

The Creemore ECHO

2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

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News and views in and around Creemore

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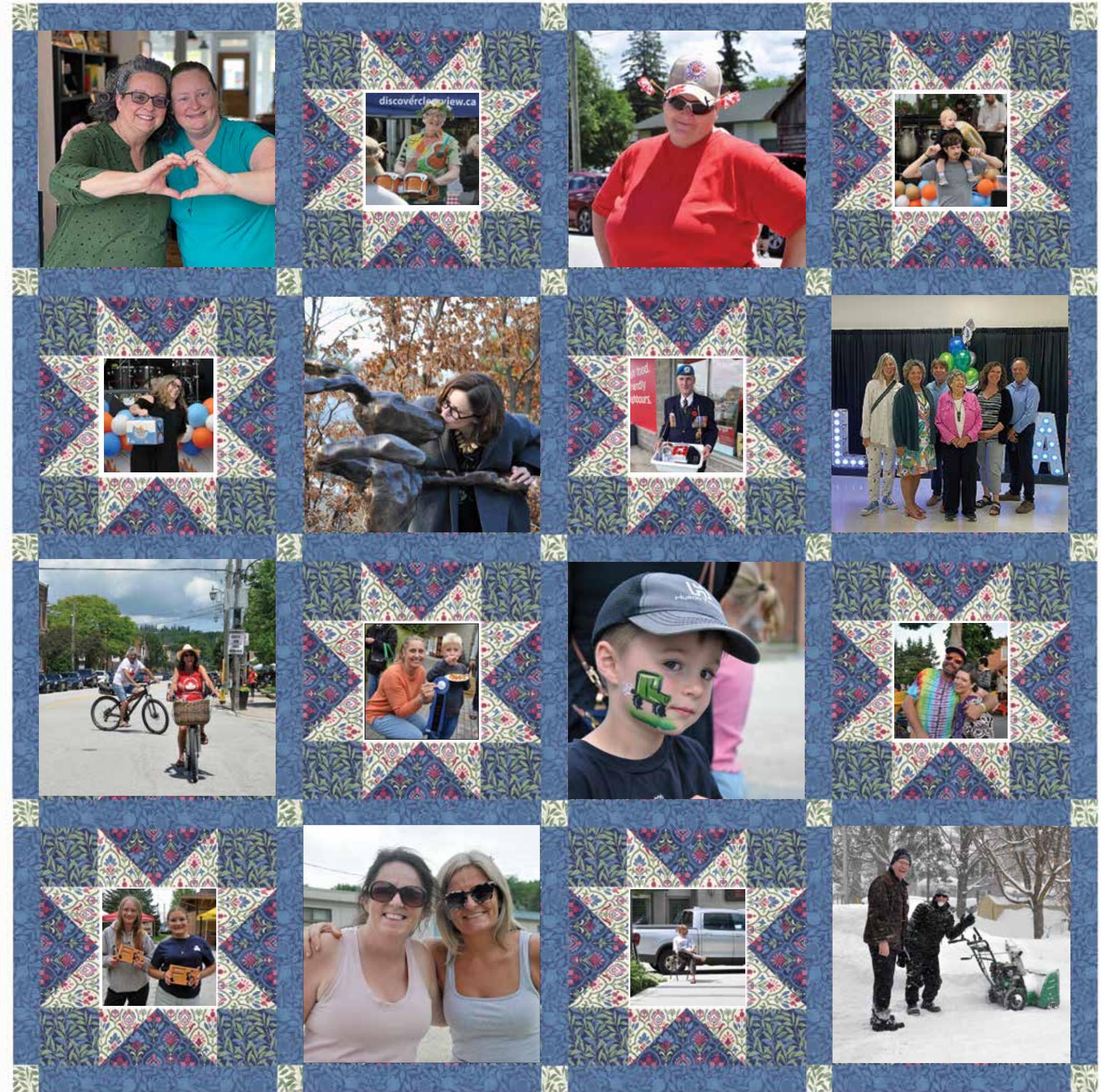
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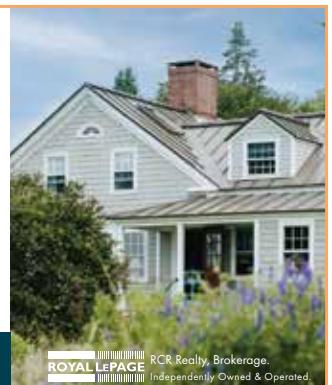


