



NEIGHBOURS

ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE

NEWSLETTER | FEBRUARY 2026

Neighbours helps GVS students reach their fundraising goal!

Golden Valley Students worked hard to raise money for their up-coming trip to Gatineau for Destination Imagination. Destination Imagination is a wonderful opportunity that allows students the freedom to grow, collaborate with others and increase their confidence by providing challenges rooted in STEAM subjects that inspire unique solutions through the use of the creative process.

Neighbours and Y4Y (Youth 4 Youth) both gave a generous donation to the students to help reach their goal. The students were incredibly grateful and Neighbours is honoured to help these hard working students reach their goals.



Pictured above (from left to right): Stephanie Frigon, GVS Principal | Camille Hernandez, GVS Teacher | Laurie Boast, Neighbours Family & Youth Coordinator | Shannon Caprio, Neighbours Special Care Counsellor

Visit Neighbours' website and Facebook page for daily updates

www.neighboursat.ca

facebook.com/neighbours.rouynnoranda

Valentine's Day Parent/Child Activity

February 14th at 10:00 a.m. at 101, 11th Street
(access on avenue Ste. Anne)

Neighbours is partnering with the Cercle de Fermières for a great activity to do with your child!

Come try out Kumihimo (Japanese Yarn Braiding)! Using the special discs provided, you and your child can make a bracelet, keyring, or even a bookmark.

There will also be a tour and demonstration of the artisanal weaving looms on site.

FREE
ACTIVITY!

All
materials
provided!



EASY
AND FUN!

Snacks will
be served!

This activity is for children 7 and up, each child needs to be **accompanied by a parent**.

Limited places, you must reserve your spot by calling Neighbours office at 819-762-0882, or contacting us by Messenger. You can also email Laurie at laurie@neighboursat.ca

Heart Month February 2026

Written by: Tracy Lynn Garrick

The month of February marks Heart Month. A time to raise awareness about the importance of heart and vascular health! Heart disease is one of the leading causes of death in Canada.

Here is a list of some risk factors :

- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- High cholesterol
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Family history of heart disease

Men are diagnosed with heart disease about 10 years younger than women (55–64 vs 65–74 years of age). For women, some unique risk factors also include: a diagnosis of pregnancy-related high blood pressure, pregnancy-related diabetes, or pre-eclampsia. Women tend to become more prone to the disease around menopause. Birth control and hormone replacement therapy may also play a part. Ethnicity and family background can strongly influence the presentation of heart disease as well.

Signs and symptoms:

- Chest discomfort (pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain, burning or heaviness)
- Excessive sweating
- Upper body discomfort (neck, jaw, shoulder, left or both arms, back)
- Nausea
- Shortness of breath
- Light-headedness

If you are experiencing signs of a heart attack, call 911, sit or lay down, and follow the instructions of the emergency operator. You may take one Aspirin 325 mg tablet or two 81 mg tablets.

How to lower risks and lifestyle changes:

- eating well (fruits, veggies, whole grains, less sugar/salt/unhealthy fats)
- staying active (150+ mins per week)
- quitting smokeing/vaping
- limiting alcohol
- managing stress (meditation, hobbies)
- maintaining a healthy weight
- getting regular check-ups for blood pressure/cholesterol
- prioritizing good sleep



Quebec Premier François Legault announces resignation



On January 14th, Quebec Premier François Legault announced he is stepping down as Quebec's premier, a role he has maintained for the past eight years.

Legault said he will remain in place until his party, the Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ), has elected a new leader.

"I can see that, right now, a lot of Quebecers want change first and foremost, and among other things, a change in premier," said Legault, flanked by his wife and top aide.

The resignation comes after months of turbulence, falling poll results, and ministers leaving the party.

"Of course, there were a few failures — we have talked about them a lot — but there was a lot of success above all," he said.

The CAQ will have just months to choose a new leader ahead of the vote scheduled for October 5th, 2026.

