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Temiskaming District
Seasons
Magazine

Winter 2022

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The joys
OF WINTER



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CONTENTS

- 4 The Joys of Winter
- 6 Job Market
- 7 Financially Fit
- 8 Winter Outfit Inspiration
- 9 Snowmobile Safety
- 10 Fire Prevention
- 12 Comfort Food
- 14 On the Wild Side
- 15 Spring Pulse Poetry Festival
- 16 Green Living
- 17 Health Talk
- 18 Book your Winter Adventure Now
- 19 Love Where You Live: Shop Local
- 20 The Real Estate Market
- 22 Home Project

SPEAKER

**PRINTING, PUBLISHING
AND PROMOTIONS**

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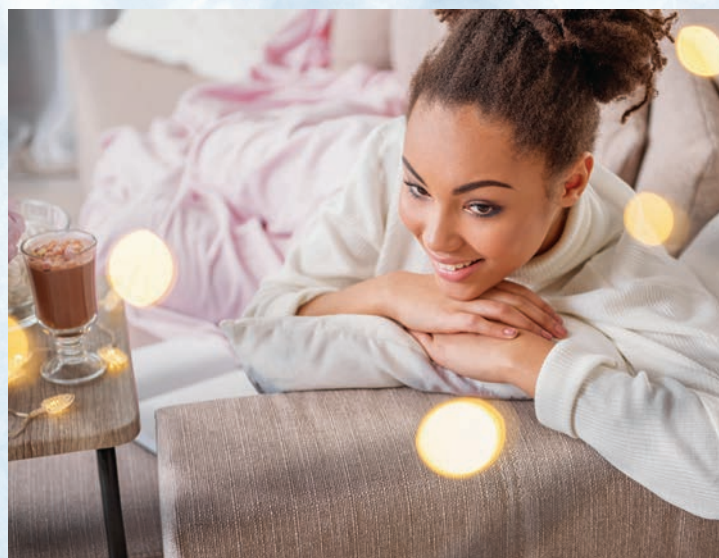
The joys OF WINTER

Essentials for a snowy day at home

Spending time at home on a cold, snowy day can be a great way to relax and unwind. Whether you feel like immersing yourself in a book, flipping through a magazine, watching a TV show, painting your nails or treating yourself to a movie marathon, here are a few winter-day essentials:

- Scented candles or essential oils
- Comfortable pillows and blankets
- Warm socks and slippers
- Soft clothes or pajamas
- Warm drinks like coffee, tea and hot chocolate
- Small treats like candies or chocolates
- Soothing treatments like bath bombs or face masks

In addition, for a calm and relaxing day, be sure to turn off your phone and disconnect from social media.



Rediscover the joy of ice skating

If you've never experienced the joy of gliding across a frozen lake or simply haven't ice skated in years, consider making time for this activity during the winter months.

Ice skating is a fun and affordable pastime, and since it's a low-impact sport that's gentle on the joints, it can be suitable for people of all ages. What's more, most people can master the basics in less than an hour.

Furthermore, ice skating is great aerobic workout that can improve your balance and cardiovascular endurance, strengthen your abdominal and leg muscles and fine-tune your motor

skills.

If you want to go ice skating this year, there are plenty of places you can lace up your skates, including indoor and outdoor rinks, forest trails and certain lakes, ponds and rivers.





4 snowshoeing tips for beginners

Do you want to try snowshoeing this winter? If so, here are four tips to help you make your first trip a success.

1. GET THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT

In addition to snowshoes, consider getting a pair of poles to help you keep your balance in deep snow and when crossing slopes. Crampons are also helpful for traversing areas with ice and hard-packed snow.

2. DRESS IN LAYERS

To stay comfortable while snowshoeing, wear layers. Start with a warm, moisture-wicking base, such as a merino wool shirt. Then, put on a lightweight and insulated fleece jacket. Finally, dress in an outer layer that will protect you from the elements. A wind and waterproof jacket is ideal. Remember to remove a layer as soon as you start to sweat to avoid becoming cold when you stop moving.

3. PACK THE ESSENTIALS

Even if you're only going on a short excursion, it's important to pack several key items. Your backpack should contain a trail map, snacks, water, sunscreen, a first aid kit, a headlamp, a flashlight, fire starter, a whistle and hand warmers. These items will help keep you safe and warm, especially if you end up in a bad situation.

