

STRATFORD **TIMES**

VOLUME 5 • ISSUE 2

AUGUST 22, 2025

FREE



A Passion for People

ROYAL LEPAGE
100 Erie St. Stratford

Hiller Realty
Independently owned and Operated Brokerage

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

Hear better. Age better. Live Better. Call today!

COMMUNITY HEARING CARE
Stratford's *only* local and independent provider

Lucas Dasilva
Hearing Instrument Specialist, Reg'd AHIP
Clinic Co-Owner

Shelly Gansevles
Office Administrator, Clinic Co-Owner

519.271.HEAR (4327)
communityhearingcare.ca

370 Ontario St,
Stratford, ON
N5A 3H9



Next year's budget process to look drastically different than past years

CONNOR LUCZKA
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Stratford city council approved the tentative 2026 budget deliberation schedule, after a special council meeting on Aug. 13.

In past years, departments would put forward operating budgets, capital plans and expansion projects, coalesced by the corporate services department into the draft budget. Over a deliberation period typically in December, January and February, council would go through the budget line by line and make amendments, cuts or additions first at committee level, before ultimately passing the budget and the proposed tax levy change with a final bylaw.

This year, the multi-year budget process will look drastically different now that Stratford has become a "strong mayor" city. Along with a host of other powers, the mayor may now put forward their own budget by Feb. 1.

Department heads will continue to put forward their proposed budgets and plans; however, anything not within Mayor Martin Ritsma's purview will be removed or will appear as an expansion project.

Crucially, this year no staffing expansions are being proposed and all expansions to be presented to council will be limited to what the mayor will consider.

"After receiving the proposed budget from the mayor, council can amend the proposed budget by

CONTINUED TO PAGE 17


(CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

Trish Harris and Townline Slim perform for Razzmajazz on Aug. 15. Due to the low water-levels of Lake Victoria, the iconic Stratford concert series is performing on the shoreline by the Boathouse. For more on how the lake draining is affecting local events, see our story on page 19.

Antoni Cimolino looks ahead to his final season as artistic director of the Stratford Festival

GALEN SIMMONS
Regional Editor

For the entirety of what will be his 40-year career at the Stratford Festival, and even before that as a young actor who chose to dedicate his life to the stage, Antoni Cimolino has been enraptured by the magic of theatre.

Looking ahead to the 2026 season – Cimolino's last as artistic director – he recently spoke with the Times about how he was feeling as his tenure comes

to an end, providing insight into how he plans to take his final bow after 14 seasons leading the festival's creative team.

"I'm really happy to have (next season) announced and the reception has been really terrific, which is great," Cimolino said. "That all feels wonderful and it is time (for me to step down). It's time for me, it's time for my family, but also, it's time for the festival. It will be wonderful to have new energy, new ideas coming, so it's great to have it announced.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2


AVON PHARMACY

Compounding Centre & Home Health Care

618 Huron St, Stratford, ON,

Phone: 226-786-0066 Fax: 226-786-0077

www.avonpharmacy.ca

Pharmacy Services We Offer

- Free Compliance packaging
- Immunization • Free Delivery
- Senior's discount
- Easy Prescription Transfer

\$0 Prescription Co-Pay/Fee (ODB) for Seniors (Age>65) at Avon Pharmacy. We waive upto \$6.11 co-payment/fee on prescriptions covered by ODB.

Antoni Cimolino looks ahead to his final season as artistic director of the Stratford Festival

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

"I mean, it's 39 years I've been at the festival and, either as executive director or as artistic director, this is the 29th season that I've ... put together. So, I don't know what it's going to be like (after). I'm sure I'm going to miss it terribly."

An actor at heart, Cimolino says he wants to ensure his final season with the festival – at least for now – is filled with great parts that allow the festival's company of extraordinary actors the chance to test the full scope of their talents.

Built on a theme of "This Rough Magic," a line from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* – one of three Shakespeare plays to take the festival stage next season – Cimolino said the 2026 playbill includes some of his personal favourites – the plays that helped solidify his core belief that theatre is indeed magic.

"I also wanted to celebrate theatre," he continued. "It feels to me there's something so powerful, so magic about it. We all need it; want it. So, I tried to look for plays that really kind of celebrated (theatre), either by having a play within a play or, like *The Importance of Being Earnest* where everyone is acting a part, it celebrates theatre itself.

"There's this power to theatre. We start doing it when we're kids. We learn through play acting, either with friends or siblings. You never have to explain to children how to play act – they do it automatically. When you take them to the theatre, they take to it like ducks to water. There's something about getting a group of people together in a room to watch another group of people act things out. We all know they're not the people they're portraying, but we somehow get into this mode where we become very moved by it – we laugh, we cry, we learn things. It's a unique element in creation. ... I wanted to cel-

brate kind of the overt theatricality that's there."

That overt theatricality, Cimolino says, played heavily in the decision to restage the festival and director-choreographer Donna Feore's incredibly popular 2024 production of *Something Rotten!*, a musical comedy that puts the vainglorious William Shakespeare himself at the centre of an uproarious story that sets the stage for the advent of musical theatre as a genre.

The Tempest, last staged by the festival in 2017 with the late Martha Henry as lead, is Shakespeare's last solely authored play. With clear parallels to Shakespeare's own career, as well as Cimolino's, the play is a meditation on legacy, on letting go and on the enduring power of art to heal and inspire.

"Here's a magician who refers to his magic as his art, and he's contemplating laying it aside," said Cimolino, who will direct the 2026 production as one of two plays he will helm next season. "*The Tempest* is very much the centrepiece of this season, but each one of these plays has a kind of tip of the hat to theatricality. Whether it's a play within a play in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or whether it's the disguises that really all the characters put on in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, there's a sense of play acting.

"There are one or two plays here where the sense of illusion is internalized. For instance, *Death of a Salesman*; I wanted to do a play about the current world situation within this mix. *Death of a Salesman* is one where the illusion is kind of believed, it's taken onboard – this whole notion of the American dream. I wanted to find a way of examining the world today that wasn't too specific to one personality south of the border. I wanted to look at why populism is on the rise right now, why we all feel that all the things we were promised are unattainable ... and what the endless pursuit of just money,

money, money means to our lives."

Director Pablo Felices-Luna's 2026 Schulich Children's play, *The Hobbit*, is another example of that internalized illusion – in this case for the better – where the main character, Bilbo, play acts as a brave adventurer and thief, and, along his journey, finds those qualities within himself as well as others that are more important – honesty, loyalty and kindness.

This season's two musicals – the return of *Something Rotten!* and a new production of *Guys and Dolls*, last staged at the festival in 2017 – as well as *Waiting for Godot* and *The Tempest* were selected to display the versatility and flexibility of the Festival Theatre stage.

"There's some differences in this season which are really kind of important. For instance, we have two musicals on the Festival Theatre stage, and I wanted to celebrate the flexibility of (that) stage. One, *Something Rotten!*, is absolutely the same cast, brought back, and *Guys and Dolls* will be a new production. *Guys and Dolls* is like *Hamlet*; you're going to end up doing it (again) because it's like a Rorschach test. It tells you who you are by your interpretation.

"... *Waiting for Godot* is an intimate, beautiful play. Remember that the top deck of the Festival Theatre (stage) is only 19 feet across. It's actually quite small and the creative team for *Godot* is so excited to be able to do it on the Festival Theatre stage; it's what they wanted to do. ... Think about the range. There will be two huge musicals and Shakespeare, and then this very, very intimate production on the Festival Theatre stage."

This season's other Shakespeare plays – *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Othello* – have, like *The Tempest*, been staged by the Stratford Festival within the past decade, however Cimolino says the 2026 productions will be

quite unlike those staged at the festival before.

"We normally do those plays at the Festival Theatre, but I wanted to give people an opportunity to see these enormous, iconic plays that are so important to our understanding of who we ... in an intimate space so we can see them differently. We see them up close, we get an experience of them at the Tom Patterson Theatre. In terms of audibility and proximity, you can hear everything so clearly."

In addition to *The Tempest*, Cimolino will direct Eduardo De Filippo's *Saturday, Sunday, Monday* in a brand-new adaptation by Donato Santeramo and Cimolino himself. This play is a richly layered comedy that invites audiences into the heart of a Neapolitan kitchen, where love abides but conflict simmers over.

"*Saturday, Sunday, Monday* is a beautiful play about family and about a marriage," Cimolino said. "... (De Filippo's plays) have this incredible power because they have you laughing, but at the same time, they're usually about serious situations and they also have a power of really moving you. In this one, the love between the members of this family – it's a big Neapolitan family that all live together in this big apartment – is about a couple that has grown apart and they're not talking anymore. ... It's about that process of couples growing apart and not really being able to connect, and how to set that right. In this story, it does get set right and they get a second chance, a new beginning.

"... My first language is Italian; I'm not Neapolitan, I'm from northern Italy, but the family meals, especially Sunday meal, was a big deal. They would bring everybody together. But along with that ... they sometimes turn into not the happy occasions we want because we put so much pressure

CONTINUED TO PAGE 3

Stratford Arts & Culture Collective
SACC
PRESENTS **RON JAMES**

NOT NEARLY DONE YET!

'...a virtuoso comedic performance' - Globe and Mail

AVON THEATRE **SEPT. 15TH**
7:30 PM

99 DOWNIE ST, STRATFORD

HEADLINER SPONSOR
BEE
Home Delivery Ltd. 🍁

TICKETS ON SALE!
SCAN HERE ➔

Antoni Cimolino looks ahead to his final season as artistic director of the Stratford Festival

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

on them. 'They've got to be perfect, we've got to make them perfect,' and in that lies disappointment. De Filippo wrote for a company of actors. There's something like 20 actors in this play, so it's fantastic for the festival. All of his plays have parts for young people, older people, women, men. ... Having a company like we have here ... of great actors; it suits the talents here beautifully."

