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'He didn't just live. He made a difference'

Tysen Lefebvre celebration
right at home at the CTC

BY NEVIL HUNT

The life and accomplishments of Stittsville's Tysen Lefebvre were celebrated on Jan 20 at the Canadian Tire Centre, as well-wishers nearly filled four lower bowl sections of seats to show support for the Lefebvre family. Many wore Capital City Condors or Ottawa Senators jerseys: Tysen's favourites.

Tysen died on Christmas Day 2025 at the age of 25.

During his 25 years, he raised more than \$1 million for Make-A-Wish Canada, ensuring as many as 100 other kids had a chance to enjoy a personal wish. He was also a major sports fan, played hockey with the Condors, and graduated high school with honours.

He worked as an accessibility ambassador for the Ottawa Senators at the CTC, side by side with other Sens fans.

Tysen was born with Pfeiffer Syndrome Type 2, a genetic condition that affected his skull, facial features and limbs. He spent long periods in the hospital during the first years



Nevil Hunt photo

Linda and Scott Lefebvre share many memories and many thank-yous with a large crowd that gathered at the Canadian Tire Centre on Jan. 20. The celebration of Tysen's life included words from dozens of the people he touched during his 25 years.

PLEASE SEE TYSEN, PAGE 14

Teen aiming for big things

Amelia Derk a natural
at the shooting range

BY NEVIL HUNT

A steady eye and a steady hand have resulted in steady progress on shooting ranges for 16-year-old Amelia Derk.

Derk only started target shooting two years ago and now finds herself preparing to represent Canada at the F-Class World Championships in England this August. She will be one of two female shooters on the national F-Open team and the only team member under the age of 25.

This past summer, she made history by becoming the first female and youngest person ever to win the Ontario F-Class Lt. Governor's

PLEASE SEE RANGE, PAGE 11

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Rough ride in 2026 for bus commuters

Electric buses
expected to help
plug the gaps

BY NEVIL HUNT

OC Transpo bus riders have had a tough time this month as the number of buses available for service each day is not enough to keep up with the original schedules.

In response, OC has changed many schedules to reflect something closer to the service level it can provide.

Stittsville Coun. Glen Gower serves as the chair of the city's transit committee.

"It has not been a good year for OC Transpo bus service so far this year," he said last week, "and I feel for the people who rely on it."

A number of issues popped up at the same time: older diesel buses are too often in need

of repairs, while OC does not have a full contingent of mechanics to make the fixes.

"The number of mechanics is a really big (issue)," Gower said. "We have 180 positions and only 140 filled right now."

He said OC Transpo is putting extra work into an apprenticeship program, has increased incentives to keep existing staff and is recruiting new mechanics. "Those take time," he said of the solutions. "It's a very competitive field and a lot of companies are looking (for mechanics)."

Young people considering career options may want to look at auto mechanics as a field where there is demand.

Gower said many old diesel buses are past the time when they would normally be retired. Demand means each bus must run longer each day, he said, and that can mean



File photo

The opening of the east end light rail could come in April, about the same time OC Transpo receives 110 new electric buses. Transit committee chair Glen Gower said both those events could see bus service across the city improve after a poor start to 2026 for those who travel by bus.

CONTINUED OPPOSITE



GEORGE DAROUZE, MPP
Carleton

Rural Voices Rise: Highlights the 2026 Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference

If you've ever wondered what happens when rural Ontario takes centre stage in Toronto, let me tell you: it's electric! The 2026 Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) conference, held on January 18–20, brought together leaders from every corner of the province, and I was thrilled to be there representing our community.

As Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, I had the opportunity to sit down with municipal leaders from across Ontario to hear directly about the challenges and opportunities facing their regions. These conversations, the heartbeat of rural advocacy, are what drive meaningful change.

I also joined the delegation with the Ministers of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness, and Health for meetings with the City of Ottawa. It was energizing to see Ottawa Councillors David Brown, Catherine Kitts, Clarke Kelly, Isabelle Skalski, Riley Brockington, and Tim Tierney, at ROMA;

local leadership showing up in full force.

Supporting our rural economy has always been one of my top priorities. That's why last year I was so proud to work alongside my colleagues to protect the full snowmobiling trail network for the winter season; a victory for rural recreation and for the businesses that rely on it.

I'm incredibly proud to champion investments that strengthen rural Ontario, including right here in Carleton. ROMA was a chance to highlight these successes, share ideas, and keep pushing for the vibrant future our communities deserve.

A Productive Day Hearing Ottawa's Priorities for Ontario's 2026 Budget

On January 14th, I had the opportunity to take part in the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs meeting in Ottawa, where local stakeholders were welcomed to share their priorities for the upcoming 2026 provincial budget. It was an exceptionally productive day, with 18 organizations offering thoughtful recommendations that reflected the

needs and aspirations of our communities.

The committee, along with the Ministry of Finance, held dozens of consultations across the province to ensure that every region has a voice in shaping the budget. Hearing directly from residents and organizations at the local level is invaluable, and my colleagues and I truly appreciated the insight and expertise shared by each participant.

As we continue preparing for the 2026 Ontario Budget, the government is seeking input from Carleton residents, including workers, families, business owners, and community organizations. Your feedback plays a vital role in shaping the policies and investments that will guide our province in the year ahead.

