

# WEEKENDER

## THE SPEAKER'S WEEKEND EDITION



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FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 2022

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## Proof-of-vaccination requirement dropped for entry to city facilities

**Diane Johnston**  
Speaker Reporter

TEMISKAMING SHORES – Proof of vaccination will no longer be required to enter municipal facilities – including arenas, the Pool-Fitness Centre and community halls – in Temiskaming Shores.

After a 10-minute discussion earlier this week, city council opted to follow the province's lead and lift the requirement that people show proof of vaccination on entering the facilities.

If there's no support from health officials for maintaining the measure, "I think we should be opening everything up," commented Councillor Jeff Laferriere.

Council met March 1, the same day that the Ontario government lifted proof-of-vaccination requirements for most settings.

However, it also authorized organizations and businesses to leave the requirements in place should they choose.

City council also considered a report from recreation director Matt Bahm, which had been prepared last week.

He said staff did not recommend that proof continue to be shown at municipal halls, because their relatively larger air volume and ability to limit capacities reduced the risk of virus transmission.

But staff did recommend that proof continue to be required at the Pool-Fitness Centre until at least April 30, for the protection of both staff and patrons.

In the report, Bahm cited the facility's relatively low air volume, patrons' ability to remove masks



### SHOT STOPPER

*On Saturday mornings the stars of the future take to the ice at the Don Shepherdson Memorial Arena in New Liskeard. On a recent outing, Brock McDonald readied for a shot on net as the Under-7 Timbits took to the ice. (Staff photo by Diane Johnston)*

while working out in enclosed spaces, and the presence of multiple staff throughout the day.

In terms of the arenas, he proposed that proof continue to be required until at least April 22.

"While there is a lower risk for masked spectators seated in the arena bowls, there is a greatly increased risk during dressing room use and while congregating in lobby areas.

"Both municipal arena lobbies have a relatively low air volume and with a concession, there is a higher risk for those who eat or drink at the arenas due to the removal of masks.

"Staff also noted that general mask compliance is waning, and dressing rooms are poorly ventilated."

But he suggested that checks could be limited to weekends, when more spectators are expected, particularly during upcoming Northern Ontario Hockey Association playdowns.

That would also lower the city's costs to hire screeners at the door.

Mayor Carman Kidd, who chairs the board overseeing the Timiskaming Health Unit, said he'd heard nothing from the district's acting medical officer of health opposing what Premier Doug Ford had announced.

Kidd noted that there are currently few COVID-19 cases in the district's hospitals, in-person learning

*Continued on 6*

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# **DID YOU GET The Speaker THIS WEEK?** **Here are some March 2, 2022 stories...**

- The north is still dealing with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, says the acting medical officer of health for the Timiskaming Health Unit.
- FedNor has provided the City of Temiskaming Shores with half a million dollars to make infrastructure upgrades at the Don Shepherdson Memorial Arena in New Liskeard.
- Sections of the Blanche River are not safe to navigate due to a collapse of a riverbank and the partial collapse of a house on that riverbank.
- Another cannabis retail outlet has opened in Temiskaming Shores called Pop's Cannabis.
- A Temagami First Nation student has received a Canada Post Award for her entrepreneurship.
- The Earlton Timiskaming Regional Airport is now under the management of the Loomex Group.
- Temiskaming has another centenarian as Ann Deering celebrated her 100th birthday last week at the Northview Nursing Home in Englehart.
- A bevy of hockey teams enjoyed the U9 Pioneer Diesel Challenge Cup held last weekend in Temiskaming Shores.
- The Temiskaming Nordic Ski Club held a Bill Gabanni Memorial Ski to honour Gabanni's dedication to the club and the sport of cross-country skiing.
- The Cubs played two competitive games last weekend, but came away without points in the win column.

# Tax filing season opens

OTTAWA (Special) – The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) officially opened tax-filing season on Family Day, meaning that Canadians can now file their 2021 income tax and benefit returns online.