With this production, Cimolino marks a milestone; the festival will have staged four of De Filippo's plays under his direction, placing him among a rare group of artistic leaders in the English-speaking world to champion the Italian playwright's work so extensively.

Finally, the season's two new plays are playwright and director Jovanni Sy's *The Tao of the New World* and playwright Charlotte Corbeil-Coleman's *The King James Bible Play*.

The world premiere of *Tao of the New World* fuses 17th and 18th century English playwright William Congreve's *The Way of the World* with the fun and glamour of the 2018 film, *Crazy Rich Asians*, promising hilarity, romance and billionaires behaving badly.

Commissioned by the Stratford Festival, *The King James Bible Play*, as directed by Nina Lee Aquino, begins with a gripping portrait of the men behind the monumental translation of the King James Bible, revealing the power structures and cultural biases embedded in their work, and ends with a contemporary group of women who take to the stage to reclaim the narrative, creating a play about the process. The work is a fascinating interrogation of translation in all its forms – be-

tween generations, between genders, between what we inherit and what we choose to believe.

Together, these two plays bring the total number of new plays staged by the festival during Cimolino's tenure as artistic director to 31, a landmark in the festival's history.

While Cimolino plans to remain close with the Stratford Festival after the curtains close on his time as artistic director, perhaps directing the odd play if asked, he is looking forward to the next chapter in his life, which he says he hopes will be filled with more time with family and friends, and enjoying all the festival has to offer as an audience member and not as an administrator.

"From the time I was in grade school, in high school, I was involved in plays. ... I disappointed my parents by not going to law school, but I think it was because I so enjoyed the power of putting on plays – the magic of that – and I don't regret that for a moment," Cimolino said. "At the same time, it's so fulfilling to watch people get transported in the way that theatre does."

"... One thing I know for certain is I don't want to do any more management or administration – that part I know I'm done. Directing plays is a joy and, of course, if down the line, I was asked to direct something at the festival; if I could, I would. I'll always be there for the festival if they need something. In *Coriolanus*, Shakespeare says, 'There is a world elsewhere.' After almost 40 years at the festival, I'm going to stay in Stratford ... and I do want to continue directing, but I want to get back to the art. ... I'm looking forward to other things and attending the festival and just enjoying the plays."



Stratford Kiwanis Garlic Festival

September 6th and 7th

Community Hall, Stratford Rotary Centre

www.stratfordgarlicfestival.ca

We are back for our 17th annual Garlic Festival. While we continue to be dedicated to promoting our Ontario Garlic Producers, our Festival has grown to include many other produce and artisan vendors...something for everyone. The Festival also includes Tastings and Pairings of wine, beer and spirits with a variety of foods on Saturday and cooking demonstrations with local celebrity chefs on Sunday.

SOURCE FLOORING

BIGGEST ON THE BLOCK!

FULLY STOCKED!

BUY IT TODAY TAKE IT TODAY!

DEALS! DEALS! DEALS!

FULLY STOCKED GLUE DOWN VINYL LUXURY IN STOCK 99¢ FROM /SQFT	FULLY STOCKED LUXURY VINYL PAD ATTACHED 20 YR WARRANTY IN STOCK \$1.39 FROM /SQFT
FULLY STOCKED DROP LOCK MODERN LAMINATE WATER RESISTANT AC4 COMMERCIAL IN STOCK 99¢ FROM /SQFT	FULLY STOCKED ENG. HARD WOOD HANDSCRAPED IN STOCK \$3.99 FROM /SQFT
FULLY STOCKED MODERN PORCELAIN TILE TONS OF SIZES AND COLOURS IN STOCK 99¢ FROM /SQFT	FULLY STOCKED SUBWAY TILES 3" X 6" IN STOCK \$1.89 FROM /SQFT
FULLY STOCKED BATHROOM VANITIES ASSEMBLED INCLUDES HANDLES SOFT CLOSE 24" QUARTZ TOP & BACKSPLASH \$399 FROM	FULLY STOCKED NEW! INTERIOR DOORS HALLOW CORE & PRIMED IN STOCK \$99

SOURCE FLOORING

BROWSE ONLINE

SOURCEFLOORING.COM

1362 VICTORIA STREET NORTH KITCHENER
M-F 9AM-8PM SAT 9-6 SUN 10-5 CLOSED SEPT 1

Editorial

Ragweed season is upon us, so I'll be staying indoors for the next two months



GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

It comes like clockwork every year.

While some years are better than others, on Aug. 15 without fail, I begin suffering from what past generations called hay fever, which we now know is due to ragweed allergies.

In the bad years, which the itching in my nose is already warning me this year might be, I get all the allergy symptoms. From itchy and watery eyes, sneezing and an itchy pallet to a stuffed nose and sometimes even a swollen face, I get it all.

And allergy season can be tricky. Sometimes, I wake up feeling great – no symptoms at all – but as soon as I even breathe a whiff of outside air, I start sniffing, sneezing, crying and wheezing almost like I'd just rolled around in a field of that dirty, rotten weed.

Ragweeds are flowering plants in the genus *Ambrosia* and native to North America. Several species have been introduced to Europe and Asia, and

some have naturalized and become invasive species.

The name "ragweed" is derived from "ragged" + "weed," coming from the ragged appearance of the plant's leaves. Other common names include bursages and burrobrushes. The genus name is from the Greek *ambrosia*, meaning "food or drink of immortality," a name I wholeheartedly disagree with.

Ragweed pollen is notorious for causing allergic reactions in humans, specifically allergic rhinitis – a type of inflammation in the nose that occurs when the immune system overreacts to allergens in the air. Up to half of all cases of pollen-related allergic rhinitis in North America are caused by ragweeds.

So, I try every year to seal myself off and remain indoors with the windows closed from Aug. 15 until the first frost, usually in mid-October. I take two 24-hour allergy pills every day like clockwork, as well as a steroid nasal spray once a day, and eye drops and decongestants as needed.

Sometimes, I'm so hopped up on allergy drugs, a single cup of coffee can have me so jittery, I can barely sit still.

However, my work and social life don't always allow me to stay indoors. When I have to cover a fall fair, for example, or a plowing match, or if all my friends are enjoying an afternoon lounging around a pool, I simply have no choice but to

take my meds and hope for the best, which is usually a day relatively free of symptoms and a full night where I feel like my head is so congested it could explode.

So, as this ragweed season comes into full swing, I am praying to the allergy gods for mercy, both for myself and all those like me who suffer needlessly.

An interesting sidenote: When I lived in Saskatchewan for a year and a half, I didn't suffer any ragweed allergies at all. I'm not sure if that's because of the drier climate or if ragweed simply doesn't thrive in the prairies the way it does here, but I was certainly very grateful.

Es tu, crudités?



CONNOR LUCZKA

Times Editor

It's funny how quickly we develop our personalities. Sure, we all evolve as we grow and experience more of the world, but who we, who we truly are, manifests *early*.

My daughter is eight months old this August.

One of the many milestones she has hit is her transition into eating solid foods, which has been continuing for the last few months.

My wife, being the knockout mother that she is, has elected to make all of her purées by hand, introducing new foods periodically as our daughter develops and more become viable for her. Every day, there is a new assortment of fruits and veggies getting steamed: avocados, bananas, peas and the like – as well as the always popular ... carrots.

Just the other night we sat down for her dinner and I set a rubber plate up

with her purées. I'm not ashamed to admit that at this point I've lost track of what each glob is exactly, but there was a green one, a beige one and, of course, an orange one.

My daughter has also hit the milestone that child development professionals call the "throwing everything not nailed down" phase, so these nightly feedings are getting intense. I try to hold onto at least one of the spoons as she grabs them, throws them, and flips them around like a tech deck finger skateboard, but she's already more agile than me, so it's a losing game.

As this particular feeding neared its end, I loaded up the spoon with a big mouthful of orange as my daughter's eyes went wide. It was heading towards her mouth, destined to hit its target, when she suddenly grabbed it by the handle. Her eyes had a marvellous glint in them as she stared at the spoonful of carrot purée locked in suspense. Something clicked in her developing mind, something fully formed.

Like I said, it's funny how quickly our personalities develop. She isn't speaking yet, but in that moment, I knew exactly what she was thinking.

Violence.

While she held the stem of the spoon with one hand, the other came crashing down on the food-end, making it reverberate like one of those spring door stops. Thanks to her smock she remained blissfully clean, laughing as the carrots and whatever

else was on her spoon suddenly became on ... everything. *That glint still in her eyes.*

I think I have a long road ahead of me. Oh well. I wouldn't have it any other way. And one day I'll be able to own white shirts again, right?

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

Editor

Connor Luczka • connor@granthaven.com

Times Reporter

Amanda Modaragamage • amandajanewriter@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

Galen Simmons, Spencer Seymour, Julia Schneider, Gary West, Paul Knowles, Emily Stewart, Lisa Chester, Fred Gonder, Sheila Clarke, Irene Roth, Lee Griffi, Stuart Lender, Sydney Goodwin, Alex Hunt, Julia Paul

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



Perth County embarks on three-year comprehensive zoning bylaw review

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

Following the recent adoption of its new official plan, Perth County is now undertaking a review of comprehensive zoning bylaws for North Perth, West Perth, Perth South and Perth East – a process that could take upwards of three years to complete.

A comprehensive zoning bylaw is a legal document that regulates land use and development within a municipality, ensuring land is used in a manner consistent with the community's goals and policies.

As all four lower-tier municipalities' comprehensive zoning bylaws have not been reviewed or updated in more than 25 years, this review is meant to bring each of them into compliance with the county's new official plan, bring them into alignment with new provisions in Ontario's Planning Act, ensure they are consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement and have them be reflective of current zoning trends and best practices.

