

WINTER  
2023  
ISSUE 45

# Spirit Of SCHUMACHER



A Community Newsletter to Connect the  
Past, Present and Future

CELEBRATING 111 YEARS

MARCH 1, 1912 TO 2023

SCHUMACHER, ONTARIO

## CHRISTMAS SPIRIT



Santa and his reindeer at the McIntyre Headframe. (Photo courtesy of Richard Lamoureux Creative Photography.)

Schumacher residents were left dreaming of a White Christmas this year. Although significant snow fell in early December, an uncharacteristic warm spell mid-month left the streets bare and exposed large patches of green grass. Temperatures on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day ranged from a low of 1°C to a high of 4°C with no windchill. An ice storm was predicted for Boxing Day, but a significant storm did not develop. New Year's Eve was colder, and there have been flurries, but avid skiers and snowmobilers are fervently wishing for more snow.

Weather aside, Schumacher Christmas traditions took place as usual. The Schumacher Lions Club hosted the annual Schumacher Seniors' Christmas Supper on Wednesday, December 13. Lions Club members prepared the meal and served 94 guests at the Schumacher Lions Den in the McIntyre Community Building. (Continued on page 2.)

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# SEASONAL SPOTLIGHT

(Continued from page 1) Much of the food for the Seniors' Supper was donated by local grocery stores, including the contribution of eleven turkeys from Garrett's No Frills. Live entertainment was provided by the Schumacher Public School Choir and professional singer Leslie-Anne Dupuis. There were draws for festive Christmas baskets, and Santa dropped by with Merry Christmas wishes.

Speaking of the Schumacher Lions Club, the group raised over \$93 000 for the 2023 Stan Fowler Christmas Fund. More than \$13 000 was raised through the club's participation in the Tim Hortons Holiday Smile Cookie campaign. Additionally, a record amount of over \$80 000 was raised on December 7 during the 12-hour Feeding Families Radiothon held in conjunction with Country 93.1 FM and Kinz and Klomp. The funds raised were used to purchase 472 food vouchers (valued at \$150 each) that the Lions delivered to local families in need on December 16.

Festive displays, vendor markets, holiday gatherings, and the annual Croatian Society Christmas Dinner were also on the agenda. And, of course, the gift-giving tradition started by FW Schumacher back in 1916 continued. Our community's namesake set up a trust to ensure that his yuletide generosity would continue to be felt by local children long after his passing. Nowadays the Schumacher Volunteer Fire Department purchases, wraps and delivers gifts to each elementary-school-aged child living in the community. This year's event took place on Sunday, December 17.



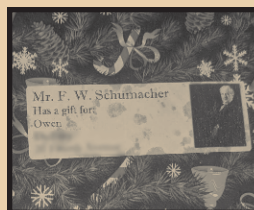
Franklin wanted to be walking in a winter wonderland on Christmas Eve; but he had to settle for a few snow patches on the grassy field behind École catholique Sacré-Coeur in Timmins. (Photo courtesy of Shannon Johns.)



Lions Bob Dufour and Sue Martel take pledges during the Schumacher Lions' annual Feeding Families Radiothon on December 7, 2023. A record amount of \$80 222 was pledged. (Photo from Lions District A5 Facebook page.)



Just in case the smile doesn't give it away, Owen Duffney was thrilled with his 2023 Mr. Schumacher Gift delivered by the SVFD. (Photos submitted by Kristen Dickey.)



The Schumacher Lions received \$13 649.31 from the Tim Hortons Holiday Smile Cookie campaign. From left are Stan Fowler Christmas Fund Chair Lion John McCauley, Lion President Danny Ansara, Tim Hortons franchise owner Linda Venerri, and managers Neil Chalmers, Sarah Boudreau and Faith Spalding. (Photo from Lions District A5 Facebook page.)



# SPOOKY SPIRIT

Here are the winners of the 2023 SACHA Halloween Contest. Thanks to all who entered including our honourable mentions Curling Pumpkin (Steve Meunier), Costumes (Shannon Meskis and Jennifer Jane) and Scary Dessert (Dawn Charette). We look forward to offering more contests in the future.