4. CHOOSE A SUITABLE TRAIL

Getting around on snowshoes is relatively easy on flat terrain. However, it can become more challenging if there are multiple inclines and declines. To avoid unpleasant surprises, find out which trails are recommended for beginners and what snow conditions to expect.

Finally, as with any outdoor activity, don't forget to check the weather forecast before you leave.



QUICK TIP

If you start to slide downhill, you can stop yourself from falling by simply sitting down.

JOB MARKET

Are you cut out for a job in the mining industry?



Are you looking for a job that's physically demanding and offers new and exciting challenges? If so, becoming a miner might be right for you.

DAILY TASKS

Miners conduct drilling and blasting operations to extract ore from underground mines. They also operate large machinery to build tunnels and reinforce walls to facilitate mining procedures. Their daily duties might also include monitoring the job site and performing regular equipment maintenance.

REQUIRED SKILLS

Miners must be in excellent physical shape, have sharp reflexes and be able to work under demanding conditions. They must also have the dexterity to handle various types of equipment and good judgment so they can quickly intervene in dangerous situations.

If you're interested in becoming a miner, sign up for a training program in mineral extraction to launch a career in this exciting profession.

3 benefits of hiring locally

Technology makes it possible for companies to hire employees from all over the world. Though many businesses are looking overseas to expand their workforce, others are going in the opposite direction and focusing their efforts on investing in local talent. Here are three good reasons to hire locally.

1. YOU'LL BOOST THE LOCAL ECONOMY

One of the biggest advantages of hiring locally is that it creates jobs and provides training opportunities that wouldn't otherwise be available. This helps keep money in your community and strengthen the local economy.

2. YOU'LL GROW THE COMPANY

Hiring locally ensures your staff have a deep understanding of the local market, making it easier to bring in new business. In addition, a local hire will likely be more invested in helping your company succeed since it benefits their community.

3. YOU'LL SIMPLIFY THE HIRING PROCESS

If you hire locally, there's a good chance you already know someone who either fits the bill or knows the right candidate. This streamlines the hiring process and ensures you get the right people for the job.

Overall, hiring homegrown talent is good for business and your community too.

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4 tips to get your finances in order for 2022



The first month of the year is the perfect time to get your finances in order. Kick off 2022 by checking the following four tasks off your to-do list.

1. ORGANIZE YOUR DOCUMENTS

Sort your bills, statements and other financial documents. Only keep what you need and shred any unnecessary or outdated papers to create space for new ones.

2. BALANCE YOUR BUDGET

Revisit your budget and make any necessary adjustments to help you stay on track and reach your goals.

3. CHECK YOUR CREDIT

Review your credit report to determine how well you're doing. If necessary, implement changes that'll improve your credit score.

4. UPDATE YOUR INSURANCE POLICIES

Look over your car, life and home insurance policies and update information as needed. You may be able to make modifications to receive additional benefits or reduce your premiums.

For help getting your finances in order, consult a financial adviser.

How to determine if you need a new credit card

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Winter outfit inspiration

5 women's fashion trends for the holidays

Here are a few outfit ideas to help you celebrate the season in style.

1. **Knitwear** is on trend and has evolved beyond mere button-downs and sweater vests. In fact, knitted skirts, short dresses and camisoles were all over the runway this year.
2. **Bodycon jumpsuits** are skin-tight and perfect for fashion-forward ladies who aren't afraid of the cold. Pair a bold print with sky-high stiletto heels if you want to turn heads.
3. **Diamond motif fabrics** are everywhere this year. Look for this chic pattern on elegant and flowing dresses in a variety of colours.
4. **Lilac formal wear** is no longer automatically associated with spring. This year, dare to wear a jacket, dress or skirt in this soft hue to your New Year's Eve shindig.
5. **Faux fur** is an elegant choice for animal-loving fashionistas. You can now create the look you've always wanted, as an increasing number of designers have released realistic faux fur pieces.



To put together an eye-catching outfit, look for these and other stylish items at your local women's clothing stores.

Stylish outfits for men

Here are a few on-trend suggestions to inspire you.