"The project will be undertaken in five phases," said Moira Davidson, Perth County's senior policy planner. "The first phase involves a background review of the overarching guiding planning policies that direct how land shall be used within the province to understand the key issues and opportunities to be addressed through each zoning bylaw. Phase two involves the creation of discussion papers that focus on key chapters found within the zoning bylaws.

"The discussion papers will review trends and best practices for key chapters within the zoning bylaws and include a comparator analysis of similar munic-

ipalities with recently adopted zoning bylaw amendments to understand current best practices."

Based on the research conducted in the project's first two phases, Davidson says county planning staff will draft new zoning bylaws for each of the lower-tier municipalities, which will then be presented to the public through a variety of engagement platforms, open houses and public meetings for comment and feedback.

"A mix of community engagement activities and events are to be deployed throughout the course of the project, including in-person open houses, virtual information sessions, one-on-one office hours and public meetings," Davidson said. "We will be using council meetings, the project website, social media, print media and tax mailouts to keep residents informed of upcoming engagement events. As the first phase of the project is background-research heavy, residents can check back in spring 2026 on how to get involved."

That feedback will then be incorporated, where possible, into the final zoning bylaws for council consideration and adoption. Following council adoption, the review's fifth phase will see the zoning bylaws go through the statutory process under the Planning Act for appeals and feedback before they are implemented.

As many of the recent changes to the county's official plan were made to bring the official plan into conformity with provincial policy, county planning staff will take a similar approach with the zoning bylaw review.

"This is by no means a complete list, but some of

the provisions that will be looked at during this review include the expansion of permissions for on-farm diversified uses, the alignment of accessible parking provisions with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and permissions for mixed-use buildings," Davidson said.

The comprehensive zoning bylaw review is a chance to ensure the zoning rules in each local municipality work for citizens who engage with the planning process, including community groups, developers and professionals.

For more information about the review, visit the project website at www.perthcounty.ca/zblreview or email zblreview@perthcounty.ca to register for regular project updates.

Maximize your return.

**Conservative
Advice for
Intelligent
Decisions**



Donna L. Hinz



Franklin E. Hinz

196 Ontario Street
Stratford, Ontario N5A 3H4

519-273-1633 franklinehinz.com



STRATFORD PERTH
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

**JOIN
OUR
TEAM**

**DIRECTOR,
FUND
DEVELOPMENT**

APPLY NOW



Application Deadline:
August 28 @ 11:59 pm



We're hiring a
Director of Fund
Development to help
advance a bold
vision for
philanthropy in
Stratford, St. Marys,
and Perth County. If
you're passionate
about building
community, nurturing
relationships, and
driving meaningful
change—this role is
for you.

VISIT US AT
SPCCF.CA



Stratford Branch 008

**All veterans and First Responders are welcome at the branch
Tuesday mornings 10:30 to noon for a social visit at the Buddy
Check Coffee.**

**The Branch Chaplain can provide Mental and Moral support.
Notice of itinerary visit of Mrs. Rebecca Hyndman, Provincial
Service Officer will visit Branch 8, Stratford on
Thurs. Oct. 9th, 2025; 1 p.m. to assist veterans and their widows.**

**Please contact Branch 8 - 519-271-4540
email: StratfordLegion008@gmail.com**

**or the Branch Service Officer Steve Zurbrigg - 519-305-1125
email: SteveZurbrigg@gmail.com to arrange an interview.**

**804-B Ontario St., Stratford N5A 3K1
stratfordlegion008@gmail.com**

'Rappin' Granny' Bette Reynolds closes out Stratford library's Happy Hour series with a bang



(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

Bette Reynolds, the "Rappin' Granny," performs alongside local musician Jaron Camp during the Stratford Public Library's Happy Hour series finale.



(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

Guests mingle over cocktails and mocktails from Junction 56 Distillery during the Stratford Public Library's final Happy Hour event of the summer on Friday, Aug. 15.



(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

Autism service dogs Bruno and Hudson, with their handlers, take in the music during the Stratford Public Library's Happy Hour event that evening.

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Times Reporter

The Stratford Public Library's final Happy Hour of the summer went out with a lyrical bang, thanks to 76-year-old rapper – and local legend – Bette Reynolds.

Known to many as the "Rappin' Granny," Reynolds lit up the library on Aug. 15 with a high-energy set that blended her famous raps with Beatles covers, backed by local musician Jaron Camp.

The performance, part of the library's Happy Hour event series, drew a lively crowd for an evening of music, mingling and drinks.

"We're excited to have people at the library to mix and mingle, have a drink from Junction 56, some snacks and enjoy the live performance," said librarian Melanie Kindrachuk. "We usually have less programming happening in the summer, so we thought this would be a really fun way to add some zing."

Reynolds, who emigrated from Scotland years ago, became widely known in the U.K. after appearing as a finalist on The Voice in 2020, performing just one month after her husband passed away.

"I was meant to do it," she said to the sold-out show at the library last Friday. "He passed away Jan. 25, and I was on

stage Feb. 25 performing. It was a special, special thing and I was meant to be there."

Reflecting on her appearance on The Voice, Reynolds recalled the surreal moment she realized where she was standing.

"I was looking for my marker on the floor and then I looked up to see the names on the judges' chairs and I thought, 'This is ridiculous – why am I here?'"

The evening wasn't without its lighter moments. Reynolds grinned while talking about meeting American singer-songwriter LeAnn Rimes.

"Meeting LeAnn Rimes was great. She follows me on Instagram now too – not trying to name drop or anything," she joked.

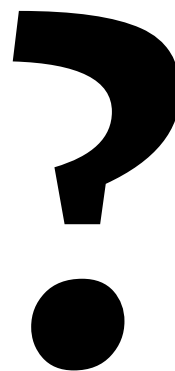
For Reynolds, Friday's show at the library was extra special.

"Oh, brilliant, yeah, absolutely brilliant," she said of performing in her hometown. "Let's face it – there's no place like home."

The performance was made possible in part by Destination Stratford's Music Pop-Up Grant. Junction 56 Distillery provided cocktails and mocktails for the sold-out crowd, giving the library a final toast to a summer of community connection and creativity.

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

stratfordtimes@gmail.com



**Don't get caught information-less
at a time of need.**

What's the difference between Aquamation & Cremation?

Which type of will is the best will?

How do I keep funeral costs low?

What happens with my TFSA (tax free savings account)?

How does MAiD (medical assistance in dying) work?

What is probate and is it necessary?

How do I make things easy for family & friends?

What do I need to do as an executor?

How do I donate my body to science?

Why should I prearrange my wishes?

What is a death doula?

What cemetery information should I be aware of?

What are the questions that need to be answered?

What are the procedures when someone dies?

Rutherford Cremation & Funeral Services
804 Ontario St., Stratford | 519-271-5062
rutherford@jarfh.com | www.jarfh.com

INNERchamber announces 16th season concert lineup

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

Fans of chamber music and musical explorations of history and popular culture will be happy to learn Stratford's INNERchamber is returning for its 16th season with a lineup of six unique concerts.

For artistic director and violinist Andrew Chung, having the opportunity to carry the INNERchamber tradition forward after 15 years sharing and performing the music he loves with friends, neighbours and total strangers is a dream come true.

"It feels really great. I'm really grateful at this stage, coming off such a successful 15th season," Chung said. "We had our best sales and attendance ever. We're thriving and that just feels wonderful as an arts organization. Our board of directors has been absolutely wonderful; they work hard, they bring a lot of their individual skills and understanding to helping INNERchamber to succeed, and I just think we've got a great formula that seems to be resonating with the community."

"For that, I'm super grateful and super excited to launch this season 16."

While the details for all of this season's concerts aren't entirely set in stone yet, Chung said INNERchamber, its musicians and some special guest performers will be embarking on a number of firsts for the organization.

The first concert, *Beyond Limits*, will take place at Factory163, INNERchamber's longtime venue and the location for all its concerts this season. For this performance, INNERchamber will present an ambitious program featuring two string quartets: Beethoven's legendary "Opus 59, No. 1" from his middle period, which is enormous in scope and full of meaning and invention, paired with the great Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer's "String Quartet No. 11."

"With INNERchamber, we use a core ensemble and part of that core ensemble is the string quartet," Chung said. "String quartet is probably the most intensely rehearsed and prepared music that we do, so we're really looking forward to digging into this program. Every three years or so, we like to tackle one of Beethoven's quartets; he composed 17 of them and they're really seminal pieces, each one, in the genre. So, this 'Opus 59, No. 1' ... is just fantastic. It's enormous in scope; I think it's over 40 minutes long, so we're even preparing for that now in the summer, trying to get some early work done on it. ... It brings out all the best of us as string-quartet players."

"... So, we were thinking what to pair with it ... and we thought, 'You know, let's do something by a Canadian, by R. Murray Schafer. R. Murray Schafer composed 12 string quartets. They are fantastic and when I listened to this 11th one, I was really taken by it. Just like



(PHOTO COURTESY OF INNERCHAMBER)

INNERchamber artistic director Andrew Chung.

Beethoven, he's really stretching the limits of the ensemble and there's just really creative ways of writing and expressing himself. I think it's a perfect fit, these two quartets together."

As always, INNERchamber is bringing in a number of guest artists to complement each performance of the 16th season.

Derek Kwan, known for his roles in both Stratford Festival musicals this season, will join the INNERchamber string quartet for its second concert of the season, *From the Salons of Paris*, on Nov. 30.

In early 20th century Paris, the tradition of the salon was rich with storytelling, songs and instrumental music, from the macabre to the ridiculous. Kwan, a uniquely gifted singer and actor, will guide the audience through the salons of Paris with Germaine Tailleferre's "String Quartet," Francis Poulenc's "La Dame de Monte Carlo," Oscar Wilde's "The Nightingale" by Laura Burton and many more.

For the season's third concert, Christopher Moorehead will be bringing his dual passions for design and typefaces to *Typeface: A Concert of Characters* on Feb. 1, 2026.

