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Community Groups Tour Former Pulp And Paper Mill - Discuss Diversification



By Rosalind Russell - BMI Group hosted a community workshop at for former Domtar pulp and paper mill in Espanola focused on the future of the former pulp and paper mill site and the broader LaCloche regional economy. The company brought together several local community groups, including the Legion and the Elks, as well as hard services, such as the hospital to share their vision of the mill, and to get ideas from the community leaders on future development. According to the town of Espanola, the Bioveld North initiative represents an opportunity to reimagine the site as a driver of renewed economic activity—building on the region’s forestry strengths while supporting innovation, sustainability, and lower-carbon industrial uses.

The team from KLB Consulting currently working on the Economic

Continued on page two...

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Espanola Council Passes Municipal Budget – 4.6% Increase Over 2025

By Rosalind Russell - Espanola council passed the 2026 municipal budget last night with an overall increase of 4.6% over last year's budget.

The brunt of the increase, 4.18%, is outside of council's control and includes policing, social services, insurance and utilities.

The remainder, 0.42% stems from municipal operations within the town itself.

For Espanola property owners, the average household will be paying an average of around \$145 more in taxes in 2026.

The estimates of all sums required for the year 2026 totals \$19,850,283.

Mayor Doug Gervais extended thanks on behalf of council to all the department heads for their work noting many of the increased costs were out of their control and that the staff did a good job in bringing in the budget at a manageable level.

The budget includes donations to external organizations as approved for the following:

\$20,000 for Doctor Recruitment, \$14,000 for the July 1st Celebrations (if required) \$5,000 for the Fire Association, \$4,000 for General Donations (at Council's discretion), in lieu donation for facility use, Remembrance Day - \$1,070 for the Grade 12 Graduation awards, another donation to a maximum of \$4,000 as discretionary item, \$2,800 to the Black Creek Sno-Trails and \$2,000 towards Senior Citizens initiatives.

Capital planning includes several projects related to Public Works, water and sewer and the operations of the plants, as well as recreation totalling \$1.8 million.

A major project next year will be Phase Five of Highway Six under the Connecting Link Program, from Kei Will Drive to Foucault Drive in the town's south end.

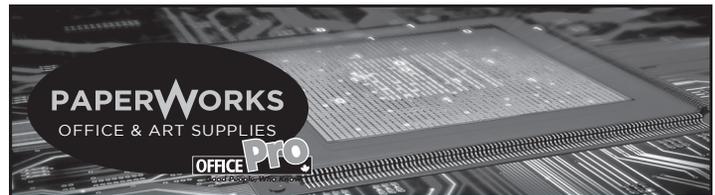
On a side note, council also passed a bylaw for a 0% increase in remuneration for themselves for the second year in a row.

Christmas Choir



By Donna Mitchell - On Saturday December 13th, under the leadership of Tanya Colquhoun, this choir went to Golden Birches Terrace nursing home in Blind River and sang Christmas carols to the grateful residents. In the afternoon, we presented a cantata 'The Tapestry of Light'

at Immanuel Baptist church also in Blind River. Then on Sunday afternoon December 14th, the cantata was presented at the Immaculate Conception Parish in Massey. We were happy to bring some musical cheer to the real reason we celebrate Christmas which is the birth of Jesus. Photo provided



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Continued from front page...

Community Groups Tour Former Pulp And Paper Mill - Discuss Diversification

Diversification Strategy were also on site to provide an update on the project and some of their preliminary findings to help guide the talks focused on long-term employment opportunities, strengthening regional forestry and fibre supply

chains, while supporting future-focused industries aligned with shared values of sustainability, reconciliation, and economic resilience across the region.

Photo provided by the Town of Espanola

Little Explorers On The Move!

In their Physical Education class, the Kindergarten students at École catholique La Renaissance (Espanola) have fun while developing their motor skills. Each activity is an opportunity to move, play, and discover... one small step at a time, with a big smile! Thanks to the guidance of a dedicated school staff, students can grow, learn, and thrive with confidence in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Discover the world of Kindergarten at École catholique La Renaissance during registration week from January 19 to 23, 2026. Parents can learn more by calling 705-869-3530 or email: ren@nouvelon.ca.



