

STRATFORD **TIMES**

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Christmas Trail returns to Stratford

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

A beloved holiday tradition among shoppers searching for gifts in Stratford and area is back for its ninth year with more stores to choose from than before.

Destination Stratford announced in a November 1 press release that the Stratford Christmas Trail features 46 local businesses, with 30 from Stratford and 16 from Shakespeare and St. Marys. Participants can select six businesses of their choice to visit for \$35 plus tax and receive a unique holiday gift from each place.

"We are so happy to be launching the Christmas Trail again this year, which marks nine years since the inception and has become a welcomed visitor and local favourite each season," April Murray, destination brand manager, said.

Local businesses from Shakespeare and St. Marys have always been included in the Stratford Christmas Trail, with this year's edition having the most businesses from those two towns in the event's history. Destination Stratford collaborated with the tourism sector in Shakespeare and St. Marys to encourage more businesses to participate. Murray added that with a difference in the number of visitors to Stratford and reasons to stop by during this time of year, events like the Christmas Trail encourage supporting local throughout the year.

Stratford's Christmas Trail also adds to the holiday spirit of the city and encourages shoppers to search for the perfect gift with their family and friends, rather than shopping alone.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

SEEING RED

Volunteers install the poppy bridge on November 1st

Over 10,000 poppies draped over the William Hutt Bridge in Remembrance

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

On November 1, a local Wednesday night knitting group started hanging over 10,000 poppies over the William Hutt Bridge to honour Remembrance Day on November 11.

Remembrance Day commemorates the anniversary of the armistice signing in 1918 between the Allies and Germany.

Patti Russell, a Wednesday Night Knitting Club member, said, "Last November, around Remembrance Day, we started talking about this project and decided

to get the word out," she continued, "Before we knew it, we had collected over 10,000 poppies, and they're still coming in."

Stratford is not the first to don such a beautiful display; poppies like this can be seen across Europe and were believed to have started in England, "Some places have poppies coming down steps and cascading from cathedrals, which are gorgeous," said Russell, "Since we don't have any of those buildings, we thought the bridge would give us the most visibility and look beautiful."

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



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Over 10,000 poppies draped over the William Hutt Bridge in Remembrance



(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

Poppy Bridge, where over 10,000 poppies are hung in Remembrance

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Many Stratford and area residents made the poppies themselves, and the process to install them on the bridge was quite tedious, "The bridge has 40 panels (20 on each side), so we've zip-tied poppies onto mesh panels so they will stay in place," said Russell.

Although the Wednesday night knitting group thought of the idea, Russell says it couldn't be without the help of the whole community, "one woman in town crocheted 1300 poppies, and a church group donated hundreds; another group

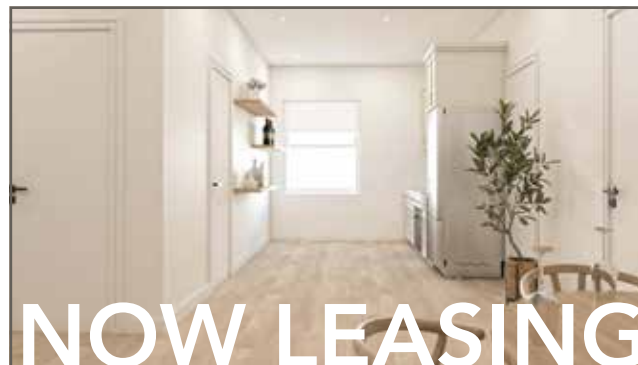
of women made over 2000 poppies for it."

The Stratford Festival was able to support the group through The Tyrone Guthrie Award, which was granted to the group last week. Russell notes that this funding will support the project by allowing them to purchase supplies, such as zip-ties and mesh, to hold the poppies in place through the first weeks of November while they are at the bridge.

Getting permission to install the Poppy Bridge was very easy. Russell said, "We initially had to get approval from the Legion, and they were great. After that, we had to talk to the City of Stratford, and they were wonderful and happy to support the project."

Mayor Martin Ritsma expressed gratitude for those who took the time to install the Poppy Bridge and told the Stratford Times, "When I see those poppies and when I wear a poppy, I reflect upon the importance of making it as relevant as possible in young people's minds. As an educator, I believe it's so important to reflect on all those who sacrificed for us."

When asked what prompted Russell and her fellow knitters as to why they chose to take on such a large-scale project, she said, "We did this in recognition of the soldiers that have lost their lives, and for the Legion," she continued, "We wanted to show our support, and we knew the community would want to show their support, too."



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Consider yourself “Local Traffic” on Albert Street during construction, say business owners



(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Sign outside construction on Albert street business owners want you to know you can still park here!

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Businesses on Albert Street have noticed a change in their walkthrough traffic this month, especially since construction took over the intersection at Albert Street and Waterloo Street South.

Not only is the construction decreasing traffic on Albert Street, says Kristene Steed, Owner of Rheo Thompson Candies, but there has been very little communication between the city and businesses on the street, “We’re self-employed businesses,” stated Steed, “we need better communication from the city when things are happening.”

Steed notes that she completely understands the need for infrastructure updates but did note that the changes are happening with little to no communication from the City, which has been frustrating for their business and others, “I understand the infrastructure needs updating, we do live in Canada, but I would have appreciated better communication from the city,” she stated.

Nick Sheldon, Project Manager of the Infrastructure Services Department for the City of Stratford, said, “City Staff appreciate the feedback from residents and businesses around the Albert Street Reconstruction project,” he continues, “We do make a concerted effort to keep residents and businesses informed and aware of upcoming and ongoing construction activities.”

The City of Stratford and Birnam Excavating coordinated a water shutdown on October 17 from 7 a.m. until noon the same day. Sheldon told The Stratford Times, “The tie-in for drinking water at Waterloo Street occurred within one of the most congested underground infrastructure locations in Stratford. Due to hard work and good planning, this tricky connection

was able to be completed ahead of schedule.”

Limited notice about disruptions, however, makes production very complicated for locally owned businesses such as Rheo Thompson and Steed noted her concerns, saying, “The water is going to be shut off tomorrow. There was no communication other than a sign on the door.”

Ariana, the owner of Pistolnik, another Albert Street business, notes the construction makes for an uncomfortable shopping experience at her store due to the constant noise; therefore, she, too, has noticed a substantial decrease in walk-in traffic, “The noise can be so bad at times that people leave the store,” she noted.

Because of the constant noise and low walk-in traffic, Ariana is decreasing her hours and working on custom orders. She, too is frustrated by the city’s lack of explanation, “I know the work has to be done, but having some notice when there’s going to be a two-week interruption in my income would have been nice.”

On behalf of the City of Stratford, Sheldon said, “We know this work can be disruptive, and we would like to thank the citizens and businesses of Stratford for their patience as we make these necessary infrastructure upgrades.”

Sheldon says those affected by the construction should see this end soon, “There is aging infrastructure requiring replacement within Albert Street. Recognizing this, our various forms of communication identified construction timeframes of late fall to early winter for completion.”

The City of Stratford encourages residents and businesses to continue to reach out to staff if they have questions or concerns and to make use of our online platforms for information and updates, including Engage Stratford at <https://engagestratford.ca/albert-street-reconstruction-phase-1>



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STRATFORD TIMES

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Established 2021

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Social Research & Planning Council announces new living wage

Living Wage Week in Ontario runs Nov. 6–12 and United Way Perth-Huron's Social Research & Planning Council (SRPC) is announcing the new living wage of \$22.75 an hour, up from \$20.70 last year.

"As the cost of living in the places we call home continues to rise, it's becoming more important than ever for people across our communities to talk about how we can make our region more livable and that includes concepts like a living wage," says Kristin Crane, director of Social Research & Planning. "This year, we're seeing the increases in the cost of food and housing driving the increase in the living wage. Food and shelter are obviously fundamental to personal well-being, and that highlights how important it is for wages to be responsive to inflation so the economic pressures many individuals and families face are reduced."

Based on a 35-hour work week, the Perth-Huron living wage was calculated using local data and considered the living expenses of a weighted average of three family types including a family of four, a single mother supporting a seven-year-old child and a single adult, once government transfers and deductions were taken into account. Everyday expenses in the calculation in-

cluded food, housing, utilities, clothing, childcare and transportation. For more information about Perth-Huron's living wage, visit perthhuron.unitedway.ca.

"We understand it's challenging for businesses to think about increasing their expenses, particularly at a time when so many organizations are feeling the pressure of higher pricing themselves," added Crane. "But we continue to hear from certified living wage employers that paying a living wage helps in many ways and over time, from reducing turnover and increasing productivity to boosting morale. While paying a living wage may seem daunting, organizations benefit in the long run."

"A living wage is another facet of helping make sure more people are able to take part in the life of their community and not feel isolated or stressed," added United Way Perth-Huron Executive Director Ryan Erb. "Not having enough to get by has such a profoundly negative effect on a person's life. If we want a fairer, more welcoming place to live, the living wage is another tool to help make sure that as we continue to grow and create opportunities as a community, everyone can benefit."

Christmas Trail returns to Stratford

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

"It's really magical and we're often told our city resembles a romantic Hallmark movie during the holidays - which I think is such a great compliment," Murray said. "The Christmas trail offers such an array variety of boutique shops with decorated storefronts and seasonally inspired products. It's just a really special time of year and we're hopeful that visitors and locals will partake and really have fun out of our holiday

shopping."

The Christmas Trail vouchers can be purchased in St. Marys and in Stratford, including the Destination Stratford office, Bradshaws, and Stone Home Creatives.

A complete list of participating businesses can be found on visitstratford.ca/ChristmasTrail. Additional events occurring in Stratford can be viewed via visitstratford.ca/calendar.

Letter to the Editor

I lost my right arm on October 18, 1944, while serving with the Loyal Edmonton Regiment in Italy. I was staked at a farmhouse that had a children's treehouse located nearby. In the treehouse was a sniper who kept shooting at our boys. A tank then came which shot out shells, the shrapnel hitting my right arm.

When I returned home from the war, I joined The War Amps and have been a member ever since. This Association was started by First World War amputee veterans to help each other adapt to their new reality as amputees.

Having just recently turned 100, I am reflecting this Remembrance Day upon all those who served in

my regiment and never returned home. Their absence weighs on me and it is essential that we keep their memory alive. I take comfort in knowing that The War Amps and its young members will continue to keep spreading the message long into the future.

The sacrifices of those who served (and continue to serve) deserve to be remembered and honoured. Each Remembrance Day serves as a poignant reminder of the tremendous price paid by these brave individuals. Their selflessness and courage continue to resonate, and it is our duty to ensure that their legacy endures.

Lloyd Brown, 100
Member of The War Amps

STRATFORD TIMES

Guiding Principles

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6. Newspapers strengthen communities
7. Advertisers, big or small, should profit from their ads (meaning sensible ad rates)
8. Newspapers should be locally-owned and operated

Homelessness in Stratford is on the rise, but this isn't different from other years, says city officials

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The City of Stratford received recognition of decreasing homelessness by 10% below baseline back in April for reducing homelessness in the county to 131 people experiencing homelessness from December 2022 until February 2023.

Since that time, there has been an increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness due to a number of factors, including housing, finances, mental health concerns and several other socioeconomic barriers.

Although these numbers are increasing, it is not uncommon to see numbers increase during the summer months, says Kim McElroy, Director of Social Services for the City of Stratford, "we

do see an increase in those experiencing homelessness through the warmer months and decreased through the winter months."

There are currently 168 people experiencing homelessness in Perth County, numbers that are 20% more than last winter, but McElroy says she is working with community partners to ensure those who are homeless will be safe through the colder months, "We do have a reach team that goes and supports people who are who are homeless or have housing stability issues," she says, "We work both so we have an internal team. And we have an external team of community agencies, like CMHA as well and various other community partners who go and check on the well being of individuals that are

living in encampments."

McElroy says it is important for Stratford citizens to reach out if they believe someone is experiencing homelessness or could be in danger. "We encourage people to call in so we can send out-reach for a wellness check," She emphasized, "It's important for us to know where individuals are so that we can go and check on their well-being and work with them to get appropriate housing."

Municipalities regularly meet to discuss best practices concerning homelessness. McElroy said this process is vital to learning and understanding what works in other areas and what we can implement these best practices in Stratford to help those who are homeless, "We speak as directors onto best practices or promises practices in the

municipalities so that we can understand what's happening in both rural and urban settings," she said, "We are constantly in contact, reviewing best practices across the province."

McElroy recently attended a meeting where homelessness was a top priority of discussion, and she said it raises important questions, "what's working in other municipalities? What are lessons learned, and how can we move the needle on this important topic?"

From here, there will be more discussion throughout the month of October as it is National Homeless Youth Awareness Month. Therefore The City of Stratford says there will be future updates on homelessness and how citizens can get involved to help those who may be without housing.

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City official says the 23 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations will not impact downtown parking

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The City of Stratford will install 23 EV charging stations throughout the downtown core, and drivers are wondering where this will leave them as far as parking spots for regular vehicles.

Currently, the downtown core provides drivers access to over 1,200 parking spaces, including accessible and motorcycle parking. This also includes over 400 free parking spaces split between the Cooper lot and the Downie Street lot.

