

STRATFORD TIMES

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Stratford Summer Music bringing vibrancy to city's core

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

After a successful first week where nearly all shows sold out, Stratford Summer Music returns for its second week.

A press release from Stratford Summer Music announced the second week of its 2023 programming, from July 28 to July 30, will feature a double-feature comedy night and some silent film. Stephen Prutsman will play at the Revival House on July 28 at 9 p.m. and again on July 29 to the Buster Keaton silent film "Sherlock Jr." at Factory 163 at 9:15 p.m.

Bridge and Wolak will also perform their multi-genre comedic musical routine at Factory 163 on July 29 at 7 p.m. Beloved and highly regarded German pianist Hinrich Alpers will hold a concert at Avondale at 3 p.m. on July 30.

MusicBarge performances will grace the Avon River during the morning and afternoon from Friday to Sunday, with different acts each day. Alt-pop band Notes and Underground will perform on July 28, followed by classical guitarist Jelica Mijanovic on July 29, and tango group Solidariad on July 30.

"It's kind of a high-energy weekend on the Barge," Kendra Fry, the general manager of Stratford Summer Music, said.

Although the Stratford Summer Music events run in the same season as the peak tourism season with the Stratford Festival, Fry said the two programs are different genres that bring in different audiences. Both enhance the city's core and make it vibrant.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

WELCOME STRATFORDS OF THE WORLD

The Stratfords of the World Reunion will be held here in the city from August 2-9. Pictured above, the flags of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and USA are hung at Stratford Public Library. Posing for the photo are Joan Ayton (Stratfords of the World Committee Chair for Ontario) and Linda Hawken (Committee Member at Stratford Public Library). Please see accompanying story on page 4.

Stratford hotel renovation becomes new show on CTV Life Channel

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Times Correspondent

Excitement is brewing as Stratford residents may have noticed the buzz of construction and the presence of TV crews on the corner of Huron Street and St. Vincent Street. The reason behind this activity has been officially revealed: Hotel Julie is set to become the star of a full renovation series on CTV Life Channel.

Under the guidance of Creative Director Autumn

Hachey and interior designer Jillian Smith-Moher, the show will follow the transformation of the 19th-century Inn into a nine-suite boutique hotel right here in Stratford.

For property owners Paula McFarlane and Jake Tayler, the acquisition of Hotel Julie wasn't just a business endeavour; it was a quest to attract a younger generation to the charming town of Stratford and its theatre scene. McFarlane shares, "We're trying to appeal to younger people and get the next generation through to the theatre."

CONTINUED TO PAGE 3



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Public Library on Wheels goes 'round through the town

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

A van filled with library materials travels to neighbourhoods and connects communities.

Trish MacGregor, Public Library on Wheels (PLOW) and children's librarian for the Stratford Public Library, recently spoke to the Stratford Times about the PLOW program. The initiative began 20 years ago after a group of Perth County Information Network (PCIN) librarians wanted to bring library materials outside of the library to families who haven't experienced joy from reading. PLOW was a response to the Early Years Grant proposal.

"Recognizing the need for early literacy programs to address low literacy rates, the purpose of PLOW was to take library programs and materials beyond the walls of the traditional library buildings and out into the communities in convenient locations where families were already gathering, such as neighbourhood parks, playgroups, the mall and even McDonald's playland," MacGregor said.

While the application to the Early Years grant was rejected, the group discovered a way to fund PLOW through community donations. The PCIN bought a PLOW van in 2004 and went to Stratford, Perth East, and Perth West.

"Locations in rural areas meant that families could access library materials and resources without having to travel several kilometres to their local public library," MacGregor said. "This was especially helpful for the Anabaptist communities in Perth East."

The program grew to St. Marys and North

Perth libraries. PLOW has been a Stratford Public Library initiative since 2012, but the Stratford Public Library still works closely with other libraries.

MacGregor added that the Stratford residents love the program.

"Participants have expressed how much they appreciate the collaboration of these partnerships," MacGregor said. "Parents and caregivers follow the PLOW programs to various locations from season to season, and library staff experience the joy of watching infants and toddlers grow up to be lifelong learners and readers. Recently second-generation PLOW participants have begun attending PLOW programs!"

A Stratford Public Library card is required for borrowing library materials, but it is not required for PLOW programs. Otherwise, PLOW offers free, accessible, drop-in programs that do not require registration or charge fines for late fees and tailors their programming based on the needs of the community.

The PLOW materials include DVDs for children, picture books, board books, and early readers books. Programming includes songs, activities, stories, and puppets to encourage learning between the ages of five years old to 80 years old.

"Community programs like PLOW help to build community as neighbours will gather with their neighbours to learn and grow together," MacGregor said. "New friendships are created. Everyone is welcome as they arrive, and everyone leaves with smiles and memories of a good time as they return home."

To view the PLOW schedule, visit splibrary.ca/summer-library or pick up a paper copy at the Stratford Public Library.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

PLOW PROGRAM

Trish & Magdalena in front of van.

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Stratford Summer Music

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

"That really helps to invigorate the downtown core and to keep all of our businesses busy. We pretty much bring everything to that downtown area," she said.

Fry, whose background is in theatre, added that theatre performance and musical performance requires different types of audience participation.

"When you go in the theatre you're in for two or three hours and you're sitting there and you're quiet and present," she said. "Music is a much more collaborative endeavor, particularly when you're at a place like Revival House or down at the Barge."

Venues such as the Stratford Perth Museum also enhance the experience.

"When you're at the Stratford Perth Mu-

seum and you're watching a Celtic or a folk band and the frogs are doing their thing and the crickets are going and the sun is setting, that's an experience that you can only have in a setting that is a little bit rural a little bit city like Stratford," Fry said. "You get the dual experience of a really great restaurant, shopping, culture during the day and rural feel when you sit along the river or at the Stratford Perth Museum at night. I think that's what makes it particularly special."

Stratford City Music will run until Aug. 13, with World in a Weekend, a collaborative event with Springworks Puppetworks taking place on the Civic Holiday weekend from Aug 3 to 6.

Visit stratfordsummermusic.ca for more information and details on future events.

Rising cases of whooping cough in Huron-Perth

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Huron Perth Public Health has issued a warning regarding the increasing cases of whooping cough, also known as pertussis, in the region. The surge in infections has prompted health officials to urge residents to prioritize vaccination as the most effective means of preventing the spread of this highly contagious respiratory tract infection.

Statistics released by the health department reveal a significant increase in the number of reported cases. In 2022, the region recorded a mere three cases of whooping cough. However, since the beginning of this year, the number has increased to 21 confirmed cases. Similar numbers are seen across Ontario.

The pertussis vaccine, which is part of the Ontario publicly-funded vaccine schedule, offers a reliable defence against the in-

fection. The vaccine is given to infants who receive their primary doses at 2, 4, 6, and 18 months of age, followed by booster shots at 4-6 years and 14-16 years of age.

In addition to children's vaccination, pregnant individuals are also advised to take proactive measures to protect their newborns from pertussis. Pregnant individuals can receive tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap) immunization, which offers protection to themselves and passes on antibodies to protect the newborn. Studies estimate that the Tdap immunization during pregnancy can shield approximately 90% of infants less than three months old from contracting the illness.

Health officials have suggested that the recent surge in whooping cough

cases may be due to delays in routine immunizations resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic disrupted regular healthcare services, including vaccines, leading to missed or postponed immunizations for many children.

Parents and guardians are strongly encouraged to ensure that their children remain up-to-date with their routine immunizations, including the pertussis vaccine.

"The illness can be serious for infants younger than 12 months of age who are not vaccinated or who have not received all doses of the pertussis vaccine," says Dr. Miriam Klassen, Medical Officer of Health for Huron Perth. "Young children have the highest risk for severe complications, such as hospitalization and death, if they get sick."

Huron Perth Public Health

Pertussis is characterized by a severe hacking cough followed by a distinct high-pitched intake of breath that

resembles a "whoop." While it was once primarily considered a childhood disease, whooping cough now affects young children who have not completed their full course of vaccinations and teenagers and adults whose immunity has waned over time.

The Huron Perth Public Health website, addresses the concerns and notes, "Stay home except to seek medical attention. If your child has symptoms of pertussis, contact your primary care provider as soon as possible. Avoid contact with others, especially young children who are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated against the illness. In addition, wash your hands often, cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, and clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces."





New show on CTV Life Channel

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

The hotel's vision merges with its historical location, as evident from its website's statement: [The hotel] is a modern twist on a Shakespearean classic; Hotel Julie is an elevated and stylish hotel designed for poetic moments and notable memories.

As visitors step into the hotel, they will be greeted with local charm, thanks to the inclusion of several locally owned business collaborations. The design team took pride in the little details that make a guest's stay memorable. As Paula McFarlane explains, "We use Chocolate Bars. We offer a preferred stay service if you're staying for more than one night. The following day, cleaners will come in and remake the bed and tidy, and you'll return to a tidy room and a Chocolate Bars mint smoothie."

McFarlane and Tayler's journey into property management was quite unique. They served as paramedics in Stratford for over 15 years, and their job's stressful nature prompted them to pursue a new career path. Eventually, they ventured into property management, where they have undertaken several property ventures in London and now Stratford.

One particular detail that holds a sweet significance for McFarlane is their association with Chocolate Bars. She recalls an incident after a tragic accident outside of Stratford where she was on call and responded as a paramedic: "After the call, we had a big debriefing, and they asked us, 'What do you guys want?' and I was like 'chocolate, I want chocolate.'" The heartwarming support from the commu-

nity left a lasting impression on her; as she recalls, "Chocolate Bars was so supportive and gave our admin staff chocolate for all of us at the scene that day." Thus, it was only natural for them to collaborate with Chocolate Bars when setting up their new location in Stratford.

Another key partnership that plays a crucial role in Hotel Julie's charm is with To Bean or Not to Bean, a local coffee roasting company. The collaboration resulted in a unique logo for the coffee available at Hotel Julie. McFarlane expresses her delight in being close to such collaborators, saying, "The support of this community is unbelievable, and they are all so great."

A prominent theme of the hotel's design is the emphasis on supporting local talent, with a focus on finishes and textiles primarily from Women-owned companies within Ontario. While not everything may be found right in Stratford, the hotel's dedication to local and regional craftsmanship is evident throughout the hotel.

To ensure that Hotel Julie pays homage to its rich history, the designers incorporated inspiration from the previous owners' decorating style, integrating elements like valances and drapery while maintaining a 'theater-inspired focus.' McFarlane said, "The designers took a lot of inspiration from the previous owners' decorating style. There were a lot of valances and drapery that they wanted to build upon."

The series "Staying Inn: Hotel Julie" will debut on Mondays at 8 p.m. on CTV Life channel. If you'd like more information on Hotel Julie or to book a stay, visit their website at www.hoteljulie.com.



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stratfordtimes@gmail.com
www.stratfordtimes.com

Editor

Stewart Grant

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, Amanda Modaragamage, Thomas R. Verny
(If interested in contributing to the Stratford Times, send us a note at stratfordtimes@gmail.com)



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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.

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Stratfords of the World unite here from August 2-9

Stratford, Ontario will be host this month to the latest chapter in a story that began nearly forty years ago.

The history of Stratfords of The World can be traced back to 1984 when the Stratford Connecticut High School Band embarked on a visit to Stratford, Ontario, setting the foundation for the organization's growth. Subsequently, in the following year, the Connecticut Band toured England, participating in the Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations in Stratford-upon-Avon alongside the Perth County Pipe Band from Ontario and the Stratford-upon-Avon Wind Band Association. This marked the beginning of a unique three-way connection between the Stratfords of the old world and new world.

Over the years, the collaboration evolved beyond music, embracing drama, dance, and various cultural activities as part of the Sister City link. Notably, in 1991, actors from Stratford, Connecticut, performed "Stratford Characters" in England, while the 'People of Stratford' drama group contributed their own piece. The cultural exchange continued, with the 'People of Stratford' and the 'English Renaissance Dancers' visiting Stratford, Connecticut, in 1993, showcasing programs inspired by Shakespeare's life and works.

As the Sister City link expanded, other Stratfords joined in. In 1997, Stratford, New Zealand and Stratford, Prince Edward Island became part of the alliance, with New Zealand taking the initiative to host in 1999. The addition of Stratford,

Victoria, Australia followed in 1999, making it a friendship and cultural alliance of six Stratfords of the World.

The inclusion of each Stratford in the organization was often driven by a shared Shakespeare connection, with annual Shakespeare Festivals becoming a common feature. The journey was not without challenges, as evidenced in 2001 when some participants were stranded in New York due to the 9/11 terrorist attacks during the PEI reunion.

