

STRATFORD TIMES

VOLUME 3 • ISSUE 16

APRIL 19, 2024

FREE



JENNIFER ANDERSON
 REAL ESTATE BROKER
 519.301.2736
 www.jandersonrealestate.com

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

4304 Rd 119 Stratford 519-273-1881



THE SPLIT RAIL COUNTRY STORE
 Celebrating 15 Years
 of Smilin' Country Service!



Parking Set Fines are increasing on May 1, 2024

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Parking fines in the City of Stratford are increasing as of May 1.

At its regular meeting on Nov. 27, 2023, council approved amendments to the city's set fines in its traffic and parking bylaw.

Following approval, the city submitted an application to the province requesting approval of the amended set fines. That application has now been approved and fine increases will be implemented on May 1.

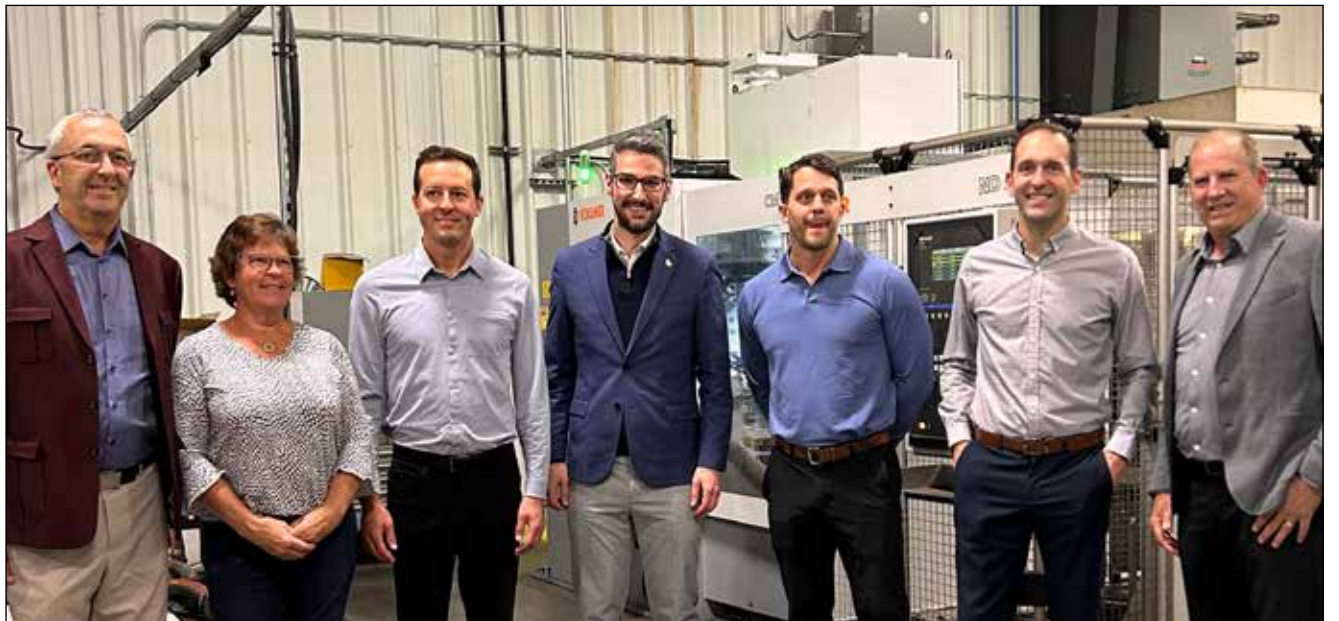
At the November meeting, city council noted that the 2024 operating budget would see an increase in fine revenue due to the set-fine rate increase by 143 per cent.

In May, an expired meter ticket will carry a set fine of \$60 or a \$40 voluntary payment if paid within seven days. Parking in a no-parking zone will carry a set fine of \$80 or a \$60 voluntary payment if paid within seven days.

Although the parking fines will increase, the parking rate will not. The standard rate at on-street parking spaces is \$1.50 per hour, and the rate in lots is \$1.25 per hour.

The city reminds those parking downtown to remember parking time limits, choose a lot that suits their needs, pay their meter on time, or use the HotSpot app on their phones.

Free parking continues in the Cooper and Downie Lots through 2024.



MANUFACTURING COMPANY GETS BOOST

(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

Family run business - New-Form Tools in Stratford received a provincial grant to help expand on new tooling to grow and expand into new markets across the world.

New-Form Tools gets a boost from the provincial government

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

What started as an idea and a single drill press in the family home basement has now grown to be a multi-million-dollar company in Stratford.

New-Form Tools is one of only three manufacturing facilities worldwide that offers specialty circular saw blades and cutting systems for high-tensile and high-strength materials. They recently received a provincial grant to help boost production and advance tooling.

"Sometimes I have to pinch myself and think, 'This is

really happening; we're shipping our products all over the world,'" said Jim Jantzi, president and tool-and-die maker "We've become the best saw maker in the world, and it's through these grants and programs that we've participated in that helped us to get to this point.

"In conjunction with the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund and the provincial government, New-Form Tools has been able to grow technologies for the Steel Industry for both tube manufacturing and solid-steel bar cutting. New-Form Tools has become a world leader in cutting technologies with exports to most industrialized countries."

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



Opening soon, call Shelly & Lucas today to reserve your space!



370 ONTARIO ST., STRATFORD

519-271-HEAR(4327)

WWW.COMMUNITYHEARINGCARE.CA



Free Hearing Tests

Free Hearing Aid Cleanings

New-Form Tools gets a boost from the provincial government

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Perth-Wellington MPP Matthew Rae stopped by New-Form Tools at 232 Lorne Ave. E in Stratford to congratulate the business on its work helping boost the local economy and to discuss how the findings will be used to boost production.

“Our provincial government will continue to support our thriving manufacturing sector across rural Ontario,” said Rae. “This investment will help retain and create new, high-skilled, good-paying jobs in the City of Stratford. It will also help

make a local employer more resilient to global supply chain shocks.”

The funding is part of New-Form Tools’ total investment of \$5.9 million to expand its existing Tungsten Carbide Tip (TCT) circular sawblade manufacturing and develop new manufacturing processes to enhance in-house production.

The project will utilize advanced technology and proprietary methods to improve efficiency and reduce waste. The investment will also reduce reliance on the global supply chain, as saw bodies

will be manufactured in-house.

Jantzi says the funding will also help maintain 48 jobs at New-Form Tools and create at least 13 new ones.

Jantzi’s wife, Carolyn Jantzi, is the business co-owner and their sons – Tyler Jantzi, director of sales, Jarret Jantzi, director of product development, and Andrew Jantzi, P.Eng. engineering and quality management – all play a big part in the company’s development and growth, alongside the other employees.

“I’m very proud of our employees,” said

Jim Jantzi. “We’re very grateful for all the exciting work each and every one of them had in helping to develop the technology that’s now number one in the world.”

Ontario is investing \$150 million through its Regional Development Program to help manufacturers across the province grow while supporting distinct regional priorities. To date, Ontario has supported more than 110 projects through the program, leveraging more than \$1.6 billion in new investments and helping to create over 3,000 jobs.



Volunteers are at the heart of United Way’s work

During Volunteer Week (April 14-20), United Way Perth-Huron (UWPH) is celebrating the passion and commitment of the volunteers who bring so much to the organization.

At the recent Spirit of Community Celebration marking the end of the 2023/24 fundraising campaign, UWPH took time to recognize seven people from across the region with Volunteer Spirit Awards.

The awards were in appreciation of the work they did on the organization’s behalf in the regions.

“We’re proud to acknowledge the incredible people across our region who help make UWPH the strong, 100 per cent local organization it is,” said Ryan Erb, executive director.

“Volunteers contribute to what we do in so many ways, from addressing envelopes, to fundraising in the community to sitting on our board and committees that

work on an incredible variety of pressing issues in the communities we care about.”

Lee Anne Andriessen (North Perth), Andrea Bernard (Stratford and area), Don Dingwall (St. Marys and area), Tabatha Fisher (Goderich and area), Wendy Haggitt (Southern Huron), Susan Moffatt (Board of Directors), and Patricia Smith (Northern Huron) displayed love for their community and dedication to UWPH’s mission of helping ensure vulnerable people across the region have the chance for a brighter future.

For more on each of the volunteer award winners, visit UWPH’s Facebook page during Volunteer Week: facebook.com/UnitedWayPH

United Way also recognizes outgoing Campaign Co-Chairs Rob and Leslie Edney for their work over the past three years.

As the organization’s highest profile vol-



SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

Rob and Leslie Edney with Ryan Erb (middle).

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

unteers, they have been advocates for the organization and helped push the organization to even greater heights.

“We deeply appreciate every one of our

600 and more volunteers, and the time and effort they invest in United Way’s work,” added Erb.

THANK YOU
to all our volunteers for your dedication to our communities!

MATTHEW RAE
MPP – Perth-Wellington

519-272-0660 • 1-800-461-9701
Matthew.Rae@pc.ola.org
MatthewRae.ca

The City of Stratford
would like to thank everyone
who volunteers their time and talents
in our community.

Stratford is better because of you.

Proposed implementation of an accommodation licensing fee discussed at recent public meeting

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

In a management report presented to council at its April 8 regular meeting, director of building and planning services Adam Betteridge provided a comprehensive overview of the implementation of a proposed accommodation-licensing fee. He addressed jurisdictional concerns, fee structures and enforcement efforts and said, after assessing municipalities similar to Stratford like Owen Sound and Niagara on the Lake, the planning services department recommends implementing a short-term accommodation licensing fee for Stratford.

The fee proposes those with short-term rental accommodations would pay \$402 and an additional \$122 for each additional room thereafter. A late payment fee of \$68 would be applied to those who do not complete their filing before April 30.

Currently, bed-and-breakfast owners pay \$152 for a license and \$91 for each additional room.

“What we came up with was a fee for the short-term accommodations’ licenses. That would equate to being approximately double the cost of a bed-and-breakfast license fee,” Betteridge said.

In 2022, the city adopted a new bylaw for short-term accommodations. The City of Stratford is now proposing fee payments by the end of April, which has caused some concern from those who currently own and run bed and breakfasts in

the city.

Though the city has received letters in support of the accommodation-licensing fee implementation, Amanda Hatton, owner of Avery House B&B, spoke on behalf of the Innkeepers Collective in Stratford and expressed concerns about the licensing-fee timeline and late payment fee, deeming them unreasonable and inconsistent.

“I believe it is completely unreasonable to drop fees on a business without giving them a reasonable window of time to budget. The collective believes it is only reasonable to offer some sort of payment extension without penalty to those who require time to cover the costs of the fee.”

Hatton said if the city is considering waived fees for short-term accommodations, bed and breakfasts should have their fees waived too.

“In the event you are leaning towards waiving 2024 fees for short-term rental accommodations, I want to point out that it's completely unreasonable to charge B&Bs a licensing fee if you are not charging short-term accommodation locations simply because things have slipped through the cracks.”

Mayor Martin Ritsma completed the public meeting by noting that the city council intends to consider the establishment of the fees for license application at a future regular council meeting.

He suggested that if anyone would like to receive further notice of this matter, email clerks@stratford.ca.



MARCH OF THE SWANS

(JENNY FITZ PHOTO)

The Swans make their way down Morenz Drive as they return to the Avon River after a long winter. For over thirty years, the event has drawn tourists from all across Ontario to see the swans, led by the Stratford Police Pipes and Drums band head to the water for the first time each spring.

HOT DEALS! SOURCE FLOORING

IN STOCK **HOT DEAL**
13" X 13"
PORCELAIN TILES
FROM **\$99¢** PER SQ FT REG 3.99

IN STOCK **HOT DEAL**
24" X 24"
PORCELAIN TILES
FROM **\$199** PER SQ FT REG 3.99

IN STOCK **HOT DEAL**
HANDSCRAPED LAMINATE
FROM **\$159** PER SQ FT REG 4.99

IN STOCK **HOT DEAL**
SUBWAY TILES
FROM **\$199** PER SQ FT REG 3.99

IN STOCK **HOT DEAL**
LUXURY VINYL PLANKS
5MM THICK
FROM **\$149** PER SQ FT REG 4.99

IN STOCK **HOT DEAL**
LOOSE LAY LUXURY VINYL
5MM THICK
FROM **\$199** PER SQ FT REG 5.99

IN STOCK **HOT DEAL**
2-TONE FRIEZE CARPET
FROM **\$199** PER SQ FT REG 3.99

IN STOCK **HOT DEAL**
3/4" THICK X 4" WIDE HARDWOOD
FROM **\$399** PER SQ FT REG 8.99

VINYL & LAMINATE MOULDINGS
100'S OF COLOURS IN STOCK!

NO TAX!
7' X 10" AREA RUGS
STARTING FROM **\$199**
NOT EXACTLY AS SHOWN

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



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



Planning to plant in hopes of harvesting a cheaper grocery bill

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

For the first time in my adult life, I have a big backyard.

That's kind of a weird thing to brag about, but after living in small apartments with little to no outdoor space of my own for the past 15 years, I'm pretty jazzed about it.

Specifically, I'm excited about the opportunities my girlfriend and I now have to grow our own fruit, vegetables and herbs. Lately, we've been doing everything we can to reduce our monthly food bill. We cook everything from scratch, we buy meat and fish when it's on sale and we make everything in big batches so we

have leftovers for lunch the next day.

While we have seen some savings, our efforts aren't yielding the extra leeway in our wallets we initially hoped. So, in an attempt to save even more money by reducing our dependency on the grocery store giants and their increasing prices, we're going to try our hands at sustainable, urban agriculture.

While my girlfriend's thumbs are already pretty green, I'm more ambitious than knowledgeable when it comes to planting seeds and caring for plants until they bear fruit.

Recently, we joined the urban farmers group at the Local Community Food Centre in Stratford. Led by garden educator Lucas Tingle, the intent of the program

is to teach gardening skills to members who, in turn, provide the volunteer labour Tingle and his team at the Local need to prepare, plant and harvest the community garden in Dufferin Park.

Last week, we helped Tingle pack seed-starter trays with soil and we planted both cilantro and green-onion seeds. It definitely wasn't a huge operation, but already we learned so much about how to pack soil and keep it hydrated so the seeds can sprout and grow up through the soil.

This week, we'll work with the group to plant seedlings grown in the Local's greenhouse at the community garden. While I don't know exactly what's in store for us, I imagine we'll learn how to space out the plants, which plants should be

planted now which should be planted later in the season, and what types of plants grow better together.

We plan to use every little bit of knowledge we gain with the urban farmers in our own backyard garden. Ideally, by the end of the season, we'll have harvested a wide range of produce, and whatever we don't eat fresh, we'll learn to can, jar, ferment or pickle to preserve it through the winter.

While I foresee quite a bit of work ahead of us this summer, we're both more than willing to put in the time and energy to save whatever we can on our grocery bill.

In times like these – and with a backyard like ours – we kind of need to.

Dr. Graham Shantz appointed as AMDSB director of education

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

The Avon Maitland District School Board (AMDSB) board of trustees announced Monday that Dr. Graham Shantz has been appointed director of education, taking over from outgoing director Dr. Lisa Walsh.

Shantz took on this role after 26 years with the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB). His most recent position with WRDSB was associate director. In that role he was responsible for leading the human resources and equity, information technology, finance, planning and facilities functions.

Prior to becoming the associate director,

Shantz first joined WRDSB as a teacher in 1997 and served in a variety of positions including principal, executive officer, superintendent of student achievement and wellbeing and coordinating superintendent. During his tenure, he supported student achievement, the migration of the IT network to cloud services, recovery from a cyber incident, changes in hiring practices that now reward lived experiences, transformation to more accessible school buildings and new facilities that incorporate nature in architectural and landscape design.

He has worked closely with librarians, trades, educators and non-education staff to create innovative solutions that centre students. Shantz was born and raised in the

district and is a former AMDSB student. Shantz studied at the University of Western Ontario where he earned his Masters and has a Doctorate in Education from the University of Southern Queensland, Australia.

"I am very excited to be returning to Avon Maitland as the director of education," Shantz said in a press release. "I have the most wonderful memories from my time as a student. It will be an honour to work for the system where I started my education journey. Avon Maitland ensured that I was prepared for life's challenges and opportunities, the same goal we have for all of our students."

"AMDSB is delighted to welcome Dr. Graham Shantz as our new director of ed-

ucation," AMDSB board of trustees chair Robert Hunking said in the release. "He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position and we look forward to his leadership in working together with our students and staff."

Hunking also thanked Walsh for her seven years of leadership at the board.