In a news release, the CRA said Canadians can also choose to file a paper income tax and benefit return.

It advises that this will be another unique tax-filing season due to the challenges continuing to be posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

But it stressed that Canadians must file their returns so they can receive the benefits and credits they may be entitled to.

Here's what you need to

know for this tax-filing season:

- There are many options available to you to file. You can pick one that best suits your needs. Check out the CRA's "Ways to do your taxes" page.
- The deadline for most Canadians to file their income tax and benefit returns for 2021 is April 30, 2022.

Because this date is a Saturday, your return will be considered filed on time if the CRA receives it or it is postmarked on or before May 2, 2022.

Similarly, your payment will be considered made on time if it is received by the CRA or processed at a Canadian financial institution on or

before May 2, 2022.

- Visit the CRA's "Get ready to do your taxes" page for the latest tax information. They have eight steps to help you file.

• Questions about the filing of your income tax and benefit return? The CRA has launched a new online learning tool to help you learn about taxes so you can do them on your own. Go to Learn about your taxes for more information.

- If you received taxable COVID-19 benefits from the CRA in 2021, such as the Canada Recovery Benefit, a T4A slip will be mailed to you by the end of February 2022. Residents of Quebec

will receive a T4A slip and an RL-1 slip.

T4A slips for COVID-19-related benefits will also be provided online if you're registered for My Account and have full access. T4A information slips, including information for COVID-19-related benefits, are also available through the "Auto-fill my return" service in certified tax filing software. This service automatically fills in parts of an income tax and benefit return with information that the CRA has on file.

To use the service, you must be registered for My Account.

- If you have a modest income, a simple tax situation, and require assistance, the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program may be able to complete and file your tax return for free. The service is available in Temiskaming Shores.

If you live in Quebec, please visit the Income Tax Assistance – Volunteer Program for more information.

- You may be eligible to claim a deduction of up to \$500 for home office expenses in the 2021 tax year using the temporary flat rate method if you worked more than 50 per cent of the time from home for a period of at least four consecutive weeks due to COVID-19.

This method can also be used if your employer provided you a choice to work from home due to COVID-19 during this period.

- The My Account secure portal lets you manage your taxes and benefits online.

You can update your address, direct deposit information, marital status, and more. You can also sign up for email notifications and access digital

*Continued on 6*



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# Fraud scores record-breaking profits in 2021

OTTAWA (Special) – Last year was a historic year for financial losses reported to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC).

Based on reports to the centre, \$379 million was lost to scams and fraud in 2021, which was an increase of 130 per cent from 2020.

The continued prevalence of scams and fraud is why CAFC, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Competition Bureau are once again joining forces this March to lead the 18th annual Fraud Prevention Month.

“Fraud is having real impacts on individuals, businesses and organizations,” said Chris Lynam, director general of the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre and the National Cybercrime Coordination Unit, RCMP, in a news release.

“Many don’t think it could happen to them but last year’s jump in reported financial losses demonstrates that that’s not true. While law enforcement and partners continue to work to prevent and disrupt fraudsters, we need Canadians to learn how to protect themselves and always report.”

Canadians have increasingly turned during the pandemic to online services and devices, the RCMP note.

While the internet is helpful in so many ways, it said the public must remain vigilant because people don’t always know who is on the other side of the computer screen.

Many fraudsters, they say, use impersonation tactics to pose as a trusted source to steal money or personal information.

This is why the Fraud Pre-

vention Month 2022 campaign will focus on impersonation scams.

The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre estimates that five per cent of fraud cases are reported.

Based on reports to the centre, the scams that resulted in the highest financial loss in 2021 were investment scams, with losses exceeding \$113 million.

This was a new trend seen by the CAFC, with a noticeable increase in cryptocurrency investment scams.

The top five most reported scams and frauds last year were extortion, phishing, merchandise scams, service scams and vendor fraud.