Best Baby Costume  
Benjamin "Hot Dog" Mann



Best Jack o'Lanterns  
The Dube Family



Best Costume  
"Wednesday" Charette & Cousin It



Best Group Costume  
The Meskis Family of Butterflies



Best Yard Display  
Angie Kyle and Family



Best Pet Costume  
Meatloaf Disguised as a Cow



# THE STORY OF A STATUE

As mentioned in the last issue of the SOS, the statue of Father Les Costello, which was on display at the McIntyre Arena, was broken this past spring. The plan to replace the statue is underway (more on that later), but the story of behind this art piece deserves sharing.

For those new to Schumacher history, Leslie John Thomas Costello was born February 16, 1928 in South Porcupine, ON. A talented hockey player, by age 16 Les earned a spot with Toronto's St. Michael's Majors and helped them win two Memorial Cups (44-45, 46-47) before being drafted by the Toronto Maple Leafs. Les spent his first pro season (47-48) with the Pittsburgh Hornets of the AHL before being called up for the Leafs playoff run. Thanks in part to the contributions of Les and another local hockey legend, Bill Barilko, the Leafs brought the Stanley Cup home that year. Les played in five playoff games, scoring two goals and tallying two assists. He spent the next two seasons in Pittsburgh, racking up 15 regular season games with the Leafs in 48-49 and one playoff game with them in 49-50. At the end of that season, Les upped and left hockey to enroll in St. Augustine Seminary in Toronto. To this day, he remains the only NHLer to give up hockey to answer a higher calling to become a Roman Catholic priest.

Father Les was ordained in South Porcupine at St. Joachim Parish in 1957. He served in South Porcupine, Kirkland Lake, Rouyn, Cobalt and Timmins before being posted to St. Alphonsus Parish in Schumacher in 1979. He served St. Alphonsus parishioners and the

people of Schumacher and area until his death. Father Les was loved by his parishioners and the wider community. He had a vibrant personality, an irreverent penchant for jokes, and a reputation for keeping Mass short. His mission was to provide for the needy and vulnerable.

To raise funds for various charity groups, he cofounded The Flying Fathers hockey team with Father Brian McKee in 1963. Father Les was the seemingly unstoppable heart of the Flying Fathers. He lost seven toes to frostbite after getting lost in the Timmins bush overnight in 1979, but he retaught himself to skate and was soon back on the ice. His death on December 10, 2002 at age 74 was due to complications stemming from a head injury sustained during a Flying Fathers game. At that time, the holy hockey squad had raised over \$4 million for charity and travelled provincially, nationally, and internationally. The \$70 000 raised during Father Les' final tour with the team was split between the local DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program and the local minor hockey association. Fittingly, his Catholic Funeral Mass was celebrated at the McIntyre Arena with 2200 people in attendance.

That short biography barely scratches the surface, but it's time to shift the focus to the Father Les statue. Timmins native Paul Harrison (a former Leafs goaltender who joined the OPP after retiring from pro hockey) was the DARE program lead when Father Les died. He wanted to commemorate Father Les with a sculpture and he knew just who to contact: another former Leaf, Gary Aldcorn. When Gary



retired from pro hockey in the 1960s, he relocated to the Bahamas where he lived on a boat and took up the art of creating resin statues, specializing in sports sculptures. Gary has created more than 100 different statues over the years, including likenesses of Michael Jordan, Wayne Gretzky, Sandra Schmirler, and Pope John Paul II. Each sculpture is hand-poured, polished and finished from a mould, a process that takes several months.