Given that most parking space inventory is in parking lots, the city says that none of the planned installations for new charging stations are proposed for on-street locations, saving these spaces for non-EV drivers downtown.

Overall, this expansion project will convert 23 regular parking spaces into parking for the charging of electric vehicles. This makes up less than 2% of the total parking inventory available to drivers in the downtown core.

"By installing more charging stations, the City hopes to encourage drivers to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by driving battery-electric vehicles or plug-in hybrid vehicles," said Christopher Bantock, Deputy Clerk of Corporate Services for The City of Stratford.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

ELECTRIC PARKING

New EV charging stations at the Erie Street parking lot.

"Additional charging stations in Stratford also contribute to the growing network of charging stations across the province that help support those commuting to or through the City,"

Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Natural Resources, announced a \$160,000 federal investment in the City of Stratford to install EV chargers in public places across Stratford in December 2022.

"We're making electric vehicles more affordable and charging more accessible where Canadians live, work and play," said Wilkinson, "Investing in more EV chargers, like the ones announced today in Stratford, Ontario, will put more Canadians in the driver's seat on the road to a net-zero future and help achieve our climate goals."

The installation of some EV charging spots has started, and drivers can current-

ly access these spots at the Kalbfleisch municipal parking lot. More charging stations are to come across the city over the next year.

This federal initiative is intended to fight climate change and deliver clean air and a strong economy to the City of Stratford. Reducing pollution from the transportation sector is critical to Canada achieving its climate targets.

The completion of the EV chargers will be installed by January 2025. The project also cost \$317,428 from the City of Stratford. The total project cost is \$483,428, and the City of Stratford is responsible for operating and maintaining charging stations, with support from the service provider.

"I'm so pleased with the support from National Resources Canada regarding the city's work on increasing the number of EV stations in our community," said Mayor Martin Ritsma, "The \$160,000 grant will assist us in the installation of a total of 23 EV stations in Stratford by 2025, one of which will have Level 3 fast charging capacity. Using the EV charging stations will benefit our residents and the 1.5 million plus yearly visitors to our city. This project certainly blends well with our city's strategic priorities, which include the 30 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030."

Kandy Cakes expands into larger space on York St

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

Excitement abounds as Kandy Cakes has moved from its tiny space to a more spacious location on York St. Now located at 51 York, the store is now able to offer a more bountiful selection of cupcakes, cookies and cakes to their customers.

Kandy first started Kandy Cakes in 2008. She was a hair stylist, when her mother handed her a book on fondant saying she didn't have time to do anything with it but for Kandy, it proved to be the beginning.

"I was like, oh, what is this, and thought this is fun. I had always baked and then I could add art to it with fondant and that's how I started. I started making cakes for friends and family and then just got really big really quick. I started in Stratford then I was in Woodstock for a little bit. I moved to Cambridge and opened up an industrial kitchen. I had that for a while, then I moved back to Stratford and was just doing custom cakes when I went to the farmer's market to see if they would like cupcakes and they did! I then found the space at 47 York St and have just grown from there," shared Kandy.

During the pandemic, Kandy closed down for a year and got some rest. By the time she reopened, she had redeveloped Kandy Cakes. They opened up with stuffed cookies, meringue cookies, full size cakes, cupcakes and cake pops.



Kandy Cosstick poses with a divine selection of meringue cookies at the new location of Kandy Cakes.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

"We are cutting out the custom cakes but will have premade designs that can be customized. We will be bringing back cake parfaits, cake slices and have full size cakes available which we didn't have before. Those were custom ordered. We will have cake toppers that are edible and fun things to choose," said Kandy.

She found that in time she needed more space, taking possession of the new location in October and opening at the end of that month. This overcame many obstacles she and her staff were facing as they

were practically on top of each other. She kept the old space for a no public access bakery, and the new storefront at 51 York for a retail space.

All products are made in-house and use fresh local eggs delivered. Ingredients are sourced from Canadian suppliers where local is not possible. They will be partnering with local businesses for other items to cross promote, for example, there are plans afoot to purchase a freezer and offer ice cream cakes from Jenn & Larry's. Her most popular items are the meringue

cookies and the stuffed cookies.

"We have five flavours (of stuffed cookies) that are a quarter pound each. The red velvets are stuffed with cream cheese and the chocolate peanut butter ones are stuffed with peanut butter. Our signature items have to be the cupcakes, or cakes in general since that's what I started with," said Kandy.

Her approach to customer service is to treat each customer to a special experience, greeting each as they come in.

"Being able to read a customer is big; reading whether they want to be talked to or not, I teach my girls that when they come in to greet them, and read the room, if they are looking for something ask, if not just let them be. Always make it a good experience so that they will remember," said Kandy.

The most enjoyable part of owning and operating Kandy Cakes is making people happy and being able to create. She thrives on being able to provide safe jobs for young women and is inspired to do more. She has been spending a great deal of time on the business and website to systemize things for her staff so that she will be free to pursue professional development in large scale manufacturing. The future of Kandy Cakes is rising.

Store hours are Tuesday to Friday, 10:30 am till 8:00 pm, Saturday 10:00 am till 5:00 pm and Sunday from noon till 5:00 pm.

The Hunter's Banquet in Support of The Local Community Food Centre

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Hunter's Banquet has been a staple fundraiser for The Local for nearly ten years. This year's event will be held at The Local with support from the hospitality team from The Bruce Hotel, who will once again lead the volunteer team in a culinary celebration of local, wild game & foraged ingredients.

Miriam Mann, volunteer on the Hunter's Banquet committee, said that they expect a packed house at this year's event, "Last year was a little quiet due to COVID-19, but this year, we hope to see all tickets sell out before the event."

The Hunter's Banquet started as an ini-

tiative to combine The Local Community Food Centre's mission of supporting Farm-to-Table foods by hosting a unique social gathering not commonly seen in Ontario. "You won't find wild game at any restaurant," said Mann, "At Charity fundraisers, such as the Hunter's Banquet, however, we can serve wild game to the community, and it's a fun and unique way to raise money for an important place."

All of the meat and fish provided for the meal, including a whole deer, are graciously donated by Stratford community members and businesses. For those who may not be interested in the game portion of the dinner, there will be a vegetarian course and plenty of local vegetables grown at The Local's off-site community

Garden.

Lucas Tingle, Garden Educator at The Local and Regenerative Farmer, says, "We have celery, beets, kale, and carrots in the field at the farm and onion and garlic in dry storage," he continued, "We will be discussing the needs and how we can utilize our crops for the event with Chef Jacob from The Bruce Hotel, soon."

At this year's event, attendees can bid on various live auction items. From a golfing getaway for four at St Mary's Golf Course or a gourmet dinner experience for four at Tutt & Co. Theater tickets to the Stratford Festival are also up for auction, or a relaxing getaway to Lake Nipissing Cottage Adventure or a serene Lake Huron Cottage Getaway are all available to bid

on. Many more wonderful items are also available, just in time for the Holidays.

Tickets for The Hunter's Banquet can be purchased on Eventbrite or through the link on The Local's website, www.thelocalcfc.org, by scrolling down to the Hunter's Banquet logo. Tickets are \$150.00 per person, and the event starts at 5:30 p.m. on November 17, 2023.

All proceeds from the event ticket sales and silent auction items are donated directly to The Local Community Food Centre to help them support the community to empower individuals with barriers to accessing good, healthy food through cooking, growing, sharing, and advocating for food as a fundamental rights.

Mistletoe Market returns after four year hiatus

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

It's been four long years since the last Mistletoe Market at St James Anglican Church, so it's with great anticipation that it returns on Saturday, November 25th from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. This market has been a Christmas tradition for close to fifty years.

The inspiration for the market came from a crafting group that met once a week making things. They wanted something to do with their creations so decided on the bazaar. They would meet all year round and then have a big craft sale.

"Some of our crafting ladies aren't with us anymore but those of us still able are crafting, then it was rebranded as the Mistletoe Market. It's well known now and they line up around the building for the sale," said Karen Haslem, president of the Anglican Church Women (ACW).

It was rebranded in 2014 as the Mistletoe Market and began to include the baked goods at that time. Since then it has become well known for the baking and savouries, and has been visited by over a thousand people the last time the market was held.

There will be areas set up for crafts, savouries, preserves, baking, and a new to you table. The tortierres come in two sizes and are the big attraction of the savoury table. In the past they have sold out in the first hour. There will also be other items avail-



Drop by St. James Anglican Church Mistletoe Market for a wide array of baking and crafted products handmade for the sale

(CAROL BOONE PHOTO)

able, for example, frozen soups and paté.

"We have some amazing people that do crafts. We are losing some of our older members and we don't have home ec(onomics) anymore where they learn to do some of these things and some of those skills are being lost. So we're always pleased when we have some of our ladies who maybe cannot move around but they do beautiful aprons and sewing things and crafts," said Haslem.

The market is unlike others, in that everything is homemade. You won't find outside vendors like Tupperware or Pampered

Chef.

"We're still the traditional market and we want to stress that, we are still making everything ourselves in the craft area and food area," said Carol Boone, Convenor.

Aside from the sale is also the Snowflake Café found downstairs where there will be coffee, tea and yummy treats for a free will offering. All funds raised go back into the church and community, like the food bank and supporting swimming passes for the children's aid society; areas of the community that are used.

Volunteers play a huge role in this church event, you will see them in different coloured aprons depending on where in the market they are working. During the day of the market there will be about fifty volunteers, though that doesn't include the ones that helped with the setup.

"As the convenor, since this whole thing (Mistletoe Market) started, over the covid time period, the loss of some of our members who have passed away has been hard and has left a gap. Others have stepped up to fill that gap but for me it's been a little emotional," said Boone.

Other challenges are the rising costs they are experiencing in supplies for crafts and food stuffs. Buying in bulk helps but they find they have been networking more to bring together what they need.

There is no price of admission to the market, and the café is by free will donation. It is very popular and people are very generous so they feel confident that they will be able to cover costs.

"It's a nice place to come with a friend, shop, have a coffee and a muffin and enjoy the season," said Haslem.

Come early if you are interested in Ross Crawford's shortbread, or a tortierre, as these are the most popular. The Mistletoe Market is located in the Hall of St James Anglican Church located at 41 Mornington St. The event is November 25th beginning at 9:30 am until 12:30 pm.



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Destination Stratford presented with a Prestigious Accessibility Award

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Destination Stratford received a prestigious Accessibility Tourism Award at the 2023 Tourism Industry Association of Ontario Annual Tourism Summit for their work on the new Stratford Boathouse Public Washroom Project located at the street level at the York Street parking lot.

Zac Gribble, Executive Director at Destination Stratford, said, "This was almost a two-year project which included renovating the old building, and the entire the entire process was quite an undertaking," he continued, "Given the amount of usage and positive feedback we get from our local residents, we're really thrilled that this project was recognized at the provincial level."

The old space consisted of seasonal washrooms that were closed throughout the colder months and reopened during Stratford's festival season, but Gribble

said after careful consideration, Destination Stratford knew they could make the space into something better, "It became really obvious to us that there weren't enough public washrooms, especially year-round that were accessible in our city," he continued, "We're inviting people from different seasons, including winter, to come and visit us and partake in activities and we felt we needed a more accessible visitor attraction."

Gribble said after brainstorming how to provide accessible visitor attraction, they were able to get to work transforming the space at the Boathouse, "We thought, what if we transformed that space at the main level of the boathouse building into a modern, accessible, welcoming space that serves the community and improves the quality of life for local residents, and at the same time, also helps lift our objectives in terms of winter development."

A big component of the project was to look at how not only the project could

benefit tourists to Stratford but also how it could improve the local economy. Gribble said, "This concept of regenerative tourism where, by virtue of the visitor economy, the quality of life for residents improves, this was very important to us."

The project did not happen without the support of The City of Stratford, and Gribble noted his gratitude towards those who took part in the transformation, "We work closely with the city and the accessibility Advisory Committee," he said, "I have to tip my hat to The City of Stratford community services department, which was a partner in all of this."

Gabby Rodriguez, Accessibility, Diversity, and Inclusion Coordinator, at the City of Stratford, congratulated Destination Stratford on a job well done, "Congratulations to Destination Stratford! This award demonstrates the benefits we reap when we apply an accessibility and inclusive lens in all stages of a project," she continued, "The City of

Stratford will use this example to continue the advancement of developing an accessible and inclusive City for all."

Gribble is optimistic about the upcoming shoulder season and says this is partly due to the new accessible washrooms, "We're not out of the economic rough waters yet. But I do feel cautiously optimistic about Stratford and its future in terms of the tourism economy," he continued, "By all the metrics that we're seeing, coming out of the pandemic, Stratford is growing. So that's exciting."

Gribble says there is more to look out for in Stratford this season and notes Destination Stratford is looking forward to Lights On Stratford and the Christmas Trail, which has more business this year involvement than ever before, "we're aiming for 100,000 visitors this season and these washrooms are an integral part of that whole experience."



ACCESSIBLE WASHROOMS

Pictures of the new accessible washrooms located at The Boathouse off York St Parking lot.

