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January 2, 2024 Issue #1 - Volume 28

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Honouring The Memory of Mrs. Claus – Wrapping Up Joy In The Name Of Agnes Michon



Photo - Agnes Michon photo courtesy of the Michon Family. Family group photo and all the toys gathered in 2023 courtesy of Espanola Lions Club.

By *Rosalind Russell* - the Espanola Lions Club wrapped up their Agnes Michon Toy Drive at the Espanola Legion, for another year and delivered toys to children throughout the North Shore Corridor. Agnes would be so proud.

Continued on page two...

CANADIAN TIRE ESPANOLA

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Northern Credit Union Donates To Various Community Causes



Photo - The Espanola Helping Hand Food Bank benefited from the Northern Credit Union fundraising campaign, receiving \$3,000 in financial support. Photo provided by NCU.

Northern Credit Union's Christmas campaign contributed a total of \$78,000 in monetary and in-kind

donations to various charities and organizations this week, including Espanola.

Spokesperson Liisa Woolley says Northern Credit Union's campaign involved all its 24 branches, each selecting one to two local charities for support.

The Espanola branch donated \$3,000 to the Espanola Helping Hand Food Bank.

Forty-two thousand dollars is going to food banks, \$20,000 to marginalized groups, \$4,500 to community & youth development, and \$11,500 to support healthcare initiatives and mental health services.

Espanola High School Student Up For Loran Scholars Foundation Award



Photo - Punya Pandey, a student at Espanola High School, is one of 250 exceptional students from across Canada who has made it to the semi-finalist stage for selection of a prestigious Loran Award. The winners will be announced in late February. Photo provided

A student at Espanola High School is anxious for the new year to arrive with news that may change his life.

Punya Pandey, a Grade 12 student, has made the semi-finalist list for a Loran Award. According to the release, the scholarship provides more than \$100,000 over four years, summer jobs, mentorship, and a focus on becoming a leader of tomorrow.

Pandey says getting the scholarship would not only cover the costs of his post-secondary education, it would also provide a network and

open the door to future career possibilities.

The Loran Scholars Foundation is now reviewing the semi-finalists and will make their final decisions in late February. The foundation receives thousands of applications, short-lists to around 250 applicants, but only 36 youth will be chosen for the premier award.

Those students who win will be able to apply it at one of 25 Canadian partner universities.

According to the foundation website, in addition to the Loran Award, it also grants Finalist Awards, Provincial and Territorial Awards, honours citations and semi-finalist certificates. There are up to 54 finalist awards per year of \$6,000 each and up to 70 provincial and territorial awards of \$2,000 each. Honour citations are issued to students who distinguish themselves at semi-final interviews but are not offered any of the financial awards, and semi-finalist certificates are issued to students who are selected for the semi-final interview, who don't fall under any of the previous categories.

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Continued from front page

Honouring The Memory of Mrs. Claus – Wrapping Up Joy In The Name Of Agnes Michon

Agnes was better known as Mrs. Claus to the people of the area. Living in Baldwin Township for decades, she lived and breathed Christmas year-round!

I interviewed her many times when I was writing for a newspaper and it almost became a tradition to visit with her every year just before Christmas to see the house. Every bit of room in her home shared the Christmas message from Santas to creches, snowmen to snow mice, Christmas carol music to the chime of the bells, and so much more. The Christmas Village sprawled across several rooms. The candles twinkling lights, and Christmas music, melted into your skin infusing you with the Christmas Cheer of the season. It was infectious.

And her laugh, she was always laughing. Her face would light up when she would show me her gifts and toys to go to the Lions Club Drive that literally were stacked to the ceiling. She would take an old doll, repaint it, make its clothes, even its new wig if it needed it, and wrap it up in love for another little girl to fall in love with. If she had to repair a toy truck or something mechanical, she told me she had secret elves who would help with the repairs. Once returned to her, they would get a bright layer of paint and under the tree they went.

I wish I had access to all the photos I took over the years. They would now be on microfiche at the Espanola Public Library. Her home and the gifts were absolutely astounding! The Lions would have to send a contingent of

vehicles to her home to pick them all up for wrapping and delivery in time for Christmas. They literally would be lined up outside her home for pick up.

And after Christmas, her holiday spirit continued. For many years, 26 in all, she would spend the rest of the year collecting, refurbishing, repairing, and getting toys ready for the toy drive. It not only filled her days, but it also ensured she always had friends and family stopping in. She would put them to work painting this, repairing that, and attaching a bow. Agnes was an avid quilter and her needlework was amazing.