If you are the victim of a scam, fraud or cybercrime, please contact your local police.

It is also essential that you report an incident, whether you are a victim or not, to the anti-fraud centre via its online reporting system or by phone at 1-888-495-8501.

# Hospital opening up to more visitors

TEMISKAMING SHORES (Special) – Temiskaming Hospital is relaxing visitor restrictions a little more, and credits the continuing stabilization of COVID-19 numbers in the North.

As of March 1, acute care patients can have two designated care partners visit, with one present at any one time.

It marks the latest easing of the restrictions first imposed at the end of November as COVID-19 cases in the area began to mount.

At that time, only patients in end-of-life, obstetric and pediatric care were allowed to have designated care partners visit. Some out-patients could be accompanied by designated individuals.

Two weeks ago, restrictions were eased for all long-term care patients, who can now have two designated care partners visit.

General visitation is still on hold.

“With provincial health care indicators continuing to improve and indicators leveling out in the district, we continue to cautiously lift previous visitor restrictions,” said Mike Baker, the hospital’s president and CEO, in a news release.

He said restrictions will be eased further “in the near future, if conditions continue to

improve.”

Pandemic precautions remain in place for all visitors.

All designated care partners must pass the screening questionnaire administered by agents at the hospital entrance.

They must also show proof of vaccination and identification. Proof of a third dose will also be required, beginning March 14.

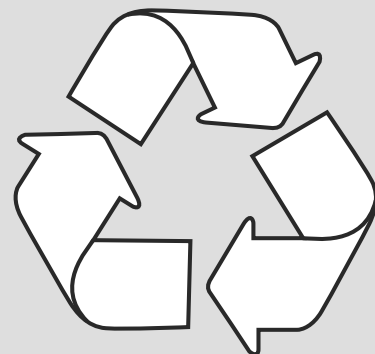
The hospital may consider vaccine exceptions for care partners of patients who are near the end of life, in obstetrics, in pediatric care, in a mental health crisis or have a significant development or communication barrier.

“We continue to analyze key COVID-19 indicators and adjust our policies as we can,” Baker said.

“The Omicron variant has made an unprecedented virus even more difficult to deal with,” he continued.

But he credited a dedicated team at the hospital and the public’s support for helping it “come through this in much better shape than would otherwise have been the case.”

The hospital said its team meets weekly to evaluate policies, with patients’ health and well-being at the forefront of its decisions.



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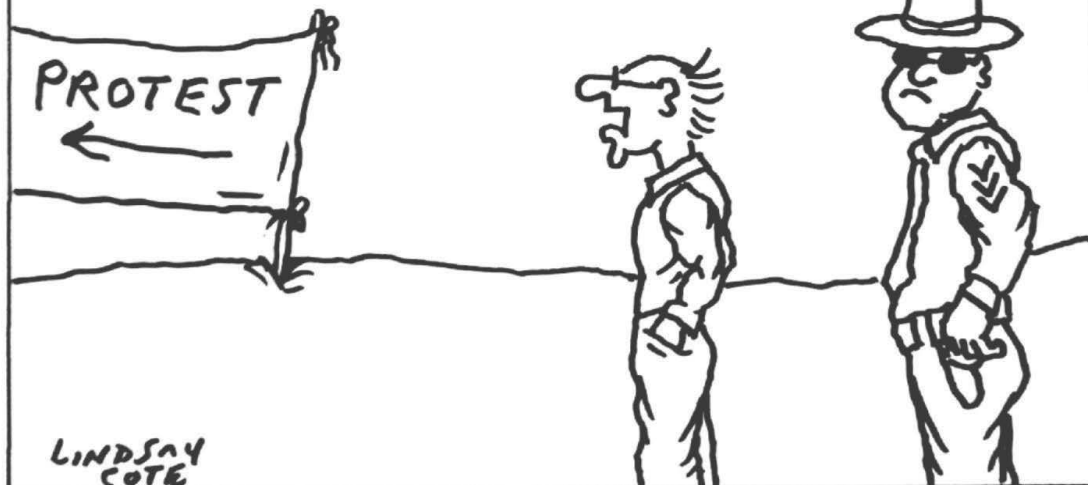
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## Old Guys

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Protest, protest, protest. Doesn't  
anyone take the teeth out and go a  
round or two anymore



## EDITORIAL

### The importance of public health

Since the COVID-19 pandemic became a reality for Canadians some two years ago, the importance of public health services has been realized.