"We want to express our appreciation to Dr. Lisa Walsh for her excellent leadership and vision over the past seven years as director. Lisa's focus on teamwork, service and leadership has resulted in the significant progress of AMDSB. Her 35-year career in education has been exemplary and inspiring, and we wish her years of health and happiness in this next adventure of retirement."

Letter to the Editor

How do you eat an elephant? Answer: One bite at a time.

I see the GTR/CNR complex likened to an elephant. Develop the buildings one bite at a time.

The first bite is to put the skylights from storage back on the roof.

The next bite is to put in a temporary Central Park. This would be made up of trees and plants in containers. There would be benches. Some library books could be set up in the park for the people, that are enjoying their surroundings.

The way the park is set up it could be moved in and taken out very quickly.

The park would be located in the east end centre of the building.

In addition to the park, a static display of environmental ways we can all help reduce CO2 in our environment.

*Environmentalist
Lorne Bolton
Stratford*

STRATFORD TIMES

Guiding Principles

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

**GRANT
HAVEN
MEDIA**

*Restoring small-town
journalism, one community
at a time!*

STRATFORD TIMES

Publisher

Stewart Grant • stew@granthaven.com

Regional Editor

Galen Simmons • galen@granthaven.com

Editor

Amanda Modaragamage • amandajanevriter@gmail.com

Graphic Design / Sales Inquiries

Sarah Cairns • stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Business Development

Heather Dunbar • heather@granthaven.com

Billing Administrator

Cindy Boakes • boakescindy1576@gmail.com

Contributors

Spencer Seymour, Betty-Jo Belton, Julia Schneider, Gary West, Paul Knowles, Emily Stewart, Lisa Chester, Fred Gonder, April Taylor, Sheila Clarke, Irene Roth, Lauren Eedy, Lee Griffi, Stuart Lender, Thomas R. Verry, Sydney Goodwin, Kristen Parker

36 Water St. St. Marys, ON, PO Box 2310 N4X 1A2

stratfordtimes@gmail.com | 519.655.2341 | granthaven.com



Funded by the Government of Canada
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada



Stratford Destination Development Fund application is now open

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Now entering its ninth year, the Stratford Destination Development Fund (DDF) is now accepting applications to help promote, enable and support experiential projects that are highly shareable and have a high impact on the city.

The 2024/2025 Stratford DDF will focus on enabling compelling and impactful destination development projects in Stratford that are year-round or occur during shoulder and winter seasons. Supported projects will be slated to happen before May 31 or from Oct. 1, 2024, to May 31, 2025.

The Stratford DDF was established with investment from Regional Tourism Organization 4 (RT04), the Downtown Strat-

ford BIA and Destination Stratford to help support seasonal experiences throughout the city. The selected projects will directly align with Stratford's cultural DNA and strengthen residents' and visitors' experiences and storytelling opportunities.

"Stratford is famous as a cultural destination during the summer months, but there are incredible cultural experiences to be enjoyed by locals and visitors throughout the year," said Zac Gribble, executive director of Destination Stratford. "The Destination Development Fund is focused on supporting and enabling additional opportunities for our community, specifically during the shoulder and winter seasons. We look forward to seeing the creative ideas and projects proposed for 2024 (and) 2025."

The goal of the Stratford DDF is to help

increase the number of sustainable and high-quality cultural experiences during the shoulder and winter seasons and provide opportunities for destination storytelling and visitor-generated content.

The program also aims to strengthen the network of destination stakeholders taking an active role in Stratford's tourism future.

Organizations eligible for funding include tourism enterprises and businesses with interests in arts and culture, heritage, agri-culinary, sports, meetings and conventions. Festivals and events and for-profit or non-profit organizations can also apply.

"The BIA is pleased to be working with the Destination Development Fund again this year," said Downtown Stratford BIA general manager Jamie Pritchard. "We need to continue to build opportunities

to bring visitors to Stratford during the shoulder season when the theatres are dark for the winter. Activities that focus on this will see our downtown business benefit from the off-season traffic."

Applicants can apply for support for new tourism-related experiences, enhancements to existing tourism-related experiences – in-person or digital projects that improve the visitor experience – and the capturing of content by photo, video or social media.

Projects must be implemented during a shoulder season or winter, year-round, or occur from April to May 31, 2024, or Oct. 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

Applications are open until May 1 and on a rolling basis thereafter if not fully allocated. The minimum fund request is \$500 and the maximum is \$10,000.

CFUW Stratford on a mission to stop unnecessary idling in the city

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A subcommittee of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) Stratford focusing on climate change has just launched an anti-idling campaign to educate the community on the effects of idling in a vehicle for more than one minute.

This campaign is in accordance with Stratford's idling-control bylaw, which prohibits vehicles from idling for more than one minute in the City of Stratford.

The committee is raising awareness among parents and the public about the harmful effects of idling exhaust on children's health by providing educational materials to school boards, schools and teachers, with the hope the information will then be passed down to the children.

"What we're hoping for is that the children themselves will be able to educate their parents," said Marylu Moyer, a CFUW member and climate-change advocate. So, when a parent comes to pick up a child at the school, that child might remind the parent not to idle their car while waiting."

"When cars idle, they are emitting carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas responsible for climate change," said CFUW member and environmental activist Sheila Clark in a press release issued

by CFUW Stratford. "Car idling is especially hazardous to our children and to vulnerable adults."

She also noted that children are particularly vulnerable because of their shorter statures, which makes them closer to the exhaust emitted by the vehicles.

According to the Nemours Child Health Foundation, unnecessary idling can contribute to childhood asthma, lung irritation and inflammation. Two common tailpipe emissions are hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides. These interact to form ground-level ozone, which acts as a bronchoconstrictor and can trigger asthma attacks.

The anti-idling packages prepared by CFUW Stratford have been delivered to all Stratford school principals digitally and in hard copy. They include idling information, selected text from the bylaw and an idling quiz.

This is just the beginning of the project, and the committee hopes to increase the number of anti-idling signage throughout the city while providing educational material to more schools across the county in the coming years.

CFUW wants to remind the public that idling in Stratford is against the law. Residents and visitors must turn off all vehicle engines when parked. This not only helps cut down on greenhouse-gas emissions, it also saves money.



(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

LIMIT IDLING

The Canadian Federation of University Women Stratford is reminding residents to turn off their car engines while parked.

**SHOP
LOCAL.
SAVE
LOCAL** 

Correction:

An error was printed in the headline of a story published on page 18 of the April 5 edition of the Stratford Times. While the headline stated OPP Sgt. Leanne Wilhelm is president of the Ontario Provincial Police Association, she is actually president of the police association for Perth, Huron, Wellington, South Bruce and Grey-Bruce. We regret any confusion this may have caused.

STRATFORD **TIMES**

**Contribute to your local community
newspaper!**
**Send articles, sports or event recaps, and
photos to**

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Innkeepers Collective working with wider tourism-business community on cross-promotion opportunities

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

A group of local accommodations-business owners are working with the wider tourism-business community in Stratford to help visitors, customers and overnight guests make the most of their time in Stratford.

Formed following the disbandment of the Stratford and Area Bed and Breakfast Association roughly a year and a half ago, the Innkeepers Collective is a group of hotel, motel, bed-and-breakfast and other short-term-rental accommodations business owners who work collaboratively to better understand and operate within Stratford's tourism marketplace. In December, the collective hosted a workshop with organizations that operate events and offer activities that draw tourists to Stratford.

"We can talk all we like, and we can support each other and share tips and tricks and brainstorm, but at some point, that becomes us talking amongst ourselves. We're not doing anything to further things, which

led us to the workshop in December," said Amanda Hatton, a member of the collective and owner of Avery House B&B. "It was about 30 people. There were some innkeepers – we tried to get members who were representative of all accommodations types ... because we all look at things through a slightly different lens – and we had what we called (operators of) activities. We had the museum there, we had the (Stratford) Festival as well as things like Art in the Park and then we've got some cool, new stuff happening in town like ... Pursuit Climbing.

"We were trying to get different folks involved to share what they're up to. ... That group generated a whole bunch of ideas."

One of those ideas, Hatton said, was to host another seminar with collective members and other tourism-business owners in the city to give everyone an opportunity to learn more about each other's businesses so they can be promoted to visitors looking for things to do in Stratford.

That seminar was held at The Copperlight (formerly Knox Presbyterian Church)

in downtown Stratford April 8, and a total of 30 local business owners had the opportunity to present about their businesses and any special offers, initiatives or promotions that might interest overnight guests.

"The innkeepers or any accommodation in town; we have a very intimate opportunity to refer guests to things," Hatton said. "The same thing happens all over town. Someone's sitting in a restaurant and they say, 'Hey, where should we go to listen to some tunes after dinner,' or 'We want an ice cream. Where do we go?' Or you walk into a retailer and you say, 'I want a really light lunch. What do you recommend?'"

"All of us are touching the visitors at some point during their stay."

And for visitors who come to Stratford for a very specific purpose – be it a play, a meal or to shop – before heading home again, the idea behind having tourism-businesses collaborate like this is to be able to give those visitors reason to spend even more time in Stratford whether it's a full day, overnight, or even for a week or longer.

"The reception from retailers and restaurants saying, 'We want in on this,' has been really exciting for us," Hatton said. "We understand there is absolutely a need for every kind of visitor. ... We also recognize what would really move the needle for everybody in hospitality is if we can all work collectively to get more multi-night stays in town. It obviously serves accommodations in that we're selling more room nights, but it is also giving guests more opportunity to get their nails done or eat lunch or do some shopping. It gives all of us that are geared toward visitors more of an opportunity to actually generate some revenue.

"That's what we're trying to hopefully achieve out of this. If each of us can share with a guest, 'Here's my three favourite things to do that you haven't done yet,' the next time they come to town, they may want to add a night."

Hatton said she and the collective will continue meeting with local hospitality and tourism businesses to learn more about one another and ultimately provide tourists the best possible experience in Stratford based on their individualized needs and wants.



Left: Stratford's Innkeepers Collective hosted a workshop April 8 at The Copperlight that gave local business owners that chance to share information about their businesses with Stratford accommodations-business owners, who in turn will promote those businesses with their guests.



Stratford Perth Museum general manager Kelly McIntosh speaks about the museum in front of an audience of local tourism and accommodations business owners



Carla Coles speaks to local tourism businesses owners at an event hosted by the Innkeepers Collective

(BRUCE WHITAKER PHOTOS)

Optimist Club of Downie Inc.

OPTI-CASH CALENDAR DRAW

April 07	Andy McKay, Tavistock	\$50.00
April 08	Ken Neumeister, Stratford	\$50.00
April 09	Missy Meadows, Sarnia	\$50.00
April 10	Bill Hanson, St. Marys	\$50.00
April 11	Val & Bob Creedy, Guelph	\$50.00
April 12	Marve & Isla Ritchie, Stratford	\$50.00
April 13	Jordanne Rose, St. Pauls	\$200.00
April 14	Elaine & Dave Ritchie, Stratford	\$50.00
April 15	Ken Krantz, Stratford	\$50.00
April 16	Murray E Straus, Brussels	\$50.00
April 17	Taylor Kells, Dorchester	\$50.00
April 18	Nick Van Nes, Stratford	\$50.00
April 19	Christine Richardson, Halfmoon Bay B.C.	\$50.00
April 20	Nancy Baker, Stratford	\$200.00

ALL OF THE CALENDARS HAVE BEEN SOLD



Franklin E. Hinz

196 Ontario Street, Stratford
519-273-1633

State of the City Mayor's Breakfast presented by the Stratford and District Chamber of Commerce

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Stratford Mayor Martin Ritsma touch on a number of topics ranging from education and Indigenous relations to economic development and community initiatives during his annual State of the City Address April 10.

Ritsma initially paid tribute to Annabell Thomson, whose legacy of passion, service and leadership inspired the community.

"In 2012, Annabell was recognized for her longstanding municipal community involvement and received the Queen's Jubilee Medal," said Ritsma. "Her celebration of life took place on International Women's Day which was very fitting. It has been said that when you pass, the only thing that you leave behind is what you leave in others, and Annabelle has left a great deal with her passion in so many, none more important than our CAO Joan Thomson."

Addressing the looming financial challenges facing Ontario municipalities, Ritsma discussed a news broadcast where Mayor Frank Scarpitti from Markham discussed potential troubles ahead if municipalities don't see support from higher levels of government.

"What municipalities are expected to do these days are into billions of dollars and you cannot fund this kind of financial need from property tax," said Ritsma. "We have a storm that is coming. That's hitting municipalities, not unlike all municipalities across Ontario."

Efforts to address the housing crisis were discussed, focusing on diverse housing options and energy efficient practices.

"As Ontario continues with its housing crisis, we must focus on different types of housing to meet the needs of residents, from traditional family homes to small apartment units, both rental and purchase," discussed Ritsma. "We still have large employers, some with over 1,000 employees, and up to 50 per cent of their



ADDRESSING THE CITY

Stratford Mayor Martin Ritsma delivers the annual State of the City Address.

(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

staff commute daily. These employees are not afforded the pleasure of being part of our community and we need to change that."

A \$1.1-million investment in 2023 was discussed, which was allocated to critical infrastructure projects including road resurfacing and upgrades to the water pollution control plant.

The city's dedication to diversity and inclusion was evident through initiatives such as creating an Indigenous sacred space and partnerships to advance diversity and inclusion efforts. YMCA and library services were highlighted for supporting newcomers and fostering community cohesion.

"Our work in advancing a respectful community and workplace is necessary for Stratford to retain its image as a great place to live, work, play and invest," said

Ritsma.

Ritsma discussed Stratford's economic vitality and discussed notable investments from the large manufacturing businesses throughout Stratford, and the ongoing support for local, small businesses.

Meanwhile, efforts to modernize transit infrastructure and address homelessness were underscored, reflecting the city's commitment to social well-being.

"We continue to commit to ending homelessness by increasing the range of housing options and programs in our cities. In 2023, 33 individuals or families were housed from the centralized waiting list, and 243 housing allowances or rental supplements were provided."

As the breakfast drew to

a close, Ritsma emphasized Stratford's unique strengths and the importance of safeguarding them for future generations.

"Our residents and city staff's strengths cannot be taken for granted; they need to be celebrated and protected. Our work in advancing a respectful community and workplace is necessary for Stratford to retain its image as a great place to live, work, play and invest."

Weekend Quiz

1. When was the American Civil War fought?
2. In "Back to the Future part 2" who won the world series in 2015?
3. What is April's birthstone?
4. What is the currency of Poland?
5. When was the last time the St. Marys Lincolns won the Sutherland Cup?
6. Whose nose grew longer every time he lied?
7. What is a baby porcupine called?
8. What show is Elmo from?
9. What is the tallest type of grass?
10. Who died on the cross for our sins?

This week's answers are found on pg. 27

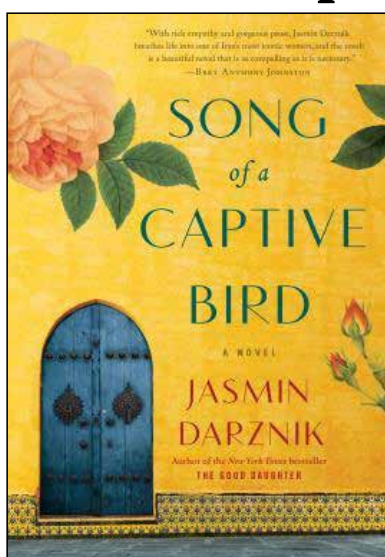
Shelf Help

Song of A Captive Bird, by Jasmin Darznik

@SPL: FIC Darzn

Song of a Captive Bird, by Jasmin Darznik, retells the life of Forugh Farrokzad, an Iranian feminist and poet, who forged her own path in search of freedom and independence from the restrictions imposed upon women in mid-century Iran.

Throughout her childhood, Forugh is taught to be quiet, modest and obedient - qualities that are at odds with her rebellious nature. A mischievous booklover and budding poet, she is forced into a suffocating marriage after the discovery an infatuation with an older cousin. Rebellious, Forugh flees from her marriage and falls into a passionate affair, during which, she begins to write and find freedom and independence through her poetry. She



perseveres with her writing despite the difficulties she faces in her personal life, and is heralded as brilliant and scandalous by some, and vilified as a demon influenced by the West by others. With the increasing success of her poems along with a publicized affair with a notorious filmmaker, Forugh soon learns that freedom and living by her own rules comes with a cost.

Inspired by Forugh's poems, letters, films and interviews, Darznik writes a lyrical and haunting novel that captures the tenacity and spirit of women who represent the birth of the feminist movement, amid the upheaval of the Iranian revolution. An ideal read for national poetry month which takes place in April.

