

# STRATFORD **TIMES**

VOLUME 3 • ISSUE 12

FEBRUARY 23, 2024

**FREE**



**JENNIFER ANDERSON**  
 REAL ESTATE BROKER  
 519.301.2736  
 www.jandersonrealestate.com

**ROYAL LEPAGE** Hiller Realty  
100 Erie St. Stratford Independently Owned and Operated Brokerage

4304 Rd 119 Stratford 519-273-1881



**Split Rail**  
 COUNTRY STORE  
 Celebrating 15 Years  
 of Smilin' Country Service!



## Stratford offering free income tax clinics for low-income households

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The City of Stratford's social services department is offering free income tax clinics for low-income individuals and couples in Stratford, St. Marys and Perth County.

The program has been offered through the city for several years to help those who may require financial assistance filing their taxes. Kim McElroy, Stratford's director of social services, says the program is offered in partnership with Famme & Co. Professional Corporation and McCutchen & Pearce Professional Corporation each year.

Residents receiving social assistance such as the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) or Ontario Works with a T5007 tax slip are eligible to sign up.

For others to participate, they must have a total gross annual income of \$16,000 or less for individuals, \$32,000 or less for couples, \$25,396 or less for seniors 65 and older, or \$34,346 or less for senior couples 65 and older. Disability income received should be included in your total gross income.

Residents are required to provide the following documents, if applicable: T4s and T5s; rent receipts or property tax receipts; medical receipts; donation receipts; disability tax credit certificates (T2201); and date of entry into Canada.

Those who are interested are asked to register in advance by March 7 by contacting the social services clerks at 519-271-3773 ext. 277.

Office hours at the City of Stratford's social services

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTO)

### SMOOTHING OUT THE ROUGHNESS

Grade 10 Stratford District Secondary School student Whitney Gropp uses a router to round and smooth out the edges of a charcuterie board she and her fellow students learned to make as part of the Avon Maitland District School Board's Tapas and Trades program. See more on page 9.

## Perth County approves 12.31 per cent tax levy increase for 2024

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

At the regular Perth County Council meeting Feb. 15, Perth County council approved the 2024 capital and operating budgets with a 12.31 per-cent increase to the levy, totalling \$22,198,354.

This is an increase of \$2,432,781 over last year's budget.

The programs and projects approved for this year's

budget are influenced by the county's corporate strategic plan for 2023 through 2026. The five main goals of the plan include growth and economic development, regionalization and service effectiveness, customer service excellence, community development and planning, and corporate sustainability.

"We acknowledge that this is a difficult tax year," said Corey Bridges, the county's manager of finance and treasurer, at the meeting. "Municipal staff contin-

CONTINUED TO PAGE 3

# KIDS

# SUMMER

# CAMP

\$250 Registration Fee

**WEEKS OFFERED**

- Wk 1: July 2-5
- Wk 2: July 8-12
- Wk 3: July 15-19
- Wk 4: July 22-26
- Wk 5: July 29-Aug 2
- Wk 6: NO CAMP
- Wk 7: NO CAMP
- Wk 8: August 19-23
- Wk 9: August 26-30

## YOUR WAY

## TO PLAY LTD.

Play Centre and Retail Store

Themed Weeks: Trolls, Bugs & Dino, Disney, Master Builders, Science, Pirates & Under The Sea, Sweet Treats & Beach (No Particular Order)

560 Huron St, Stratford ON | www.yourwaytoplay.ca

Hours: 7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



IMAGINE  
CREATE  
GROW

# Collective bargaining negotiations with Huron Perth public health (HPPH) could result in a strike, says CUPE

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Public Health workers in Huron-Perth, members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 1331, had a conciliation meeting last week after almost three years of contract talks without a deal.

Before the meeting, a CUPE Local 131 representative told the Stratford Times “the possibility of labour disruption is there should conciliation not lead to a deal these workers deserve.”

CUPE Local 1331 was formed in July 2020 after the locals of the former Huron County and Perth District Health Units merged.

The union currently represents more than 70 Huron Perth pub-

lic health (HPPH) employees, including administrative assistants, custodians, dental assistants, dental hygienists, health promoters, IT support technicians, parent-resource visitors, public-health inspectors and tobacco enforcement officers.

According to a media release, HPPH employees represented by CUPE Local 1331 have been without a contract since Dec. 31, 2020. They have been bargaining with the employer since the spring of 2021 and, since that time, there has been little progress.

According to the union representative, the next step is job action if a deal cannot be reached. The media release notes that in Sept. 2023, 93 per cent of mem-

bers voted in favour of a strike.

“We are dedicated to our work and want to avoid a strike,” said Pam Hanington, CUPE Local 1331 president. “But we are prepared to walk off the job if the employer continues to reject the union’s proposals and does not present a fair deal.”

In addition to wages and benefits, outstanding issues include hours of work, overtime and leaves of absence such as pregnancy/parental leave.

A Huron Perth public health (HPPH) spokesperson said they are disappointed in how long it has taken to reach a final agreement well into the third year of negotiations with no end in sight.

“After amalgamation in 2020, HPPH successfully worked to-

gether with two other unions to reach a collective agreement for each union within a year of the first bargaining date. We are committed to also successfully reaching an agreement with CUPE, which is why the employer filed for conciliation in hopes of expediting a fair deal.”

Hanington hopes to see the collective agreement in favour of workers.

“We are frustrated by how long it has taken to get a first collective agreement as a newly merged Local, and we feel disrespected by the employer,” she said.

“We are trying to maintain as much of our predecessor collective agreements as possible and, at a time when the cost of everything has gone up, we are

asking for reasonable increases to wages and benefits. The employer has yet to come to the table with a deal that we can confidently take to our members; they have failed to offer us the same wage increases that our HPPH colleagues in the ONA (Ontario Nurses’ Association) and OPSEU (Ontario Public Service Employees Union) received over the last three years.”

According to a statement provided by HPPH, benefits, wages, the duration of the collective agreement and retroactivity are all part of the compensation package in ongoing bargaining.

*No correspondence has been received by the Stratford Times after the Feb. 15 conciliation meeting.*

## Student Summer Company grant applications open for ages 15-29

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

Area students with that all-important entrepreneurial spirit once again have the opportunity to get the financial and organizational support they need to launch a business of their own this summer.

The Student Summer Company grant is made available to students aged 15-29 through the Ontario Minis-

try of Economic Development Job Creation and Trade. The grant is for \$3,000 in total and is available to those with a new business idea they wish to pursue for the summer period rather than taking the traditional summer job route.

“I’m grateful to the Province of Ontario and the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade for their continued support of young entrepreneurs through the Summer Company Grant program,” said Joani Gerber, CEO of investStratford in a press release. “Their funding allows us to continue to deliver mentorship, training and support to the next generation of business owners.”

The grant is administered through the Stratford Perth Centre for Business (SPCB) and encompasses the Stratford, St Marys and Perth County region. The centre assists the new entrepreneurs in business practices they will need to succeed including how to draft a business plan, how to register and insure their business, marketing strategies and how to record expenses and profits.

Applications are open to those in high school and post-secondary schools who have not received the

Student Summer Company grant before and who intend to continue with their education after the business period. The summer company program typically runs for eight weeks for high school students and 12

weeks for post-secondary students. The new business cannot be an extension of an existing family business.

Successful candidates will receive half of the grant money up front and the remaining half at the end of the program with proof that they have performed in their business successfully. Types of businesses created in the past included landscaping, swim instruction, website design, social-media marketing for small businesses, and YouTube content creation.

Historically, about half of the grant recipients have indicated they would like to carry on in business. In fact, about 20 per cent of recipients continue operating their business on a part-time basis. There are usually about 20 applicants and seven grants available. One application for 2024 has already been approved so there are six spaces remaining. Applicants are encouraged to submit early.

“This year, we’ve seen an explosion of interest in the Summer Company program from students looking to spend their summer exploring entrepreneurship and learning how to handle running their own business in a time that will present multiple challenges for them to overcome,” said Holly Mortimer, SPCB business advisor.

The Stratford Perth Centre for Business runs events throughout the year to support business and connect entrepreneurs. It also offers individual consultations and advice and is the access point for funding and programs to support start-up and established businesses.

For more information on this program and to apply, visit <https://www.stratfordperthbusiness.ca>. The application deadline is May 17, 2024.

## Stratford offering free income tax clinics for low-income households

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

department are Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. An appointment time will be provided for document delivery between March 8 and 14, and further

instructions will be provided when registering.

There is no fee for the income tax clinic.

# Perth County approves 12.31 per cent tax levy increase for 2024

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

ue to work towards maintaining current service levels and addressing corporate priorities while striving to ensure resiliency, sustainability and accountability from the corporation.

“We took a refreshed approach to the development of our streamlined budget package this year. The county is experiencing budget pressures similar to those of other municipalities across the province. This year, inflationary pressures were the primary source of increased expenses across all service areas.”

The 2024 Budget was initially presented to council in December 2023 and then later, the treasurer delivered capital and operating budget presentations over several council meetings in January.

A dedicated capital levy increase of 1.06 per cent was approved to continue to move the county’s asset management plan forward.

The operational levy increase of 11.25

per cent will ensure the maintenance of the current service levels and address corporate priorities.

“Council is confident that this budget supports the continued excellent programs delivered by the county,” said county Warden Rhonda Ehgoetz. “I look forward to seeing the completion of some exciting projects in the county in 2024.”

Some of those projects include the completion of the courthouse campus, completion of the new Official Plan, road, bridge and culvert replacement projects, public works and paramedic fleet vehicle replacements, and the regional automated external defibrillators (AED) program.

“Staff work hard each day to deliver efficient and effective services across Perth County,” said county CAO Lori Wolfe. “All of our programs and services are connected back to the goals and objectives of the county’s strategic plan, and we appreciate council’s support of that vision and the work we do.”

## BARGAINS AND DEALS SOURCE FLOORING

**IN STOCK** **BARGAINS & DEALS**

13" X 13" PORCELAIN TILES

FROM **69¢** /SQ. FT. REG. 3.99

**IN STOCK** **BARGAINS & DEALS**

12" X 24" PORCELAIN TILES

FROM **99¢** /SQ. FT. REG. 3.99

**IN STOCK** **BARGAINS & DEALS**

HANDSCRAPED LAMINATE

FROM **\$159** PER SQ. FT. REG. 4.99

**IN STOCK** **BARGAINS & DEALS**

SUBWAY TILES

FROM **\$199** PER SQ. FT. REG. 3.99

**IN STOCK** **BARGAINS & DEALS**

LUXURY VINYL PLANKS 5MM THICK

FROM **\$149** PER SQ. FT. REG. 4.99

**IN STOCK** **BARGAINS & DEALS**

LOOSE LAY LUXURY VINYL 5MM THICK

FROM **\$199** PER SQ. FT. REG. 5.99

**IN STOCK** **BARGAINS & DEALS**

3/4" THICK X 4" WIDE HARDWOOD

FROM **\$399** PER SQ. FT. REG. 8.99

**VINYL & LAMINATE MOULDINGS**

100'S OF COLOURS IN STOCK!

**IN STOCK** **BARGAINS & DEALS**

HARDWOOD STAIRTREAD

FROM **\$49.99** EACH

**NO TAX!**

5' X 8" AREA RUGS STARTING FROM **\$99**

NOT EXACTLY AS SHOWN

**FULLY STOCKED! BIGGEST ON THE BLOCK!**



1362 VICTORIA ST N. KITCHENER  
MON-FRI 9AM-8PM SAT 9-6 SUN 10-5



### Dance The Summer Away

**ON STAGE DANCE STUDIO**

WHERE DANCING IS FUN FOR EVERYONE

## Day Camps

For ages 3+  
(we are running 8 weeks this Summer)  
**SPRING/SUMMER 6 WEEK PROGRAMS**  
Evening classes for age 2 - Adult beginning at the end of May

Registration is now open!

Check out our website to register [www.onstagedance.ca](http://www.onstagedance.ca) or contact us at [info@onstagedance.ca](mailto:info@onstagedance.ca)

**SUBMIT YOUR LETTER TO THE EDITOR TO US!**  
CALL 519-655-2341 OR EMAIL [STRATFORDTIMES@GMAIL.COM](mailto:STRATFORDTIMES@GMAIL.COM)

# STRATFORD TIMES

Stratford's Community Newspaper

Established 2021

The Stratford Times is published twice per month (the second Friday and fourth Friday) and is free to all citizens either in print format or online at stratfordtimes.com. The newspaper is published by Grant Haven Media, a local business who also publishes the Goderich Sun, St. Marys Independent, Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette and Woodstock Ingersoll Echo.

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

www.stratfordtimes.com

## Publisher

Stewart Grant

## Business Development

Heather Dunbar

## Regional Editor

Galen Simmons

## Editor

Amanda Modaragamage

## Graphic Design / Layout

Sarah Cairns

## Administrative

Wendy Lamond, June Grant, Cindy Boakes

## Advertising Inquiries

Contact stratfordtimes@gmail.com

or call 519-655-2341

## Contributors

Spencer Seymour, Betty-Jo Belton, Julia Schneider, Gary West, Paul Knowles, Emily Stewart, Lisa Chester, Fred Gonder, April Taylor, Sheila Clarke, Irene Roth, Lauren Eedy, Lee Griffi, Stuart Lender, Thomas R. Verny, Sydney Goodwin, Kristen Parker  
(If interested in contributing to the Stratford Times, send us a note at stratfordtimes@gmail.com)



@StratfordTimesNewspaper



@stratford\_times

**Letters to the Editor:** Please email to stratfordtimes@gmail.com, or send to our physical office at the St. Marys Independent, PO Box 2310, 36 Water Street South, St. Marys, ON N4X 1A2.

Proud member of the  
Ontario Community  
Newspaper Association



Funded by the  
Government  
of Canada



# Stratford Times nominated for General Excellence Award

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Last week, the Ontario Community Newspaper Association (OCNA) announced their award finalists for the Better Newspaper Competition (BNC) Awards.

The OCNA is proud to recognize the outstanding work produced each week by member newspapers and recognizes this with yearly awards in several categories highlighting excellence in local news coverage.

For the first time, the Stratford Times newspaper was selected in the "General Excellence Award" category for our circulation of 2,000 to 6,499 newspapers bi-weekly. We were nominated alongside the Fort Francis Times and the Eganville Leader.

We also want to congratulate our sister paper, the St. Marys Independent, on their nomination for "Best Sports Section", where Spencer Seymour's sports coverage is unlike anything else.

The award winners will be announced at a later date during a virtual presentation.

"It was wonderful to hear of our nomination, especially as we're still a relatively young newspaper," said Stewart Grant, Publisher of the Stratford Times. "We've been fortunate to have had so many talented people contribute to our paper - a great cross section of the community. I think the best is yet to come, but I'm very proud of our Stratford Times team and what we've been able to do so far to add to local journalism in the Stratford area."



## GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

In the true spirit of giving, the Stratford Arts and Culture Collective (SACC) was thrilled to announce that thanks to the community's generous support, they raised \$7,708 during their Stratford Christmas event. The money will be divided equally between Optimism Place and Shelterlink Youth Services. Photo: Barb Cottle (Shelterlink Youth Services), Nancy Preston (Optimism Place), Cate Trudeau (Shelterlink Youth Services)

## CORRECTION

"Regarding an article about Hidden Acres that was published a few weeks ago, Hidden Acres wanted to clarify that United Way Perth Huron has noted that the

support that Hidden Acres received was through the Community Services Recovery Fund and is not considered a grant but an investment by the Government of Canada."

# STRATFORD TIMES

## Guiding Principles

1. Everyone has a story
2. The news should be free for all to enjoy
3. Good news beats bad news
4. A Newspaper should be a community effort (contribute to your local paper!)
5. Newspapers document history
6. Newspapers strengthen communities
7. Advertisers, big or small, should profit from their ads (meaning sensible ad rates)
8. Newspapers should be locally-owned and operated

# Students in Huron Perth may be suspended if vaccine records are not up-to-date

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Huron Perth public health (HPPH) has reviewed the immunization records of all students attending elementary or secondary school in Huron-Perth, and more than 5,000 records are incomplete, meaning students are either missing required immunizations or their immunizations have not been reported to public health.

This accounts for approximately 39 per cent of all students in the region.

Records are usually reviewed annually, but because of the amalgamation of the Huron County and Perth District health units in 2019 and the COVID-19 pandemic, HPPH is just completing record reviews now.

“COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and

a focus on pandemic response limited the ability of health units and primary care providers to offer routine immunizations,” said Jennifer Beaver, a public-health nurse with the immunizations team. “Many students missed getting their routine immunizations as a result.”

Students with incomplete immunization records may be suspended from school under the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA), and HPPH is asking parents to check vaccine records as soon as possible to confirm.

With teens being one of the age groups affected by out-of-date vaccine records, HPPH will be holding vaccination clinics at local high schools for high-school students to catch up on their missing vaccines.

The dates and locations of the high-

school clinics are listed in the immunization letter sent home with students.

HPPH will also hold catch-up immunization clinics for all age groups at its Stratford office, located at 653 W. Gore St.

Parents who receive a letter from HPPH regarding their child’s immunization records are asked to report vaccine status to HPPH if vaccines are, in fact, up to date.

Parents with children who are not current with their immunizations can book an appointment with their primary care provider or HPPH but Katherine Horst, BSc, MPH and Communications Coordinator at Huron Perth Public Health notes it’s important to still update HPPH regarding vaccines given.