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News story of the year: DND radar

In what has rapidly become the most talked-about story in rural Ontario, Clearview Township finds itself at the heart of a national security drama. This year, the Department of National Defence (DND) dropped a bombshell — a \$38.6 billion modernization plan for NORAD includes building a radar receive-site on 288 hectares of prime farmland.

It began with silence — DND quietly acquired roughly 711 acres of agricultural land at 2225 Sideroad 15/16. Locals were stunned when they received offers to sell their surrounding farms, realizing the government planned to flatten the land, erect thousands of six-metre antennas, surround it with high fences, and operate round-the-clock lighting and cameras.

Clearview Township's council voted unanimously to oppose the receive site, citing that agriculture is the backbone of its identity and economy. In their eyes, valuable farmland, some bordering environmentally sensitive wetlands, was being sacrificed for a project that may outlive its usefulness.

"Clearview is an agricultural community, with agriculture and agri-related businesses being the township's Number 1 economic activity. Agriculture is a vital part of our culture and heritage," said Councillor **Marty Beelen**. "Valuable farmland in Ontario is already being used for roads, housing and development. We do not need to use more valuable farmland for this DND



Rachel Brooks and **Terri Jackman**

project."

Two public info sessions hosted by DND drew about 300 people. Emotions ran high: concerns about expropriation, radio-frequency exposure, and environmental impact dominated the floor.

DND defended its plan as a vital piece of Canada's continental defense — part of a broader NORAD modernization effort to detect high-speed threats.

What started in Clearview has spilled over into neighbouring municipalities. Essa Township and the Town of Innisfil have publicly joined Clearview's resistance, calling for a more balanced approach that respects farmland, food security, and local heritage. Their

argument: once the soil is gone, it's gone — but military needs can evolve.

DND announced that initial work could begin as soon as winter 2026, with the radar network projected to reach initial operational capability by the end of 2029.

For many in the township, this is more than a local political fight. As one farmer put it, "once we run out of farmland, how are we going to feed our community?"

The proposed DND radar in Clearview has become a defining moment — not just for this farming community, but for the broader national debate on defence, development, and democracy. It tests the limits of local agency in the face of a global security agenda.

If the radar goes in, it could transform the landscape — both physically and in its symbolism. But if the people of Clearview win this fight, it may prove that even in the face of sweeping national plans, the voice of a small township still has weight.

Meanwhile, residents launched a grassroots petition. Community leaders like **Terri Jackman** and **Rachel Brooks** are urging neighbours to stand firm. It's not just a land fight — it's a fight for legacy, livelihood, and a way of life. The petition, open until Jan. 23, is online at www.ourcommons.ca under e-6829 (national defence and military operations). There is also a Facebook group called Clearview DND radar.

Volunteer spotlight: Jeanette McFarlane

In 2025 we recognize **Jeanette McFarlane** for putting Mulmur in the national spotlight, as a finalist in the Kraft Hockeyville contest.



Although Honeywood Arena did not win the top prize, the community came out a winner because they had a chance to band together and tell their story. As a top-four finalist, they will receive \$25,000 for arena upgrades and \$10,000 for equipment.

"My friends, we are winners and we will always win when we work together so from here on out show up for your community. Do something for somebody else because that's how we win," said McFarlane at a gathering for the live broadcast.

McFarlane is a dedicated Mulmur resident whose leadership and volunteer spirit have made her a pillar of the local community. Named Mulmur's Citizen of the Year in 2025, she was recognized for her energy, initiative, and long-standing commitment to strengthening community life. A driving force behind the My Honeywood campaign, she has contributed to major efforts to improve local recreation facilities and expand opportunities for youth. Her involvement also extends to civic engagement and economic development.