If you have a few minutes, I encourage you to share your ideas through the online survey or by submitting written feedback at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/budget-consultations>.

The deadline for submissions is Friday, January 30th, 2026 at 4 p.m. EST.

Your voice matters, and I hope you'll take this opportunity to help inform the future direction of our province.

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FROM OPPOSITE PAGE

breakdowns, with repairs that often take longer to complete because the vehicle is already well worn.

The good news?

"A lot is happening behind the scenes," he said, adding that over the coming weeks and months, OC Transpo riders will see improvements.

When the eastern leg of Stage 2 opens to Trim Road, the city plans to keep running buses "in parallel for six to 10 weeks," Gower said, "as a backup in case there are any issues (with the LRT service)."

Sometime this spring,

possibly April, the buses that no longer need to run in parallel in the east could be redistributed elsewhere in the city. At the same time – April – the city expects to receive its long-awaited 110 new electric buses, and they will hit the road to get schedules back in full.

After that, Gower said the next big change will come when the western and southern legs of Stage 2 open, and he estimates that will be about a

year from now. Once trains are running from Moodie Drive and Algonquin College to downtown and points east, riders will no longer have to bus all the way to Tunney's Pasture to board the LRT. "(Bus) runs won't need to go to Tunney's – they'll only go as far as Moodie (in the west) and Algonquin from the south," he said.

Glen Gower

Residents may have noticed three LRT trains in the maintenance yard beside

Highway 417 near Moodie, and Gower said they have been testing the rails as far east as Pinecrest in anticipation of the western Line 1's opening in a year's time.

"When west LRT opens we'll be more flexible with the repurposing of buses," Gower said.

He said the city has learned from the large order of electric buses that has been delayed, and "best practice suggests you should stagger the order for this exact reason."

"We're planning (to purchase future buses) in a more staggered way."

nhunt@ottawavoice.ca

"When west LRT opens we'll be more flexible with the repurposing of buses."

Hospital launches monthly draw

Queensway Carleton raising funds for medical equipment

COMMUNITY VOICE STAFF

The Queensway Carleton Hospital is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year by launching a new 50/50 Monthly Lottery, giving people across Ottawa the chance to win cash while directly supporting local healthcare.

Tickets are now on sale for the first monthly draw on Jan. 30, with a jackpot already nearing \$40,000 and growing, plus guaranteed cash prizes every month.

PRIORITIES

All net proceeds support the hospital's highest-priority medical equipment needs, putting lifesaving tools directly into the hands of care teams at QCH. Visit qch5050.com for details.

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Ottawa police dismantle drug trafficking network

Firearms, large quantities of drugs seized

COMMUNITY VOICE STAFF

The Ottawa police drug unit has dismantled a local drug trafficking and distribution network following a year-long investigation in the region.

On Jan. 12, officers executed eight search warrants at six locations in Ottawa and two locations in Gatineau.

Seven people from the Ottawa and Gatineau area

were arrested, resulting in 61 criminal charges being laid.

Six of the seven individuals were held in custody for show cause hearings, while one individual was released on a promise to appear.

As a result of the search warrants, officers seized:

- Three crime handguns
- Cocaine: 1,894.9 grams
- Crack cocaine: 47.8 grams
- Fentanyl: 470.6 grams
- MDA: 854.5 grams
- Crystal methamphetamine: 335.7 grams
- MDMA: 6.1 grams
- Hydromorphone: 1,130 pills

- Oxycodone: 14 pills
- Pregabalin: 80 pills
- Liquid hydromorphone: 42.5 mL
- Cash: \$185,390
- Two motor vehicles

Three additional individuals remain outstanding, and warrants are being sought for their arrest. These individuals will face a further 11 criminal charges.

The investigation involved the Ontario Provincial Police, Gatineau police, Toronto police and the Canada Border Services Agency.

“Drug trafficking brings real harm into our neighbourhoods—it fuels addiction

and overdoses, increases the presence of illegal firearms, and creates ripple effects for families, schools, and local businesses,” said Ottawa Staff Sgt. Jamie McGarry in a press release following the arrests.

TIPS

Anyone with information related to drug activity is asked to contact the Ottawa police at 613-236-1222, ext. 7300. Anonymous tips can be submitted by contacting Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or crimestoppers.ca.

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File photo

Ottawa police executed eight search warrants on Jan. 12, resulting in gun and drug charges.

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UOttawa adds new teaching clinic

University will train family medicine residents

COMMUNITY VOICE STAFF

The Ontario government is investing up to \$8 million to support planning for 16 new and expanded primary care

teaching clinics across the province to connect 300,000 more people to primary care.

One of the new clinics will be operated by UOttawa in central Ottawa.

The spending is part of the government's \$2.1 billion Primary Care Action Plan.

“These new primary care teaching clinics will further protect our health-care system by training the next generation of primary care clinicians, right here in Ontario,” said Minister of Health Sylvia Jones in a press release.

Each teaching clinic will receive up to \$500,000 to support planning work. In partnership with Ontario's medical schools, these clinics will train family medicine residents in a team-based model alongside other health-care professionals, such as nurse practitioners, physician assistants and registered nurses.