“Parents often think that if their child is immunized at their healthcare provider’s office, HPPH automatically gets notified.

Unfortunately, in Ontario, electronic medical records don’t connect electronically to our provincial immunization database, so it is a parent’s/legal guardian’s responsibility to report their child’s immunizations to their local public health unit.”

HPPH asks parents to respond by Mar. 4 to avoid a suspension notice. In late April, HPPH will mail suspension notices to students without proof of up-to-date immunizations. Suspensions will begin on May 23.

The immunizations team expects a high volume of calls over the next month and requests patience from parents as it works to update everyone’s records as quickly as possible.

To book an appointment with HPPH, call 1-888-221-2133 ext. 3558 or visit them online, at [www.hpph.ca/icon](http://www.hpph.ca/icon).

# Perth County Economic Development Shines: Double win at EDCO Awards for Innovations in Agriculture and Housing Initiatives

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Perth County economic development and tourism division received two awards of excellence at the 67th annual Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) Conference and Showcase in Toronto for two recent projects: the Perth County Farms to Stratford Tables and Perth County Full House Tour.

On Feb. 8, the EDCO honoured Perth County, recognizing outstanding projects that served as examples and set the stage for future economic-development best practices throughout Ontario.

“Winning these awards is really a testament to the county’s commitment to innovative and impactful projects that contribute to our local economy but also can set a standard for best practices and economic development across Ontario,” said County tourism officer Ashley Lansink. “The EDCO awards and these projects can really act as inspiration and motivation for continuous improvement, encouraging Perth County to stay innovative and dedicated to driving positive economic-development outcomes.”

The first project that earned recognition for Perth County was Perth County Farms to Stratford Tables in the community economic development rural award category. The project offered a look inside produce, meat and egg farms across Perth County and how these fresh ingredients end up on diners’ plates in local restaurants.

This initiative was possible through a partnership with Destination Stratford.

“The Perth County Farms to Stratford Tables initiative was a wonderful example of what’s possible through creative and impactful collaboration, especially for



## EDCO AWARD DOUBLE WIN

Perth County Economic Development team takes home two awards. Ashley Lansink, Justin Dias, Maggie Kerr, Meredith Forget - Perth County Economic Development and Tourism Division Staff - bring home two awards at this year’s EDCO award ceremony.

projects where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts,” said Zac Gribble, executive director of Destination Stratford. “We’re thrilled with the results and look forward to future collaborative destination marketing and development projects with Perth County Tourism that benefit our entire region.”

The second recognized project was the Perth County Full House Tour, which earned Perth County the resident attraction rural award.

“The [Perth County Full House Tour]

Farm Hop Tour.

Meredith Forget, manager of economic development and tourism at the county, presented the initiative as a panellist at the conference’s Empowering Rural Ontario: Fostering Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Sustainable Economic Development session.

“We wanted to get creative and try to make sure that people who might not otherwise be able to take tours like this would have the opportunity to participate, and that’s exactly what we saw, and that’s exactly what we heard from attendees,” said Lansink. “Participants told us this tour meant everything to them as they could participate, despite different barriers they might face.”

Though the awards were presented to the Perth County economic development and tourism division, Lansink says it really takes the whole community to pull large-scale projects like these together. She notes her gratitude for community partnerships and connections throughout Perth County and Stratford.

“Partnership was really at the heart of our success for these awards. All of these partnerships were very important. Although we were there to pick up the award, it’s really an award for everyone who was involved,” she said.

“Perth County’s economic development and tourism division is thankful for these EDCO awards, recognizing our success is rooted in strong partnerships and local collaboration,” added Forget. “Building on this momentum, our team is actively engaged in developing exciting initiatives for 2024, aiming to advance destination marketing and foster economic growth with a focus on inclusivity, innovation and sustainability.”

project provided a forum for all levels of government staff, builders and developers to discuss how we can best work together to build more homes across Perth County,” said Lansink.

“This project was unique to Perth County. It’s something that we thought we’d try out because, when it comes to housing solutions, sometimes you have to get creative. It ended up being a major success.”

Perth County was also recognized as a finalist in the Inclusive community based initiative award category for its Mystery

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

# Perth-Wellington MP John Nater's office addresses concerns over Ukrainian refugee status

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Multicultural Association of Perth Huron raised alarm bells last month over questions related to Ukrainian refugee status as many have been led to believe that status will expire and those without could be sent back to Ukraine.

Geza Wordofa, president of the multicultural association, said at a recent press conference he is worried those whom the association has supported will not be able to stay in Canada and they will be sent away from a country in which they've started to build a new home.

"It's an emergency; we need to be sure that Ukrainians are safe here in Canada and can continue to live here without being worried they will have to return to their country. It's not right. It's not fair," Wordofa said.

Tim Sparks, executive assistant at the office of Perth-Wellington MP John Nater, attended the event and said the confusion about Ukrainians being sent away from Canada is simply untrue and he wanted to clear the



air that those living in Canada can continue to do so.

"We have heard from many groups that there is a level of concern within our new Ukrainian newcomers about how the government will be extending, viewing, or allowing them to stay," Sparks said. "We're hearing it from multiple groups and we're not sure why there is such a level of uncertainty. It shouldn't be there."

"There is a process in place that by March 31, if this paperwork is submitted, the Ukrainians who came here under the original emergency transit plan can extend for up to three years. (They) can extend their work permits. (They) can extend their study permits for their children."

Sparks said Ukrainians can extend their stay in Canada for up to 3 years as long as their passports or other travel documents,

including biometrics, are valid the entire time.

He said Ukrainians may also be able to apply to extend their visitor status in Canada with valid temporary resident status as long as that person is a Ukrainian national or a non-Ukrainian family member of a Ukrainian national.

Those looking to extend their stay must be in Canada with valid temporary resident status under the Canada-Ukraine

Authorization for Emergency Travel program (CUAET). If eligible, they can apply to extend their visitor status in Canada and are exempt from paying the visitor-record processing fee or the biometrics fee.

Settlement services are also available to all Ukrainians and their family members in Canada until March 31, 2025.

As of Oct. 23, 2023, Ukrainians can apply for the new permanent residency pathway for if they are in Canada and are the family members of a Canadian citizen or permanent resident.

Those wanting more information on the process are asked to visit Nater's office in person at 59 Lorne Ave. E., Unit A in Stratford, or call his office at 519-273-1400. More information can also be found at [www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/ukraine-measures/extend.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/ukraine-measures/extend.html) and [www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/service-delivery/ukraine/cuaet-canada-trv-extensions.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/service-delivery/ukraine/cuaet-canada-trv-extensions.html).



**SOUTH EASTHOPE**  
MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the SOUTH EASTHOPE MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY

Notice is hereby given that the 152nd Annual Meeting of South Easthope Mutual Insurance Company will be held at **Grace United Church, 116 Woodstock Street South, Tavistock, Ontario, on Friday March 8, 2024** at 1:30 p.m.

The meeting will commence with a presentation "Managing Severe Weather Risks" by Glenn McGillivray, from the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction.

The business portion will follow this special presentation for the purposes of:

1. Receiving and approving the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Corporation held March 3, 2023.
2. Receiving the Auditor's Report and Financial Statement for the year ended December 31, 2023.
3. Appointing Auditors for the 2024 fiscal year.
4. Electing three directors, each for a term of three years.

Any member wishing to seek election or re-election as a director must have filed their intention to stand for election in writing with the Secretary of the Corporation at least thirty days in advance of the Annual Meeting.

A complete version of the audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2023 are available for viewing on the company website at [www.southeasthope.com](http://www.southeasthope.com). A member may also request a copy by written request at least 14 days before the Annual Meeting.

Jennifer R. Kearsey, CIP – President & CEO  
For the Board of Directors

## TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH AND YOUR PAIN

You can do it. We can help.

**FREE**  
Workshop  
In Stratford  
Starts March 19  
Register Now!

Are you living with chronic pain? If so, this workshop is for you

### Topics include:

- ▶ Dealing with difficult emotions
- ▶ Healthy eating
- ▶ Communicating with your health care providers
- ▶ Getting active safely
- ▶ Managing pain and fatigue
- ▶ And more

To register for a workshop :  
**519-421-5691 or 1-855-463-5692**  
[info@swselfmanagement.ca](mailto:info@swselfmanagement.ca) or  
[www.swselfmanagement.ca](http://www.swselfmanagement.ca)



# Host families needed for international students staying in Stratford, St. Marys

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

A company that works to bring international high school students to study at Canadian schools and experience what life has to offer here is looking for local families to provide lodging and help foster truly Canadian experiences for students that will be attending Avon Maitland District schools starting in September.

MLI Homestay, a division of MLI Education Group, is specifically looking for families in Stratford, St. Marys, Goderich and Listowel to volunteer as host families, something MLI community engagement and social media specialist Jodi Anderson says is crucial to international students getting the most of their stay in Canada.

“They’re basically part of the family,” Anderson said. “They need their own bedroom ... they make their own breakfast and usually their own lunch, but hopefully they have dinner together and just integrate in Canadian life. It helps them with their language; obviously they gain so much English in just communicating (with the host family). The family also helps with their independence in navigating wherever they live.

“Some kids come and they’re in Van-

couver, B.C., or Toronto, but a lot of them come and actually really want to have a more rural experience. We’re seeing the program grow in Avon Maitland ... because kids want to be in just not as busy a place.”

Students typically stay with their host families for anywhere between three and 12 months. A large part of the experience international students look for while in Canada is the ability to participate in Canadian life with their host family. This includes enjoying various foods they have heard or read about, participating in the weekly family routine, and extracurricular activities they may not have at home such as skating, ice fishing, skiing, hiking through a forest, or even going to a local supermarket to see the various foods we have on our shelves.

Anderson said families are fully compensated for all food expenses incurred by their students and the students come to Canada with their own spending money.

“Families can come in all shapes and sizes. It could be a single mom, it could be a couple with a young kid or high-school kids, or empty nesters, or they’re retired. Basically, students really just need to have their own private bedroom with a comfy bed, a window and access to the bathroom,” she said.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

## WELCOME TO CANADA

MLI Homestay is looking for Stratford and area families to volunteer as host families for international students who will be attending Avon Maitland District schools in September. Pictured is a group of international students that stayed with families in the area this past school year.

MLI Homestay is looking for people to apply to be primary host families as well as respite hosts who can step in as a back-up and provide housing in the event a primary host family has something come up that prevents them from fulfilling their duties.

The company is looking for families to apply now so it can begin matching families with students in April and May, well ahead of the start of the school year in September.

For more information and to apply to be a host family, [www.mlihomestay.com](http://www.mlihomestay.com).



(COMMUNITY LIVING STRATFORD AND AREA PHOTO)

## PANCAKE SUPPER

Community Living Stratford and Area hosted its annual Pancake Tuesday supper Feb. 13. Pictured from left are Dianne S., Community Living Stratford and Area executive director Trevor McGregor, Nathan and John.

## Weekend Quiz

1. Worship of Krishna is observed by which Religious Faith?
2. From which country does Gouda cheese originate?
3. What was Disney's first animated movie?
4. What sport is dubbed the "king of sports"?
5. In little red riding hood, who does the wolf dress up as?
6. Area 51 is located in which U.S state?
7. What is the loudest animal on Earth?
8. In what type of matter are atoms most tightly packed?
9. Pikachu is from what fictional universe?
10. For what movie did Steven Spielberg win his first Oscar for best director?

This week's answers are found on pg. 27

**SHOP LOCAL.**

**SAVE LOCAL** 

Support businesses that keep your community and its newspaper thriving

# Seedy Sunday is back at the Local Community Food Centre

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

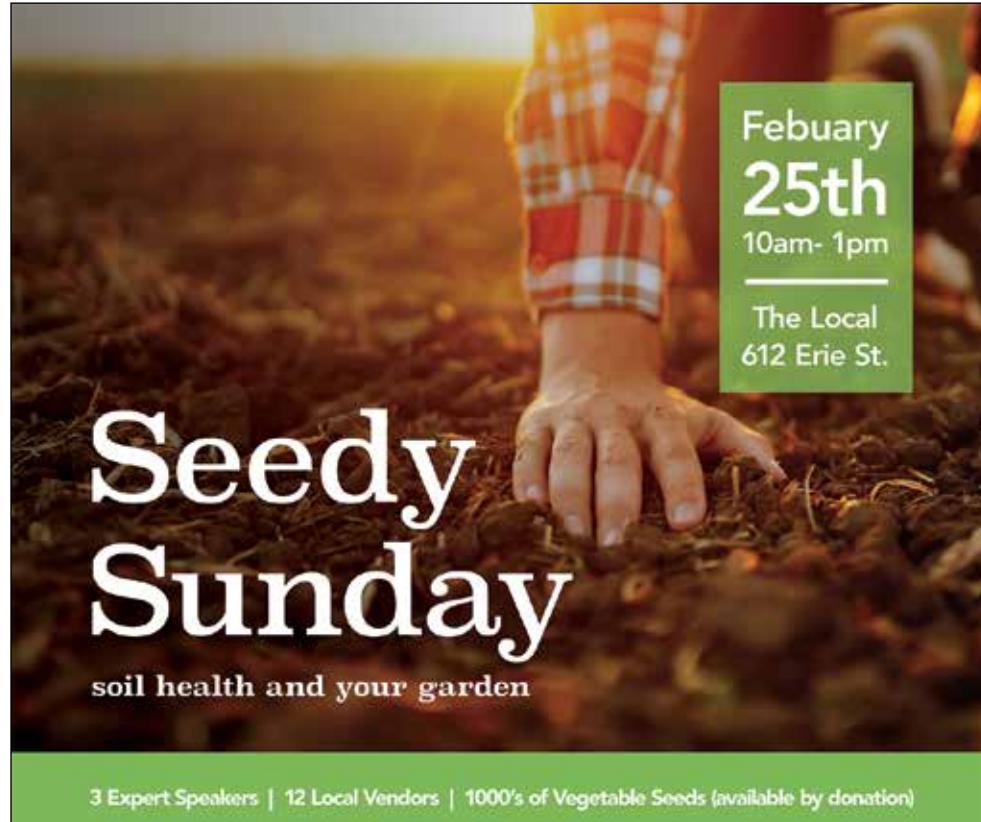
The popular Seedy Sunday is coming back to the Local Community Food Centre with a focus on soil health and home gardens.

At the event, which runs Feb. 25 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., attendees can expect a full, three hours of learning about agriculture and sustainable gardening practices, all while participating in a seed exchange with seed packs made by the Local's Green Team.

This is a drop-in event and attendees do not need to sign up beforehand. They only need to be prepared with questions and be ready to learn about all things gardening.

"The day is for anyone interested in healthy food and learning more about implementing change in our community," said Lucas Tingle, garden educator at the Local. "We need to rethink gardening. We want to focus on growing healthier, more sustainable food."

During the event, there will be a speaker series starting at 10:30 a.m. in which three experts will discuss home and large-scale gardening topics. Tingle says the panel of speakers will be of interest to anyone curious about growing healthy, locally grown food or having a future in which their kids



can have access to healthy food.

Spencer Zehr from AG Sol will discuss soil sampling for the home gardener; Wolf-

gang Pfenning from Pfenning's Organic & More will speak on organic growing and soil-health strategies; and Sophie Foster

from Rising Roots Farm will discuss ecological gardening for the home gardeners.

Among the speakers, there will also be 12 unique, local vendors including the Stratford and District Horticultural Society, the Stratford and Area Master Gardeners, and the Stratford Public Library, along with others that can answer questions about worm fermentation, soil sampling, seeds and much more.

"There will be vendors there with products relevant to the day who can answer any questions. If they can't, they will know who to put you in touch with," Tingle said. "If people want to get a soil sample for the home garden, kits will also be available."

This year, the Local Community Food Centre will also operate a special Sunday Market for everyone to stop in and pick up fresh, local produce at reduced costs. The market is also open on weekdays for those looking for healthy food at a good price.

Lucy Dillinger, the Local Community Food Centre's community chef, is fixing up a grab-and-go lunch attendees can bring home or eat while they listen to the speaker series.

For more information, visit the Local Community Food Centre's Facebook page or stop in at the Local and chat with the friendly staff.

# Stratford architect wins bronze at International Design Awards

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A Stratford architect received bronze at the 2023 International Design Awards (IDA) competition for his work on the Festival Hydro Inc. building at 187 Erie St.

The IDA recognizes, celebrates and promotes exceptional design visionaries and works to discover emerging talent in architecture, interior, product, graphic and fashion design worldwide.

Michael Wilson of Michael A Wilson Architect in Stratford earned bronze for his interior design of the Festival Hydro building, which aimed to bring as much natural light into the interior of the space while addressing the increase of workstations, acoustic and visual privacy, and more public space.

Wilson, originally from Toronto, moved to Stratford while he was in high school before returning to Toronto to study Architecture at



## PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

Michael Wilson's outside-the-box thinking led to a bronze medal at the International Design Awards for local Architect

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

the University of Toronto.

"I always liked making things, and I always loved art and mathematics. I think I knew pretty early on what I wanted to do," he told the Times in a recent interview.

While studying in Toronto, Wilson took time to dabble in guitar making and took his time completing his education. He notes there were also educational differences with the school's philosophical teachings that, at the time, pushed him to take another year of technical

teaching on top of an already lengthy degree.

"It was nine years of education. Some of those were years off doing guitars and working in construction where I gained experience," Wilson said. "It was a fantastic education as critical thinking was most taught above the mechanics of building. For that, we have the rest of our lives"

Using the philosophical approach that won Wilson bronze in the world competition, he was able to transform the dated space – originally designed by Gordon Richie in 1959 – to accommodate the ever-changing economy.