1. **Turtlenecks** are the perfect way to stay warm and be in style this holiday season. A stretchy, colourful sweater is sure to create a festive look.
2. **Polo shirts** can be worn alone or under a fitted jacket to create a smart, sporty and casual look.
3. **Bermuda shorts** were featured on several catwalks at this year's biggest shows. It's no longer a faux pas for men to expose their legs at social events.
4. **Pastel colours** are all the rage and will make you feel like you're on vacation. Consider trading in your classic black suit for something a little more daring this year.
5. **Oversized pants** in neutral colours are taking the men's fashion world by storm. They're both comfortable and easy to accessorize.
6. **Sleeveless vests** can be worn with or without a shirt and come in a variety of contemporary cuts and patterns.
7. **Vertical stripes** are a cheeky nod to baseball and sports uniforms. Opt for thick, vertical stripes in contrasting colours for a bold look.

To create a stylish ensemble, visit your local menswear store. If you're not sure where to start, the knowledgeable sales staff can offer a helping hand.



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Snowmobile Safety

Making snowmobiling safe!

7 tips for safe snowmobiling

Snowmobiling is a popular winter activity in many northern communities around the world. It's a great way to get outside and enjoy beautiful snow-covered landscapes.

This year is the perfect time to highlight the importance of safe snowmobiling practices. Here are a few tips to keep in mind this winter:

1. Never ride a snowmobile under the influence of alcohol or drugs. You should also avoid hitting the trails if you're tired. Doing so can slow your reaction time and affect your ability to make good decisions.
2. Always pack emergency supplies. You should have a cellphone, a flashlight, waterproof matches, a survival blanket, hand warmers, non-perishable foods, a rope, a spare drive belt, flares, a whistle and a first-aid kit.
3. Check the weather forecast, trail conditions and opening hours of the businesses and shelters you plan to visit before you leave.
4. Always ride with someone else, and let your friends and family know where you're headed and your estimated time of return.
5. Avoid crossing large bodies of water where there are no marked trails. It's almost impossible to assess the thickness of ice at a glance.
6. Follow other snowmobilers at a safe distance, keep to the right, stay on marked trails and stop at all road crossings.
7. Avoid stopping in the middle of a trail, on a curve or on a downhill slope to avoid blocking traffic and to ensure you're visible to other riders.

For more safety tips,
visit snowmobile.org.





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Fire Prevention

Five ways to fireproof your home

According to Fire Prevention Canada (FIPRECAN), residential fires account for 73 per cent of all reported fires across the country. It's true: fire hazards lurk in every corner of your home; however, being aware of potential dangers and knowing how to proactively manage those risks can significantly reduce the chances of your home catching fire. Here are five ways to fireproof your house and keep your family safe:

1. **Fireproof furniture.** Apply an environmentally friendly fire retardant spray to your couches, curtains and rugs, and opt for fire-resistant carpeting instead of wool or synthetic fibres that burn more easily. Nowadays, fire-resistant carpets come in a variety of colours and styles to complement your home décor.
2. **De-clutter.** A messy house is breeding ground for fires. Every month, clear your closets, attic and garage from unwanted junk that risks catching fire. Stacks of paper, boxes and linen are especially flammable.
3. **Clean lint traps.** Many residential fires start with household appliances. A clogged lint trap in your dryer, for example, can overheat and catch fire. Check your lint traps regularly for any obstructions.
4. **Don't overload power outlets.** Electrical short circuits are among the leading causes of house fires. Avoid overburdening power bars with too many plugs, and make sure plugs fit tightly in their sockets. A loose fit can cause sparks to fly.
5. **Scrub kitchen burners.** Dried grease and food splatters can ignite at high temperatures. Make sure to regularly give your burners and stovetop a good scrub to avoid any mishaps in the kitchen.



Practice Campfire Safety



- Never build a fire on a windy day.
- Keep campfires small and manageable
- Never leave campfires unattended.
- Keep plenty of water close by.
- Douse fire completely when done



COBALT FIRE DEPT.

Smoke alarms: an integral part of your home fire escape plan

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), an estimated three out of every five home fire fatalities in the United States occur in homes with no smoke detectors or no working smoke alarms. This type of loss can be prevented by correctly installing the right number of smoke detectors in the right areas of your home and ensuring that they're in working order.

