

CMPL to hold Escape Room event July 21, 22, and 23

By Mike Riley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Carlow Mayo Public Library has an Escape Room event starting Friday, July 21 and going over the weekend. From tonight until July 23, participants can take part in this exciting initiative put on by the CMPL and the Carlow Recreation Committee, who is providing the Carlow Community Centre in Fort Stewart at 1702 Fort Stewart Road as a space to hold the event. Carrie McKenzie, the CEO/head librarian of the CMPL comments.

McKenzie says that the Escape Room event, which starts tonight and continues all weekend, will have participants enter a room that has puzzles strategically placed, and in order to escape from Carlow Mayo, they must complete the puzzles to find certain clues to create a Wi-Fi password that is used at the library.

'I don't want to give too much away so that the mystery is there for the participants,' she says.

The first Escape Room event on Friday, July 21 will take place from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., while on Saturday it is from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The cost per person is \$10 and people can sign up in teams of up to four people. For more information, please contact McKenzie at carlowmayopl@gmail.com or at 613-332-2544.

McKenzie says that libraries have recently been doing escape rooms as fundraisers, and that while Harry Potter is the most frequently used theme, she didn't know the story of Harry Potter that well, and when she looked at the other libraries' templates, she didn't think she could escape from their rooms either.

'So, I decided to make my own version of an escape room that would portray popular events and locations held in Carlow Mayo. There is a station based on popular events such as darts, baseball, and the Fort Stewart Jamboree. Participants will also complete puzzles at stations located at 'the library, the township office, Hermon Public School' and 'Cunningham's Country Store.' Also featured is a station based on the Little Mississippi Seniors' Club activities. I really enjoyed putting together each station as I got to know more about these activities by asking questions to these groups to capture their creativity,' she says.

While this is the first time ever doing an escape room event, McKenzie says she held two trial runs and they both had positive outcomes. She hopes that it will provide a lot of laughs for team members to make memories with. She says she has enough time slots for 17 teams to try it out and she's hoping to fill them all. So far, she says that both Friday evening and most of Sunday are solidly booked. She's been talking about this event for a few months now and she says many in the community have been waiting for the big reveal on Friday at the Carlow Community Centre.

'I would like to send out a big public thank you to the Carlow Recreation Committee for running this event for me. Unfortunately, I cannot be in two places at once, so they have generously offered to host our escape room. For those wondering, the \$10 entry fee per person is a fundraiser for the library,' she says. 'The Carlow Recreation Committee has generously donated their half of the proceeds to the library. Community partnerships are not only part of the CMPL strategic plan, but also cherished as we are grateful for their generous support.'