"We explored a lot of options; the public administration, the IT department, accounting and engineering each outgrowing their former spaces. With changes to technology,

we needed to rethink each space to improve the various functions throughout the various departments"

The original lobby space was much larger than needed today. Because of online payments and phone or chat customer-service options, an outdated, large lobby was transformed into office space while maintaining the structure and design of the original design.

The four new radial perimeter offices where the former lobby used to be, defined by a stunning curved wall, will now allow natural light to enter the main reception area while maintaining the original 1950s aesthetic.

New desks in the main office space will now provide acoustic privacy, maintaining visual connection and voice with administration staff while natural light reaches deep within the interior of the circular room for all staff to enjoy.

Better space utilization was achieved throughout the building, and all desks and work areas retained an open-concept feel while still maintaining privacy for those working within the space.

"The renovations to the Festival Hydro Administration building have been very well received by staff, visitors, and customers," said Jeff Graham P.Eng. President and CEO Festival Hydro Inc.. "Michael did a fantastic job designing for accessibility, security and our business needs while balancing our tight budget and getting great results in form, function, and aesthetics. We are thankful for Michael's creativity and his ability to move the project forward; he is very deserving of the International Design Award and a remarkably talented Architect."

**Maximize your return.**

**Conservative Advice for Intelligent Decisions**



Donna L. Hinz



**Franklin E. Hinz**

196 Ontario Street  
Stratford, Ontario N5A 3H4

519-273-1633 franklinehinz.com

# Stratford Intermediate School students learn about trades



The Avon Maitland District School Board recently hosted its two-night Trades and Tapas program at the Pathways Innovation Centre at Stratford Intermediate School. Over both nights, high-school students learned about co-op, tech education, the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, dual credits, the Specialist High Skills Major program, the world of apprenticeships and what families should know in order to set their children up for success while pursuing a career in the skilled trades. Pictured, students learn how to make pickled red onions from Stratford District Secondary School culinary teacher Andrew Mavor.



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTOS)

Grade 11 Stratford District Secondary School student Hannah Young shows off the smoked pork tenderloin she and her fellow Trades and Tapas program participants learned to make.

# Salvation Army celebrate Kettle Campaign success in Stratford, St. Marys

GARY WEST

*Times Correspondent*

The hundreds of volunteers that make the Salvation Army a success were honoured at a reception in Stratford last week for the countless volunteer hours put in before Christmas.

Local Salvation Army Kettle Campaign organizers said it was one of their best years, raising a total \$374,846.84 in 2023. The local Kettle Campaign ran from Nov. 14 to Dec. 23 in Stratford, Mitchell and St. Marys.

“The program could not operate without the caring volunteers that return year after year,” said Jennifer Morris, the Salvation Army’s local community and family ser-

vices manager.

She thanked everyone for manning the kettles over a total of 582 hours across various locations in all three municipalities during the Christmas season.

The money collected helps to support the Salvation Army food bank, back-to-school programs, the Christmas hamper program and the mobile food bank among others.

The Salvation Army’s mission is to be an innovative partner, mobilized to share hope wherever there is hardship, building communities that are just, and know the love of Jesus.

Their Core values are hope, service, dignity and stewardship.

(GARY WEST PHOTO)

## SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN

Pictured at the Salvation Army volunteer reception in Stratford last week are Perth-Wellington MPP Mathew Rae, Leeta Currah of family services, manager of community and family services Jennifer Morris, and Salvation Army officer Elaine Honchersky.



# STRATFORD **TIMES**

Sebringville Esso  
 Dave's Diner - Sebringville  
 Stratford-Perth Museum  
 Cozyn's  
 Stratford Rotary Complex  
 No Frills  
 Sobey's  
 Wightman  
 Shoppers Drug Mart  
 Tim Hortons  
 Mornington Variety  
 Buzz Stop

Union Barber  
 Stratford Public Library  
 HH Delea  
 Balzacs Coffee  
 Queen's Inn  
 Arden Park Hotel  
 The Bruce Hotel  
 Stratford Motor Products  
 Stratford Legion  
 Festival Marketplace  
 Stratford Nissan  
 Stratford Subaru

Peavey Mart  
 Stratford Honda  
 Walmart  
 Shakespeare Variety  
 Shakespeare Brewery  
 Shakespeare Esso  
 Joe's Variety  
 Zehrs  
 Food Basics  
 Stratford Variety  
 Foodland  
 Freeland's Diner

# Pick Up Locations

Stratford Hyundai  
 Stratford Chamber of Commerce  
 A.N.A.F.  
 McDonald's - Erie St  
 Expressway Ford  
 Strickland's Toyota  
 Stratford KIA  
 Fix Auto  
 Erie Street Esso  
 Stratford Medical Pharmacy  
 Erie Convenience  
 Stratford Mazda

Stratford Hospital  
 The Livery Yard  
 The Parlour Restaurant & Inn  
 Erie Convenience  
 United Way Perth Huron  
 AJ's Hair / Festival Square / Features  
 Joe's Diner  
 The Urban Barber  
 Graham Energy - Hwy #7  
 Delmar Foods

# Lights On Stratford sets the city aglow: record-breaking attendance at this year's festival

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Lights On Stratford festival brought in more than 4,000 locals and out-of-town visitors per day this year for their shoulder-season attractions in the downtown core and throughout the city.

Lights On Stratford opened on Dec. 15, 2023, and ran for 18 days this year. Visitors were invited to experience firsthand all Stratford has to offer through light installations throughout the city, as well as other family-related activities such as public skating and the free hop-on-hop-off bus.

"Our team is excited and proud about what was accomplished this winter," said Zac Gribble, Destination Stratford executive director and festival director for Lights On Stratford. "The community and patron feedback has been tremendously positive."

The daily average attendance during Lights On shot up from just over 1,800 patrons last year to more than 4,200 people this year, all within a shorter festival.

"The average daily attendance more than doubled compared with last year," said Gribble. "There was a significant overall ridership increase on Stratford Transit's free hop-on-hop-off shuttle bus service, which is really remarkable given that this winter's festival had 18 produc-



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

tion days versus 45 production days last year."

Overall, the Dandelion exhibit was the most-popular attraction, bringing more than 915 people to Market Square. Space Island and the Light Wall installation were a close second.

This year's free public skating saw over 200 visitors at the Alman Arena.

tourism partner for the Stratford Perth Museum," added museum general manager Kelly McIntosh. "We've never seen so many visitors in the shoulder season. We are happy to report that Lights On Stratford is responsible for generating over 50 per cent of the museum's seasonal holiday visitors."

After the city's tourism organization targeted Kitchener-Waterloo, London and Toronto through external marketing campaigns, 36 per cent of attendees were from within 20 km of Stratford, 48 per cent were from within 99 km of the city, and 16 per cent of visitors were from more than 100 km away.

As a result of poor weather conditions, closing weekend was impacted by a significant snowstorm with travel advisories in effect. This did cut down on local and out-of-town attendance, however Gribble is certain Lights On Stratford will not only help Stratford's shoulder season travel but also build the community by giving locals a reason to come together during the cold, winter months.

"It takes a village to build a lights festival, and Stratford's community absolutely came together to make it happen. Lights On Stratford continues to build momentum, and our team is already busy planning for a spectacular fifth-annual winter festival of lights to keep Stratford shining bright next winter," he said.

"In addition to the main lights exhibits, hosting free public-skate dates at the William Allman Arena, silent disco parties at LightWall, a Flash(light) Mob at Market Square, and live music pop-ups at multiple venues brought a whole new energy to the experience and to downtown," said Gribble.

"Destination Stratford is a priceless

**Fitness.  
Fun.  
Results.**



Step inside  
Genuine Fitness, let go of:

- Your endless to-do list
- Your struggles to get fit in the past
- Your stress and tension



**GenuineFitness™**

**Speak with one of our coaches to find out if  
Genuine Fitness is right for you.**

**804 Ontario St., Stratford  
226-779-0548 | genuinefitness.ca**

## CALL FOR BOARD NOMINATIONS 2024

STRATFORD PERTH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
SEEKS CANDIDATES FOR ITS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SPCF is a registered charitable foundation that cares for over \$9M in endowed assets and has provided nearly \$3M in local community grants since 2004.

SPCF is seeking nominees with a broad range of skills and perspectives, community leadership, and professional expertise, and particularly interested to hear from candidates with knowledge and experience in the following areas:

- Strategic leadership and governance, particularly in the charitable sector
- Legal with knowledge of non-profit and charity law
- Finance/Accounting/Investment Management



STRATFORD PERTH  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

Visit [spccf.ca](http://spccf.ca) for more information and to complete the online application form.

**Applications are due March 29, 2024**

# Times Past: The Disappearance of Tom Brown

KIERAN ALBRECHT

*Stratford-Perth Archives High School Co-Op Student*

Following the devastation of World War I, Stratford, a small city with a profound sense of community, celebrated the end of the war. There was excitement about the upcoming additions and renovations to businesses and tourist attractions that would further enhance the charm of the city. And, Tom Brown, a young, handsome, and ambitious native of Stratford, was gaining popularity among the youth and the community as a member of city council or Alderman. In the 1920 municipal election Brown wrote to the electors. He advocated for an economy aligned with progress, vowing to ensure honest and efficient spending of the city's tax dollars. Offering youth, energy and enthusiasm, he pledged to dedicate himself to establishing an honest, economically efficient, and progressive administration.

Tom Brown committed to upholding principles of justice and fairness, advocating for equal rights for all, and showing no favoritism. His popularity steadily grew, and, in 1922 he was elected Mayor of Stratford for the next year. Optimists had plenty of material to bolster their trust in Mayor Brown in 1923. Remarkable achievements during that year included police reports indicating an annual decrease in crime and the completion of highways connecting Stratford and Kitchener. The opening of Ann Hathaway Public School and the establishment of Conception school demonstrated a substantial increase in children's education. In addition, the news of two women joining the Board of Education in the New Year solidified the people's optimism as they welcomed 1924. Immensely popular, Brown returned to office as Mayor by acclamation. His opposition withdrew from the race, fearing defeat to the widely well-liked and charismatic Mayor Brown. An editorial in the local newspaper celebrated the outcome, supporting Brown and portraying him as a man embodying dignity and distinction. The editorial commended him for holding respect and charm in any company, advocating for the needs of Stratford before those in power, and conducting a clean and fair fight.

Mayor Brown's administration promised a safe, progressive, and youthful city—one characterized by consistent and responsible economic spending. The citizens of Stratford re-elected Tom Brown as their Mayor for a third consecutive term in 1925. He then returned to his role as an Alderman and was reelected every year. He was poised to serve the people of Stratford again for 1930.

However, on January 1st, 1930, something peculiar occurred after a New Year's party. Tom Brown vanished into thin air. According to one report, he had left Stratford and driven to Toronto, abandoning his car. This was the last anyone saw of Brown, and his movements became a matter of speculation. Initially, the police treated the investigation as a missing persons case, believing he might be on



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

the run out of fear for his safety. However, they struggled to identify anyone who would pose a threat to the well-liked former Mayor.

But then, Andrew Reinhardt, one of many hardworking and honest locals who had gone into business with Tom Brown, came forward with ground breaking evidence, exposing Brown's dual life. The space where Tom Brown had his law office, now part of Festival Square, housed safety deposit boxes. Brown had maintained a vault in the rear, rising two stories high and filled from floor to ceiling with safety deposit boxes containing his clients' money. Reinhardt discovered that his safety deposit box had been opened, and \$3,000 in first mortgage bonds had been cleared out. It turned out that the affable and well-liked Brown had seemingly absconded with more than \$200,000 of other people's money, as well as leaving behind \$80,000 in unpaid debts. Consequently, the police issued a warrant charging Brown with theft.

Subsequent investigations revealed that Brown had likely been defrauding his clients for years. For example, Brown was responsible for selecting investments for his clients in a company called J.H. Taylor Co. Ltd, a manufacturer of work clothes on King Street, Toronto. As the president of the company, Brown converted his clients' investments into worthless shares of the company, deceiving them with a smile. Other scams included defrauding an individual of \$10,000 in mortgage bonds for worthless vacant lots, mortgaging a young married man's home to another individual, and the local Romeo Odd Fellows Lodge entrusting \$17,000 in Stratford debentures to Brown, money intended for renovations.

Story after story, with all the elements of mystery, corruption, intrigue, betrayal, and double-dealings of a John Grisham novel, revealed that Tom Brown likely possessed the cunning of a two-bit con man. These revelations splashed across the headlines of Canadian newspapers, with accusations that former Mayor Brown had swindled his clients' money and life savings using phony mortgages and stocks in order to support his gambling and drink-

ing addiction and to play the stock market. In the period leading up to the stock market crash in October 1929, fortunes were being made on paper, resulting in many losing everything. I suspect that, due to the stock market crash, Brown planned his "disappearance", absconding with his clients' money before they could take notice.

Four months into the police investigation and search for Tom Brown, authorities in Mexico City discovered a lifeless body wearing a coat bearing his name on an inside label.

He was found dead on May 10th, 1930, at the age of 36. Despite Brown's family and Canadian authorities requesting the body to be returned home for burial, and to definitively identify Brown, the authorities in Mexico claimed they had to act swiftly in burying the body due to the hot climate.

Decades later, David Bradshaw, a native of Stratford and a former Alderman himself, studied unsubstantiated third and fourth-hand accounts to try to solve the mystery. According to these narratives, the body buried by the authorities in Mexico did not belong to Brown. Tales were circulating that Brown had been sighted alive in Switzerland in 1946, and later in San Diego and Miami in 1949. An elderly gentleman, working as a traveling auditor responsible for handling books for several U.S. hotels, claimed to have encountered a suspicious man who identified himself as being from Stratford and on the run. Bradshaw was left convinced that Brown orchestrated his apparent death to escape to a new life with the fortune he had stolen from his former clients.

However, we know Stanley Dawson, the American Consul situated in Mexico City, confirmed the death of Tom Brown to the editorial staff of the Stratford Beacon Herald as events were unfolding. A.L. Glyka, editor of El Hogar, Mexico City, also made a phone call to the Beacon Herald. Glyka was informed of Tom Brown's death and tasked with finding out where the body was and identifying it as Tom Brown if possible. Glyka discovered that Brown's body was in a funeral parlor but was unable to identify the body. Though Glyka hadn't ascertained the fact for certain, he

believed the funeral parlor had told him the truth, with the body bearing a label stating Tom Brown's name. When asked about the cause of death, he stated that he had searched the accident files at the Mexico City police headquarters and found no report of an accident where Tom Brown had been fatally injured. He was unable to learn the exact cause of death from the funeral parlor but expected it was from natural causes. Dawson confirmed this to be true – death from a heart attack.

Bradshaw also pointed out that the body was found in a lavishly furnished apartment in a poor neighbourhood in Mexico City and it would have been incongruous for Brown to draw attention to himself with expensive property. Testimony from a neighbor witnessing a furniture van being loaded at Brown's home on St. Vincent Street in Stratford shortly before his disappearance suggests that Brown had always planned on disappearing with his client's money, explaining where he would have gotten lavish furniture. And, I argue that living in a poor neighborhood, in a run-down apartment, in another country is a genius hiding spot for a well-known wealthy public figure; no one would be looking for him there.

The recurring problem for Ontario authorities at the time was the difficulty to definitively confirm facts as 100% true. The authorities had to follow and re-examine reasonable evidence of true events to answer unsubstantiated questions and rely on the good word of authorities in Mexico City to bring the disappearance of former Mayor Brown to a resolution, leaving the case subject to theories such as Bradshaw's.

The question remains: How did Mr. Brown manage to conceal his double life? Perhaps it was due to his upbringing in a well-respected family, his friendly demeanor, and his significant contributions to the community that led to his election as mayor for three consecutive terms. Many formed strong friendships with Brown, trusting him with their financial affairs. Tom Brown, despite being a con man, demonstrated both good and bad actions, propelling the city toward progressive change while simultaneously robbing his clients. This situation underscores the reality that one never truly knows a stranger. Despite being part of a community that placed trust in strangers based on goodwill, Tom Brown exploited that trust for his own gain.

In conclusion, we may never definitively know the exact circumstances of Tom Brown's life after January 1, 1930. Using reductive reasoning and relative truth, we can find reasonable evidence to uncover true events. The evidence suggests that Tom Brown led a dual life, one as mayor and another as a con man, and authorities discovered his lifeless body in Mexico City on May 10th, 1930, four months after his disappearance, at the age of 36.

*This article is based on information resources available at Stratford-Perth Archives [www.perthcounty.ca/StratfordPerthArchives](http://www.perthcounty.ca/StratfordPerthArchives)*

# Anne Hathaway Retirement Residence residents transform dreams into reality with Green Screen Portrait Program

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A fun and innovative experience at Anne Hathaway Retirement Residence had residents practicing social and personal development while participating in the Green Screens Program in partnership with the Stratford Public Library.

Robyn Godfrey, Adult Collections and Outreach Librarian offered the opportunity for residents to get their pictures taken and edited into any scene they wanted.

The pilot program was meant to engage seniors' imaginations by asking them to picture themselves doing something brave, outrageous, or whimsical.

Participants could choose to 'meet' celebrities, 'go' on adventures, recreate memories of favourite vacations and pets, or pursue their dream jobs.

Godfrey photographed 26 seniors using green screen technology, transforming their wildest dreams into pictures that the residents can now keep forever.