Legault has been Quebec's premier since 2018 and the leader of the CAQ since 2011.

No mention of Abitibi-Témiscamingue

During his speech that morning, François Legault made no mention of his position as minister responsible for Abitibi-Témiscamingue and did not answer questions from journalists.

Sources:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/legault-resigns-ahead-of-provincial-election-9.7044929>
<https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/2220656/francois-legault-demission-ministre-abitibi-temiscamingue>

The Origins of Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is celebrated every February 14th, where people around the world celebrate their love for close ones, whether it be romantic, familial, platonic, etc. But the origins of this holiday, which has traces in Christian and ancient Roman traditions, are not quite clear, in fact!

Who is St. Valentine?

St. Valentine is a Roman saint recognized by the Catholic Church, whose origins according to legend are somewhat unclear. He is believed to be one of two people: a Roman priest and the bishop of Interamna (in what is now Terni, Italy), both of whom were martyred. It is also possible they are both different accounts of the same person.

Legends state that he defied Emperor Claudius II Gothicus' banning of marriage for young men, continuing to secretly marry couples which led to his execution, as well as his feast day being associated with love. Legends also state that he signed a letter "from your Valentine" to the daughter of the jailer he befriended and supposedly healed from blindness. He died during the third century on the 14th of February, which would eventually be observed as the Feast of Saint Valentine.

How did it start?

Valentine's Day possible has origins in the Roman festival of Lupercalia. It was held in mid-February and celebrated the coming spring. This includes fertility rites and pairing women with men by lottery. In the late fifth century, Pope Gelasius I forbid its celebration and is believed to have replaced it with the previously mentioned Feast of Saint Valentine. However, Valentine's Day only started to be celebrated as a day of romance around the 14th century, and valentines cards appeared in the 16th century.

Symbols

Many symbols and other things associated with Valentine's Day are unsurprisingly due to their association with love.

- **Cupid:** He is the Roman god of love, as well as the Roman counterpart to the Greek god of love, Eros.
- **Red roses:** They became a symbol of love due to Greek myths associating them with Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, as well as the mother of Eros.
- **Birds:** Medieval Europeans thought birds began mating in mid-February. As well, lovebirds became associated due to pairs being lifelong partners. Doves were often associated with Aphrodite in Greek mythology.
- **Chocolate:** In 1868, Richard Cadbury started selling chocolates in heart-shaped boxes with Valentine's Day designs. Expecting a more meaningful origin, were you?

Source: Britannica, Wikipedia

2026-2027 Kindergarten registration WQSB!



- To register children for 4-year-old Kindergarten (K4), they must be 4 years of age by September 30, 2026.
- To register children for 5-year-old Kindergarten (K5), they must be 5 years of age by September 30, 2026.

Required Documents for the Registration

- Child's original long-form birth certificate bearing parents' names.
- Proof of Canadian Citizenship (Canadian birth certificate, Canadian citizenship certificate, or Canadian passport) of the parent who will render the child eligible.
- Québec driver's license of the parent/guardian responsible for the child or Lease/House Deed and a utility bill (Hydro Québec or telephone).

Golden Valley
819-825-3211

mhstpierre@wqsb.qc.ca

*Starting Feb 3rd, by
appointment

Noranda School
819-762-2706

fbellerose@wqsb.qc.ca

*Starting Feb 9th, by
appointment

G. Thérberge
819-627-1212

gtheberge@wqsb.qc.ca

*Starting Feb 9th, by
appointment

UPCOMING WINTER EVENTS IN OUR REGION



LA FÊTE D'HIVER DE ROUYN-NORANDA

La fête d'hiver is back for its 39th edition from February 20th to 22nd! Come enjoy all the different activities, such as sports competitions, outdoor games, family entertainment, and light installations!