(ZAC GRIBBLE PHOTOS)

Queer Book of the Month

Eight Strings / Margaret DeRosia
@SPL FIC DeRos

In late 19th century Venice, Francesca flees an arranged marriage by transforming herself into Franco. As a man, she runs to the Minerva marionette puppet theatre – her grandfather was a puppeteer and has trained her, but the profession is only open to men. As Franco, he gets an entry level job, and as time goes on settles in to life as a man. Franco is who Francesca was always meant to be; fortunately, he's also the way to hide from his family, and develop the life of his dreams.

Franco works hard to earn the grudging respect of his coworkers and the Minerva's owner. Those relationships cement his devotion to the theatre, until one day a friend from the distant past appears. Annella had grown up on the same street, and is now a companion to a wealthy woman, one who seems to have some influence at the Minerva. Annella recognizes Franco but keeps silent. When they are thrown together through circumstance, desire begins to bloom.



Franco works at puppeteering, even while tracing the tangled threads of theatre politics and financing. As things begin to shift at the Minerva, Franco and Annella have to find out who's pulling the strings, and where their own future together lies.

This well-researched novel evokes a vibrant, earthy Venice. From criminal rings and corporate spying, to art and puppetry, to the power of clothing and finding out who you really are, this story has it all. With a rich setting, unusual storyline, and complex and intriguing characters, this is a thoroughly engaging read. Franco is a character you are cheering for all along, wanting him to overcome all the hurdles and obstacles in the way of grand success.

It's a great read for anyone who enjoys historical novels which illuminate hidden lives.

Melanie Kindrachuk
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Weekend Quiz

- 1) What Canadian officer wrote the poem "In Flanders Fields"?
- 2) Where is the Canadian National Vimy Memorial located?
- 3) How many Canadian soldiers died during WWI?
- 4) What year did Canada adopt the poppy as the symbol for Remembrance Day?
- 5) At what time is a minute's silence held on Remembrance Day?
- 6) How many minutes of silence do we take to honor the fallen?
- 7) What treaty officially ended WWI?
- 8) How many Canadians earned the Victoria Cross at Passchendaele?
- 9) In what country is The Cenotaph located?
- 10) What year did WWI end?

This week's answers are found on pg. 31

Our Buildings Tell a Story

The Worth Block 42 Wellington

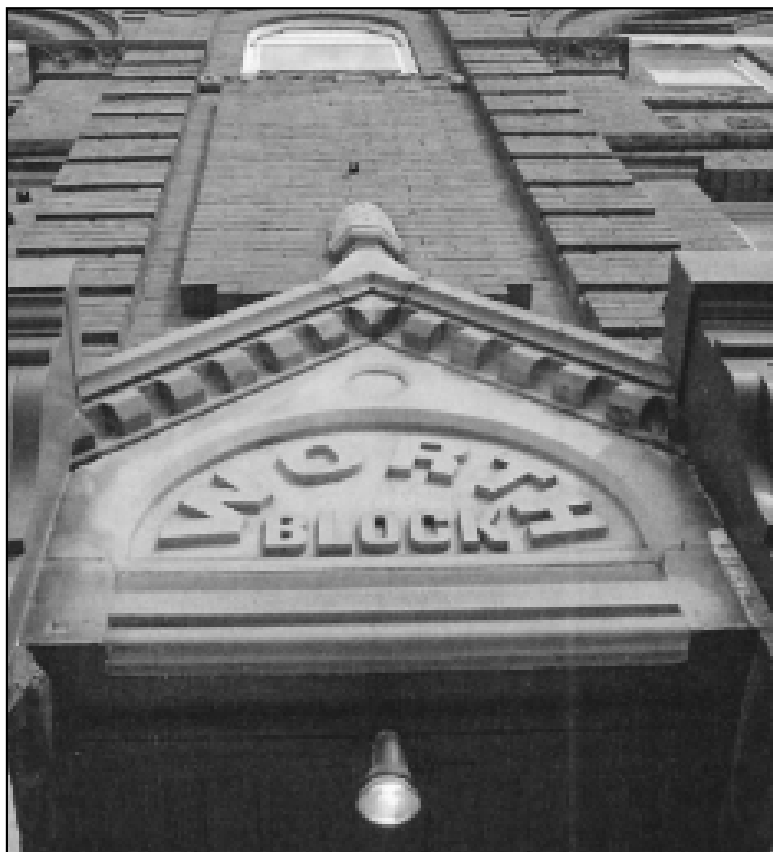
Contributors: Paul Wilker and Gord Conroy
www.streetsofstratford.ca

The Worth Block was the creation of Charles L. Worth in 1889-1890 when he was in his mid-30s. He was the son of William Worth, who had been a hotelkeeper at the same address from 1868 to 1884. Stretching from 38 to 46 Wellington St., the block was designed to provide retail outlets on its street level, while its upper two storeys were more for offices, living quarters and meeting halls. Among the first occupants were brokers W. G. Mowat and Alex Dow. There were others who sold liquor, cheese and music supplies.

In 1897, when Stratford's first city hall was destroyed by fire, the mayor and his councilors moved their municipal headquarters to rooms in the Worth Block. The Stratford branch of the Royal Canadian Legion was born in the same building. At some point, the Worths filled their third floor with a ballroom. Beginning in

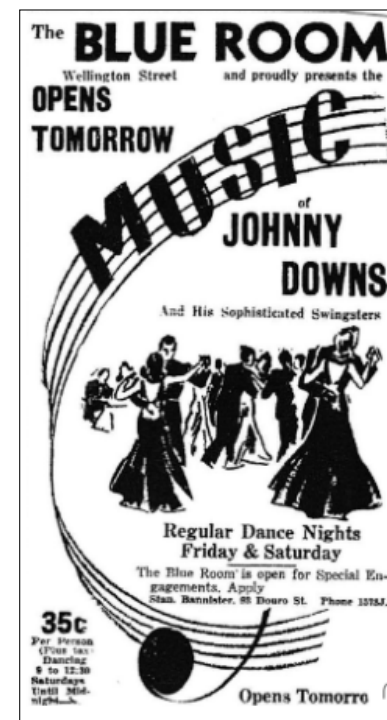
1929, and for much of the next four decades, that ballroom – 44 stairs up from the street, was the city's best-known dance place.

It began as The Classic Gardens. About a decade later it became The Royal Ballroom, then The Blue Room (1939-1951), The Melody Mill (1952-1954), The Blacksmith Shop (1955-1957), The Festive Lounge (1957-1959), the German-Canadian [Teutonia] Club (1959-1965) and Club 42 (1965 to March 1969). At least once during The Blue Room years, and a few times in the days of Club 42, there was roller skating on the ballroom's hardwood. At other times, there were dozens of bingo nights, and euchre parties. There were political rallies and receptions and an art gallery. In the first two years of the Stratford Festival, founder Tom Patterson used the big room to welcome dignitaries and members of the media prior to his theatre's opening-night performances.



(DEAN ROBINSON PHOTO)

In 1952, after the death of Charles Worth and his wife, the Worth Block was sold to Herbert Wellington Gregory who owned and operated the Rexall Drug store at 46



(STRATFORD-PERTH ARCHIVES PHOTO)

Wellington St. He sold the building in 1972 and in the years since, its ownership has changed a few times. Source: taken from Dean Robinson's book 42 Wellington- The Music and Memories 1929 -1969.

Foundation for Education providing opportunities for students to thrive

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

An organization has reached most of their fundraising goal to ensure students have learning opportunities in arts education and have their basic needs met.

The Foundation for Education Perth Huron held the Inspiring HeARTS gala at the Stratford Festival Marquee on November 4. The event raised \$29,100 through the silent auction, ticket sales, sponsorships, and general donations.

"Our hearts overflow with gratitude towards everyone that supported our event," Laura Pethick, the executive director of Foundation for Education Perth Huron, said to the Stratford Times. "It feels fantastic to know that proceeds from this event will help to enhance the life and learning of many students. We are very happy with our results."

The Foundation for Education Perth Huron supports students by providing arts and drama education opportunities across the Avon Maitland District School Board, as well as further funding schools' nutrition programs and providing students with necessities through the Caring Fund.

The drama and arts workshops provide learning opportunities not found in the school curriculum. For example, Stratford Festival performer Jason Sermonia taught a hip-hop dance class to students

in 2022.

"Not all students have equal opportunity to experience such programming outside of school," Pethick said. "We make it free to the classroom so all students have the opportunity to expand their creative potential regardless of economic background."

With an increase in the cost of living, including grocery prices, the Foundation for Education Perth Huron is making sure every student is fed.

"Schools do receive funding through Ontario Student Nutrition Program and PC Children Charities but it's not enough to cover all the needs," Pethick said. "Schools are still receiving the same amount of funding as they were five years ago despite the fact that groceries cost a lot more today and the number of students facing food insecurity has increased since the pandemic."

The organization's Caring Fund helped students and their families cover the cost of clothes, hearing tests, eyeglasses, and grocery store gift cards, among other necessities. More families are seeking assistance through the Caring Fund since the start of the Pandemic.

The Foundation for Education Perth Huron is looking for more donations to reach their \$30,000 goal.

Visit foundationforeducation.ca for more information.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Kandy Cosstick poses with a divine selection of meringue cookies at the new location of Kandy Cakes.



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Rotary Club of Stratford Annual Christmas Craft Festival is Back

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The 22nd annual Arts & Craft Show is back at the Rotary Complex from November 10 to November 12 for local vendors showcasing their crafts and arts.

The Christmas Craft Festival features over 60 vendors. Black Angus is operating the food court and selling food at the event for those looking for some good eats while shopping the wide range of vendors.

Those showcasing their work at the market will offer some of the best in unique, beautiful, and practical Christmas gifts for just about everyone on your shopping list.

Paul Roulston, one of the event organizers, says, "There's something for everyone at this year's show," he continued, "Coming out to the show will not only help support local projects, but it will help you get a head start on your Christmas season shopping."

Organized by The Rotary Club of Stratford, your \$6 entry fee will support The Rotary Club of Stratford projects, which support local not-for-profit organizations, such as Rotary Hospice, Rotary Respite House, Commit, Aquabox and many

more charities and organizations across the city.

You can find online or print coupons for \$1 off the entry fee, which are available on The Rotary Club of Stratford website and in select print media such as the Stratford Times.

After 22 years, the show gets better each year, and after a two-year break, Rotarians are looking forward to the best show yet, "We have more vendors than ever at this year's show," says Roulston, "We want to continue to build on the year before to host the best show we can."

"The best way to support this event is to show up and shop," says Roulston, "tell your friends, stop on by and support the community."

The Rotary Complex offers ample space for vendors and visitors and has plenty of free parking and easy access to the venue. **Opening dates and times:**

Friday, November 10: 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 11: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, November 12: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

ADMISSION \$6 (\$5 with coupon). Children under 12 FREE



(CRAIG PEARCE PHOTO)

HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Shoppers take advantage of the great deals and unique crafts at last year's Rotary Club Annual Christmas Craft Show

Times Past: One Soldier's Story

BETTY JO BELTON

Stratford-Perth Archives

Two worn volumes at Stratford-Perth Archives record the part played by officers of the Canadian Bank of Commerce in World War I. *Letters from the Front: Being A Record of the Part Played by Officers of the Bank in the Great War, 1914-1919* includes copies of correspondence sent by soldiers along with short biographies. One of the most eloquent writers was Ralph Egerton Norris Jones who was born in Perth County. Jones' parents were married in St. Marys on August 8, 1866. His father was Charles S. Jones, Barrister and his mother was "Miss Ellen Amelia, third daughter of Daniel McDougall, Esquire." A brief notice appeared in the Stratford newspaper when their fourth son, Ralph, was born on June 3, 1877. In 1881, the family was living in Toronto where Ralph attended Upper Canada College before launching his career. When he enlisted in the Manitoba Regiment in February 1915, Jones was managing a bank in Winnipeg.

A letter dated October 6 1915 described his life in the trenches.

"I am sitting in my own special little dug-out, the walls of which are lined with sand bags... My door has even got an old fashioned handle and bolt... The window is about two feet by eight inches wide and simply a hole. The roof is well covered with corrugated iron sheets, on top of which sand bags are piled, then dirt, and the whole supported by four stout timbers... The space... is about four feet by seven feet and mostly taken up by... bed... They shell our immediate surround-



R. E. N. JONES
Lieutenant. Killed in action
6th April, 1916.

ings frequently, and while one bombardment was going on... I wrote a couple of letters indoors while listening to the big fellows whistling and half wheezing and shrieking as they passed. It was most uncomfortable at times too, as one could not help wondering where, say, that one which is hovering hesitatingly, it would seem just overhead, would land. The very big ones come up something like steam engines and make an awful row when

LETTERS FROM THE FRONT

PARODY

SING ME TO SLEEP

Sing me to sleep where bullets fall;
Let me forget the War and all.
Damp is my dugout, cold are my feet,
Nothing but bully and biscuits to eat.
Sing me to sleep where bombs explode
And shrapnel shells are a-la-mode.
Over the sandbags helmets you find,
Corpses in front of you, corpses behind.

Far, far from Ypres I long to be,
Where German snipers cannot pot me.
Think of me crouching where the worms creep,
Waiting for someone to sing me to sleep.

Sing me to sleep in some old shed;
The rats are running around my head.
Stretched out on my waterproof,
Dodging the raindrops through the roof.
Sing me to sleep where the camp fires glow,
When nights are cold and spirits are low,
Dreaming of home and days in the West,
Somebody's overseas boot on my chest.