These clinics will offer training that combines direct patient care with hands-on learning in team-based environments, all while providing primary care for an additional 300,000 people. Initial teaching clinics are targeted to open in 2027-28.

This funding is part of the government's broader investment of up to \$300 million – part of the \$2.1 billion Primary Care Action Plan – to build new and expanded community-based primary care teaching clinics in areas with high rates of unattachment.

In addition to funding planning grants for 16 new and expanded teaching clinics, two new primary care teaching clinics at Toronto Metropolitan University will bring the total to 18 clinics.

“This investment in critical infrastructure will strengthen team-based primary care in Ontario,” said Dr. Jane

Philpott, chair of Ontario's Primary Care Action Team. “These new teaching clinics will train the next generation of family physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and other health professionals to work in teams while delivering vital care to patients who currently lack access.”

The call for proposals for new and expanded teams will be used to identify interprofessional care teams that can partner with medical schools to provide team based clinical support for primary care teaching clinics.

Ontario currently has 39 primary care teaching clinics across the province where medical residents train to become family doctors.

Family medicine residents typically spend two or more years training at a teaching clinic before graduation.

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2026 offers new ways to enjoy Ottawa

Theme is
'Celebrate Together'

BY NEVIL HUNT

A year's worth of ideas were unveiled on Jan. 20 at the official launch of Ottawa's 200th anniversary.

In 2026, the city commemorates two centuries since the founding of Bytown.

"Ottawa's 200th anniversary is about telling our story, celebrating together, having some fun, and reflecting on what makes our community so special and unique," said Mayor Mark Sutcliffe during the launch at city hall.

The ByWard Market and the centre of the city will be the focus for many people – and hopefully many tourists – but the suburbs and rural parts of the city will also see a boost as local events get extra funding.

The Ottawa 200 program will distribute \$750,000 across the city, aiming to expand cultural, Indigenous, francophone and youth events. The funding includes:

MAIN STREETS

- \$150,000 to "dress up" main streets, with the funds shared between the city's many business improvement areas.

All Ottawa BIAs are eligible to receive funding to support the purchase of Ottawa 200 promotional materials for BIA-led Ottawa 200 events throughout 2026.

ARTS

- \$300,000 for individual artists and art collectives, an increase from the usual annual spending of \$50,000.

The plan encourages artistic expression that explores the people, stories, lands and legacies that define Ottawa. Artist- and creator-led projects may take the form of



City of Ottawa Archives photo

A horse team trots past the Aberdeen Pavilion during the Central Canada Exhibition, in this photo dated to 1900.

visual arts, performing arts or media arts, including community co-creation and temporary public installations under the Ottawa 200 theme of "Celebrate Together." The application deadline is Feb. 25.

- \$600,000 for the Ottawa Art Gallery to create an "arts corridor" with murals from the ByWard Market to the National Arts Centre.

Sutcliffe said there will also be additional support for existing festivals such as the Ottawa Jazz Festival, Bluesfest, CityFolk and the return of Nuite Blanche

Music fans will have a very Canadian day to celebrate at Bluesfest on July 19, with the Guess Who headlining, and support from fellow Canucks: the Sheepdogs and Elisapie

An original song for Ottawa 200 is being commissioned and will first be played publicly this summer.

LOCAL EVENTS

- \$50,000, to support community events.

Civic events funding is available to Ottawa-based non-profit organizations to implement family friendly events and activities that bring Ottawa residents together to celebrate civic pride and community connection, between

April and December 2026.

This one-time funding program will support the production of community events that are free to the public and encourage events that reflect Ottawa's cultural diversity and history. The application deadline is Feb. 27.

Ottawa Tourism also announced 14 projects, including

- Deux Voix, Une Capitale (March–December) – a monthly music series produced by the Bronson Music Theatre, showcasing the diversity of French music through nine performances

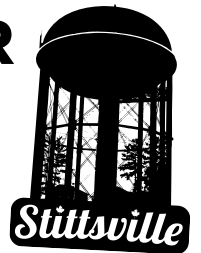
- Saunders Cider TulipFest (begins May 1) – a new three-week spring festival at Saunders Farm, featuring nearly half a million tulips, artistic photo installations, live entertainment, storytelling in English and French and culinary experiences in a six-acre circular orchard anchored by a 30-foot windmill.

- Ottawa 200+: Portraits, Places, and People (begins May 15) – an immersive outdoor gallery led by the Bytown Museum, transforming storefronts and public spaces along Rideau Street and the ByWard Market with large-scale archival images,

PLEASE SEE BYTOWN, PAGE 6



GLEN GOWER
City Councillor
Stittsville (Ward 6)
glengower.ca



Join us for the Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser

Are you a part of a big-hearted business, group or family? We invite you to join team "Councillor Glen & Friends" in support of Lionhearts at the Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser on Saturday, February 28 in Stittsville.

Lionhearts is an incredible Stittsville-based organization focused on food recovery and food security. They provide food to the Stittsville Food Bank, emergency shelters, and organizations across the city that serve low-income residents.

You can register or donate at cnoy.org/location/ottawastittsville

When: Saturday, February 28, 2026, 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Where: Starts and finishes at École Paul-Desmarais (Abbott East @ Robert Grant)

Registration is free! There is no cost to register or minimum fundraising amount. Our goal is to reach at least 200 walkers this year!