*Parc Chadbourne, Parc Mouska, Côte Météo
1, avenue Thompson, Rouyn-Noranda*

<https://www.fetedhiver.com/>

LA MAGIE DES NEIGES OPTIMISTE D'AMOS

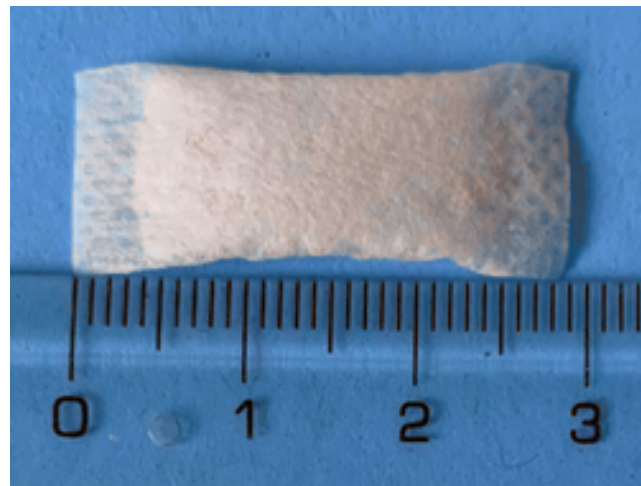
La Magie des Neiges Optimiste is hosting its 30th edition from February 20th to 22nd! There will be many activities, which include a parade, fireworks, snow tubing, dogsleds, magic train rides, and more! There will even be music performances and street hockey!

Close to the Cathédrale d'Amos

<https://www.facebook.com/optimisteamos>



Nicotine Pouches : Real dangers



The use of nicotine pouches is gaining popularity. This trend is raising concerns about the development of nicotine addiction in adolescence. In the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region, the use of nicotine pouches, particularly among young athletes, appears to be an emerging phenomenon. Their discreet size, appealing flavours, and ease of use, even at school or without adult knowledge, contribute to their popularity.

These products are not without risk. Their nicotine content varies considerably depending on the brand, whether sold legally in pharmacies (up to 4 mg/unit) or from the illicit market (up to 37 mg/unit). This concentration is sometimes very high, enough to quickly lead to severe addiction. Contrary to what many users believe, nicotine absorption through the oral mucosa can produce a rapid effect, which reinforces the urge to consume and encourages repeated use.

Other effects can also occur and have repercussions on health.

Oral Health

Specialists are also observing worrying effects. Prolonged use in the same spot in the mouth can cause irritation, inflammation, gum recession, and, in some cases, promote the development of lesions that may progress to precancerous forms. Even if the quantities of carcinogenic substances present in these products are generally low, just their presence warrants caution, especially with regard to long-term use.

Cardiovascular Health

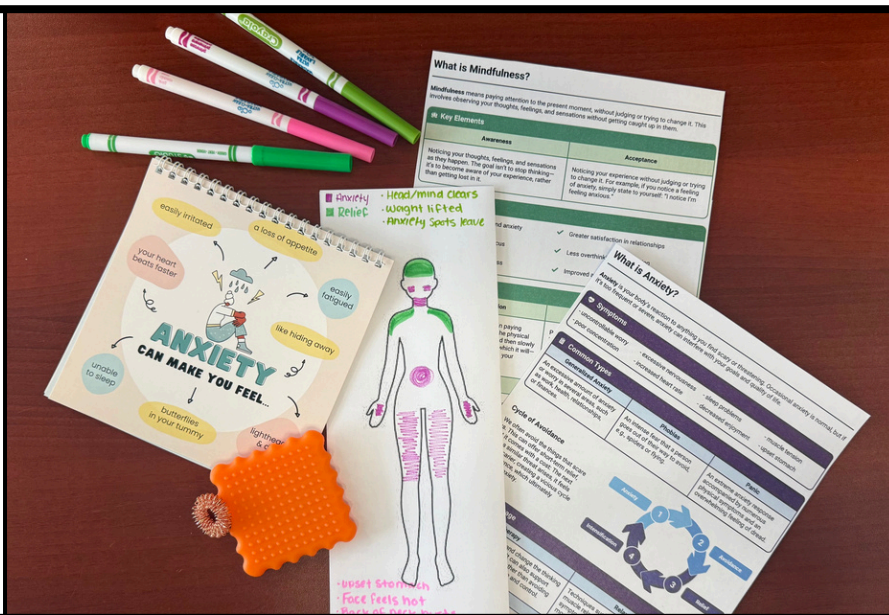
Nicotine isn't without impact on cardiovascular health. It can influence heart rate, increase blood pressure, and worsen existing chronic illnesses.