Far from the star-shells I long to be,
Lights of old London I'd rather see;
Think of me crouching where the worms creep,
Waiting for someone to sing me to sleep.

they crash to earth scattering steel, mud and twigs in every direction... What amazes me is how easily we get used to it all."

He sent another letter on October 25, 1915, commenting that *"The creepy and crawling things are horribly in evidence in the trenches"* that included his poem called *Sing me to Sleep*. He went on to say that the poem was *"much circulated over here... [and] abso-*

lutely reflects the impression and feelings of the men, and officers as well"

In his Jan 27 1916 letter, Jones described the beauty to be found amongst the chaos and desolation, "We have been having a long spell of wonderfully good weather. Trees are actually budding, and one may pick tiny daisies here and there in the fields. It is odd, during an absolute silence, say at midday, in the front line, to hear birds singing peacefully in nearby fire-swept hedges or shrapnel-torn trees."

According to *Letters from the Front*, Lieutenant Ralph Jones was killed on April 6 that year "while gallantly leading his men, in an endeavour to recover a mine crater at St. Eloi, and thus repair a breach in the line." He was 38 years old. The battle of the St. Eloi craters has been described as "one of those nightmare engagements which continues to shape our memory of the fighting on the Western Front." British forces had set off underground mines to destroy German defences, but the effort had left massive, mud-filled craters. When the Canadians relieved British troops on the night of April 3, they found few trenches in which to take cover and the entire front was under incessant fire. Jones is memorialized on the Menin Gate in West Flanders, Belgium which is inscribed: Here are recorded the names of officers and men who fell in Ypres Salient but to whom the fortune of war denied the known and honoured burial given to their comrades in death.

This article is based on information resources available at Stratford-Perth Archives www.perthcounty.ca/StratfordPerthArchives

Mayor Ritsma reflects on the Importance of Remembrance Day

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Mayor Martin Ritsma spoke to the Stratford Times recently on the importance of Remembrance Day. "I truly believe that World War One was when Canada became a country," Ritsma said, "When those men were serving with that patch on their shoulder with the maple leaf, that was the beginning of Canada being recognized as a nation. Whether it's peacekeeping or war, it's still recognized as an important nation in the world with regard to global conflict today."

Ritsma reflected on speaking to his father about his choice to come to Canada from The Netherlands. The decision was based on his encounters with Canadian soldiers, and Ritsma said, "I would ask, Dad, 'Why did you come to Canada?' And he'd say, 'The Canadian soldiers were humble boys. I'll never forget him saying that.'"

The Maple Leaf Forever, a song that sits dearly in Ritsma's heart, quotes, for freedom, homes, and loved ones dear, firmly stood and nobly died, a phrase Ritsma says is close to his heart, and he thinks about regularly, "those soldiers nobly died for us; the ultimate sacrifice, they Nobly Died for us," he emphasized.

The Stratford Mayor expressed his appreciation of local war heroes being some of the key reasons he, himself, is here in Stratford today, "That's why I'm here today; Mum and Dad were liberated in the Netherlands by Art Boon himself, one of the greatest war veterans we've ever had."

Years later, as Ritsma grew up, he actually attended the same school as Art Boone Jr. and said about the experience, "It's a very small and precious world when you can think, not even one generation later, after liberating a family in the Netherlands, I'm going to school with one of the key individual's family members who helped liberate my family."

During his time as an educator, Ritsma noted the importance of continuing to educate students on remembering those who fought in the war, "I always made in my work as an educator, that if we on a school trip or a personal trip, we would visit so many wonderful museums, whether it was in, or Groesbeek, near Nijmegen, Vimy ridge or the Canadian War Cemetery and also so many Canadian War Memorial Cemeteries. I always ensured that we took it upon ourselves to be in a cemetery and to recognize those individuals that served."

Ritsma then reflected on his role as an educator and that holding Remembrance Day assemblies at school was most important to him. He said, "I can remember one of the last assemblies I did was to host a War Veteran. Because he was just so frail, he said to me, 'Mr. Ritsma, I can't walk in, but I would love to walk out of the assembly. So, he did. I was able to support him to walk out of the assembly. It was one of the proudest moments in education for me because I got to walk out of the assembly with him as our students stood in respect.'"

Wearing a poppy as a sign of respect but also an opportunity to educate others, said Ritsma, "It's our responsibility in whatever walk of life where we are in to take the opportunity to educate the next generation and make it relevant to them," Ritsma continued, "It's our responsibility to continue to fight for what's right, not only in Canada but globally."

On a final note, Ritsma said, "It's important on Remembrance Day and every day to continue to tell the story of our Canadian soldiers and impress upon people that might not understand the significance of the sacrifice those men and women made for us."

For reference, "The Maple Leaf Forever" is a Canadian patriotic song written by Alexander Muir (1830-1906) in 1867, the year of Canada's Confederation. He wrote the work after serving with the Queen's Own Rifles of Toronto in the Battle of Ridgeway against the Fenians in

1866." The song can be found on many different streaming services for free.

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We all must carry the torch

RICHARD BOON

Times Contributor

Over the years, I have written and spoken about the importance for all of us to carry the torch handed to us by all of the brave Canadians who fought for our freedom today. The hopes of each of these soldiers, sailors, and airmen after the battles were over, was that their efforts never be forgotten. That is why we gather at the Cenotaphs throughout our communities each November 11th. I have been front and centre for fifty-eight (58) of my fifty-nine (59) years on this planet (I was forced to miss one service because of a University mid-term), standing proudly at the Stratford Cenotaph.

This year though, Remembrance Day takes on a double meaning for me and so many other people who knew my father, CWO A.H. Boon MMM, SB, St.J. CD, CLH. My father's passing on March 12, 2023 brought sorrow to all who knew him here in Stratford, throughout other centres in Ontario, and as far away as Friesland in the Netherlands. When you listen to others speak of him, the conversation revolves around his ability to represent all that is good about Canadian veterans who gave up so much for our freedoms today.

Since 1947, my father has been ever present at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Day. He served every role that was asked of him with ultimate professionalism. In the late 1940, 50's, and 60's, Arthur H. Boon proudly stood guard around the Cenotaph at the services that were held in driving winds, cold rain, or even blowing snow. Later, in the 1970's, my father was the Guard Commander who led the



(FRED GONDER PHOTO)

Art Boon with his son Richard by his side at the 2021 Remembrance Day ceremony.

Guard to and from the Cenotaph, during the service. Upon his official retirement from the military in 1980, he assumed the position of Parade Commander who led the remaining veterans on parade to the Cenotaph. When my father's marching days were over when he was in his 80's, he took on the responsibility of organizing and delivering the Remembrance Day service we attend each November 11. He relied heavily on a number of very important Legion members and others, to assist him in making sure all of the details were in place for this very special day.

For the last ten (10) years, I have worked with him in the planning stages and for the last five (5) years, I have proudly stood by his side at the podium through all kinds of ever changing weather on Remembrance Day. For close to seventy-five (75) years, Arthur H. Boon has been the face and voice of the veterans in Stratford. When I close my eyes at the Cenotaph, I can still hear his powerful, unmistakable voice giving out com-

mands to the veterans on parade, when I was a young boy. With all due respect to those who followed him in that role, no ones' voice caught the attention of those in attendance, like my father's voice. The clarity of the commands and the powerful tone, was one of a kind. When he transitioned to the microphone at the podium, my father occasionally needed to be reminded that his voice level need not be as loud, but nevertheless, he prided himself on being professional.

My father's absence from the podium now will be very, very difficult for myself and my family. I believe that along with our family, generations of citizens from across Stratford will also feel that sense that something just is not right...something is missing...and they would be correct.

Though my father was ever present on each November 11th for the past 75 years, he rarely sought out the attention that was bestowed upon him from the newspapers, radio stations, and those who knew him personally. He was simply trying to represent his fallen comrades,

friends, and family members who gave their lives for our freedom today. He would often tell my students, when he would visit my classroom/school each year, that "one life that is lost in a war, is one too many and that the peace we have today came at an extreme cost."

Arthur H. Boon never lost sight of that, nor could he "unsee" the horrible things he had endured during World War II. His drive to educate the youth of today about the wars, was so important to him. For me personally, my experiences over the past twenty (20) years of travelling back to the beaches of Normandy, Belgium, Friesland and other parts of the The Netherlands with my father, has fueled my promise to continue to educate the youth and anyone who does not know, how important it is to come to the Cenotaph and pay their respects, if possible.

As I continue to take on the role of Remembrance Day Service Chairman, I feel honoured and a little apprehensive. It is kind of like the first time when you take off your training wheels on your first bike. I will be at the podium without my father, but I know that he will be there in spirit and everything will go as planned, just like it always did in the past.

People have jokingly said that I have big shoes to fill. These words have never been more true. I believe that a person like my father, and all he represented with regards to taking care of the veterans in Stratford, the Legion, Remembrance Day, and educating the youth in our schools on why we have this special day, can never be replaced.

With all of my heart and soul, I would never try to "replace" my father on Remembrance Day. That would be such a foolish and disrespectful act. My heart tells me that I must represent him proudly at the podium, plan all that needs to be planned with the help of many, many others, and more importantly, I need to never forget, never stop teaching, and honour



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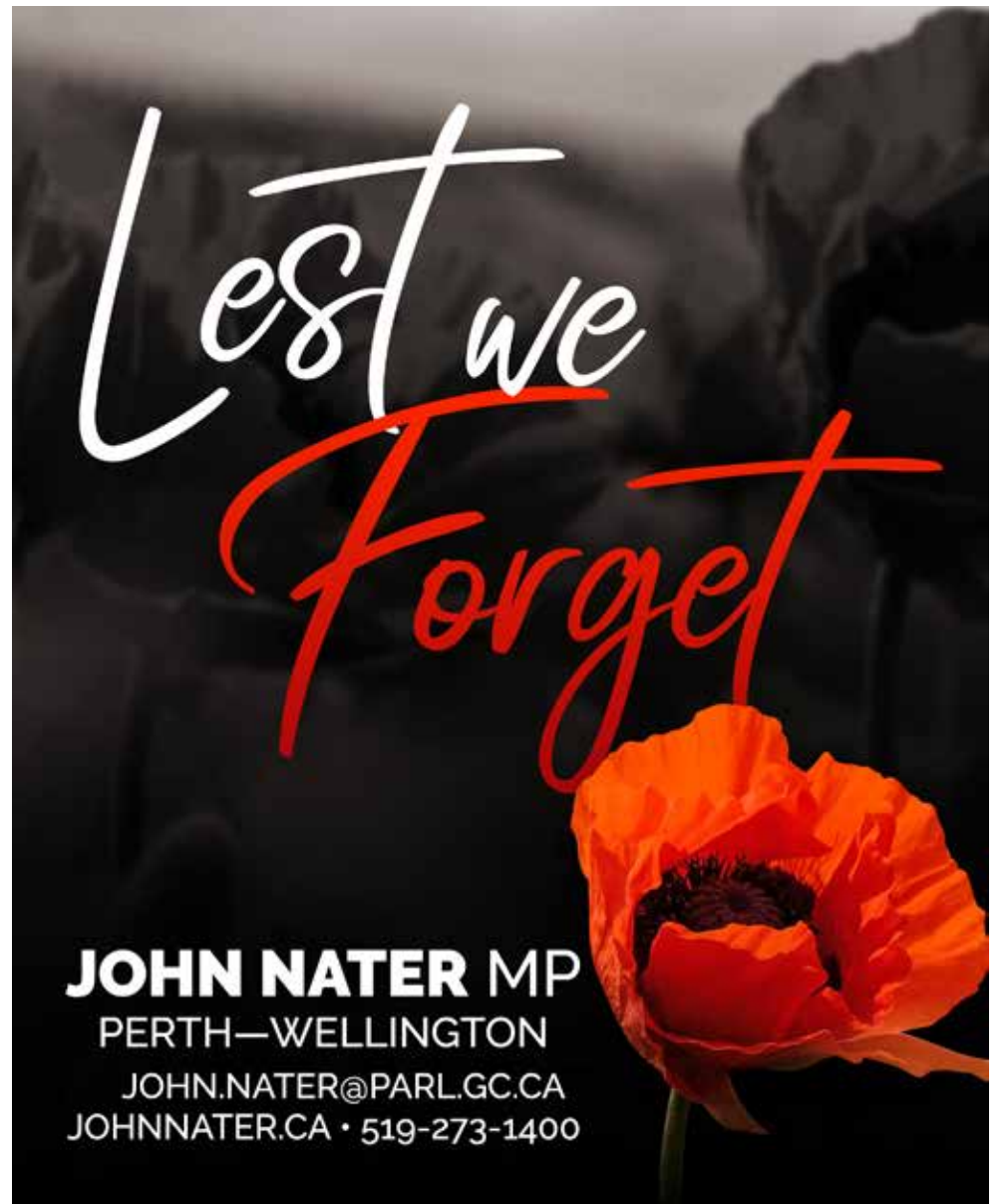
We all must carry the torch

those who came before us.