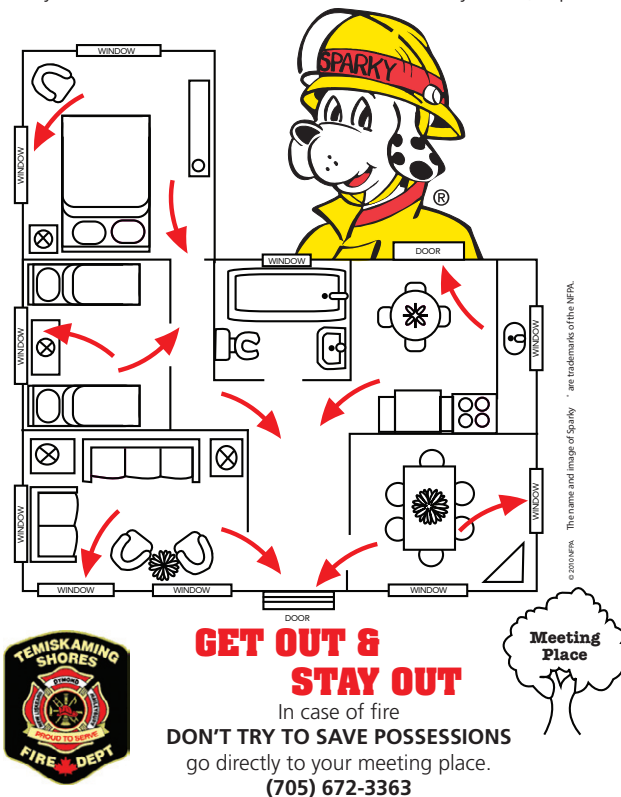
SMOKE ALARM SAFETY TIPS

- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms and areas prone to fire hazards (e.g. around the fireplace and kitchen).
- Depending on the model, mount smoke alarms high up on the wall or ceiling. Remember, smoke rises!
- Don't install smoke alarms near windows, doors or ventilation ducts where drafts could interfere with their sensory capacity.
- Test smoke alarms every month by pressing their "test" button. According to the NFPA, dead batteries account for one-quarter of smoke alarm failures.
- Change batteries twice a year. As a rule of thumb, batteries should be replaced at the same time that you change your clocks for daylight saving time. If your alarm emits a repetitive chirping sound, it means the batteries are running low.
- Automatically replace any smoke detectors that are more than 10 years old. They're way past their prime!
- Hire a professional to interconnect all smoke alarms for increased safety. This way, when one sounds, they all do.
- If you are, or someone you know is, hard of hearing, invest in special alarms that use strobe lights or bed shakers to alert occupants of a potential fire.



KNOW WHERE TO GO.

Develop and practice a home fire escape plan. In case a fire starts, everyone must know **TWO WAYS OUT** of every room, if possible.



COLEMAN Township FIRE DEPT.



Cheesy Turkey Cannelloni

Ingredients

1 tablespoon olive oil
1/2 cup chopped green onion
2 cloves of garlic , minced
2 tablespoon chopped fresh sage
2 cups finely chopped cooked turkey
1 cup cottage cheese (ricotta can be used)
3/4 cups grated Parmesan cheese , divided
4 slices bacon , cooked and crumbled
5 ready-to-cook fresh lasagna sheets , halved lengthwise
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
2 cups homogenized milk
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese , divided

Directions

Step 1

In saucepan, heat oil over medium heat; cook onion, garlic and sage for 2 minutes. Let cool. Transfer to bowl; mix in turkey, cottage cheese, 1/4 cup Parmesan, and bacon. On work surface, divide turkey mixture among lasagna sheets; roll up to make cannelloni. Set aside.

Step 2

Melt butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Once melted, stir in the flour until smooth. Continue stirring as the flour cooks to a light golden colour, not brown, about 7 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high and slowly whisk in milk until thickened by the roux. Bring to a gentle simmer, then reduce heat to medium-low and continue simmering until the flour has softened and not longer tastes gritty, 10 to 20 minutes, then season with salt and nutmeg. Mix in 1/4 cup Parmesan and 1/2 cup mozzarella.

Step 3

Preheat oven to 375°F. Spread 1/4 cup of the sauce over bottom of 11 x 7inch baking dish. Arrange cannelloni over top; spoon remaining sauce over top. Sprinkle remaining Parmesan and mozzarella over top. Add sage leaves on top (optional). Bake until filling is hot and cheese is melted, about 25 minutes.

Note: For a good-looking dish, place the cannelloni under the broiler for a few seconds to brown the cheese. Great way to use up leftover turkey. Other meats can be used.



Comfort Food

Fully Loaded Cauliflower Bake

Sick of mac and cheese or potatoes but still want a hearty side? This is the perfect alternative for you.