Brittany Meadows
Public Service Librarian
Stratford Public Library

Perth County council approves additional \$150,000 contingency allowance for land-registry building renovation and connecting-link addition

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

Perth County council has approved an additional \$150,000 in contingency funds for the ongoing renovations to the Perth County land-registry office in Stratford that will connect it to the neighbouring Perth County Courthouse to create one county headquarters.

Demolition and construction at 5 Huron St., located on the Perth County Courthouse campus, began in July 2023 and is expected to wrap up in October 2024. The project, which was awarded to Dakon Construction Ltd. at a cost of just over \$5 million, included a \$200,000 contingency allowance to cover any unexpected costs.

“Currently, approved change orders totalled \$165,000 or approximately 83 per cent of the contingency allowance,” county public works director Johnn McClelland said at council’s April 4 meeting. “There are pending change orders to be dealt with along with retaining-wall excavations and the parking-lot reconstruction. Given the contingency allowance

will be over the \$200,000 allotted, we will require an increase to complete the project.”

According to McClelland’s report to council, change orders funded through the contingency allowance are grouped into three categories: unforeseen site conditions, changes or additions to the project scope, or changes to the structure or design of the project.

McClelland said more than half of the change-order costs are attributed to unforeseen site conditions underneath the 1887 county courthouse and surrounding buildings including the need for additional under-pinning of courthouse foundation, unsuitable soil conditions, deteriorated sanitary and storm pipes, the need for additional asbestos removal and the removal of an old foundation or retaining wall.

“One of the pending change orders that we’re currently dealing with is the replacement of deficient sanitary and storm infrastructure,” McClelland said. “This has recently been priced by the contractor’s sub(contractor) and is significantly higher than expected. The project team is

working with the contractor to find other options and a more reasonable cost.”

Meanwhile, changes to the structure or design of the project account for 38 per cent of the additional costs so far. They include the need to construct an emergency exit on the lower level of the courthouse, achieving fire rating in certain walls, duct-layout revisions, revisions to air diffuser and transfer grilles, the relocation of the Bell feed pathway and pedestal, the addition of sumps, lighting changes, and revisions to the snow-melt system for the front entrance, ramp and stairs.

The final 10 per cent of the additional costs so far are attributable to changes or additions to the project scope including the addition of an electric-vehicle-charging station, additional outlets or data boxes, and revisions to the building layout to improve functionality and security.

“There’s (also) a \$28,000 overage in the fire-alarm allowance and that’s due to an unforeseen upgrade to the courthouse fire system so it coordinates and communicates with the new system in the reno. The extra \$28,000 is intended to be cov-

ered under the contingency allowance but has not been accounted for to date,” McClelland said.

“... Accounting for the overage in the fire-alarm allowance and estimating the pending change orders, staff anticipate \$285,000 to be (needed) from the contingency allowance. At this stage in the project, the majority of the scope and (structure-and-design) changes have been addressed and change orders of this nature should be minimal moving forward, however pending excavation work and parking-lot reconstruction could encounter further unforeseen conditions.”

Those potential unforeseen conditions, McClelland explained, is why staff recommended topping up the contingency allowance to a total of \$350,000.

This project is intended to establish a single headquarters for county staff through renovations to the building that houses the land-registry office – and once housed Service Ontario – while creating a central, public-facing reception area within a connecting-link addition with the county courthouse.

Walsh to retire as AMDSB director of education April 19

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

After seven years leading the Avon Maitland District School Board (AMDSB), Dr. Lisa Walsh is stepping down as director of education as of April 19.

Speaking with Grant Haven Media just before she was set to leave her role, Walsh said she’s excited to move into a new chapter in her life, and she’s proud of what she and the board team have accomplished since she’s been director.

“I passed my time when I could retire, but actually spent a few extra years (here) because I have so enjoyed this job and it’s hard to leave,” Walsh said. “It’s actually a bitter-sweet thing, but I’m really looking forward to the next chapter

and doing some different things. ... It’s time for a change.

“... Establishing a strong team and continuing to build upon the culture of a well-run organization that strives for positive change has been a real focus for me. I don’t believe that any of us do this alone in our job, so I’m really proud of a few things based on the teamwork we have shown.”

While it wasn’t something she expected for her time as director of education, Walsh says she’s proud of how she and her team provided leadership during a particularly difficult period amid the COVID-19 pandemic. At a time of extreme uncertainty and disruption for students, families and staff, Walsh said she focused on improving communication and maintaining those all-important human connections as board staff tried to offer stability and clarity through shifting provincial health-and-safety rules and restrictions.

Though Walsh said many of the accomplishments she’s proudest of were in the works prior to 2020, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic expedited and solidified them as board policies that will live on in perpetuity.

During her tenure,



RETIREMENT (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Avon Maitland District School Board director of education Dr. Lisa Walsh is retiring from her position as of April 19.

Walsh said she pushed for an expanded communications team that now works to regularly promote student, staff and school accomplishments in the wider community, and the board has adopted a much-simpler strategic plan that focuses in on wholistically preparing students for success through many different career pathways in a way that accounts for mental health and wellbeing and equips them

with the skills they’ll need for opportunities well into the future.

“We’re working on soft skills – those people skills, those connection skills – and understanding what every child needs to be successful and what their interests are,” Walsh said. “It’s the soft skills around resilience and coping strategies and all of those kinds of skills as well as literacy, numeracy and the hard skills, the different pathways and building skills that take students into the future. I feel very proud that we have consolidated a great strategic plan.”

Walsh said the board is now also using data from all levels to measure the success of its strategic goals and initiatives on an ongoing and regular basis to determine what’s working and what isn’t, and be more flexible when it comes to adapting to changes in student needs.

Walsh said she’s excited to spend more time with friends and family and become a more active member of the Stratford community after she retires from the job that has kept her busy over the past seven years. She’s looking forward to getting back into some of her favourite hobbies like gardening, Scottish country dancing, pottery and sewing, and she’ll also work part-time as an executive-coaching consultant, helping to train leaders across all kinds of organizations.

Overall, Walsh says she’s proud of her time leading the school board and she’s confident it will be in good hands after she retires.

Maximize your
return.

Conservative
Advice for
Intelligent
Decisions



Donna L. Hinz



Franklin E. Hinz

196 Ontario Street
Stratford, Ontario N5A 3H4

519-273-1633 franklinehinz.com

Kinsmen's \$6,000 donation ensures Connection Centre supplies basic necessities

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

The Kinsmen Club of Stratford's recent donation will help the Stratford Connection Centre ensure some of the city's most vulnerable residents have access to food, toiletries, clothing and other essential items.

A press release announced the Connection Centre, run by United Way Perth-Huron, received \$6,000 in Walmart gift cards from the Kinsmen Club of Stratford on April 2. The gift cards are worth \$500 each and will be spread out over the next 12 months.

Kinsmen Doug Young explained the Connection Centre told his organization that the Walmart gift cards are preferred because the store is a one-stop shop for everything from groceries to toiletries to clothing.

"The very basics is what they can get on an as-needed basis," Young said. "It's not always food that they need. It might be something else, so that offers us the flexibility of addressing those needs."

The Connection Centre helped more than 500 people since opening its doors in December 2021. The centre usually serves up to 25 people a day, and sometimes up to 40 people on its busiest days. In addition to offering reprieve from the heat or cold, the Connection Centre also provides meals, showers, and other support services.

Kinsmen members often drive by social services and support centres during their commutes around the city. Young said he saw an encampment every time he went by the central bus terminal.

"Every time I drive by it, it just tears my



(KINSMEN OF STRATFORD PHOTO)

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

(Left to right) Kin past president Trevor Exner, housing stability worker Sara K., street outreach worker Alexia W., and kinsmen Doug Young. The Stratford Kinsmen donated \$6,000 worth of Wal-Mart gift cards for the Connection Centre to stock up on items to ensure their clients' basic needs are met.

heart out to see these people that are homeless, have food insecurity, have health issues," he said.

Food insecurity is a growing issue in the Province of Ontario, especially with the rising cost of living. Young said about 15 to 16 per cent of households or over two-million residents in Ontario face food insecurity.

"They have to do these mental gymnastics

every month. 'Do I pay my rent? Do I buy food? Do I buy clothing?' " he said. "That's the sort of very tough decision making that has to go on."

The Kinsmen Club of Stratford aims to help those in need, including men over 16-years-old who are facing homelessness, addiction and food insecurity.

"We don't judge why they're in this situation," Young said. "It's not for us to judge.

It's for us to try to lend a helping hand as best we can through the professionals that do this to make their lives livable at the very basic level."

The Kinsmen Club of Stratford will run its annual bottle drive for cystic fibrosis on May 4 at Strickland's Toyota from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. The organization will also host its Classic Car Show on June 9 and Canada Day Fireworks on July 1.

Bunker Performance Lounge and Café serving as a platform for musicians

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

The Bunker Performance Lounge and Café is ensuring the bands and musicians that play at the venue are recognized after the set is finished.

The Bunker will promote new music by musicians they refer to as "bunker alumni." John Crawford, co-owner of the Bunker, explained that a bunker alumnus is someone who played at the performance lounge on either a Friday or Saturday and released new music on streaming platforms including Spotify.

"We want to make sure that we continue to support the local, live-music scene long after the gig is done and the artist has left the building," Crawford said. "One of the things the Bunker wants to accomplish is to become a community hub for local music and let people know that they have a place there to play, to grow, to develop, to show off their original tunes, which is what we try to focus on Fridays."

The Bunker also plays music by musicians that played at the performance lounge when



there aren't live shows and people stopping by will ask about the music playing.

"Any time that we're speaking with folks and talking about who the Bunker is and what we do, we can point out, 'Hey, that's the song that's playing right now,'" Crawford said. "They played on our stage two weeks ago, they're fantastic. They have a show coming in a month.' It can keep the conversation going and keep the past gigs relevant."

Crawford said he wants to ensure that the musicians there are not just background music as guests enjoy cocktails and snacks. Rather, The Bunker aims to be a listening room, similar to The Bluebird Café in Nashville, Tenn.

"When you go to see a show at the Bluebird, you know that there's going to be quality entertainment on stage," he said.

"And if you are the entertainment on stage, you know that there's going to be quality listeners in the room. You're not just going to be the background music. People are coming here to hear you, your story, your music, your songwriting. They're here to experience your craft and you're not going to be the background music."

The Bunker Performance Lounge and Café recently received a nomination for a Forest City London Music Award (FCLMA) in the Best Live Music Venue award category. Bunker alumni such as Justin Maki, Kristen Renee, Aaron Allen, Amanda Movio and Leanne Mayer are also nominated for FCLMAs.

"We are super, super stoked to be nominated," Crawford said. "Scout's honour, we have no idea who nominated us but thank you. It could've been any of the artists. It could have been any of the regular patrons. We have no idea. We love looking at that nomination list of all of the artists and seeing so many Bunker alumni."

Allen, one half of the duo Smoke and Ashes, told the Stratford Times he appreciated the Bunker promoting the song "A

Thousand Miles Away."

"I think the promotion of their performers' music is such an innovative idea," Allen said. "This not only shows that they care about a continued relationship with their past performers, but it helps get their music into more hands than only the audience."

He also enjoyed performing at The Bunker.

"The Bunker is a small and intimate setting making it a perfect environment for story sharing and a real listening room experience," he said. "The staff were welcoming, friendly and very accommodating. The audience is there to really experience the live music; somewhere I'd really like to play at again."

The FCLMAs will take place at the London Music Hall in London, Ont. June 16. Voting takes place via academy.fclma.ca/vote until April 28. Follow the Bunker Lounge on Facebook (facebook.com/thebunkerperformancelounge) or Instagram (instagram.com/thebunkerstratford) to find out when Bunker alumni dropped new music.

Record attendance marks 10-year anniversary of the Canadian Dairy XPO in Stratford

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The 2024 Canadian Dairy XPO celebrated its milestone 10-year anniversary this year at the Burnside Agriplex in Stratford, drawing a record-breaking total attendance of 17,178 over the two-day event.

Day two saw nearly 8,000 attendees, also setting a new record and marking a slight increase from the previous year's turnout.

The dairy expo attracted exhibitors from over 30 countries showcasing the latest innovations and technologies in the dairy industry. The inaugural Canadian Business Dairy Summit, held at the Tom Patterson Theatre, was a significant addition to this year's event.

The summit, which featured business-focused speakers and topics, is intended to grow to 500 attendees over the next three years. It provides invaluable insights and networking opportunities for industry professionals.

"Basically the dairy summit is a business-training day for dairy farmers," said Canadian Dairy XPO owner Jordon Underhill. "Most dairy farmers have extensive animal-science training, but not business training. As we see this massive consolidation in the industry, dairy operations are getting bigger so they require business training like all the rest of us who are running businesses.



"Being the first year, I was quite happy to have about 112 people there. The plan

is to grow that over the next three to five years up to about 500 people."

One of the highlights of the dairy expo was the popular Calves for a Cause auction, which raised \$60,000 last year for the London Children's Hospital. With more consignments in the auction this year, organizers were on track to exceed the previous fundraising record.

"This year, we actually had more consignment than we could handle, which goes to show how supportive the dairy community is," said Underhill. "Essentially, dairy farmers put up either frozen or live genetics in the auction, and then between 20 per cent and 100 per cent of that item is donated to the London Children's Hospital."

Cheese Fest, another crowd-pleaser, saw over 1,000 Stratford residents invited via direct mail. Underhill said this initiative is meant to bring the city's residents closer to the agricultural community.

"We actually sent out around 1,000 mail invites to residents in Stratford this year for our free Cheese Fest," said Underhill. "We wanted to invite Stratford residents to help connect them with agriculture. We had a lot of redeemed mail pieces come in. So that was really nice to see not only residents in Stratford supporting, but also consumers supporting what farmers are doing."

Looking back on another successful year of the Canadian Dairy XPO, Underhill looks forward to the event's continued growth and success in years to come.

STONETOWN TRAVEL

Rome and Amalfi Coast, May 16 - 25, 2025

INFORMATION NIGHT
May 7, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.
Stonetown Travel St. Marys Office
150 Queen St. E., St. Marys

To RSVP, please email vanessa@stonetowntravel.com
or call 519-284-2332

Branch Office: 210 Mill Street, New Hamburg, ON N3A 1P9 | Head Office: 150 Queen Street East, St. Marys, ON N4X 1B4
☎ 226-333-9939 | ✉ newhamburg@stonetowntravel.com | ☎ 519-284-2332 | ✉ agent@stonetowntravel.com
TICO #50025796 | www.stonetowntravel.com | TICO #50010159

BRIGGS & STRATTON ENERGY SOLUTIONS

10 YEAR WARRANTY

Receive a **CAD 375 gift card** with the purchase of a Briggs & Stratton® Home Standby Generator*

SOMMERS Generator Systems

70 Packham Ave, Stratford
1-888-792-9928

www.sommersgen.com

Tri-County Mennonite Homes makes every day matter for Stratford, New Hamburg residents

GARY WEST

Times Correspondent

There has been much in the news the last number of years in reference to the quality of care provided by seniors homes, especially during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Two homes in Stratford and New Hamburg managed by Tri-County Mennonite Homes (TCMH) have a solid reputation on that front, as those who have had relatives or friends as residents have nothing but positive comments pertaining to the care received.

TCMH operates two seniors' continuum of care homes; Greenwood Court in Stratford and Nithview Home in New Hamburg.

TCMI also operates Aldaview Services, which supports adults with developmental disabilities in the New Hamburg and Baden areas.

TCMH was founded in 1968. Nithview Home for the Aged opened in 1971, later becoming Nithview Community when it added assisted-living units and independent-living units as a seniors village.

Aldaview services opened its doors in 1979 on the same campus as Nithview Community.

Greenwood Court in Stratford was built in 1993. The home was moved from its original location in Milverton to Stratford

to better serve the local community.

In November 2020, TCMH was granted additional long-term care beds for Nithview in New Hamburg. This expansion project will see long-term-care beds at Nithview, increase from 97 beds to 150 beds. These additional beds will help meet the growing need for long-term-care in the community.

Nithview in New Hamburg has 97 beds, 57 assisted-living units and 70 independent-living units.

Greenwood Court in Stratford has 48 beds, 18 assisted-living units and 85 independent-living units.

Aldaview Services has seven group homes and offers community support programs that connect individuals with developmental disabilities with meaningful employment and community activities.

TCMH's annual general meeting is held annually at the community space at 90 Greenwood Dr. in Stratford every year on the third Tuesday in June.

Board chair Bruce Bechtel says they are looking for a board member in Stratford to become one of the 10-15 volunteer members. Their mission is "Making Every Day Matter" and board members are vital to TCMH's success.

This year, the meeting is scheduled for June 18 at 6 p.m. All are welcome to attend and members are entitled to vote during the meeting.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Above: Pictured at Greenwood Court in Stratford are, from left, Emily Shannon, chief of staff and director of communications, Bruce Bechtel, board chair of Tri-County Mennonite Homes, and CEO Dr. Steven Harrison.