For me personally, I can proudly remember coming to the service as a child in knee deep in snow or carrying an umbrella with my mother, brother, and other friends. The sounds of the pipe band, the bugler, and the marching feet on the pavement ring in my ears with the commands from my father to the Guard. We would attentively pay attention to the entire service and then hurry up the hill to stand in front of the former Brown's Mens Wear store to watch proudly as my father and column after column of distinguished veterans, men from our community, marched by with their chests pumped out on their way down Erie Street to be dismissed in front of the former Legion on St. Patrick St.

The true connection to the actual experiences of why we gather each November 11th, for me, has passed with my father's passing and all those honoured veterans before him. Those veterans who are still with us are getting fewer and fewer each year, so we need to collectively embrace every moment and every story with them.

My memories are very personal on Remembrance Day with regards to my father. I cherish all of them, but no more than last year, his last Remembrance Day, where I planned with him and stood proudly with him not knowing that that would be his last one. Those moments are forever engraved in my heart, just as each person who witnessed him over their lives will remember him on November 11th for their own reasons. May my father, Arthur H. Boon, and all veterans, past and present, NEVER be forgotten, now and forever for what we enjoy today...our freedom! LEST WE FORGET!



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Warriors win all three in weekend triple-header

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SPENCER SEYMOUR

Times Regional Reporter

After back-to-back losses to the Kitchener-Waterloo Siskins and Cambridge RedHawks during the last weekend of October, the Stratford Warriors got back in the win column last weekend in a three-game set that included rematches against the two teams that beat them one week previously.

On October 28th, first- and last-minute goals sunk the Warriors' momentum on home ice as they fell 7-3 to the Siskins. Kitchener-Waterloo scored goals just 48 seconds into the first period and 42 seconds into the third, with another coming just one minute and 18 seconds into the final frame as well. They also gave up a tally with 12 seconds remaining in the second period. Head Coach Dave Williams told the Times that early and late goals hurt their ability to build momentum.

"We didn't get off to a great start," admitted Williams. "We took a penalty on the first shift of the game and they scored on the ensuing powerplay. From there, it felt like we chased the game a bit. We grinded our way back into it and got it 3-2 but then we gave up a goal late in the second and I think that took the steam out of us. Then the two powerplay goals early in the third put the nail in it."

Stratford allowed three goals on five powerplay opportunities.

One day later, the Warriors were in Cambridge and despite outshooting the RedHawks 27-18, came away with just one point, dropping their second straight 3-2 in overtime. Williams

said it was a better performance but still not where the team needed to be.

"I thought we played better than we had on Friday but I still felt that we could have been better on Saturday. It felt like it was a game that was there for the taking if we had been assertive enough. We had to battle back late to tie it and Carson [Harmer] had a beautiful chance to win it in overtime but their goalie made a great save."

With their next game coming last Friday against the Brantford Bandits, the Warriors had close to a week off to recalibrate which they most certainly did. Against the Bandits, the sixth goal of the season for Braydon Stumpf proved to be not only the game-winner but also the only goal of the night with Stratford taking it 1-0. Trenton Bennett made 22 saves in the shutout bid.

A rematch against the RedHawks was on tap one night later and the Warriors successfully avenged their loss from seven days prior, downing Cambridge 4-3. According to Williams, what they lacked a week before was back in their game last weekend.

"We brought that assertiveness that we lacked the weekend before. It also reflects the parity in the league and in our conference where there are at least six or seven teams who can beat anyone on any given night. The margin of error is just so small that you have to do so many things consistently well. We got ourselves into some penalty trouble but I thought our penalty kill was very good and generated momentum for us at different times by getting through so many kills."

After giving up the first goal, Michael Denney tied things up at one apiece at the nine-minute mark of the first period. Just 19 seconds later, Camden Daigle gave the Warriors the lead with his fifth of the year and first of three points on the night. Carson Harmer and Cole Lewis had the assists, the latter of whom also had a multi-point night. Williams said both Daigle and Lewis have risen to their increased responsibilities as leaders of the squad this season.

"Obviously we don't have a ton of returning players but Carson is one who has been here for five years. I think where he can add value, in addition to his obvious high skill level, is that he knows what the expectations are from the coaching staff and what we expect from our group as an organization. He knows how important it is to us as a group that we show up and compete every time we're on the ice."

"Cole is playing with far more confidence this year," Williams continued. "I think he knows that he's a guy who is being relied upon more heavily to produce offensively. He plays the right way all the time. He always works hard and competes hard. It's great to see him get rewarded offensively and as much as he's produced offensively, he has also given really good minutes defensively. Cole is a guy who we rely on in the last minute of a game and on the penalty kill."

Stumpf, who entered this week with points in eight of his last nine outings, and Casey Bridgewater added goals, both on the powerplay, en route to the Warriors' 4-3 victory.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 17

WOSHL STANDINGS (Standings through November 5, 2023)

	GP	W	L	OTL	T	PTS
Petrolia Squires	8	6	2	0	0	12
Strathroy Jets	10	6	4	0	0	12
Tillsonburg Thunder	6	5	1	0	0	10
Elora Rocks	6	4	2	0	0	8
Alvinston Killer Bees	6	4	2	0	0	8
Tilbury Bluebirds	5	3	2	0	0	6
Delhi Flames	6	3	3	0	0	6
Stratford Fighting Irish	5	2	3	0	0	4
Dunnville Aeros	6	1	5	0	1	3
Orangeville Blitz	8	1	7	0	0	2
Woodstock Lakers	6	1	5	0	0	2

GOJHL STANDINGS

Midwestern Conference (Standings through November 5, 2023)

	GP	W	L	OTL	T	PTS
Elmira Sugar Kings	19	14	4	0	1	29
Stratford Warriors	17	12	3	2	0	26
Listowel Cyclones	17	12	5	0	0	24
KW Siskins	17	11	4	1	1	24
Cambridge Redhawks	16	9	6	1	0	19
Ayr Centennials	17	7	10	0	0	14
Brantford Bandits	17	4	13	0	0	8
Caledon Bombers	18	0	17	0	1	1

Wear your neck guard and wear it right

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Times Correspondent

The hockey world is grieving following the tragic loss of Adam Johnson, a former NHL player who was playing hockey in England and died after an errant skate blade slashed Johnson in the neck.

In the days following his passing, the term ‘freak accident’ was used by the club for which Johnson played and quoted by numerous media outlets. While a situation like this is both a rare occurrence and likely not intentional, describing it as a ‘freak accident’ somewhat minimizes what should be taken from Johnson’s passing.

Thankfully, neck guards have become much more widely used and mandated in minor and junior hockey, although despite the NHL having seen cases such as Clint Malarchuk and Richard Zednik, they inexplicably don’t mandate the

use of such equipment. One has to wonder how a league can claim to have a functioning Department of Player Safety and not require its players to wear potentially life-saving equipment.

The NHL’s incompetence aside, it is reassuring to know that kids playing today are required to wear neck guards. However, the slight discomfort of the neckguards does make some young players reluctant to wear them or they may not fasten them as tightly or accurately as would be required to offer full protection.

Johnson’s tragic passing, however, is more than a ‘freak accident.’ The pain being felt by Johnson’s family and friends is worth more to the rest of the hockey community than a passing headline or a forgotten tragedy. If you play or you have someone in your life who does, please make sure they are not only wearing a neck guard every game, but they have it fastened correctly.

As uncomfortable as it may be to wear, the physical pain of a laceration to the neck from a skate blade, and the emotional pain from such an incident that is felt by you and those who love you, are infinitely worse. Every game, every practice, no matter what, please wear your neck guard and wear it right.

Because it’s the right thing to do. Because it could save your life. Because freak accidents can happen, but you can take steps to prevent them.

Warriors win all three in weekend triple-header

ry 17over the RedHawks. Matthew Perdue turned in yet another strong outing, stopping 36 of 39 Cambridge shots.

Rounding out their triple-header, the Warriors hit the road again to visit the Siskins for their second straight rematch from the weekend previous and once again, came away with the victory this time around. The Siskins opened the scoring but this time, it was Stratford who got a last-minute tally as Daigle potted his sixth of the season assisted by Harmer and Bridgewater.

Ahead of their game this past Thursday in Hamilton, the first of six interconference games this season for Stratford, Daigle had a five-game point streak and goals in four of his last five. Lewis also has points in each of his last five.

The only goal of the second period came off of the stick of Denney who potted his 10th of the campaign. In the third, the Siskins found a tying goal just 17 seconds beyond the half-way point of the period but the Warriors persisted and not only retook the lead but extended it. First, it was a powerplay goal by the recently-reacquired Rhyse Brown who Williams was happy to welcome back into the lineup.

“Rhyse gained valuable experience last year with our group. I think it’s a smooth transition for him returning as he knows the coaching staff and knows a number of the players that are back. I think he’s been able to jump right into the roster pretty seamlessly and provide quality minutes for our group. He brings heaviness and he is responsible defensively but in his short time back, we’re also seeing him get better offensive opportunities. He had several really good shots in the slot area on Friday and it was good to see him get a big one on Sunday.”

Denney’s second of the game came while Stratford was shorthanded with Brown earning an assist on the

insurance marker. An empty-netter by Harmer sealed the 5-2 final for the Warriors with Perdue making 25 saves in the victory.

The Head Coach felt that the win over the Siskins was “one of [the Warriors’] most complete efforts top-to-bottom.”

“Our guys did a good job managing themselves and the puck responsibly,” Williams explained. “We had less turnovers in the neutral zone. We did a better job getting pucks behind their defence and using our speed to get on top of them and turn pucks over. I thought in our end, as a group of five, we did a better job communicating and, in turn, we did a better job defending and giving up fewer high-danger chances.”

Patience was preached heavily go-

ing into this season with the Warriors experiencing a great deal of turnover and a high infusion of first-year players. While no one thought the team would be bad, few likely would have predicted a 12-3-2 record through the first 17 games which has Stratford second in the Midwestern Conference. When asked whether the patience practiced gave the team the freedom needed to have such a strong start or if the young group has developed faster than expected, Williams said that it was a mix of those two elements.

“I think it’s a combination of both. We still need to be patient with the group because we do still see at times the inexperience in our game, like the last weekend of October, and we’ve even seen it times in games

STRATFORD WARRIORS

Player Statistics

PLAYER	POS	GP	G	A	PTS
Carson Harmer	F	15	8	12	20
Braydon Stumpf	F	17	5	13	18
Michael Denney	F	17	11	4	15
Jaxon Broda	D	15	3	10	13
Cole Lewis	F	17	7	9	16
Drew Agnew	F	17	3	6	9
Camden Daigle	F	17	6	11	17
Haden Frayne	D	15	2	5	7
Joey Brehmer	F	17	4	3	7
Dylan Dundas	F	16	3	3	6
Liam Gorman	F	15	3	1	4
Casey Bridgewater	D	10	1	8	9
Tristian Huinink	F	11	2	1	3
Zach Bell	F	15	2	0	2
Jacob Wiseman	D	11	0	2	2
Cole Brooks	D	11	0	2	2
Evan Hjelholt	D	12	0	4	4
Zachary Schooley	F	14	1	0	1
Wyatt Adkins	D	10	0	4	4
Owen England	D	10	0	1	1
Keaton Bartlett	D	10	0	1	1
Ben Graham	F	9	0	1	1
Rhyse Brown	F	5	1	1	2

GOALIE	RECORD	GAA	SV%
Matthew Perdue	8-3-1-0	2.65	.926
Trenten Bennett	4-0-1-0	1.68	.925

STRATFORD FIGHTING IRISH

Player Statistics

PLAYER	POS	GP	G	A	PTS
Cameron Stokes	F	5	2	6	8
Ray Robbins	F	4	4	3	7
Cooper Leitch	F	5	3	2	5
Sean O'Brien	F	4	1	4	5
Graham Brulotte	F	4	1	3	4
Dylan Buckholz	F	5	1	3	4
Matt Fuller	D	4	0	4	4
Matt Henderson	D	5	2	1	3
Matt Granger	D	5	1	2	3
Zachery Tierney	D	2	1	1	2
Michael Finlay	D	3	1	1	2
Riley Coome	D	5	1	0	1
Mav Petrie	F	5	1	0	1
Tye Campbell	F	4	1	0	1
Brody Smith	F	4	0	1	1
Sebastien Nogueira	F	5	0	1	1
Ryan O'Bonsawin	D	5	0	1	1
Spencer Mills	F	4	0	1	1
Warren Gorman	F	3	0	0	0
Curtis Nogueira	F	3	0	0	0
Colin Martin	F	5	0	0	0

PLAYER	RECORD	GAA	SV%
Darren Smith	2-1-0	3.67	.903
Zach Weir	0-2-0	4.50	.893

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Stratford Rotary hockey action



Nate Framst (#14) of K&K Racing rips a shot towards the top corner but can't beat goaltender Owen Hearn of Festival City Rentals. Hearn was outstanding in net throughout the game as Festival City prevailed 5-1 in Stratford Rotary Hockey League action on Sunday, November 5.



(STEWART GRANT PHOTOS)

Callum Hallahan (#8) and Nathaniel Smith faceoff in Stratford Rotary Hockey League play on Sunday, November 5th while Jesse Merkel looks on from the crease.

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 2023-24 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 stratford-times@gmail.com.