Stratford, Ontario holds the record for the longest planned reunion spanning six years, initially hoping to host in 2020. However, the Covid pandemic outbreak led to the event's cancellation. Now, in 2023, the organization looks forward to renewing friendships and celebrating the bond that has grown between these Stratfords over the years.

The evolution of SOTW from a high school band visit to a thriving international cultural alliance stands as a testament to the enduring power of shared interests and passions.

As the organization continues to foster connections between Stratfords across the globe, it reaffirms the belief in the universality of art and culture in uniting diverse communities.

For more information on Stratfords of the World, please contact SOTW@stratford.ca

Mayor Martin Ritsma will raise the "Stratfords of the World" Flag on August 3rd at 9 a.m.; all are welcome to join.



STRATFORD TIMES

ATTENTION:

The Stratford Times is now being printed TWICE a month: 2nd Friday of each month & 4th Friday of each month Please have advertisements, obituaries, event notices, etc. submitted by the preceding Tuesday.

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STRATFORD TIMES

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Downtown Stratford BIA presents education, diversity, and inclusion policy to city council

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

To foster a more inclusive and welcoming community, the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area (BIA) presented its Education, Diversity, Inclusion Policy (EDIAR) plan to Stratford City Council on July 10. The Downtown Stratford BIA, an association of small business owners collaborating with the City of Stratford, aims to create a thriving and safe business area that attracts shoppers, diners, tourists, and new businesses.

Leena Sherman Seth, Founder and Principal of Mending the Chasm, an external business that worked directly with the BIA to build the EDIAR policy, expressed the significance of community engagement during the policy's presentation. She stated, "We have the opportunity to engage with 163 different community members through the process, where all voiced their opinions, perspectives, and longings for a community where everyone's experience of belonging is cherished." The primary question posed to the community was, "What does it mean to be a welcoming community?"

Sherman Seth emphasized the collective responsibility to address acts of discrimination and ensure that Stratford remains a welcoming community for everyone. "There's a collective responsibility to address these acts in ways that they need to move forward as a welcoming community for all," she noted.

The key statement from the EDIAR report reads, "Stratford strives to be a welcoming and supportive community, healthy, vibrant, and inclusive, where everyone feels a sense of belonging and safety is a shared priority." The policy seeks to work collectively to ensure that all individuals feel valued and respected within the community.

The BIA's commitment to promoting acceptance and inclusion is evident in their plan to provide equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism training to every



(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

INCLUSION

Stratford City Hall's PRIDE crosswalk is an example of the city becoming a more inclusive and accepting community for all.

board staff member and volunteer during their hiring process. Anne Campion, a current member of the A&E committee, noted, "We believe that our equity and diversity inclusion and anti-racism policy calls us to first acknowledge our own personal internalized racism so that we may ongoingly commit to the work that we teach."

The policy embodies a comprehensive approach to inclusivity, including factors such as age, ethnicity, disability, and sexual orientation and advocating for equal opportunity for all employees. Jamie Pritchard, General Manager of the BIA, said, "Inclusion is the practice of making all people feel a sense of belonging, regardless of where they fall on the pro-

tection grounds perhaps inclusion could be everyone. But there are always some demographics that seem to be included more than others."

Pritchard emphasized the significance of turning the words into actions, saying, "EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, ANTI-RACISM, are all very powerful words, but if they are not made part of your culture, they are just words on a page." Pritchard further highlighted the efforts of the Advocacy and Education committee, who have been working on the EDIAR project on behalf of the Downtown Stratford BIA for the past two years.

Despite acknowledging that more work needs to be done to advance equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism within the BIA. In a statement, Pritchard expressed the organization's commitment to investing in the future, moving both Stratford businesses and the community forward.

The BIA and Sherman Seth presented the EDIAR policy to the City Council, requesting its official adoption and support as a guiding statement to continually engage and empower the community to become more inclusive, equitable, and welcoming.

Supporting the initiative, Councillor Burbach moved to adopt and support the welcoming community statement. She commented, "I think it's an excellent start for our community, and it's something that we can really build on." She continued, "I would like to see this welcoming community statement integrated into our event policy so that we can ensure that any community partners that we work with would be accepting and would be following the welcoming community statement."

With the Downtown Stratford BIA taking the lead in promoting diversity and inclusion, the City of Stratford sets out to become a more welcoming and supportive community for all its residents and visitors. A follow-up presentation is expected in the future.

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Stratford Mall Launches School Supply Drive In Support Of House Of Blessing

To show their support for their community during what can be trying time for families, Stratford Mall has launched the Fill The Locker event – an annual school supply drive in anticipation for back to school season.

From July 29 – September 2, shoppers and members of the community are invited to visit the lockers in the mall's food court and donate new school supplies for students in grades Kindergarten -12.

All supplies collected will be given to the Stratford House of Blessing, in support of their Off to School Smiling program.

Items that can be donated include backpacks, duotangs, binders, pens & pencils, pencil cases, paper, crayons, glue sticks and other classroom staples.

"We are thrilled to host the school supply collection initiative at the Stratford Mall. We are hoping this initiative will make a strong impact on the community by filling those crucial gaps in their school supplies and make a positive impact on the community. We want to empower the kids as they enter a new school and help set them up for success!"

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Car Free Fridays continue: Commuters Cup Challenge inspiring participation

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

Another Car Free Friday was held in Stratford sponsored by the downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA) on July 14th at the York St bike repair station. From 8 to 10 am representatives from the city, the BIA, Stratford Police and Climate Momentum greeted commuters with coffee and juice.

Morning commutes took the form of biking, walking, and bussing. Commuters were offered the chance to enter a draw for a one month bus pass and \$25 downtown dollars, and register for the Commuters Cup Challenge.

The Commuters Cup Challenge is a competition between City of Stratford Employees and BIA businesses and their employees for which group had the most commuters come to the booth for Car Free Friday. The June event saw about fifty people register and the winner with bragging rights, and a nifty trophy donated by Ross' Bike Works was the City of Stratford. The July event saw 28 BIA Commuters winning over the city with 17.

Car Free Fridays is a celebration of Active Transportation. It is an opportunity to experience the joy of cycling, rolling, bussing, cruising to work without your car. There are bicycle racks throughout the downtown core to safely lock your ride.

"I think things like this (Car Free Fridays) helps put it back in your brain a little bit that this is important for the city and the environment and good health for yourself," said Kim Griffiths, BIA Member Liaison. "Active transportation gives you more room to be enjoying downtown without all the cars. We have limited parking with all the Festival goers and people coming from out of town, it's a nice thing to give up a parking spot for them. It's good for the environment. Car Free Fridays is a solid reminder that we should be thinking of that," she continued.

Constable Darren Fischer was on hand to assist bikers to register their ride on Project 529 Garage, an electronic database of bicycle serial numbers registered to the owner. Not only does the software register bikes, it is also a theft reporting and recovery application.

"Project 529 Garage is a free bicycle registration app that is North America wide and helps reduce bike theft. Stratford Police jumped on to it about two



TAKE A SPIN

Constable Darren Fischer and Councillor Burbach after registering her bike.

(LISA CHESTER PHOTO)

years ago with the support of the Optimist Club of Stratford, so we've been slowly building up a good amount of bike registrations and we're hoping to increase that through initiatives like Car Free Friday and creating awareness as time goes on," said Constable Fischer.

Bike theft is one of the most under-reported crimes in most communities with less than 20 percent of thefts reported to police. Less than 5 percent of recovered bikes are returned. What has happened historically is an annual auction to dispose of recovered bikes because there has been no way to trace the owner.

"Every year we get a hundred plus bikes that get recovered within our community

and we don't know who owns them. What we've been doing with that is we created a public auction with the proceeds going back to the Optimist Club which then can be recycled back in the program to keep it going and hopefully we can reduce these numbers," said Constable Fischer.

To register a bike, electric bike, scooter, or skateboard, simply download the 529 Garage app and follow the self-explanatory instructions.

Also on hand for the BIA event was Michael Mousley, manager of transit for the City of Stratford to talk about his favourite topic, Active Transportation and Electric busses. The feasibility study for changing to electric busses is about two thirds done now, giving great information as far as infrastructure, retrofits to the garage facility for example. Once infrastructure is in place, then the city can start looking at electric busses.

"This is a twenty year project so basically we aren't going to get rid of the fossil fuel busses right off and replace them with electric. We are going to wait for the lifecycle to end before we get rid of them. To replace all fifteen busses that we have in the city will take about twenty years to make that full transition," said Mousley.

Commuters can probably expect the first electric bus in the fleet around 2026 or 2027. In the meantime, the city is looking at hybrid busses.

"I'm looking at purchasing a couple hybrid busses, that is, diesel/ battery. Not zero emissions but close. That way it's going to give everyone a chance to look it because they do drive differently and they maintain differently and ease the transition," said Mousley.

The next Car Free Friday will be held August 11 at the Cooper lot, and September 8 at a location to be determined.



NOTICE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION AND PUBLIC MEETING CONCERNING PROPOSED ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

TAKE NOTICE a Statutory Public Meeting is scheduled for **August 15, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.** This meeting will be held in-person and available remotely to discuss a proposed Amendment to the Perth South Zoning By-law.

PURPOSE:

The proposed amendment to the Perth South Zoning By-law No. 4-1999 has been initiated by the Municipality to consider changes to the Zoning By-Law that will include a definition for Second Dwelling Units and adding one single detached dwelling as a permitted use in the Agriculture (A) Zone.

If you would like to be included virtually in the meeting on **Tuesday, August 15, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.** please email the Clerk at lscott@perthsouth.ca by **Monday, August 14, 2023**. More information regarding this process will be made available to those who register.

Those interested in viewing the meeting but not directly participating are asked to view the webcast via Township of Perth South Facebook page at www.facebook.com/PerthSouthTwp/

ANY PERSON may attend the public meeting and/or make written or verbal representation either in support of or in opposition to the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION relating to the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment is available upon request and will be shared virtually where possible. If required, arrangements can be made to have a package prepared and available for pick up at the Township office.

DATED AT THE TOWNSHIP OF PERTH SOUTH THIS 25th DAY OF JULY, 2023

Lizet Scott, Clerk, Township of Perth South
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Perth County Tourism hosts successful 'Mystery Farm Hop' tour

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

In collaboration with the Perth County Federation of Agriculture, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and PC Connect, Perth County Tourism hosted a 'Mystery Farm Hop' on Saturday, July 8, 2023. The event saw 150 participants who embarked on a 4.5-hour rural adventure across Perth County, exploring four different mystery farms.

Participants navigated from farm to farm using the PC Connect bus, a new means of transportation in and around Perth County.

"This event was intended to showcase Perth County's incredible agritourism assets and community transit system PC Connect in a fun, non-traditional way," noted Meredith Forget, Perth County Manager of Economic Development, Tourism, and Transportation. "The success of the day is a testament to how special rural Perth County is – the welcoming farms, friendly volunteers, and eager attendees made for a memorable day full of new experiences and meaningful connections," she added.

The adventure started at McCully's Hill Farm, where attendees kicked off their day with a wagon ride through the property. Afterward, they had the opportunity to interact with a number of different



HOPPING FARMS

Jessie Jacobs and daughters, Raelynn, 8 and Hannah, 4 making flower-pressed crafts at Back Creek Flower Farm during the Mystery Farm Hop Tour.

(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

farm animals.

The second farm stop was at Stonetown Artisan Cheese, where attendees learned all about the craft of cheese production. They sampled artisanal cheeses while browsing the delicious offerings in the farm store.

The third mystery farm stop was Kampkreek Dairies. Upon arrival, at-

tendees took a tractor ride through the farm, learning about their operations and milking facilities, with a special focus on water buffalo. Back at the Kampkreek farm store, attendees were greeted with cheese samples and had the opportunity to taste fresh water buffalo milk. "The samples of local cheese and milk were delicious," notes Jessie Jacob, Farm Hop

tour participant and mom of two.

The final stop was at Black Creek Flower Farm, where attendees took a guided tour by the owner of Black Creek Flower Farm, Laura Baker, learning about growing seasonal flowers and gardening through the flower fields. To conclude their experience, attendees participated in a floral workshop, where they used fresh flowers to create unique imprints on personalized bookmarks or greeting cards.

Barker noted they are currently ramping up their business for family activities, and the Farm Hop was the perfect way to advertise and expand their flower business. "We have a 'You Pick' option, which is kid friendly and is a great option for moms with kids or a group of friends. Anyone can come to pick flowers for their mom or their grandma, and it's very inexpensive; about \$10 or \$15 a bunch, so it's a great little outing for the family during the weekend."

Jacobs noted, "I would highly recommend this tour to anyone wanting to explore their own backyard or for anyone visiting family in the area, it allows you to experience so many new things in Perth County."

Keep an eye out on the Perth County Tourism Website for more information regarding upcoming tours www.perthcounty.ca.