"We hoped this project would give residents something to explore, learn, and happily anticipate in what turned out to be a very dreary January," said Godfrey. "I'm an amateur in photography and green screen editing, but I'm pleased with the results."

The program was a great success. Godfrey said she heard from several participants and family members who were thrilled with the results.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

## SADDLE UP

Dorcas Debus living out her dreams as a cowgirl. Stratford Public Library is making dreams come true for Anne Hathaway Retirement Residence residents.

"Do you realize how happy you've made us?" – a resident at Anne Hathaway Retirement Residence said.

"This has been such a unique and positive initiative, thank-you!" A family mem-

ber of Anne Hathaway Retirement Residence resident said.

Kaitlin Carnegie, Retirement Living Consultant at Anne Hathaway, said the program was unique and fun for everyone.

"One of our residents always wanted to be a cowgirl," she said. "Another resident wanted to be an astronaut, and we had a few who posed with the late Queen and another petting a tiger; it was great."

The aim was to offer residents a fun way to boost social activity, but Carnegie said the program did much more than that.

"[The Green Screens Portraits program] gave residents a confidence boost in the winter. It allowed them to look forward to a program that I think they were not expecting would impact them as much as it did."

"Each resident got a hard copy of all their photos, and when I delivered them, their faces just lit up. They just thought it was the funniest thing ever. They thought it was absolutely amazing."

A reception for the participants and their family members took place at Anne Hathaway's Activities Room on the evening of February 14th, with all the photos on display for viewing.

The photos are now displayed for the community to view in the Stratford Public Library's auditorium.

The Stratford Public Library hopes to run this project again in 2025 in more locations and with more partners.

If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Robyn Godfrey, Adult Collections and Outreach Librarian at 519-271-0220 x132 or rgodfrey@splibrary.ca

## Optimist Club of Downie Inc.

### OPTI-CASH CALENDAR DRAW

Feb. 11 Karin McDougall, Stratford . . . . .	\$50.00
Feb. 12 John & Brenda Bye, Dunchurch . . . . .	\$50.00
Feb. 13 B & M Meadows, St. Pauls . . . . .	\$50.00
Feb. 14 Jim Byatt, Stratford . . . . .	\$50.00
Feb. 15 Kriston Hammond, Kitchener . . . . .	\$50.00
Feb. 16 Fred Olbach, St. Marys . . . . .	\$50.00
Feb. 17 Darrell Moore, St. Marys . . . . .	\$200.00
Feb. 18 Rita Hoogenes, Clinton . . . . .	\$50.00
Feb. 19 Laurie Ross, Glen Williams . . . . .	\$50.00
Feb. 20 Jim & Lori Aitcheson, St. Pauls . . . . .	\$50.00
Feb. 21 Taylor Fluid Systems, Stratford . . . . .	\$50.00
Feb. 22 Dale & Janet McNaught, Edmonton . . . . .	\$50.00
Feb. 23 Payton Knott, St. Marys . . . . .	\$50.00
Feb. 24 Justin Shantz, St. Marys . . . . .	\$200.00

2024 CALENDARS ARE GOING QUICKLY



Franklin E. Hinz

196 Ontario Street, Stratford  
519-273-1633

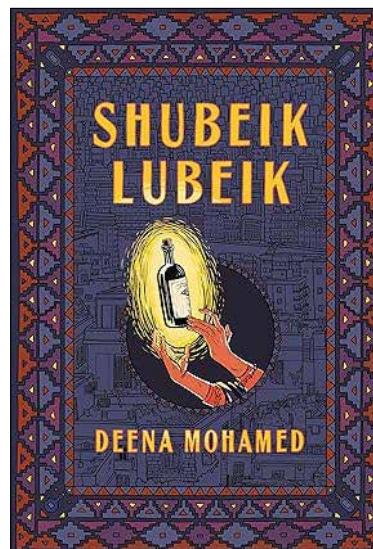
## Book of the Month Club

Shubeik Lubeik by Deena Mohamed  
@SPL: GN FIC Muham

What would you wish for, if you knew your wish would come true? This is the question asked by Deena Mohamed in this imaginative graphic novel, set in an alternative Cairo, where wishes are real, regulated, bottled and licensed.

There are three classes of wish: first class, second class and the banned third class wish (due to their malicious unreliability). Wishes can be tricky and deceptive; the wording has to be just right for optimal results.

The story follows three characters as they each decide to use a First Class wish for different reasons, mainly non-material desires, like forgiveness or health. They each struggle with the ethics of wishing, with discussion of the religious or philosophical elements of a wish. How will it be interpreted, and will it actually give them what they need or want? Their stories cover a wide range of



human experience, and bring up many aspects of the meaning of life, in a way that is accessible and sometimes humorous as well.

The artwork is a lively mix of colour and black and white, dependent on context. There are some extra nice touches – for example, when a wish is opened, it appears as a bubble of Arabic calligraphy. The translation has also left as much of the original unchanged as possible, with the book reading from right to left, as it does in Arabic.

With the engaging artistic style, and the deep themes that the storyline explores, this might be a great choice for any thoughtful reader interested in family stories, the Egyptian setting, or just the artwork itself. It might also raise philosophical questions about what we want, or need, out of life --

and what the right way is to achieve our desires.  
Melanie Kindrachuk,  
Public Service Librarian

HAVE A COMING EVENT COMING UP?

Contact: stratfordtimes@gmail.com or call 519-655-2341

# Avondale's St. Patrick's Day Party filled with a variety of Celtic entertainment

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

Just a few days before St. Patrick's Day, Avondale United Church will host a party filled with singing, dancing and storytelling.

Avondale's annual St. Patrick's Day party will be held at the church starting at 7 p.m. on March 15. The event will feature music from Irish-born tenor Michael Kelly Cavan and Celtic trio Kettle's On, as well as an Irish story written and read by Avondale Rev. Keith Reynolds.

"Anybody who shows up will find quite a variety of Celtic entertainment," said Paul Harris, a member of the church's music series team.

Along with entertainment, the St. Patrick's Day party will also feature

appetizers such as Guinness-soaked meatballs, potatoes and Irish soda bread. Guests can either sip on wine, soft drinks, or Guinness and take photos at the photobooth. Though the main part of the church is used often as a music venue, the party will be held in a smaller community room often used for coffee houses.

"We look at it as a really nice antidote to the winter blahs because, frankly, by the first couple of weeks of March, everybody's pretty much sick of winter," Harris said. "This is just a fun thing to do. We just think it's a good time of year for it to happen."

"And it's very traditional for Avondale," added Karen Brown, another member of the church's music series team and Harris' wife. "We've put on a St. Patrick's party for several years

now. Everybody always has a really good time."

Proceeds from the party will support the Avondale United Church congregation, which runs programs such as the Food Shelf and supports other local community services like the Emily Murphy Centre and the Stratford Connection Centre.

"We support stuff we do ourselves and we also support some of the other good groups in Stratford who are helping people," Harris said. "The more money we have to contribute to that, the more we can accomplish."

Tickets are \$25 and are only available for purchase in advance. They can either be purchased by stopping in at Avondale's office, calling 519-271-7946, or by sending an email to avondaleuc@wightman.ca.



100 Erie St. Stratford  
Independently owned and Operated Brokerage



**SHERRIE ROULSTON**  
Real Estate Broker  
email: sherrieroulston@royallepage.ca  
Direct: 519-272-3578

*A Passion for People*

**SHOP LOCAL. SAVE LOCAL.** 

## Navigate Your Savings Journey: Pre-Owned Marvels, Unmatched Offers!

2022 Nissan Versa



\$ 22,495 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 21,402 KM**

2023 Nissan Kicks



\$ 23,998 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 19,515 KM**

2021 Honda Civic Touring



\$ 28,495 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 46,539 KM**

2022 Mazda CX-9 Touring



\$ 40,999 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 21,998 KM**

2020 Hyundai Ioniq Electric



\$ 27,998 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 33,380 KM**

2019 Nissan Altima



\$ 19,495 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 99,156 KM**

2021 Nissan Sentra



\$ 22,495 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 64,550 KM**

2016 Chevrolet Malibu



\$ 17,888 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 54,005 KM**

2019 Nissan Rogue SL



\$ 24,998 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 66,891 KM**

2019 Ford Mustang GT



\$ 38,998 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 30,964 KM**

2020 Ford Escape Titanium



\$ 33,998 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 10,215 KM**

2021 Dodge Challenger R/T



\$ 48,998 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 15,119 KM**

2022 Mazda 3 GT



\$ 30,998 + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS - 32,150 KM**

\*While every effort is made to ensure accuracy, we are not responsible for any errors and omissions. Please see your dealer for current pricing. Plus tax and licensing. Some terms and conditions may apply.

**BAD CREDIT... NO PROBLEM!. We work with multiple banks and credit unions to get you APPROVED with the LOWEST RATE POSSIBLE! All Credit Approved with \$0 Down.**



2001 Ontario Street, Stratford ON  
519.273.3119  
www.stratfordnissan.com

STRATFORD NISSAN



STORE HOURS SALES: Mon.-Thu. 9:00-8:00; Fri.-Sat. 9:00-6:00 PARTS & SERVICE: Mon.-Sat. 8:00-5:00

# STRATFORD **TIMES** SPORTS

– STRATFORD'S ULTIMATE INDOOR GOLF EXPERIENCE –

**FORE EVERYONE**  
GOLF & MULTISPORT

**RAIN OR SHINE  
IT'S TEE OFF  
TIME!**

Enjoy Wings and a Domestic Pint  
for ONLY \$18.99

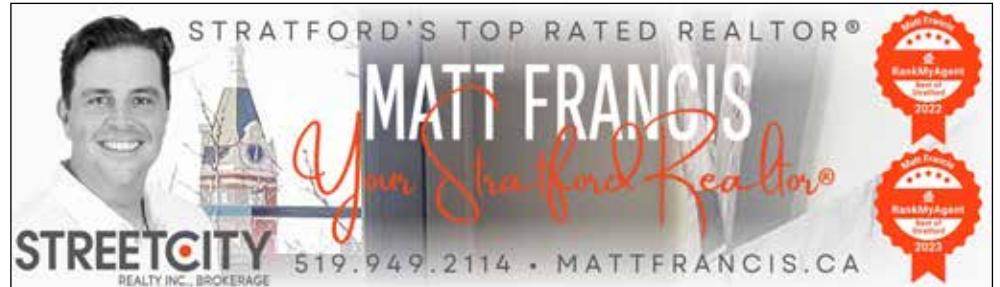
1060 ONTARIO ST., 519-305-5800



STRATFORD'S TOP RATED REALTOR®

**MATT FRANCIS**  
*Your Stratford Realtor®*

STREETCITY REALTY INC., BROKERAGE 519.949.2114 • MATTFRANCIS.CA



## Warriors finding ways to rack up points as playoffs approach

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Times Regional Reporter

Getting points in three straight isn't a bad outcome, but it's especially positive considering three of the Stratford Hunter Steel Ltd. Warriors' five top scorers were largely held off the scoresheet during that stretch.

In their most recent four games, the team leader in points, Carson Harmer, who also is second on the Warriors in goals, found the back of the net just one time while Cole Lewis and Camden Daigle, two of the team's five players with over 40 points, only appeared in three of those four games and neither scored a goal in any of those appearances.

And yet, the Warriors sit ahead of Kitchener-Waterloo Siskins for third place in the Midwestern Conference based on tie-breaker procedure. Additionally, Stratford is just two points back of the Elmira Sugar Kings for second with a game in hand on their rivals from Elmira.

Head coach Dave Williams told the Times he's been pleased with the roster for stepping up to fill in with marquee names either not available for games or not scoring at a high clip.

"Over the past few weeks, we've been battling injuries to several players," said Williams. "With some key guys out, it has been great to see other guys elevate their games and play well while taking on larger roles and making key contributions."

While the last three outings have resulted in five of a possible six points, their game on Feb. 10 against the Brantford Bandits left a sour taste in the Warriors' mouths as the seventh-seeded Bandits stole a 5-2 win from Stratford. The Warriors outshot

Brantford 41-21 in the game, but a 39-save effort by Bandits' netminder Lennart Niese stunted the Warriors' dominance and handed the Warriors a second straight regulation loss after they were shutout by Caledonia earlier in the month.

The Warriors returned home a day later looking to rebound against the high-powered Listowel Cyclones and, this time, it was the Warriors who escaped with the win despite being heavily outshot. The Cyclones, who have clinched first in the Midwest, fired 38 shots at Stratford goalie Matthew Perdue compared to the 25 sent at Listowel's Dixon Grimes.

It took just 34 seconds after the opening faceoff for Joey Brehmer to net his 13th of the season to put Stratford ahead 1-0. Almost exactly 11 minutes later, Harmer found his 25th of the year on a powerplay, sending the Warriors into the first intermission with a 2-0 lead.

For the second consecutive period, the Warriors scored in the opening minute as Tyler Kelly scored the first of two goals he would record in the middle stanza on another powerplay. The Warriors finished the game two-for-two on the man advantage. Ben MacRobbie finally got Listowel on the board before the second intermission and Wylie Birkett got the Cyclones within two in the third, but Perdue and the Warriors held on for a 4-2 win.

The two teams rematched on Family Day and, once again, a good effort by Perdue and a pair of powerplay markers lifted the Warriors past the top-placed Cyclones,

this time by a 3-2 final.

Braydon Stumpf scored a pair while Michael Denney potted his team-leading 30th goal of the season. In the two games combined, meanwhile, Listowel's powerplay went scoreless in seven opportunities.

Williams highlighted several parallels in the Warriors' two victories over Listowel.

"In both games, we got off to a good start and found our game quickly.

We did a good job at getting pucks behind their defence and using our speed to keep them on their

toes. Both of our special teams were excellent. Listowel is well-

coached and plays a very structured game. Any time you are able to battle in the manner in which

we did and win, that should

only help our confidence as we approach the final weeks of the regular season."

In between the games against Listowel, the Warriors hosted the Ayr Centennials on Feb. 16 which saw an element that has been key in many of this year's wins and losses for the Warriors – early period goals.

Brehmer scored for Stratford just over three-and-a-half minutes into the game and Kelly, who has points in five of his last six after a four-game point drought at the beginning of his Warriors' tenure, found the back of the net at the 2:45 mark of the second. Defenceman Evan Hjelholt tallied his first goal as a Warrior in the second frame while Ayr scored once in each of the first two periods.

However, two early goals went against

the Warriors in the final 20 minutes of regulation as the Centennials found the back of the net twice in the first minute and 17 seconds. Ayr held a narrow one-goal lead for over half of the third until Jaxon Broda fired home a powerplay goal to tie the game at four apiece, which sent the game into overtime. Just under four minutes into the extra frame, Reid Forster scored to give the Centennials the 5-4 win.

Coach Williams admitted his team's performance wasn't perfect, but he was satisfied with the team's refusal to quit when they fell behind.

"At this stage of the season, most teams are emphasizing the importance of consistent play in preparation for the playoffs. As a group, we stress and discuss the significance of executing the small details during games. Against Ayr, we felt we needed to do a better job on a couple of their goals managing the puck and having better awareness of our defensive responsibilities. That being said, we were proud of the group and we were able to battle back and earn a much-needed point."

Ironically, the most consistent part of this season for the Warriors has been inconsistency. With the post season just four games away, the bench boss said this is the time for the group to finally find their consistency.

"As we gear up for the playoffs, our primary focus is building our consistency for a full 60 minutes. Success at this time of the year will require all 23 guys to compete and make a contribution to the outcome on a nightly basis. Since August, our team has worked tirelessly for the opportunity to compete for the Cherrey Cup, and we're fully committed to making the most of it."

### GOJHL STANDINGS

#### Midwestern Conference

(Standings through February 18, 2024)

	GP	W	L	OTL	T	PTS
Listowel Cyclones	46	34	9	1	2	71
Elmira Sugar Kings	47	30	15	0	2	62
<b>Stratford Warriors</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>60</b>
KW Siskins	46	27	13	2	4	60
Ayr Centennials	47	28	18	1	0	57
Cambridge Redhawks	46	20	22	3	1	44
Brantford Bandits	45	10	33	2	0	22
Caledon Bombers	47	5	41	0	1	11

### WOSHL STANDINGS

(Standings through February 18, 2024)

	GP	W	L	OTL	T	PTS
<b>Stratford Fighting Irish</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>34</b>
Tillsonburg Thunder	24	16	8	0	2	34
Tilbury Bluebirds	24	15	9	0	1	31
Petrolia Squires	24	15	9	0	0	30
Alvinston Killer Bees	24	14	10	0	2	30
Woodstock Lakers	24	14	10	0	0	28
Strathroy Jets	24	12	12	0	2	26
Elora Rocks	24	10	14	0	2	22
Delhi Flames	24	9	15	0	1	19
Dunnville Aeros	24	8	16	0	3	19
Orangeville Blitz	24	3	21	0	0	6

# Fighting Irish win final four games to clinch first place

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Times Regional Reporter

The Stratford Bentley's Fighting Irish go into the playoffs atop the WOSHL standings after winning their final four games of the regular season.

Stratford's unbeaten quartet of games dates back to Feb. 9 when they earned a 7-4 win over the Tillsonburg Thunder, who finished tied with the Fighting Irish for first in the WOSHL. Stratford won the season series between the two teams and finished with two more regulation wins.

The Fighting Irish's 7-4 win over Tillsonburg began with three Stratford goals within four minutes and 37 seconds midway through the first period, including tallies by Colin Martin, Steven DeGroot and Ray Robbins. Graham Brulotte added another later in the period to give Stratford a 4-0 lead heading into the first intermission.

