

TODD TIFFIN
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HOME OF THE HIGHLAND STORM

The Highlander

Thursday **October 5 2017** | Issue 308

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FREE



Michael Love of Newcastle gets into his karate routine during the Michael Chapman Memorial Shiai tournament Sept. 30 in Haliburton. See more page 24. Photos by Lisa Gervais.

Businesses forecast winter of discontent

Chamber considers Support Local initiative

By Mark Arike

Despite ongoing community support, the owners of Baked and Battered have decided to close their business for the winter months. As they head into their sixth year, it's the first time they've had to do so

because of a growing number of challenges.

"We spent a lot of time thinking about it over a period of about two months," said Colby Marcellus, who owns the Haliburton business with Craig Gordon. "It was towards the end of the summer that we started to realize that this was the only thing that we could do."

They will close the restaurant and café Oct. 17 and reopen March 1.

One of the main reasons for the closure is the provincial government's decision to increase minimum wage to \$14-an-hour on Jan. 1, 2018 and \$15-an-hour the following January. On Sunday, minimum wage increased by 20 cents, from \$11.40 per hour to \$11.60.

Overall, it's a jump of 32 per cent in less than two years.

"This just kind of hit us from left field,"

said Marcellus. "We could have kept going on without something like this happening."

Payroll is their single largest expense. They have 20 full-time employees in the summer. That number drops to nine staff in the winter, five of whom are full-time.

But it's not just the wage hikes that make it difficult. Rising expenses include hydro, food supplies and winter maintenance.

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HALIBURTON
TIMBER MART
5148 Cty Rd 21
705-457-2510
haliburtonlumber.com
sales@haliburtonlumber.com



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