When Paul reached out, Gary was on board with creating the memorial sculpture for Father Les. The Toronto Maple Leafs Alumni Association (founded in 1995 by Red Kelly, Timmins native Allan Stanley, Eddie Shack, and Schumacher native Frank Mahovlich) covered the \$5000 cost to create the mould. Once the statue was cast, Paul had it installed in the Father Les Costello Memorial Arena in Cobalt. When Cobalt town council put the arena up for sale in 2016, the memorabilia on display was returned to the Costello family. Most was donated to the Timmins Sports Heritage Hall of Fame, but Paul was allowed to relocate the statue to the Costello Community Care Centre (the former Nativity of Our Lord church) on Spruce Street in Timmins. The CCCC was founded in 2005 after restructuring in the Diocese of Timmins resulted in several churches (including St. Alphonsus) being shuttered.

In February 2020, in time for a new squad of Flying Fathers to descend upon

Timmins (the old squad had disbanded in 2008), a Father Costello display (including the statue) was set up in a showcase outside the auditorium at The Mac. At some point after the charity game on February 22, 2020, a decision was made to relocate the Father Les display to a more visible showcase at the arena entrance. All was well until one morning in late March 2023 when an arena worker approached Ed Pupich, Wayne Bozzer and Mike Mulryan to deliver the news that the statue had somehow been damaged. The three men, intent on repairing or replacing the statue, were initially at a loss about how to proceed. Once word of the damage got out, Paul reached out to Ed to share the history of the statue and extend an offer to get in touch with Gary.

Now in his late 80s and living in Lethbridge, Gary readily agreed to cast a new statue. In a fitting full-circle event, the Northeastern Ontario branch of the OPP DARE program agreed to cover the costs associated with replacing the statue. As luck (or divine intervention) would have it, Gary was able to locate the original mould intact and has finished creating the new statue. The remaining hurdle is getting it home to Schumacher. Shipping options are insanely expensive with no guarantee of safe arrival. The plan at the moment is for Paul to drive it home in June on his return from travels out west. We hope to have the final installment of this story in the next issue of the SOS.



Gary Aldcorn's original The Flying Father: Les Costello was unveiled at a Toronto Maple Leafs Alumni gathering. Aldcorn had also cast a statue of Ted Kennedy that he presented to Ted during that same occasion. (Photo supplied by Paul Harrison.)



## SHAD CANADA SOJOURN

Shad Canada is on a mission to ignite youth potential and create lasting impact. What began in Aurora, Ontario in 1981 as Shad Valley has become a nationwide STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art & mathematics) and entrepreneurship program for grade 10 & 11 students. The ShadOnCampus experiential program is offered at university campuses across Canada and has benefited more than 21 000 high achieving and innovative Canadian youth.

Shad Canada values creativity, excellence, community, diversity and responsibility and aims for participants to awaken passion, solve problems, embrace risk and an entrepreneurial mindset, make and leverage strong connections, and develop change-maker capabilities. With limited spots available every year, admission is competitive. Ideal candidates are community-minded, creative, engaged, curious and want to make an impact in Canada and the world. Applicants are assessed on several factors highlighting their unique talents and contributions including overall academic excellence, extracurricular involvement, volunteerism, part-time work, creativity, and commitment to making the world a better place.

In the fall of 2022, Benjamin Dunkley (a lifelong Schumacher resident) applied for the ShadOnCampus2023 summer program “because my mom said I should”. Sometimes mom really does know best; in early December, Ben learned that he was accepted to the program and would spend 26 whirlwind days in July 2023 at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. In his own words, Ben was “humbled to be selected to engage in this prestigious opportunity”. Before he embarked on his adventure, Ben was most looking forward to meeting new people who shared his interests, travelling alone for the first time, and exploring Vancouver. It would be an understatement to say that he got all that and more from his Shad Canada experience.



Top: Ben (far left) and some fellow Shad participants explore Vancouver. Middle: The Shad UBC 2023 cohort hiked to experience this Rocky Mountain vista. Above: Ben and his team participate in a shelter building challenge. (Supplied photos.)