Well, at least by most people, though the anti-vaxxer crowd continues to doubt the value of immunization programs.

Immunization has been responsible for most of the major public health advances in the past half century in Canada.

We have seen diseases like polio, mumps, measles, rubella and other communicable diseases eliminated.

It is a slippery slope when we begin to talk about amalgamating public health units in this part of Ontario or underfunding public health agencies.

And this is what the Ford government has proposed when it announced it would amalgamate northern health units into one regional service model.

In order to carry out disease surveillance, collect data, monitor water quality and provide immunization pro-

grams, public health funding must either increase or remain stable.

Local implementation of public health services is critical to the lives of northerners and we do not wish to see integrated service models delivered from places in far off cities.

Perhaps the most important service public health provides to rural communities are the data and programming around the social determinants of health.

Social determinants of health include housing, food and education.

As terrible as the COVID-19 pandemic has been, it will not be our last pandemic.

Any progressive government will make investments to prepare now for future pandemics by investing in public health today.

We offer a thank you to the Timiskaming Health Unit for their professionalism in the way they have expertly handled the COVID-19 pandemic.



# Sudden loss



Sue Nielsen

While we come to understand from an early age that death is a part of life, it does not make losing a loved one any less painful or easier.

Especially when someone dies unexpectedly.

Death is hard and even harder when it comes out of nowhere.

One day you are a healthy person and the next you are gone.

Which brings me to the sudden death of fellow Cobalter and family friend, Bill Gabanni.

I pass on my deepest condolences to the Gabanni family and to all who knew and loved Bill.

And especially to his partner, Isabelle Goulet.

Bill suddenly and unexpectedly passed away on Thursday, February 24.

As Cobalt families go, we grew up knowing Bill and the Gabanni family.

His mother and father, Ernestine and Dario, sisters Louise, Theresa and younger brother Michael lost their home in the 1977 fire and were able to rebuild a brand new home.

Bill remained in Cobalt living in the family home.

My brothers David and Dwight played high school sports with Bill and, of course, fastball.

Bill was the catcher on the team and we all loved his big wide smile emanating from his handsome face.

He was an incredibly talented athlete at whatever sport he chose to pursue.

And I think it is safe to say, when he pursued something, it was with great passion and dedication.

I think what I appreciated the most about Bill was his passion and his sense of values.

Bill was a valuable member of Cobalt council.

I appreciated him for his knowledge of workplace safety and for his ethics and his true belief in the town and its future.

Most recently, Bill and I shared some thoughts via Facebook messenger about the decision by the members of Cobalt council to take a pay raise.

Bill was disappointed in this decision and told me, "Sue they didn't give themselves a 25, 50 or 75 per cent raise, it was 100 per cent, and in the middle of a pandemic."

And he also told me for the first time, he felt like resigning from council.

But what impressed me about this decision was the fact that Bill was the only councillor to vote against the pay raise and that he did not accept the pay raise and his stipend remained the same.

I congratulated Bill on being at the council table for the right reasons.

Bill was also a dedicated, skilled cross-country skier and it was heartwarming to see so many people turn out to a memorial ski in his name this past weekend at the Temiskaming Nordic Ski Club.

You know what, I will have that piece of chocolate cake and maybe even a glass of wine, because tomorrow isn't promised. Waking up each day is a privilege and let's not take for granted one single moment of our incredible lives.