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From the front page

Funds flow to unlock Stayner development backlog

by Trina Berlo

On his final stop of a funding tour Tuesday, Simcoe-Grey MPP Brian Saunderson was in Stayner to announce that Clearview Township will be receiving \$35 million in provincial funding to add water capacity in Stayner and allow development projects to proceed.

He said the money will unlock infill properties and new subdivisions, adding that the new long-term care facility and grocery store on Highway 26 are all "critical pieces of the puzzle to make sure the community is thriving."

He said the successful funding application is a testament to the advocacy of municipal and elected



Area continues to get walloped with winter storms

by Bonnie MacPherson

If you're feeling like we've had more than our fair share of winter weather, you're not alone. The Canadian Council of Environment Canada says that data from the Egbert monitoring station, the nearest to Creemore, shows that is the second-worst winter on record. They started measuring snow depths in 2001.

"As of 7 a.m. Wednesday, we're at 15.5 cm of snow on the ground at Egbert. The long-term average for the month of February is 13 cm," said Coulton, adding that number is the second-worst in places that experience like effect.

He said in the last couple of weeks, within the last week and a half we've hit with three large scale storms.

He said the last two storms, significant



NDCC competes for Kraft Hockeyville

by Trina Berlo

North Dufferin Community Centre (NDCC) is hoping to score big in the Hockeyville contest, putting the 50 arena on the map while community engagement is high.

Parents have certainly been feeling the impact of the wintry weather. Erik Dixon of the Simcoe County Stayner Township Community Council (SCSTC) says they don't release statistics on school bus cancellations to the public, but bus drivers are calling in sick.

Nottawa Community Public School bus drivers have been cancelled for 14 days since Dec. 27.

Dixon said SCSTC considers many factors before cancelling buses: road conditions, assessment of current and forecasted weather, and visibility.

Four main political parties in Ontario have selected candidates for the Simcoe-Grey riding in preparation for the Feb. 27 election.



Ford triggers snap election

Incumbent MPP Brian Saunderson will stand for the Progressive Conservatives. He won the seat the last election, after long-time representative Jim Wilson stepped down.

He said he needs a new mandate from the people in case he needs to spend billions of dollars to prop up Ontario's economy if tariffs are imposed. To protect Ontario, including during the fast-approaching renovation of the

desire to merge his business interests and food. He first worked at Freshco and quickly rose to a manager's role.

Franchisee Terry Prescott, who runs the Stayner business with his wife Jacqueline, says he is excited about the new store for its fresh look, modern design, spacious layout, and location. He says it's too early to say.

According to Elections Canada the Liberals won 169 seats—just shy of the 172 seats needed for a majority—and Conservatives had won 14.

New Foodland set to open in Stayner this spring

by Trina Berlo

A new Foodland grocery store is taking shape in Stayner's east end, with a grand opening for spring.

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Civic Engagement



Clockwise from above: **Zak Hayward** received council support for his plea to maintain the character of Gowan Park by rethinking the replacement of the bleachers; Various citizen groups, including Melancthon Against Quarries, have been raising their voices in opposition to Strada's quarry application; Clearview Township will allow boulevard gardens after the community rallied around **Brenna Lattimore** and her efforts to raise awareness about pollinator gardens; Councillor **Robert Walker** worked to ensure there was proper public engagement for Compass Greenfield Development's battery energy storage system (BESS) proposal in Stayner; In May there was a week-long protest of Bill 5 outside the Stayner constituency office of MPP **Brian Saunderson**; Hundreds of people attended two information sessions hosted by the Department of National Defence to hear about plans for an Arctic Over-the-Horizon Radar (A-OTHR) system installation to be built in Clearview Township.



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Community Events



Copper Kettle Festival



Summer Solstice



Gathering of the Classics



Harvest Festival



Witches Walk



Community dinners at St. John's



Symphony Under the Stars



Harvest Street Festival

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Community events



Duck Race



Creemore Festival of the Arts



Trivia on the Green



GNE fall fair



Sunnidale Winterama



Canada Day



Sundays in the Park



Amazing Race Clearview

There will be tears
But also
laughter
and love

Yes, a funeral is a time to remember but it is also a chance to celebrate a life with friends, family and loved ones.