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New ownership at the Butcher and Bakery brings store upgrades

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

The Butcher and Baker's new ownership brought some modern changes to the shop.

A post on the Downtown Stratford website said that one of the changes under new owner Andy Vivian includes transforming the bakery into a full-scale kitchen to create a variety of meals. Customers can now find everything they need for dinner, from spices to main dishes to dessert to floral tabletop decorations.

"If you're a longtime customer of the store and you haven't been in a while, pop in and see the changes," Tobias Friis, general manager of the Butcher and Baker, said. "We had a big renovation in the spring, and it looks very different inside the store but there's still the same great staff and the same great products we've always had."

Previous owner Richard Frank, Friis' father, retired in February and sold the business to Vivian. One of the biggest changes that customers notice right away is the store now has a point-of-sales system.

Before becoming the Butcher and Baker's general manager, Friis attended culinary school and worked in restaurants for several years. He said moving to this position made sense for him and he enjoys helping customers plan their dinners.

"Instead of cooking your food for you at a restaurant, now I get to guide you to a selection or two, to a meal choice and help you through the cooking process with tips and instructions or whatever I can," Friis said. "It's fun talking to people about what they make with what we sell them."

For barbeque season, Friis said that you can enhance a steak by taking the meat out of the fridge an hour and a half to two hours before grilling.

"Let that come to room temperature before you put that on the barbeque, and you'll have a much more tender steak."

The Butcher and Baker is in the core of Stratford, a city known for its excellence in hospitality because of the restaurants.

"We're very lucky around here," Friis said.

You can pop into the Butcher and Baker on 26 Wellington Street.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Driver arrested after serious collision

On Saturday, July 22, 2023 shortly before 3:00 a.m. the Stratford Police Service received a report of a serious head-on collision on Downie Street near Falstaff Street, in the City of Stratford.

Police arrived on scene to find that a GMC Sierra pick-up truck had collided head-on with a Hyundai Elantra. Due to the serious nature of the collision, Downie Street was closed in this area throughout Saturday morning as the Stratford Police Service Collision Reconstruction Team, with assistance from the OPP investigated this incident.

The 31-year-old male driver from the Hyundai Elantra was transported to Stratford General Hospital. He was later transferred to London Health Sciences Centre where he remains in critical condition.

The driver of the GMC Sierra was identified as a 19-year-old male resident of Perth South. He was arrested at the scene of the collision for Impaired Operation of a Motor Vehicle and was transported to Stratford Police Headquarters.

A breathalyzer test at the police station confirmed that the 19-year-old male had over the legal limit of alcohol in his system. He was subsequently charged with Operation Causing Bodily Harm (alcohol), Operation Causing Bodily Harm (Blood Alcohol Concentration) and Dangerous Operation Causing Bodily Harm.

Further to the mandatory 90-day suspension of his license, the 19-year-old male was released from custody on an Undertaking and is scheduled to appear in court on August 28, 2023.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

SHOP LOCAL.

Weekend Quiz

- 1) Which breed of dog is believed to be the fastest?
- 2) Who was the author of Peter Rabbit?
- 3) How many lines does a Limerick have?
- 4) Who had an 80s hit with the song entitled '99 Red Balloons'?
- 5) What is the name of the largest river in France?
- 6) Which famous poet wrote 'An Ode to a Nightingale'?
- 7) What is the largest planet in the solar system?
- 8) How many ribs are in a human body?
- 9) What is the largest island in the world?
- 10) What is the name given to animal that eat plants only?

This week's answers are found on pg. 27

Book of the Month Club

Everyone In My Family Has Killed Someone / Benjamin Stevenson

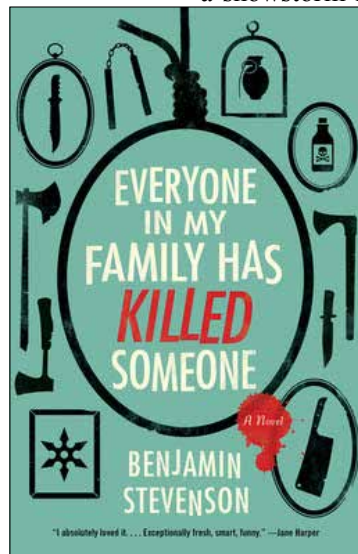
@SPL: FIC Steve

If you're looking for a chilly read to chase away the heat wave, this mystery from Australia might help! Unexpectedly, it's set at an Australian ski resort during a blizzard.

This quirky mystery is based on classic Golden Age novels; the narrator, Ernest, is an instructor who teaches people to write mystery fiction (despite not actually writing it himself).

He's also a younger brother whose testimony sent his older brother Michael to jail for murder, for which his mother has never forgiven him. Now they are at a ski resort having a family reunion of sorts, to celebrate Michael's release from prison. But as the title indicates, this is no easy family to gather with.

There are all sorts of issues with every member of Ern's extended family, slowly revealed as the story progresses.



The story turns into a classic 'locked room' mystery once a snowstorm hits, stranding them all at the resort along with a few staff members, and a dead body or two.

But the story is also self-aware; the book opens with the 1929 Ten Commandments of Detective Fiction from Ronald Knox, which Ern refers to during the narrative. The asides to the reader, and the dark humour, add to the entertainment value of this one -- it's a lot of fun to read. The author plays with the tropes of mystery fiction even as he is using them, and his character is commenting on them. It's a cleverly plotted and enjoyable read, even if there are some dark moments and some shocking secrets revealed.

This is a great pick for the mystery fan who loves classics like those by Christie or Sayers.

Melanie Kindrachuk,
Public Service Librarian

Turning a 'Pipe into Lemonade': how a downtown art gallery came together to combat vandalism

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Times Correspondent

The Matilda Swanson Art Gallery faced an unfortunate act of vandalism on July 13th when a large pipe was thrown through one of its windows. Despite the initial shock, the incident served as a catalyst for a heartwarming display of community support.

Artist and employee Claire was the first to discover the damage that morning. Although taken aback by the damage, she stated, "I was actually very calm; I just knew that there was nothing we could do about the past, and all we could do was to try and fix it."

Sharing the incident on the Matilda Swanson Art Gallery's Instagram page, Claire's call for assistance didn't go unnoticed. The response from the local community was overwhelming. "I just can't believe how amazing the community is," Claire said, "Everyone was commenting and asking how they could help."

The window's damage required immediate attention, and that's when Carl Gross from The Alley Cat Cat Café stepped up. Gross arrived to help seal the window with plywood right away. "Carl immediately stepped in to help; he said we would need some plywood and was able to come over and help get it sealed that day," Claire stat-



LEMONADE

Staff at The Matilda Swanson Art Gallery outside the new plywood mural. From left to right: Artist and staff, Claire; Gallery Owner, Sarah Filion; Artist and Staff, Kevin September

(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

ed gratefully.

Although relieved that no artwork had been stolen, gallery owner Sarah Filion recognized the need to address the not-so-nice-looking plywood covering the broken window. She expressed, "We were all just so happy that nothing got stolen and that

all of the art was still intact, but we knew we needed to do something about the plywood to make it more inviting."

Inspired by her artistic spirit, Claire decided to transform the plywood barrier into a beautiful mural that would capture the essence of the gallery. "I mean, we are

artists; this is what we do," she said.

Claire's work gained local attention by documenting the mural's progress on Instagram. Downtown businesses like Revel and The Alley Cat Cat Café joined in expressing their love and support for the gallery online.

Desiree Dawn, owner of Desiree Dawn on Market Square, helped to complete the painting alongside Claire. As the mural reached more viewers, Claire noticed something interesting about the comments online. She told The Stratford Times, "All of a sudden, everyone just started commenting 'lemonade.' I guess the saying 'turning lemons into lemonade' was something people saw when they looked at the mural; in this case, we turned a pipe into lemonade."

The mural (the former plywood barricade) features a bright yellow backdrop with an array of colours, accompanied by the Matilda Swanson Art Gallery's name across the front. Sarah Filion laughed and remarked, "I mean, we needed a sign anyways," referring to the gallery's new artwork.

The Matilda Swanson Art Gallery's resilience and the heartwarming response of the community showcase the true power of art and unity in Stratford.

As of now, no arrests have been made, but the authorities are aware of a potential suspect, and investigations are ongoing.

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The physiotherapy team at HPHA receives 'long-awaited' rehab machine

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The physiotherapy program at Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance, Stratford, was honoured to receive a SCIFIT Step One recumbent stepper for our rehabilitation gym at the Stratford site. The Stratford General Hospital Foundation purchased this piece of equipment for the team through generous donations.

The SCIFIT Step One provides a combination of strength training and aerobic training that is specifically designed for stroke patients; however, it also can be used for a wide range of patients, such as those with cardiac health concerns.

Trish Vickers, physiotherapist at Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance, Stratford location, noted the SCIFIT Step One, "Improves cardiovascular health, assists with muscle strengthening and coordination." She continued, "The patient can perform this independently without a lot of assistance from the physiotherapy team. It also allows us to use it for patients who are wheelchair dependent."

The SCIFIT Step One is said to be a safe and effective form of 'bilateral upper and lower extremity training'. The device can even allow patients who are wheelchair-bound to actively participate. Vickers noted, "It is utilized in conjunction with other physiotherapy techniques like balance, progressive strengthening, and respiratory and cardiovascular health techniques."



STEP YOUR WAY TO REHAB

Physiotherapists, Hiren Patel (standing) and Trish Vickers (seated) showing off the new SCIFIT Step One recumbent stepper at HPHA, Stratford location.

(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

The SCIFIT Step One is not meant to accelerate rehabilitation but to assist with current methods, "It helps to enhance the current therapy protocols to assist with optimizing patient recovery," Vickers noted.

"Combining strength and aerobic exercise is the best opportunity for rehabilitation," the hospital website said in their recent newsletter, "Many forms of this combination of exercise can be very strenuous and therefore limits participation."

The physiotherapist team at HPHA Stratford noted on their website that they have had very positive and encouraging feedback from patients. Vickers said, "One of the patients commented on how easy it was to get on and off the chair, and they also liked the different program options."

The SCIFIT Step One offers patients an opportunity to exercise independently and challenge themselves as they feel they can.

"It's been a long-awaited addition to the rehab program," notes Vickers, "We look forward to maximizing its benefits for our patient's recovery."

With the new SCIFIT Step One, the physiotherapy team is now able to maximize rehabilitation time and provide programming that aligns with the Canadian Stroke Best Practice Recommendations for aerobic training.

The HPHA inSITES newsletter noted a heartfelt thank you to the community for the donations to make the SCIFIT Step One a possibility: "We are grateful for these generous donations that help patients meet their rehabilitation goals."

Become a blanketeer with Project Linus Stratford

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

A brand new chapter of Project Linus Canada has opened in Stratford, brought to town by coordinator Kim Lalonde. Project Linus is a charitable organization through which volunteer blanketeers make and distribute blankets to children who have suffered a crisis.

"The Linus refers to the Charles Schultz character Linus with his safety blanket. He allowed us to use the name. It has been in Canada since 1998. Its mission is to provide a blanket to any child in need that has suffered a trauma or illness. The second part is that it provides a sense of service and community. Since it tends to be older people that contribute that like to knit and crochet it is important to give them a sense of community," explains Lalonde.

The chapter was started in June, and is rapidly ramping up. The first meeting was held on June 27th at Avondale United Church with some public interest, and there has been a great deal of interest from the community since. Meetings are held the last Tuesday of every month, from 2 to 4 pm. It provides a great opportunity to come together and craft, whether you knit, crochet, or quilt, blanketeers of all types are welcome.

Lalonde was inspired to begin the chapter because there is one in both London

and Kitchener, but thought they would be too busy within their own districts to service Stratford so she thought, why not start a chapter herself?

"I probably have fifteen to twenty people have emailed and said they thought this was great and they would love to contribute. We had two people come to the first meeting and one woman brought blankets that she had already made. We now have close to twenty blankets!" enthused Lalonde.

The meetings are drop-in style and there are tables and chairs set up for crafters to work together. While there are no sewing machines available, sewers are encouraged to bring their own machines to the meetings at Avondale United Church. Tags that identify the blanket as Project Linus are available and there is an iron and ironing board available for pressing blankets after the finished product has been laundered.

Anyone interested in joining the chapter can simply come to a meeting from 2 to 4 pm, the last Tuesday of each month, or email Lalonde at projectlinusstratford@hotmail.com. There are many ways to volunteer with Project Linus. First and foremost is by becoming a blanketeer. Blankets need to be washed before they can be donated, and blankets need to be stored and delivered.

Initially, Lalonde is soliciting opinion as to where to concentrate donations first.