Rest in power and peace Bill.



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# Tax filing season opens

*Continued from 2*

services such as “Auto-fill my return” and “Express NOA” certified tax-filing software. If you own a business, you can also sign up for My Business Account.

As of February 7, 2022, you are required to provide an email address to use My Account.

You will receive an email if important information such as your address or direct deposit information has been changed on CRA records.

These notifications can act as an early warning about potential fraudulent activity.

- For those who received taxable COVID-19 benefits, remember to enter them on your income tax and benefit return. These benefit payments are considered taxable income.

- For individuals who need to speak with an agent this filing season, the CRA’s individual enquiries line is open Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. local time, and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

CRA telephone numbers, fax numbers and addresses are available at the Contact the Canada Revenue Agency page.

- The CRA encourages filing online as it is the fastest and most secure way to do your taxes, but it says it will continue to support those who choose to file by paper.

It may take 10 to 12 weeks to process paper returns. If you choose to file by paper, file as early as you can to avoid any interruptions to your benefit and credit payments you may be eligible for.

- Canadians can sign up for direct deposit and file their taxes online to get their refund faster and avoid delays.

- The CRA offers a Liaison Officer service that provides free personalized virtual visits by phone or videoconference to small business owners and self-employed individuals to help them understand their tax obligations.

- The CRA has expanded payment arrangement parameters to provide Canadians more time and flexibility to repay a tax debt. Anyone in difficult financial situations and find themselves owing money can call a CRA agent for help, toll-free at 1-888-863-8657 between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m., Monday to Friday (except holidays).

- Resources on how to protect yourself from scams and fraud are available at the “Be Scam Smart” page.

Those who suspect that they have been the victim of identity theft or fraud should call the CRA so they can validate their account and discuss additional security measures.

# Proof-of-vaccination requirement dropped for entry to city facilities

*Continued from Front*

continues in schools, and most of the cases he’s heard about are not that serious.

“Maybe the premier is doing the right thing, and who are we to oppose them?”

Councillor Mike McArthur, who is also a city appointee to the health unit board, said he would have favoured maintaining the proof requirement a week ago.

But he said he feels that the local health unit and the provincial government have been listening to the scientists and health officials “from day one.”

“The way I look at it, the green light is on right now,” he said, and supported the lifting of the requirement.

“We need a consistent message every time we put it out there, so I would agree that we follow what the province is putting forward,” said Councillor Danny Whalen.

“Obviously we haven’t heard any opposition from any of the medical officers of health for each of the health units. If they’re all singing the same song, then I think we should be as well.”

Masking requirements remain in place.

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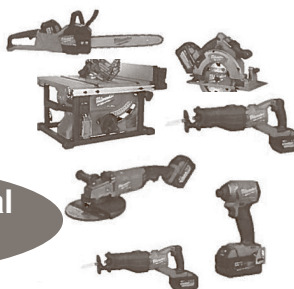
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# Four great ways to celebrate St. Patrick's Day with your kids



MARCH  
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### FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

Looking for something fun to do with your kids for St. Patrick's Day? Get into the spirit of the occasion with these four fun activities.

**1. Adopt a green diet.** Put green food dye in the pancake batter in the morning. For dinner, mix avocado in with your mac and cheese. And for dessert? Consider lime Jell-O or chocolate mint ice cream.

**2. Explore Irish traditions.** Listen to traditional Irish music, write your own limericks and read up on Irish folklore and legends, including those about leprechauns, banshees and giants. Get crafty by making a St. Brigid's Cross, sate your appetite with a hearty bowl of Irish Stew or discover Irish dancing by taking a class or watching a performance.

**3. Attend a parade.** Gear up in green clothing then head to your local dollar store to buy St. Patrick's Day themed accessories. Be sure to bring hot cocoa in a thermos to sip while you watch the floats go by.