Stittsville Community Micro-Grants

Once again this year, we're accepting applications from Stittsville residents for the Stittsville Community Micro-Grant program.

The program provides grants of up to \$200 for qualifying projects that benefit residents and neighbourhoods in Stittsville. Examples of eligible projects include yoga in the park, a craft market, an art display, a workshop, a community movie night, or other activities that bring people together and foster a greater sense of community.

A total of \$2,000 in funding is available, with a maximum of \$200 per applicant. (Amounts may be adjusted depending on the number of applications received.) Funds must be used in the calendar year they are awarded.

Deadline for applications is February 20, 2026, and grants will be awarded on or before March 9, 2026. For more information and to apply for the grant please visit my website.

Outdoor rinks in Stittsville

Skating is a great way to stay active during the winter months, and there are plenty of rinks in Stittsville to lace 'em up and get some practice. This year we now have 17 outdoor rinks in our community, including new outdoor rinks at Mark Yakabuski Park (Fernbank), Silas Bradley Park (Edenwylde), and Bradley-Craig Park (Abbottville Crossing / Bradley Commons). A full list of outdoor rinks is available on my website.

Every rink is maintained 100% by community volunteers – so please say a big "THANK YOU" to your neighbours for their help.

If you'd like to help out with snow clearing, flooding, maintenance or programming at the rinks, please contact my team at glen.gower@ottawa.ca.

Winter helmet safety reminder

If you're heading out to enjoy winter fun like skating, skiing, or sledding, remember to keep safety top of mind for yourself and your loved ones. A properly fitted helmet, used for the sport or activity it is designed for, can help protect your head and reduce the risk of a serious brain injury.

Did you know: A hockey helmet is best for both hockey and skating as it is made for the kind of falls that happen on ice. A ski helmet is designed for impacts most common in downhill skiing, and for use in cold weather.

For information on choosing the right helmet, how to wear a helmet, when it's time for a replacement and more, visit ottawapublichealth.ca

Contact Glen with your questions and feedback.

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BYTOWN FROM PAGE 5

animated projections and bilingual stories celebrating Ottawa's communities.

- Shawarma Fest 2026, a Guinness World Records attempt on June 7 to build a 160-metre shawarma in the ByWard Market, accompanied by 60 vendors and live programming, with all portions donated afterward to local food security partners.

- The Voices of Bytown (June 11–13) – A 360 degree immersive VR experience at the Festival Franco-Ontarien's 51st edition in Major's Hill Park, where four musical voices guide visitors through

two centuries of local history through the voice and traditional music of an Algonquin, a French Canadian canal worker, an Irish immigrant and a contemporary Ottawa performer.

- The Chief Speaks (June–December) – Indigenous Experiences will operate a touring Algonquin cultural installation, featuring a moveable wigwam and a hologram voiced by elder Merv Sarazin sharing stories about Algonquin life past and present at various events across the city.

- Bytown 200 – A Musical Journey through Ottawa's History (July 4–17) – a



The logo that will be seen across Ottawa during events in 2026 to mark the city's 200th anniversary.

five-concert classical music series presented by Music and Beyond, exploring different eras of Ottawa's history through performance, French and English narration, archival imagery and new commissions.

- A Night of Inuit Excellence (July 11 and Nov. 8) – a concert series presented by Qamaniq Records, bringing together Inuit musicians, storytellers and multidisciplinary artists from across the Arctic.

- Happy 200th Birthday,

Ottawa! (Aug. 29) – a Capital Pride drag talent showcase featuring all six Ottawa queens from Canada's Drag Race and a birthday-themed takeover of the festival's main stage.

- O-Town Animated (Sept. 18–Dec. 31) – the Ottawa International Animation Festival will activate a Public Art Trail, featuring three original animated short films created from archival Bytown photos and displayed on Rideau FX Poles for three months. This free downtown

experience will connect cultural sites through animation and digital storytelling in English and French.

HISTORY

"We will honour our history," said Sutcliffe of the year's celebrations.

He listed proud moments in this city's past, including the visit of Terry Fox; the repatriation of the Constitution; Project 4000, when 4,000 refugees from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia were sponsored for settlement in Ottawa; and the welcoming home of soldiers from two world wars.

"We will be telling the story of Ottawa, from the Indigenous peoples who lived here for thousands of years, and the voyageurs, loggers and settlers."

Many city councillors were on hand for the announcement, and Riverside South-Findlay Creek Coun. Steve DesRoches said he's happy to see that Ottawa 200 celebrations will encompass all parts of the city.

"The grant program for

community organizations will be important and I'll be following up with those groups," he said. "This looks very much like a pan-city approach."

One example of the events far from downtown will take place at Saunders Farm in Munster. Angela Grant Saunders said, for the first time, the farm has "almost half-a-million tulips bulbs" in the ground, waiting for spring.

"It will be a nice variety, with waves of colour," she said of the expected blooms.

Interested visitors can already buy tickets, although the dates will be announced later, when it's clear when the tulips will emerge. They will be on display for three weeks.

Saunders Farm also plans an Ottawa 200-themed corn maze for 2026.

"Come get lost at Saunders Farm," Grant Saunders added.