"Christopher Moorehead is a graphic designer specializing in typography and design and data visualization; he's a really interesting man with an amazing working career," Chung said. "I was talking to Chris about typefaces and he just gets so animated because there's all these stories behind how the typefaces developed. A lot of people might call

them fonts, but the correct word for the style of the lettering is typeface, and it's a really deep well. There's a lot of stories there to explore that follow the trajectory of music."

"There are developments in typeface and there are developments in how you look at print on the page, but it largely follows a similar developmental arc to music across the past 500 years or more. So together with Christopher, we'll be handpicking some stories to tell and we're going to be finding some music from the same era and countries of origin that these typeface designers came from."

In the fourth concert of the season, Chung will join local fiddle legend and longtime friend Dan Stacey to create a new program together called *In the Steps of O'Carolan* to be performed on March 1, 2026. Turlough O'Carolan, considered by many to be Ireland's national composer, travelled across the country in the early 18th century with the help of a guide on account of his blindness, composing hundreds of songs and harp pieces along the way.

Stacey has had a lifelong fascination with the work of O'Carolan, and he joins the INNERchamber Ensemble and narrator Cedric Smith to tell the remarkable story of this composer, including his artistic influences and enduring impact on folk music.

The fifth concert of the season, *Reverence*, will bring a much-needed pause and nod to nature, for all that springtime brings, with a program co-curated by Spy Dénommé-Welch. For this



(PHOTO COURTESY OF INNERCHAMBER)

INNERchamber has announced a lineup of six concerts for its 16th season.

concert on April 12, Dénommé-Welch – a multi-disciplinary composer, librettist, playwright and educator of Algonquin-Anishnaabe descent – will compose new works themed around the environment, a reverence for our planet and the coming of spring.

The season finale, *Imagining Samuel Coleridge-Taylor*, set for May 24, will see the return of poet, playwright, director and actor Roy Lewis for a program that blends music from this great British composer with an original script of poetry and prose written by Lewis himself.

Composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's musical legacy blends a mastery of Viennese forms with the vital currents of North American Black music at the turn of the 20th century. Using an inimitable blend of fact and fiction, prose and poetry, Lewis presents the life of Coleridge-Taylor and the events that helped shape one of Britain's brightest musical talents.

While each of this season's concert will be performed live at Factory163 alongside delicious meals, INNERchamber will continue to make two live concerts accessible through video on demand (VOD), recorded by Mike Fisher of Stream Studio. In the *Steps of O'Carolan* and *Imagining Samuel Coleridge-Taylor* will be the two concerts available on VOD on the Wednesday after each live event.

Season pass subscriptions and single tickets are now on sale at www.innerchamber.ca.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT GRANTHAVEN.COM

From babies to seniors, local humane society teaches all ages about responsible pet ownership

ALEX HUNT

Times Correspondent

Every year for the past two decades, the Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo & Stratford Perth educates more than 30,000 people about animal care, empathy and safety in a variety of hands-on programs – and they are showing no signs of slowing down.

What started as the occasional school visit has now expanded into dozens of programs offering locals and visitors the value of caring for all animals.

“We always ran programs at both the Kitchener and Stratford locations to try and teach the community about responsible pet ownership and how to be good friends and neighbours to animals,” said Kathleen McCaughey, manager of community engagement and outreach with the humane society. “We think by teaching them young is the best way to create responsible pet owners when they’re older.

“We teach from babies ... all the way to adults and everyone in between. The more people know, the more knowledge they have of the bylaws and how to properly care for animals and make responsible choices.”

Starting with young children, McCaughey said they learn how to be safe and empathetic towards animals and as they get older, there is education provided about behavior and how to recognize when it’s safe to approach an



(ALEX HUNT PHOTO)

Avery-Raine Arnstowski, animal care worker at the Stratford location of the Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo & Stratford Perth, caring for a kitten as it awaits its new home.

animal. Along with the importance of identifying how an animal is feeling to keep themselves and the animals safe.

“We go all the way to discussing laws and who makes the law decisions around pets and who children can talk to on a concern about pets. We really cover the whole spectrum of what they’re learning and how we can relate

it to animals,” said McCaughey. “For high school, we talk about different careers and ethical issues when it comes to animals.”

Education programs are all run by program staff, including McCaughey, her team and some volunteers, along with visits from experts as well. McCaughey said that veterans and vet technicians

are brought in to provide informational sessions. Additionally, the award-winning summer camp brings over 40 community experts to educate children on various pet ownership topics.

“After every single program we send out a survey and we always ask how did the participants like the program or make them feel and what they would like to see in the future,” said McCaughey. “A lot of people who come to our programs end up coming back in and adopting, which is wonderful.”

“We see up to 30,000 people a year and teach them different things. We are trying to get in front of as many individuals as we can to teach them about safe animal interaction, choosing a pet and other education.”

Programs will take place in various environments such as schools, community centers or at the humane society itself. Along with many long-term care facilities and organizations, there are lots of opportunities for corporate groups to volunteer which also provides extensive education.

“We have a Tiny Tails program that parents can enroll their babies in as soon as they’re born ... as well as yoga programs to encourage comfortability with animals, and education programs where people can come in, do tours and listen to talks on different topics.”

Dancing Waters Boutique

We carry unique Asia featured vintage works of art. It includes Brass, Cloisonné, furniture, Jewelry, Porcelain, and Zen & Buddha, etc.

11 York Street Stratford | 647-215-8515
www.dancingwatersboutique.com

York Street: A Street With Heart

WHERE INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITY COME TOGETHER-TAKE A STROLL AND EXPLORE THIS HIDDEN GEM.



Dancing Waters Boutique



Distinctly Tea



Antiques In Time



Jen and Larry's Ice Cream Shoppe



YORK STREET

YORK STREET

YORK STREET

LAKESIDE DRIVE

DISTINCTLY TEA

Whether you are new to tea or well aquainted, we are certain that you will find a taste you love.

18 York St., Stratford
519-271-9978
www.distinctlyteastratford.ca

Antiques in Time

Watch & Clock Service & Sales
All makes & models
FREE ESTIMATES
House calls available
45 York Street | 519-272-0411
www.antiquesintime.ca

JENN and Larry's
Ice Cream Shoppe
Riverside 49 York St. Stratford
519-508-4949

ICE CREAM • MILKSHAKES • BLASTS • FLOATS
SUNDAES • FROZEN YOGURT • VEGAN ICE CREAM
Make your next event extra special with an ice cream cake, pie or sundae bar!
ASK ABOUT OUR FUNDRAISING OPTIONS
www.jenn-and-larrys-ice-cream-shoppe.com

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT GRANTHAVEN.COM

Library releases fifth anthology of local youth writers

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

“I used to love that trail,” Max Denomme read from the back of Fanfare Books, a popular downtown independent bookstore. “Now, I can’t even look at trees without hearing them breathe. The forest was darker than usual. I always walked that trail when I couldn’t sleep. It was the only place that felt quiet. I had walked that trail plenty of times before, even at night, so I knew what to expect.”

“But something felt off, like the whole place was holding its breath, waiting for something...”

Denomme, reading an excerpt from his short story “Not Supposed to be Here,” was one of the six writers that participated in the Aug. 15 public reading of *Forest of Words 2025*, an anthology of short stories by youth involved with the Writers in Residence program at the Stratford Public Library (SPL).

Ranging from black comedy and horror to slice-of-life coming of age stories, the anthology is the fifth edition SPL has released – and is one of the biggest yet.

According to Brooke Windsor, youth services librarian and anthology editor, the Writers in Residence program started during the “worst summer ever,” the summer of 2021. Faced with another lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, high school students needed to get creative to maintain their community service hours and keep engaged with their peers.

“I participated in a writer’s club back in the dark ages of my own high school years and thought with so many new digital tools I could make it work,” Windsor told the Times. “The teen participants get ways to hone their writing and gain community service hours as they contribute to the story of Stratford in their own words. ... Basically, we are growing our own local authors from the ground up with this program.”

In the first year, five writers signed up for the residency program, and it was so successful Windsor elected to run the program every year. This year, there are eight writers – Eliana Williams, Sophie Titus, Hem Patel, Gavin Purdon, Neda Unal, August Purdy-Kremer, Sena Unal and Max Denomme – all in high school.

In July, writers have a weekly hour-long meeting over Zoom. Each week they explore a different type of writing (such as horror, comedy or poetry) with prompts provided by Windsor. After 15 to 20 minutes of writing, they come back and share what they achieved. All



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Forest of Words 2025 is the fifth and latest anthology composed of local youth writers involved with the Stratford Public Library’s Writers in Residence program.

the while, the writers are also working on other pieces that they are passionate about in the background.

In the end, the writers submit the pieces they want in the anthology, usually a mix of pieces written outside of meetings and some they created during the meetings as well. As editor, Windsor said the majority of her work comes down to piecing the anthology together at the end of the program. Files are shared amongst the writers, letting each other do peer-review, and self-editing is encouraged.

“The reaction of the program has been amazing since the beginning,” Windsor said. “The writers as a whole are thrilled to dip their toes into the world of publishing their works. Although, one of my favorite interactions was from one of our teen writers searching their name in our library catalogue and emailing me immediately that they screamed so loud in excitement their parents got scared.”

As Windsor explained, once the anthology is catalogued, each writer receives an author tag in the digital system, allowing youth to share space with the likes of Stephen King and Margaret Atwood.



(CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

Hem Patel, Sophie Titus, Gavin Purdon, Max Denomme, August Purdy-Kremer and Eliana Williams pose in Fanfare Books with Forest of Words 2025, after reading excerpts of their short stories included in the anthology.