In conclusion, even though they are sometimes presented as an alternative to traditional tobacco, the long-term effects remain poorly understood. Being vigilant, seeking information from reliable sources, and maintaining an open dialogue with young people: three essential approaches.

NEIGHBOURS' VISIT TO VAL-D'OR!

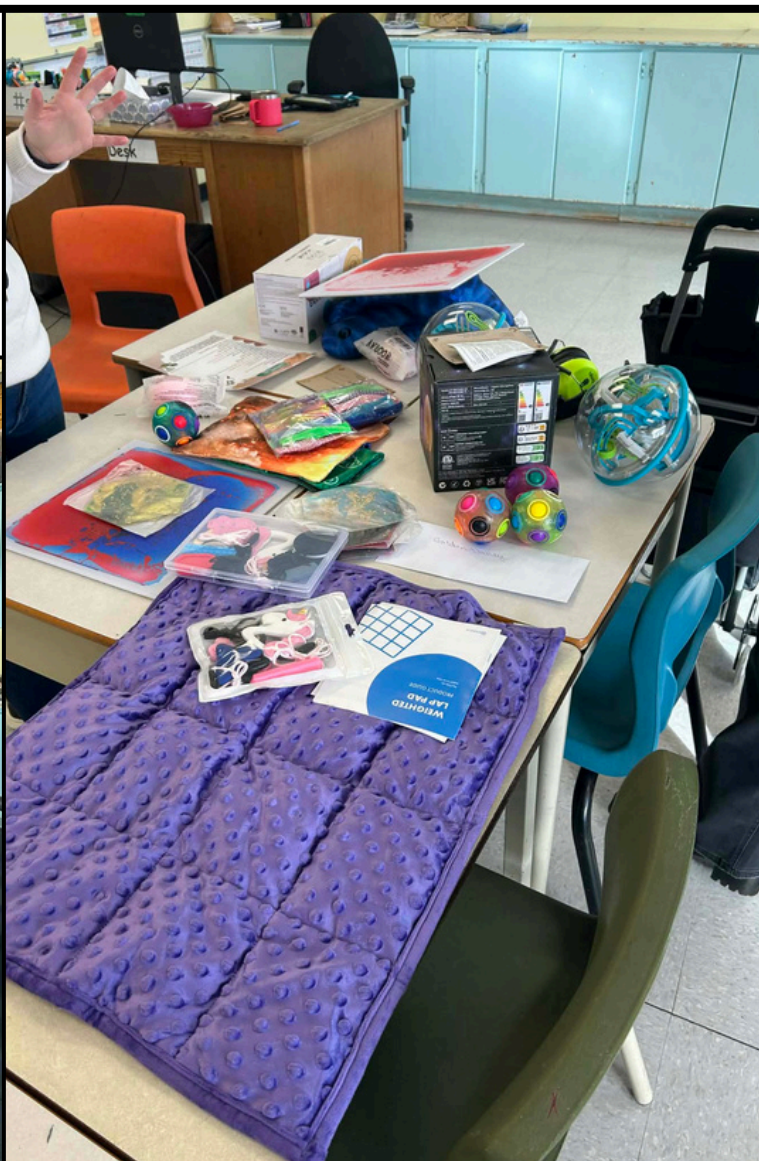
Talking about Anxiety with Adult Education!