For more information on plans for Ottawa 200, visit ottawa.ca and search for "Ottawa 200" or visit ottawa.tourism.ca

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A New Year, a Better You

A new year has begun! This will find many of us pledging to improve in some way. According to leading wellness experts, our connection to others is essential to a happy life. Consequently, any resolution that strengthens relationships is sure to make you happier. The leading way to strengthen relationships is conversation, which relies heavily on proper hearing abilities. So, if your loved ones have become mumblers, be resolved to improve your relationships through better hearing. Here are some tips to follow.

DO Consult an Audiologist. Much like you would consult a Dentist for a sore tooth or an Optometrist for blurred vision, the Audiologist is the healthcare professional to consult for hearing concerns. Audiologists have a Masters or Doctorate level of education and are regulated by the College of Ontario. They are the most qualified to assess your hearing abilities and discuss what the next step should be. A physician's referral is not required to be assessed by an Audiologist.

DON'T Limit your potential of success.

Because hearing is highly individualized, what works for one, may not work for another. With nearly a dozen Manufacturers offering different products, you deserve the one amongst them that suits you best. To find this most suitable product, look for an independent clinic with no product restrictions because a limitation to one or a few product lines may mean you will unknowingly settle for a product sub-optimal for you.

DO Get a thorough assessment. For a strong foundation, seek a test that not only includes the removal of earwax, testing of eardrums, and identification of hearing levels, but also assesses your speech comprehension with one ear compared to two, and in quiet compared to in noise. Such an assessment will generally require a 1.5-hour consult. Beware of complimentary assessments as they can lead to less thoroughness and more biased outcome reviews.

DON'T Get discouraged.

Learning to hear again takes time. Your brain cannot relearn to hear overnight. Be patient and persistent, especially in those first weeks when your voice sounds awfully strange and the noises seem so intrusive. This is normal. The dust will settle...but only if you wear your new devices consistently. Relationships are important and hearing properly is essential for connecting. Though finding the right solution is not a simple process, dealing with the most qualified health care professional, in the most independent setting and getting a customized solution will maximize your success. Encompassing all the above recommendations is Hearing Freedom, in Manotick. With their support, this could be the year you keep your resolution!



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Building owners can prepare for climate risks

BY DEREK DUNN

Damage from severe weather and climate disasters has risen from hundreds of millions dollars per year, in the last century, to billions annually in recent decades, according to the Insurance Bureau of Canada, with projections rising even further.

Hydro Ottawa suffers significant costs from climate-related damage, with a single extreme weather event – the

May 2022 derecho storm – causing an estimated \$23.8 million in damages. To help delay climate change, Hydro Ottawa launched the Ottawa Retrofit Accelerator, a \$10-million program funded by Natural Resources Canada. The ORA program is designed to empower commercial, institutional and multi-unit residential building owners to achieve deep emissions reductions.

It combines expert advisory

services with significant financial support, including funding for up to 75 per cent of study costs (90 per cent for affordable housing). Funding of up to \$50,000 per building for energy and carbon pathway studies is possible.

GAS EMISSIONS DOWN

Under the ORA, projects are expected to target at least 50 per cent energy savings and an 80 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions over time.

William's Court at Kanata Lakes is a local building in the program. The complex includes five apartment buildings with a clubhouse and shared underground parking, and separate heating and cooling systems serve the complex.

However, every building is different. Some are older, some have more traditional building systems, and each has unique tenant needs.

"Because of that, each retrofit needs its own plan," said Lauren Sinclair, communications director for the building's owner, Killam Home For All. "One building might need a new HVAC system, while another gets more benefit from improving insulation, retro commissioning, or

adding smart energy controls. We have to consider how the building is used day-to-day and the local climate, which can affect the best approach."

Sinclair said the program provided Killam with access to experts, funding and extensive data analysis to help confirm that the company is planning the best upgrades for each building in alignment with its sustainability strategy. "Being part of the program allowed us to compare proven strategies that save energy, find opportunities to reduce maintenance costs, and further improve the tenant experience. It also reduces risk by helping us model and validate our assumptions before making big investments."

PRIORITIES

While the program is not currently available to individual residential homeowners, it is specifically designed to tackle the high-impact emissions of the city's largest structures.

"Buildings are currently the single largest source of emissions in Ottawa," said Susan Fekete, Hydro Ottawa's external affairs manager. "Hydro Ottawa recognizes that while many building owners want to decarbonize, the path is often stalled by a lack of technical



Nevil Hunt photo

William's Court owner Killam Home For All is one of the local landlords who have worked with experts to make the most suitable upgrades to their properties.

expertise or the upfront costs of feasibility studies."

To qualify specifically for Carbon Pathway Study funding, buildings generally must be at least 1,850 square metres in size and located

within Hydro Ottawa's service territory. Owners must be legal entities registered in Canada, including for-profit companies, non-profits,

CONTINUED OPPOSITE

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FROM OPPOSITE PAGE

municipalities and Indigenous organizations. Mixed-use buildings are eligible if more than half of their floor area is dedicated to qualifying uses.

Several property types are excluded, including industrial manufacturing facilities, low-rise residential housing, new construction projects and buildings owned by the federal government.

LONG-TERM GOAL

The goal of a deep retrofit extends beyond immediate energy savings; it is about long-term resilience. Participants can expect lower lifecycle costs, reduced operating expenses and improved comfort for the occupants.