Over the course of the program, Ben got to participate in hands-on learning, collaborate in design teams, and engage with academic and entrepreneurial mentors. A typical day started early (breakfast by 7:30 AM) and consisted of morning lectures on a wide range of topics including quantum physics and leadership, a group lunch, committee work, project work, a group dinner, and evening entertainment. The 40-some participants at UBC were divided into committees tasked with completing specific activities such as creating a yearbook or planning evening events. Ben's group oversaw the design and procurement of souvenir apparel from local merchants. Evening activities ranged from Bollywood dance classes to movie nights to sightseeing excursions. The group's daily schedule was frequently altered to accommodate workshops on topics ranging from robotics to debate and excursions including a tour of the Triumf Particle Accelerator, exploring Granville Island, and hiking and camping in the Rocky Mountains.

A Design Project is a major component of the ShadOnCampus experience. Ben's UBC cohort was challenged to work in small groups to develop and pitch a business plan for a product that would improve the environmental, economic and/or social impacts of housing in Canada. Ben's group of seven focused on the environmental and economic aspects by developing an alternative to fiberglass insulation derived from waste textiles. Participants were encouraged to reach out to contacts that might have insight, so Ben invited his group to reach out to O'Gorman High School's Construction Technology teacher, JP Gauvin. Mr.

Gauvin helped the group understand what their product would need to achieve to earn a place in the market. JP let the group know that their product would need to be on par pricewise, safer and easier to use, and perform equally well or better than existing options. He also encouraged the group to consider important aspects such as fire, water, and mold resistance. As a result of strong group collaboration, and a little bit of insight from back home, Ben's group ended up being recognized for developing the most environmentally sustainable product and one of the top products overall.

Ben readily admits that ShadUBC2023 was an experience of a lifetime. He was awed by the mountains and being near the ocean. He fell in love with the UBC campus (so much so that he is considering its engineering program as a post secondary option). He created great memories and developed lasting friendships. Ben credits the program with allowing him to develop greater confidence in his presentation skills and leadership abilities as well as helping him to improve his collaboration skills. He highly recommends that other local youth consider applying to the program.

It should be noted that while some financial aid options exist, Shad participants are expected to fully fund their experience (over \$6000 in 2023). Participants are encouraged to seek out sponsorships from local businesses and organizations to offset the costs. Ben is extremely grateful for the financial support provided by SACHA, the Kiwanis Club of Timmins, O'Gorman High School, the NCDSB Social Committee, and Mayor Boileau. For more information about Shad, please visit [shad.ca](http://shad.ca).

Below Ben (far left) and his Design Project teammates prepare to pitch their waste textile insulation product near the end of Shad UBC 2023. The group was recognized for developing the most environmentally-friendly product. (Supplied photo.)





## HOCKEY UPDATE

Schumacher Day Minor Hockey has iced three teams this season: the House League U13 Spartans and U18 Renegade along with the U18A Cubs in the Timmins Midget League. The Spartans are playing well. They won the local Presidents' Cup on October 25 and narrowly lost the North Bay Challenge Cup Championship on November 26. The Spartans also held a post-holiday bottle drive to help fund future tournaments. The Renegades have proven to be a brute force to be reckoned with since the start of the season when they took home the Presidents' Cup on October 24. The Cubs have struggled to eke out wins on the ice, but the team has a lot of heart as evidenced by their volunteer work at the Santa Claus Parade.



Schumacher Cubs players collected South Porcupine Food Bank donations during the Santa Claus Parade on November 18.



The Schumacher Renegades took home the Presidents' Cup on October 24. (All photos from SDMHA Facebook page.)



The Schumacher Spartans took home the President's Cup on October 24 and continue to have a great season.

## CURLING UPDATE

The McIntyre Curling Club's Team Chilton started 2024 with a trip to Longlac to compete in the Northern Ontario Curling Association U18 Provincial Championship. The girls battled hard all week, but came up short in their semi final game and will not continue on to the U18 National Championship in Ottawa. They will, however, continue to prepare themselves for the U20 NOCA Championship in February.