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Community Connection



Clockwise from above: Stayner's east end saw tremendous change in 2025 with the opening of the plaza off Grand Trunk Road including McDonald's, a Dollarama, a larger LCBO store and a new Stayner Foodland location, with new owners Kyle and Selina Krueger (top right); Creemore Foodland also saw a change in ownership with Shannon and Alain Lemay; a number of businesses celebrated grand openings in 2025 including The Hub in Duntroon; Mullen and Mullen in Stayner; and The Olive Grove Wellness Center in Stayner.

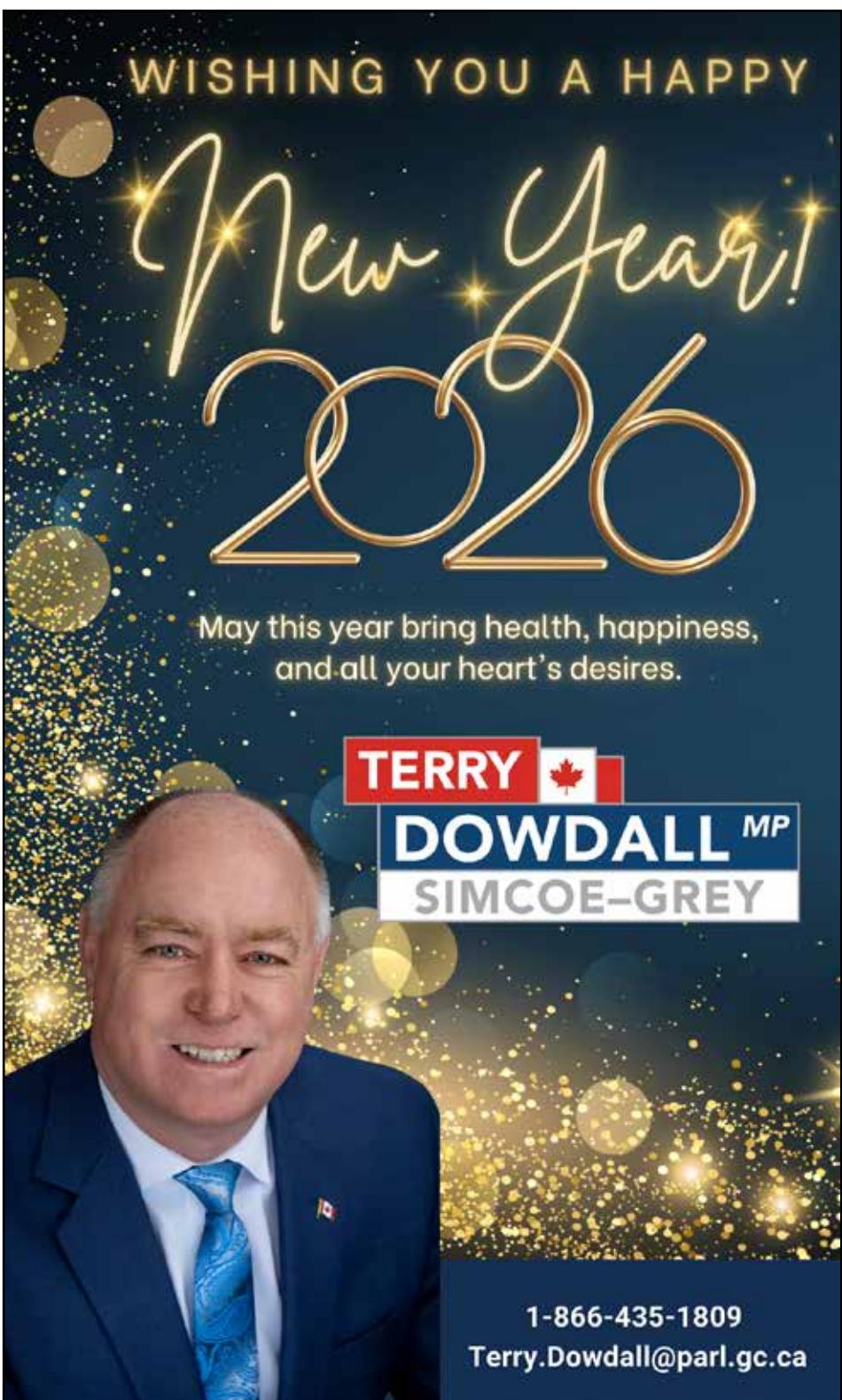


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Sudoku

by Barbara Simpson

4			9	7	5	3						
		5										4
	6			4	1	9	8					
8	5											3
9							6	5				
6	3	2	9					8				
8					5							
	5	9	4	3								2

Answers on page 11

FRED'S FUNNIES

Why is the party in Times Square overrated? Because they drop the ball every year.

Happy New Year!

COLLINGWOOD AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Annual General Meeting

at Stayner Centennial United Church,
234 William St.

Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026

Doors open at 5:45 p.m.
Light refreshments served.
Business meeting starts
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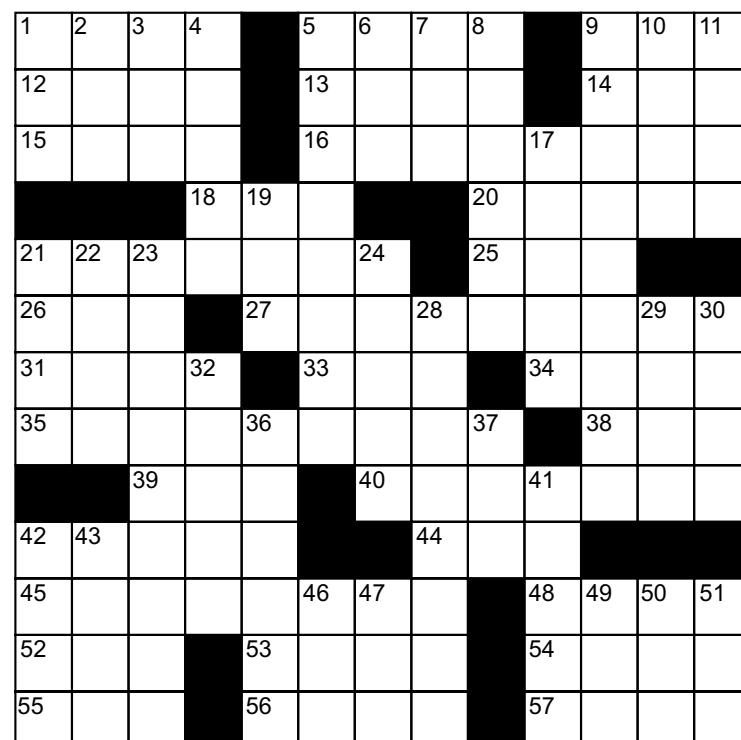
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Canadian Criss Cross

by Walter Feener

ACROSS