**4. Make a leprechaun trap.** Leprechauns are said to hide pots of gold at the end of rainbows. Legend has it that if caught by a human, these trickster-like fairies must hand over their treasure. See if you can catch your own leprechaun by building a trap the night before St. Patrick's Day.

The easiest way to make a leprechaun trap is to decorate an empty box and place it upside down. Use a stick to prop up one end and leave a few shiny coins as bait. Leprechauns can't resist the lure of gold and, in their excitement, may knock down the stick and get caught in your family's trap. If they're quick, they might get away. But leprechauns are known to leave treats for crafty kids who make impressive traps.

You don't have to be Irish to enjoy St. Patrick's Day with your family — you just have to be willing to have a little fun.



### Verdant veggies and green goodies: the ultimate green diet grocery list

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| -Asparagus  | -Lettuce  | -Limes                                   |
| -Avocados   | -Edamame beans                                      | -Lime aide                               |
| -Broccoli   | -Herbs  | -Matcha                                  |
| -Brussels sprouts                                 | -Ice cream  | -Onions                                  |
| -Cabbage  | <i>(green varieties include mint and pistachio)</i> | -Pears                                   |
| -Celery   |   | -Peas                                    |
| -Cucumbers  | -Jell-O   | -Peppers                                 |
| -Green apples                                     | -Key lime pie                                       | <i>(bell, jalapeno, Hungarian, etc.)</i> |
| -Green grapes                                     | -Kiwis  | -Pesto                                   |
| -Green tea  | -Leafy greens                                       | -Pistachio nuts                          |
| -Green candies                                    | <i>(arugula, kale, spinach watercress, etc.)</i>    | -Sprouts                                 |
| <i>(gummy bears, jellybeans, mints, and more)</i> |   | -Zucchini                                |

# Happy Shamrock Day!

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## The Luck of a 4-Leaf Clover isn't as helpful as you can be.

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Englehart motel



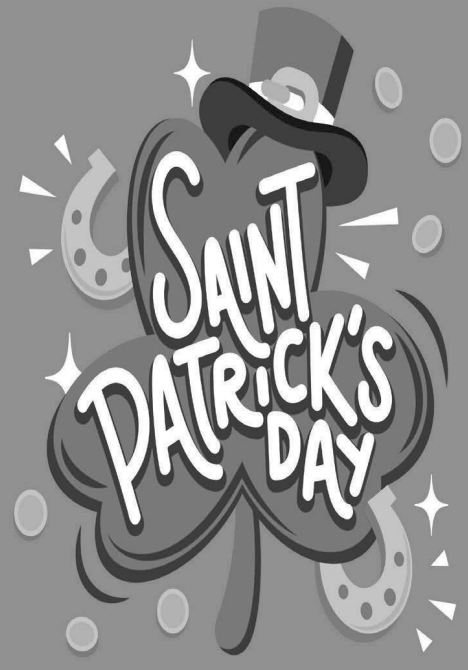
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## Happy St. Patty's Day!!

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- Fresh Seafood
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- Food Court
- Pharmacy
- Organic Foods
- Bakery

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## Temagami Family Health Team

Submitted by Ellen Ibey

### What is Glaucoma?

Glaucoma is a chronic progressive eye disease characterized by a degeneration of the optic nerve. This can lead to serious vision loss if not detected and treated early. Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness in Canada.

#### Who Gets Glaucoma?

Glaucoma most often occurs in people over the age of 40. There is also a greater risk of developing glaucoma when you have diabetes, high blood pressure or a history of eye injuries.

#### Will You Go Blind from Glaucoma?

If diagnosed at an early stage, eyedrops and laser treatment can control glaucoma and little or no further vision loss should occur. If eyedrops are prescribed, they must be used always to control the eye pressure. If left untreated, peripheral vision is affected first, followed by central vision loss during late stages of the disease. Complete blindness may occur.