In a Facebook post, Team Chilton Coach Steve Meunier had this to say: "The loss for our girls was tough but they are resilient and driven young athletes. ... A wise old curling coach once told me, 'the sweetest of victories usually comes at the hand of a

heartbreaking loss'. Coaching these young ladies is a privilege". SACHA is proud to be a Team Chilton sponsor and we wish the girls well as their season continues.

SACHA would also like to take the opportunity to congratulate Coach Meunier who was chosen to receive a Provincial Coaches' Award at the U18 Championship in Longlac. In a Team Chilton Facebook post, Deanna, Kendall, Leanna and Natalie had this to say: "Congratulations on this accomplishment Coach! We thank you for your hard-work, dedication, leadership, encouragement and always believing in us! You are our number one supporter and we thank you for everything". Well said!



Team Chilton members Deanna & Kendall Chilton, Leanna Delich and Natalie Graham share a moment of downtime with Coach Steve Meunier at the 2024 NOCA U18 Provincial Championship in Longlac. (Photo from the Team Chilton Facebook page.)





# APPRECIATING 50 YEARS



Above: Vera Romanowski presents Linette MacDonald with a token of appreciation from SACHA for her 50 years of service with Canada Post. Right: The graphic made by Lisa Romanowski for Linette's Appreciation Day post on Facebook.



Linette Brousseau-MacDonald is synonymous with the Schumacher Post Office. She is in her 50th year of service with Canada Post and for 44 of those years she has been one of the faces that greets Schumacher residents when they come by to pick up their mail. As postmistress of the Schumacher Post Office, Linette does so much more than oversee the efficient sorting of parcels and envelopes. She has her finger on the pulse of the community, looks out for our elders, and is known by our youngsters and four-legged friends as a source of treats.

Friday, December 15, 2023 was declared Linette MacDonald Appreciation Day at the post office. Much to her surprise, Linette received accolades and tokens of appreciation from Superintendent Denise Landry on behalf of Canada Post, Councillor Bill Gvozdanovic on behalf of the City of Timmins, Vera Romanowski on behalf of SACHA and Kevin Narduzzi on behalf of the community. Throughout the day, patrons stopped by to share best wishes and congratulatory messages accumulated on Schumacher-related Facebook pages. In a Timmins Daily Press interview given that day, Linette indicated that she has no immediate plans to retire from "the most wonderful career you could ever choose".

# LET THERE BE ICE



Members of the Timmins Fire Department flood the ice at the SPS outdoor rink on January 7. (Photo by Joseph Dunkley.)

Local residents thoroughly enjoyed having access to the outdoor rink at Schumacher Public School last winter. Fortunately, Jasmine Chenier, Billy Gvozdanovic and their team of volunteers are committed to maintaining the ice again this year. The warm spell at Christmas meant there was no outdoor holiday skating in Schumacher this year. Fortunately, a dip in the temperatures and some snow flurries made the conditions ideal for flooding the ice and getting a good base down. Gratitude is extended to the Timmins Fire Department, under Chief Berny Stansa of Schumacher, for bringing the trucks out to flood the rink at least three times before this issue went to print.



# EDITORIAL



SACHA supporters will find a belated Christmas gift with their paper copy of this issue of the SOS. The creation of the wooden Christmas ornaments was a family affair. Lisa designed the image, Ben 3D printed the jig and handled the laser engraving, Vera oversaw the addition of the jute cord hangers, and Jake and Joe assisted with envelope preparation. We hope you enjoy this token of appreciation for your ongoing support of the Spirit of Schumacher newsletter and the Schumacher Arts, Culture & Heritage Association. If you would like to become a SACHA supporter, please see the last page for instructions on how to join.

Well, here we are at the start of a new year. 2023 was eventful to say the least. Time seemed to fly between Halloween and Christmas, but both occasions were celebrated well here in Schumacher. It's great to see that Schumacher Day Minor Hockey was able to field some teams this year and that they are experiencing some success. Congratulations are extended to Linette MacDonald for 50 years of service with Canada Post. What will 2024 bring?