“I think my favorite part of this program is taking the solitary act of writing and making it a group effort,” Windsor shared. “The writing exercises each week are a big part of this angle because, yes, they must write the prompt but then they also all have to share what they wrote ... Each group of writers we have is special in their own way (even though we frequently have returning writers before they graduate), and it is the group dynamic that really makes this program special because they can work off of each other and get exposed to other ideas.”

“Truly, the program is a group effort, and I couldn’t be prouder of that fact.”

To read more from these authors, check out the anthology at the library. Windsor and the team at SPL encourage anyone with feedback to let the fledgeling authors know by emailing bwindsor@splibrary.ca.

Weekend Quiz

1. The first colour photo in the world was taken in which year?
2. What is Canada’s most valuable company based on market capitalization?
3. The car crash that killed Princess Diana occurred in which city?
4. When was the last time the Blue jays won the AL East?
5. Gregor Mendel is considered to be the father of the modern study of what?
6. What is the meaning of the letter “R” on movie rating?
7. What two brothers lead the English rock band oasis?
8. What is the typical pH level of pure water?
9. Is the Equator a line of latitude or of longitude?
10. From the 16th to 18th centuries, India was ruled by which dynasty?

By Jake Grant

This week’s answers are found on pg. 27

Shelf Help Review

HEATHER LISTER

Stratford Public Library

Raising Hare by Chloe Dalton
@SPL: 599.3280941 Dal

When Chloe Dalton found an abandoned leveret - a baby hare, and decided to raise it, she had absolutely no idea just how much it would change her life.

Raising Hare is the true story of that unusual relationship that began one day when Dalton encountered the leveret sitting in the middle of the road. Knowing that many well-meaning rescues of wildlife don’t end well, she decided to leave well alone, and hope its mother would find it. When, several hours later, the hare was still sitting in the same spot, she felt compelled to take it home with her.

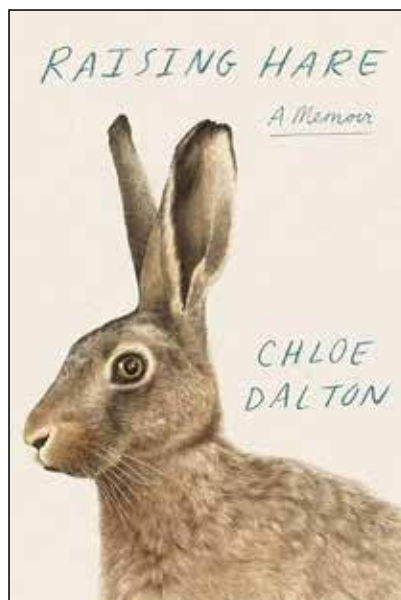
Dalton’s career as a political advisor required her to travel regularly, and for that reason she had never acquired any pets. But now the COVID-19 pandemic forced her into isolation and to sit tight in a remote farmhouse.

Dalton sought advice from books and from a local conservationist on how to care for the hare. Neither were particularly helpful. The books tended to cover the res-

cue of wild rabbits, and the conservationist warned her the hare was unlikely to survive.

As the weeks went on, Dalton’s pace of life slowed down and kept time with the little animal. And she realized just how rewarding it was to observe it grow and thrive. She never named it and she never tried to turn it into a pet, but rather, just allowed it to be. The hare taught Dalton about what it means to slow down and live a peaceful, meditative existence.

Raising Hare is quite simply a delightful memoir. Sparsely, yet beautifully written, it was a joy to follow Dalton’s journey. This is easily one of the most captivating books I’ve read this year.



STRATFORD'S GAME SPECIALISTS

Stratford best selection of Board Games, Puzzles, Pool Tables, Dart Boards, Accessories & MORE



BILLIARD & GAME TABLES DARTS, BOARDS & ACCESSORIES JIGSAW PUZZLES BOARD GAMES

Joyland's
Billiard & Games Warehouse

64 Linton Ave
Stratford
519-508-7665
www.JoylandStratford.ca

FREE DOOR HARDWARE
VALUE UP TO \$350
WITH YOUR DOOR PURCHASE*

Ends August 31st

103

LINTON 50
WINDOW & DOOR CELEBRATING YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Visit LintonWindow.com

LA-Z-BOY FURNITURE
15% OFF ALL SUMMER LONG!
15% OFF Any new stock item or custom order



LA-Z-BOY
ComfortStudio
Live Life Comfortably.

SPRINGWALL CANADA-MONTH QUEEN MATTRESS SPECIAL \$599*
*Including HST and Delivery

5663 Line 86, HWY 86 East of Listowel
519-291-3820
www.conwayfurniture.com

CONWAY FURNITURE

Proudly made in Ontario

MT
MARBLE TRADITION
est 1989

GROUT FREE

1408 Victoria St. N. Unit 16, Kitchener
(Showroom only)

225 Sheldon Ave, Unit 22, 23, Cambridge
(Showroom and manufacturing)

519-571-7567 | www.marbletradition.com



Family-owned Marble Tradition branching out into Stratford

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Marble Tradition, a family-owned business based out in Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge regions, is continuing to branch out into Stratford after the community has opened its arms – and its renos – to the Pauls family.

“We are a family-run business,” Marble Tradition owner Alf Pauls explained. “I have me, and my two sons that work with me, and my wife works there as well.

“We pride ourselves in using the best of the best products,” Pauls went on to say. “We pride ourselves in giving quality jobs and giving a great price. ... My wife calls it affordable luxury.”

Marble Tradition manufactures bathroom products made of cultured marble, cultured granite and cultured onyx, man-made products constructed of calcium carbonate, polyester resins and a waterproof marine gel coating. They are Canadian-made – locally sourced in Ontario, in fact – and often environmentally friendly. The Pauls use recycled materials wherever possible.

There are a number of competitive advantages when using cultured stone for a bathroom. As Pauls previously mentioned, it can be a better economic option, but it is also mould, mildew and stain resistant, durable, easy to maintain, non-porous and there are a greater variety of colours, shapes and sizes that can be created.

The Pauls took over Marble Traditions in 2011 when Pauls purchased the circa. 1989 business. Right away, Pauls and his wife Jennifer took to the business, and their sons Chris and Dylan joined them the following year in 2012.

As Pauls explained, what started as a way to change their pace and take on a new career quickly morphed into the thriving business it is today. Now, they are focused on growth and doing more renovations, though long-term Pauls would like to see his sons take over the business and continue the family legacy.

Though, if another opportunity presents itself to



them, he would be just as happy, he added.

Pauls said that their push into Perth County and Stratford came naturally.

“My wife has family down there,” Pauls said. “We go there maybe every second weekend anyways. Over there is lots of work – you guys have lots of renovations going on. ... In Stratford area, people do support local a lot, and they will pay the extra dollar for a better product, especially if it is local.”

Marble Tradition works with renovators and installers from the design stage to installation. Its work is insured and warrantied, with a lifetime guarantee. It offers financing options through Financeit so all customers can get the one-of-a-kind bathroom they’ve dreamt of.

Contact the team at info@marbletradition.com or (519) 571-7567 to request a free in-home measurement, or for more information.

Alternatively, those interested can go to their showrooms at 1408 Victoria St. N in Kitchener or 225 Sheldon Dr. in Cambridge, open Tuesday to Friday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., or Saturday, Sunday and Monday by appointment.

PROUDLY CANADIAN SINCE 1961.

GIANT TIGER



477 Huron St., Stratford

STORE HOURS:
Mon. – Fri. 8 am to 8 pm
Sat. 8 am to 6 pm | Sun. 9 am to 6 pm

Four in five Canadians read newspapers weekly.



CANADA'S NEWS MEDIA CHAMPIONS OF THE TRUTH

#Newspapers247

Stratford Perth Museum celebrates Labour Day with stories, music and hands-on fun

ALEX HUNT

Times Correspondent

Music, education and a storytelling parade await visitors at the Stratford Perth Museum this Labour Day, as it celebrates the tireless efforts of local labour movements and brings history to life for all generations.

On Sept. 1, the Stratford Perth Museum will be offering a free admission, fun-filled day for the community to take part in, and an afternoon of remembering the importance of Labour Day through a variety of visual storytelling concepts.

Taking place between the hours of 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. attendees will have the opportunity to immerse themselves within Canada's labour history through pop-up exhibits which explore past strikes and protests.

"The Stratford and District Labour Council came to me with some wonderful union history with the idea for a labour celebration. This was a time when labour councils have worked tirelessly towards fairness and safety in the workplace, as well as equal pay," Kelly McIntosh, general manager at the museum, said.

Event visitors can explore the muse-



(ALEX HUNT PHOTO)

Kelly McIntosh, general manager at the Stratford Perth Museum, looks forward to the community joining the museum and indulging in the rich history of Stratford's labour past.

um grounds guided by a storytelling parade where they listen to local tales ranging from the 1897 train explosion to the chicken plucker's strike. Attend-

ees will interact with local historians, authors and performers. The event includes food and refreshments, outdoor and indoor activities for all ages, community collaborators and kids' crafts in the Hydeaway.

"We got history on our trails, which is a template for a walk-through history that the council wants to do," said McIntosh. "There will be displays that talk about our labour history."

McIntosh said that the museum aims to tell stories that address past injustices, highlight overlooked experiences and showcase instances where change has occurred. They hope to encourage reflection and growth, emphasizing the importance of teaching younger generations not to take hard-won rights and progress for granted.

"Any of the stories we tell, from women's history to hormonal health, through to some of the community conversations this year that took place – the only way that history can change is to look back at the times where it didn't," said McIntosh. "We have to understand where we come from and make changes. They have to be big enough, so they don't get taken away at a moment's notice."

Stratford & District Agricultural Society president calls for younger volunteers to keep fair and market thriving

ALEX HUNT

Times Correspondent

The Stratford & District Agriculture Society is juggling its farmers market, barbecues and annual fair while leaning on donations and sponsors to keep programs running without steady financial support.