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Hockey team for the ages



As the saying goes, "age is only a number". The above-pictured team, comprised mostly of Stratford and Shakespeare residents, dates back to the 1970s when they were called the "City Hall Hockey Association", though they say they are in no way associated with City Hall anymore. Tom Robinson, who is now 66, told the Stratford Times that he and fellow hockey players get together once or twice a week to play the sport they all grew up enjoying. Three of their players are over 80 and the majority are in their 60s and 70s. Even though they change off quite often to catch their breath, they still have great camaraderie and a sense of fun - the scores of their games are really secondary.

Pictured from left to right above are, front row: Dave Loucks, Guy Bellehumeur, Dawn Cormier, Cindy Young, Ron Louttit, and Stu Dall.

Back row: Terry Millar, Tom Hislop, Chris Strahm, John Cossey, Rob Congram, Brian Eaton, Tom Gorman, Tom Hemeon, Tom Robinson, Dave Hishhorn.

Those who also suit up most weeks include: Ron Straum, Brock Chisholm, David Querin, Don Henry, Paul Carter, Brandy Bontrup, Mike Sallis, Ward Hazen, Tonya Bowles, Mark Wilkinson, Ken Nesbitt, Bill Preston, Rick Hyatt, Thomas Giurukis, Terry Mercer, and Tony Klemencic.



Stratford Branch 8

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Brittlestar's first book climbing the ranks on Amazon

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

Stewart Reynolds, more commonly known online as Brittlestar, has penned his first book, a series of essays for Welcome to the Stupidpocalypse, Survival Tips for the Dumbageddon. The book has been released in stores and online and is climbing the ranks on Amazon. At one point it was the most gifted book on Amazon.ca.

Although Reynolds has been writing in one shape or form for years, it hadn't been a goal to write a book. Instead, he was approached to do it by a literary agency in Toronto who thought readers would have fun with a book.

"I worked with my agent who is in Edmonton, his name is Wayne Arthurson, and Wayne and I worked together on the proposal for a book idea. They shopped it and there were two offers, which is great, but they said let's put this on hold. Then there were another couple offers and the offer we accepted is the one from Post Hill Press out of Nashville owned by Simon & Shuster," explained Reynolds.

The title was inspired by what Brittlestar felt was people becoming too comfortable doing stupid things about things.

"Coming through the pandemic there were a lot of people who did not rely on scientists and doctors and that would seem dumb in any other circumstances. The political climate of 2016 where people were kind of throwing logic and rational thought to the wind and were ok with that. Things like alternative facts; where does that come from? It's kind of based on the idea that we can take a breath and we don't have to react to everything, we can digest things and process things and act accord-



(KAMARA MOROZUK PHOTO)

STUPIDPOCALYPSE

Brittlestar aka Stewart Reynolds poses with his first book "Welcome to the Stupidpocalypse, Survival Tips for the Dumbagedden"

ingly," said Reynolds.

The book blends humour with social commentary and covers topics from parenting, social media, politics, marriage and more. Taking a humorous look at serious topics helps offset pomposity, austerity, and uncovers for us that we are all just a little bit stupid sometimes.

"I think comedy is very powerful. I think comedy is very effective at pricking the balloon of pseudo-serious things.

Especially coming though the pandemic there was so much anger and rage, but at the same time, how do you deal with that? You can't give it back, it's best to deal with it by using comedy. Social commentary; I kind of fell into this role. I feel like based on feedback and the past number of years one of the things I can offer people is, things seem this way to me, does it seem this way to you? It's still an uncomfortable role for me to be in," said Reynolds.

The big challenge in writing the book is that he is used to much shorter works. His scripts for videos run about two hundred words meaning, he has to be succinct. Writing the book, which is a series of essays which run about a thousand words each allowed more time to create a better scene, explain what he meant in a bit more detail. It also allowed him to put more jokes in.

"I love blurbs on the back of books, and I contacted the publisher to ask when do I find out what blurbs were going to be on the back of my book. They said we don't do that, you do that. And if you want any on the back of the book we need them by Friday. So I contacted the people that I did and they were all generous enough to provide nice comments.

There is also the Foreword by Ryan Reynolds (not related), a Middleword by Mary Trump (niece to Donald) and an Afterword by Colin Mochrie. Ever hear of a middleword? Neither had the publisher, but it fits in quite nicely.

As with any writer, Brittlestar has hopes for what people take away from his book. He hopes people come to see that it's okay to not know what you're doing, and to admit that you don't know what you are doing.

"When you talk about chapters like parenting I think people panic about it and they don't think they're doing it right, but you do it to the best of your ability and try to learn as much as you can. I guess the theme I hope people take away is try, learn and get better," summarized Reynolds.

To get a signed copy, visit Fanfare books downtown on Ontario St. Friday November 17 in the evening and Brittlestar will be there. It is also available for order on Amazon.ca



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Stratford Concert Choir presents Sing-Along Messiah for the first time

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

Maestro Stephane Potvin is thrilled to be leading the Stratford Concert Choir (SCC) in a first ever Sing-Along Messiah at Avondale United Church. This is a fun and festive twist on the beloved tradition for audiences of previous performances of Messiah.

"The choir will be doing the first part of Messiah which is Christmas and a few other parts. So this is a shorter version. We picked the most popular movements and the idea is to get the audience to sing," said Potvin, executive director of the SCC.

Accompanying the choir will be an organist, some trumpets and a timpani which is a percussion instrument also known as kettledrums. This relaxed performance is a family friendly event that will be one to be remembered. Sing-along performances always pack the house with people wanting to sing to the beautiful music.

"It is intended for anybody who likes Messiah, anybody who likes to sing, and anybody who likes Christmas. It is for all ages, a family friendly event and we organize the audience into sopranos, altos or if families want to sit together that's perfectly fine too," said Potvin.

"When I talk with fellow conductors about their experience doing a sing-along Messiah, their faces light up and you can



SONGS OF JOY

The Stratford Concert Choir in rehearsal for Sing-Along Messiah at Avondale United Church.

(LISA CHESTER PHOTO)

hear the excitement in their voices. This is one of those events in which people enjoy participating. I am very excited about this concert and I promise you that this is going to be a lot of fun for the community and for the choir," he said in a release.

There is also great excitement surrounding this year's soloists. They were selected after auditions were held at Western Uni-

versity in London.

"We partnered with Western University and asked if they had recommendations for students. They advertised the need for soloists to their students, arranged auditions, arranged a locale and listened to a number of students and selected four. So we will have new talent to showcase. We're excited, the university is excited

and so is the choir," said Potvin.

Rehearsals are underway now and there is a great deal of preparation for Potvin. Many decisions go into the performance before the first rehearsal is even begun.

"All the decisions for how fast do I want this, how loud do I want this, what kind of phrasing do I want, how do we pronounce the words, those decisions are made before the first rehearsal. Accompanists get the music, learn the music, and we get together and listen to each other so we are in tune with each other. We start phrasing the music, so what's important in the text, what's important in the music, we bring that out. Sometimes the tenors have something interesting so the rest of the choir has to be softer so that we can hear the tenors then it's the altos. All this is worked out ahead of time," he explained.

Singing experience is not a requirement for those who want to attend. Audience members will be seated in sections (soprano, alto, tenor, bass), although family and friends are welcome to sit together. The choir will be joining from the stage.

Those attending are encouraged to bring their own musical score which is available at Long & McQuade both in store and online. Tickets are available at Blowes Stationery and online at stratfordconcertchoir.org. The performance will be held Saturday December 9th at 7:30pm at Avondale United Church, 195 Avondale Ave.

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Let me Introduce ... Anthony John ... All Round Cool Cat



APRIL TAYLOR

Times Freelance Columnist

I remember when I was a young hairdresser in the 80s, I was pretty shy and not very worldly to say the least. Clients would come in and chat about all sorts of topics; most I knew nothing about and that was the beginning of my real world education from behind my stylist chair. One of the hot subjects back then was about this tall thin guy with funky hair named Anthony John. This guy arrived in town and caused a ruckus about organic vegetables. Yes "vegetable talk" it was quite the thing. In reality, the talk was more about the man and what he was doing than actual vegetables.

Anthony has been on my radar for years, but I hadn't actually met him until a couple of weeks ago. If you have read this little column of mine before, you know it's about introducing you to your neighbours that you share this lovely city with. My brother Ross suggested I approach Antony for an article because he's a really cool guy. I must admit I felt a bit intimidated to reach out to him and procrastinated doing so. One day I almost physically ran into Antony coming out of the chef's school and thought, oh heck, just ask him not knowing if he even knew who I was. He was gracious and kind, not intimidating at all, in fact I might even say humble.

When Antony suggested we



meet out at the family farm just outside of town, it was perfect because the countryside is extra special in the autumn, and it gave me a chance to savour the season. I drove in, and it was exactly as I would have imagined it: a real rustic working farm, several pairs of scissors hanging beside the door handy for clipping herbs and flowers. A table sat inside the door with vegetables from the garden for folks to stop by and purchase.

Anthony met his wife Tina at the University of Guelph while he was earning his Honours Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife Biology. Tina, a farmer's daughter, shared his love of nature, and it seemed a natural progression to buy a farm from Tina's father. That's just what they did, and they ran a dairy farm for 10 years. Eventually, they switched from dairy to growing vegetables and "Soiled Reputation" was born. At one point they had the largest market garden in Canada, providing markets and some of the finest

restaurants with local produce. What made their product different was the artistic flare in which they presented it.

"Seed does no good sitting in a packet", says Antony John.

Antony lives by the quote above, keeping his mind open to all possibilities. Opportunities are all around us, but we have to be open to receiving them. One such opportunity came to him in the form of a TV show "The Manic Organic", where Antony taught his audience about gardening and value of quality food. This program is still available on YouTube and Prime. Also, while working with the chef's school, he met and learned from many renowned chefs from all around the world, which of course opened even more doors. I think that is what is intended by Antony's quote. We can't grow until we get out of our packet.

So that was then ... but what's happening now?

Well, When I was at his home, what I did not expect was art and lots of it. Who knew he was an

artist? And a mighty fine artist indeed. Their large living room has a cool studio vibe with at least 20 paintings by Alex Colville, Canada's own realist artist. The room also contains several large paintings by Antony himself. That was a surprise.

Antony has never looked like your average farmer and now I know why. He is a very proud farmer but has another side to him: an avid birdwatcher and artist. At this phase of his life, this aspect is becoming his primary focus. All his life he has wanted to make art his career and now seems to be the time for it. Antony's paintings are very detailed and infused with significant feeling and meaning, often nature and bird themed. His works hang in private collections in Canada and the U.S. He has shown his work in several galleries and at present sells at the Skwirl Gallery in Bayfield. Antony's attention to detail, either in his work as a farmer or as realist artist and even as a

bird watcher, is what sets him apart. As his painter hero, Alex Colville said, "It's the ordinary things that seem important to me." I think that is what Antony's gift is: Seeing the extraordinary in the ordinary.

Opportunity came once again knocking on Antony's door when he travelled to the Amazon on a bird watching excursion. He and Tina went on a 3-week birding trip to Peru and stayed at research stations run by Amazon Conservation. Imagine Antony's surprise when cofounder Dr. Adrian Forsyth called him after he returned home and asked to see his paintings. Well, he must have liked them because he asked him if he wanted to do an artist in residency in Manu Research Station in Peru, and Osa Conservation in Costa Rica. There he is again jumping out of his packet, ready to tackle a new adventure.

Does an Adventure in the Amazon sound like something you would like to do?

Good news... you can! Now that Antony has fully retired from organic farming, he is hoping to combine his Wildlife Biology Degree and almost 20 years of travel in Central and South America with his knowledge of tropical ecology and birds. He would like to take friends and interested parties to the various locations he's been to, and to share with them the incredible biodiversity of places like the Osa Peninsula of Costa Rica, and the Manu Biologde in Peru. His aim is to convey the wonderment of seeing rare and elusive creatures in their natural habitat, visit culturally significant sites, and delve deep into the cuisine that has evolved in each area. It sounds like an adventure of a lifetime.

Contact Antony if you are interested, on Instagram at antonymartinjohn or at antbird60@gmail.com.

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WHAT IS A KIWANIS BUILDERS CLUB?

There are more than 1,500 Builders Clubs around the world. No two are alike. Each club is an independent entity-designed for its Intermediate School members, by its members. They work together to improve their schools and their communities. Their service also increases the visibility and enhances the reputation of both the club and the school they represent. The program is designed to fit member and volunteer interests.

It's student-led. Builders Club is uniquely built on an important principle: Amazing things happen when the students take the lead.

It's age-appropriate. The program and its resources are designed specifically to help middle school students get the most of a club experience.

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Motto: Building leaders.

Vision: To develop competent, capable, caring leaders through the vehicle of service.

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Pledge: "I pledge on my honor to uphold the objects of Builders Club, to my school, my community, my nation, and myself. To aid those in need while enhancing leadership capabilities, and to encourage the fellowship of all mankind."

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WHY BE A BUILDERS CLUB MEMBER?

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Once upon a return to Musical Theatre

SYDNEY GOODWIN

Times Correspondent

The Princess and the Pea is a well-known and well-loved story, filled with Princes, Princesses, and romance, but what would happen if you took that story, turned it into a musical, and made the Princess a brash and wild character fighting for the Prince's hand? Well then, you'd get the storyline for Once Upon a Mattress; a hilarious comedy making its way to Stratford thanks to the talented people with the Perth County Players.