"I am trying to get feedback where people would initially like to donate and build from there. We are thinking first the hospital, the pediatric care wing, then fire department, police department, ambulances, shelters. There's lots of opportunity," she said. She would like to be able to restock in between donations, so first stock the hospital then branch out from there to build a network of recipients.

Since starting the chapter in the beginning of June, Lalonde has heard from people who have been blessed by Project Linus, who still have their blanket, and others showing interest on the Facebook page that has been set up. She has been asked by the quilting league to give a presentation at one of their meetings in the fall.

"Head office has said, if you think this starts out slow, wait two months after you start to advertise it, you'll have boxes arriving at your door," she laughed.

As a registered charity, cash donations are also accepted with a tax receipt issued for donations of \$25 or more. Project Linus is also a

great resource for that extra fabric or acrylic wool you may be wanting to donate.

For more information on Project Linus the Canadian website is projectlinuscanada.org and the local chapter Facebook page is Project Linus Stratford. To contact Kim Lalonde, email projectlinusstratford@hotmail.com.

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Stratford-based charity making difference in Malawi

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Change HER World, a registered charity based in Stratford aims to transform the lives of girls and women in the developing world through education. Founded by Linda Willis and Carol L. Hamilton-Williams, this organization has been working to provide educational opportunities and empower women in Malawi, a country in southeastern Africa.

Linda Willis, a retired teacher with 29 years of experience in education, and Carol Hamilton-Williams, a retired nurse and an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church, were initially drawn to Malawi through a mission trip to support HIV/AIDS programs. During their visit in 2006, they were confronted with the devastating aftermath of the AIDS crisis.

During that time, Africa experienced a severe AIDS crisis, and Malawi was particularly affected. The disease claimed the lives of many adults, leaving behind a staggering number of orphaned children

and placing a heavy burden on the elderly. This dire situation highlighted the urgent need for education among women and girls in the region.

Recognizing the importance of education for young girls, Change HER World became a registered charity in 2010. Their primary objective is to raise awareness about the global mission of empowering women and girls through education.

Willis noted, "A girl's education has a profound impact on breaking the cycle of poverty, improving health outcomes, and promoting gender equality," she continued, "Statistics show that when girls are educated, they earn higher incomes, have healthier families, and contribute upwards of 95% back into the development of their communities."

The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes the importance of educating young women to foster social and economic progress; however, as Hamilton-Williams told the Stratford Times, "It has become almost impossible



(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

BREAKING THE CYCLE

Founders of Change HER World, Linda Willis and Carol L. Hamilton-Williams

for families to afford educational costs after the AIDS crisis."

Willis stated, "Right now, the average cost for a girl in university is \$800, which has skyrocketed since COVID, and there are four terms in each year." She went on to say, "These families, as you can imagine, are barely scraping by to pay each term, to pay for the education, and then they slap on exam fees; families simply can't afford to do it."

Change HER World has made significant strides in its efforts to remove barriers to providing education to girls in Malawi. The organization provides financial assistance to purchase uniforms and helps to enable young girls to attend school in remote regions of northern Malawi, where government aid is scarce, and few Non-Governmental Organizations operate.

By listening to the needs of the local Malawi community, Change HER World ensures its initiatives are tailored to their specific requirements, "in our charity, we don't tell the people what to do; we listen

to the people and respond," said Hamilton-Williams.

Currently, Change HER World supports 28 young women in their post-secondary studies, with an additional 40 having already graduated. The organization's nursery school will witness its third cohort of girls graduating this month. Two goat projects and two pig projects have also proven beneficial to vulnerable women, providing them with a sustainable source of income.

In an area where access to books and reading materials is scarce, the establishment of a new community library is currently underway and will be a valuable resource for children, youth, and adults alike. With over 3,000 books ready to be placed in the library, this project is nearing completion and could use your support.

For more information about Change HER World or to donate to this outstanding organization, please visit their website at www.changeherworld.ca or contact Linda Willis at l.willis@rogers.com.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

GIRLS EDUCATION

Nursery School Graduates at the school in Northern Malawi

The fight to save Stratford and St. Marys Go Train service

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

A petition to save the Go Train is nearing 1,500 signatures. Residents sign in support to urge Metrolinx to reassess the stops in both Stratford and St. Marys.

The recent announcement of the route's discontinuation has sparked widespread frustration among commuters who feel let down by what they perceive as a failed effort to support effective transportation to bigger cities.

One signee noted, "Stratford has limited public transit out of the county, and even that may lose its funding. If we don't keep GO services, our city will further disadvantage the poor as anyone who wants to reduce their carbon footprint. We need strong, affordable, reliable intercity public transport."

"However, this setback should not discourage us from striving for improved rail connectivity," the petition read. "Rather, it should serve as a catalyst for renewed advocacy and engagement with decision-makers at both the provincial and federal levels."

The petition, started by Stratford resident Vanessa Mugo, went on to read, "We implore Metrolinx and other relevant authorities to reconsider their decision to discontinue the London-to-Toronto GO Train route. We urge them to recognize the potential of this service in enhancing regional connectivity, promoting sustainable transportation, and fostering economic development."

Urging all forces to help save the GoTrain for the environmental aspect as well as safe transportation for those who need it, one supporter noted, "The London-to-Toronto GO Train route is more than just a train

service; it is an essential thread that weaves our communities together. Discontinuing this route would hinder economic growth, limit opportunities, and undermine the goal of sustainable transportation."

Mayor Ritzma noted in his comments during the City Hall meeting on July 10th, "Certainly there is much interest by both levels of government to work together to advocate for some sort of increased rail service, whether it's Go, whether it's VIA, whether it continues to be a combination of both."

Councillor Jo-Dee Burbach also advocated for the importance of the continuation of the Go Train and requested the concerns be brought to the municipal government: "I'd like to request a motion or a recommendation that we can share with other Perth County Municipalities that can endorse this on behalf of the City Coun-

cil." This motion was passed to address concerns directly with the Municipal Government.

Eddie Mathews from the Stratford and District Chamber of Commerce talked to Terry Johnson and Ken Westcar from Transport Action Ontario via LinkedIn, where they together discussed the issues with the cancellation of the Go Train in Stratford and St. Marys. Johnson noted, "We're not quite sure why the province changed direction and decided to cancel the service"

Johnson continued, "We need both levels of government to collaborate to make sure the service to Stratford and St. Marys between Kitchener and London is delivered efficiently and reliably."

There is still no solution at this time, and those who rely on the service are still waiting for answers for future travels.

VISIT US ONLINE AT WWW.STRATFORDTIMES.COM

Entrepreneur spotlight: Nick Bohner of Nix Snow

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Nix Snow, a local snow removal business, is making waves in the community as its founder, Nick Bohner, receives recognition for his entrepreneurial achievements at this year's Business Excellence Awards. Having started the business at the age of 11 shovelling driveways, Bohner's hard work and passion for heavy equipment have propelled Nix Snow to become a profitable and expanding enterprise in the region.

Recognizing the potential in the snow removal industry, Bohner purchased his first tractor, marking a significant turning point for his small business. Determined to provide exceptional service, his dedication and commitment to customer satisfaction soon earned him a reputation for reliability and efficiency in Stratford.

The young entrepreneur's talents did not go unnoticed, as he was accepted into the Starter Plus Program through the Strat-

ford and Perth Centre for Business while in high school, where he received funding to help kickstart his business. Bohner continued to expand Nix Snow and began hiring local community members, primarily consisting of his friends, who shared his work ethic and dedication.

Inspired by a mentor from Quebec who emphasized the profitability of large-equipment businesses, Bohner found his passion in heavy equipment operations. As Nix Snow's client base grew from Stratford to London, Bohner's team now services over 1,500 driveways in Stratford and an additional 1,500 in London, catering to a wide range of residential properties.



NICK BOHNER, FOUNDER OF NIX SNOW

Bohner later sought out new opportunities to diversify his business. Recognizing a niche market in lawn maintenance, Bohner expanded its services to include environmentally conscious solutions. With the acquisition of a specialized sprayer truck, the company is now equipped to provide organic spray mulch services that can be done quickly while also maintaining a focus on environmental sustainability.

As Bohner's success continues, he remains dedicated to personal growth and development. This year, he is embarking on his first trip to Europe, entrusting his capable staff to manage the business in his absence. "That's one thing I've always been able to do; I know my

staff, and I trust them to do the work while I'm away," he states.

Bohner's entrepreneurial philosophy revolves around pursuing one's interests but also being sure to make money. "Do something you're interested in, but make sure it pays," he advises aspiring entrepreneurs.

With his passion for heavy equipment, Bohner demonstrates that success lies in finding and excelling within a niche. "You have to like your job and make it your mission to do well, and you will do well," he said, encouraging others to become industry leaders in their respective fields.

As Nix Snow garners attention, the company's founder, Nick Bohner, leads with exceptional service, community engagement, and niche market expansion, which continues to impress those in Stratford and across London.

If you're looking for professional lawn services or are interested in learning more about Nix Snow for this coming winter, please visit their website at <https://nix-snowblowing.com>.

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Fighting Irish still riding high of championship win

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Times Regional Reporter

While the organization is incredibly excited about its upcoming concert featuring one of the country's top musical acts, the Stratford Fighting Irish are still feeling the thrill of winning the Western Ontario Super Hockey League's Championship earlier this year.

According to Fighting Irish General Manager and Head Coach Jamie Petrie, who recently spoke to the Times about the team's playoff run, arguably the biggest factor in the group's success was the "invested" nature of everyone within the team.

"When it comes to this age group, the fear can be that you won't have guys consistently coming to practice and games,"

said Petrie. "But, we averaged 22 guys at practice. We were never short on bodies for our games except for when we chose to rest some guys at the end of the season who were nursing some minor injuries. That investment was huge for us."

Petrie explained that, while he knew the team had improved from the previous season, it wasn't until approximately one month into this past campaign



that he began feeling this team had significant potential.

"You never think in the middle of the season that you're going to win the championship but I think around the start of December, we began feeling like we had a real shot to do something special. We had the best goaltending tandem in the league, our defence was arguably the best in the league, and we had beaten every team at least once. Then, we picked up some key players and felt like we could hang with anyone."

After suffering one defeat in their first-round series win, the Fighting Irish got on an unstoppable roll, going undefeated through the rest of the postseason. Petrie admitted that even the greatest teams likely don't foresee a run as dominant as that of the Fighting Irish.

"We went 11-1 in the playoffs and the one loss came in the first round. I would have never predicted that. I did think we had a shot going into the playoffs to be there at the end but with the talent that teams in this league have like Tillbury, Strathroy, Elora, and Tillsonburg, they are really good teams so sweeping the semis and the finals definitely wasn't what I expected."

"I think it shows the belief that the players had in one another and themselves as a team," Petrie continued. "We normally were able to take the lead but even in the games where we fell behind, the guys didn't stop pushing. As I said, they were invested and that investment was what allowed us to get on that incredible roll."

Since winning the first title in the organization's history, the team has been taking the championship trophy on tour to many of their partners within the city. Petrie restated how important that presence in the community is to the team's

success.

"It's all about always striving to be better. We wanted to increase our fanbase and we did that. We wanted to raise our partner base in the community and we did that. Being present in the community all the time is a major focus for us so we wanted to keep being involved as much as we could and we did that."

Although the team is still looking back fondly on their title win, Petrie said that the organization is also very excited about what comes next – a major fundraiser in the form of a concert featuring one of Canada's most prolific current country groups, James Barker Band. The band is nominated for the Group or Duo of the Year Award at this year's Canadian Country Music Awards (CCMAs).

On Saturday, September 30th, James Barker Band brings their talents to the Rotary Complex, with doors opening at 7:30 p.m. and tickets available for purchase in-person or online. Tickets can be bought at Sound Fixation Record Store in Stratford, Turning Heads Salon and Spa in Mitchell, and Joe's Diner in Stratford and St. Marys. You also can purchase tickets by emailing events@stratfordfightingirish.org or by going to eventbrite.ca.

An extremely excited Petrie told the Times that the concert is part of the team's commitment to providing the community with a variety of entertainment options while also helping to build the necessary funds to ice the strongest possible team.

"From the very beginning, we've wanted to be more than just 60 minutes of hockey. From the beginning, we have had a mandate to be entrenched in the community and do what we can to help our partners and local charities. We also want to bring a wide variety of entertainment to the city. At the same time, we have a budget that we need to supplant."

"Holding an event like this concert is two-fold for us. We want to provide different forms of entertainment for the community, while also making sure we can provide a high-quality product on the ice."



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Women's hockey league icing four teams this fall

LEE GRIFFI

Times Correspondent

For the first time in Stratford hockey history, a women's recreational league will be hitting the ice in the fall. The Stratford Women's Hockey League is the brain trust of Katelyn Aitcheson, a well-known and long-time player in the girl's hockey scene in the Festival City.