Laurie Neubrand became president of the society just this year. She thought she would just be helping out at the barbecues at the Stratford Farmers' Market every Saturday. Between balancing the upcoming fall fair, tracking donations, along with helping with fundraising and events, Neubrand says that the society is in need of volunteers to help.

"We are non-profit, but the fair brings in money and it's a free fair. We also have a lot of sponsors and donations, but we need help and volunteers," said Neubrand. "We run this farmers' market every Saturday which is a little bit of income for us and income for these farmers too. We donate to different programs, but the fair is a big thing to organize."

Neubrand is asking for more volunteers and board members as its long-serving supporters grow older. She says that younger people are needed to help carry on the work, as many



(ALEX HUNT PHOTO)

Laurie Neubrand, John DeWys and Andrea Dolson serve attendees at the annual barbecue at the Stratford Farmers' Market.

retirees who have volunteered for years are no longer able to contribute as much time. The society's ladies division, which runs the homecrafts at the Rotary Complex during the annual fall fair, is also looking for new members to keep the tradition going.

"I think we're ongoing and trying to adapt from year to year to find out where we're settling. The fair in a way is getting bigger. The fair itself is free, we're hoping if we just keep drawing people in and expanding that way, hopefully everything will fall into place

and we're able to get volunteers and the businesses in town can help us out."

Neubrand says that the society wants the fair to have more programming and a variety of events. Currently they run exhibits in the big hall ranging from quilts, sowing, crafts, along with the Fair Ambassador Competition.

Neubrand explained the fair provides a communal link that runs through the community, through the Farmers' Market, where people are buying local and fresh food products.

"People come out there every Saturday. We are a year-round market. Everybody is here to sit and chat, everyone knows who they're buying from."

Neubrand says that the society also supports the annual Passport to Savings, a \$50 coupon booklet offering discounts at nearly 200 local businesses. Proceeds from the booklet benefit local charities, including the Stratford House of Blessing.

The House of Blessing also uses the funds to help support its programs, including fundraising towards a free community Christmas dinner, which also requires the help of community volunteers. Neubrand added that the program allows residents to help the community's local business while also shopping with a discount.

Stratford's heart bike racks bring art and function to downtown, plus new bike rack installation at police station

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Times Reporter

If you've been downtown lately, you may have noticed the bright red heart-shaped bike racks sprinkled along the streets. Installed over the winter, this summer marks their first season in full use – and people are loving them.

"They're really cute. People love them," said Kim Griffiths, a member of the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area (BIA) and animation liaison, which partnered with the City of Stratford's active transportation advisory committee (ATAC) on the project. "When we posted a reel of the installation, it blew up on social media."

The racks were designed locally after the BIA spotted a similar style in England, but couldn't import them. SBS Metals Ltd., a Stratford company, created the racks based on specs the BIA found online. Painted bright red to match the BIA's "Heart of the City" branding, the racks were co-funded by the BIA and ATAC.

Special thanks, Griffiths added, go to city public works staff led by Jeremy Witzel, manager of public works at the city, who, with his team, installed the racks and ensured they were placed at the right height for snow clearing.

The 12 racks are scattered throughout the downtown, intentionally spreading beyond Ontario Street to encourage visitors to ex-

plore the BIA's full boundaries. They've become as much a piece of public art as functional infrastructure.

Building on the heart racks' success, two larger bike racks are set to be installed at the Stratford Police Station – one at the front and one near the new accessibility ramp at the back.

The racks, funded by the Stratford Police Services, will be monitored by existing security cameras on-site. The location was chosen to tie into the police station's designated "safe exchange zone," where residents can meet to buy and sell items under surveillance.

"It's a great place to put bike racks because bike theft is a big issue," Kim said. "Having them in a well-lit, camera-monitored spot should make them a safe place to park."

The new racks will be larger than the heart racks, holding up to five bikes each. The BIA will receive one nine-foot-long rack and one seven-foot-long model.

Stratford Police Chief Greg Skinner welcomed the idea immediately. "He thought it was a marvellous idea," Griffiths said.

The BIA hopes the combination of art, safety, and accessibility will keep more residents choosing their bikes over cars – a goal that aligns with other downtown initiatives, like this year's Car-Free Fridays.

"It's all about making it easier and more inviting to bike downtown," Griffiths said. "And if we can make it look good too, even better."



One of Stratford's new bright red heart-shaped bike racks, installed downtown over the winter, adds a pop of colour while offering cyclists a safe place to lock up. The racks, created by local company SBS Metals Ltd. and co-funded by the Stratford City Centre BIA and the city's Active Transportation Advisory Committee, have quickly become a hit with residents.

(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTO)

ONE CARE's Shop for Seniors returns for September

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

Supporting local businesses in September can ensure seniors and adults with health challenges have reliable transportation.

ONE CARE Home and Community Support Services will bring back their Shop for Seniors fundraising initiative for the month of September. Shop for Seniors involves participating local businesses who will donate proceeds to the organization supporting seniors and adults with health challenges in Huron and Perth Counties.

"It's very exciting. I started this campaign back in 2021 after we were all starting to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, (so) we could partner with our community to encourage people to shop local but while also supporting ONE CARE," said fundraising coordinator Lindsey Martchenko. "Several years later, we're still here and we're still doing the campaign, and our community is so, so supportive even during these difficult financial times for businesses."

ONE CARE aims to raise \$500,000 for their Driven to Care campaign to purchase new accessible vehicles for its clients, so they can have reliable transportation for medical appointments, community programs and more. Ev-



(EMILY STEWART PHOTO)

ONE CARE's Shop for Seniors will return for September to raise money for accessible vehicles for their clients. Many of the participating businesses are in Stratford.

ery year, ONE CARE provides nearly 50,000 rides to seniors and adults with health challenges.

"The reality is that we have a lot of the accessible vehicles that either need repairs or need full replacement because they are all on the road constant-

ly driving clients to things like medical appointments or social outings or adult day programs or running errands," Martchenko said. "I was just at a wedding on the weekend, and ONE CARE brought the bride's mother from the home where she's living."

ONE CARE's other initiatives towards the Driven to Care campaign include monthly 50/50 draws and June's Steps for Seniors Walkathon.

So far, there are eight Stratford businesses participating in Shop for Seniors with more to be announced. The Candy Store Corner Co. will donate 25 per cent of sales from three eligible candy mixes towards ONE CARE. Demetre's Family Eatery will donate a dollar from every senior's menu item towards ONE CARE during the month of September. Mosaic Outfitters will sell ONE CARE hoodies for the cause in September and Paws On Patrol will donate 10 per cent of their sales.

Domino's Pizza in Stratford will donate 30 per cent of orders over \$25 made on Sept. 26 towards ONE CARE. Sirkel Foods will also have a ONE CARE-wich daily special to raise money.

Zurich's Hayter's Farm, Jordan Auto in Wingham, the St. Marys Golf and Country Club, and St. Marys-based photographer Sarah Michal Studios will also be participating in Shop for Seniors.

More information on Shop for Seniors can be found online by visiting <https://www.onecaresupport.ca/shopforseniors> or by sending an email to fundraising@onecaresupport.ca.

Wildwood hosts spooky bingo as part of Halloween in August



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTO)

Kids and their families gathered inside the education centre at Wildwood Conservation Area on Saturday, Aug. 16 to play Halloween Bingo.



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTO)

Pictured, Logan and Ryan Anderson and Grant and Corin Hoonaard mark their cards during a game of Halloween Bingo.

Share moments, not measles.

Measles is a contagious virus and it's spreading.

But there's good news, the measles vaccine is safe, highly effective and can provide life-long protection from measles.

Vaccination doesn't just protect you, it also protects your family and your community, especially at-risk groups like babies or people with weakened immune systems.

Contact your local public health unit to check your vaccination status or book a vaccine appointment today.

ontario.ca/measles

Paid for by the Government of Ontario

Ontario 

STRATFORD **TIMES** SPORTS

Three Stratford walking soccer players representing Canada in October

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Times Regional Reporter

Three members of the Stratford Sloths Walking Soccer Club will represent Canada at the Oct. 21-31 International Walking Soccer World Nations Cup in Torrevieja, Spain.

Dan Festoso, Andrew Hilton and Jorge Mota, who all play walking soccer in Stratford, were selected to play for three Canadian national squads competing at the international championship tournament later this year.

Festoso, who is suiting up for the 60s men's team, described his entry into the sport, which has only just begun to gain some traction.

"I thought it was a crazy idea to be walking around playing soccer," Festoso admitted. "I played soccer all my life until I tore my ACL in my 50s, so I didn't play any soccer after that. When I got into my 60s, I was trying to figure out how to get more exercise, and my buddies were bugging me about trying walking soccer, and I kept saying no, but realizing I was out of shape and with my wife's encouragement I decided to give it a shot, and now I absolutely love it."

Walking soccer is played with altered rules from running soccer, with the most visibly notable being that players are limited to heel-to-toe walking rather than being able to run. Additionally, the ball cannot be sent more than two metres high, and the field is smaller than traditional soccer pitches.

Festoso said the different nuances of walking soccer make it an intriguing alternative for those not looking for the hyper-competitive adult league-level soccer that may include people in their 20s and 30s, while keeping the element of staying active.

"I get a great workout from it, and it really changes the game," said Festoso. "You have to be a lot more accurate playing walking soccer because in traditional soccer, you can put the ball into a space while your teammate runs to that space. But when you're walking, that guy can't get to that space as fast, so you've got to be a lot more accurate. It gives guys who can't play the running



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Pictured from left to right are Jorge Mota, Andrew Hilton, and Dan Festoso. The three Stratford residents are representing Canada as part of three different national team squads competing at the International Walking Soccer World Nations Cup in Torrevieja, Spain, on Oct. 21-31.

game anymore a chance to stay active and keep playing soccer."