Perth County Players was formed in 2008, and was created to provide the opportunity for thespians to enjoy the experience of being in community theatre. "Our first production was in 2009. Leading up to the pandemic, we presented a variety of productions including musicals, plays and dinner theatre, sometimes two productions a year", explains Chris Leberg, one of the show's producers (also appearing in the show as Kitchen Wench #2). Leberg goes on to recount how the team at Perth County Players wanted to bring the joy and excitement of theatre back to life, and decided 2023 was the year they return to performing musicals. So they turned to Music Director Jenn Zutt with the question of whether she would be interested in leading the production of Once Upon a Mattress, to which Zutt very enthusiastically agreed.

The desire to perform this particular show goes back to the beginning of the Perth County Players, Leberg recalls; "Once Upon a Mattress has always been Jenn's favourite musical, it's been a passion of hers, she has wanted

to do this." Leberg explains how the group had wanted to put on a musical last year, but having just come out of the throes of Covid they decided doing a non-musical play would be a safer choice. "When we were done last December we found we were left at a point where we felt we could mount a full scale musical again. And I brought Once Upon a Mattress up again at our next board meeting." Seeing how the desire to do this show had lasted for so long within the Perth County Players, it's no surprise that this is the first musical they are putting on again after the effects of Covid.

It's not uncommon for theatre groups to put their own unique spin on shows they put on, and the Perth County Players have certainly taken part in this tradition with a new angle on the musical comedy - an 80s Punk Rock aesthetic. Zutt, wanting to do something different for this retelling of the story, had the idea to model the costume designs after popular 80's singers, mixed with a grunge look. The story is still going to be set within medieval times with 15th century set and prop designs, but you'll certainly notice an 80s flair to the costuming and choreography if you see the show.

Once Upon a Mattress is going to be playing in the Stratford Intermediate School auditorium from November 17-25. If you would like more information about the show, how to get tickets, or want to know more about Perth County Players, you can visit their website perthcountyplayers.com, or their social media on Facebook or Instagram under the name Perth County Players.

perthcountyplayers.com

Once Upon A Mattress

November 17, 18, & 24 @ 7:30pm
November 18, 19 & 25 @ 2pm
Stratford Intermediate School
Adults \$25 | Students \$20
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UNTIL SOON. LIVE WELL: Only A Fool



STUART LENDER

Times Contributor

In October of 1972, the band Steely Dan, with their fantastic jazz/rock fusion sound, came out with a response to John Lennon's 1971 release "Imagine." Steely Dan's song entitled "Only a Fool Would Say That" was a slap in the face perhaps, highlighting the highly improbable and impractical sentiment that "Imagine" put forward. Imagine no religion? Imagine no possessions? Imagine

all the people living life in peace? Quite!

The thing about songs like "Imagine" or any artistic endeavour with a hope a wish or a dream, is that they are meant to open one up to possibility. To something better. To thinking about who we are. Sure, it's quite clear that some human beings are far too bitter, far too self-absorbed to actually create what most of us would like to manifest; but in the very least, an idea could make a shift, could alter a behaviour, could remind us.

I think ultimately, songs like "Imagine" are calls for recognizing that one's character should mean more than one's social status. And it's that character (the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual) that makes us human in every way. It's our character that dictates our life choices, our relationships, the quality of our joy and sorrow. And it's our choices that constant-

ly feed our character. We must keep it beside us at all times, like a shadow. If what we are feeding ourselves ultimately doesn't suit us, we will come to our end ultimately dissatisfied.

This sentiment came to me upon my reflection concerning you, dear reader. Everyone who is reading this now. Why? I wondered that myself. Well, I think because it's this writing (whether it's read through or not) that acts as a balm for my soul, my character. It is plainly, something that I feel I must do and not doing it for a length of time, pains me. There are personal reasons for this of course. It's interesting to note that, as a father, my main concern about raising my lovely daughter was in the silent hope that she would grow to recognize her own character, her own particular quality of self in the world and be able to expand upon it or change it.

This might sound as though it is

a given; that, of course one lives and grows and looks at themselves within the myriad events that happen to them in their lifetime. But no. There are many whose mirror is turned only outward, never upon themselves. And without that reflection upon their 'character,' they are seeing only movies.

And so, reflecting on these posts that I place on Facebook and the monthly articles I contribute to The Stratford Times, both informational (for my work) and metaphysical (for my soul) – it made me see what it is that has always mattered to me. What parts of my character have never changed because they are, indeed, an integral part of who I am. It dawned on me that the things that I loved to do as a child are the same things that I still love today, and it's this that I recognized and hoped would be my daughter's revelation: to see herself in her best possible life. One that feeds who she is. That kind of a life might appear simple

and straightforward, or it might appear busy and travelled.

For my own self worth, it's in helping people in some way, it's in the enjoyment and creation of music, visual art, and writing. If one of these things became an inability, there would be diminishment. One needs to at least try to move through life happy. There are plenty who struggle with that for very serious and unfortunate reasons. But for most of us, thankfully, there is a choice. The road not taken might be as gratifying as the one well worn. The choice is ours after all. The trick is to know oneself so that we know the road we are taking is the right one. We are urged to take it and we are called to be good to ourselves. Only a fool wouldn't do that!

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

Web-crawling through the menu....



SHEILA CLARKE

Times Freelance Columnist

We've gone web-crawling in a lot of places. We've been under the soil in the incredibly vast microbe ecosystem that keeps our soil healthy, we've looked at the wonder of a native plant/pollinator garden that nurtures so many insects and birds, we've taken a look at the incredible importance of wetlands in flood control and habitat, and we've looked at ways to curb carbon emissions.

This week our path will be a bit different. We're going to look at a connection between climate change and what we eat, and how we prepare our food. When fossil fuels are the main source of the climate crisis, you may wonder what food has to do with that. In fact there are far more connections than we might think, starting at the bottom.

The bottom, in our web-crawling world is the soil. If the soil is

rich in organic content, it's supportive of the plants that grow in it, and we know those plants are important as a carbon sink, for habitat and for nutrition. Leonardo Da Vinci said that we know more about the movements of celestial bodies in the sky than we do about the soil on our own planet. Truth! Every tablespoon, every shovel-full of healthy soil is teeming with tiny to microscopic life that processes material above the soil. For example, REGENESIS (George Monbiot) tells about an ant wood louse that welcomes itself into anthills. Ants are nearly blind, so all they know is that this creature smells like the ants, and has antennae that it uses to stroke the ants, until they respond as to hungry ants, and give it food. Clever louse! And that's just one very small story of millions upon millions of soil organisms that give us a rich growth medium.

On the other hand, if we have plowed and stripped the land, and need to chemically support the crops that grow in it, there are consequences. Did you know that production of one tonne of fertilizer emits 3 tonnes of carbon? Planting hedgerows to curb erosion, and to provide habitat is another way to preserve that precious soil. Habitat for insects becomes all important as we look at the need for pollinators in our farmland.

Use of neonicotinoids and other pesticides are rapidly removing the very insects we need to pollinate our crops.

Looking for food that is grown in organic fields is one step we can take- or grow our own! Join a community garden or devote a patch of your back yard to the delight of fresh garden produce- Plan ahead for next year! You haven't lived until you've come face to face with a small mountain of green beans, ready to be topped and tailed, blanched, and put into the freezer for the winter ahead! The taste- and the satisfaction- are heady stuff indeed!

What about the menu itself? Is there a carbon connection there? Start with food content- packaged and pre-prepared - or not. For a start, more trees, more plastic from fossil fuel, and more food additives go into prepared food. Going from scratch avoids heavy salt and sugar content. It sounds intimidating, but it's really not- and there are some fun ways to get in the "make it from scratch club"—The Local has a drop in parents and kids shared cooking on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 10 AM (and a meal, if you don't have time to cook!). The closer to home the food comes from also reduces fossil fuel emissions that are created in shipping pre-packaged foods.

How about the content? We

need a meat, a starch, and a veg, right? Well no, actually that approach only keeps pouring carbon into the atmosphere. There are some terrific alternatives that lower methane and carbon levels in the atmosphere, and are healthier. Nutritionists today recommend reducing meat to one or two meals a week. Try chicken, and if possible avoid red meat and preserved meat. Those sausages and sandwich meats preserved with nitrates and nitrites can create carcinogenic chemicals in food, which may contribute to cancer risk. There are a gazillion other ways to make up protein content. Protein can be found in alternative meals by legumes (beans and lentils), tofu (think Thai stir-fry :) eggs, cheese, shiitake mushrooms, quinoa, buckwheat, and fish. Who knew!

In our house we use the google method :) I look at what's in the fridge, put it in google, along with the word recipe, and take a look at the results. Often the recipes we find are from other countries and cultures- They're easy, and they're delicious! Build your spice cupboard gradually to meet the recipes from around the world- Start with curry powder, oregano, basil, and chili powder. Branch out as you bump into new recipes!

All done? Fresher, healthier, kinder to the planet (and to the

animals) and way better for lowering carbon emissions. One last thing, really work to use left-overs. When leftovers decay, they generate about 8 percent of the world's heat-trapping gases. Almost all leftovers can end up in a combination dish-! Try to eat local, organic, and mostly veg - The planet will thank you.

Updates:

Atmospheric Carbon this week reached 420 ppm (parts per million), October 2023, up from the safe level of 350 ppm, passed in 1990. Look for alternative energy sources and reduce fossil fuel use.

And from Greenpeace:

This Fall, as you enjoy the crisp air and warm beverages, remember that beneath the layers of fallen leaves, a world of biodiversity is thriving. By choosing to "Leave The Leaves", you're creating a safe haven for these essential pollinators.

Sheila Clarke is a Stratford advocate for the environment, of our community and of our planet. She has a BSc Zoology from the University of Illinois, and a host of courses beyond in disciplines that inform ecology, the science of how everything living fits together in nature. She is a member of CFUW Stratford, Stratford Climate Momentum, and the Perth County Sustainability Hub.

How to Set Healthy Sleep Routines in the Darker Months



IRENE ROTH

Times Freelance Columnist

As the daylight-saving time ends and the chill of winter approaches, it becomes essential to pay extra attention to our sleep routines and overall sleep hygiene. Quality sleep is a cornerstone of physical and mental well-being, and the changing seasons can disrupt our circadian rhythms.

Ensuring we cultivate healthy sleep routines can ensure we don't get sick with any respiratory infections. This is because when our sleep quality is optimal, we have more resistance to viruses.

To get a good night's sleep, we must create some healthy habits

and routines. Here are a few factors to consider.

Create Your Ideal Sleep Environment

The environment in which you sleep plays a vital role in the quality of your sleep. To make the most of your sleep space, maintain a cool and comfortable room temperature, usually between 60-67°F. This range is conducive to better sleep.

With daylight hours diminishing, invest in blackout curtains to keep your sleeping area as dark as possible. This will help regulate your circadian rhythm and improve sleep quality. Reduce noise disturbances by using white noise machines or earplugs if necessary. These can help drown out background sounds that might otherwise disrupt your sleep.

Ensure Your Mattress and Pillows are Comfortable

Ensure your mattress and pillows are in good condition and provide the support and comfort you need for a restful night's sleep. It's a good idea to buy new pillows every year or two. Also, you may want to flip your mattress every season to ensure it maintains its shape.

Create a Consistent Sleep

Schedule

Maintaining a consistent sleep schedule is crucial for a healthy sleep routine. Even with shorter daylight hours, try to go to bed and wake up at the same times every day. Your body's internal clock, known as the circadian rhythm, thrives on consistency and can help regulate your sleep patterns.

Limit Screen Time

The blue light emitted by smartphones, tablets, and computers can interfere with your body's production of melatonin. This hormone has been known to regulate sleep. Therefore, to improve sleep quality, avoid screens for at least an hour before bedtime. Instead, consider relaxing activities such as, reading a book or taking a warm bath.

Make Lunch Your Largest Meal

Diet plays a significant role in sleep hygiene. Avoid heavy meals, caffeine, and alcohol close to bedtime, as they can disrupt your sleep. Aim for a light, balanced dinner, and limit your fluid intake in the hours leading up to sleep to prevent nighttime awakenings to use the restroom.

Establish a Relaxing Bedtime

Routine

This will help remind your body that it's time to wind down for the night. This can include activities like gentle stretching, meditation, or deep breathing exercises. Try incorporating one or two of these relaxation techniques into your routine. This will help you transition from wakefulness to sleep.

Engage in Regular Exercise

Regular physical activity can improve sleep quality, but it's important to time your workouts wisely. Try to finish exercising at least a few hours before bedtime to avoid the stimulating effects of physical exertion, which could hinder sleep.

Manage Stress

Stress and anxiety can have a profound impact on your ability to sleep well. As daylight hours decrease, it's essential to incorporate stress management techniques into your daily routine. These may include mindfulness meditation, journaling, or seeking professional help when necessary.

Limit Naps

While short power naps can rejuvenate, long or irregular daytime naps can disrupt your nighttime sleep. If you feel the need for

a nap, keep it brief and aim for a duration of no more than 20-30 minutes.

Avoid Clock Watching

Constantly checking the clock can increase anxiety and make it harder to fall asleep. If you can't sleep, try to remain calm and avoid looking at the clock. It's better to get up and engage in a relaxing activity until you feel drowsy.