Aitcheson said as she and others have gotten older and priorities have changed, the time was right. "There are a few of us in a core group who have played together for quite a while on the Aces, and we've been finding our attendance at away games (with her senior team) was dwindling. A lot of us have kids that are now playing sports, so it isn't just about us anymore." She added other area communities like Zurich and Embro run very successful women's programs and she thought if they can do it, why can't she. "Halfway through last season, I said I was going to look into it. Three other girls jumped on board and the four of us have been spearheading setting this league up."

Aitcheson has been playing hockey since the age of 10 after starting her on-ice career in figure skating and then ringette. Her love of the game is obvious. "I've played, I've coached, I've even refereed

and played again as an adult. A lot of us are in the same position.

We aren't ready to give up playing but we don't want to travel. We always end up playing the Saturday night before Christmas in Lucknow and it's always a snowstorm. We're just looking to keep active, be social, and we feel we can do that in our own backyard."

The league has ice time booked at the Allman Arena and the season is set to kick off on Saturday, October 18 at 8 p.m. with four or five teams participating in year one. Those interested can sign up as a single or with a group of friends. "We started a Facebook page and have been planting the seed with people. We lost a lot of girls over the years because of the (Aces) schedule. They are all really excited to come back." Aitcheson

on said there are nearly 100 likes on their Facebook page, and she

has been feeling like a bit of a local celebrity these days. "People have been stopping me telling me they can't wait to play, and they are definitely signing up. We are now taking signups and deposits, so we are ready to roll."

Aitcheson is a financial planner by trade, and she said the money aspect of running the league comes naturally to her. "That part has come easy to me and really, we are only charging what it costs to play. Right now, we are trying to get four teams to start, possibly a fifth, and we are going to buy a simple registration and scheduling program. Everyone gets a jersey and a pair of socks, and the cost will be \$275 but because we don't know the full extent of the cost, we are taking a \$100 deposit.

If we get more than 60 players, it might be a little less." She added there are currently no plans to seek corporate sponsorship but that may be something looked at down the road.

It is obvious Aitcheson has a love for the game and can't wait to get the season started in the fall. She said it is an exciting time. "I'll be 40 next year and it's still fun to play. It's great to see my friends and to be able to dedicate some time to myself, especially in this busy world and having young children which a lot of us do. Women's hockey has grown so much in Stratford compared to when I started." Aitcheson actually started her career with the boys in the Warriors system and even when she made the switch to the Aces there wasn't much hockey. "Back then there were only two teams and now at every age group, there are two to four teams which is pretty remarkable. I'm sure there will be people older than me signing up and definitely those younger." The league will cater to girls who are too old to play midget hockey. "I just hope I'm not the oldest one," she laughed.

Aitcheson is being helped in the venture by long-time friends Janelle Krug, Katie Van Nynatten, Courtney Downham, and Tara Wienecke.



Stratford youths impress as SI Top Prospects Tournament

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)



ETHAN SCHMIDT

Ethan Schmidt suited up for Team Canada Black and reformed a line with Hishon and Dan Dittmer. Last season, that line won an Alliance Championship with the U13 Stratford Warriors and combined for 165 points. In the tournament, Schmidt scored one goal and five points in five games. Schmidt helped Canada Black win three of four games in the round-robin to finish second in their group before falling to Canada Red 4-2 in the semis. In the three round-robin wins, Canada Black outscored their opponents by a combined 24-5.



COHEN BOWLES

Cohen Bowles was one of several Stratford natives to compete at the Sports Illustrated Top Prospects Tournament held in Toronto earlier this month. Bowles turned in a "strong defensive effort" on the blue-line for Team Canada Black. Bowles' team went 3-1 through the four-game round-robin to finish second in their group before bowing out in the semi-finals to the high-powered Canada Red squad. The tournament hosted top minor players from Canada and the USA with scouts from development leagues in both countries in attendance.



OWEN MARTIN

Owen Martin was key to Team Canada Red's success at the Top Prospects Tournament, finishing tied for second on the team in points and goals. Canada Red went undefeated in round-robin play, outscoring their opponents by a combined 17-6. Martin chipped in three goals and five points in six games. Canada Red defeated Canada Black in the semi-finals to advance to the final game. Canada White narrowly squeaked out a 3-2 victory over Martin's Canada Red. In the group overall, Martin finished tied for fourth in both goals and points.



LUKE HISHON

Luke Hishon was part of the heavy local contingent on Team Canada Black at the Top Prospects tournament earlier this month. In five games, Hishon had one goal and five assists on a line with Dan Dittmer of St. Marys and Ethan Schmidt, the same trio that led the U13 Stratford Warriors to an Alliance title this past season. Canada Black lost to Canada Red in the semi-finals after finishing second in their group with three wins and one loss in the round-robin. Hishon finished the tournament tied for 10th in points in the group.

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Outgoing Warriors contributed to spectacular season

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Times Regional Reporter

As the offseason continues for the Stratford Warriors, the team is also reminiscing on how the members of the Cherrey Cup-winning team from this past Spring who won't be returning contributed to the organization.

The Overage Forwards

At the top of the list of the players aging out of junior hockey is the Warriors' Captain and GOJHL leading scorer Zac McCann. In 48 games this past season, McCann scored 27 goals and a league-leading 83 points. McCann spent the entirety of his Junior 'B' career with Stratford, posting 60 goals and 163 points in 136 games. Jason Clarke, Director of Hockey Operations for the Warriors, told the Times that McCann more than met the challenge of wearing the team's 'C'.

"We couldn't ask for anything more from our Captain last year," said Clarke. "Zac is a quiet leader who leads by example with his work ethic and dedication to the game. As for what he means to the team and the city of Stratford, he's a great success story. Zac is an undersized player who was told that he wasn't big enough but he never stopped working and it resulted in him becoming a top player in this league for his hometown team."

In the playoffs, McCann recorded 12 goals and 31 points, which was second on the Warriors to another longtime staple of the club and overage forward Sheldon Pryce. A Seaforth native, Pryce scored 18 goals and

57 points this past season and his junior career ended with 50 goals and 137 points in 144 games. Clarke said that Pryce possessed an internal drive that pushed him to be the kind of player that could help lead a team to a conference title.

"Sheldon is a gamer who puts pressure on himself to produce every night and holds himself accountable. He has been really good for us since his rookie season and he was a guy that our coaching staff could look to and depend on to produce and compete hard every single game."

In the raucous atmosphere of the William Allman Arena, a player like Keaton McLaughlin thrives, with a physical style that routinely sedans electricity pulsing through the crowd. However, as abrasive as he could be toward opponents during the heat of battle, Clarke indicated that McLaughlin was as genuinely nice a person as you could hope to meet.

"Keaton brought a lot of stability to our lineup. It's not just that physical presence on the ice, though that certainly is highly valuable and gave our guys an added level of comfort to play a bit more free and he made other teams pay the price. But more than that, Keaton was a true leader. He's a great listener and a great friend. If guys were going through tough times, Keaton would check on them and communicate with staff

about what guys needed. Keaton is just a great human being."

The Overage Defencemen

Before going in-depth on each player individually, Clarke talked about the incredible rarity of having four overagers on the blueline.

"It's a great luxury. Very rarely do you have that much of a veteran core back there. There isn't a ton of coaching that has to go on with those guys because all of those guys have played junior hockey for several years. They know what is in front of them on their last run and they hold others accountable.

They also know how to do the little things right so there is a lot of trust in those guys."

Arguably the most prolific of the defenders was Reid Oliver. In the post-season, Oliver led

the league in points by a defenceman with 29, six of which

were goals and 11 more points than the next-highest scoring blueliner, in 25 games.

"Reid was a top-end guy," Clarke said. "He could log big minutes for us. Even more than that, he is a born leader. He came in and from day one, he led with his work ethic. I remember the first skate we had with Reid and seeing the way he carried himself on and off the ice and knowing that we had made a great addition."

It's easy to forget about now with a Cherrey Cup still fresh in everyone's mind, but the start of the year wasn't as stellar as the finish for the Warriors. However, a big change came in a very literal sense when the six-foot-five Waterloo behemoth Owen Robertson returned to the lineup.

"I don't think you can put a price on the value that Owen brought to our team. He is an incredible personality and a guy that everyone loves. I think back to the start of the year when Owen had off-season shoulder surgery and because of that, Owen wasn't in the lineup and we struggled. The timeline of when we turned around and found our stride coincides with Owen rejoining the lineup. He's just that kind of person who makes everyone feel more comfortable and he was a really big culture driver for us."

Some players are made for the most high-pressure moments and most intensely difficult competition, and while his stats may never have been mind-boggling, Nolan Adkins was unquestionably elite at thriving under pressure.

"You could always count on Nolan to be that solid, honest, hard-working defenceman. He never took too many risks. He always made the right play. Most importantly, he was determined to do what it took to win. He's the kind of guy who plays his best hockey in the playoffs every year. He is willing to pay the price to win. I was obviously happy for all of our guys but a guy like Nolan you're especially happy to see win a championship in his last year after always doing things the right way for his whole junior career."

Adkins wasn't the only veteran defender who knew how to do the grunt work to

great effect. Zach Hatch could also certainly fit that description.

"Zach was a hybrid between Owen [Robertson] and Nolan [Adkins]. On the ice, he was another really solid, competitive defenceman who did whatever the team needed him to do. Off the ice, he truly cared about everyone on the team. He was never an issue and did whatever the coaches or the staff asked. Having someone who comes with the right attitude every night and who you completely trust is incredibly valuable.

Non-Overage Departures

Several non-overage players have either already been moved or aren't expected to return. At the top of that list is the team's leader in goals, Hunter Nagge, who has joined the OJHL's Collingwood Blues. In 44 games, Nagge found the back of the net 32 times en route to a 60-point season. According to Clarke, Nagge's talent is somehow matched by his character.

"Hunter is a great hockey player who developed into a dangerous offensive threat last season. What's amazing about Hunter is, as good as he is as a player, he's an even better person. Hunter is one of the nicest and most humble young men to play for our hockey club and we wish him all the success in the world."

No team reaches the Championship series without strong goaltending and the Warriors certainly had that box checked with Owen Willmore. With the St. Thomas native's sights set on cracking the London Knights' lineup, it's unlikely he will return to a Warriors jersey, but his contributions are not any less valued by the team.

"I don't know if I can properly sum up what Owen meant to our run. He allowed the entire group in front of him to play with so much confidence. He was always so solid and gave us a chance to win every night. Owen has a great work ethic at practice and in games and he gelled with the team."

Few players in the league proved more adept at deflecting pucks in front of the net than Lancaster, New York's Patrick Cole, who will be playing his final junior year closer to home in Buffalo. Clarke said that the elements brought to the table by Cole allowed the team to send different kinds of scoring threats over the boards.

"Patrick added some great secondary scoring for us. There was no one better in terms of hand-eye coordination in front of the net than Patrick. I don't think I've ever seen him miss a deflection in front. The fact that he was able to do so well in that aspect meant that we were able to roll multiple lines out as legitimate scoring threats."

Last but not least is Stratford's own Jonas Schmidt, who will be suiting up next year for the Bonnyville Pontiacs of the Alberta Junior Hockey League. Clarke praised Schmidt for his ability to adapt and grow during his time with the Warriors, in which he occupied a variety of different roles.

"Jonas is a Stratford resident who played here as a 16-year-old and found his way playing in the bottom six during his first year which can be difficult for a young skilled player. He has a great work ethic and kept working away and this year was on our top line, had a great performance at the McPherson Tournament, and has created opportunities for himself."



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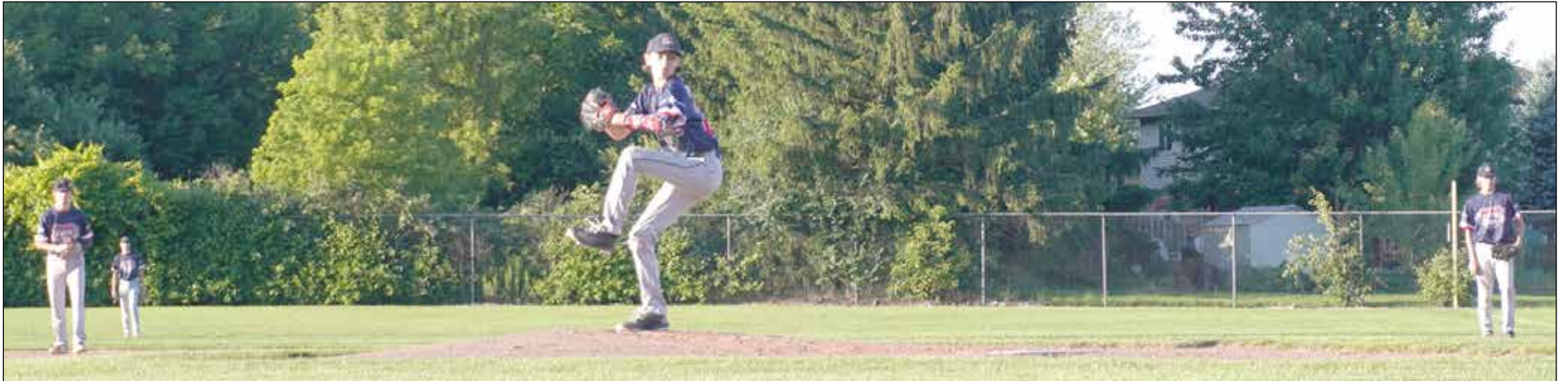
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Boys U15 Nationals secured a win



1, 2, 3 STRIKES, YOU'RE OUT

Eathan Priestap on the mound for the Stratford Nationals at the July 19th game.