Tillsonburg roared back to life in the second frame, outscoring the Fighting Irish 3-1. Cameron

Stokes posted the lone Stratford goal of the second, which went on to be the game-winner. The Thunder made it a one-goal deficit just 64 seconds into the period but goals by Brody Smith and Cooper Leitch in the final nine minutes of regulation sealed the victory for the Fighting Irish.

Just one day later, the Fighting Irish were back in action, beginning a back-to-back against the Woodstock Lakers. For the second-straight game, Stratford put up a seven-goal effort that included a four-goal period as they cruised to a 7-1 thrashing of the Lakers. Dylan Buckholz took a starring role, scoring twice as part of a five-point night, while Zack Weir made 40 saves in between the pipes. Leitch posted a hat-trick while Matt Fuller picked up a trio of assists.

After a few days off, the Fighting Irish squared off against Woodstock once again in a make-up game from earlier this year on Feb. 13. A much tighter affair, the two teams were



(FRED GONDER PHOTO)

## FINDS THE BACK OF THE NET

**Matt Fuller #7 sneaks in on the Rocks defense and put a bulge in the twine behind Rocks goaltender Liam Austin #29, a minute and a half in to the first period.**

Stokes tied at two apiece after 40 minutes. Martin and Spencer Mills scored for Stratford. Just one minute and two seconds into the final frame, the Fighting Irish got a goal from Brulotte which held up as the game-winner with Weir once again holding down the fort with a 28-save winning bid.

The final game of the season for Stratford came at home against the Elora Rocks and

gave an exciting conclusion to the campaign with the Fighting Irish downing the Rocks 8-4 and, in the process, securing the top spot in the league. After getting out to a 2-0 lead, the Fighting Irish allowed three straight goals, one of which came in the first minute of the second stanza. Stratford then scored three straight goals of their own.

A late Elora goal in the second made it 5-4 in Stratford's

favour, a score that held for over half of the third until three straight Stratford tallies in the last seven minutes and three seconds of regulation en route to the 8-4 final. Colin Martin had four helpers while Justin Murray posted two goals and an assist and Cameron Stokes scored once and put up two assists. Fuller, Buckholz, Brulotte, Leitch and DeGroot all had two-point nights.

# Stratford Stingers take Gold at 18U Girls Furlani Cup



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

## GOLD AT FURLANI CUP

From L-R Top Row: Coach Chris Parson, Ellen Thorup, Milayna Mulder, Virginia Will, Emelyn Collins, Eva Patterson, Breanna Van Nes, Jenna Lange, Hilary Parson

STEVE WILL

Times Contributor

The Stratford Stingers 18U Volleyball Girls recently won gold in the Furlani Cup held here at the Stratford Rotary Complex on February 10th.

Coach Chris Parson and Assistant Coach Jenna Lange highly praised the team saying, "The ladies really shone today. After a slower start, the team really came together and played at a very high level during the Semi and Final matches."

The day started with the Stingers defeating Simcoe Xtreme Heat in straight sets. The Stingers suffered their only defeat of the day in match two of round-robin play, losing a hard-fought three-set match to Rose City United Red.

The quarter-final playoffs pitted the U18 Stingers against the London Great White Sharks. Setter Pihu Sharma, who is recovering from an injury setback from the start of the season, was solid when called upon to run the offence. The Stingers prevailed

in straight sets, winning 25-23 and 25-18. In set one of the match, veteran left side Milayna Mulder suffered an injury and had to withdraw. This is when Coach Parson said the team really "stepped up to the plate."

"Having an injured player is a test for any team, but we've trained all year to place these ladies into any position on the floor with confidence. They really came together as a team and focused on getting through those two sets. I was very proud of their performance", Parson stated.

The Stingers were matched against a strong Twin Bridges Thunderstruck team from Sarnia in the semi-finals and took the game in straight sets. Lauren McKay, shared Libero duties with Ella Van Bakel; both commanded a solid backrow defence throughout the match. Left-side hitters Summer Emms and Ellen Thorup teamed up with middles Virginia Will and Eva Patterson to mount a relentless offence combined with solid blocks. Right-side hitters Aydrie Groenestege and Breanna Van Nes effectively shut

down the Twin Bridges' Left-side attack and scored consistently throughout the match. The Stingers advanced to the gold medal match after 25-23 and 25-22 victories against Twin Bridges.

The Gold medal game saw the Stingers rematched with Rose City. Once again, the defensive effort was led by Liberos Van Bakel and Team Captain Lauren McKay, with Ella Spicer joining them in the back row to provide a dominant defence in addition to some stellar offensive play earlier in the day. Mulder rejoined the team for the final sets, and Setter Emelyn Collins utilized her offensive players to overwhelm the Rose City defence, helping to lead the Stingers to gold, winning both sets straight with scores of 25-20 and 26-24.

Coach Parson summed the day up by saying, "The girls really overcame some real adversity to achieve this win and will carry the momentum forward to our next tournament in Rochester, New York and even further ahead to Provincials in April."



**STRATFORD  
Hunter Steel  
WARRIORS**

## UPCOMING GAMES

Friday, February 23 - 7:30pm  
vs Caledon - Allman Arena

Sunday, February 25 - 1:30pm  
vs Brantford - Allma Arena

Thursday, February 29 - 7:30pm  
at Ayr - North Dumfries C.C.

Friday, March 1 - 7:30pm  
vs Cambridge - Allman Arena

Sponsored by

**TINA GRASBY**  
BROKER  
519-275-7663  
Home & Company

# Stuart Rompf takes gold in All Seniors Care Senior Games held at Cedarcroft Place

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

It was a gold-medal win for Cedarcroft Place resident Stuart Rompf in the All Seniors Care Senior Games (ASCSG) hosted by Cedarcroft.

The games were held across the country from Feb. 5-9. They are meant to boost morale in the dark period of the winter and get residents active and engaged.

“The games were created because February is the among the most isolating time of the year, so they were created to try to keep everyone active and social. They might not come down for a lot of activities, but as soon as the games come on, everyone is down either playing or cheering them on,” said Jessica Mills,

health and wellness director at Cedarcroft.

This is the 15th year for much-anticipated games. The games are all inclusive and can be played by people of any ability. The seniors who compete play bocce ball, cornhole, Pétanque, shuffleboard and ladder golf to name a few. Pétanque and ladder golf are played at the national level where all the All Seniors Care homes compete for medals in bronze, silver and gold.

Winning at the national level is quite an achievement that comes with bragging rights. In the closing ceremony, Rompf was awarded the gold medal for ladder golf with a winning score of 27 points. He was presented the medal by Stratford Mayor Mar-

tin Ritsma and Perth-Wellington MP John Nater.

There is a rivalry to the games, but it's mostly the All Seniors Care staff who promote friendly competition between care homes.

“When it gets competitive with the staff, then they want to participate too and it becomes a lot of fun that way too,” shared Stacy Jordan, All Seniors Care manager of training and development for Ontario.

Over the years, the games have inspired thousands to engage with each other, get active and stay physically and mentally fit. The event helps foster a sense of community, and camaraderie with participants, family members and staff all sharing joy and laughter.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

## TAKES GOLD

Cedarcroft Place resident Stuart Rompf (centre) poses with Mayor Martin Ritsma, (left) and MP John Nater (right) with his gold medal won in the national competition of ladder golf.

# FIND A VEHICLE YOU'LL LOVE

**2021 Kia Soul EV Premium**



**\$32,995** + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS**  
46,764 km

**2021 Kia Soul EX**



**\$25,995** + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS**  
49,307 km

**2023 Kia EV6 GT Long Range**



**\$65,995** + HST & lic All-Wheel Drive  
**LOW KMS**  
2,145 km

**2019 Kia Forte LX**



**\$22,995** + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS**  
46,884 km

**2022 Kia K5 GT**



**\$39,995** + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS**  
42,936 km

**2022 Kia Forte GT-Line**



**\$34,995** + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS**  
36,880 km

**KIA CERTIFIED PRE-OWNED SALE**

**7 year/140,000 km CPO warranty included**

**2021 Kia Soul EX**



**\$27,995** + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS**  
28,830 km

**2023 Kia K5 GT-Line**



**\$40,995** + HST & lic All-Wheel Drive  
**LOW KMS**  
14,066 km

**2021 Kia Forte EX+**



**\$26,995** + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS**  
49,002 km

**2023 Kia Stinger GT Elite**



**\$52,995** + HST & lic All-Wheel Drive  
**LOW KMS**  
29,160 km

**2024 Kia Seltos EX**



**\$34,995** + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS**  
21,790 km

**2022 Kia Forte EX**



**\$27,995** + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS**  
15,251 km

**SERVICE & PARTS OPEN**

Repairs to all makes & models

Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm

Saturday 8am to 3pm by appointment only

**2021 Kia Forte EX**



**\$25,995** + HST & lic  
**LOW KMS**  
41,217 km

**2023 Kia Telluride SX**



**\$58,995** + HST & lic All-Wheel Drive  
**LOW KMS**  
8,620 km

Bad or challenging credit? Newcomer? Work Permit? Everyone is approved, some conditions apply.



863 ERIE STREET | STRATFORD  
519.508.5755

General Manager: Bobin Mathew

[www.stratfordkia.com](http://www.stratfordkia.com)

STRATFORD KIA



STORE HOURS SALES: Monday-Thursday 9:00-8:00; Friday-Saturday 9:00-6:00  
PARTS AND SERVICE: Monday-Friday 8:00-6:00 Saturday 8:00 to 3:00 by appointment only

\*While every effort is made to ensure accuracy, we are not responsible for any errors and omissions. Please see your dealer for current pricing. Plus tax and licensing. Some terms and conditions may apply.

# Boarshead Hospitality Inc. announces new plans for historic Queen's Inn

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

A group of local investors is partnering with the Marriott group of hotels to help bring Stratford's historic Queen's Inn into the 21st century.

Boarshead Hospitality Inc., a locally owned company backed by developer BMI Group, recently announced it will temporarily close the Queen's Inn to the public as the 165-year-old hotel undergoes renovations and a modern refresh.

"The Ford family has operated the hotel for over 30 years," said Boarshead Hospitality investor and former Stratford mayor Dan Mathieson. "Knowing there was a possible transition with (Barb Ford) retiring and (her son) Jay (Ford) staying on as general manager (of the Boar's Head Pub), and knowing that the chance to remake this hotel into a modern hotel was an opportunity that seemed intriguing to myself

and others, we invested in it with a vision around ... Marriott becoming a partner (and) Crescent Hotels and Resorts – which manages over 100 hotels in North America – coming on as the hotel manager.

"It made it a very strategic investment. ... The Corries, the Pinkneys, the Fords; so many families owned this for a lot of years. It's an iconic, very important building in downtown Stratford. ... This building was built in 1858, so it's one of the prominent downtown buildings and it plays an important role not only in tourism in the city, but it's a community centre for so many locals who come into the pub. So many weddings, baptisms, wakes, community events and meetings have been held here. I think in the future it will be a major spot for tourism and business travellers coming through the city."

The plan for the hotel, which is expected to keep the Queen's Inn's doors closed until summer of 2025, is to renovate and

refresh each of its 31 rooms with new plumbing and electrical, as well as renovate the inn's hallways, washrooms and common areas. The inn will also be refreshed with all-new furniture, while the current furniture will be donated to Habitat for Humanity and sold at the Restore.

The pub will remain open for most of that time under the leadership of Jay Ford, except for during some minor updates with new paint and furnishings. The Boar's Head Pub menu will also see some modern culinary updates thanks in part to new executive chef Matthew Williams.

"We're hoping to expand the hours, maybe bring some more entertainment back like we used to. We never lost the real feeling of a community bar," Jay Ford said. "... The city's become more like our family and we don't want to lose that feeling, but the Marriott touch will be nice to have too."

According to Williams, the pub menu

will stay rooted in traditional pub fare – elevated slightly – and all the Boar's Head favourites, like its chicken wings, will remain – though Williams said he has been testing a new hot sauce that might singe a few tongues of those brave enough to try it.

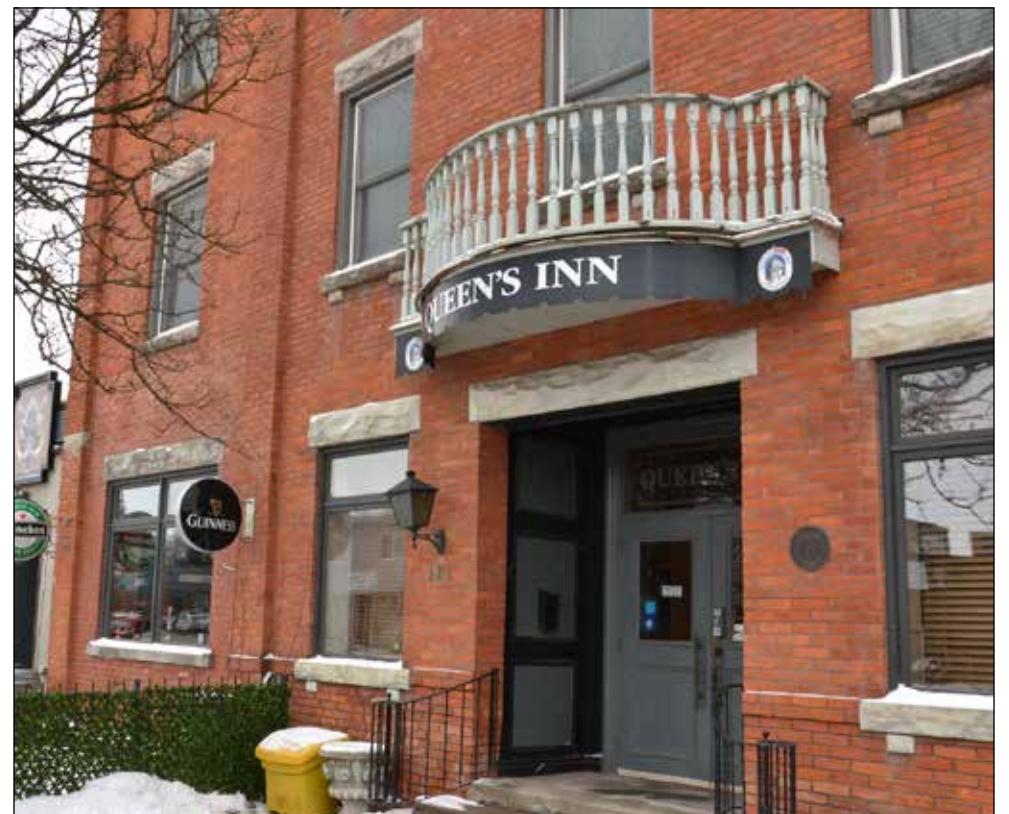
Williams, who grew up in Zimbabwe and was previously a sous chef at the now-shuttered Stratford South African restaurant, Braii House, will also be working with the teams at Marriott and Crescent to open and develop a menu for a second restaurant at the Queen's Inn.

"At the moment we're just playing with ideas to see what the locals will like," he said. "We're just going to try to keep (the pub menu) to as close to English pub as we can, obviously with flairs of Canadian and American influence."

The Queen's Inn event spaces will also remain open for bookings during hotel renovations.



Boar's Head Pub general manager Jay Ford and executive chef Matthew Williams are committed to keeping the pub doors open as the adjoining Queen's Inn undergoes renovations and a modern refresh over the next year and a half.



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTOS)

Boarshead Hospitality Inc., the new owner of the Queen's Inn, has partnered with Marriott Hotels and Crescent Hotels and Resorts to modernize the 165-year-old Stratford hotel.

## LOCAL MATTERS.

Remember that time when **Amazon** sponsored your church fundraiser?

Remember when **Facebook** bought a case of Girl Guide cookies to support your daughter?

Remember when **Google** provided free pizza to your child's soccer team when they won the championship?

### Neither do we!

Local businesses live here. They play here. They invest here. They need our support, now more than ever.



# Local Flavour

## RESTAURANT GUIDE

Advertise your restaurant specials here!  
Call 519-655-2341 or e-mail us at  
stratfordtimes@gmail.com

## Ashborne Café and Bakery aims for spring opening

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

The restaurateurs behind the former Edison's Café are on a new culinary journey, with the same flavours and values.

An announcement was posted to the café's social-media pages Jan. 14 that the restaurant has rebranded as Ashborne Café and Bakery, and that the change is "a symbol of rebirth and new beginnings."

"We had always planned on moving back to Niagara-On-The-Lake and opening a café there," the post says. "Knowing that most of the town had once been ravaged by fire during the War of 1812, we imagined resurrecting one of the ghostly buildings and giving it a new life. We would call it 'The Ashborne Café.' When the pandemic hit, we put our vision on hold but never stopped giving life to the idea of The Ashborne."

Edison's Café was known for occupying the former home of inventor Thomas Edison, but the name wouldn't make sense after relocating. The social media post also said that 95 Ontario St. was up for sale, a building once considered for their business by owners Buffy Illingworth and Greg Kuepfer, and the pair took the opportunity to open Ashborne

there.

"We knew it was the right fit for us based on its size and prime location," the post reads. "And if that wasn't enough to seal the deal, according to the Stratford Archives, the building was part of what was once known as 'the Phoenix Block'. Crazy huh? It was meant to be!"