Shannon visited the Adult Education Center in Val-d'Or for an Anxiety information session. The students learned about how anxiety is a cycle and identified where they feel anxiety using a body template sheet and colours. They were gifted pop-it stress balls, anxiety information pamphlets, and mini booklets. They then practised 5 minutes of meditation to end the activity.



Sensory Kit Donation!

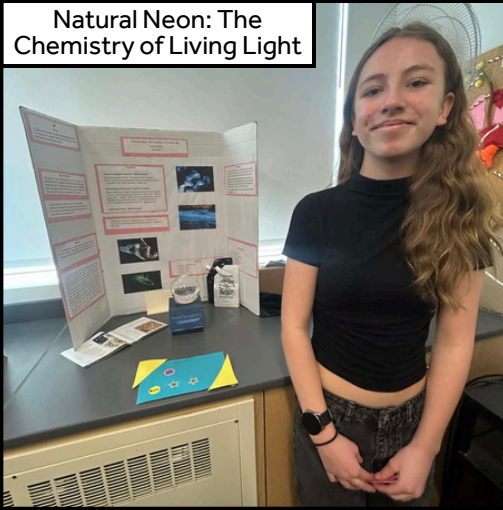
Neighbours' Special Care Counsellor, Shannon, presented a comprehensive Sensory Kit to Golden Valley School's resource teacher Tina Boutin. Neighbours was delighted to make this donation to help support students and teachers at GVS.



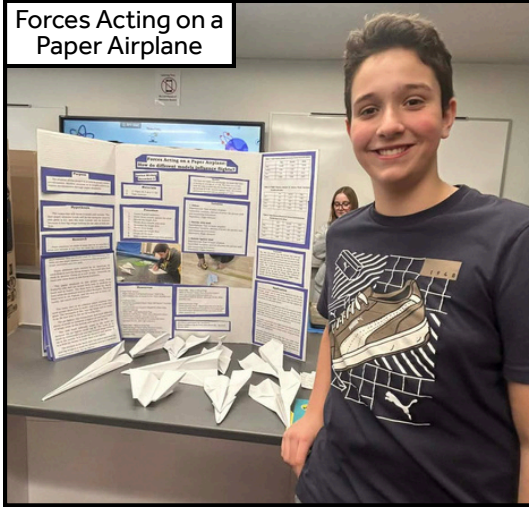
Golden Valley Science Fair!

Laurie and Shannon attended Golden Valley School's Science Fair, and WOW! What great work by all the students! There were so many interesting projects exhibited, displaying the hard work and research the students undertook.

Natural Neon: The Chemistry of Living Light



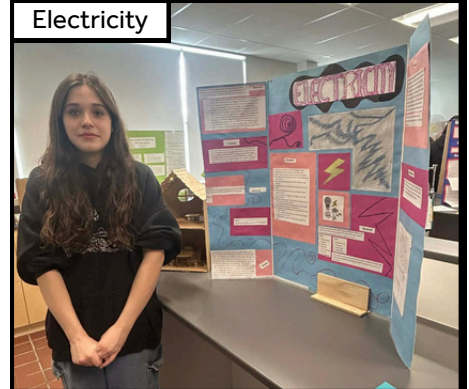
Forces Acting on a Paper Airplane



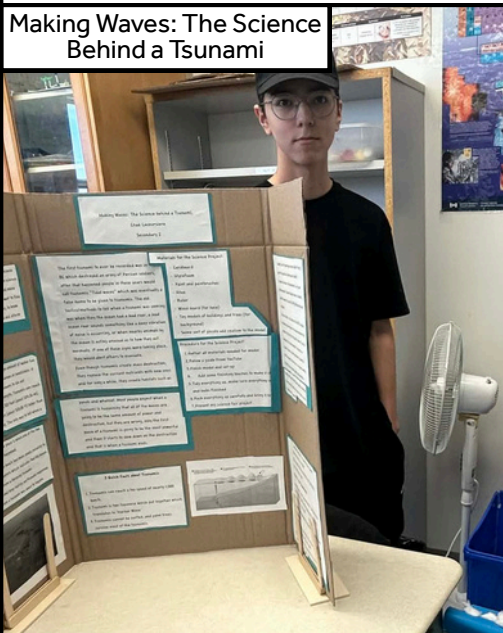
Keeping Apples Fresh: What Stops Browning?