Northlander Back On Track ... For 2026



By Rosalind Russell - Quarter to six in the morning and 11:30 at night. That's when the new Northlander passenger train service will arrive in North Bay, once it is launched. The proposed service schedule is posted on the Northlander page of the ONTC's

website. The southbound train will leave Timmins just after midnight and pull into Union Station in Toronto just before noon. Heading northbound, passengers leave Toronto at 6:30 in the evening and reach Timmins just after five in the morning. Ontario Northland says the passenger rail service will operate four to seven days a week, based on seasonal travel demands. In September, officials said they expect to receive the first trainsets in early 2026, with 'many months' of testing and commissioning to then take place. With files by Richard Coffin

Photo – Vista Staff

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COMMUNITY NOTES

Massey Legion Br 432 New Years Eve Social - Fish Dinner, 5:00 – 9:00 p.m. Take out Eat In. Bar Open

Massey Area Museum Bingos - at Massey Arena. New start time, Mondays, 6:45 p.m. Dates: (Jan 5 is canceled.) will resume again Feb 2, Mar 2, April 13.

North Shore Quilting & Stitchery Guild: Next Meeting – Wednesday, January 28, 2026 at 7:00 pm at the Espanola Royal Canadian Legion. New members welcome.

Webbwood Eagles #4269 Spaghetti Dinner - Saturday Feb. 7, Mar. 7, April 11, May 2, June 6. Eat in or Takeout 4:30-6:00pm. Spaghetti, salad, garlic bread & desert.

Soup & Sandwich Lunch - at the United Church of Espanola on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.. Everyone welcome.

Massey Legion Wing Nights - Thursdays 5:00 – 9:00 p.m. Wings, deep fried pickle spears, mushroom caps, onion rings, Cheese sticks

Meat roll-offs - every Saturday at the Espanola Legion. 2:30 p.m. everyone is welcome.

Al-Anon - Not everyone Trapped by Alcohol is an Alcoholic. Family and Friends are suffering too. Meetings: Tuesdays at 7, St George’s Anglican Church. 213 Tudhope St, Espanola.

Free Community luncheon - at the light house 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month. 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Everyone Welcome.

The Remnant Call Church – Service: Sunday 10:30 a.m., Espanola Elks Hall; All welcome. Non denominational.

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

OBITUARY



MAIN, Caylin John - Of Espanola passed away suddenly in Sudbury on December 19th, 2025 at the age of 36. Dear son of Sylvie (nee Presseau) & the Late Stephen Main. Loving brother to Carol-Lynn (Trevor) of Espanola. Cherished uncle to Stevie & Blaike. Will be remembered by friend Jen Shepherd. Caylin was kind-hearted, soft-spoken and was always willing to lend a hand whenever needed. He enjoyed gardening, and most of all, playing the piano. He was a very talented pianist and took great pride in his music. Caylin will be

remembered and missed by many aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, and his beloved cat, Ruby. Funeral mass will take place at the St-Jude Parish, Espanola, on Friday, January 9th, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., followed by a luncheon in the church hall. Interment of ashes at a later date. Arrangements by BOURCIER FUNERAL HOME, Ltd., Espanola.



WRIGHT – Beverly. It is with profound sadness that the family of Beverly James Wright announces his passing, after a short illness, on December 17, 2025, in Espanola, at the age of 76. Born in Gore Bay on January 24, 1949, Bev was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. He loved to golf, hunt and fish and was well known for his willingness to help others (and his green thumb). Bev leaves behind his loving wife, of 45 years, Claudette Wright (née Dufour). He was born and raised in Gore Bay with his brother Alvin “Sandy” Wright (predeceased) and his parents Alvin Wright

(predeceased) and Katherine “Katie” Wright (McCannell) (predeceased). Bev worked with the MNR for many years before spending the remainder of his career at Domtar. He retired in 2006. He is survived by two sons and three daughters: James “Jay” (Ronda) of St.Catharines, Amanda (Zac) of Dowling, Kellie (Doug) of Espanola, Molly (Jody) of Dowling, Sean of Evansville. Also surviving him are his seven grandchildren: Sarah (Aya), Adam (Emily), Jordan, Jack, Riley, Jax, and Charlotte “Charlie”, along with many nieces, nephews, and good friends. After a very short time in hospital tended by his daughters. Bev past away peacefully with his granddaughter by his side. A celebration of life will be held at a future date to be determined. Donations can be made to the Pancreatic Cancer Canada. Also a big thank you to the doctors, nurses, and staff of Espanola Hospital. - Where the staff took great care of Bev in his final days. Arrangements by BOURCIER FUNERAL HOME Ltd, Espanola.



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