Illingworth told the Stratford Times the Ashborne Café is expected to open in either March or April. The café, like Edison's, will feature whole foods and nutrient-dense meals and drinks. Protein smoothies with superfoods and herbs to boost nutrition will be added to the menu filled with coffees, teas, breakfast bowls, baked goods and charcoal-infused sour-dough toasts.

"All of our baked goods are prepared in-house without the use of refined sugars and inflammatory grains," Illingworth said. "We focus on healthy, clean ingredients that make you feel good about what you eat and drink."

The café will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Tuesday to Saturday, plus limited hours on Sunday, for eat-in and take-out. There will be lots of seating and the restaurant will be wheelchair accessible. Visit either facebook.com/Edison'sCafeBar or instagram.com/theashborne-cafe for the latest updates.



OPENING SOON

Formerly known as Edison's Cafe Bar, the Ashborne Cafe is getting ready to open its doors at 95 Ontario St. this spring.

(BUFFY ILLINGWORTH PHOTO)

## Hungry Ninja expands to new location on Ontario Street

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

For quite some time, Maiko Onuma and her staff have passionately brought authentic Japanese food to the community from her tiny storefront on York Street. This month, she expanded into a new space at 46 Ontario St. and couldn't be happier.

The move came as an opportunity knocking when her landlord told her the Ontario Street space had opened up. Without hesitation, she jumped at the chance to expand. What started as a take-out counter has now grown to a full-blown restaurant with tables and seating for customers to enjoy their freshly made selections. There are now Hungry Ninja restaurants in Stratford, Cambridge and Guelph.

Selections available include sushi bowls, sushi burritos, sushi pieces and ramen.

"I would go to Japanese restaurants but they weren't owned by Japanese, which I don't mind, but the food tasted different and I didn't like it. So I started making mine with fresh Japanese ingredients," said Onuma.

Stratford was a desirable city to set up shop because the community was so attractive and welcoming with a great food scene.

"I never came here before but my husband, he is Canadian, and he said that Strat-



FRESH JAPANESE INGREDIENTS

The Hungry Ninja is now serving dine-in customers at its new location, 46 Ontario St.

ford was a beautiful city and (he) would love to live here. It's very different from Guelph and Cambridge," she said. "I like Stratford a lot."

This move allows for her to eventually expand her offerings to include sake and Japanese whiskeys. The culture of food she brings is authentic. Her passion brings her to Toronto for ingredients like Japanese basil to make the experience of eating as

pleasurable and true to Japanese cuisine as possible.

Her biggest challenge has been finding and training the right people. Prior to the pandemic, there were many more Hungry Ninja restaurants, but she was forced to scale her business down.

"I don't care if you have experience in a Japanese restaurant or not because I can train. I want to have people with heart. Your

personality or what you feel about making food you can't change, so I always ask people, 'Do you like making food or are you looking for just hourly money?' People sometimes say they want the money and I say they need to look for a different job because I want passion," said Onuma.

Growing up in Japan, she has found the work ethic to be different in Canada than back home. There is a standard she emphasises when she trains new employees.

Her food is fresh. The fish is acquired and cut daily, prepared using two kinds of basil and yuzu fruit. She is a self-professed food geek, and that comes through in her creations which make use of ingredients that are healthy and without preservatives. Customer favourites are the sushi bowls and sushi pieces. Curiously in Japan, pieces are not as popular as they are here. Avocado, which is common in North American sushi, is not a staple in her sushi.

"At first customers couldn't get it because they were used to avocado but now they are getting used to it. But that's not a Japanese flavour," she said.

Japanese hospitality and quality of food is where Onuma focuses her time and money. Hungry Ninja is open Monday to Saturday, 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. serving both eat-in and takeout customers.

(LISA CHESTER PHOTO)



**WOODSTOCK AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY & FAIRGROUNDS**

WOODSTOCK AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024

FEBRUARY 27 AT 7:30 PM  
IN THE OXFORD AUDITORIUM

Annual financial report and status report about society business to be discussed  
*All current society members and new members are invited to attend*




**JOYLAND'S**  
Billiard & Games Warehouse

**LIMITED QUANTITIES!**

**NOW ONLY \$169.99<sup>+tax</sup>**

**PREMIUM DART STARTER KIT**  
Unicorn Eclipse Pro Dart Board  
Winmau Premium Cabinet  
Unicorn Premium Darts




519-508-7665  
JoylandsBilliardandGames.ca  
FEB 23

64 Linton Av  
Stratford

**WWW.STRATFORDTIMES.COM**



**NISSAN**

**FACTORY APPROVED EVENT**

FEBRUARY 1<sup>ST</sup> – FEBRUARY 29<sup>TH</sup>

**GET FREE OIL CHANGES\* WITH THE PURCHASE OF A BRAND NEW NISSAN**

LEASE A **2023 ROGUE**

**0%** FOR 24 MONTHS O.A.C.



\*OFFER VALID FOR FEBRUARY 2024 WITH A NISSAN RECOMMENDED SERVICE.

**Stratford NISSAN**

2001 Ontario Street, Stratford ON  
519.273.3119  
www.stratfordnissan.com

STRATFORD NISSAN



STORE HOURS SALES: Mon.-Thurs. 9:00-8:00; Fri.-Sat. 9:00-6:00 PARTS AND SERVICE: Mon.-Sat. 8:00-5:00

# Mad Hatter's dance FUNdraiser to keep Off the Wall classes running

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

Off the Wall Stratford Artists Alliance is inviting community members to dance their way into finding Wonderland.

The organization will host its Mad Hatter Dance FUNdraiser on March 15 at Factory 163. The event will start at 7 p.m. and tickets are \$45 each. Attendees can expect to dance all night long to the Downie Street Collective.

"People just love to dance to this band. It's very danceable music," said Michele Boniface, past chair of Off the Wall. "It's not dancing in couples, necessarily. People just jump up on the floor and dance. Everybody feels very comfortable at our dances."

Stratford Festival legend Marion Adler will be hosting and performing a duet with Festival actor Steve Ross, who will be starring in *La Cage Aux Folles* as Albin.

"People are very excited about the prospect of Steve and Marion being involved," said Jeff Marontate, chair of Off the Wall's board of directors.

The dance will also feature an open bar, appetizers, face painting, auctions

featuring items from local restaurants and artists, and caricatures by Marontate. He's drawn caricatures for several years at amusement parks, fairs and other events including a fundraiser for the Shaw Festival. Off the Wall's board of directors loved Marontate's suggestion to do caricatures at the event.

"I'm really excited to be a part of it," he said.

As the dance's theme is inspired by Alice in Wonderland, attendees can dress up like their favourite character if they'd like, wear unique hats akin to what the Mad Hatter would sport, or dress in whatever they would like to wear. Boniface said the best dressed of the night will be recognized with a costume contest.

"We picked the Mad Hatter theme because we needed a theme for decoration. We needed a theme for celebration," she said. "It's an easy costume to find – from Mad Hatter to Alice, to the Red Queen, the White Knight. There are all kinds of possibilities for costumes there, and this is a community of people who are very creative."

All event proceeds will go back to Off the Wall. The organization is still recov-

ering from the financial loss from the COVID-19 pandemic and is looking to cushion the blow while continuing its classes.

"When Off the Wall started, we only offered workshops in the summer and now we're pretty much offering them all through the year," Marontate said. "We have a big space that we have to pay the rent for and insurance and all that kind of thing. We've got workshops going on, but some of them can only take two or four to five people, depending what the workshop is. Even there, there's only a certain amount of money going in."

The organization is in its 20th year running and grew exponentially since first running a few classes on the weekends as a volunteer-run initiative. Off the Wall offers 15 courses in the summer, 12 in the fall, and six in the winter. Students taking Off the Wall workshops are often pursuing a career in theatre or education in theatre arts, hobbyists, or teachers looking to bring the skills back into their own classes.

"We've grown so much that it's beyond the capabilities of a few volunteers," Boniface said. "So, for the first time we've hired a staff member and

now we're looking for funds to keep Off the Wall in business because it really is a very good thing that we do; training people to go on into theatre production."

Off the Wall Stratford Artists Alliance was formed to pass on technical skills in theatre production from one Stratford Festival season to the next. Before the organization began workshops, many of the skills were lost as they were not documented, and several artists would take their talents with them when the festival closed for the season. There were also few professional theatre companies and theatre festivals in Canada when Off the Wall was founded.

"Workshops like the ones that we offer at Off the Wall, you can't get anywhere else," Marontate said. "You can't get the quality of work that's offered by the Festival artists in any other town without going for a degree in something or going for a diploma in set design or something like that."

Tickets for the Mad Hatter's Dance can either be purchased at La Osa Jewelry and Vintage at 34 Ontario St. or online at [stratfordoffthewall.com/courses/madhatters-dance-ticket](http://stratfordoffthewall.com/courses/madhatters-dance-ticket).

## Here for Now Theatre wins Company of the Year Critics' Picks Award ahead of new season

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

An independent theatre company focusing on new works recently received international recognition just ahead of their announcement of productions for the new season.

Here for Now Theatre announced on social media Feb. 5 that the company won the My Entertainment World's Critics' Picks Award for Company of the Year for 2023.

"It's so exciting. It's always an honour and a little bit of a thrill to be recognized by industry professionals for the quality of

your work," said company artistic director Fiona Mongillo.

Here for Now Theatre announced the lineup for its 2024 season in a Feb. 12 press release. The lineup includes three world premieres and the Canadian premiere of *The Saviour* by Irish playwright Deidre Kinahan. The new season, which will begin with the debut of the comedy, *Paul and Linda Plan a Threesome* by Jane Cooper Ford, will run from June 19 to Sept. 28. *Paul and Linda Plan a Threesome* will open on June 19 and will run until July 6.

Next, Steve Ross' *12 Dinners* will take the stage from July 10 to July 27. Ross'

autobiographical work accompanies the fan-favourite *Goldfish* from 2021. The Canadian premiere of *The Saviour* will run from July 31 to Aug. 16 following its successful run by Landmark Productions at the Irish Repertory Theatre.

Julia Lederer's *Love and a Major Organ* begins Aug. 21 and ends Sept. 7. Closing off the 2024 season is Nick Green's *Dinner with the Duchess* running from Sept. 11-28.

"It's a nice combination of heartfelt, interesting, authentic, beautiful little gems," Mongillo said.

While Here for Now Theatre used to have a theme picked for each season, Mongillo now looks at the new productions coming in and looks at the connections between the plays. All of the plays have their characters experience challenges with self acceptance, which Mongillo said could be from the current state of affairs where people are throwing shame at

each other.

"We are relating to each other in a new way, which is through screens, isolated from each other in conversation," she said. "A lot of those conversations are really charged, and I think we're really judgmental right now. I just wonder if this focus on self acceptance is how we're going to grow in response to that."

Here for Now Theatre will stage its productions outdoors in a tent on the Stratford Perth Museum property. The tent will be closer to the museum building this year and on higher and drier ground.

"It should be a little bit more accessible for people, and, also for those who are thrown off by the elements, it will be a little bit more comfortable," Mongillo said.

In addition to the five main productions, Here for Now Theatre will have limited-engagement productions, either readings of new scripts or productions that will be staged for only a few days. Mongillo is

looking forward to the 2024 Here for Now Season.

"I couldn't be more excited about the particular projects and the artists we're going to be collaborating with this year," she said. "I think every year we learn a lot and we get a little better, and this season is going to be a really good one."

More information about the 2024 season can be found via [herefornowtheatre.com](http://herefornowtheatre.com).

**GRANT  
HAVEN  
MEDIA**

Wondering how local media can help grow your business? Let me help tailor a customized marketing plan for your business goals.



[heather@granhaven.com](mailto:heather@granhaven.com)

226.261.1837

St. Marys Independent The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette STRATFORDTIMES INDY  
Woodstock Ingersoll Echo Goderich Sun NORFOLK FARMS BRANT FARMS strays radio



**The Army, Navy & Air  
Force Veterans in Canada  
(ANAVETS)**

Inviting all eligible Canadian Forces Personnel, Ex-Service Members, their respective spouses, widows, and dependents seeking assistance for programs and services offered by Veterans Affairs Canada to meet with our Service Officer the last Saturday of every month between 10:00am and 1:00pm (by appointment only).

All interested parties are asked to contact President Stephen Cooper at 519-271-3113 to book a date for a consultation.

151 Lorne Avenue, East Stratford, Ontario N5A 6S4

# Gush Studio: Where Skincare Meets Soul Care

KRISTEN PARKER

Times Correspondent

When you step through Gush Studio's bright pink-front door at 91 Erie St., a pleasant aroma of essential oils welcomes you into a cozy ambiance reminiscent of a warm and inviting living room.

Chloë Merkel, the owner of Gush Studio, was born and raised in Stratford and has a heart for the community. Merkel is a medical esthetician who uses her schooling and work experience to create a safe environment where everyone is welcome.

Gush Studio is focused on esthetic treatments for skin, body and soul. Merkel approaches skincare and wellness with an emphasis on integrating Eastern and Western techniques, creating a welcoming and relaxing space and offering high-quality services such as facials, full-body waxing and body treatments for all genders.

Merkel co-owned LV Esthetics for five years before pivoting to do her own thing and rebrand as Gush Studio in October 2023.

Since opening in October, Merkel said she feels very lucky to have clients who have stuck with her through the changes.

"Everyone has been so receptive of Gush," she said.

Gush Studio has three rooms: a wait-



(KRISTEN PARKER PHOTO)

## BRIGHT BUT MELLOW

Chloë Merkel, owner of Gush Studio, in her relaxing room.

ing room that is curated with retro style décor, a waxing room that has vibrant colours and artwork intended to serve as a distraction, and a relaxing room that is adorned with soft greens and low lighting. Merkel said her inspiration for the studio style came from her love for funk and jazz music.

"I wanted it to be bright, but mellow and grounding," Merkel said.

Gush Studio offers a wide range of services. In the wax room, the services include full body waxing, eyebrow and eyelash tinting, and lash lifts. Merkel's most popular waxing service is her "Bare Bush," which she describes as "your classic Brazilian wax for all genders."

She also offers a wide range of relaxation and body treatment services

including foot and calf treatment, back massages, scalp massages, a full-body dry brush treatment, facials, head massages, energy work and more.

The HydraFacial is a favourite. It utilizes a specifically designed HydroPeel tip and patented vacuum technology to create a vortex that removes impurities while delivering deep hydration to the skin.

Laser-hair removal, skin rejuvenation, reflexology, and "Pause" (adult nap time) are new services on the horizon.

Merkel loves Stratford.

"I'm really grateful for what it's given me and I hope that I can be here for a long, long time," she said.

Growing up, Merkel has been positively impacted by the Stratford community and is eager to make a positive impact on the community.

"I feel like I was given so much, and if I can give half of that back to the community here, then I will be happy," Merkel said.

When you meet Merkel, be sure to ask her about her snare drum lessons and her involvement in the Stratford Police Pipe and Drum Band. She has a passion for music and a sweet story to share about her granddad.

Follow Gush Studio on Instagram @gush\_studio to learn more about her services.

# Another Banner year for the Stratford and District Agriculture Society



Brian Anderson, who was re-elected as president of the Stratford and District Agriculture Society, is shown here at work in his family's dairy barn in South Easthope Township.

GARY WEST

Times Correspondent

Members of the Stratford and District Agriculture Society had another banner year in 2023 and, after their recent annual meeting, 2024 looks like a year that could see more success for the society.

At the end of the meeting, Brian Anderson, a dairy farmer in South Easthope Township, southeast of Stratford, was re-elected for his second term as president of the ag. society.

"The organization functions due to the number of dedicated volunteers that put in the work year after year," said Anderson.

He follows in the footsteps of his father,

Stewart Anderson, and Grandfather William Anderson who were also presidents of the society in past decades. Anderson volunteers with other agricultural organizations, including many years leading local 4-H clubs.

The organization's biggest venture every year is the Stratford Fall Fair in September, and this year was blessed with nearly perfect weather resulting in record attendance. Old favourites such as cattle shows, the ambassador competition, homecraft, farm to you, school displays and horse shows were enjoyed by all.

"This was the second year they had a goat show and the first year hosting lawn-

mower races, which both should be continued," Anderson said.

The fair required many hours of co-ordination and effort by many people, especially by the chair of the fair, Martin Ritsma.

"The farmers market held every Saturday morning at the agriplex had stable vendor numbers, and foot traffic increased in the summer of 2023," Anderson reported. "The people coming to the Stratford Farmer's Market seem to appreciate the bacon on a bun that is available thanks to the roster of directors and volunteers who greet them with a smile every Saturday morning.

"They still have room to expand the market but, all in all, it was another successful year and they are always looking at new ways to advertise the long-running Stratford Farmer's Market."

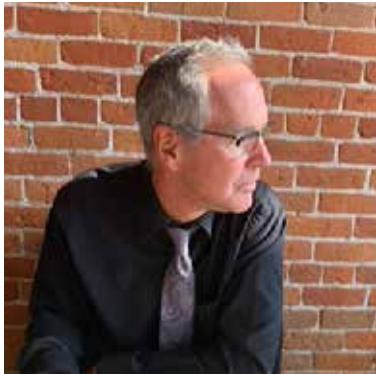
The many activities taken on by the ag. Society board of directors also included working with the Canadian Dairy Xpo in April to serve breakfast to hungry crowds that attended and a fundraising drive-through pork chop dinner in July with Perth County Pork Producers.

The meeting also saw Laurie Neubrand elected first vice president, Don Storey elected second vice president, Jeremy Eaton elected third vice president.