Sleep hygiene is vital for ensuring a restful and rejuvenating night's sleep, especially as daylight hours decrease. By implementing the practices and habits outlined above, you can improve your sleep quality and establish a healthy sleep routine that will help you navigate the challenges of the winter season.

Prioritizing sleep hygiene is a good investment in your physical and mental well-being. It can also help you make the most of the precious hours of rest during the long winter nights.

So as our daylight savings time ends, may we take some time to turn inward and to start some healthy habits that will help us move into winter more healthy, happy, and fulfilled.

Irene Roth

Welcoming Ukrainians: Meeting Needs

VJ KNUTSON

Times Freelance Columnist

I'm connecting you in a chat with Barb, Richard Hone from Ukraine Help Middlesex messaged me a month in. This is how we rolled. The pleas for help from displaced Ukrainians were pouring in daily. There was no time for explanation.

Barb, it turned out, was located in Barrie, and she was working with an American, Lars, who was situated in the Warsaw train station helping Ukrainians sign up for free flights to Canada. The flights were being offered by an international relief organization, with the caveat that the applicants had to have hosts at our end before they could board a plane. That's where I came in. Lars and Barb wanted me to help find hosts.

The refuge centres in Poland were overrun. An 800-bed facility was jammed with 3,000 people. Volunteers were working the camps, helping people complete paperwork and directing them to Lars. The information was then uploaded to Barb. Within days of my involvement I was sent a list with 525 families. I rounded up more volunteers and tried to breathe.

A family of five in Toronto need to be relocated immediately, Lars messaged me one day. They're in a one-bedroom apartment where there is already a family of four and a dog. The dog is biting the kids. The situation is untenable.

My husband offered them pick them up. Already awaiting the arrival of a family of five, I crossed my fingers that we'd be

able to help this family gain their independence before the next landed.

Understandably, the family that arrived were scared, and overwhelmed. It wasn't long before Ric and I realized that Ukrainians were arriving with a gamut of needs: documentation to complete, ESL classes, employment, health care, school registration, and so on. They also, understandably, needed trauma counselling.

I reached out to a local minister, Gwen Ament, who had experience helping refugees. "The most important thing you can

do for them," she advised, "is give them a sense of community. If they can go to the grocery store and meet someone they know, then they'll begin to feel like they belong."

In short order we held our first community picnic. Other families had started to arrive to the area too. Volunteers came forward to offer ESL classes. Employers reached out with job offers. The children were enrolled in school. Nataly and Ruslan were ready for their own place within five short weeks.



As our Ukrainian population grows, so do the needs. It takes a community to ensure their success. Sunday, November 19th, local volunteers are holding a gathering for Ukrainians and Canadians. The event is being housed in the Falstaff building, at 35 Waterloo St. N. 2-5 pm. All are welcome. Bring a dish to share. Contact Kiri-Lyn at muir.direct@gmail.com if you have any questions.

Partners in Immigration, a government-based settlement organization, contacted me recently regarding an initiative they are involved in with the University of Guelph. The goal is to hear from immigrants in Huron Perth and from their stories, identify which resources and services are needed.

Newcomers to Canada, within our region, are invited to complete The Immigrant Survey, available online. The survey is available in Spanish, Arabic, and Ukrainian, and hopes to hear from international students, and temporary workers, as well as refugees. Look for the link to the survey on Facebook, or find it at huroncounty.ca. It will be open until November 24th, 2023.

(Disclaimer: I am a grassroots volunteer and not affiliated with local organizations raising funds for refugees. My goal is person-to-person, hand-to-hand, lifting up those in need. If you'd like to help, please message me at english.knutson@gmail.com, or reach out to the volunteers at Stratford Community Connects with Ukrainian Newcomers on Facebook.)

Introducing Kelly McIntosh: The New General Manager of the Stratford Perth Museum

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Kelly McIntosh, known locally for her extensive work in theatre and arts, heritage administration and entrepreneurship, has been appointed General Manager of the Stratford Perth Museum.

McIntosh's experience, however, is much broader than her experience in theatre and, she says, the most pivotal moments in her career happened because of motherhood, "I have a 13-year-old daughter, and when we would go to mom's groups, I met so many amazing women; there was a publisher and an entrepreneur and a woman who was a lawyer for the steelworker's union. And later, when my daughter was involved in sports, I met so many fantastic women who helped give me the confidence to apply, and now that I've made it happen, I feel like this is absolutely what I should be doing."

Currently finishing up her role at the Blythe Festival Theatre, McIntosh also has a history working in Stratford where community members may know her as the owner of the beloved Martingale Vintage on Wellington Street (now permanently closed), "It was fantastic," said McIntosh, "People would come in and browse, and something would remind them of a time in the past, and I loved that."

After closing down her vintage shop, McIntosh wrote and produced the highly successful play, *Ladies of the CNR*, which toured all of southwestern Ontario. This play was based on a photo that hung in her shop, "People would come in and say, 'Hey! That's my aunt,' so I knew there was a lot of history in that picture, and I wanted to find out more, which led me to write the play."

McIntosh later wrote and staged the hit *Kroehler Girls*



Kelly McIntosh, New General Manager of the Stratford Perth Museum, Starting on November 20th, 2023

stage production and also spent three years working for the Stratford Perth Museum in administration. This experience eventually led her to her position as Audience

Development Coordinator and Artistic Associate at Blythe Festival Theatre, where she is currently wrapping up her final weeks before moving into her full-time role here in Stratford.

Storytelling is at the heart of McIntosh's career, and she says no matter what position she's held, stories have always been important. Now moving into her new role, she believes she can use stories to provide a sense of community to citizens across Perth County.

"I've done Shakespeare, and I've travelled across this country, but what I keep returning to is when you tell stories about your community, they stay relevant and important. And those stories matter," said McIntosh, "The museum already does such a lovely job of that, and I want to continue to do that the best way I can; through telling stories."

Speaking on the Stratford-Perth Museum, McIntosh says she gives credit to John Kastner, previous General Manager, and says his vision for the museum, building the Player's Backstage and bringing in companies such as the Here for Now Theatre are all wonderful stepping stones that will help her continue in his legacy but also allow her to grow into her new role.

McIntosh notes that from here, she would love to build upon the Player's Backstage by offering more community events, "What you are seeing at the Stratford Perth Museum is far beyond stories and exhibits; it's a place for communities within communities, to celebrate and interact, bring their kids," she continued, "It's an incredible footprint that's been developed by John, and I think that it's integral that we have a place where people can feel at home, to be creative and I love that the Museum can support that. I'm looking forward to seeing how we can expand on that."

Economic Forecast presented by The Stratford and District Chamber of Commerce

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Stratford and District Chamber of Commerce hosted the RBC 2023 Business Symposium at the Stratford Country Club on November 7, 2023. The Discussion was focused on all aspects of local economic status and trends for the following years.

RBC Economist Claire Fan dove into topics related to business economics to the housing crisis, shedding some light on why interest rates peeked and what their projections are in the coming years. After the initial part of the morning, those who attended the event were able to ask questions and discuss concerns with a panel of financial professionals, who were local advisors from across Stratford.

Fan emphasizes the importance of understanding the context behind the Canadian financial forecast, including consecutive quarters of economic contraction in Canada and the US, saying, "Economies have been surprisingly resilient despite restrictive monetary policy and high inflation."

"A series of unfortunate events, including surpluses and inflation, led to rapid interest rate hikes in Canada," said Fan, "This has become increasingly restrictive for household finances."

Higher prices for goods and services have led to more people relying on debt to finance their basic needs, Fan highlights this by stating, "Indicators such as debt repayment and credit card usage suggest that households use their debt more aggressively to finance spending despite the tightening monetary policy."

The impact of higher interest rates on household debt service ratios in Canada, highlights a lag in the increase due to the renewal schedule of mortgages, meaning that those

who purchased homes in the peak of April 2023 should see lower interest rates in 2025 to 2026 as compared to those renewing mortgages over the next two to three years.

Prices and costs deteriorated rapidly in Q3, with businesses reporting normal pricing behaviour due to decreasing cost pressures and lower consumer demand. Businesses attributed the normalization to residual cost pressure, including longer-term contract renegotiation for unionized workers still catching up with wage growth that is not matching inflation.

"Inflation Canada has been stuck in a range of 3.5-4.5 percent since October 2022," said Fan, "Despite the economy slowing down, this indicates a concerning trend. She noted that Economists expect inflation to be higher than the current rate of four percent over the next year.

Because of the hike in interest rates, Fan noted that the Bank of Canada needs to regain its credibility in maintaining low inflation by keeping inflation expectations anchored at two percent, which she believed will happen over the next few years.

The unemployment rate has risen by 0.7 percent over two quarters, which is "historically a sign of a downturn," says Fan, "The GDP data suggests a decline on a per capita basis." Fan said the unemployment rate in Canada is rising due to population growth but the labour market has not yet seen massive layoffs but she does expect this could be in the future.

Fan noted that a discussion about the Canadian Economy wouldn't be a discussion at all without talking about the housing Crisis. She said the housing market faces structural and cyclical challenges, including increased demand and affordability issues. "The forecast for home prices in Ontario, such as lower interest rates and increased supply,"

she continued, "We expect a slowdown in demand and a challenging market over the next few years."

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United Way of Perth-Huron gets fundraising help



Susan McGonigle (office administrator), along with Laurie Newbrand and Andrea Dolson from the Ag. Society, serve up a hearty lunch of Bacon, Egg and cheese on a bun to a local market goer who enjoys the food along with helping the local United Way at the same time.

GARY WEST

Times Correspondent

Hungry market goers to the Stratford and District Agricultural Society's weekly Farmer's Market, were in for an appetizing treat on Saturday and at the same time, helping to raise funds for the Huron-Perth United Way.

Ag. Society Directors cooked up Bacon, Egg, and Cheese on a bun along with chocolate milk, donating 100% of the proceeds to this year's United Way campaign.

Over the last number of years, thousands of dollars have made their way from the Ag. Society to the organization which goes to help many "not for profit" groups who require U.W. Funding to help those in

need.

Those would include Optimism Place, Shelterlink, The Connection Centre, and The Urgent Needs Fund, along with addressing intimate partner violence, food security, homelessness and mental health.

The bacon was donated by the Perth County Pork Producers, Eggs from Perth County Egg Farmers, Cheese and Chocolate Milk from Perth County Dairy Producers and the Buns from the Grain Farmers of Perth County.

Market Manager, Tavistock's Heidi Danen, reminds interested market goers, that those shoppers interested in buying local should visit the farmers market at the Agriplex on McCarthy Rd. every Saturday from 7am till noon, 12 months of the year.

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STRATFORD KIA



Riddles

How do vampires get around on Halloween?
On blood vessels.

Why did the Headless Horseman get a job?
He was trying to get ahead in life.

The skeleton couldn't help being afraid of the storm—
he just didn't have any guts.

How can you tell when a vampire has been in a bakery?
All the jelly has been sucked out of the jelly doughnuts.

What do ghosts wear when their eyesight gets blurred?
Spooktacles.

What can you catch from a vampire in winter?
Frostbite.

What would be the national holiday for a nation of vampires?
Fangs-giving!

Why didn't the skeleton go to prom?
He had no body to go with.

Who did the scary ghost invite to his party?
Any old friend he could dig up!

Sudoku

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

Solutions on page 35



Pet of the Month



OLIVIA

One-year-old Olivia is a very sweet and silly girl! She loves all the pets and every cuddle she can get and is looking for a family that would take her on exciting adventures! She would love to have an active family that likes to go out on long walks to burn off the boundless amounts of energy she has. Olivia wants all the attention to herself and would want to be the only dog in the house. If you want a new member to join your family who will shower you with love and slobbery kisses, fill out an adoption survey at <https://kwsphumane.ca/adopt/process>.

Word Search

REMEMBRANCE DAY

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

- MEMORIAL
- PEACE
- MEDALS
- HONOR
- VETERANS
- POPPY
- REMEMBER
- HEROES
- NOVEMBER
- BRAVE
- SALUTE
- WREATH
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GARDEN STRATFORD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SOCIAL

December 4; 6:30 –9:00 p.m.
Army Navy Hall, 151 Lorne Ave. E., Stratford
Feature Presentation: “Big Ideas for Small Gardens”, Paul Gellatly, “The Tattooed Gardener”. Paul is a visionary gardener, passionate horticulturalist and author. Meeting open to Everyone; free admission.

MISTLETOE MARKET AT ST. JAMES

November 25; 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
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41 Mornington Street, Stratford
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November 21, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Eckert Hall, St. Michael CSS
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- 1)John McCrae
- 2)France
- 3)66,000
- 4)1921
- 5)11 a.m.
- 6)2 mins
- 7)Treaty of Versailles
- 8)Nine
- 9)England
- 10)1918

SUDOKU

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

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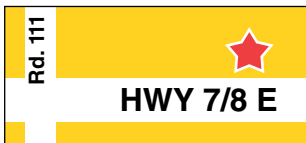
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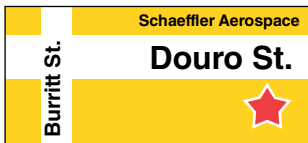
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