By integrating the upgrades into their long-term asset planning now, building owners are future-proofing their properties against a changing climate while increasing overall property value.

“We are removing the primary barriers that prevent large-scale sustainability projects from moving past the

planning stage,” Fekete said.

The greenhouse gas emissions targets align with the City of Ottawa’s Climate Change Master Plan, which calls for a 96 per cent reduction in community-wide emissions by 2040. Buildings – particularly older commercial, institutional and multi-unit residential properties – account for a significant share of local emissions.

“We are already seeing strong interest across our service territory, including Kanata,” Fekete said. “Our work with Killam REIT and KingSett Capital highlights how multi-unit residential buildings in Kanata North are already leading the way.”

At the centre of the ORA is the Carbon Pathway Study, a comprehensive planning document that lays out a building’s decarbonization strategy over seven years or more.

The program covers up to 75 per cent of the cost of these studies, capped at \$50,000 per building. For affordable housing providers, funding can reach 90 per cent.

Each study includes an

energy audit, detailed emissions analysis, modelling for renewable energy potential and a phased roadmap for replacing major systems as they reach end-of-life – typically organized into horizons from one to more than seven years.

Hydro Ottawa pays the funded portion of the study costs directly to approved consulting firms, reducing upfront financial pressure on owners. Participants are responsible only for their remaining share.

The program’s future may

also be shaped by broader policy shifts. Natural Resources Canada, which funds the ORA, has been moving away from short-term grants toward longer-term “concierge” funding models that span three to 12 years.

At the provincial level, new incentives launching in 2025 and 2026 – including programs aimed at industrial and institutional sectors – are being designed to complement existing retrofit accelerators. Together, these developments suggest

that successful models like Ottawa’s could be renewed, expanded or embedded more permanently into utility strategies.

DEADLINE

For now, Hydro Ottawa is urging building owners to apply while funding remains available. The program runs until March 31, 2027.

Sinclair offered a few words of advice for others considering the program.

“Models and predictions are helpful, but real buildings

often come with unique challenges, best reviewed in person and from speaking with onsite teams and residents that live and work in the buildings every day,” she said. “Planning carefully, communicating with affected groups and staying flexible is key to minimizing disruptions for those who call the building home.”

You can find more details at hydroottawa.com by searching for “Ottawa Retrofit Accelerator.”

derek@ottawavoice.ca

Puzzle Competition Fundraising Event

WHEN: Saturday, March 7, 2026
Pairs at 10 am, Teams at 1:15 pm

WHERE: Upstairs Hall at the Johnny Leroux
Stittsville Community Arena
10 Warner-Colpitts Lane, Stittsville

COST: Pairs - 500-pc Ravensburger, \$40
Team (2-4 ppl) - 750-pc Ravensburger, \$45
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<https://forms.gle/eGhe9hSY7hY9M13T6>



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Nevil Hunt photo

Grayson MacAllister of the Stittsville Rams, in black, keeps Kanata's Victor Swerdfeger away from the Rams net as the two U12B teams met at the Bell Sensplex on Jan. 14.



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Photo provided

Some target shooters can go a lifetime without a ride from their fellow competitors, but Amelia Derk earned a lift at the age of 16, and is now headed to England to represent Canada at the F-Class World Championships.

RANGE FROM PAGE 1

Championship—a long-range rifle competition—in what can only be described as the fastest sport on Earth. Her custom made bullets cover 2,900 feet per second, travelling from muzzle to a target 1,000 yards away in less than one second.

Derk is a Grade 11 at South Carleton High School and works part time at the Stittsville Shooting Ranges on Fernbank Road.

She said the first time she tried shooting was with her dad when she was seven or eight years old. She tried target shooting in earnest in 2024 and entered her first competition later that year.

ACCURACY

Her chosen event requires extreme accuracy. Competitions vary in distance from 300 to 1,000 yards; the sport uses Imperial measurements in most of its standards.

At the Stittsville range, she works where shotguns are

fired in skeet and trap shooting. Derk said it's very different from the target shooting she does, and admits she has

tried it and was "not too good at it."

She's also tried firing handguns and even went with her

dad to try turkey hunting, but that was boring, she said, because a whole day went by without a turkey in sight. She



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8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

8:30–11:30 – FREE Breakfast: pancakes, sausage, scrambled eggs, juice, coffee, tea, + hot chocolate

9:00–Noon – FREE Horse and Sleigh Rides

11:30–1:00 – FREE Hot dogs + hot chocolate outdoors

1:00–2:00 – FREE – Kevin Smith's Family Magic Show

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The Kanata-Hazeldean Lions Club, with financial support from the City of Ottawa, is presenting this event as a service to the community. Let us treat you on Valentine's Day.

also has no interest in shooting animals – or people – and she has no plans to join the military, no matter how good she gets at hitting targets.

The maximum weight of the gun in her chosen class of shooting is 22 pounds, and her rather large firearm was made by her father.

She views the target through a scope that displays crosshairs that allow accurate adjustments: up and down, and side to side to account for the wind.

It's hard to believe something

as small and heavy as a bullet, with a ton of momentum, could be affected by wind, but that's a real issue in the sport.

YOUNG EYES

On a 1,000-yard range, Derk said the target is about five inches wide – "about the size of the palm of your hand. Obviously, young eyes help."