#### How is Glaucoma Detected?

A thorough eye examination is the first step to detecting glaucoma. Your optometrist will do a simple and painless procedure called tonometry during your routine eye exam, which measures the internal pressure of your eye.

#### How is Glaucoma Treated?

Treatment will depend on the type, severity and progress of the disease. It cannot be cured, but it can be controlled with daily eyedrops. Laser surgery is also an effective way to control glaucoma and maintain your remaining vision.

In more complicated cases, surgery may be needed to completely bypass the eye's natural drainage system. Once vision is lost due to glaucoma, it cannot be restored. This is why **regular preventive eye exams with your optometrist are important.**

#### How Often Should You Have an Eye Exam?

Most eye care professionals recommend a comprehensive eye exam every one to two years, depending on your age, risk factors and whether you currently wear eyeglasses or contact lenses. Children need regular eye exams to detect vision problems that may interfere with learning.

**The Temagami Medical Centre  
and Family Health Team...**

**committed to keeping you as healthy as possible**



**Temagami**

**Family Health Team**

17 O'Connor Drive, P.O. Box 98, Temagami, ON P0H 2H0  
Tel: 705.569.3244 Fax: 705.569.2610



*A short documentary, now in production, will explore the challenge of being an artist in rural Northeastern Ontario. From the left are director/filmmaker and former Englehart resident Nicholas Koscik, Jayden Martin of Englehart, and cinematographer Dylan Young of Toronto, who have been working together on the project. (Supplied photo)*

## Documentary focuses on Englehart artist

**Darlene Wroe**  
Speaker Reporter

ENGLEHART - A singer/songwriter in Englehart will be the subject of a short documentary destined to be entered in Canadian and international film festivals.

Jayden Martin, 23, who works in a wide range of art forms, does not like to put one form ahead of another in terms of his art, but last year he pro-

duced several dozen original songs with music performed on guitar, and expects to exceed that number this year. He also is a writer, photographer and enjoys filmmaking.

His interests include antiquities, and he has made a choice to not have internet service in his home.

He has struggled with mental health during his life, beginning when he was an adolescent. It was at that time that

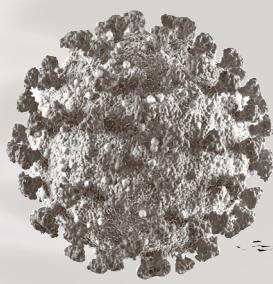
he turned to music to help him through the particularly hard times.

Today he has a clear vision of art and its creation, but he is also working through the challenge of living in rural Northeastern Ontario while attempting to develop and promote his work.

"A lot of my art is created in seclusion, but it also necessitates that social aspect which

*Continued on 12a*





# COVID UPDATE



Services de santé du

**TIMISKAMING**  
Health Unit

**Address/adresse:** 247 Whitewood Ave., unit 43/ 247 avenue Whitewood, unite 43

**COVID-19 phone line/ligne de COVID-19:** 705-647-4305, extension/poste 7

## IF I MISS WORK DUE TO SELF-ISOLATION, AM I ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS? SI JE M'ABSENTE DU TRAVAIL EN RAISON DE MON AUTO-ISOLEMENT, SUIS-JE ÉLIGIBLE AUX PRESTATIONS?

We understand that self-isolating is hard, especially for families with children. The **Ontario COVID-19 Worker Income Protection Benefit** is available to people who are self-isolating for reasons related to COVID-19.

Nous comprenons qu'il est difficile de s'isoler, surtout pour les familles avec des enfants. La **Prestation ontarienne de protection du revenu des travailleurs atteints de la COVID-19** est offerte aux personnes qui s'isolent pour des raisons liées à la COVID-19.