I still have a doll she gifted me about 15 years ago. It is in my bedroom tucked away. It plays music and every once in a while I give it a twirl and simply listen and reminisce.

As a journalist for the last 45 years, I have met and interviewed many people. Agnes was always a highlight, a wonderful way to cap off another year of generosity, sharing, and caring.

I miss Agnes, I miss our annual Christmas tea at her home, I miss her infectious smile and her tinkling laugh, I miss her exuberance and her love of the season. I am not the only one. She gained her wings in 2021 at 82 years of age.

But, her spirit lives on now as the Agnes Michon Toy Drive, and the laughter and joy of her love for Christmas is seen in the eyes of the children who still get that wonderful gift under the tree.

Food Bank Donation

By Grant Lewis - Many thanks to the residents at Assisted Living for the generous donation to the Espanola Helping Hand Food Bank.....over \$1,500.....Great Job.



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By Dean Riggs - The Maintenance Staff of the Espanola Hospital realized the need for some Holiday greetings for all residents. So they reached out to area schools to make Christmas Cards and over 400 cards were created and delivered to the hospital. With this generosity all residents including Long Term Care, the Queensway place, Acute care and the Apartments received cards made by students from grade 1 to grade 12. The Hospital is so appreciative to all staff and students who have made this such a huge success again this year. It will make a tremendous difference in the lives of people who may not see a lot of family during the Holiday Season.

OBITUARY



Elizabeth Boyne - It comes with great sadness we announce the passing of our beautiful Mum Elizabeth. She passed away peacefully Dec 23,2023 at the age of 85 with her family and special caregivers by her side. We are so thankful for the care and compassion our Mum was given by all the staff in the Hillcrest Neighbourhood at St Joesphs Villa where she lived for the last 2 1/2 years. She will be greatly missed by her children Derek (Sherry), Ian (Arduith),Janice(Blair),Jean (Roger) and by her grandchildren Robin, Devon, Danah(Ryan), Cameron(Josee),Dyer (Roxanne),Alex (Nicole)and Keegan(Isabela).

Mum was blessed with 4 great grandchildren Dawson(her sunshine angel), Logan, Karsyn and little Peanut. Besides her family Mum loved her tea, watching hockey and listening to Johnny Reid. In honour of her wishes there will be no service. Our family will have a private ceremony at a later date. Donations can be made in her honour to St Joseph's Villa or the Alzheimer's Society. Arrangements by **BOURCIER FUNERAL HOME Ltd**, Espanola.

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COMMUNITY NOTES

Webbwood Eagles Potluck Dinner – Saturday, January 6, starting at 4:30 p.m. Bring a dish to share. Everyone welcome.

Northshore Pins & Needles Quilting & Stitchery Guild
- Next meeting, Wednesday, January 24, 2024 at 7:00 pm at the Espanola Royal Canadian Legion. New members welcome.

St. Andrew's Church Massey - Services at 10:30 every Sunday. All are welcome.

North Shore Seventh-day-Adventist Church - Saturdays Sabbath School 10:00 a.m., Divine Service 11:00 a.m., "Discovery Hour" 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. ages 7 up. Discover new stories activities and crafts ...10 Menard Cres. Walford/Spanish

Do you have a note for the community? We invite not-for-profit organizations to submit information on their upcoming events in writing no later than **Wednesdays at 3:00 p.m. 25 word limit.**
E-mail: around@aroundandabout.ca

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NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS & OTHER CLAIMANTS – Notice is herby given, that all Creditors & other claimants having demands or claim against the estate of Thelma Abitong who died on the 24th of October 2023 are required to produce on of before January 24, 2024: to E. Bob, P.O. Box 165 MASSEY, Ontario P0P 1P0, their names and full address, full particulars and evidence of their claims. 1/2



BIRTHDAY MONTH – PAID IN FORWARD ... Wrapped in Warmth and Gifts of Necessity WAS A HUGE SUCCESS... hey, this is Roz, during the month of November, I asked for donations of gift bags or boxes filled with necessities, warm blankets and winter wear. WOW, thanks so much to so many for making this one of the most successful years ever. One lady even knit 66 hats marking my birthday! All items have been distributed to shelters and depots to help those who need it most. THANK YOU and All the Best of the Christmas Season to everyone!



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