The Stratford and District Agriculture Society 2024 board of directors: (front row, from left) John DeWys, Lynn Fleming, Ruth Moore (treasurer), Brian Anderson (president), Elaine Landsborough, Laurie Neubrand, Susan McGonigle (office administrator), Martin Ritsma (city council representative). (Back row from left) Tom Melady, Greg Bell, Dave Hanley, Ron McKay, Ron Neeb, Ashley McKay, Kim McKay, Heidi Danen and Dave Gaffney. Missing are Don Storey, Jeremy Eaton, Marlene Ballantyne, Kyle Moore and Dianne Walkom.

## UNTIL SOON. LIVE WELL: MYTHS & TRUTHS



STUART LENDER

*Times Contributor*

In my decades of serving people, there have been many comments made that are incorrect concerning the field of funeral service from folks who were misinformed or not informed at all. And so, Rutherford Cremation & Funeral Services' number one function before services rendered, is the offering of complete but concise information. These are a few of the predominant issues that have come up while serving the public in my field of compassionate care. I hope it is informative.

### COSTS:

When looking at a funeral home contract, the costs in the services offered are usually broken down into three main categories. You will see costs listed for:

**PROFESSIONAL & STAFF SERVICES:** meaning professional fees, coordinating rites and services, documentation, preparation of remains, transport of remains, staffing, facilities, vehicles, etc. **SUPPLIES:** meaning things you purchase like a casket or an urn, cremation jewellery, vault, stationery, etc. **DISBURSEMENTS:** meaning things the funeral home pays for on your behalf, that go to second parties and are put into the funeral home contract – like the cost of the cremation fee that gets paid to the crematorium, or the cost of a newspaper notice that gets paid to the newspaper, or the municipal death registration fee to register the death at the city. Others might be a clergy honorarium, or flower costs, etc.

These three sub-headings under any one of the funeral home packages, comprise the entire contract. Within those sub-headings things may be removed if not needed or added if desired, depending upon what you wish to do.

**THINGS TO NOTE:** Without sitting down with a funeral di-

rector and going over your specific wishes, there are only two types of services that can be quoted over the phone in their entirety, including all applicable taxes right off the bat – a basic direct cremation or a basic direct aquamation. The reason these two can be quoted complete is due to the fact that there are no real variables in them. They are pretty straightforward. Be aware that sometimes, when a funeral home tells you the cost of a service, or you see the service on a price list, it is probably the cost of only the Professional & Staff Services and not the supplies or disbursements that would go into that service. Why? Because, as mentioned, other than a basic direct cremation or aquamation, the funeral home can't know what supplies you want or what disbursements are needed or desired without going over the options with you. But they can give you the cost of the Professional and Staff Services because those are the funeral home's costs. The other things depend upon what you want to do. So, always make sure you know what a funeral home is quoting you.

### URNS:

Funeral homes have urns, or can obtain urns, that range in price from approximately \$200 to \$5,000. Metal urns, wooden urns, stone urns, composite urns, biodegradable urns – there is no shortage to choose from. Urns hold remains from a cremation or aquamation and lend a certain dignity to a funeral service if you want the remains present at the service. What folks often don't know is that they don't necessarily need one. It is perfectly acceptable to bury remains in the receptacle they come back from the crematorium or aquamation site in. There is only one reason why an urn becomes a necessity and that is when remains are being placed in a glass fronted niche in a Columbarium. Usually glass front niches are in separate buildings within the cemetery. A Columbarium is an above ground structure in a cemetery that holds urns filled with remains. Another option would be to bring a receptacle to the funeral home that can be filled with the remains. I've put people in some interesting objects – a lady (the family baker) in the family cookie jar, a fireman in a fire extinguisher, a husband and wife who worked on a naval vessel into an empty shell! These objects can often be very

personal to a family, objects that hold tremendous meaning. If someone wants to keep cremated or aquamated remains at home in a place of honour, an urn or family heirloom is the way to go.

### VAULTS:

Sometimes, when someone is buried in a cemetery, you'll see the casket or the urn go into what's called a "vault." A vault is an outer protection for a casket or urn. In some cases, and in some areas in a cemetery, a vault is a requirement due to the ground in the location where the burial is happening. In some areas the ground can be more compromised than in other sections, (a downhill slope or damper location), and so a vault is needed. Most often it is not a necessity. An "urn vault" is almost never needed, but it does provide space around the urn itself to place personal items into, such as notes and cards, jewellery or family keepsakes that hold meaning to the family or the deceased. The placement of objects can be a very poignant part of a burial service.

### CREMATED / AQUAMATED REMAINS:

The term "ashes" for cremated or aquamated remains is not accurate. "Ashes" implies the result that you would get from a wood fire – remains that can be blown away easily in the wind. Not so. Remains from a fire cremation are beige in colour and similar to coarse sand. From a water aquamation they are white and like talcum powder, and there is about 15-20% more as aquamation is a gentler process and does not leave an environmental footprint like cremation or traditional body burial. Both remains are comprised of our bones. That is all. The scattering of remains is not illegal. There are certain rules that are supposed to be observed, but in general, cremated or aquamated remains are allowed to be scattered on water or Crown Land but not private property.

### AQUAMATION:

Aquamation (and green burial) is the most environmentally friendly option of disposition we have in Canada right now. There are not a bunch of harmful chemicals being used. It is a combination of water and alkali, both of which occur in our soil. Aquamation mimics that process of decomposition when someone is buried in the ground without a casket, it merely speeds it up. So... no... a person

is not "doused in acid" or some of the other crazy thoughts I've heard from people who haven't researched it. It is one of two non-toxic and clean options that this country has.

### NEWSPAPER NOTICES:

Obituaries are always a good thing. They provide the general public information that someone has died and I have had many a call from people who were informed through an obituary about a friend or colleague or even a family member. The placing of an obituary in a newspaper is not required. Some folks I've served have been under the impression that it must be done! It doesn't. On funeral home websites the obituary is free of charge and often that is enough depending upon the circumstances surrounding someone's life. There could, however, be people in another city that you want to make aware through the local paper. The main reason some people do not place a notice in a particular paper is because of the cost or the deceased was well on in age and all those who knew them have passed on already and there either will be no public service or the service will be through invitation only. That said – an obituary somewhere is a good idea even if it is short.

### THE BODY:

In my decades of funeral service to the public, there have been some disturbing stories that have come back to me regarding things that have happened to the body of a decedent. Here are the myths I've heard, that I will dispel now:

There are never organs removed from a body by a funeral director. Any organs that were harvested were done so by a physician and with the permission of the family or the deceased. There are never any limbs adjusted in any way that would damage the integrity of the human body. If an individual does not fit into a regular sized casket, the funeral home will order an oversized casket. While a human body goes through specific changes after a death occurs, there is never a severe "reflex" that would have the deceased sit up or "animate" in any way. In addition, embalming of a body is done as a temporary disinfection and preservation of the body for viewing purposes only. Embalming is not a requirement, although as Rutherford Cremation & Funeral Services does and

probably most funeral homes do – if the body is not embalmed but a visitation or service is desired with the body present, the casket will not be opened for the public. In the province of Ontario, it is mandatory that the body be taken to the crematorium in a safe and rigid container. It is illegal to have a human body cremated outside of being in a casket or cremation container. With Aquamation, a rigid container is not required.

### RENTAL CASKET:

Most funeral homes will have a rental casket in which there is an insert of another (often pine) wooden box, specifically for a cremation to be carried out after a funeral service has taken place. When the service is complete and guests have left, the insert can be removed with the deceased in it and that is what goes to the crematorium. The rental casket can cost as much as a mid-grade purchased casket, however, rental caskets are a way to have a very solid and much more expensive looking casket at a service without purchasing the casket outright. With many funeral homes, the casket is used a specific number of times, before it goes to the crematorium with a decedent in it. You can, however, get very lovely caskets at the cost of a rental casket.

### RUTHERFORD CREMATION & FUNERAL SERVICES:

Contrary to some folks having thought that Rutherford's doesn't exist, after the old dark and dingy funeral home was sold on Albert Street, having moved into our bright space on Ontario Street, we very much do exist! In the full capacity of any funeral establishment. In fact, we are here as a source of information far beyond merely taking care of folks when someone has died. Information on wills, probate, clean options, what is and isn't needed, etc... If you want straight information and all the information, please get your questions answered. It is empowering to know your answers rather than assume something incorrect. I urge you to call. 519-271-5062.

*Stuart is a celebrant and the manager of Rutherford Cremation & Funeral Services. It is his privilege to serve, dispel myths, and give information concerning his field of compassionate service.*

# Loving Others Unconditionally



**IRENE ROTH**

*Times Freelance Columnist*

tional love can be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. Or is it?

Part of the problem with unconditional love in relationships is not knowing what it really means to love in this kind of complete way. When people think of unconditionally loving another, the first thing that comes to mind is a parent loving a child or a child loving an older parent.

However, human relationships are complicated. For example, with romantic relationships, it can be hard to consistently love unconditionally. There will always be betrayals, upsets, misunderstandings, and much more. How can one love another person unconditionally when things are very complicated?

Here are a few tips to love unconditionally, despite the challenges of some relationships.

1. Realize that no one is perfect. So, we should try to forgive if we can. I'm not advocating that we keep putting with abusive behavior from a romantic partner. But if the person is

willing to make amends and try to improve, then we should accept that and move on. Don't try to control others or how they feel. Just let them be who they are.

2. Try not to be harsh or judgmental. Listen more than criticize. Realize that everyone has a right to their own opinion, even if we don't agree with it. Be mindful of what you want to say. If you have nothing good to say, bag what you want to say for another time when you've had a chance to rethink how you word things.

3. Listen attentively instead of talking. Many times, when someone is speaking to us, we are already thinking of how we will respond. Why not just let the person speak without answering and giving our opinion on what they said?

4. Practice open communication so that both of your needs are met. Try not to have conversations that are one-sided. Be honest, yet respectful with the other person. Ask for feedback and have conversations with the other person regularly.

5. Don't let small annoyances of life override your love for the other person. We will disagree with the people in our lives. And sometimes we will wonder where the person is coming from. But this doesn't give us reason to dismiss them altogether. Try to become aware and take a few deep breaths. You may want to remove yourself from the immediate situation so that you can regroup.

6. Share power in your relationship. No one in the relationship should get everything that they want. This usually leads to resentment and hardship. We should negotiate and give others space to make decisions too.

7. Be mindful of how you express love with your significant other or spouse. Do you always want something in return for loving or doing a favor? If you do, perhaps try to make your love more unconditional and wholehearted.

8. Always treat the other per-

son with dignity and respect. In other words, practice the Golden Rule. Love others like you'd like to be loved. Try to practice this rule as often as you can.

Therefore, we should all try to love others unconditionally by showing them how you'd like to be loved in return. Many of us learn by example and how others treat us. Many times, you can turn the most bitter hearts to see and love more unconditionally. Once you have achieved this, you can rest assured that you did something positive not only for your relationship with one particular person, but also for humanity in general.

When we extend unconditional love to others, I believe it expands. And there's nothing the world needs more now than that kind of love. We all want to be loved. But how about extending genuine love to others without strings attached?

**HAVE A SPECIAL EVENT  
COMING UP?  
Let us know! Call 519-655-2341  
or email stratfordtimes@gmail.com**

**THANK YOU**

*Wilker*

*Well our kids (Jason, Todd, Heather and Families) pulled the wool over our eyes surprising us on our 50th wedding anniversary.*

*We wish to thank all our friends and families that came with their well wishes.*

*When we look back and go over this night we are so blessed to see all the people who have been on our crazy journey.*

*Thank you doesn't seem enough so keep well, laugh often and know that you are special to us.*

*Rich & Kathy Wilker*

**COMING EVENTS** Email to inquire [stratfordtimes@gmail.com](mailto:stratfordtimes@gmail.com)

**TRIVIA NIGHT**  
February 23; 7 p.m.  
Legion Hall  
Doors open at 6 p.m. Trivia, prizes, dinner, drink. Call 519-271-4540 to register your team.

**GARDEN STRATFORD GENERAL MEETING**  
Monday March 4, 2024, 7:15 – 9:00 p.m. **\*\*New Time\*\***  
Army Navy Hall, 151 Lorne Ave. E., Stratford  
Featured Presentation: Join us for a "Visit to Floriade 2022 – Growing Green Cities" with Sharon Grose, Photographer/Journalist. Floriade, an international garden festival and exhibition, was held every 10 years in the Netherlands.

**OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP MEETING**  
Tuesday, March 5; 7:00 p.m.  
93 Morgan St., Stratford  
Presentation on Ostomy products. Come with your ostomy questions and concerns. Social time and snacks. Everyone welcome.

**Community of Christ**  
226 Forman Avenue 519-271-4539  
*Proclaiming Jesus Christ  
with communities of*  
**LOVE, JOY, HOPE & PEACE**

**Worship with us  
Sunday 10:00 a.m.**  
*11:00 a.m. – Fellowship and  
Coffee Hour*

We are a Welcoming Community

Worship  
With Us



**Stratford Associate  
Reformed  
Presbyterian Church**

Quality Inn Festival  
(1144 Ontario St., Stratford)

**WORSHIP TIMES:**  
10 a.m. and 3 p.m.  
[stratfordarp.org](http://stratfordarp.org)

**Invite readers to your worship services. Contact [stratfordtimes@gmail.com](mailto:stratfordtimes@gmail.com)**

# Welcoming Ukrainians: Philosophy of Grassroots Aid

VJ KNUTSON

*Times Freelance Columnist*

The Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel program (CUAET) was Canada's response to the war in Ukraine. Given Canada has the third-largest population of Ukrainians, it seemed like an obvious solution to helping so many displaced people. Give them temporary residency and an open study or work permit (three years each) and their Canadian relatives can give them shelter.

Except not all Ukrainians displaced by war had family or friends in Canada. What then?

Since Ukrainians were not being treated as refugees (i.e. given support through refugee programs), those without contacts were expected to find their own way. When Ric, I and several others became aware of the problem, we jumped into action to create a grassroots movement. Our philosophy? Everyone has something to give and if we all

work together, combining our gifts, we can create a human chain to help these people.

I am tasked with being the first hand to reach out. I offer to help, engage in conversation and determine the needs of the families or individuals hoping to come to Canada. When English is a problem, we write with the assistance of translation apps. If English is possible, we video chat. The human stories I hear are often heart-breaking, but I also experience the incredible resilience of these brave individuals.

Once I have a sense of who I am helping, I convey the information to our team of volunteers. My first priority is to find a host whose location, setup and personal situation best fit with the needs of the incoming family. For example, a family of five whose breadwinner is a metallurgist by trade, was matched with a host who lives in a town where he could find compatible employment. The host family, having raised their own family of five children, were not overwhelmed by the number of guests arriving. In every situation we try to make the best

host-guest fit. Forming good relationships is the foundation of our process. It is also the first step towards helping them heal.

Interviewing hosts and determining their compatibility is also part of the process. I then present their offer to the Ukrainians seeking shelter. If accepted, a chat between host, guest and myself is set up to allow the two parties to exchange information, ask questions and build a bond long before the war weary Ukrainians arrive.

New hosts are introduced to other hosts through a support chat so they know they are not alone and can glean knowledge from others. Hosts and guests are also introduced to others in their area for the same reason.

If a new host needs an extra bed, our volunteers work to provide it. Some volunteers help convert Ukrainian resumes to Canadian ones. Others volunteers teach ESL and others drive guests to classes or other appointments. We plan group events to get to know each other better. Through my newspaper column in the St. Marys

Independent, the community learns about individual needs and contacts me if they can help. Doug Betteridge, whose business is bike repair, partnered with Trish Edge, for example, to supply bikes for every newcomer.

Knowing firsthand the power of compassionate collaboration, I hope to create a similar chain of support on behalf of hosts and guests in Stratford.

Over the Christmas season, I was contacted by individuals who expressed their loneliness and despair. Imagine being forced from your home, arriving in a country where your language and expertise are incompatible, and trying to hang onto hope. In isolation, this is practically impossible. People are struggling. If you think you can help, please reach out.

(Disclaimer: As a grassroots volunteer, I am not associated with any organizations).

Reach me at [english.knutson@gmail.com](mailto:english.knutson@gmail.com). If you have a story to share, a topic you'd like me to cover, or a question, I'd love to hear from you.

## Stratford's Festival City Rotary Club hosts Wine Survivor evening

GARY WEST

*Times Correspondent*

The Festival City Rotary Club of Stratford recently held its fourth-annual Wine Survivor evening at the Army Navy Air Force Veterans Hall.

Organizers said the event has always

been held around Valentine's Day as it is aimed for couples and single women, all of whom tend to appreciate good wine and the opportunity to have a fun evening together.

"We were sold out three weeks before the event and some of the organizers wondered if they lost a few friends because

they could not get them tickets," event organizer Jean Aitcheson said.

Ticket holders did not have to be there to win any of the 200 total bottles of wine, but they would have missed out on the excitement of the evening, which included live music, a wine-and-cheese tasting and a gift-card wall, all of which added to the

celebration atmosphere.

All the profits from this Wine Survivor night will go to support the Stratford Hospital foundation. Past Wine Survivor events have supported Shelter Link, House Of Blessing, L'Arche, Special Olympics and many other community organizations.