Right: At the Greenwood Court entrance are Tri-County Mennonite Homes CEO Dr. Steven Harrison, board chair Bruce Bechtel, and Tri-County Mennonite Homes executive assistant Emily Shannon.



Stratford children's author-illustrator showcasing work in Stratford Public Library exhibition

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

Fresh off the completion of his Tidesville Trilogy of children's books, Stratford author and illustrator James Colbeck is now showcasing his black-and-white illustrations featuring the books' protagonist pigs, Percy and Hoge, and a whole host of other colourful, animal characters at the Stratford Public Library.

Having read his books through children's reading programs at the library before, Colbeck was invited to display a selection of his imaginative illustrations from each of the three Tidesville Trilogy books – The Great Peanut Caper, The Decathlon and The Impostor – on the walls of the library auditorium.

"(The exhibition) goes from a basic introduction of the three books with these panels that describe the story in each case ... and flows through the illustrations from book one, book two and then book three," Colbeck said. "I'd just heard (the library) had this program for community artists and I thought, 'Should I or shouldn't I? And what would I do?' Originally, I just thought I didn't have that much to put in, but then during the launch of The Impostor, I realized there is a collection of illustrations that people, unless they open the book, are never going to see. Therefore, a bit of my ego kicked in and I said, 'Now or never.'"

Having never received any formal artis-



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTO)

IMAGINATIVE ILLUSTRATIONS

Public service librarian Melanie Kindrachuk and Stratford author-illustrator James Colbeck stand in front of a portion of an exhibition at the Stratford Public Library showcasing Colbeck's illustrations from his Tidesville Trilogy of children's books.

tic training, Colbeck's work as an artist was influenced by his direct involvement in both theatre and the military. In 1953, a 13-year-old Colbeck was cast in the Stratford Festival's inaugural season, instilling in him a flare for the dramatic and an understanding of how to set a scene at an early age.

As a young man, Colbeck – who is now 84 – served in the First Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment in Germany and was offered a number of opportunities to develop

his visual-arts skills, including the chance to design two stained-glass windows for the Protestant and Catholic chapels at the base at Soest. In 1965, Colbeck returned to Canada to pursue a career in the arts that saw him work as a graphic designer, a mural artist, an editorial cartoonist, a theatre-set designer, an illustrator and – somewhat unexpectedly – an art teacher.

"As part of our Community Art program, we welcome any community artist," said

Stratford Public Library public-service librarian Melanie Kindrachuk. "James came to us because obviously his (pieces) are especially relevant because they're book illustrations. We thought it was a great fit, especially for (the auditorium) because there's a lot of children's programs here. Kids can see them. Families can see them. It just makes it exciting for us and the public."

While Colbeck's Tidesville Trilogy books are chock-full with fun and creative illustrations that help bring his stories and characters to life, Colbeck chose a selection of those illustrations from each book that depict important points in the narrative with a wide range of characters and show Colbeck's development as an illustrator over the course of writing all three books, the first of which he began when he returned to Stratford from the East Coast more than a decade ago.

Colbeck hopes those who see the exhibit will, first of all, want to pick up copies of his books and give them a read, and secondly, come away with the notion that they too can become an author and an illustrator if they put their minds and their time to it.

"There is a place as an art form in its own," Colbeck said. "... It's been a learning experience for me and hopefully they can learn something from it, too; that they can do it. Here am I at 84 years of age having this display of illustrations that I only started doing seriously in 2012.

"... If you like it, do it."

Times Past: Unveiling Thomas Edison's Early Innovations

BETTY JO BELTON

Stratford-Perth Archives

On April 5, 1876 an earlier version of the Stratford Times newspaper announced that "Mr. Edison, the electrician, has brought out an ingenious and useful invention which excels in novelty all his previous efforts. It is an electrical duplication press which enables one to write a letter and make 5 copies per minute until hundreds of copies are produced." Stratford readers were understandably curious about the now famous Thomas Edison (1847-1931) who had lived here about a dozen years before. On his membership application for the Old Time Telegraphers' and Historical Association that Edison filled out in 1904, he recorded that he was a telegraph operator in Stratford while working on the Grand Trunk Rail Road in 1863. When celebrations took place for what would have been Edison's 100th birthday in 1947, the Mayor of Stratford was presented with the original membership document as a keepsake. Like many other local history treasures it was put into the hands of R. Thomas Orr (1870-1957) for safekeeping. The document arrived at Stratford-Perth Archives in 1972 as part of the Orr family collection.

Interest in Edison's career and his time in Stratford likely peaked in 1940 with MGM's release of a biographic film starring Mickey Rooney as the young inventor. According to a plot summary on IMDB, Young Tom Edison "shows him as a lad whose early inventions and scientific experiments usually end up causing disastrous results. As a result, the towns folk all think Tom is crazy, and creating a strained relationship between Tom and his father. Tom's only solace is his understanding mother who believes he's headed to do great things." A few years after the film came out, the Honourable Mr. Justice J. Maurice King (1907 – 1972) gave a series of thoughtful, well-informed local history talks on CJCS radio. King was Mayor of Stratford in 1946 and 1947. He graduated from the Stratford Collegiate Institute in 1924 and went on to St. Michael's College and Osgoode Hall in Toronto. He became a lawyer in 1932 and practiced here until 1950, when he was appointed to the Supreme Court of Ontario. He maintained strong ties to Stratford and kept his home at 182 Church St.

This is May-



Young Tom Edison

72-28-476

Old Time Telegraphers' and Historical Association.

CONSTITUTION. JOHN BRANT, Secretary,
195 Broadway, New York.

ARTICLE II.

Section I.—Any person of good standing, who twenty-five years prior to the date of making this application was employed in the telegraph service, and thereafter for five years, shall, upon payment of an initiation fee of one dollar, be eligible to membership.

BY-LAWS.

Section III.—The dues for membership in this Association shall be one dollar per year.

Application for Membership.

I hereby make Application for Membership in the above named Association.

1. Full name Thomas A Edison
2. Place of birth Milan Erie Co Ohio
3. Date of birth February 11 1847
4. When commenced telegraphing 1863
5. On what line Grand Trunk RR
6. At what place Stratford Ontario
7. In what capacity Night Opr
8. How long in service _____
9. Has service been continuous Wandered over the map of the US for 5 years, working for the WU

Present residence Orange, N.Y.

Occupation Inventor

Notes
(This was Mr. Edison's application to join the Telegraph Historical Society)

Preserved by Donald M. Nicol

Signature Thos A Edison

Post office address Orange N.Y.

Date Dec 5 1904

Edison application to the Old Time Telegraphers' and Historical Association, 1904

or King's radio presentation on young Tom Edison's time in Stratford.

"Stratford in the early 1860's was a fairly primitive place. Ninety percent of the buildings at that time were made of logs. The population of Stratford was about three thousand—the

streets were muddy, with planks for sidewalks, and at night all was in darkness save for the light shed by candle or lamp from the windows of the early homes built here. Yet there was living in Stratford at that time, one who in the course of a few short years, was to change the whole way of life for millions of people throughout the civilized world.

A passenger on the old Grand Trunk Railway some ninety years ago, travelling from Port Huron to Detroit, would have seen a bright young newsboy about fourteen years of age, selling his wares with enthusiasm to all and sundry and would have learned, upon enquiry, that this remarkable newsboy published his own weekly paper on board the train on a hand-press of his own contrivance, calling it "The Grand Trunk Herald." Further enquiry would have disclosed the fact that this boy was none other than Thomas Alva Edison – or young Tom Edison as he was then known.

One day when the train was at Mt. Clements, the little daughter of the station agent there, ran out on to the tracks and young Edison rescued her from the threat of an approaching train. In gratitude for this chivalrous deed, the station agent, whose name was McKenzie, taught Edison the art of telegraphy and shortly thereafter he had qualified himself as an operator and was employed at Port

Huron at \$25.00 a month.

Following a brief period of employment as telegraph operator at Port Huron, Edison came to Stratford as night operator in the early 1860's. For at least part of the time that he was in Stratford, Edison lived at...the residence of William Winter, who conducted an express and telegraph business here...

It was while in Stratford that he rigged up a contraption that would automatically operate his signal, while he could use the time for resting. This, however, was one invention that didn't appear to be too successful. It was only by great good luck that a train that should have been required to stop was not involved in a wreck when it continued on its course. This was the incident that ended young Edison's career in Stratford.

Edison's grandparents had lived in Canada, but he was born in the United States, his family having left Canada at the time of the Mackenzie Rebellion of 1837. Edison's account of this is graphic for he is reported to have said that "The old man got mixed up in that scrap and they chased him clear across Canada. He got off at Detroit." Thus, Edison was born in the United States rather than in Canada, although, we in Stratford can claim his as a resident for some time just at the dawn of his amazing career.

It was in 1879 that Edison perfected his invention of the electric light but it was not until Christmas Eve 1910 that the street lights were turned on in Stratford, operated by hydro-electric power from Niagara. Prior to that, the local electric company, with power from the dam, had been used for that purpose.

Now throughout the world no one considers it surprising that homes and streets should be well illuminated with electric lights. Yet it can all be traced back to a young boy who lived and worked here in Stratford years ago, and a young boy too, who did not have the advantage of much education.

When the Hollywood picture "Young Tom Edison" was produced, the first Canadian showing of the film was held here in Stratford and at that time a plaque was erected in the station to mark the association of Edison, both with Stratford and with the railway.

There is an incident, in closing, which will be of interest to railway people. When Edison left the railway in such a hurry, he left without waiting to collect his wages. Some twenty-five years later (he was famous by then) the railway presented him with a cheque for one month's wages at a public ceremony in Port Huron. I suppose there is a moral to this but I will leave you to draw your own conclusions.

The point in the story of Edison's life as far as we are here concerned, is that we may well have in our midst right now young men and women whose names, like Edison's, will be famous throughout the world a few years from now."

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

The Anne Frank House announces John Kastner as new co-ordinator of Canada

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Anne Frank House announced earlier this month that John Kasner, Retired General Manager of the Stratford Perth Museum, is the new coordinator for the Anne Frank House activities in Canada.

Education and reflection on history are crucial elements of the Anne Frank Exhibit, which has been displayed twice at the Stratford Perth Museum under Kastner's management.

"The museum has a really special relationship with the Anne Frank House for so many reasons," said Kastner. "One was the very significant Dutch community in Perth County, and the other was the role that the Perth regiment played in the liberation of the Netherlands. That was why the Anne Frank House exhibit was held in Stratford twice. Once in

2016. And again, after COVID in 2021."

Anne Frank House exhibit exemplifies how museums can address social issues through education and how the Anne Frank House and Stratford are connected on more than one level.

Kastner, who recently retired as general manager of the Stratford Perth Museum, has a long relationship with the Anne Frank House dating back to 2016 when he brought the display to the museum for the first time to coincide with the Stratford Festival's Diary of Anne Frank performance.

"The exhibit really spoke to our partnership and our relationship with the Stratford Festival," said Kastner. "It was a nudge from the Stratford Festival that said, you know, there's this excellent travelling exhibit; you should try and get it. And that started that process. We were successful in getting it, and it was really

a fundamental change for the museum because it was of an international nature.

Over 10,000 people walked through the museum to see the famous exhibit, which Kaster notes was one of the most successful and pivotal moments in the museum's history.

"The Anne Frank exhibit was hugely successful, and that really started to change the strategic thinking of the Stratford Perth Museum and create a long-lasting relationship with the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam."

The Anne Frank House is an independent organization managing the location where Anne Frank went into hiding during the Second World War and where she wrote her diaries in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

There are four travelling Anne Frank exhibits in Canada. The travelling exhibitions are part of the mission of the

Anne Frank House to increase awareness of her life story all over the world and reflect on the dangers of anti-Semitism, racism, and discrimination and the importance of freedom, equal rights, and democracy.

The exhibit tells the story of Anne Frank, set against the background of the Holocaust, and each panel displays information about the most important developments in that time: the rise of National Socialism, the Second World War and the prosecution of the Jews.

The travelling exhibit is available to museums, schools, municipalities and community organizations. The Canadian Tour of the Anne Frank Exhibition is part of the educational program of the Anne Frank House in North America, implemented in close cooperation with a permanent partner, the Anne Frank Center at the University of South Carolina

Maximize Your Tax Return: We'll Match Your Down Payment Up To \$500!

2020 Ford Escape SEL  \$24,999 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 80,647 KM	2022 Honda CRV LX  \$32,888 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 56,112 KM	2021 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon  \$51,999 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 61,636 KM	2019 Subaru Legacy  \$24,999 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 134,688 KM	2020 Subaru Impreza  \$26,898 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 29,594 KM
2023 Nissan Sentra  \$24,999 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 23,516 KM	2024 T-SPEC Nissan GTR  \$229,000 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 10,955 KM		2019 Nissan Altima  \$18,999 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 95,446 KM	
2019 Mercedes GLA-250  \$28,395 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 87,492 KM	2019 Ford Ranger Supercrew  \$33,898 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 80,655 KM	2020 Ford Escape Titanium  \$31,999 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 10,215 KM	2021 Dodge Challenger R/T  \$47,495 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 17,119 KM	2022 Mazda CX-9  \$39,999 + HST & lic LOW KMS - 33,465 KM

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

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



NISSAN Stratford NISSAN

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



STRATFORD NISSAN

STORE HOURS SALES: Mon.-Thu. 9:00-8:00; Fri.-Sat. 9:00-6:00 PARTS & SERVICE: Mon.-Sat. 8:00-5:00
 Our Service Department is Now Open on Saturdays

STRATFORD **TIMES** SPORTS

- STRATFORD'S ULTIMATE INDOOR GOLF EXPERIENCE -

FORE EVERYONE
GOLF & MULTISPORT

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

Enjoy Wings and a Domestic Pint
for ONLY \$18.99

1060 ONTARIO ST., 519-305-5800



GET NOTICED!

Email stratfordtimes@gmail.com for details on how to get your ad here and support our local sports.

Warriors fall to Cyclones in Midwest finals

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Times Regional Reporter

The Stratford Hunter Steel Ltd. Warriors' bid for a second straight Cherrey Cup came to an end in five games at the hands of the Listowel Cyclones.

Head coach Dave Williams told the Times his team knew they were the underdogs against the powerhouse Cyclones and he was pleased with the compete level brought to the table by the Warriors.

"The series was how we thought it was going to shape up to be," said Williams. "Listowel finished first in the regular season for a reason. They're obviously a very good, well-coached team. They play sound, systematic and structured hockey so that didn't surprise us. We knew we were going to have to be at our best. To win the series, that consistency that we talked about the entire year, we would need it shift-to-shift and period-to-period every game. I think we played some of our best hockey of the year during this series. It was just a little more challenging on the ice to get rewarded."

Williams elaborated on why he felt the team's conference final performances were

some of the best of the year.

"I liked that we had to really battle and compete. We had to persevere. Listowel was definitely the best team we have played this season and we had to try and be at our best to compete with them. I thought our guys gave it their all. They wanted to win and were trying to do everything they could to give themselves a chance to win.

"The easy thing to do being down 3-0 to Listowel would have been to come out and just go through the motions," Williams continued. "But, I think our guys truly did believe that we could push that series back to Listowel. We played some good hockey this year that made us believe if we can get it back to Listowel, then maybe we can get back to Stratford. Then, if you can do that, the pressure starts to change."

After Michael Denney opened the scoring for the Warriors just three minutes and 11 seconds in the first period of game one, the Cyclones answered with two straight goals to take a 2-1 lead into the intermission. After a scoreless second, Listowel took a two-goal lead at the 14:30 mark of the third frame with a powerplay marker. However, Cole Lewis made it nine straight games with a goal in the post-season, cut-

ting the lead back down to one with just over two minutes remaining. The Cyclones held on for the 3-2 victory.

Shortly before the series began, goaltender Matthew Perdue became unavailable due to injury which turned the net over to Carter McDougall. In game one, McDougall made 36 saves on 39 Listowel shots.

Breaking through Listowel's defence has been a tall order all year for teams in the Midwestern Conference and, in games two and three, the Warriors struggled to do that as well. Dixon Grimes made 53 saves in total over the second and third games of the series to earn

back-to-back shutouts as Listowel won 3-0 and 4-0 to take a three-game lead into game four.

With their season on the line in their home rink, Stratford refused to roll over and quit, and Williams once again credited the team for its perseverance.

"We really battled and preserved in game four. The boys were ecstatic to get the opportunity to continue their season and continue to play together for another game. It speaks volumes to the character of the group. When teams have to battle the way we had to, it really speaks to how close the

group is. There's an underlying connection amongst our guys that goes beyond the rink. They wanted to extend their season. They wanted to win together."