Hilton, who was selected to be part of the 50s men's squad, echoed the sentiments of finding a renewed passion for the game after playing traditional soccer stopped being a pastime for him.

"I played soccer for all my life, even as an adult, wherever I lived, and during the pandemic. Like a lot of sports, it became difficult to find a means to play soccer. I had heard through a friend that there are a bunch of guys getting together to play walking soccer, and I was happy to try it because I missed the sport and I missed playing with other people. The most important thing to me was that it was fun.

"It just became something I looked forward to doing every week and also connected with a great bunch of people who are playing, some of whom I played with when I was a kid," Hilton continued. "There is one guy who I played with on the first team I was ever on when I was five years old. It's a fairly low-impact way to get very good exercise, and you do get your heart rate up a fair bit."

Jorge Mota will wear the jersey as part of Canada's 70s men's roster, and described how soccer being a constant presence

throughout his life led him to embracing the game in his current stage of his life.

"I used to play running soccer since I was a kid in Brazil. I never played professional soccer back in Brazil. When I came to Canada, soccer wasn't a priority, as I had to take my exams and work to get my medical licence. It took me more than five years to do that. Moved to Stratford in 2004, got settled, and after a couple of years, I found Sandy (Marcaccio). He was an Italian guy who used to organize the running soccer for us soccer lovers.

"I think we started playing walking soccer a couple of years ago," added Mota. "It came from Peter Mitchell and Graham Bunting. Most of us were playing running soccer, and to me, it was a little weird. Later, I decided to stay with the group and learn the rules. I guess we are still learning the rules. Now, we are playing better, and because of the group, I started getting to like more and more the game of walking soccer."

Mota further explained the pride he feels in representing the country he has called home for more than 25 years.

"I came to Canada in 1999 with my wife and my two kids," Mota told the Times. "Canada, to me, represents my ideal place to live. Representing Canada in any way makes me feel very proud. I am going to enjoy each and every minute of the time I am wearing my Canadian shirt."

Hilton added his similar feelings about playing for Canada on the international stage.

"It's fantastic, even though it's a sport that not many people have ever heard of, to be picked to play for your country is fantastic and I feel super proud and super honoured," Hilton said. "We're all paying our own way to go to this. There is no sponsorship or government money sending us. I'm just very excited to put on a uniform with the maple leaf on it and play against other countries."

Festoso recalled receiving the notification that he had indeed been chosen for the Canadian national team and his reaction of pleasant surprise.

"Going through it all, I was trying to keep it light and fun," said Festoso. "But then, when I got the phone call that I had been selected for the team, my initial reaction was, 'Holy cow, this feels like a pretty big deal.' It's no longer just a group of guys hanging out on a Wednesday night, kicking the ball around and having some fun. This is a pretty big opportunity, and we're still keeping light and fun, but it's definitely a big honour to represent Canada, which I never anticipated I would experience."

Looking ahead, Hilton detailed the Stratford Walking Soccer Club's plans to grow the local league in the near future.

"We are going to really ramp up our efforts in the fall to attract new players, get out in the community, and try to strengthen and grow the sport," Hilton noted. "I think Stratford punches above its weight compared to some other clubs out there. We applied for a provincial grant and got some money, which we're using to buy more equipment and start a website so we can send people to a place where they can learn about the game and see when we play, and really get people to understand the benefits of the sport."

The benefits of walking soccer, according to Mota, are vast and plentiful.

"This is a sport that anyone can practice, at any age, and it is a wonderful way to get together and to make new friends," Mota said. "You get to see the players so often that you create a bond, which is great for your mental health and physical health as well. More important than anything to me is to show older people that there is another sport they can try to get fit and make new friends."

Readers can help the three Stratford residents and all of the Canadian national team players cover the costs of paying their way to the tournament in Spain by donating to a GoFundMe campaign created to support the team. The link for the fundraising campaign is <https://tinyurl.com/25nfz9ab>.


CANADA'S
**OUTDOOR
FARM SHOW**
SEPT. 9-11, 2025
Woodstock, Ontario
outdoorfarmshow.com

Explore where
innovation
comes to life.

- ▶ 600+ exhibitors in all areas of agriculture
- ▶ Demonstrations in crops, livestock, equipment, technology and more
- ▶ An experience for every member of your farm family

Stratford celebrates first cricket pitch with opening game this month

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Times Reporter

The 51st annual Stratford vs. Shaw cricket match will take place on the brand-new pitch at the Butch Blake Memorial Cricket Ground in Lower Queen's Park on Monday, Aug. 25, 2025.

In July, Stratford's first permanent cricket pitch was installed in Lower Queen's Park through a partnership between the City of Stratford and the Stratford Festival Cricket Team.

With more than 150 years of cricket history in the city, the project marks a major milestone in celebrating and supporting Stratford's diverse and growing cricket community.

Speeches and congratulations will begin at 11:30 a.m., followed by the first ball at noon and a tea break at 3 p.m.

The new pitch has been informally named after beloved actor Mervyn "Butch" Blake, who graced the Stratford Festival stage for 42 consecutive seasons and was a driving force for cricket in Stratford.

"We're so fortunate to be able to mark this occasion with speeches from Stratford Mayor Martin Ritsma, Stratford Festival artistic director Antoni Cimolino, and Mervyn 'Butch' Blake's son, Andrew

Blake," said Emilio Vieira, captain of the Stratford Festival Cricket Team.

"This event is always electric. The air is filled with a healthy mix of camaraderie and competition. The chatter on the sidelines is excited and invested. Who will take home the trophy this year?"

Vieira encourages everyone to come out and enjoy the family-friendly event, even if they don't quite understand the rules yet.

"People can expect a beautiful day of cheering from the sidelines, enjoying their picnic baskets and the match underway before them," he said. "You may ask someone near you about the rules of the sport and hear tales of storied matches from long ago. The tradition continues! This time on a beautiful, brand new, pro-grade pitch, right here in Stratford."

Organizers say the inaugural match on the new pitch will be one to remember.

"We love the buzz on the sidelines," said Vieira. "The impromptu chants. The mix of folks from both festivals and both cities. It's always a day of fun in the sun for longtime fans and first-time viewers alike. This year, Stratford is looking to win its third championship in a row. We hope people come out in droves to cheer us on."

The cricket pitch is expected to en-

hance recreational opportunities in the city while also contributing to tourism growth in Stratford.

Vieira said he's eager to see how the pitch can inspire more people to take up the sport in Stratford and beyond.

"I'd love to see the pitch used to foster the next generation of cricketers," he said. "Cricket pitches are swiftly popping up across Canada to meet the sport's exponential resurgence in popularity."

"Cricket is set to be an Olympic sport in 2028. Wouldn't it be great to see Team Canada rival the likes of cricket royalty like India, England, Australia, Pakistan and South Africa? As a lover of the sport, I hope to see that in my lifetime. And I hope, in our own small way, that we've contributed to that bright future with the building of Stratford's home for cricket: the Butch Blake Memorial Cricket Ground."

GRANT
HAVEN
MEDIA

STRATFORDTIMES



BE IN THE KNOW!
Get the Latest
Edition Delivered
Straight to Your
Inbox!

granthaven.com/stratford-times



#1 FOR NEW-VEHICLE QUALITY

AMONG MAINSTREAM BRANDS IN THE J.D. POWER 2025 U.S. INITIAL QUALITY STUDY




2025 SENTRA

0% + \$500

FINANCING FOR 24 MONTHS O.A.C. CLEAROUT BONUS



Stratford NISSAN

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

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

STRATFORD NISSAN



17th annual walk and picnic for Autism Ontario hits the park this September

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Bringing community connection, raising awareness and good old-fashioned fun is the name of the game when it comes to Autism Ontario's Annual Stratford Walk and Family Picnic.

The 17th annual fundraising walk takes place on Sept. 14 this year. It is aimed to raise money for Autism Ontario West Region, supporting life-enhancing programs, services and engagement opportunities for autistic individuals, with all funds staying in the local area.

Erika Luoma, fund and volunteer coordinator with Autism Ontario, told the

Times that the walk is a huge benefit for the local organization.

"They've raised upwards of \$10,000 to \$15,000 on a walk in the past. I know individual families have raised up to \$4,500 on their own," Luoma said. "The walk is a pledge walk where families and groups and teams can get together and get pledges from family members and friends in the community, and then bring their collections to the walk and do the walk. And then there's a picnic and some family activities, a silent auction and all kinds of fun. And again, we can't stress (enough) the emphasis of community and building an inclusive and a welcoming community to our families that

have kids with autism."

Autism Ontario is a charity that is split into seven regional organizations across the province. Autism Ontario West Region, where Stratford is located, covers the western half of southwestern Ontario, from Essex County in the south to Bruce County in the north and to Oxford County in the east.

As Luoma explained, all Autism Ontario chapters run a huge variety of unique programs that span their local regions, designed to support individuals with autism and their families reach their full potential. According to Autism Ontario's website, last year over 175 volunteers helped with about 960 events,

providing services for over 40,000 total attendees – and those programs aren't just for youth.

"Autism doesn't end at 18," Luoma said. "We do children programming, youth, teenage, adult, various programs, events and activities for all ages," she said.

The walk and picnic takes place Sept. 14, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Upper Queen's Park. Community members, families and supporters are encouraged to join in the walk, to volunteer, donate or otherwise contribute.

"The more the merrier!" Luoma said. "Everybody's welcome."