**GLOBUS**

**STONETOWN TRAVEL**

GROUP TRAVEL OPPORTUNITY HOSTED BY STONETOWN TRAVEL

**IRELAND**  
**JUNE 5-16, 2024**

Head Office: 150 Queen Street East,  
St. Marys, ON N4X 1B4 | 519-284-2332  
[agent@stonetowntravel.com](mailto:agent@stonetowntravel.com)  
TICO #50010159

Branch Office: 210 Mill Street,  
New Hamburg, ON N3A 1P9 | 226-333-9939  
[newhamburg@stonetowntravel.com](mailto:newhamburg@stonetowntravel.com)  
TICO #50025796



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Pictured are the five finalists who won their share of bottles of wine at the Festival City Rotary Club's Wine Survivor Evening. From left are Sherry Grabowski from St. Marys, who won the grand prize of 50 bottles, Terri Griffith, who won 20 bottles, Kevin Patterson, who won 10 bottles, David Harvie, who won 10 bottles, and Kirk Riehl, who went home with 20 bottles.



Pictured are Sherry Grabowski, grand-prize wine-bottle winner from St. Marys, Rotarian Lucy Railton making announcements, and Rotarian Jean Aitcheson, one of the event organizers.

# Riddles

What's black, white, black, white, black and white?  
A penguin rolling down a hill.

What did the boy octopus say to the girl octopus?  
"I want to hold your hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand."

What rolls and jumps but never walks?  
A soccer ball

What do you call a person with a tree for a briefcase?  
A branch manager.

Why can't you borrow money from a leprechaun?  
Because they are always a little short

What kind of chickens lay golden eggs?  
Golden Chicks

Why did the boy take a packet of oats with him to bed?  
To feed his nightmare

How do you get a baby astronaut to sleep?  
Rock-it.

What happens when you throw a purple rock into a yellow stream?  
It makes a splash.

# Sudoku

	8		1					
	4			6	2	7		
					9			
	6	1				5		
				4		3	8	
			8	5				1
				7	3			
						2		
6		9			5			1

Solutions on page 27



## CAPTAIN CRUMB

Meet 2-year-old Captain Crumb! This handsome and affectionate dog is ready to set sail into your heart and home. Despite his initial shyness, Captain Crumb is a sweetheart who loves nothing more than going on leisurely walks and snuggling up for cuddle sessions. Once he warms up to you, he'll shower you with love and affection, melting away any worries with his gentle demeanor. Captain Crumb does experience some separation anxiety, which can lead to him becoming vocal when left alone. He's looking for a family who understands his needs and can provide him with the reassurance and support he needs to feel secure when apart from his loved ones. If you think Captain is the right fit for you, please submit an adoption survey at <https://kwsphumane.ca/adopt/process>.



## Pet of the Month



# Word Search

## COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR

D	H	X	J	C	H	O	M	E	L	E	S	S	N	E	S	S	L	A	I
L	W	Z	P	H	D	G	Z	Z	X	K	V	N	T	J	D	R	T	F	E
E	F	A	Y	C	K	M	N	G	P	K	O	O	V	M	M	S	W	A	E
S	D	U	A	C	K	L	P	P	R	S	L	U	F	Z	X	I	E	M	T
Y	P	G	X	I	L	K	C	I	F	T	U	R	Q	C	H	L	N	I	A
E	R	P	W	F	A	V	M	G	E	R	N	I	Z	Y	Z	N	T	L	N
G	F	A	J	I	W	T	E	C	N	A	T	S	I	S	S	A	Y	Y	O
N	F	B	U	R	T	M	U	D	O	O	E	H	E	B	C	Y	J	Y	D
E	N	J	F	R	I	E	N	D	L	Y	E	U	S	K	S	E	W	I	I
L	Z	P	H	E	B	S	P	O	K	N	R	P	I	K	R	D	I	X	P
L	G	Y	M	T	S	E	D	H	N	L	A	C	A	M	T	V	D	J	Y
A	S	X	K	N	W	T	F	G	Z	C	M	F	R	O	Z	T	E	A	M
H	E	U	A	I	S	Y	W	T	N	F	V	K	D	L	H	L	U	F	T
C	R	B	U	W	C	U	X	E	E	U	E	S	N	R	A	N	R	D	V
C	K	U	H	N	U	D	P	Z	G	K	Z	O	U	T	R	E	A	C	H
P	J	X	M	P	K	B	B	P	E	M	R	Z	F	O	U	R	T	H	M
W	O	R	K	E	R	T	K	Q	O	F	A	A	B	E	Z	S	A	F	J
W	A	G	M	T	I	M	Q	F	I	R	K	H	M	J	B	I	I	T	G
K	C	C	B	E	U	Y	U	A	S	Y	T	H	N	S	A	Y	R	K	X
S	R	C	K	F	F	W	V	A	K	Z	S	Q	U	F	Z	W	Z	G	S

- February
- Twenty fourth
- Winterrific
- Family friendly
- Walk
- Support
- Donate
- Volunteer
- Team up
- Challenge
- Fundraise
- Homelessness
- Assistance
- Outreach worker
- Nourish market

**OBITUARY**



**MAGIE, MARIE (NEE SCHULTZ)**

July 25, 1938 to Feb. 13, 2024

Marie died in Niagara Falls on Feb 13, 2024 in her 86th year with family at her side. She was predeceased by her husband Joe Gardiner and survived by her children: Barbara (Harvey) Tobey and Donald (Jinhee) Magie, grandchildren: Chris (Jessica), Anne (John-Paul), Hope, Megan (Emile), and Andrew, and great grandchildren: Andy, Madeline, Hallie, and Zoey. Marie was born and raised in Stratford as the youngest daughter of Herman and Anna (Hoffarth) Schultz. Marie was very fond of her siblings and their families: Esther (Sister Anne Marie), Jim (Grace), Bob (Bonnie), Jean (Tony), Rita (Bill), Phyllis (Vince), and Ron (Carol). Marie loved to play cards, bingo and attend family gatherings. She loved taking road trips to her hometown of Stratford to see family and friends. A graveside service will be held in the Spring to celebrate Marie's life.



# CLASSIFIEDS

## WANTED

\$ Cash Paid \$ for your RECORDS and LPs. Jazz, Blues, Rock, Pop, Folk, Soundtracks, and more. Selectively buying CDs, Cassettes, Turntables, and Stereo Equipment. For more information: **DIAMOND DOGS MUSIC** 114 Ontario St. Stratford / 226-972-5750

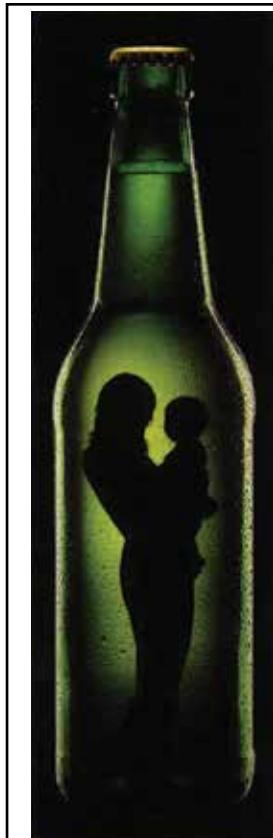
A WORKING CAMCORDER that will play Hi-8 digital tapes. Phone 519-284-3774

WANTING TO BUY – All collectibles including sports cards, beanie babies, Funko pops and stamps. Highest prices paid. Free appraisals. Call or text Stan anytime 519-868-3814.

Fair value offered for your VINYL RECORDS & STEREO EQUIPMENT. **SOUND FIXATION 519-801-5421** 56 Wellington St., Stratford

I WILL PAY CASH FOR ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES – Coca Cola Pepsi any pop company, Brewery items Kuntz, Huether Labatts etc. Old radios and gramophones, Wristwatches and pocket watches, Old fruit jars Beaver Star Bee Hive etc. Any old oil cans and signs Red Indian Supertest etc. Any small furniture. If you are moving or cleaning out stuff please contact me - 519-570-6920.

**RUN YOUR CLASSIFIED AD HERE!**  
**JUST \$10 + HST PER EDITION**  
Contact: stratfordtimes@gmail.com or call 519-655-2341



## NOT EVERYONE TRAPPED BY ALCOHOL IS AN ALCOHOLIC

Families and friends are suffering too

**Al-Anon & Alateen could help**



App available

1-800-706-9833

[al-anon.alateen.on.ca](http://al-anon.alateen.on.ca)



**1-888-4AL-ANON • AL-ANON.ORG**

# In stock for immediate delivery

2024 Kia Seltos



2023 Kia EV6



2023 Sorento



2024 Kia Niro EV



2024 Kia Forte



## Sales, Service & Parts



STORE HOURS SALES: Monday-Thursday 9:00-8:00; Friday-Saturday 9:00-6:00  
PARTS AND SERVICE: Monday-Friday 8:00-5:00

863 ERIE STREET | STRATFORD  
**519.508.5755**  
General Manager: Bobin Mathew  
[www.stratfordkia.com](http://www.stratfordkia.com)

STRATFORD KIA



# BUSINESS DIRECTORY Email to inquire stratfordtimes@gmail.com

## ACCOUNTING

**Famme & Co.**  
Professional Corporation  
CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS  
125 Ontario St., Stratford  
519-271-7581 | Fax 519-271-2737  
office@fammeandco.on.ca

## CLEANING



- Mobile Auto Detailing
- Residential Cleaning
- Commercial Cleaning

www.boscocleaningservices.ca  
519-697-2376 | 519-694-2079

## CONSTRUCTION



"Serving Stratford & area since 1977"

www.fraserpaving.ca

Driveways • Parking Lots • Excavating  
Truck Rentals • Asphalt Patching

Call Scott or Denise  
for a free quote.

519-271-5690

## CONSTRUCTION



**Jonathan  
& James  
Construction Inc.**

5875 Line 26, Fullarton, On NOK 1H0

519-949-3107

Construction Management  
General Contracting

info@jandjconst.com

www.jandjconst.com

## HOME APPLIANCES



APPLIANCES • PARTS

237 Huron Road,  
Sebringville  
519-393-6181

info@phelansplace.com

www.phelansplace.com

## FENCING / DECKS

**ALL SHORES**  
Fencing & Decks  
519-273-2003  
info@allshoresfd.ca

## HUMANE SOCIETY

Stratford Perth  
**HUMANE SOCIETY**  
125 Griffith Rd, Stratford  
519-273-6600  
kwsphumane.ca

## INVESTMENTS

**Franklin E. Hinz**  
196 Ontario Street, Stratford  
519-273-1633  
www.franklinehinz.com

## JUNK REMOVAL

**DIAMOND DISPOSAL**  
BIN RENTAL OR FULL JUNK REMOVAL  
519-284-2221  
www.diamonddisposal.ca  
info@diamonddisposal.ca

## MORTGAGE

**RBC**  
Eric Miller  
Mobile Mortgage Specialist  
226-921-5248  
eric.miller@rbc.com  
Shopping around  
for a mortgage?

**MORTGAGE ALLIANCE**

**LET ME FIND  
THE RIGHT  
MORTGAGE  
FOR YOU!**  
PAUL BARTON | 519-272-9559  
pbarton@mortgagealliance.com  
Mortgage Agent Level 2 Lic# 10530

## REAL ESTATE

STRATFORD'S TOP RATED REALTOR®  
**STREETCITY**  
REALTY INC. BROKERAGE  
**MATT FRANCIS**  
Your Stratford Realtor  
519.949.2114 • MATTFRANCIS.CA

## MARKETING

**TOWN CRIER**  
MARKETING  
FREE CONSULTATION

## PHARMACY

**PharmaChoice**  
Stratford Medical  
Pharmacy  
• Travel Clinic  
• Compounding Pharmacy  
• Easy prescription transfers  
342 Erie St (Jenny Trout Centre),  
Stratford, ON N5A 2N4  
Phone: 519-272-0888  
www.stratfordmedicalpharmacy.ca

## REAL ESTATE

**JENNIFER ANDERSON**  
BROKER  
**ROYAL LEPAGE** Hiller Realty  
519-301-2736  
www.jandersonrealestate.com

**Home & Company**  
REAL ESTATE CORP. BROKERAGE  
245 Downie Street,  
Suite 108  
Stratford, ON  
N5A 1X5  
**Tina Grasby**  
BROKER  
b. 519.508.HOME (4663) | m. 519-275-7663  
tgrasby@homeandcompany.ca  
homeandcompany.ca

**Home & Company**  
REAL ESTATE CORP. BROKERAGE  
**Toni McLean** Sales Representative  
519-274-1120 Direct  
245 Downie St, Stratford, N5A 1X5  
tmclean@homeandcompany.ca

## REAL ESTATE

**LUCIE STEPHENS**  
SALES REPRESENTATIVE  
519-703-0333  
**RE/MAX** REALTY LTD  
BROKERAGE  
SOLD!

## LIST WITH CHRIS!

**ROYAL LEPAGE**  
**Chris Evans, Broker**  
Hiller Realty Brokerage  
100 Erie St., Stratford, ON | 519-276-9101  
listwithchris@wightman.ca

**Liz Yundt, REALTOR, Coldwell Banker - Exemplary Service GUARANTEED!**  
I will always do my absolute best for YOU - I am persistent, hard-working, honest, enthusiastic, tenacious, and most importantly, thorough! I will listen to your needs and strive to meet your goals. Please consider me as your passionate real estate sales representative for you, my most important client!  
519.272.9017  
lizyundt.realtor@gmail.com

## DAVE FAIR REALTOR®

Make Real Estate a  
**'FAIR' GAME**  
www.davefair.ca  
905.866.7577  
**ROYAL LEPAGE** Hiller Realty

## SHARPENING

**STONECRAFT FINE SHARPENING**  
Achieving a superior cutting edge  
using traditional whetstones, files,  
and diamond grit hand tools  
Knives - Scissors - Tools - Repair  
Located in Stratford  
Pick up/Drop off service available  
Contact Dani at:  
dani@stonecraftsharp.com  
www.stonecraftsharp.com  
519-998-7954

## ADVERTISE HERE FOR AS LOW AS \$15 PER ISSUE!

Contact:  
stratfordtimes@gmail.com  
or call 519-655-2341

## TRAVEL

### STONETOWN TRAVEL

150 Queen St. E., St. Marys  
519-284-2332

210 Mill St., New Hamburg  
226-333-9939

www.stonetowntravel.com  
agent@stonetowntravel.com

## WATCH/CLOCK REPAIR

**Watch & Clock Repair**  
FREE ESTIMATES  
Watch batteries, bands  
& crystals  
All makes & models.  
New & Old.  
House calls available  
**Antiques in Time**  
45 York Street | 519-272-0411  
www.antiquesintime.ca

## WINDOW WASHING

COMMERCIAL - RESIDENTIAL  
**SQUEEKS**  
PROFESSIONAL WINDOW CLEANING  
**JARED GOWAN | HEATHER GOWAN**  
519-854-5254  
jaredsqueeks@live.ca / www.squeeksclean.com

## SUDOKU

9	8	7	1	3	4	6	2	5
1	4	3	5	6	2	7	9	8
5	2	6	7	8	9	1	3	4
8	6	1	3	9	7	5	4	2
7	9	5	2	4	1	3	8	6
4	3	2	8	5	6	9	7	1
2	1	8	6	7	3	4	5	9
3	5	4	9	1	8	2	6	7
6	7	9	4	2	5	8	1	3

## QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Hinduism
2. The Netherlands
3. Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
4. Soccer
5. Grandmother
6. Nevada
7. Sperm Whale
8. Solids
9. Pokémon
10. Schindler's List

AMAZING SAVINGS STOREWIDE

Twin mattresses starting @ \$99

LOW, LOW MATTRESS PRICES

# 2023 MATTRESS LIQUIDATION EVENT

## RESTOPEDIC

- 416 coil
- Edge guard
- HD fibre pad

QUEEN SET \$399 TAXES IN

## KINGSDOWN 7000

- 1500 Pocket coil with AirFlow Foam Surround
- Cool Touch Extreme fabric
- Plush through Firm options

QUEEN SET \$659 TAXES IN

QUEEN SET \$999 TAXES IN

QUEEN SET \$1639 TAXES IN

## LEISURE SLEEP

- 1322 tri-zone pocket coil
- Edge guard
- Ultra soft gel foam

## INTERLUDE

- 1130 pocket coils w/ quantum coils
- Full layer copper latex
- Full layer Serene response

4 COMFORT OPTIONS, SELECTABLE PER SIDE

SAVE 60%

QUEEN SET \$959 TAXES IN

QUEEN SET \$1,999 TAXES IN

## TEMPO

- 1142 pocket coils w/ quantum coils
- Full layer Copper gel
- Full layer Response foam

## ENSLEY

- 1090 pocket coil
- Airflow foam surround
- Posterized centre 3rd

## KINGSDOWN 9000

- 2500 pocket coil with Airflow Foam Surround
- Dual comfort options

QUEEN SET \$799 TAXES IN

Queen Lifestyle bases starting at \$699 tax in

AT HOME FURNITURE WE SELL A GREAT NIGHT'S SLEEP

EVERY MATTRESS TAX INCLUDED

PLUS

FREE LOCAL DELIVERY & REMOVAL

PLUS

FINANCING AVAILABLE OAC



# Home furniture



**MAIN STORE:**  
519-273-9330  
2954 Hwy 7&8 E



**OUTLET:**  
519-273-7453  
617 Douro Street

Follow us on:



**Outlet Hours:**  
Thurs. to Fri. 10 to 6  
Sat. 10 to 5  
Sun. 12 to 4

**Main Store Hours:**  
Mon. to Thurs. 10 to 6  
Fri. 10 to 8  
Sat. 10 to 5  
Sun. 12 to 4

www.stratfordhomefurniture.ca  
www.homefurniture.ca