Camden Daigle and Carson Harmer both scored in the first period, the latter ending up as the game-winning goal, en route to a 3-1 victory to keep the Warriors alive while also handing the Cyclones their first loss of the playoffs. McDougall turned in a 33-save effort in goal with Joey Brehmer adding an empty-net goal.

In game five, the Warriors once again jumped out to an early 1-0 lead with a goal by Harmer just under four-and-a-half minutes into the game. However, the Cyclones responded later in the first period with two goals in two minutes and 33 seconds to take a one-goal lead.

Listowel's Tanner Dietz scored his second of the game and the only goal of the middle period on a penalty shot. In the third, Brayden Stumpf scored for the Warriors while the Cyclones scored twice to lift them to a 5-2 win and the Cherrey Cup.

Despite the disappointment that comes with being eliminated from the post-season, coach Williams felt incredibly pleased

CONTINUED TO PAGE 15

Gilly's wins Stratford-Perth YMCA Men's Division A volleyball championship



The 2023-2024 Stratford-Perth YMCA Men's A Championships recently wrapped up another competitive season, with Team Gilly's prevailing in straight sets over annual rivals Team Mercer.

Coming off a successful League leading regular season, Gilly's regained their Champion status after last winning in 2019, while missing years without a season due to Covid. Although the victory was in straight sets, Mercer made each set difficult with scores of 25-21, 25-23 and 26-24. Mercer kept things very close, leading in the last two sets until strong serving and team defence took over.

Gilly's was led by the pow-

erful attacks of Matt Poulin as well as fellow outside hitters Tyler Baile and Spencer Trachsel while middles Adam Prospero and Andy Linley keeping Mercer on their toes. Gilly's Setter Greg Vivian spread around the effective offence and kept Mercer guessing on set location. Gilly's was able to fend off the Mercer attacks with timely blocks and some dazzling defensive plays. The defensive responsibilities were shared by Liberos Kyle Ferrigan and veteran Chris Parson, who just completed his 36th Season of Men's A.

Gilly's will look ahead to defend their title when the 2024-25 Season begins in the Fall!


VOLLEYBALL
COMPETITIONS

MEN'S A CHAMPS

Back Row: Adam Prospero, Andy Linley, Tyler Baile, Kyle Ferrigan, Chris Parson & Spencer Trachsel

Front Row: Matt Poulin & Greg Vivian

(STRATFORD-PERTH YMCA PHOTO)

SDSS Girl's rugby official season kick-off in St. Thomas



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

RUGBY SEASON OPENER

Stratford District Secondary School Girl's Rugby team kicked off their season with a friendly game against St. Joes in St. Thomas, Ontario. The SDSS team took home the win with a 7-0 game.

Morgan Otten had the loan try, while Jordan Keller added the convert. Erika Horan was awarded "Girl of the Game" with her team-leading eight tackles in the first half. In a social media post, coaches said, "Despite the horrible weather, there was a lot of positive energy from both teams."

Warriors fall to Cyclones in Midwest finals

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

with his team's season which could only be viewed as an over-achievement given their return to the conference final despite the amount of roster turnover from last year's squad to this year's.

"It was great to see them have the season that we were able to have. The entire group was about doing whatever it took to win. I said to them after the fifth game that losing obviously stinks and being in the final and having that opportunity to defend the Cherrey Cup makes it sting a little bit worse, but the group still had lots to be proud of. I don't think at the beginning of the season many people had us back in the final and, to the players' credit, they were able to work hard for seven months and did everything they needed to do to earn that opportunity."

When asked why he felt his team was able to get back to the Midwestern Conference Final, Williams believed the team's strong bond on and off the ice played a major role.

"I think a big part of it is just how connected the group is away from the rink as well as on the ice. They genuinely enjoy being around each other and having the opportunity to play hockey together. Sometimes through that youth, it can be a good thing too, because I think sometimes with a more youthful group, you don't hang on a loss as much as some other groups. You don't overthink things as much at times."

Williams also felt grateful for the work put in by everyone in the organization.

"I'm really proud of the entire team. The players, the staff and the organization getting as far as we did speaks volumes to the long hours, dedication and commitment of a lot of different individuals. It's hard to win and we try to emphasize with our guys that you can play a long hockey career and sometimes never get an opportunity to play for a championship. And when you do, you're never sure what play might be the play that has an effect on the outcome of that particular game or swings a series in a certain direction. I think with time our group will feel really good about what they're able to accomplish."

The team once again enjoyed strong support and atmosphere from their fanbase which Williams said didn't go unnoticed by the team.

"It was outstanding," noted Williams. "The other thing that we speak to a lot with the group is that we believe we see most teams' best games because of the arena we get to play in. It's a really special rink to play in and a special city to play in so, throughout the season and even more so in the playoffs, we know that we're going to see everybody's best game because they are going to be motivated to come in and to try and win in our arena. It wasn't lost on our guys how lucky we are to have that opportunity every Friday night to play in front of such great fans."



EVERMORE Compassionate Pet Aftercare & Funeral Services

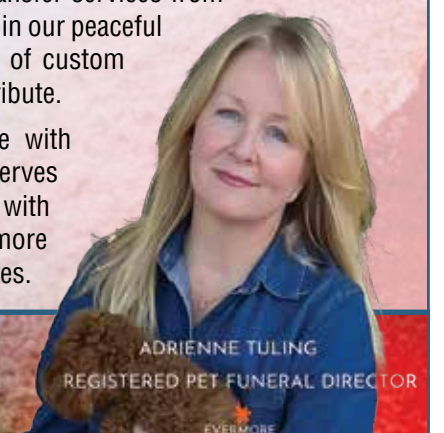
We understand that saying goodbye to a cherished companion is among life's most difficult moments for pet parents. We have been there. In times of loss, we ensure that your pet's journey is respectful and dignified. The reason is simple; we provide the same level of care that we expect for our own beloved pets.

At **EVERMORE**, we believe pet parents decide how best to honour their beloved companion and offer options to make each aftercare experience meaningful. Whether it is same-day private transfer services from home or clinic, or an intimate celebration of life in our peaceful comfort room, **EVERMORE** offers a range of custom services and memorials for a most fitting tribute.

Let us guide you through this difficult time with compassion and understanding. Every pet deserves a farewell as special as the bond they shared with their family. Contact **EVERMORE** to learn more about our compassionate pet aftercare services.

www.4evermore.ca
226-791-3768

90 Dunlop Place, Stratford, On



ADRIENNE TULING
REGISTERED PET FUNERAL DIRECTOR

EVERMORE

Women's Dragon boat season kicks off on April 9 during a beautiful, sunny evening

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Over 20 new members tried out dragon boating for the first time, alongside another 20 seasoned paddlers. Cassie Barclay, brand new member, says she had a great time try-

ing out dragon boating for the first time, and will be back.

"I always admired when I would see the dragon boat paddlers paddling the river, and was excited to see they offered a free trial," she said. "

Barclay notes that as a new potential mem-

ber, she was able to try out dragon boating twice before committing, which made her feel more comfortable coming out for the first time.

"It had popped up on my Facebook page and I thought I'd give it a try. Members were welcoming and accommodating to new pad-

dlers, and it's a fun new way to get some exercise. I look forward to another practice and spending time out on the beautiful river!"

Anyone interested in dragon boating this season can check out the Stratford Dragon Boat Club website at www.stratforddragonboat.com



(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTOS)

WHEN LEASING FOR 24 MONTHS THROUGH NCF AT SUBVENTED RATES




UP TO 3% RATE REDUCTION ON 2024 SENTRA

UP TO 0.5% RATE REDUCTION ON 2024 KICKS

UP TO 2.5% RATE REDUCTION ON 2024 ROGUE

APRIL 2ND – APRIL 30TH

SPRING INTO SAVINGS

EVENT

GET UP TO **3%** RATE REDUCTION ON SELECT MODELS

WHEN LEASING FOR 24 MONTHS THROUGH NCF AT SUBVENTED RATES

Stratford NISSAN

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

STRATFORD NISSAN



STORE HOURS SALES: Mon.-Thurs. 9:00-8:00; Fri.-Sat. 9:00-6:00
PARTS AND SERVICE: Mon.-Sat. 8:00-5:00. FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, OUR SERVICE DEPT IS NOW OPEN ON SATURDAYS

Joel Franklin Mysteries author Ron Finch publishes 12th book of the series, One Man Left

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Although Ron Finch just completed the twelfth book in his Joel Franklin Mysteries series, he has completed over fifty-three novels since he retired from his career in education.

Finch says while he is retired, he never truly wanted to be bored and initially took up writing as a hobby to keep his brain active.

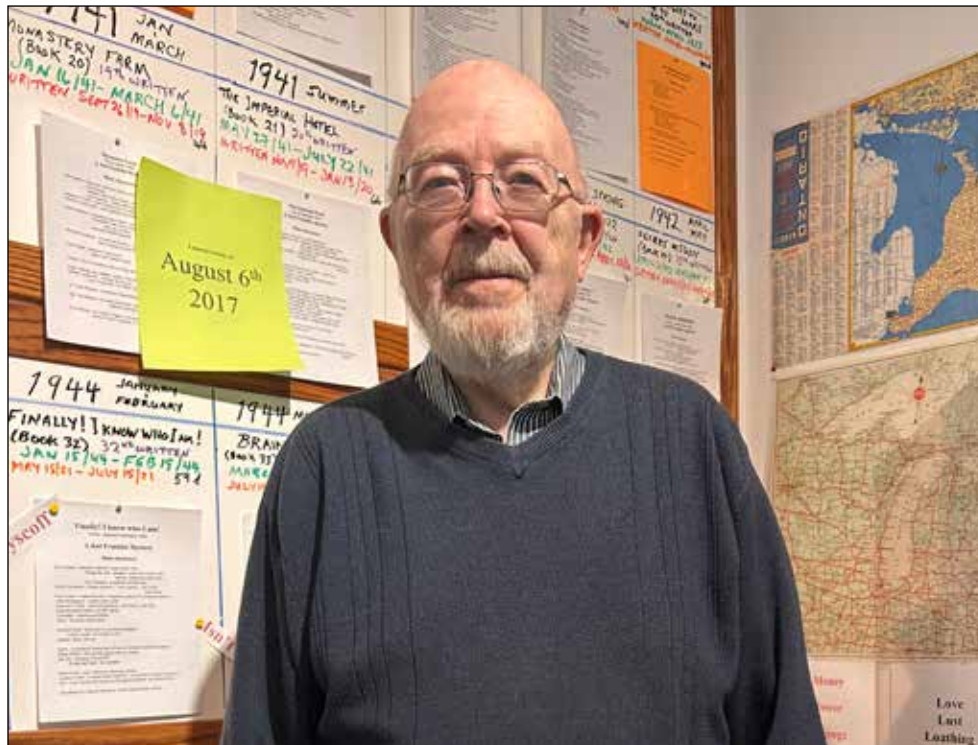
"Writing requires me to concentrate, focus and think," he said. "You're never too old to start a new enterprise, provided that you can physically and mentally do so. Age is not an excuse."

Noting he was a busy child who never took a nap, Finch started his first novel in secret in August 2017 and initially wrote for 10 minutes. From there, things kept improving and now he writes almost every day.

"That first day, I wrote for ten minutes and I know because I wrote '10' on the calendar. The next day, I wrote for thirty minutes, then another ten, then zero, another zero the next day, then 5 minutes and on the final day of the week, a whopping 20 minutes. That first week as a writer, I wrote for seventy-five minutes.

"But things got better. The next week, I wrote for 490 minutes. That's not a lot, but it's an improvement because I kept on track."

Finch says writing has become a way to hone in on his thoughts and feelings, and although he carefully tracks how many hours he spends writing each week, the novels he writes take on a life of their own, and he



ONE MAN LEFT

Ron Finch has published over fifty-three since he retired from education. He says age is no excuse to starting something new.

says he never knows where the characters will lead him.

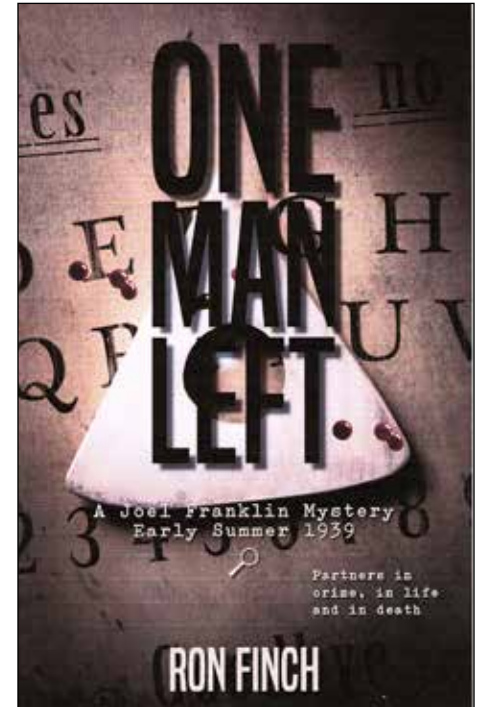
"When I sit down to write, I often don't know what the characters are going to do. It just flows. I can start writing the book, and all of a sudden, it's gone somewhere else, so I follow it and see where it leads."

Finch also shared his childhood memories with the Stratford Times, highlighting how being a principal influenced his life and how relating to the children he taught enabled

him to be empathetic and gain understanding and trust, something he weaves through his novels and series.

In his most recently completed novel, One Man Left, Finch takes readers through the mansions and glittering society of London's wealthy elites. Finch's novels also take readers through history, starting in the late 1930s at 200 Durham St. in Chaseford, a fictionalized version of Stratford.

The latest novel follows detective Joel



Franklin as he returns to London only to be assigned a new task: helping Police Chief Bedgood's aunt Celeste after she was robbed during the night of Dr. Harold Plimpton's séance.

With a cast of recurring characters and locations similar to real place in Ontario, the paranormal historical fiction novels date back to the golden age of detective fiction. Finch says they will appeal to readers of every age.

Those interested in purchasing a copy can visit Amazon to find the self-published novels or contact Finch directly at ronfinch@gmail.com.

Indigenous Art Market and Cultural Celebration returns to Stratford-Perth Museum

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

The Stratford-Perth Museum will welcome both Indigenous and non-Indigenous makers and attendees back to the museum for the Indigenous Art Market and Cultural Celebration.

Scheduled for May 11 with a rain date of May 12, the event will feature more than 53 vendors selling beadwork, paintings, sculpture, food and other handmade wares. Megan Patterson, manager of education and programs at the museum, said most of the vendors will be outdoors and about six or seven will be inside the museum building. Free coffee, tea and cedar tea will be offered, and some musicians have offered to perform during the event.

Patterson said everyone who is either Indigenous or non-Indigenous is welcome to attend as either guest or a vendor.

"It is a diverse market," she said. "We'll have those who are Indigenous, have Indigenous heritage and those that do not but express their commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation project and initiative."

The Indigenous Art Market and Cultural Celebration is organized by the Haunt-

ingLIVE podcast's Trevor Bishop and Chris Larocque along with Healing of the Seven Generation's David Villada. Patterson said they've been guiding the Stratford-Perth Museum on hosting the event.

"They have been informing us on how to approach our community and our Indigenous neighbours and friends and make connections," she said. "Honestly, those organizations and our partners have been going out and networking and facilitating connections that we certainly couldn't do on our own."

Patterson said the museum's Indigenous Art Market and Cultural Celebration is doing something similar to other events such as Pow Wow markets and art markets at Conestoga College.

Before Patterson returned home to Perth County, she worked at the Wetaskiwin Heritage Museum in Alberta under the guidance of curator Dr. Karen Aberle where she assisted with their Indigenous Art Market and Cultural Celebration. She then wanted to bring what she learned to the Stratford-Perth Museum. The museum's board of directors and staff wanted to do something similar for Indigenous communities in the area and to honour the



(MEGAN PATTERSON PHOTOS)

The Indigenous Art Market and Cultural Celebration will return to the Stratford-Perth Museum on May 11. The event features sculptures, beadwork, paintings and other handmade items.

our own larger region, and also have fun while supporting local entrepreneurs and artists."

The free Indigenous Art Market and Cultural Celebration will run at the Stratford-Perth Museum from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. A fall edition will also run on Sept. 21 with a Sept. 22 rain date. More information can be found by visiting stratfordperthmuseum.ca/indigenous-art-craft-market.



Truth and Reconciliation initiative.