Ingredients

2 small heads cauliflower, cut into florets
2 tbsp. butter
3 cloves garlic, minced
3 tbsp. all-purpose flour
2 c. whole milk
2 oz. cream cheese, softened
1 1/2 c. shredded cheddar, divided
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
6 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
1/4 c. sliced green onions

Directions

Step 1

Preheat oven to 350°. In a large pot of salted boiling water, blanch cauliflower, 3 minutes. Drain and squeeze cauliflower of water.

Step 2

Make cheese sauce: In a large skillet, melt butter. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, 1 minute, then add flour and stir until golden, 2 minutes. Add milk and bring to a low simmer, then add cream cheese, whisking until combined. Remove from heat and stir in 1 cup cheddar until melted, then season with salt and pepper.

Step 3

In a 9"-x-13" dish, add drained cauliflower. Pour over cheese sauce and stir until combined. Stir in all but 1 tablespoon each cooked bacon and green onions until combined, then top with remaining cheddar, bacon, and green onions.

Step 4

Bake until cauliflower is tender and cheese is melted, 30 minutes.



Peppermint Patties

Ingredients

¾ cup sweetened condensed milk
1 ½ teaspoons peppermint extract
4 cups confectioners' sugar
3 cups semisweet chocolate chips
2 teaspoons shortening

Directions

Step 1

In a large mixing bowl, combine condensed milk and peppermint extract. Beat in enough confectioners' sugar, a little at a time, to form a stiff dough that is no longer sticky. Form into 1 inch balls, then place on waxed paper and flatten with fingers to form patties. Let patties dry at room temperature two hours, turning once.

Step 2

In a medium saucepan over low heat, melt chocolate with shortening, stirring often. Remove from heat. Dip patties, one at a time, into chocolate by laying them on the tines of a fork and lowering the fork into the liquid. Let cool on waxed paper until set.



Old Fashioned Chocolate Fudge

Ingredients

2 cups white sugar
½ cup cocoa
1 cup milk
4 tablespoons butter
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

Step 1

Grease an 8x8 inch square baking pan. Set aside.

Step 2

Combine sugar, cocoa and milk in a medium saucepan. Stir to blend, then bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Reduce heat and simmer. Do not stir again.

Step 3

Place candy thermometer in pan and cook until temperature reaches 238 degrees F (114 degrees C). If you are not using a thermometer, then cook until a drop of this mixture in a cup of cold water forms a soft ball. Feel the ball with your fingers to make sure it is the right consistency. It should flatten when pressed between your fingers.

Step 4

Remove from heat. Add butter or margarine and vanilla extract. Beat with a wooden spoon until the fudge loses its sheen. Do not under beat.

Step 5

Pour into prepared pan and let cool. Cut into about 60 squares.



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Eating beans out of a can warmed up over an open fire on a frozen lake was a treat.

I did that when I was a child of about 10 with my uncle, Albert St. Jacques.

Mon uncle was an avid outdoorsman and I went with him to fish in both winter and summer months.

I think he saw something in me that gave him a sense I loved the outdoors and he was right. My interest in being in nature began when I was a child, which opened up the door to the temple, so to speak.

The temple is the beautiful woods and waterways of this region.

As a mature woman living in this beautiful North Country, I think of how important nature mentors are to children and how valuable even simple things such as eating beans with cheeks all rosy and red around a campfire really is.

These days I am mostly found in a canoe on a northern lake and occasionally in the back-country on sojourns.

I explore the true depths of my sensory capacity when I am in an old growth forest or paddling slowly around a green shoreline at dawn.

With today's hustle and bustle lifestyles, I think we have forgotten how to use our senses to the best of our abilities.

We ask our supposed smart devices, Alexa what colour is the sky? And Siri- what's your favourite animal?

Really, we are now talking to technology like it is human?

Technology is making our lives increasingly disconnected from nature and that is not a good thing.

When we go to nature we are indeed on voyages of discovery and adventures highlighting

our senses.

People ask me if I am afraid going into the woods by myself, which I often do.

The answer is no. I am more fearful of two legged creatures on a darkened city streetscape. I am very comfortable in my own company and I enjoy getting away from people if truth were told.

It's a crazy world out there.

I am mostly self-taught when it comes to my canoe and trekking skills but I have enjoyed workshops with the queen of the canoe, Becky Mason, and of course learning bush craft skills from British explorer Ray Mears.