During a competition, she said participants have about five minutes to set up to shoot.

PLEASE SEE FIRE, PAGE 12



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February 20 8pm to 12pm
March 6 8pm to 12pm
March 20 8pm to 12pm
April 10 8pm to 12pm
April 24 8pm to 12pm

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February 8th

Starts at 6:30pm till the game is over. Chili Cook-off with top 2 prizes. After the competition the chili well be sold for \$5.00 with a bun. We are in the Hall upstairs. Free Admission

ENTERTAINMENT DATES

Feb 1: Billy Martin 2pm to 5 pm in the Lounge.

Feb 14: Valentine Dinner & Dance from 5:30 to close. Cost is \$35.00 if you are having dinner, and \$10.00 if you just what to dance. The band **High Maintenance** will be performing from 8:30pm to 11:30pm. Tickets on sale at the bar with limited numbers of tickets for the dinner. Must get tickets by Feb 12th. Tickets for the dance only can be purchased at the door.

Feb 28: Dance featuring the band Derringer. Tickets on sale at the bar for \$20. The door opens at 7pm and the music starts at 8pm.



Photo provided

Amelia Derk takes aim at a target 900 yards distant. At this range, she said the target is about the size of the palm of your hand. She has taken part in competitions between 300 and 1,000 yards.

FIRE FROM PAGE 11

“You can practise a few trigger pulls (without a bullet), and then the order comes to ‘Commence fire!’”

Competitors shoot one bullet at a time from their bolt-action rifles.

“You’ve got 45 seconds between shots and usually have between 10 and 20 shots per relay,” she said, adding that there are usually four relays in a 1,000-yard competition.

Concentration is one of the key skills. Derk said some competitors actually track their own heartbeat and fire when they feel most still. She doesn’t follow that strategy, but does hold her breath for each trigger pull.

Target shooters want the least possible movement as the trigger is pulled, so a clunky, heavy trigger would be a bad idea. An easy, soft engagement is preferred.

“The triggers are mostly feather-weight,” she said of the pull required.

But well before the trigger is pulled, two variables must be considered.

Flags are placed along the sides of the range, allowing shooters to gauge the direction and speed of the wind.

“You read the ripples in the flags,” she said, adding that conditions may change from moment to moment. “Some people wait for the wind or you look at the flags and get a feel for it. Sometimes the flags at different points may point in different directions, so there’s some trial and error.”

The second variable appears in hot weather: the “mirage” caused by heat shimmer rising from the ground where the shooters lay prone.

“It looks like it’s shaking,” she said of the phenomenon that we often see in summer. “You have to take into account how heavy the mirage is.”

And if you manage to assess the wind and the mirage just right, you still need good equipment, coaching and experience.

Derk has the first two elements covered, thanks to her father, but has relatively little experience in a sport that many people enjoy for decades. She said the Stittsville range sees shooters from age seven to one member who is in his 90s.

No matter the age, safety is step one. Derk said her father taught her safe firearms handling, and all those at the range know the rules about pointing even unloaded guns away from other people, loading safely and “basic stuff.”

ENGLAND

When next August arrives, Derk will travel to England as part of the Canadian team. She will compete in the Junior division for those up to age 25.

“I’m really excited for my first opportunity to represent Canada and to compete internationally,” Derk said.

Before then, she’ll attend an award ceremony in February, where she will receive an Ottawa Sports Award as the city’s top shooting athlete of 2025.

There is no national funding for F-Class events and it’s not in the Olympics. There are some small monetary prizes for competition winners, but nothing to offset the cost of travel to represent Canada. Derk is doing fundraising to help pay for the World Championships trip.



AMELIA DERK

She has ongoing bottle drives, home-made goods sales and handmade personalized pen sales. Her next fundraising event will be puzzle competitions – where participants try to complete the same mystery jigsaw puzzle(s) as fast as they can – on Saturday, March 7 in Stittsville.

FUNDRAISING

All the money raised will go towards costs associated with her participation at the F-Class World Championships, not the team or her family accompanying her.

For more information, visit ame-liaderk4class.ca, where you’ll also find photos and videos from Derk’s shooting competitions.

nhunt@ottawavoice.ca

Trade deal could unlock \$3B in new export orders

BRUCE FANJOY
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
FOR CARLETON

Agriculture is at the heart of our local economy and a cornerstone of Canada's prosperity.

From the farms here in Carleton to global markets abroad, the success of our agri-food sector directly supports jobs, families and rural communities. That is why January has been an especially important month for Canadian agriculture, with major developments that will strengthen our farmers' competitiveness and open new opportunities for growth.

On Jan. 16, Prime Minister Carney entered into a preliminary agreement with Chinese President Xi that includes landmark measures to remove

trade barriers and reduce tariffs. This is a major win for the Canadian agri-food industry, as China represents a \$4-billion canola seed market for Canadian producers.

Under the agreement, China is expected to lower its tariffs on Canadian canola seed to a combined rate of 15 per cent by March 1, 2026 – an 85 per cent reduction from the current combined tariff rate.

These measures could unlock nearly \$3 billion in new export orders, supporting Canadian workers and businesses as they gain greater access to the massive Chinese market of 1.4 billion people.