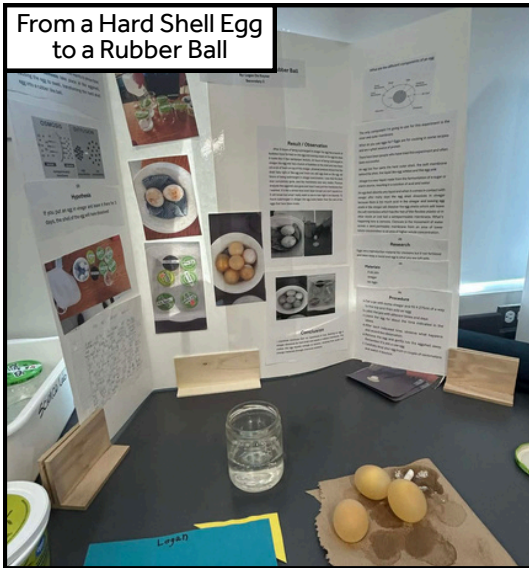
Electricity



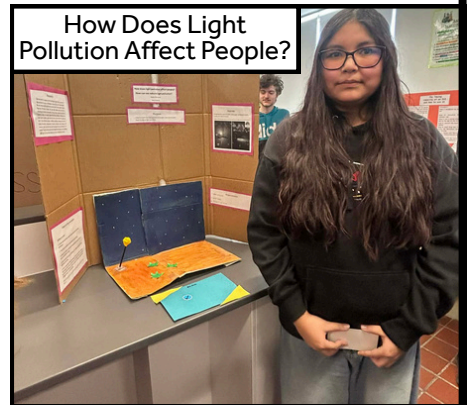
Making Waves: The Science Behind a Tsunami



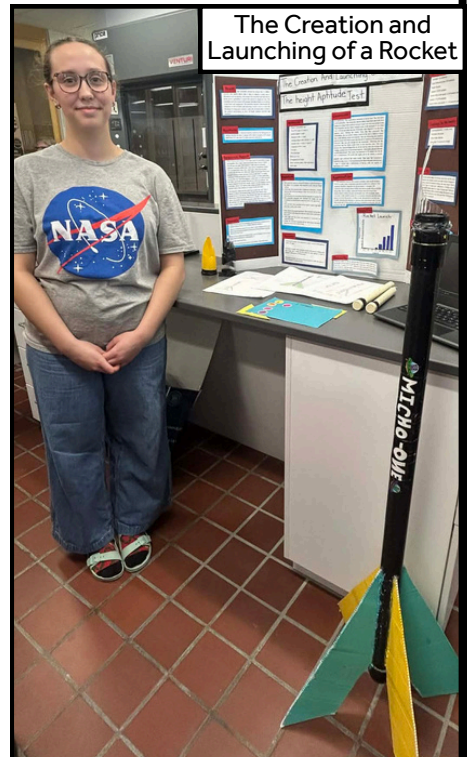
From a Hard Shell Egg to a Rubber Ball



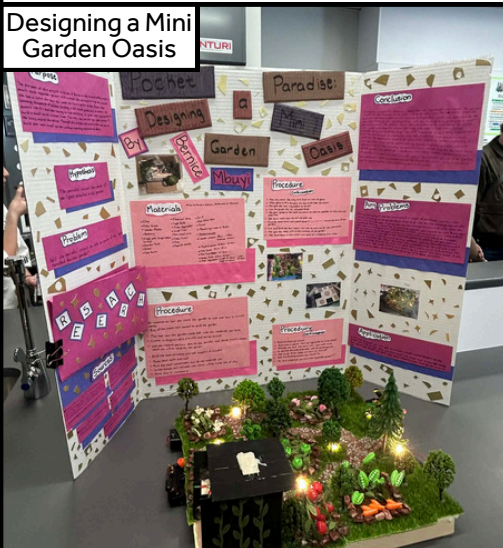
How Does Light Pollution Affect People?