(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Times Correspondent

The Boys U15 Nationals demonstrated

their skill and determination, securing a victory with a final score of 11-5 on July 19th.

Logan MacMillian showcased his skills

on the mound, delivering six innings of pitching. The team's offense was on fire, with standout performances from Cooper Yantzi, Alex Everett, Nolan Miller, and

Rowan Barlett, all contributing big hits. Alex Everett closed the game with impressive pitching, securing a well-deserved win for the Boys U15 Nationals.

U10 Nationals defeat Waterloo Tigers



ROUNDED THE BASES

#21 Randell Everett making it to home plate.

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Times Correspondent

At a July 13th game at SERC, the Stratford U10 Nationals faced off against the Waterloo Tigers. The pitchers, Randell Everett, Bentley Denstedt, Greyson DeGroot, and Kohen McLeod, showcased their skills, teaming up to strike out six players and secure a victory with a final score of 16-10.

McLeod and Easton Mathieson each recorded two singles, while DeGroot and

Everett contributed with one single hit each. Hayes Francis delivered a single and a double, displaying hitting power on the field.

Francis also drove in an impressive three RBIs, while McLeod, Carson Schenck, Greyson O'Donnell, Everett, and Mathieson each added an RBI to their name, showcasing their offensive prowess.

Jake Hurley, O'Donnell, and Rekker played well on the defensive front, contributing to their team's success.



SWING FOR THE FENCES

#16 Easton Mathieson up to bat for Stratford U10 Nationals

(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTOS)

Send in your sports reports

Coaches and/or parents are invited to send in your sports reports and pictures to the Stratford Times to let Stratford and area know how your teams are doing throughout the 2023 season (and to create some great scrapbook material to be reflected upon in future years).

Game reports should be kept to a

maximum of 100 words. Please include a brief description of what happened during your games, including the names of those who scored and any special efforts made by your players.

Please have all reports and pictures in by the end of the month by emailing stratfordtimes@gmail.com.



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OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: The ghostly history of the Mermaid Inn



PAUL KNOWLES

Times Contributor

I have stayed at some very interesting hotels and inns during my years as a travel writer. But I have to admit, this was the first time I booked in at an establishment that boasts that it was rebuilt... in 1420.

We were on the last leg of our 22-person tour of southern England, and I had opted to stay in the ancient town of Rye.

I love Rye, for a number of reasons. It is replete with historic buildings; it has a storied past of smuggling and other sea-side shenanigans; its cobblestone streets are authentic and original; its pubs are the real deal.

I have stayed in Rye a number of times, but always at a bed and breakfast, but with a group of this size, we needed something bigger. I had often walked past the Mermaid Inn, and had even ducked in for a look around, but had never stayed there.

We decided to take the chance on a hotel that brags that it was rebuilt over 600 years ago – although bits were added two hundred years later, making those parts practically modern.

And our stay at the Mermaid was entirely wonderful, from the unique rooms to the great food to the terrific service.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

The Mermaid Inn was rebuilt in 1420, and dates back to the 1100's.

There was one hitch – our full-sized coach could not get anywhere near the Inn. But the folks at the Mermaid offered to meet us at a parking lot a couple of blocks away, and transport our luggage up the cobblestone streets to the Inn. Turned out, they also offered rides to anyone in the group who opted not to walk. One of the drivers was a friendly woman named Judith.

As we were checking in, Judith called me aside and asked if the group would like an introduction and a bit of a tour of our new – well, very old – home away from home. It soon became apparent why she knew all this stuff – our “driver” was Judith Blincow, who has worked at the Mermaid since she was 18 years old, and who now owns the place.

All the rooms in the Mermaid are unique, all are historic (al-

though with state of the art updates like wifi), and many come with apparently authenticated ghost stories!

According to a “fact” sheet handed out to guests, Mermaid's Room 16 was the location of duels by sword, resulting in the death of one of the combatants, who was thrown down the stairs to the area that is now the bar. Modern-day guests have reported ghostly duels right in their bedroom. Guests in Room 5 report a “Lady in White” visiting them. In Room 10, a family of three was seen to walk through a wall. Judith delights in recounting these and many more stories – it seems that many of the hotel's 31 rooms come with spectral roommates.

Then Judith took us to the basement – a series of vaults with Norman arches, dating back as least

as far as the 1100's, and today used for storage and as a wine cellar. But – Rye being a smugglers' haven – there is clear evidence of tunnels under the basement floor, and archaeologists continue to study this, the most ancient part of the Inn. Judith says there are rumours of treasure, and she is confident it will be found.

Our group had booked a lounge for a convivial “happy hour”; the walls were decorated with dark wood, including one panel that, on examination, appeared different from the rest. Its decorations turned out to be subtly carved symbols and icons representing the Roman Catholic faith – because Catholics fleeing the ardent Protestants of the Henry VIII era stayed at the Inn, and could worship in this temporary “chapel” – or, as Judith said, a church hidden in plain sight.

I had chosen Rye as our final home base on our visit to the south of England because it is an easy drive from there to wonderful sites including Dover Castle, Sissinghurst Castle Gardens, Winston Churchill's Chartwell, Canterbury, and more.

But the truth is, our stay in the Mermaid Inn was as interesting as visiting any of those interesting destinations. I don't believe I saw any ghosts, although we did spot an elderly man dressed in period clothes having a pint in the Giant's Fireplace Bar. Having never talked to a ghost, in person, I struck up a conversation with him, and I'm pretty sure he was a present day resident of Rye portraying a fictional smuggler known as Dr. Syn. At least, I'm fairly sure he was real. Although he did disappear, eventually.

The Mermaid Inn has had connections with figures like William Shakespeare – a friend of a one-time landlord, and a visitor and performer in Rye in his day – as well as Queen Elizabeth I, and the more modern author, Henry James, whose house – now a National Trust site – is just around the corner.

Rye is full of unique shops and eateries – including Simon the Pieman, a two minute walk from the Mermaid Inn, occasionally frequented by Paul McCartney. Who is definitely not a ghost, despite the “Paul is dead” rumours that abounded – even without social media – in 1969.

I know – that reference dates me. But even I felt young, staying in an Inn renovated as recently as 1420!

Paul Knowles is an author and travel writer. To contact Paul about travel, his books, or speaking engagements, email pknowles@golden.net.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

Judith Blincow, owner and exuberant host at the Mermaid Inn in Rye, East Sussex, on the south coast of England.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

Half-timbered buildings and cobblestone streets abound in Rye.

Get your garden growing: Annual Best Blooming Gardens contest returns

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

Residents with a green thumb have a chance to be recognized by their neighbours who admire their gardens.

The City of Stratford announced in a July 17 press release that the local Communities in Bloom Committee's Best Blooming Gardens contest returns for another year. The Miracle-Gro sponsored contest, run by Communities in Bloom Canada honours the best gardens in municipalities with local chapters, including Stratford.

"It just gives people a chance to give back to those people who garden and spend time making our city beautiful," Barb Hacking, member of the city's Communities in Bloom committee, said.

Winners will earn prizes such as gardening supplies and a sign that says "best garden selection" to display in their gardens.

Hacking said that admiring beautiful gardens can boost mental health. Gardening, especially planting pollinators, can help the environment as well.

Encouraging pollinator planting is part of the Communities in Bloom Committee's mandate. This year, monarch butterflies arrived later than usual and are starting to lay their eggs now.

"They're looking for the milkweed to lay their eggs on and other butterflies need the nectar for their energy and their continued health," Hacking said. "I think it's just the enjoyment of watching the pollinators and knowing you are contributing a positive environment, not only for them but also for our children. Plants have a way of making us happy and it's important that we encourage planting gardens to enhance that mental health."

Carys Wyn Hughes, another member of Stratford's Communities in Bloom Committee, said the committee runs several events throughout the year including the Pumpkin Parade. Events organized by the committee also focus on environmental action, heritage, community involvement, tidiness, forestry, landscaping, and floral displays.

"It is an initiative about people, plants, and pride and growing Stratford together," Wyn Hughes said.

Any resident who sees a garden they admire can submit a photo entry, with permission from the owner, for nomination to the Clerk's Office. Along with the photo, entries must include the owner's name, address, contact information, and the reason for nomination.

Nominations can be sent to adviscom@stratford.ca before August 1 at noon.



(BARB HACKING PHOTO)

Building a blueprint for a more dynamic way to use municipal land

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Lucas Tingle, Garden Educator at The Local Community Food Garden on Dufferin St., has been growing a community food farm and educating volunteers at the two-acre property since 2020. This community garden helps to supply the Local Community Food Centre with organically grown, healthy food for the community market.

The farm consists of leaf lettuce, peas, carrots, beets, peppers, tomatoes, onions, kale and garlic. The property also has a small orchard consisting of a number of different kinds of fruit trees.

The community food garden is grown with a holistic approach in order to preserve the land. "Perth County is such a large agricultural center," Tingle said, "So one of the ways that we like to engage with our community is to share a bit more sustainable farming method."

Tingle discussed how he runs an Urban Farm Project that teaches people about sustainable agriculture, particularly regenerative practices. He notes, "As plants grow and photosynthesize, they feed millions and millions of microbial life forms, like worms and beetles, and that whole lifecycle is in the soil that helps support the growth of topsoil."

This regenerative way to grow food is a forward-thinking model that uses plants and bugs to process the topsoil rather



(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

SUSTAINABLE FARMING

Community volunteers working at the Local Community Food Farm in July

than a tilling process that most farmers would use. Tingle told The Stratford Times, "We don't actually use mechanical tillage to prepare the ground when we grow. We use plants to get them to do that work for us; it's called Biotillage, a soil conservation practice."

One particular plant used to help biotill the land is clover. "What's unique about Clover," Tingle said, "is not only does it give like a flower for pollinators early in the season, but it also fixes nitrogen,

the number one nutrient a plant needs. It makes up about 60% of a plant's diet." Clover roots will then grow deep into the soil, allowing for movement for nutrients to grow deep into the soil.

The conservation practices used at The Local Community Garden show underpinnings of the ways First Nations peoples and Indigenous Peoples in Canada originally farmed the land.

Tingle noted, "It is something I hope does come through, just through the practice of thinking about the soil, the land,

and the beneficial insects we're trying to invite into this space. We are trying to bolster a healthier, ecologically rich environment to grow food, and this is based on practices of the First Nations Peoples and Indigenous Peoples in Canada."

The farm currently consists of two acres of city property that was underused in the past. The City of Stratford has been an instrumental part in helping the farm continue by signing a new lease after the initial 10-year contract had ended; Tingle also notes, "The [City of Stratford] also helped us execute grants and has even given us money for the farm. There's a water line that we've run in from the city, and they don't charge us for access to water."

This biodiverse way of farming could set a standard across Ontario for better use of municipal land. "We have a great relationship with the city and are using the municipal land in a very good way, which is great for everyone," Tingle said, "We are basically building a blueprint for a more dynamic way to use municipal land to feed the community," he noted.

Tingle is currently working with the Eco Club at Stratford District Secondary School to help implement a school garden at another off-site, municipally owned property. This project will help students learn about biodiversity and the importance of sustainable farming practices to support their agricultural needs for years to come.

World in a Weekend returns to Stratford for second year

LISA CHESTER

Stratford Times Correspondent

World in a Weekend, the international puppet and music festival, returns to town August 3rd to 6th with world-class performances. In partnership between SpringWorks PuppetWorks! and Stratford Summer Music, the weekend promises to entertain festival goers of all ages with both free and accessibly priced events. World renowned puppeteers are coming from Hungary, Mexico and Quebec.

"We have a lot of magic in our situation, and I think magic is a theme that continues on forever and a day with music and puppetry in the intersection of what is magical in how you can be moved and changed, and with puppetry, how an object can come to life and how these puppeteers can view the audience as part of the conversation. Your imagination gets enlivened and we make you believe this creature is alive," said Eileen Smith, artistic producer of SpringWorks.