Mears came to the Temagami Canoe Festival two years in a row sharing his views of the wilderness.

Let's tip our paddles to the Muirs, Murray and Vicky, who continue to show people how beautiful Wild Temiskaming is.

It sickens me when I hear and see people disrespecting nature by leaving huge amounts of garbage in the backcountry.

And when I see beautiful white pine trees cut down for firewood by folks from the city who know nothing about the majesty of an old growth forest.

For two billion years or more we have lived in nature and nature does require respect.

From travelling by canoe over water I have learned more about myself and been enriched as a person than most anything I have ever done in my life.

I have learned to love the outdoors and when you love something you tend to protect it.

Of course I am thankful Indigenous land-based knowledge is helping to ensure nature is being protected.

I see good things happening in the schools whereby children are learning nature-based skills from Indigenous shamans.

Children need to be shown a love for nature and then our world may indeed be a safer, more protected, less violent and mercurial place to live.



spring pulse poetry festival

HOAR-FROST

During winter's cold reign,
hoar frost brings to my mind pictures
of great exquisite beauty.
When the morning sun rises and all the
earth sparkles,
it is breathtaking.
For every mundane thing is trans-
formed into a thing
of great beauty,
a signpost, an abandoned soda can,
a broken fence
or telephone wires,
take on a new appearance.
Nature's little treasures, like dead
leaves,
pine cones,
bullrushes, tall dried grasses, and rocks
change into
valuable jewels,
just by the harsh touch of the delicate
hoar frost.
It is as though some great artisan has
made a perfect
tapestry of white and silver.
Then worked so it changes shades at
the
setting of a red sun.
Look closely, observe the handiwork
and marvel at
the loveliness of winter.

Ann Margetson



Green living

How to have a green Valentine's Day

If you want to have a green Valentine's Day this year, here are a few simple ways to ensure yours is an eco-friendly celebration.

- Buy locally grown flowers. Many popular Valentine's Day flowers are imported. This means they're transported long distances. Plus, these blooms often require the use of harmful pesticides. Instead, support local growers by purchasing their fresh cut or potted flowers.
- Give an eco-friendly gift. Local businesses have many green items you can offer your sweetheart for Valentine's Day. For example, you could give your partner clothes made of organic materials, an array of locally made bath products, a therapeutic massage or a fun outing in the area.
- Leave your car behind. Walk, bike or use public transportation to get to your destination. After all, cuddling up to your significant other on a bus or train is very romantic. In addition, you don't have to worry about getting stuck in traffic or having one too many drinks.
- Eat local food. Whether you decide to cook a delicious meal at home or go to a restaurant for Valentine's Day, opt for locally grown food. Keep in mind that frozen local products have more nutritional value than fresh products that were transported overseas.



Happy Valentine's Day!





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DNA determines your reaction to caffeine

Caffeine is the most widely consumed psychostimulant in the world, but did you know your genetic code can determine if it has a positive or negative effect on your body? Here's a quick overview.

REACTIONS

Consuming caffeine increases blood pressure and dilates blood vessels. While this can have a feel-good effect on some people, others may experience heart palpitations as a result.

One of the reasons for this difference in reactions is a specific enzyme that's responsible for metabolizing it. Genetic variation determines how fast your kidneys can eliminate caffeine from your body. Consequently, it has practically no effect on people whose bodies can get rid of it quickly, but, it can increase the risk of hypertension in people whose bodies eliminate it slowly.

CONSUMPTION

The amount of coffee you drink may also be linked to your DNA. Scientists have pinpointed two specific genes that are directly associated with how many cups of joe people drink per day. Additionally, these genetic sequences indicate whether someone feels the need to consume caffeine, and if so, how often.



4 tips for embracing winter

Do you hate winter or loathe the cold? If so, here are a few tips for making the most of what the season has to offer.

1. BRING THE LIGHT INDOORS

The short days and long, dark nights of winter can take a toll. This is especially true for people who work indoors with few windows. To help brighten up your space, hang festive lights and garlands and consider investing in a light therapy lamp.

2. GET OUTSIDE

To keep your spirits up in winter, it's important to spend time outdoors. Invest in warm, comfortable clothing, including boots, mittens, a coat, a hat and a scarf, and be sure to bundle up so you can get plenty of sunshine and fresh air.

3. DIVE INTO YOUR HOBBIES

Whether you enjoy reading, painting, knitting, playing board games, baking or decorating, winter is the perfect time to immerse yourself in the indoor hobbies you love.