"Ultimately, we just wanted people to find a meaningful source for expressing their culture and exchanging their culture," Patterson said. "And even perhaps having reunions between friends and family and sub-communities within

Welcoming Ukrainians: English Support Classes

VJ KNUTSON

Times Freelance Columnist

I had the pleasure of facilitating the English support group recently, as our teacher was under the weather. While the majority of participants are Ukrainian, I am pleased to report that other nationalities attended also. After an icebreaker activity to assess the levels of English in the room, we moved into conversation. The topic was “Canada is an alien planet”.

It’s fascinating to see ourselves through the eyes of newcomers. Naturally, there are mixed perceptions and emotions when comparing one’s homeland to this strange new land. Most of the frustration stems from government’s lack of clarity, especially now that the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) program has ended. Ukrainians, in particular, are worried about what this means for their

future in Canada. Permanent Residency is a hot topic right now.

That aside, the conversation turned to differences. One gentleman from Eritrea described how flat he found Canada’s landscape, explaining that his country is mountainous with many waterways. He described the climate as never colder than 10 degrees Celsius or hotter than 30 degrees Celsius. I have to confess that I hadn’t heard of Eritrea before and was interested to learn that the population of the whole country is 5 million.

The conversation then moved to a discussion of diversity in different countries, students agreeing that Canada, or at least Ontario, is very diverse. We talked about how that is comforting for newcomers, especially those who do not speak English well. Others explained that their lack of ease with the English language made them feel self-conscious, afraid that others would think them stupid. I have encountered this

issue often in the last two years. Without language skills new immigrants almost always are forced to work below their capacity, and find themselves socially marginalized.

What is strange about Canada? I asked at one point, to which Peter, from South Sudan, responded: “The amount of social services helping people.” Our duty of care is one of the things that makes me proud to be Canadian, and I have never thought of it as being odd, so this was an eye-opener.

When asked what the group would like to learn in future gatherings, one student mentioned they need guidance in how to answer the phone. Another said she’d like to learn polite language, to be “more Canadian”. All wished to be corrected on their grammatical errors, and I noticed that an emphasis on pronunciation might also be helpful.

All in all, I was really impressed with the enthusiasm and candor of the class. As a retired language teacher, the experience was

rewarding. Sadly, my health does not allow me to continue, and our beloved teacher, Tanya, is no longer able to continue with classes. Ed Montgomery reached out with an offer to help out, but I also know he has plans to travel.

If you, or someone you know, can help with ESL classes, please reach out. Our current class is great for intermediate students, and we are recognizing a need for a separate class for beginners.

English classes address one need of newcomers, and we know there are many more. A special thank you goes out to Rick Zimak with the Downie Optimist Club, who has arranged a table for Ukrainian women to participate in the upcoming Ladies Night Out on April 19th. They have promised photos and report for my next column.

(Reach me at english.knutson@gmail.com. I represent a group of grassroots volunteers wanting to make a difference in the lives of those fleeing war.)



SEEKING SUSTAINABILITY

Earth Day 2024: Planet vs. Plastic

Welcome to Seeking Sustainability! This column is written by the Stratford District Secondary School Eco Club to share environmental news and initiatives with the public.

Everyone has heard the phrase “reduce, reuse, recycle” before. But did you know that there’s a reason for the order in which these words are placed? These three actions are listed from most to least significant in reducing negative environmental impacts. While recycling is often talked about (and is still an important step to take), there are often not as many resources available on how to reduce and reuse materials. Luckily for you, there are many opportunities to integrate these actions into your lives both within the community of Stratford and in your own homes. Local businesses like Bulk Barn and Little Green Grocery both offer programs that allow you to bring clean, empty, reusable bags or containers into their stores to take home products in. The empty containers are weighed at the counter before products are added inside, then the price is determined based on the quantity of a product you are purchasing.

Bulk Barn offers a 15% discount to customers who bring in their own containers on Sundays, so you can save money and the planet! The Little Green Grocery also has “free containers” which have been sanitized and are available for use, or new jars for purchase if you forget your own containers. In this store, many items come pre-packaged in reusable bottles. You are required to pay a small deposit for the container, which is refunded when the bottle is returned. When acquiring reusable containers to use in these stores, opt to use what has already been created rather than purchasing more containers. You can do this simply by washing out containers for other products you have previously purchased. Some great examples of these include Ziplock bags, plastic or glass food containers, and takeout containers. Now, enjoy your environmentally friendly shopping!

Committing to small, consistent change may not seem significant daily, but it accumulates over time to make a remarkable impact. This is how we should all think of our efforts to recycle. Each time we choose to recycle an item, this is one less item ending up in our local landfill. This amounts to a lot when we consider the total overtime. Recycling has become very accessible throughout Canada since its inception in 1981, and with recycling bins located throughout our city, we can all play a key role in this endeavour whether we are at home or out in the community. The City of Stratford’s recycling col-

lection program offers curbside collection throughout the city biweekly. A comprehensive list of items that can be recycled is readily available on the city’s website. Although many items can be recycled, in recent years, some previously recyclable items have been excluded. Understandably, this could be a source of frustration for citizens who may be disappointed that some recycling has been discontinued and may cause confusion about what can be recycled. For example, single-serving apple sauce and yogurt containers can no longer be recycled in Stratford. Still, a simple and cost-effective change would be to buy family-size containers (that can be recycled) and repackage them into easy-to-grab single-serving sizes for snacks and lunch boxes in reusable containers at home. The city’s website also provides a convenient Recycle Coach App to help citizens learn what items can be recycled as well as recycling collection schedules and reminders. Don’t forget we can also recycle both single-use and rechargeable batteries through the www.call2recycle.ca battery recycling initiative, with many drop-off locations throughout the city, including the Stratford Rotary Complex.

Stratford Creative Reuse, owned by Kylie Wasser, specializes in waste redistribution and opened earlier this year as an initiative to address climate change, pollution, and various environmental issues. Art, defined as the expression or application of human creative skill, imagination, or creation, offers an unexpected solution for addressing these challenges that face our community. Kylie believes in the power of creative expression as a solution to pollution and climate change. She is quoted saying, “Art is a way to be able to express your-

self, share your thoughts and perspectives, and create community. There shouldn’t be a barrier for people to engage in that. I’m happy to collaborate with local artists and organizations to support their programs.” With less than 10% of all plastics being recycled, and the rest ending up in local landfills, the system isn’t perfect. Therefore, Kylie’s overall goal is to create a sustainable community, reduce waste, and examine processes around plastic recycling in Stratford. To achieve her goals, Kylie is currently accepting a wide range of materials from fabrics and paint to jewellery supplies and scrapbooking materials. Beyond simply recycling artistic materials, Kylie transforms plastic bags and containers into jewellery and new artistic materials by shredding the plastics and melting the pieces together in a Panini press. Kylie uses plastics with “recyclable numbers 2, 4, and 5 as they have really low melting points [...] You can melt this type of plastic into really pliable shapes [including]: flat surfaces like clipboards, shelves, or serving plates.” From microplastics that leach off of synthetic paint brushes or the glitter that falls from elementary school art projects to the carcinogenic Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) that are released by paint even long after it has dried, the art industry can be harmful to humans and environmental health. By reusing and recycling artistic waste and materials, Kylie hopes to cut down on this hidden pollution and create a more affordable alternative to standard art supplies.

Come back in June to see what’s new with Seeking Sustainability!

Written by Nathan Bean, Avery Durand, Natalie Ditty, and Kieran Albrecht; edited by Elliana Morrison



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

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

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

151 Lorne Avenue, East Stratford, Ontario N5A 6S4

INNERchamber to present fifth concert of the season, “Signing Off,” across two shows April 27 and 28

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

Guest performer Sharon Wei will join the INNERchamber string quartet to perform in their fifth concert of the season, “Signing Off,” across two separate shows – one free at the Local Community Food Centre April 27, and the other a ticketed show at Factory 163 April 28.

Wei, an accomplished violist from London and an avid chamber-music performer with the New Orford String Quartet, will join the INNERchamber quartet to perform Johannes Brahms’ String Quintet in G Major, a piece the 19th-century German composer intended to be his final work before he retired.

“We wanted to do this particular Brahms quintet,” said INNERchamber violinist and artistic director Andrew Chung. “For Brahms, this was intended to be his final work and then he would happily slide into retirement and that would be the end of the story, but he did go on to compose a few more works. This particular quintet of Brahms is not heard that frequently. He wrote two sextets for strings and this is a quintet for strings. When we perform Brahms, it’s music that wears its heart on its sleeve. I feel like it’s highly accessible music. He writes in a style that is just so convincing and has an emotional language that’s just very clear.

“... He wrote a series of string quartets we’ve performed before, but when you add just that one extra player, Brahms has the ability to amplify that expressive language that much more. It’s really amazing.”

Chung said none of the five players, which include himself, Wei, cellist Ben Bolt-Matin, violinist Julie Baumgartel and violist Judy Davenport, have played this particular Brahms work before and each of them are excited to perform it for the first time for two Stratford audiences.

Contrasting the music of Brahms, the INNERchamber quartet will perform Soviet-era composer Dmitry Shostakovich’s String Quartet No. 11. Having suffered from a debilitating neural disease as early as 1958 that eventually made his right hand all but unusable, Shostakovich’s failing health gave an urgency to his music with the reality that every piece, including his haunting and enigmatic 11th string quartet, could be his last.

“He composed during soviet rule throughout the entirety of his career and so, in order to have a viable career, he had to tow the party line to some degree,” Chung said. “That’s where the enigma shows itself. We’re not exactly sure at all times what his intention was with his music. Often times when we listen to Shostakovich, it’s witty, it’s angular, it’s very pointed writing, and that could mean lots of things. Because there’s no text to go along with his music, it’s up to the listener to decide what that means.

“... Here, he’s later in his life with this particular quartet, and he feels under a lot of pressure with what he’s writing. The Soviet government is wanting its artists



SIGNING OFF (TERRY MANZO PHOTOS)

The INNERchamber string quartet will perform with violist Sharon Mei in its fifth concert of the season, “Signing Off,” at the Local Community Food Centre April 27 and Factory 163 April 28.

to put forward a certain aesthetic when it comes to what its artists and composers were putting out. It has to celebrate the people, the proletariat, and it has to be upbeat. It can’t be too muddled in its intention. Shostakovich walked a very fine line throughout his whole career. ... There was always this sense of this weight that he always felt throughout his composing career, and this particular piece is no different. That comes out in this kind of melancholic feel, but you still have this intensity.”

As INNERchamber has done before, the concert will first be performed free at the Local Community Food Centre at 2 p.m. April 27 before it goes to Factory 163 for a ticketed performance April 28 at 7 p.m. with a light dinner option catered by Stratford District Secondary School’s The Avocado beginning at 5:45 p.m. The second performance will also be livestreamed for those who prefer to watch from home.

Chung said he’s excited to engage with both audiences, the first of which he expects will be relatively new to chamber music and the second a little more familiar with the music being played. He says he’s eager to share the historical context of both compositions and listen to what audience members have to say after they hear them.

At \$45 for the in-person concert at Factory 163, including dinner, or \$20 for the

livestream concert, tickets are available now at www.innerchamber.ca/signing-off. Tickets purchased by 5 p.m. on April 26 will include dinner. Tickets purchased after 5 p.m. April 26 may be available at the same price but will not include dinner.



London violist Sharon Mei will join the INNERchamber string quartet to perform Johannes Brahms’

**Fitness.
Fun.
Results.**



**Step inside
Genuine Fitness, let go of:**

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

GenuineFitness™

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

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

Boreal Concert at Avondale to welcome spring

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

An award-winning folk trio will be stopping by Stratford's Avondale United Church this spring.

Avondale United Church announced last week that Boreal will be performing at the church on May 11 as part of their Songs of Renewal tour. Boreal, made up of Katharine Wheatley, Tannis Slimmon and Angie Nussey, will be performing songs with elements of spring such as bike rides, butterflies, flowers and falling in love.

"Their values and message of hope and renewal along with a deep interest in humanity is very much in alignment with the vibe at Avondale and I think that's what excites me the most," said David Bates, member of Avondale's music series team.

Bates has wanted to bring Boreal to Avondale United Church for quite some time. He has fond memories watching Wheatley perform a song about fishing with her father at a music festival. Bates also knew Slimmon from Folk Music Ontario and other festivals and recalled watching her bring other women up on stage to sing "There's a Lift" during a songwriters circle.

Boreal used to be a winter-only touring band and their album Winter's Welcome was made to bring joy to a dreary winter season. However, the band began performing spring shows during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 so it could play outdoors. The trio played at Toronto Botanical Gardens and Guelph's Hillside Homeside previously.

Wheatley said as a band, they want to bring joy and connection to the audience.

"Spring is the perfect season for that," she said. "Of course, winter is the perfect season because that is when they need it the most, but the spring is when we got the season with us to help us along that feeling. I guess from winter to spring is really the metaphor of what we're trying to get across in the show."

Wheatley plays guitar, Slimmon plays guitar and mandolin, and Nussey plays keyboards. Nussey said the band's stage presence and closeness is also brought into their performances.

"We get along like old friends," she said. "You can just feel it the minute we walk in. We really enjoy each other's company."

There will be 12 additional stops on the Songs of Renewal tour including Sudbury, Toronto, Innisfil and Ottawa. The tour comes with more dates than 2023, when the trio played about five shows.

"This year, it's like the world has opened up for musicians right now and for artists like us," Nussey said.

Slimmon performed at Avondale United Church before, singing back-up vocals for Allison Lupton when she performed with the Stratford Symphony Orchestra.

"It was incredible," she said. "Even the pipe band came in for one song, so it was amazing."

Avondale United Church is becoming a beloved music venue for musicians and bands, with some calling it "The Avondale," explained Terri Sparling, a member of the music series team. The church can be converted from a congregation space to a concert hall seating more than 400 attendees.

"The acoustics are exceptional," Sparling



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

AWARD-WINNING FOLK TRIO

(Left to right): Katharine Wheatley, Tannis Slimmon, and Angie Nussey of Boreal will be performing at Avondale United Church on May 11 as part of their "Songs of Renewal" tour.

said. "The stage space is wonderful. Artists really enjoy it, but so does the audience."

Proceeds from the concert will go towards Avondale's ministry, including outreach programs such as community meals and the Food Shelf. The volunteer-run Food Shelf serves those in need every Friday, with the exception of major holidays, from 1-2:30 p.m.

Aleah Graff, community engagement coordinator, said the number of people using the Food Shelf has increased. The church served an average of 21 people per week through the Food Shelf in 2023. The first quarter of 2024 already saw an increase to

38 people per week.

"We have people coming into the church every day to prepare food for the Food Shelf and really volunteering their time and dedicating their time," Graff said. "Anything we can do to support either emotionally or financially this initiative, I think it's a really good thing."

Tickets to the Boreal concert are \$25 and can be purchased either in-person at the church's box office at 194 Avondale Ave., by emailing avondaleuc@wightman.ca, or by visiting ticketscene.ca/events/47721. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the show begins at 7:30 p.m.

Shakespeare—Was he really Shakespeare?: Thoughts on his birthday



JULIA SCHNEIDER

Times Contributor

April 23, 2024 marks the 460th anniversary of the birth of William Shakespeare from Stratford-Upon-Avon, England 1564. But who was William Shakespeare?

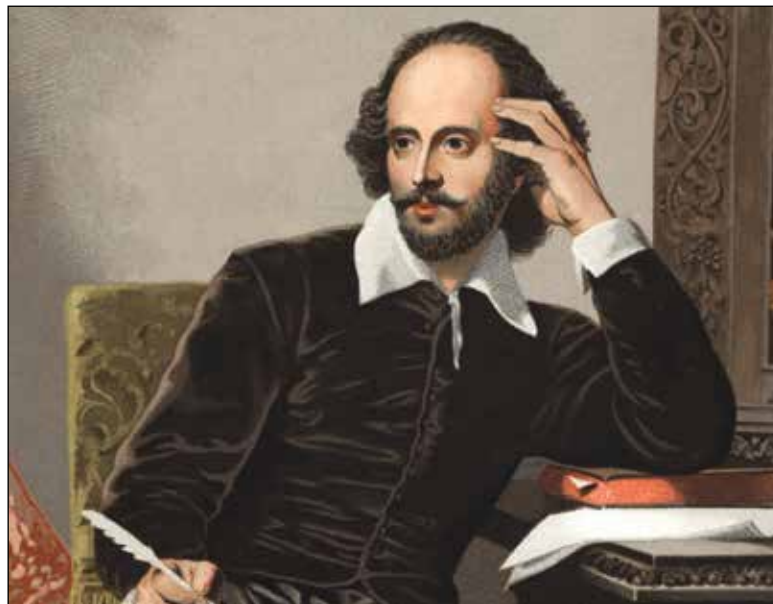
Though it may seem heretical to those who revere Shakespeare as the ultimate playwright, there have been those who question whether Shakespeare did, in fact, write the plays attributed to him.