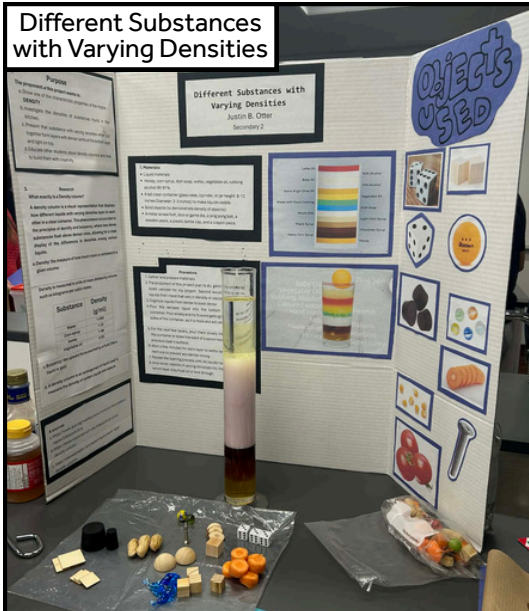
The Creation and Launching of a Rocket



Designing a Mini Garden Oasis



Different Substances with Varying Densities



Campfire Club



Feb 3rd : Snow and Hail!

Learn all about how snow and hail are made up in the sky before falling down onto the ground! Then do an experiment: make your own snowstorm in a jar!



KOOL KIDS CLUB

Feb 5th : "The Winter Camp" Film and Discussion

Deep in the woods, lumberjacks used to live in rustic logging camps for the winter season. Learn about their life and work in the 1930's before everything was mechanized.



Feb 10th :



Feb 12th :



Feb 17th : Winter Sensory Bottles

Make your own winter-themed sensory bottle to help you calm down or relax.



Feb 19th : Would You Rather...?

Play this classic dilemma game where you have to choose between two difficult scenarios. Practice your thinking skills - but don't worry, lots of laughter is guaranteed!



Feb 24th : Acting Wild!

Play an animal game to win tokens for prizes!



Feb 26th : Animal Rally!

Have fun imitating different animals, and win prizes!



FEBRUARY
ISSUE

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

FEBRUARY
ISSUE

MOVING MONDAY *No activity: Feb. 9th*

1:30pm

Join us every Monday at 1:30pm for a ViActive exercise or yoga session! Each exercise session is made up of different movements for all levels of ability.

Chairs are provided for those who need the extra support!



WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

1:30pm

Feb. 4th

SécuriCAB Presentation

A presentation about their services with a guest speaker!

Feb. 11th

NO ACTIVITY



Feb. 18th

SHARP Webinar

Financial subsidies to help you live comfortably at home.

10 AM
Call to reserve your lunch

Feb. 25th

Oppositional Defiant Disorder

What is the disorder and who does it affect?

FUN FRIDAY GAMES

1:30pm

Feb. 6th

Game Day

Feb. 20th

Game Day



FUN FRIDAY MOVIES

1:30pm

Feb. 13th



Feb. 27th

Wake Up Dead Man: A Knives Out Mystery (2025)

2h24m

A baffling death inside a quiet church draws Benoit Blanc into a tense investigation where faith secrets and suspicion blur as a close community turns against itself.



FEBRUARY 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 	3 	4 	5 	6 	7
8	 UNDER CONSTRUCTION					14 Parent/child activity 
15	16 	17 	18 	19 	20 	21
22	23 	24 	25 	26 	27 	28
	Moving Monday 1:30pm	Campfire Club 4:00 - 5:15pm	Wellness Wednesday 1:30pm	Kool Kids Club 4:00 - 5:15pm	Fun Friday 1:30pm	
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