### Quick tips to improve your child's COVID-19 vaccine experience:

- Use distraction techniques, i.e. deep breathing, jokes, music, reading or a new app
- Bring a special toy
- Plan a fun way to celebrate afterwards

### Conseils rapides pour améliorer l'expérience vaccinale de votre enfant :

- Utilisez des techniques de distraction, comme la respiration profonde, les plaisanteries, la musique, la lecture ou une nouvelle application
- Apportez un jouet spécial
- Prévoyez une façon amusante de fêter par la suite

Book using the provincial booking system: | Réservez en utilisant le système de réservation provincial : <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/> or call | ou appelez 866-747-4305, Ext./poste 6.

- First and second doses
- Boosters (12+)
- Adult mRNA (Moderna & Pfizer)
- Pediatric Pfizer

- Première et deuxième doses
- Dose de rappel (12+)
- Les vaccins à base d'ARNm (Moderna et Pfizer) pour les adultes
- Le vaccin Pfizer pédiatrique

### CLINICS | CLINIQUES (AGES 5+ ANS)

Wednesday, March 2 | mercredi 2 mars

**New Liskeard Riverside Place  
Kirkland Lake Heritage North**

2 to 7 p.m. | 14h à 19h  
2 to 7 p.m. | 14h à 19h

**Walk-ins are welcome.**

Tuesday, March 8 | mardi 8 mars

**New Liskeard Movie Gallery\***

3 to 6 p.m. | 15h à 18h

**Les visites sans**

Wednesday, March 9 | mercredi 9 mars

**Kirkland Lake THU Office\*\***

3 to 6 p.m. | 15h à 18h

**rendez-vous sont bienvenues.**

\*225 Whitewood Avenue, New Liskeard (beside Findlay's Drug Store) | \*\*31 Station Road North, Kirkland Lake

# Documentary focuses on Englehart artist

*Continued from 11a*

is something that I can't really find here," he commented in a telephone interview.

Art, for him he says, is "sort of a journey of self discovery and working through my own issues and using the art to cope and that's where the truest art comes from."

He hopes that the documentary will help those with similar plights.

The documentary was initiated by his high-school friend Nicholas Koscik, 27, who was also raised in Englehart but now is living in Toronto where he is working as a director/filmmaker.

Koscik, whose sister had lived in the Toronto area, moved there in 2015 to pursue a career in filmmaking. He said in a telephone interview that while he is happy to see the film industry getting a start in North Bay and Sudbury, there are two main hubs for the industry in Canada, and those are in Toronto and Vancouver.

"If you want to succeed in film, you unfortunately have to go down south," he said.

Late in 2021, Koscik was in Englehart for a visit and dropped in on Martin to catch up, and the more he heard of his life, his experiences and his interests, the more Koscik felt certain that Martin's story was one which needed to be told.

During the past couple of months, Koscik and Martin, along with cinematographer Dylan Young, have been working together to create the documentary *Dear Friend, Where Have You Gone?* That's also the title of one of Martin's many songs, which he performed in a short video he has posted on his Facebook page along with other songs, and some of the black and white photography he has created.

Koscik said that through the documentary he hopes to bring focus to the arts in the north, and also to bring focus to what it's like to be an artist in rural Northeastern Ontario "because it's really hard."

The film will focus on "this idea of isolation and the loneliness as an artist working in rural Northeastern Ontario," said Koscik, who noted "there are multiple facets to this story."

Koscik expects the film to be completed by the fall. Martin will be assisting with the film's music score. Once completed, it will be entered in international and Canadian film festivals. It is Koscik's hope that the film will be picked up by a distributor.

Koscik says the documentary is "a passion project" with a limited budget, and expressed gratitude for the support of Good Shepherd Church Pastor Steve Crosby who allowed them access into the church, which they used as a studio.

Koscik's parents, Stan and Lodzia Koscik, also assisted by providing meals and accommodations during the project.



## Ontario is getting stronger

Across the province, more workers are joining the skilled trades as resources and industries in the north become part of the future of clean steel and electric vehicles.

More jobs are being created by building new bridges and highways, expanding public transit and constructing new homes—all for a growing province. Home-grown businesses are manufacturing more of the things we rely on.

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