4. FOCUS ON THE OPPORTUNITIES

Winter has its charms, and it's hard to deny that snow-covered landscapes can be beautiful. In addition, winter activities like skating, skiing, sledding, snowshoeing and snowmobiling are sure to keep you busy. Plus, seasonal festivals, shows and special events can be fun to attend.

If you've tried everything but can't seem to get out of your winter funk, you may be suffering from seasonal depression. In this case, it's best to schedule an appointment with your doctor.

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- intervenantes ou intervenants communautaires,
- diététistes.

La planification de l'intervention communautaire

évolue continuellement pour différentes populations cibles. Le but est d'offrir des activités et de la programmation selon les besoins des communautés.

Les populations cibles sont:

- les enfants de 0 à 12 ans et leurs familles,
- les aînés.



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Book your winter adventures now

By Darlene Wroe

Books, books and more books offer a world of adventures, truths, knowledge and characters to fall in love with through the winter months.

As the snow piles outside the doors and windows, and buries the cars in the driveway, and the Omicron Storm hopefully burns itself out, we can escape into other worlds with different climates.

About 15 years ago, when I took a break from the Temiskaming Speaker and spent a few years in Parry Sound, one of my occupations down there was to work in the Parry Sound Public Library.

I absolutely loved it, and took the greatest pleasure in helping patrons discover new characters, settings, adventures and mysteries to read and enjoy.

I undertook a project to read as many of fiction books as I could. I began with the letter A and read the first page of every book as I began my journey through the library's collection. I was not reading every book of course, as that would be impossible, but I was reading the books that might speak to me, and I was giving every single author a chance. I decided that if they could win my interest with the first page, I would read their book, and I made such amazing discoveries with authors I did not know before, but came to really appreciate and admire.

In the four years that I worked at that library, I made my way through the letter C, and had a significant amount of fun and pleasure immersed in the pages of many authors I had not read before.

After returning to the Speaker, I lost my original intention to complete that project, but I hope to pick it up

again. It was fun, interesting and full of surprises.

I would get caught up with some of the more prolific authors, and M.C. Beaton, who I know is not everyone's cup of tea, had me laughing out loud so frequently through the course of her stories, that I began to search for her books in book stores, just because she was so much fun, and her characters and settings were completely charming.

Peter Abrahams surprised me and impressed me with his very interesting and unusual Pressure Drop. I hadn't realized who he was prior to that decision to open my mind to the authors for the sake of finding out what was in the library. The story was literally like wading into the ocean, with the characters' stories drawing in and weaving together a fascinating mystery which increasingly revealed itself with every next chapter.

A library is an open door, and with the winter now set to roll out before us, and encouragement by authorities to remain at home and lay low, it's time to begin your own adventure.

Also, encourage the kids to do this as well.

Kids right now are having a very hard time. In this era where people are very busy, and trying very hard to deal with our pandemic, those who need us most, still need us most.

Encourage them to read. Read to them. Let them read to you.

Stories can heal, reveal, revitalize and create loved memories of their own.

Love where you live: **SHOP LOCAL!**



Buying local: an important practice now and always

The economic crisis caused by the pandemic made it clear that buying local should be a priority for consumers. After all, the benefits for both you and your community are vast.

SUPPORT THE ECONOMY

When you buy goods from local merchants, your support has a domino effect. This is because it allows the retailers to source more materials from producers in the area, which in turn grows the regional economy. Helping local businesses thrive also ensures they can create and maintain jobs for people in your community, who will then have more money to spend.

PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

If businesses sell products that are made locally using materials sourced from nearby areas, it decreases the amount of time these goods spend on the road or in the air. A reduction in transportation means fewer greenhouse gases are emitted and, often, less packaging is used. For bonus points, walk or cycle to the local shops you frequent.

ENSURE WORKER COMPENSATION

If you buy goods from growers and producers in your region, you can be more confident that the people who made them benefitted from local laws regarding wages and working conditions. By purchasing these products, you're using your power as a consumer to encourage the practices of fairly treating and paying employees.

OBTAIN QUALITY PRODUCTS

From the method in which products are manufactured to the way animals are raised and food is grown, the goods made in your area are subject to strict quality and environmental standards. In addition to ensuring you get top-of-the-line products, you're also letting merchants know that you value quality.