It's hard to believe that forty-five issues of the SOS newsletter have been produced. I had the opportunity to look through several past issues recently and a lot of territory has been covered over the years. I laughed, I cried, and I couldn't help but realize that as long as people have ties to Schumacher, there will always be stories to tell. An unfortunate reality is that other commitments have made it increasingly challenging to produce more than two issues of the SOS each year. I am committed to producing an issue in the summer and another over Christmas Break. It is our sincere hope that not only will you stick with us, but also that you will share some of your stories with the SOS community. There are so many voices with interesting stories that deserve to be heard.

Until next time, take care and Happy New Year!

*Lisa Romanowski,*  
SOS Editor

## TAKE NOTE: CHANGE COMING

To keep the production of the Spirit of Schumacher newsletter viable, we are permanently switching to two issues per year. Expect issues in July/August and December/January.

### SACHA ACCEPTS ETRANSFERS

Annual SACHA support payments can be made by eTransfer. Use the email address [schumachergirl@gmail.com](mailto:schumachergirl@gmail.com).

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### SOS NEWSLETTER

The not-for-profit Schumacher Arts, Culture & Heritage Association publishes the Spirit of Schumacher newsletter two times a year in the summer and winter.

For newsletter inquiries email: [spiritofschumacher@gmail.com](mailto:spiritofschumacher@gmail.com)

Readers are invited to submit articles and photos celebrating Schumacher's past, present, or future for publication consideration. Please include the creator's full name and the full names of photo subjects.

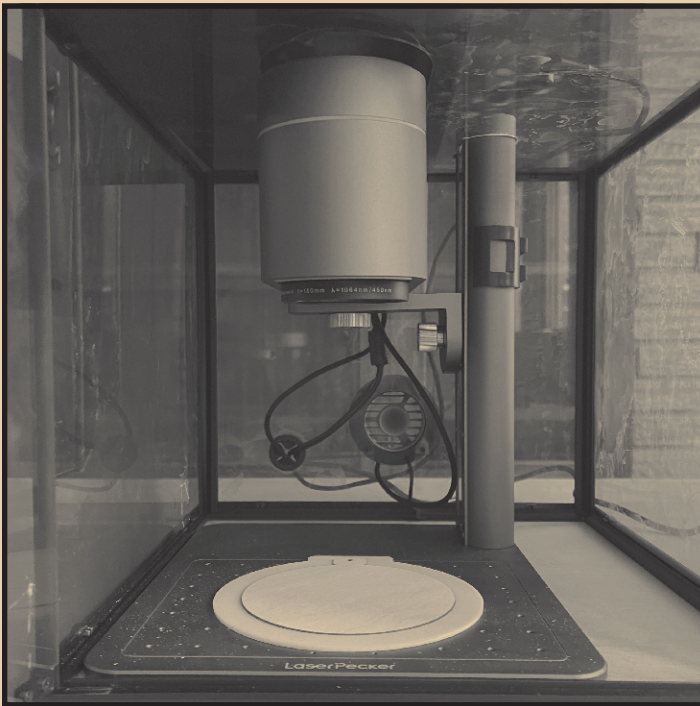
### ADVERTISING

Business ads are \$70/year. Contact us for more information.

### Good for a Giggle ...

How do you farm in the winter?  
Use a snow plow!





For those interested in the tech specs, Ben tinkers with an Anker M5 3D Printer and a Laser Pecker LP4 dual-laser engraver.

## READER MAIL

Please renew membership to SACHA for Sheila Moran McLellan, Marjorie Wharton Payne, and myself. The cheque is enclosed.

I am enjoying the red tote bag; thank you! After reading my Toronto daily newspaper, it goes in the tote bag until it's time to go out for recycling. One day a passerby noticed the bag and said, "Oh Schumacher!"

I lived in Iroquois Falls and on some Saturdays my father would drive us to Timmins to see a movie and enjoy a good meal at the McIntyre Coffee Shop! (Years ago!)

All the best!  
Nancy A McNeil

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+ Deceased

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SACHA will recognize your generosity in the SOS newsletter and on its website. A non-tax deductible receipt will be issued.