This was not the only positive development for agriculture in January. On Jan. 20, I directly engaged with national agricultural stakeholders to mark the launch of

consultations for the development of the government's next policy framework for agriculture, known as the Next Policy Framework.

The NPF will set out federal, provincial and territorial policy priorities and a shared vision for an economically competitive, innovative and resilient Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector.

I was pleased to represent Carleton at this discussion and to speak with stakeholders from across Canada on the current and emerging challenges and opportunities facing the sector.

I look forward to continuing to work with local agricultural stakeholders as this process moves forward, and to helping build the strongest possible policy framework; one that is well suited

to addressing the realities of today's global environment.

This consultation period for the NPF is now underway and will run through June 30, 2026. This government is committed to working with provinces and territories, Canadians, and all parts of the agriculture and agri-food sector to gather a range of perspectives and ideas.

If you are interested in participating in the consultation process, please follow the attached QT code. You can also contact me directly at bruce.fanjoy@parl.gc.ca to schedule a meeting. I would welcome the opportunity to hear your views and discuss any concerns you may have.

Our agricultural sector is facing both significant opportunities and real challenges, from global trade pressures to

climate resilience and labour needs. By opening new markets abroad while listening closely to producers and processors here at home, we can ensure Canadian agriculture remains strong for generations to come.

I am committed to making sure the voices of Carleton's agricultural community are heard as this work continues, and I encourage everyone

with an interest in the future of our agricultural sector to take part in the consultation process and share their perspective.



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HARD

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Nevil Hunt photos

Music was part of the celebration, and included Tysen's nephew Darren, second from left, who played his ukulele.

TYSEN FROM PAGE 1

of his life and went through many surgeries.

His funeral was held on Dec. 31, with the celebration of life at the CTC planned to allow the wider community to say farewell. There was no shortage of people keen to share their stories about Tysen, with more than 20 taking to the podium during the celebration.

Some of their words are included here:

Jim Perkins, who acted as the evening's emcee, said many would likely shed tears during the celebration.

"We're going to go through a range of emotions here, and that's alright," he said.

Stittsville Coun. Glen Gower listed some of the awards Tysen earned through his fundraising Mission to a Million for Make-A-Wish, comparing his efforts to other Ottawa philanthropists: Max Keeping and Dave Smith.

"I put Tysen among the best fundraisers and those who cared about people in our community," Gower said.

Former Ottawa mayor Jim

Watson said he met Tysen many times.

"He was relentless. He got the job done," Watson said. "I was worried he would run for mayor."

Taylor Hittner of Make-A-Wish called Tysen "one of the most impactful champions Make-A-Wish has ever known," and said the spinoff

"Our students looked up to him."

Rick Ronberg

effects of each wish granted touches many people beyond the recipient.

Dr. Johnna MacCormick of CHEO performed some of the surgeries Tysen required to ease the effects of Pfeiffer Syndrome, and said there were times when his life was in danger.

"He was a young man with

an immense heart, who could always lift up others," she said.

Rick Ronberg, one of Tysen's teachers at Sacred Heart High School, said he was always welcomed into the classroom by his peers.

"Our students looked up to him," Ronberg said.

He added that Tysen always liked to talk about sports: football, hockey and about his own team, the Condors.

"He was a proud Condor," he said. "I was amazed to see him flying around the ice."

Two speakers were children when they received wishes thanks to Tysen's Mission to a Million. Chloe Lawson, a Condors teammate, shared her memories.

"He sent me to Hollywood," she said. "He always cared about everyone. He helped kids like me."

Ian Mendes, the Senators vice-president of communications, said he was always amazed at Tysen's professional interactions with the public while working at the CTC.

CONTINUED OPPOSITE

UPCOMING ISSUES

Publication Date

Advertising deadline

Jan. 29

Jan. 22

Feb. 12

Feb. 5

Feb. 26

Feb. 19

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PROUDLY CANADIAN - PROUDLY CANADIAN

FROM OPPOSITE PAGE

"You made our community a brighter place," Mendes said.

...

Tysen's dad, Scott Lefebvre, had thanks for all those who met Tysen during his lifetime:

- the doctors: "for 25 years."
- family and friends: "Tysen learned from all of you."
- "all the fantastic and caring teachers, principals and EA's. Because of you, he graduated with honours."

- "all those who took part in Mission to a Million."

- every Wish child and family. You gave Tysen a deep sense of accomplishment."

- "the Condors coaches, volunteers and players. Tysen took great, great pride in being a team member."

- Scott said his son called his position as accessibility ambassador in guest services at the Canadian Tire Centre his "dream job."

"Thank you to the Senators for that opportunity."

- "and to my wife, the best mother Tysen could have

had."

- "and a final thank you to Tysen. He was so much more than our son ... he was our inspiration and our everything. We'll love you forever son."

...

His mother, Linda, said, "We miss him beyond words."

"He didn't just live. He made a difference," she said, and asked everyone to take care of the people close to them.

"Make some time in your life for those you love," Linda said.

The family has asked the community to consider donating on Tysen's behalf to his favourite causes: Make-A-Wish Canada, the Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind, or the Capital City Condors.

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Local Star Wars fans, who have been part of Make-A-Wish's efforts in Ottawa, were on hand for Tysen's celebration.



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