When you realize the difference you can make simply by buying local, it's hard to think of a reason not to. Happy shopping!

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How to maintain your home's curb appeal in winter

Do you want to put your house on the market this winter? If so, you'll need to make sure the cold, dreary weather doesn't detract from your property's curb appeal. Here's how to give potential buyers a great first impression.

- **Paint your front door.** This is a simple way to make your home stand out. A bold colour like blue, red or yellow is sure to pop against a snowy landscape.
- **Update your number and mailbox.** Replace peeling sticker numbers and a rusty mailbox with quality pieces that match the style of your home's exterior.
- **Spruce up your outdoor lighting.** Since the days are short in winter, illuminating your home should be a top priority. The warm glow of light from wall sconces or a porch chandelier will improve your home's appearance and visibility.
- **Add colour to your yard.** Plant evergreens, frost-resistant flowers and shrubs with colourful stems and berries to liven up your winter landscaping and make your property more inviting.
- **Clear a path to the door.** You'll want to ensure your property is safe for buyers to visit. Remember to keep surfaces free of snow and ice, especially before an open house.

For more expert tips on selling your home in winter, consult a local real estate agent.



4 expenses homeowners pay that renters don't

Do you want to become a homeowner? While there are many benefits to owning property, there are also numerous costs. In addition to the price of the home, here are just some of the expenses you'll need to factor into your budget.

1. PROPERTY TAXES

If you own a house or condominium, you're responsible for paying taxes to your local government to fund services such as garbage collection, road maintenance, policing and more.

2. HOMEOWNER'S INSURANCE

Although tenants typically pay for renter's insurance, it's important to be aware that homeowner's insurance is a lot more expensive. This is largely due to the fact that if you own the property, you need to insure the actual structure of the home, not just its contents.

3. MORTGAGE INTEREST

This is an expense you'll have to pay for the duration of your mortgage. The amount required will depend on the time over which your mortgage is amortized, the frequency of your payments and the rate and type of interest.

4. MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS

Gone are the days of simply calling the landlord if an appliance stops working or there's no hot water. From simple electrical repairs to replacing the roof or flood-proofing the basement, all home maintenance tasks are the homeowner's responsibility.

Before you decide to buy a home, it's a good idea to consult a financial adviser to ensure you're making the right choice based on your needs and circumstances.



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Kitchen lighting 101

In a kitchen, it's best to have different types of light fixtures throughout the space that serve various functions. Here's an overview.

AMBIENT LIGHTING

This type of lighting is powerful enough to illuminate the entire room but tends to leave workspaces insufficiently lit. Recessed or can lights are a timeless choice for kitchens, as they have a low profile and work with any decor style. Alternatively, you can opt for a traditional ceiling fixture or track lights, which have individual fixtures that can be easily repositioned to better illuminate the space.

TASK LIGHTING

This type of lighting is used to brighten up specific areas. Pendant lights are great to hang over a kitchen island or sink, for example, and they can contribute to the decor. These lights are best paired with recessed lighting to avoid too much visual clutter. As for countertop prep space, under-cabinet lighting is your best bet since it's easy to install, practically invisible and won't create shadows.

To find the right light fixtures for your kitchen and elsewhere in your home, visit the hardware, home decor and specialty light stores in your area.



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4 must-have features for the ultimate dream kitchen

Are you updating your kitchen? If so, here are four fabulous features you may want to consider installing.

1. POT FILLER

A pot filler is a swing-out faucet on a long, jointed arm that's generally mounted over the stove. Pot fillers are extremely convenient and prevent you from having to lug heavy, water-filled pots from sink to stove.

2. FARMHOUSE SINK

With their white, fireclay basins and tall, stainless-steel faucets, modern farmhouse sinks aren't only stylish; they're also wider and deeper than standard kitchen sinks. This helps make cooking and cleaning a breeze.

3. DOUBLE OVEN

Double ovens provide extra cooking space, so you have the flexibility to whip up multiple dishes simultaneously. They're especially convenient if you do a lot of entertaining.

4. BUILT-IN REFRIGERATOR

If you want your kitchen to have a streamlined and uniform profile, a built-in refrigerator is the way to go. Built-in refrigerators sit flush with the rest of the kitchen cabinetry in the space and offer an upmarket appearance.

If you're designing your dream kitchen, keep in mind, you don't have to do it alone. Consider reaching out to a home designer or general contractor in your area for help.



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