- Fit of the sulks
- Unspecified amount
- Be quiet!
- False god
- Computer operating system
- Chinese "way"
- Programming language for children
- Put in good condition by making many repairs
- High mountain
- Put off until a later time
- Ragged clothing
- Internet address
- carte
- The symbol -, indicating subtraction
- Red Planet
- Monetary unit of Japan
- Excellent
- Toys similar to windmills
- Actress Martin
- Reminder to pay a debt
- Quick, clever reply
- Supermarket section
- Painter Greeley from Newfoundland and Labrador
- " (God)"
- Holes in needles
- Had a meal
- Point scored in hockey
- Place in the hands of
- Floating leaf of a water plant
- Well ventilated
- Over again



DOWN

- One thousandth of an inch
- Words said by brides and grooms
- Thick cloud of tiny water droplets
- Be buoyant
- Catch unawares
- Half of two
- Sixty seconds: abbr.
- Old Testament book
- Some male horses
- He was prime minister of Japan for nine weeks in 1994
- Hamlet in Saskatchewan
- Vice __
- Moon vehicle, for short
- Pack down tightly
- Jai __
- Having lost its shine
- Curl one's upper lip
- Improbable
- Fly resembling a mosquito
- Hawaiian goose
- Extremely muscular
- Strike; stoppage; walkout in Spain
- Collect information secretly
- Last Greek letter
- Immediately!
- Extremely small amount
- Hawaiian dish
- Calendar abbr.
- Yang's counterpart
- Adam's wife
- Make with a needle and thread

Trivia: Who wrote the screenplay for *Rocky*?