When I was in the now long-gone but never forgotten Grade 13, I had an assignment for my English class to evaluate a book that said he was not the greatest English dramatist. That he was,

instead, a man credited with the works of someone else, someone who was the real author of his many plays and sonnets. What did I know? Growing up in Stratford I had seen Shakespeare productions but I was this was my introduction to Shakespeare research.

What did I learn from the assignment? That the elapse of hundreds of years of history after an event or life of a person can make fact hard to ascertain. During the raucous and vibrant popular culture of Elizabethan England historical recording was notably lacking, leaving much room for future speculation. Scholars were not tracking texts, or plays, or who wrote them; those scholars came much later, as did critics and sceptics.

Shakespeare deniers have included such notable figures as Walt Whitman, Mark Twain... and Sigmund Freud! Those most frequently named as his plays' real author have been variously identified as Francis Bacon, Edward de Vere, and Christopher



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Marlowe, among others. In fact, in 1964 the British High Court heard a case in which the beneficiaries of a woman contested the part of her will that left a large bequest to find the Shakespeare plays written by Francis Bacon. Experts were called in and the "facts" were examined. The Judge's finding? That it was im-

possible to prove Shakespeare's authorship "beyond the shadow of a doubt." The ruling upheld the bequest to the Francis Bacon Society in the woman's will.

Does all of this matter? The miracle of the Shakespeare, his genius, and his extraordinary writing stand. Whoever he was, and whatever he did, his legacy

lives on. This year we in Stratford, Canada, have the opportunity to see three of his plays – the comedy Twelfth Night, the very different Romeo and Juliet and the even more different Cymbeline, as well as Something Rotten, a new production that plays with the story of an extraordinary writer and his life -- all owing to this being we call Shakespeare.

On his birthday, I will use his own words: "O wonderful, wonderful, and most wonderful wonderful! And yet again wonderful, and after that, out of all whooping!" As Your Like It, III, 2

And so: let's go out, celebrate, and enjoy!

(For engaging and informative illustrated stories about Shakespeare's life and times check out *A Child's Portrait of Shakespeare* by Stratford teacher and author Lois Burdett and her students, and *William Shakespeare & The Globe* by author and illustrator Alik.

With thanks to Mr. O'Flynn, my esteemed Grade 13 English teacher)

UNTIL SOON. LIVE WELL: Forgetting The World As We Know It



STUART LENDER

Times Contributor

I have one or two images from my childhood that are so vivid, so tactile, dressed with such deep sensation, that they are etched into memory as if the brain were a stone inscribed. One of these is a grove of trees in early Spring, their trunks extending out of a pool of water where no water should have been. The forest had gathered its days of rain and snow and morning wet that fell from its canopy of leaves – into a basin, where path became

puddle. One giant puddle in fact, held delicately in place by a fragile and thin membrane of icy skin that magnified the forest floor beneath. One magnificent air bubble from the breath of everything alive below.

That image of transition, the clear translucent grey/green mirror with lit up flecks of white fairy-light snow, held me in frozen wonder. Resplendent. I will die with that image somewhere in the brain-bank of memory. It was a transition of sorts for me. My relationship to the earth beneath my feet and any body of water, whether stream or ocean, changed that day. I understood something about our planet that I couldn't talk about, nor satisfactorily write about either.

When something is found that jars you awake like that, your heart is felt in your chest and what it is that you understand is not understood through words or thinking. More tactile. More sensory.

In later years I discovered that,

at will, I could bring a smidgeon of that sensation back into my heart through “forgetting” about what it is I was looking at. What I mean by that is, to find anything interesting and new I merely had to look at it long enough and let everything I know about it disappear! It's somewhat similar to that sensation of seeing the word “and” or “the” on the printed page and suddenly not recognizing it as the way that it's always been spelled. Or suddenly paying attention to the ritual of eating – performing this maneuver where I place something into this hole in my face, mash it up with these stony white things that grow there and then let it slip into another deeper hole, into my body. Or that perspective my brother and I had as kids – looking at the room upside down, with ceiling as floor and floor as ceiling.

Do you get my meaning? Everyday things – looked at through the eyes of a child, the eyes of wonder, or the eyes of unknowing. What happens is a little taste

of freedom from the norm, a little taste of newness, playfulness – perhaps a little sense of losing that ego that keeps chattering in the head saying it knows what this is or how this will go and that the world is under our control, understood and packaged in a recognizable fashion. Potentially interesting. Possibly fresh. Perhaps a revelation that helps one understand something not fully recognized before.

It's about leaning into a sense of uncertainty, of being playful and finding wondrous things there – where suddenly the tree is upside down and the roots are the part that we are seeing above the ground, drinking in the air. Where the house is a box, with other boxes of varying sizes within the bigger box, and we move about from box to box. Automobiles as just a bunch of moving chairs on wheels, rolling from one place to another, or people “dressed” in skin, having put on façades of clothing to give the further illusion that under

clothes and skin, we are somehow different.

Sometimes there's great discovery and eye-opening lessons in looking at the world without the labels we've placed onto everything to make ourselves feel safe. It's only a game after all. Things don't have to be what they seem. They can be waiting in wonder. Worlds we weren't aware of. People becoming stories through conversation. Everything revealing itself interesting and new and shiny.

And if we're lucky, we'll lose ourselves for a moment to find ourselves anew, more playful and with even greater meaning or sense of purpose, as an integral part of what we're observing – feeling truly present in a world of wonders so strange, and strangely familiar.

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.

MUSINGS: Taking Off the Grid



MARK HERTZBERGER

Times Freelance Columnist

How many musical genres are there? Ask Spotify's Glen McDonald. He's attempting to classify them. At last count he had identified in excess of 1700 categories including: Canterbury Scene, Rock Gaucho, Pagan Black Metal, Fidget House, Polish Hip Hop, and something called Deep Disco Fox.

This is a far cry from when people gathered around their family televisions on a Sunday night to watch the Beatles or the Rolling Stones on Ed Sullivan. Some of us remember that as a unifying experience.

Of course, categories are useful for statistical, scientific, or planning purposes. But why is there such a compulsion to slap

labels on ourselves or other human beings? Certainly there are compelling reasons for those who have been historically ostracized and dehumanized to step into the light and claim their identities. But when does enough become too much? When does identification become objectification?

In the 2021 Canadian Census, more than 450 ethnic or cultural origins were reported. By some counts, there are 7000 different languages/ ethnicities worldwide and 4200 recognized religions including 47,000 denominations. On top of this add 47 sexual orientations and close to 100 gender identities.

And don't psychologists love labeling? According to Myers Briggs there are 16 personality types but, according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, these are outnumbered by mental disorders clocking in with 17 categories and 64 sub-categories!

How do we decide who is normal and who isn't? Let's face it, if we map everyone on earth on a continuum, there is really only one “normal” person right in the middle. Let's call him Norm. But is Norm really normal? No he is not. Norm is not normal because



he is different from the 4 billion abnormal people standing to either side of him. Which makes him abnormal. Am I confusing you yet? I am certainly confusing myself. I'm starting to feel like I'm not normal, which my wife would tend to agree with.

Let's look at it a different way. Take the Mona Lisa (not the original Mona Lisa; that could be an

indictable offense even if you just borrowed it). Try to find a copy somewhere. Lay a grid of some sort over it – you can use chicken wire if you have some. Now try to appreciate the painting by examining it one cell at a time – her eyebrow, her veil, a section of her dress, maybe a corner of that mysterious smile. It doesn't work too well, does it? Nor does judg-

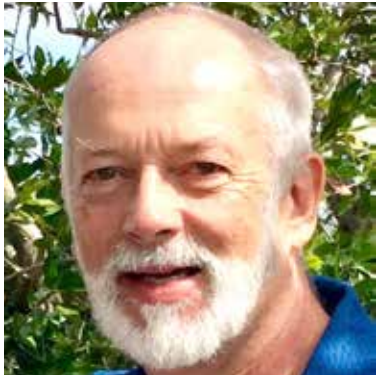
ing human beings. Even body language can be misleading. Do crossed arms indicate a superiority complex or chronic shoulder pain? Is that a sneer, or simply a stifled yawn? Who knows? Nobody does until we get to understand the person.

So perhaps we should go back to basics. We could label everyone the same: UHB (Unique Human Being). Start from the beginning, without assumptions. Be curious – what is the UHB's story? What do they believe in? What is dearest to them? What do they fear? What do they dream of? Celebrate with them. Dine with them. Get to know them.

In other words, remove the grid. There is music underlying the universe. Perhaps, if we all suspend judgement and listen carefully, we might be able to hear the same melody.

Mark Hertzberger is a former social services supervisor, human resources manager, conflict mediator, and literacy practitioner. He has since freed his mind and now writes poetry and occasional opinionated columns. Mark has lived in Perth County for 27 years, the last 12 of which have been in Stratford where he resides with his wife, novelist Yvonne Hertzberger.

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: An unexpected artistic treasure trove in the Nation's Capital



PAUL KNOWLES

Sun Contributor

I couldn't believe my own eyes. I had walked into a large exhibition hall in an art gallery I had never heard of. Admission was free – open the door, and you're in. And I found myself alone, surrounded by the works of many of the best artists Canada has ever known.

There were wonderful paintings by every member of the famed Group of Seven. And, as art lovers will know, the Group actually numbered 10, thus demonstrating that art is not necessarily rational. There were fine examples of Canadian impressionist art, and terrific abstracts.

And there was an inspiring display of A.Y. Jackson artifacts, paintings and sketches, including multiple pull-out drawers containing examples of his pencil sketches, works that led to some of the masterpieces of this prolific, original member of the Group of Seven.

I was in the Ottawa Art Gallery, an imposing, multi-storey building that somehow manages to be ignored by most visitors to Canada's capital city. Actually, I understand this – as the nation's capital, Ottawa is replete with cultural attractions. Visitors with an eye for art will flock to the admittedly wonderful National Gal-



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

The A.Y. Jackson corner at the Ottawa Art Gallery includes Jackson paintings, drawers full of his sketches, and his snowshoes and palette box.

lery of Canada. While in Ottawa, I got a chance to chat with Liliane L , Vice-President of Public Affairs and Marketing at the National Gallery, and she told me of many exciting things that are happening, or are about to happen, at that attraction. But's that another article.

Visitors come to Ottawa with a long to-do list – The Museum of History in Gatineau, the National War Museum, Parliament Hill, Rideau Hall House and Gardens, the Canada Science and Technology Museum, the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum, and much, much more.

But honestly, most of those to-do lists will not include the Ottawa Art Gallery, because most visitors are not even aware of its existence. It lives in the reputational shadow of the National Gallery.

I stumbled on it by accident.

I was attending the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada's annual conference and stayed at a hotel new to me – Le Germain, only a block or two from Parliament Hill, the Shaw Centre (which hosted the conference), the Byward Market, and all the other interesting sites around downtown Ottawa.

Le Germain was terrific – I would highly recommend it as your headquarters for your exploration of Ottawa.

As soon as I arrived at the hotel, I noticed, right next door, a clearly marked entrance to the Ottawa Art Gallery. I assumed, quite mistakenly, that this was a cute little facility offering exhibition space to local artists. But when I took the time to check it out, I realized how wrong I had been!

There are five floors with exhibitions, although only a very limited number on the lower floor,

which houses a caf . The floor labeled "1" – because it opens from the front entrance, one floor up from the back door I had discovered – has a big exhibition space that does, indeed, feature work by local artists. But this is not to be dismissed. Many of the works are excellent art by talented people.

I climbed the stairs to the second floor, and entered a room called the Firestone Gallery. Here is where the wonder really set in. Here, I was alone with Lawrence Harris and A.J. Casson, Emily Carr and Paul- mile Borduas. Wonderful works by artists of international significance, but with a distinctly Canadian point of view.

Jack Firestone was an Austrian immigrant to Canada in the 1930's, a man who fell in love with his adopted country and its culture. A successful businessman, academic, author, and

advisor to political leaders, he began to collect art in the 1950s – when, let's be honest, a Lawrence Harris painting could be acquired for a tiny fraction of today's multi-million dollar price tag. But the Firestones went all-out – they collected 1600 paintings, and in 1972 donated the entire collection to the Ontario Heritage Foundation, with one proviso. The paintings had to be made available for the public to enjoy.

The Heritage Foundation decided to pass that challenge on, and gave the paintings to the City of Ottawa, which made the Ottawa Art Gallery stewards of the collection. A smart move, in my opinion, because today, you and I can see these wonderful works of art – free of charge.

One floor up was a temporary exhibit of the striking work by Ottawa artist Norman Takeuchi, spanning his work from 1961 to 2022. I did not know his work before my visit – I am very glad to have encountered this visionary creator.

I finished my tour of the OAG by returning to the Firestone Gallery, where I spent another half hour, once again alone, drinking in the delight of being up close and appreciative of such great work.

And then, as I was about to descend the elaborate staircase to return to the first floor, I read the panel that explained that the staircase – like the paintings – had actually been moved to the OAG from the Firestone mansion.

A perfect pathway to important Canadian paintings.

Paul Knowles is an author and travel writer, and President of the Travel Media Association of Canada. To contact Paul about travel, his books, or speaking engagements, email pknowles@golden.net.



A wall full of paintings by Group of Seven member A.J. Casson.



Abstracts by four important Canadian artists – from left, Marcelle Feron, Paul- mile Borduas (top), Kazuo Nakamura, and Harold Town.

Staff-area sheep farmer inducted onto the Stratford-Perth Museum Agriculture Wall of Fame

GARY WEST

Times Correspondent

Perth County is inducting two new members onto the Stratford Perth Museum "Agriculture Wall of Fame."

Sandi Brock, who is a Sheep farmer from southwest Perth County near Staffa, says she is extremely humbled by the recognition, but smiles with surprise at the news.

Brock has been an agricultural influencer on the YouTube channel, Sheepishly Me, for more than 10 years with 1.1 million followers around the world.

She has held countless tours of her barns for farm and non-farm organizations and has also been involved with numerous speaking engagements.

Her nominators felt she has made a significant contribution to agriculture in Perth county by sharing real, on-farm experiences, from rewards to challenges as a farmer, while promoting the importance of animal husbandry.

Brock is also a champion of food safety and environmental management. In ad-

dition to her leadership in consumer education, Brock has been a strong advocate for farmer mental health and is a tireless volunteer for the sheep industry. She has represented Ontario Sheep Farmers in District 3 as a director on the board in the past, and has given her time to support her local sheep community for many years.

When I visited her, Brock was just completing two weeks of managing 400 ewes at lambing, which can be stressful with little sleep, but at the same time she says it's very rewarding.

Brock and her husband Mark, and children Jack, 23, and Jess, 21, also farm 1,700 acres of corn, soybeans, wheat and, at times, winter canola and winter barley along with alfalfa grown for feed for her sheep.

She will be honoured at the Stratford Rotary Club's Rural-Urban night Thursday April 18 at the Stratford Rotary Complex. Tickets are available at the museum by calling Kelly McIntosh at 519-393-5312, visiting the museum at 4275 Huron Rd., Stratford, or visiting the museum website at www.stratfordperthmuseum.ca.



SHEEPISHLY ME

Sandi Brock, inside her modern, clean and healthy sheep barns, holds one of her newborn black lambs, which she says is one of her favourites, as other newborns look on.

(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Perth County's Steve Dolson and Karen Galbraith inducted onto Stratford-Perth Museum's Agriculture Wall of Fame

GARY WEST

Times Correspondent

The Stratford-Perth Museum is honouring and inducting an Atwood Dairy farming couple onto the 2024 Agriculture Wall of Fame.

Dr. Karen Galbraith and husband Steve Dolson's Master Breeder registered Holstein herd, known as Legacy Holsteins, has been one of the top-production and highly classified herds in Perth County for many years.

Both have helped lead a number of community organizations over many decades in their young careers.

Galbraith was a founding board member and past president of Perth Care for Kids. She has been a board member of Elma Mutual Insurance, which later became Trillium Mutual Insurance in Listowel.

Through the Big Brothers and Big Sisters organization, Karen has been an active big sister and active 4-H leader, and also a leader on their local church board.

In 2013, when the international plowing match came to Perth county, she helped organize the dairy portion of the match and has spent many years organizing the ice cream booth at the Listowel Fall Fair.

Earning a Masters in Science from the University of Guelph in capacity and rural development involved periods of time when Galbraith lived and worked in inner Mongolia where she helped small landholders improve their milk quality.

In 2014, she became an inaugural director and is still active on the Kenyan Kids

Foundation Canada which, among other things, is spearheading cooperative projects to improve milk production and quality on small farms in Kenya.

Her husband has not had much grass growing under his feet either.