Opening the festival on Thursday at Factory 163 is Payadora Tango Ensemble, a contemporary chamber music ensemble performing Argentinian/Uruguayan tango and folk music and original compositions inspired by that tradition. Following the concert will be a Latin dance party beginning with demonstrations and salsa lessons given by Patricia and Robert Dodgson of Ballroom Breeze.

"Payadora Tango Ensemble is just finishing a tour of Europe and they are number two in the European charts right now. There will be a Latin Dance Party after. That's what opens the Festival," said Kendra Fry, general manager of Stratford Summer Music.

"There will be a couple demonstrations of basic salsa 'how-to' and then dance till midnight so it's just a party, no pressure, no experience, beginners that just have a grand ol' time, but if you want to learn there's a couple instructors," added Smith.

Friday features free music on The Barge



JOY AND MAGIC

Animalarium rabbit from Mexico interacts with a young girl.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

floating on the Avon River. Jani Lauzon will be performing Metis music in the morning and afternoon. Extraordinary performances in object puppetry begin that day, with the interactive "Fire, Stones, & Stories" at the Stratford Perth Museum, and the double bill of "Zen Tales" and "A Brief History of Time" at Factory 163. Puppet tickets range in price with a Pick Your Price model for tickets, either \$15, \$25 or \$35. Closing the evening is the Jazz All Stars performing to a sold out crowd at Revival House.

Saturday and Sunday will see magic in the community with a host of free family friendly activities along Veterans Drive in-

cluding strolling puppets and professional stilt walkers. Families will enjoy an interactive puppet playground, do it yourself face painting, a puppet tea party zone, and crafts for all ages. Check out the acclaimed Budapest Marionettes from Hungary with an array of inventive long string marionettes or interact with the beautifully animated creatures of Animalarium who have come from Mexico.

Saturday's free music performances on The Barge is the jazz stylings from the Jazz Academy, and in the tent is Pete and Anna-Music for Kids. The performance is a fun and interactive concert of original

songs and popular covers perfect for the JK to Grade 5 range.

Sunday's free music performances on The Barge is by Montreal's Ensemble Caprice where they will perform their early music. Returning to Stratford is Rhapsodius celebrating the soul, jazz, rhythm and blues, and Gospel music of the Civil Rights Era.

"There's all this free programming but we're also hoping people will be interested in attending concerts and experiencing Factory 163 and The Avondale; when at the Museum you can also attend exhibits that are there," said Smith.

Ticketed events include the puppet show "Judy Saves the Day", a modern interpretation of the traditional "Punch and Judy", at the Nancy Campbell Academy and at the Museum is a fascinating workshop in Object Puppetry.

Ticketed concerts include Ensemble Caprice at Factory 163 taking concert goes on a musical tour from South America to Europe, showing how cacao made the trek across the water. Rheo Thompson chocolates are included in the price. The Allison Lupton Band is appearing Saturday evening at the Museum, bringing to life contemporary folk music while incorporating Celtic influences. On Sunday at The Avondale is appearing Bournaki & Schwartz, world famous pianist and renowned cellist, in their only Canadian performance this year.

"This is about art but it's about art as opportunities, coming back and adding yourself and other people creates a stronger society and stronger people, healthier, happier people," said Fry.

"Joy and magic, magic and joy, escapism, moments or respite, moments of exploration, curiosity. It's relatively risk free, you can come and test the waters and maybe open your mind to who knows what" concludes Smith.

Tickets can be purchased online at worldinaweekend.ca and at the Stratford Summer Music box office at 19 Waterloo St.

City of Stratford unveils Cultural Plan for 2023-2028 Season

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

In a collaborative effort with Destination Stratford, the City of Stratford has successfully finalized its Municipal Cultural Plan for the 2023-2028 season. The project, funded by the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) through Regional Tourism Organization 4 (RTO4), aims to bolster the city's cultural assets and provide a 'strategic vision for its growth and development.'

The Municipal Cultural Plan was the result of extensive research and public engagement that began in November 2022. Over 250 connections and conversations were held with community members, cultural stakeholders, Stratford City Staff, and Council members to gather insights and ideas for shaping



the city's cultural landscape.

"Stratford is a year-round cultural city cherished by residents and visitors alike, where cultural offerings celebrate diversity and inclusion and reflect the city's unique community values and heritage," said the plan's vision statement.

The focal point of the public engagement process was the Engage Stratford platform, where community members had the opportunity to share their opinions through surveys and discussions, ensuring the representation of a number

of perspectives in the planning process.

The Municipal Cultural Plan sets out both long-term and short-term strategies to cultivate Stratford's cultural fabric and community, bringing together policies within various cultural sectors. The plan establishes a growth strategy that aligns the city with its desired long-term vision, promoting a healthy cultural scene.

"The Municipality will support cultural initiatives, assets, and opportunities that inclusively elevate the quality of life in Stratford for current and future

generations," stated the plan's mission.

Among the program's early successes is Stratford's commitment to reconciliation through Indigenous-led learning opportunities and authentic relationship building. The city's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion division has been instrumental in driving initiatives aimed at achieving reconciliation goals. In February 2023, the Council approved a Land Acknowledgement that serves as a testament to the city's acknowledgment of the land upon which its residents live, work, and play. This acknowledgement is read at every City Council meeting.

Mayor Ritzma understands there is a long road ahead and said, "It's one thing to say that, 'yes, we value it,' but, as I said this in my inaugural address, you can have a vision, but what you put in your budget line, truly reflects what you value in your community."

Anna Lekas Miller, author and journalist, visit Fanfare Books

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Times Correspondent

Writer and journalist Anna Lekas Miller visited Fanfare Book Store during the Provocation Ideas Festival, an intellectual gathering focused on stimulating discussions and the exploration of ideas. Lekas Miller, known for her work on covering the impact of conflict and migration on people's lives worldwide, shared her experiences and insights during the Ontario tour with stops at York University and then here in Stratford.

Lekas Miller was also promoting her new book, "Love Across Borders," which takes readers on a journey through several love stories spanning from Turkey to Iraq, Syria to Greece, and Mexico to the United States.

The author exposes the prejudicial laws that aim to divide people through her personal account of the meeting and falling in love with her now husband, Rizk, in Istanbul, where they were both reporting on the Syrian War.

The book captures the challenges faced by Rizk, a Syrian national, as Turkey cracked down on refugees, rendering him unable to stay in the country or safely return to Syria. Lekas Miller noted, "When you have a Syrian passport, it's not the same as having a US or Canadian passport. [With a Canadian or American passport], you have so much freedom of movement compared to the global majority."

She started to realize that there are so many people in similar situations, "This must be happening to so many people



LOVE ACROSS BORDERS

Anna Lekas Miller with her new book, Love Across Borders at Fanfare Books, downtown Stratford

(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

around the world and a lot of people that did not have the convenience of a US passport," and this is how "Love Across Borders" was born.

"The grand argument of the book," Lekas Miller reflects, "is that if we didn't have borders like this, we would have so much more freedom to love, so much more freedom to be who we are and know who we actually are without the stress and weight and trauma of these very dehumanizing institutions."

Lekas Miller's other work in journalism and thought-provoking essays have been in publications such as Vanity Fair, the Intercept, CNN, the New Humanitarian, and Newlines Magazine.

Residing in London, England, with her husband, Lekas Miller continues to captivate readers and audiences with her compelling storytelling and dedication to shedding light on the human experiences shaped by conflict, migration, and the pursuit of love and healing.

Recently, she has turned her attention to the surge of far-right movements in Europe and the United States, meticulously investigating immigration systems, white supremacist ideologies, and the inspiring stories of resistance against them. Her primary interest lies in stories of love and healing amidst the unpredictability and instability of our world.

You can find Lekas Miller on Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok, under the handle @annalekasmiller.

Stratford Destination Development Fund grant for 'Shoulder Season' attraction

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The Stratford Destination Development Fund (DDF) was established with investment from Regional Tourism Organization 4 (RT04), Downtown Stratford BIA, and Destination Stratford to 'enable and support experiential projects that are highly shareable and have a high impact on the destination.'

The goal of the Stratford DDF is to help increase the number of sustainable and high-quality visitor-focused experiences during the shoulder and winter seasons, provide opportunities for destination storytelling and visitor-generated content creation, and strengthen the network of destination stakeholders taking an active role in our tourism future, notes the website.

This year, the project supported eight cultural projects specifically designed to attract tourists to Stratford during the "off-season," says Zack Gribble, Executive Director of Destination



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Hypnotist Asad Mecci, SACC Board Member Marian DeWever, SACC Co-chair Ron Dodson, SACC Co-chair Chris Leberg, Canadian comedy legend Colin Mochrie after "Hyprov" January 15, 2023, at the Avon Theatre.

Stratford.

"This year, we've made quite a shift, focusing outside the theatre season." Gribble noted, "We made the decision this year that one of the keys to the activity is to focus on things that are happening outside the summer months."

Gribble also said, "Stratford's

innovative and creative spirit is always on full display with DDF applications, and we're excited to bring the focus to shoulder seasons and winter to showcase amazing cultural experiences throughout the year as well as during Lights On Stratford."

Jamie Pritchard, General Manager of Downtown Stratford

BIA, noted, "These funds offer creative minds a chance to shine, and the BIA loves to be part of fresh new ideas!"

Ron Dodson, Destination Development Fund recipient from Stratford Arts and Culture Collective (SACC), said his main objective is to put the funding towards marketing and attracting

visitors from beyond a 40-kilometre radius. "We're going to implement a bus tour to bring people from London and Kitchener and beyond to Stratford during the winter. This may include an overnight stay and shopping downtown and then dinner."

The Stratford Arts and Culture Collective exists for the purpose of creating an Arts and Culture Center in Stratford for creatives to connect and be a support system for one another. They are known for much of their art and cultural work, including some high-profile performances. "We have a track record of having produced a number of events over the past several years, such as Colin Mockery and Brad Sherwood," Dodson notes.

The eight companies that will receive the funding for the 2023 season are Stratford Winterfest, Provocation Ideas Festival, Stratford Arts and Culture, Communities in Bloom, Stratford Summer Music, Pazzo Co. and Stratford Winter Film Festival Inc.



SEEKING SUSTAINABILITY

2023 is the worst wildfire season on record, according to Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre

By: Kieran Albrecht

Climate change continues to evolve and intensify each year. This problem is aggravated by the rampant and unregulated use of fossil fuels, which has led to accelerated global warming and significant long-term changes in temperature and weather patterns. This includes the emergence and rapid escalation of recurring heat waves, severe wildfires, heavy rainfall, and intense storms. Climate crisis has become increasingly urgent with each passing year. In cities across our nation, like Stratford, there have been noticeable changes in temperature and weather patterns, such as frequent heat waves, severe wildfires, heavy rainfall, reduced snow accumulation, and a decline in biodiversity.

The urgency of the climate crisis is evident in the Alberta and Quebec wildfires. Wildfire seasons in these regions have grown increasingly intense, resulting in wildfire smoke becoming a regular part of the environment. The wildfires in Alberta have not only weakened the infrastructure but have also left thousands of residents homeless, as their homes have been destroyed. These devastating fires have forced residents to endure stressful evacuations. In Quebec, the wildfires are expected to continue growing in September and October, fuelled by ample burning materials and a forecast of hot and dry summer conditions due to a warming climate. When the north or northeast

winds prevail, it is likely that the smoke will spread across the lower Great Lakes Region. This wildfire smoke significantly affects air quality for millions of people in Ontario.

Exposure to the smoke and resulting low air quality has short-term health effects, including burning eyes, sore throat, coughing, light-headedness, and headaches. Individuals with underlying respiratory or cardiovascular conditions, as well as those with neuromuscular conditions, are particularly vulnerable and face potentially life-threatening consequences.

According to Dr. Patrick James from the University of Toronto, there is a correlation between climate change and weather patterns, including temperature, pressure, and precipitation. This year, we experienced the third warmest May on record. Additionally, there have been unusual ocean temperatures, contributing to higher overall temperatures and increased energy within the climate system. Fires are the outcome of the interplay between fuel ignition and weather conditions. The exceptionally hot weather conditions, coupled with extremely dry fuels and potential sources of ignition like thunderstorms, create a convergence of factors that lead to the formation of large clusters of highly destructive fires. These fires are a direct consequence of the dry conditions.

Individuals, communities, groups, businesses, municipalities, and agencies

across Ontario and Perth County all have a responsibility to address the climate crisis. Potential solutions include investing in emergency aid and education, implementing measures to reduce resource consumption within communities, and educating ourselves about climate change and its direct association with carbon monoxide emissions, temperature, and heat. Another proactive step is to continue planting trees, as they help retain water and contribute to cooling the environment. Vegetation that carries water can also help mitigate wildfires while providing us with oxygen.