Under construction



Clockwise from above: Mannington Investments continues to work on a new building at 143 and 145 Mill St. and has unveiled its vision for the re-development of the old Sovereign building; Planning continues for the new Collingwood General and Marine Hospital, including a visioning session in Creemore to gather input into early design concepts; The new Stayner Care Centre, a modern 128-bed facility operated by Jarlette Health Services, officially opened and moved residents in September 2025; The Georgian Triangle Humane Society broke ground on the David and Helen Capin Regional Centre for Pets and People; The NVCA completed a 125-metre side channel in the Mad River in Avening to restore natural flow patterns to the river.



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This week's answers

4	2	8	1	9	7	5	3	6
3	9	1	5	8	6	2	7	4
5	7	6	3	2	4	1	9	8
7	8	5	6	1	9	4	2	3
2	6	4	7	5	3	9	8	1
9	1	3	8	4	2	6	5	7
6	3	2	9	7	1	8	4	5
8	4	7	2	6	5	3	1	9
1	5	9	4	3	8	7	6	2

M	I	F	F	S	O	M	E	S	H	H
I	D	O	L	U	N	I	X	T	A	O
L	O	G	O	R	E	N	O	V	A	T
A	L	P		D	E	L	A	Y		
T	A	T	T	E	R	U	L			
A	L	A	M	I	N	U	S	S	I	G
M	A	R	S	S	E	N	A	O	N	E
P	I	N	W	H	E	E	L	N	A	N
I	O	U	R	I	P	O	S	T	E	
A	I	S	L	E	K	Y	M			
S	O	H	E	L	P	M	E	E	Y	E
A	T	E		G	O	A	L	G	I	V
P	A	D		A	I	R	Y	A	N	E

Trivia: Sylvester Stallone



Happy NEW YEAR

We wish you all a joyful and peaceful 2026!

Thank you so much for your love and support, and for proving again and again that Creemore truly is the little village with the big heart.

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2025: A year to remember

This past year marked an important milestone for Coates Creek Cabinetry, 36 years of building spaces shaped by care, skill, and collaboration. It was a time to reflect on the people behind the work and the clients who have trusted our team with their homes, year after year.

Throughout the years, Coates Creek Cabinetry has continued to welcome clients and partners into the creative process. Open conversations, shared ideas, and hands-on collaboration remain at the heart of the work, with each project built in-house by a team that understands how cabinetry and furniture become part of everyday living.

Kitchens where families gather. Tables where stories are shared. Spaces where life unfolds.

As the year comes to a close, the focus remains the same. Coates Creek Cabinetry continues to build with intention, working closely with clients to create well-crafted spaces that feel right for their homes—spaces made to be shared, enjoyed, and remembered, with a little magic woven into the everyday.

Built to Last: A Legacy in the Making

At the heart of Coates Creek Cabinetry is founder Jeremy Van Severen, whose connection to the craft began at a young age. Time spent working alongside his grandfather shaped not only his skill, but his respect for woodworking as a trade built on patience, precision, and pride.

What began as a small workshop grew steadily, guided by a belief that good work speaks for itself. Over the years, that belief has shaped a company known for its attention to detail, thoughtful design, and a commitment to precision and craftsmanship. Apprentices became artisans, skills were passed down, and a culture of craftsmanship took root.

Today, from this small town, Coates Creek Cabinetry creates custom cabinetry and furniture for homes across Ontario and beyond. While the reach has expanded, the approach has remained the same—each project built with care, collaboration, and an understanding that the spaces created will be lived in every day.

Stop by. Meet the team. See what's possible.



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