He has been an active and valued member of the Perth County Holstein Club, past 4-H leader and is currently an Ontario 4-H foundation trustee.

Dolson is a past president of the board of United Breeders in Guelph, and he played a pivotal role in the amalgamation of United Breeders and Western Ontario Breeders based near Woodstock.

He was also involved in the early process of forming the Semex Alliance, and also a past member and chairman of the board of Gay Lea Foods, a dairy farmer owned co-operative that produces award-winning dairy products and high-quality dairy components in several different provinces.

In the past, Dolson was awarded the distinguished certificate of recognition from Holstein Canada for his valuable contribution to the Canadian dairy industry.

Locally he has been involved in the Listowel Agriculture Society for many years, including in many leadership roles.

Dolson is also involved with the Kenyan Kids Foundation and has also been an active participant in dairy extension work in Kenya along with Galbraith.

They are an Elma township dairy farming couple, very deserving to be recognized in 2024 on the Agriculture Wall of Fame at the Stratford-Perth Museum.



AWARD-WINNING

Newly inducted onto the Stratford-Perth Museum's Agriculture Wall of Fame, dairy farming couple, Karen Galbraith and Steve Dolson from Elma Township in Perth County are pictured with their award-winning purebred Holstein dairy herd.

(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Rotary Club and Kinsmen come together to fund and build 500 Aquaboxes

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

An unprecedented donation by the Kinsmen Club of Stratford of \$15,000 has enabled the Rotary Club of Stratford to build another 500 Aquaboxes destined for disaster areas around the world.

Volunteers of the two clubs came together with representatives of Global Medic on April 6 at Jutzi Water Technologies to assemble the kits. Logistical support is provided by Global Medic and Downie Optimists.

An Aquabox can provide fresh water to a family of four or five for up to a year after a disaster. They are a simple, gravity fed system containing two silver-impregnated, ceramic filters. These filters remove 99.999 per cent of bacteria and particles

as small as .03 microns. Each Aquabox kit also contains a basic hygiene kit of soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste. Additionally, it includes a solar-powered, rechargeable light.

This is the first time the two clubs have come together for an international, charitable cause. The Kinsmen were inspired to contribute after Rotarian Ian Fisher approached them to do a presentation about the project.

“They made a presentation to our club and the club takes it into consideration, and they decided to sponsor it even though it is international while Kinsmen is typically all-Canadian. I think it has a lot of merit,” said Kinsman Bob Walters, adding it is possible that the two service clubs could collaborate again in the future.

“The kits that were built are currently in



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

RUGBY SEASON OPENER

Natasha Adams, Emergency Program Officer Global Medic, Walt Bathe, Stratford Rotary, Bob Walters, Life Member Kinsmen Club of Stratford, and the many volunteers that gathered to build the 500 Aquaboxes.

Global Medic preposition stock,” said Jamie Cross, senior emergency programs manager with Global Medic. “This means they are prepped and ready to go as soon as there is an acute crisis that occurs. This is extremely helpful for our operations as it gives us the flexibility to respond quickly when disaster strikes.”

Global Medic is a non-profit disaster response organization of paramedics and first-responder volunteers who will distribute the Aquabox units globally to those most in need, including disaster-stricken areas in Latin America, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and recently

the Ukraine.

The Aquabox project was started in 2006 and has made 48 shipments to 18 countries comprising 15,000 units, which equates to 75 million litres of fresh water. This is a lifesaving project that will continue as long as there are donations to fund it.

The project is entirely funded by donations, and the local clubs plan to put more kits together in June. Kits are built by volunteers, so all donations made go directly to the cost of an Aquabox. For those interested in more information or to make a donation, visit rotarystratford.com.

*My Dear...
...just between us...*

I ALWAYS GET THE BEST DEALS AT

THE ST. JAMES VARIETY SALE

First Choice Night: Thursday, April 25 • 7-9:30 p.m.

Super Sale: Friday, April 26 • 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Toonie A Tote Hour: Friday, April 28 • 7 - 8 p.m.

Clothing, Toys, Kitchen Items, Treasures, Jewelry, Books
Linen Goods, Music & Records, and of course our huge
Yard Sale

41 Mornington Street, Stratford • 519-271-3572

**HAVE A SPECIAL EVENT
COMING UP?**

Let us know! Call 519-655-2341
or email stratfordtimes@gmail.com

COMING EVENTS Email to inquire stratfordtimes@gmail.com

ST. JAMES VARIETY SALE
April 25-April 28
St. James Anglican Church 41 Mornington St.
Clothing, Toys, Kitchen Items, Treasures,
Jewelry, Books, Linen Goods, Music &
Records, and of course our huge
Yard Sale

SPRING TEA
Sunday April 21; 2-4 p.m.
Legion Hall
The Stratford Legion Branch 8 and Ladies
Auxiliary are hosting a ‘Spring Tea’. The
afternoon of tea includes finger sandwiches,
dainties, doors prizes, a silent auction and lots
of fun. Tickets are available by calling Anne,
visiting Flowers on York 519-301-0914 or visit
<https://tinyurl.com/2zyb2dfv>

**GARDEN STRATFORD GENERAL
MEETING**
Monday May 6; 7:15 – 9:00 p.m. ****New
Time****
Army Navy Hall, 151 Lorne Ave. E.,
Stratford
Featured Presentation: “Roses at the Royal
Botanical Garden” with Alex Henderson,
Curator of Living Collections/ Horticulturalist,
Royal Botanical Garden. Meeting Open to

Everyone; Free Admission.
OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP MEETING
Tuesday, May 7; 7:00 p.m.
93 Morgan St., Stratford
“How to Avoid Scams and Frauds’ with
Constable Darren Fischer (Community
Resource and Media Relations Officer)
Stratford Police Service. Social time and
snacks. Everyone welcome. 519-273-4327

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

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

We are a Welcoming Community

Worship With Us



**Stratford Associate
Reformed
Presbyterian Church**

Quality Inn Festival
(1144 Ontario St., Stratford)

WORSHIP TIMES:
10 a.m. and 3 p.m.
stratfordarp.org

Invite readers to your worship services. Contact stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Riddles

What do the Montreal Canadiens and the Titanic have in common?
They both look good until they hit the ice.

How do you get 50 Canadians out of a swimming pool?
You say, "please get out of the swimming pool."

What does Canada produce that no other country in the world produces?
Canadians.

What did the snow say to the Rocky Mountains?
I've got your covered.

What was the skeleton doing at the hockey game?
Driving the zam-boney.

Why shouldn't curlers tell jokes on the ice?
Because it might crack up

What has antlers and sucks blood?
A moose-quito

Why is maple syrup always so sad?
Because it's sappy.

How do you get a Canadian to apologize?
Step on their foot.

Sudoku

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

Solutions on page 27



Pet of the Month



WHISKEY

Meet 2-year-old Whiskey! He is hoping to find a furrever family that shares his love of adventure and play. Whiskey would love a family that can take him on long walks and hikes and offer him plenty of enrichment. This guy always has lots to say, so he is looking for a house with no shared walls so he does not upset his new neighbours! He is a bit on the chatty side! Whiskey does not understand how big and goofy he is, due to his lack of manners and his size he is looking for a home with older children and no other pets. If you think Whiskey might be your new best friend, submit an adoption survey at <https://kwsphumane.ca/adopt/process>.

Word Search

HARRY POTTER

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

- Hogwarts
- Gryffindor
- Voldemort
- Wand
- Quidditch
- Hermione
- Dumbledore
- Snape
- Patronus
- Muggle
- Hagrid
- Slytherin
- Dobby
- Nimbus
- Diagon Alley

Perth County Holstein Breeders Cup competition results

GARY WEST

Times Correspondent

Holstein Breeders of registered and purebred cattle of this popular breed in Perth County recently held their annual Breeders Cup in which an official Holstein Canada judge tours area farms and judges cattle in their own dairy barn setting.

The following are the results of the recent competition.

In the First lactation class:

- 1- Terrylea Picasso Bravo for Terrylea Holsteins.
- 2- Downiebrook Sidekick Stephanie for Downiebrook Farms Ltd.

In the second lactation class:

- 1- Maplevue Adagio Bugle for Maplevue Farms.
- 2- Kevcrest King Doc Abby for Kevin and Delaney Bauermann.

In third lactation class:

- 1- Maplevue Marius Peach for Maplevue Farms.
- 2- Janholm Silvio Dignity for Janholm Farms.

60,000+ Production Class

- 1- Squibbland Rita Dempsey for Impact Farms.
 - 2-Skinheir Brew Belinda for Skinheir Holsteins Inc.
- Grand Champion: Maplevue Marius Peach for Maplevue Farms of North Perth (the Johnston Family).
Reserve Grand Champion: Janholm Silvio Dignity for Janholm Farms.



WINNERS TAKE THE CUP (CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Above: Dave and Doug Johnston show their champion trophy for Grand Champion Maplevue Marius Peach. The third lactation Excellent Holstein was named champion at the recent Perth County Breeders Cup Challenge competition.

Below: A closer look at the Breeders Cup grand champion, Peach, at the Johnston dairy barn southeast of Listowel in North Perth, winner of the Breeders Cup Challenge in Perth County.



Buying or selling your home, cottage or land?

Call Joseph Marcaccio
Sales Representative
519-703-4346
Email: jmarcaccio55@gmail.com

SHACKLETON'S
Real Estate & Auction Co. shackletons.com

Boreal

Avondale United Church presents...
Boreal's "Songs of Renewal" concert

Saturday, May 11, 2024
Avondale United Church 194 Avondale Ave., Stratford ON
Concert starts at 7:30 pm (Doors open at 7:00pm)

Tickets \$25

Tickets also available at the church office: 519-271-7946
proceeds from this event support the ministries of Avondale United Church
www.borealsongs.ca

SPONSORED BY:
BLOWES PRO
OFFICE

LAY PASTORAL MINISTER - CHAPLAIN
Baptism
Wedding Officiant (same sex - all denominations)
Funeral Celebrant - Celebrations of Life

JEFF F. SAGER
1-519-301-2925
jsager62@gmail.com

Web: www.lpmchaplain-jeff-f-sager.ca

CLASSIFIEDS

Email to inquire stratfordtimes@gmail.com

WANTED

PRIVATE LENDERS WANTED

Looking for investors for 1st and 2nd private mortgages. Local broker lending in Perth and Oxford Counties.

Julie@hometowngroup.ca
for more info.

Julie Brenneman Mortgage Broker
Mortgage Architects Lic#12728

FOR SALE

20 Pringle's vending machines for sale. Excellent condition. Profit 50% on \$2 toonie sale. 5 minutes to stock machines. Contact: judobro@rogers.com or 519-500-0251 Wellesley

FOR SALE

ATTENTION: Collectors, and doll lovers from 4 to 104. FOUR, brand new (still in presentation boxes) 20" "Reborn" brand dolls; two with blonde rooted hair, and all in quality outfits on weighted, vinyl/soft bodies with eyes that open and shut; and may include bottles, diapers, birth certificates, pacifiers and rattles. Special price of \$115.00 each box, complete. Please call (non smoking) Stratford home at (519) 305-6275. These adorable 'babies' are looking for loving 'Forever Homes'.

Royal Albert china sets - Old fashion Violet and Peach Blossom. Old fashion viewmaster discs. Roy Rieman magazines, Country Farm & Rural and Reminisce. Call 519-580-0630 (Wellesley area).

TREES: Shade trees, Fruit trees, Apple, Pears, Peaches, Plums, Sweet and Sour Cherries, Apricot, Nectarines, Blueberry, Haskopp, Black Chokeberry, Grapes etc. Lots of Spruce, Pine, Cedars for windbreaks and privacy hedges, Sizes 1 to 6+.

Flowering shrubs and much more.

Come check us out Mon-Sat 7:00am - 6:00pm

Martin's Nursery
42661 Orangehill Road
Wroxeter (1 concession north of Wroxeter on Belmore Line)

WANTED

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

WANTING TO BUY – All collectibles including sports cards, beanie babies, Funko pops and stamps. Highest prices paid. Free appraisals. Are you downsizing or need an estate clean out? We can help. Call or text Stan anytime 519-868-3814.

I WILL PAY CASH FOR ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES – Coca Cola Pepsi any pop company, Brewery items Kuntz, Huether Labatts etc. Old radios and gramophones, Wristwatches and pocket watches, Old fruit jars Beaver Star Bee Hive etc. Any old oil cans and signs Red Indian Supertest etc. Any small furniture.

If you are moving or cleaning out stuff please contact me - 519-570-6920.

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

BUSINESS DIRECTORY Email to inquire stratfordtimes@gmail.com

ACCOUNTING

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

CLEANING



- Mobile Auto Detailing
- Residential Cleaning
- Commercial Cleaning

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

CONSTRUCTION



"Serving Stratford & area since 1977"
www.fraserpaving.ca
Driveways • Parking Lots • Excavating
Truck Rentals • Asphalt Patching
Call Scott or Denise
for a free quote.

519-271-5690

CONSTRUCTION



**Jonathan & James
Construction Inc.**

5875 Line 26, Fullarton, On NOK 1H0
519-949-3107
Construction Management
General Contracting
info@jandjconst.com
www.jandjconst.com

CONSULTING



- Environmental Site Assessments
- Remediation
- Records of Site Condition
- Excess Soil Management
- Groundwater and Surface Water Monitoring

www.cxkenvironmental.com

ALTERATIONS & REPAIRS

**SOULA'S FESTIVAL
DRESSMAKERS**
42 Albert Street, Stratford
Ground Floor
519-273-3411

FENCING / DECKS

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

HOME APPLIANCES

PHELANS PLACE
Appliances
APPLIANCES • PARTS
237 Huron Road,
Sebringville
519-393-6181
info@phelansplace.com
www.phelansplace.com

HUMANE SOCIETY

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

INVESTMENTS

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

JUNK REMOVAL

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

MORTGAGE

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

MORTGAGE

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

MARKETING

TOWN CRIER
MARKETING
FREE CONSULTATION

PHARMACY

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

REAL ESTATE

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

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

REAL ESTATE

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

LIST WITH CHRIS!

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

**EXCITING NEWS!! LIZ YUNDT,
JOINS MAGNOLIA GROUP REALTY**
I have joined Magnolia Group Realty! My team founders have
phenomenal client centered relationships and many years of
experience in real estate at Coldwell Banker Peter Benninger Realty.
THANK YOU, Magnolia Group Realty.
I am honoured to be part of this passionate client centered team!!
Phone: 519-272-9017
Email: liz@yourmagnoliagroup.com
Website: Yourmagnoliagroup.com

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

Spencer Binkle
Sales Representative
Direct: 519-801-5620
spencerbinkle@royallepage.ca
ROYAL LEPAGE Hiller Realty

**ADVERTISE HERE
FOR AS LOW AS
\$15 PER ISSUE!**
Contact:
stratfordtimes@gmail.com
or call 519-655-2341

TRAVEL

STONETOWN TRAVEL
150 Queen St. E., St. Marys
519-284-2332
210 Mill St., New Hamburg
226-333-9939
www.stonetowntravel.com
agent@stonetowntravel.com

WATCH/CLOCK REPAIR

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

WINDOW WASHING

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

SUDOKU

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

QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1861-1865
- The Chicago Cubs
- Diamond
- Polish złoty
- 1976
- Pinocchio
- Porcupette
- Sesame Street
- Bamboo
- Jesus Christ



\$579
TAXES IN

TWIN OVER TWIN, 3 COLOURS



\$449
TAXES IN

STORAGE BED, GREY LINEN, DOUBLE OR QUEEN



\$2,249
TAXES IN

PULL OUT SECTIONAL WITH STORAGE



\$1,199
TAXES IN

SPECIAL BUY!
DOUBLE SOFABEDS

2 STYLES,
2 COLOURS

Spring Savings Event



KINGSDOWN MATTRESS SALE EVENT!



ALL KINGSDOWN MATTRESSES

40% OFF



FREE* PILLOW!

SAVE \$200
ANY ADJUSTABLE BASE*



*with Kingsdown mattress purchase

EVERY MATTRESS TAX INCLUDED

PLUS

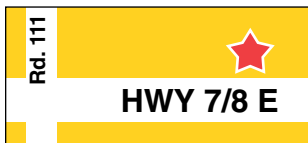
FREE LOCAL MATTRESS DELIVERY & REMOVAL

PLUS

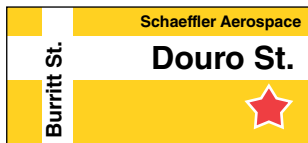
FINANCING AVAILABLE OAC



Home furniture



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



OUTLET:
519-273-7453
617 Douro Street

Follow us on:



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

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

www.stratfordhomefurniture.ca
www.homefurniture.ca