In conclusion, the wildfires we are witnessing have the potential to affect our region, and they may have already done so, as indicated by the poor air quality that is impacting individuals in and around Perth County. Additionally, the unchecked and widespread use of fossil fuels has gone unnoticed, contributing to our warmer and more arid climate, as well as shorter winters. As I reflect upon a quote from the movie *Braveheart*, where Mel Gibson's character William Wallace declares, "I'm going to pick a fight", the fight I chose is the battle against climate change.

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Perth Pork Producers honour Perth East Firefighters and First Responders

GARY WEST

Times Correspondent

The Perth County Pork Producers wanted to honour a group of volunteers in Perth East who sometimes don't get the recognition they deserve, but are very important to the community in case of a fire emergency or even when a first responder is required.

The Perth East Fire Department members and their families were treated to a smoked Pork Chop BBQ dinner in the Pavillion at Rostock as a way the local pork producers could say "thanks" to the emergency services and first responders for all they do for the community.

Fire Departments in Perth East include members from three stations: Milverton, Sebringville and Shakespeare.

The Perth County Pork Farmers are seen in many areas of the county bringing their Pork Chops and BBQ to a number of social events in order to provide that hometown local flavour that area residents have come to enjoy.

Pictured are representatives of the Perth East Fire Department along with local Perth County Pork Producers.

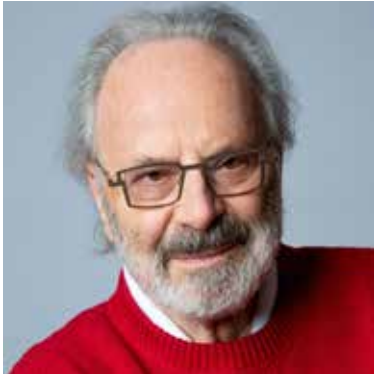
L-R: Paul Leis (Milverton Fire), Henry Groenstage (President-Perth Pork Producers), Steve Jantzi (Milverton Fire), Amanda Brodhagen (Perth East Councillor), Rob Brett (Milverton Fire), John Timmermans (Sebringville Fire), Vince Hulsoff (Perth Pork), Doug Ahrens (Perth Pork), Dan Gerber (Milverton Fire).



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

PUSHING BOUNDARIES: The Bedrock Theory of Memory

How Memories are Formed, where they are Stored



THOMAS R VERNY, MD

Times Contributor

Introduction

Learning and memory are two of the most remarkable faculties of our mind. Learning is the biological process of acquiring new knowledge about the world, and memory is the process of retaining, reconstructing and accessing that knowledge over time. Ask most people where memory resides and they are most likely to respond with, "What a dumb question! It's in the brain, of course."

Let's take a deep dive into this question.

Meet Your Brain

The average adult brain weighs about 3 pounds. It is made up of around 75 per cent water. The brain consists of roughly 100 billion neurons, as many as the stars in our galaxy, embedded in a scaffolding of a 100 billion glial cells. Each neuron may have 1,000 - 10,000 synapses (connections with other neurons). The most active period of neuron proliferation takes place during the middle of the second trimester,

when 250,000 neurons are created every minute.

Early experiences have decisive impact on the architecture of the brain, and on the nature and extent of adult capacities. Brain development is non-linear: there are prime times for acquiring different kinds of knowledge and skills. By the time children reach age three, their brains are twice as active as that of their pediatrician. But be warned: if you have young children, brain activity levels drop during adolescence.

The basic unit of the Central Nervous System is the neuron or nerve cell. Each neuron has several thousand dendrites – up to 10,000 – tiny hair like strands of tissue that receive signals and one axon, a more robust structure through which the neuron sends signals to other cells. Neurons function in networks.

Neurons do not actually touch. Each axon produces about 160 different neurotransmitters that cross a miniscule gap, the synapse to insert themselves in the receptors of dendrites that are structured to receive a particular neurotransmitter and no other. Sort of like a space shuttle docking to a space station.

Neurons comprise only 15 per cent of the brain. The other 85 per cent is made up of glial cells. Glial cells continue to grow in number until a few years after birth. They guide early brain development and keep the neurons healthy throughout life. Glial cells provide the scaffolding for neurons and as the origin of their name implies (Greek for glue) they help

to keep the neurons together. Glial cells can affect the functioning of neurons even though they cannot discharge electrical impulses of their own.

Human neurons are very similar to those of other animals, right down to using the same neurotransmitters. But as one compares the brains of animals ascending the evolutionary tree, one sees that the higher you climb, the more non-neuronal glial cells these animals' brains contain in proportion to the number of neurons. For years glial cells were dismissed as mere putty. Actually, glial cells control communication between neurons and play a central role in learning.

The Bedrock Theory of Learning and Memory

The accepted scientific hypothesis regarding memory is what I call "The Bedrock Theory of Learning and Memory". According to this theory, incoming signals from our sense organs initiate the production of specific proteins in neurons that make their synapses grow stronger. These proteins not only build up the synapse but also encode memories. Just like physical exercise leads to greater muscle mass through the production of new proteins, so experience builds memories in synapses, potentially whole neural networks in an ever-changing plastic brain.

Eric Kandel, who shared the Nobel Prize in the year 2000 with Arvid Carlsson and Paul Greengard for "their discoveries concerning signal transduction in the nervous system" and is professor

of biochemistry and biophysics at Columbia University conducted his studies on the marine snail, *Aplysia* which has only about 20,000 nerve cells compared with about a 100 billion in the human brain. The snail has a simple reflex by which it protects its gills and Kandel used that reflex to study how the snail learnt and remembered stimuli. He showed that short-term memory involves increased levels of neurotransmitters at the synapses and long-term memory requires changes in the levels of proteins in the synapse.

After learning how these simple animals functioned, he then experimented on mice. This work helped him understand how the same processes that occurred in nerve cells of slugs could be seen in mammals, which includes humans.

Kandel concluded that the basic building block of memory is the synapse, where both pre- and postsynaptic elements together with associated glial processes form an integral unit with an individual identity and distinct "neighborhood." The increase in connectivity strength within a diffuse group of cells in a more complex feed forward circuit results in the emergence of an engram (engrams are complex stored memories, within a cell assembly).

Summary

Eric Kandel, declared in 2006 that "in the study of memory storage, we are now at the foothills of a great mountain range... To cross the threshold from where

we are to where we want to be, major conceptual shifts must take place." I totally agree. As we shall see in the next part of this paper, it is time that Kandel's reigning neuroscientific view of memory storage is modified.

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Dr. Thomas R VERNY MD is a psychiatrist, podcaster and author of 47 scientific papers and eight books including the international best seller, The Secret Life of the Unborn Child, published in 27 countries and the recently released, The Embodied Mind. The Embodied Mind shows how intelligence and consciousness—traits traditionally attributed to the brain alone—permeate our entire being. Dr. VERNY lives with his wife in Stratford.

In Pushing Boundaries, Dr. VERNY will report on pioneering research and breakthrough discoveries in science and the arts as they impact our lives. He will try to address the question of readers everywhere, "Why should I care, of what value is this to me?"

The Stratford and District Saddle Club riders and horses competed



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Pictured with Saddle club president and Stratford Mayor Martin Ritsma (centre) are riders and horses who competed while showing their true Canadian colours at the equestrian show on the weekend at the Schlotzhauer riding facility on Line 37 east of Stratford.

GARY WEST

Times Correspondent

There were many local horses and riders at the Stratford and District Saddle Club show on the weekend of July 22-23, as

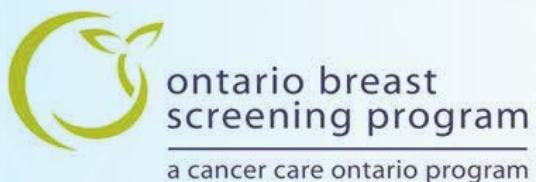
both young and not-so-young competed with their mounts in excellent weather at the Schlotzhauer riding facility in North Easthope township on Line 37.

There were numerous classes for all age groups, and Saddle Club President Martin

Ritsma was happy with the turnout of riders and spectators.

Organizers said the weather was in their favour for the first time in many weekends where rain forced the cancellation of the two previous shows.

Show judge Christine McMullen, from the Aylmer area, was helpful in advising and explaining to the younger riders how they could improve in the future with their horses in some of the areas and classes of the competition that they were entered in.



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Riddles

Why did the cowboy die with his boots on?

Because he didn't want to stub his toe when he kicked the bucket

What did the fireman's wife get for Christmas?

A ladder in her stocking

What lies at the bottom of the sea and shivers?

A nervous wreck

What do you call an American drawing?

Yankee doodle

Have you ever seen a man eating tiger?

No, but in the cafe next door I once saw a man eating chicken

What do cannibals eat for breakfast?

Buttered host

What do you call a cat with eight legs that likes to swim?

An octopuss

What is the best way to communicate with a fish?

Drop it a line

Sudoku

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

Solutions on page 27



Pet of the Month



RUBY

Ruby is a 3-year-old vibrant and energetic large breed dog who is on a quest to find her forever home! Ruby's spirited personality and zest for life make her an ideal companion for an active and dynamic family. She is looking for a home with a single person, couple, or family with dog-savvy children. Ruby's energy level requires an environment that can keep up with her. This playful pup adores going for long walks and exploring the great outdoors. Whether it's a hike through the woods or a game of fetch in the park, Ruby is always up for an adventure. Her sunny disposition is further enhanced by her love for every person she meets, making her an instant friend to anyone who crosses her path. Ruby's boundless affection and gentle nature make her a wonderful companion. If you're seeking an active and loving furry friend to accompany you on your outdoor endeavors, fill out an adoption survey at <https://kwsphumane.ca/adopt/process>.



Word Search

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP 2023 FAVOURITES

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

- USA
- SPAIN
- GERMANY
- ENGLAND
- AUSTRALIA
- BRAZIL
- FRANCE
- JAPAN
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CLASSIFIEDS

Email to inquire stratfordtimes@gmail.com

OBITUARY



KARL BRIAN ANDERSON

September 26, 1942 – July 10, 2023

We are sad to announce the loss of our dear Brian. Born in Winnipeg, Manitoba and raised in Saskatchewan; then on to Ontario where he established "Canadiana Antiques" to satisfy a lifelong interest and passion. He later located to Stratford, Ontario which proved to be his ideal location. He found the city interesting and beautiful and a place where he formed good friendships.

Brian was very even-tempered and optimistic. He was well-read and an entertaining conversationalist as well as a good listener. He was fond of animals, especially cats, two of which lived happily to the age of 24 under his care.

Brian is predeceased by his parents Anders and Astrid, sister Elsie (Tony) Velvick, brothers Lennart (Orpha) and Gordon (Lilian), half-sister Joan Brownridge and nephews Michael Velvick and Anders Anderson.

He will be missed and lovingly remembered by Anne-Marie, Orpha and his many nieces, nephews and his grand-nephew.

Cremation has taken place. It was his wish to be remembered but not publicly celebrated, and so there will be no formal visitation or funeral service held. Donations in memory may be made to a charity of one's choice through Rutherford Cremation & Funeral Services, 804 Ontario St., Stratford. 519-271-5062.

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TO DOT THE I – for editing and proofreading.
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FEMALE CAREGIVER NEEDED for mildly autistic adult female for one week of camp August 13-19th in Guelph. Call/email for details. No texting. 519-273-7147, srlavallee44@gmail.com

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- Provide solution to routine or unique installation problems

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- Capability in Solid Works design program
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- The ability to create and maintain a team environment focused on continuous improvement
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- Possess strong oral and written communication skills and interpersonal skills
- Must pay attention to details with a customer service attitude

To Apply

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Please refer to the City of Stratford website at www.stratford.ca for details of the duties for this position, qualifications, and application submission process.

Application forms will be available on the Stratford Police Service website under the "Careers" link. Completed application packages for this Experienced Police Constable position will be accepted until September 8, 2023.

Please mail or deliver completed applications to Stratford Police Service, 17 George Street West, Stratford, ON N5A 1A6.

We thank all applicants for their interest; however only those selected for testing will be contacted.

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COMING EVENTS

Email to inquire
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ACAPELLA SINGERS

August 6; 3-4 p.m.

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Come and enjoy Gospel Singing By Fairhaven Youth Choir.

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Saturday, August 19; 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

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Saturday, August 19; 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Stratford, ON

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or email stratfordtimes@gmail.com

QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1) The Greyhound
- 2) Beatrix Potter
- 3) Five (5)
- 4) Nena
- 5) Loire
- 6) John Keats
- 7) Jupiter
- 8) Twenty-four (24). Humans have 12 pairs of ribs / 24 ribs in total
- 9) Greenland
- 10) Herbivore

SUDOKU

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

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