

Wildlife dinner returns to Carlow Mayo

By Mike Riley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Carlow Mayo Township is having their 17th annual Wildlife Dinner at the Mayo Community Centre at 66 Mayo Lake Road in McArthurs Mills after a three-year hiatus due to COVID-19 and a lack of volunteers last year. It'll be on March 2 with doors opening at 4:30 p.m., dinner from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. and the auction from 7 p.m. onward. Tickets are \$30 and they're already 65 per cent sold out, so if you want to attend, you'd better hurry and call organizer Wayne Dillabough at 613-334-0255 to get your advance tickets, as there are no ticket sales at the door. Dillabough comments to Bancroft This Week on this popular annual event. Dillabough says that they were shut down for two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and last year due to not having anybody to organize it, so it had kind of fallen off the rails, so this year they wanted to revive it. Proceeds from the event go to the Mayo Community Centre and community recreation programs. Dillabough says that preparations are going well and they have a lot of donations already coming in. "We're over 2/3 sold out so it's going fast. The sales are going very quickly, which suggests that anybody wanting to go that they call me and get their ticket right away. We have about 35 spots left," he says. Dillabough says they'll be serving water buffalo, beaver, wild turkey, bear, venison and lake trout on the night of the event. As noted on the event poster on Facebook, the wild game served at this event has not been inspected under the Meat Inspection Act, RSO1990. They'll have potatoes, vegetables, smoked venison heart and hors d'oeuvres and homemade pies provided by local seniors to accompany the wild meat. There will also be beer and wine available licensed under the Liquor Control Act. Dillabough's wife Stephanie, Ann Drudge, and a few others are helping to cook the meal that night. Dillabough says the meat was sourced locally, such as the water buffalo, which he and his wife got down in Stirling at The Buff Stuff Store (www.ontariowaterbuffalo.ca). There will also be a toonie table, a 50/50 draw and a live auction that night. Dillabough says that one of the live auction items is a fishing charter for four for eight hours on Lake Ontario. "That's one of the bigger ticket items. We do have another bench being donated that's a live edge cedar and metal frame. And there's some other great items too," he says. Dillabough says the Wildlife Dinner has changed over the years in that they expanded their menu into getting a unique meat each year as a menu entrée and it also used to be run more by seniors and now some of the younger people are taking care of it. He says his wife has been cooking for the event for the past seven years and she's the primary organizer, and he usually helps in the kitchen, but this year he's out selling tickets. He also says there are five or six others helping out. "They're going around, gathering donations, or setting up the hall or helping in the kitchen or helping with the toonie table. So, there's a bit of a committee but not as many people as we've had in the past, so it's been more of a challenge this year," he says. Dillabough says that everybody he's talked to is excited about the dinner. "Usually, they phone to get tickets. This year we just put it out on social media and most of the tickets they just called me. I haven't done much canvassing for tickets themselves," he says. "If people want tickets, call in because they're going quickly!"