SUMMER SAVINGS WITH STRATFORD KIA'S PRE-OWNED DEALS

 2022 Hyundai Venue Trend \$20,995 OR \$75/wk + HST & lic MILEAGE - 82,491 KM STOCK #: P22516	 2023 Kia Seltos LX \$21,995 OR \$79/wk + HST & lic MILEAGE - 88,894 KM STOCK #: P22494	 2022 Mazda CX-3 GS \$24,495 OR \$88/wk + HST & lic LOW KMS - 52,330 KM STOCK #: P22442	 2022 Mazda CX-3 GS \$24,495 OR \$88/wk + HST & lic LOW KMS - 39,564 KM STOCK #: P22453	 2023 Kia Seltos EX \$24,995 OR \$90/wk + HST & lic MILEAGE - 92,416 KM STOCK #: P22529
 2022 Toyota Corolla LE \$24,995 OR \$90/wk + HST & lic LOW KMS - 67,200 KM STOCK #: P22488	 2020 Honda Civic EX \$25,495 OR \$92/wk + HST & lic LOW KMS - 27,000 KM STOCK #: P22515		 2018 Honda CR-V EX \$25,495 OR \$92/wk + HST & lic MILEAGE - 87,368 KM STOCK #: P22550	
 2022 Hyundai Elantra Preferred \$25,995 OR \$93/wk + HST & lic LOW KMS - 29,800 KM STOCK #: DS26044A	 2021 Kia Sorento LX Premium \$27,995 OR \$100/wk + HST & lic LOW KMS - 65,175 KM STOCK #: P22547	 2023 Kia Sportage X-Line \$30,995 OR \$111/wk + HST & lic LOW KMS - 61,609 KM STOCK #: P22450	 2024 Mitsubishi Outlander ES \$32,995 OR \$118/wk + HST & lic LOW KMS - 19,810 KM STOCK #: P22474	 2023 Kia Telluride SX \$49,995 OR \$179/wk + HST & lic MILEAGE - 87,166 KM STOCK #: P22552

*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 O.A.C. Some terms and conditions may apply.

GOOD CREDIT? BAD CREDIT? NO CREDIT? EVERYONE GETS APPROVED
\$0 DOWN, SIGN & DRIVE
T&C APPLY, O.A.C.




(519) 508-5755
 863 Erie St., Stratford ON
www.stratfordkia.com

SHOP
INVENTORY NOW


STORE HOURS SALES: Mon.-Thu. 9:00-8:00; Fri.-Sat. 9:00-6:00 PARTS & SERVICE: Mon.-Fri. 8:00-6:00; Sat. 8:00-3:00 (By Appointment Only)
 *T&C APPLY, While every effort is made to ensure accuracy, we are not responsible for any errors and omissions. Please see your dealer for current pricing.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT GRANTHAVEN.COM

St. Marys outreach worker calls for more compassion amid housing, mental health struggles

ALEX HUNT

Times Correspondent

Jade Orquin spends her days connecting St. Marys residents to the resources they need most, from housing applications to health care, helping people rebuild their lives one step at a time.

Orquin, the community outreach worker for the Town of St. Marys, said housing is the highest request for help she receives as residents struggle with paying their rent due to the high cost of living. Orquin says the provincewide crisis affects the community more than some may think.

"If a person is on Ontario Disability, they're receiving just over \$1,000 a month and the average rent cost in St. Marys is around \$1,800 for a bachelor apartment," said Orquin. "They're likely not able to afford it; there's not a lot of low-income housing in this town."

Orquin's role as an outreach worker is to connect residents of St. Marys to essential resources, from transportation and health care to housing applications and financial support. She enjoys helping people in a variety of ways. Over time, Orquin has built close personal relationships with many clients, seeing some daily and others weekly.

Orquin says there are a few programs in St. Marys, such as peer support, which provide mental health and addiction assistance. She also hosts a women's group at the library every Monday focusing on issues that affect women in



(ALEX HUNT PHOTO)

St. Marys community outreach worker Jade Orquin vouches for compassion over judgment for those living with mental-health issues and without stable housing.

the community.

"I think just treating people with dignity and respect; at the end of the day it goes such a long way and I'm very real with the people that I work with," said Orquin. "I try not to sugar coat things and seeing them once a week really helps build personal relationships,

and I coordinate with different agencies which are also very supportive."

Orquin said she believes the community can sometimes be unaware of the circumstances people with mental-health challenges struggle with every day. She hopes the town can provide education to locals as a way of

encouraging compassion for everyone, regardless of those circumstances.

The most rewarding part of her job, Orquin said, is helping people. When clients face setbacks, like being evicted from their apartments, many return seeking her support. She often receives messages from clients thanking her for her help. Seeing people succeed and being part of their journey is what she finds most fulfilling.

"I think our community needs to be compassionate and understanding for outreach workers as well; we are doing our jobs the best that we can," said Orquin. "Not everyone is going to be housed when we want them to be. They are being taken care of. It comes down to not having enough housing and people not making the right decisions when they are living rough."

Orquin said her first month on the job was difficult, but having great co-workers and supportive partnerships with local support agencies helped her push through the rough days and molded her to be more effective at her job.

"That's what it is. We have to work together and teach compassion to community members as workers," said Orquin. "We are always trying to uplift clients and make sure they get their feet off the ground and sometimes people have setbacks. It's great to see people succeed but it's really hard to watch people have those setbacks and it's important for workers to push them and tell them to keep going."

Next year's budget process to look drastically different than past years

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

passing a resolution within a 30-day review period," a report on how next year's budget deliberations will look reads. "The mayor then has 10 days from the end of the council review period to veto any council amendment. To veto a council amendment, the mayor must provide written documentation of the veto and rationale to each member of council and the city clerk on the day of the veto. Within a 15-day period after the mayor's veto period, council may override the mayor's veto of a council amendment if two-thirds of all council members vote to override the veto."

As noted in the report, this year's budget process has already begun. The city's treasurer Karmen Kreuger and interim chief administrative officer (CAO) Adam Betteridge will continue to meet with the mayor to ensure that the budget being developed by staff reflects the head of council's priorities.

A draft budget is expected to be released the week of Oct. 13, with a month-long survey to follow shortly after. The following month, on Nov. 17, the mayor's 2026 budget is to be presented to council and the public.

On Nov. 27 and Dec. 1, the first two full-day budget meetings are tentatively scheduled. Dec. 2 is the end of the one-day mayoral veto period and Dec. 9 is the end of the seven-day council veto override period.

As approved by council at the meeting on Aug. 13, the amendment period was shortened from 30 days to 15 days, the veto period from 10 days to one day and the council veto override period from 15 days to seven days, in order to ensure that staff can achieve the milestones established in the budget timeline.

Following completion of the amendment, veto and override process, the budget will be deemed adopted.

GRANT HAVEN MEDIA

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



heather@granthaven.com

226.261.1837

St. Marys Independent The Paris Independent The Wilmet-Tavistock Gazette STRATFORD TIMES Woodstock Ingersoll Echo Goderich Sun
Simcoe Advocate NORFOLK FARMS BRANT FARMS NIAGARA FARMS TNDY

STONETOWN TRAVEL

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

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

Where in the world would you like to go?

Let us take the hassle out of your holidays. Reach out to one of our knowledgeable travel consultants today!

www.stonetowntravel.com

Stratford Summer Music wraps 25th season on a high note with packed shows, community applause and plans for the future

ALEX HUNT

Times Correspondent

With its 25th anniversary season now complete, Stratford Summer Music (SSM) is closing the summer with a round of applause, marking a summer of strong crowds, memorable performances and plans for new directions in the festival's future.

"We got through the 25th anniversary without any drama at all. Our opening night was a big hit. It was the biggest production we put together internally since I joined; it was a huge success," said Mark Fewer, artistic director at SSM. "The final kids show with Al Simmons was a huge treat, it was great to see him doing it. It was a real thrill."

Fewer said that there was a lot of success and positive feedback with having the stage onshore as opposed to being on the barge. He adds that there are discussions to move that whole series to be on land, indicating that could result in a name change for the series. Fewer was happy that the concept was a hit for the performers and audiences.

"The ink is just drying from the season, but we had a really smooth ride compared to previous years. We feel like we are doing the right thing for the community that we are serving, there were so many people that were thrilled with what we were doing," said Fewer.

Fewer also mentioned that there are discussions to move the start time of the festival a week or two earlier due to



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Although Stratford Summer Music continues its search for a permanent home, moving the concerts to different venues throughout the community continues to offer indoor and outdoor spectacles.

the higher volume of out-of-town visitors coming to Stratford for the July run of music events. He adds that there is a little visitor attraction when the August long weekend comes around, and the festival will stay the same length as it's

always been.

"We're always trying to find ways to get people from a larger radius to join," said Fewer. "Stratford Summer Music does not resonate with people outside of the general area because when they hear

the name Stratford, they immediately go to the theatre festival, and that's a challenge but that's the way it is.

"Our ticket purchases are 60 per cent local and 40 per cent non-local, which would be London and Kitchener-Waterloo as the first main markets. We are always looking for ways to gauge the participation more. Stratford is a great place to come to for a few days holiday."

Fewer stated that the organization is searching for a permanent home for SSM. Unlike many other music festivals in Canada, there is no official location for it. Instead, the festival utilizes various spaces across the community. Fewer added that these community venues add great value; however, he feels that they are reinventing the wheel with each production. Fewer emphasized the importance of finding a space they truly believe in, rather than securing a permanent site simply for the sake of having one.

"About this time every year, I'm always thinking about the next two to three years in the future. I'm thinking about what I can share on stage with the public that might bring a certain kind of resonance when we get there," said Fewer. "We live in a time where there are lots of weird things happening around the world and the arts do reflect that. I'm thinking about ways to continue to connect the dots so that people can use art not as an escape but as a way to feel some aspiration."

LOCAL MATTERS.



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



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



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

Neither do we!

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

News Media Canada
Medias d'Info Canada

CANADA'S NEWS MEDIA
CHAMPION
THE TRUTH.

Optimist Club of Downie Inc.

OPTI-CASH CALENDAR DRAW

Aug. 10 Josh Otto, Sebringville	\$50.00
Aug. 11 Patrick Miners, Stratford	\$50.00
Aug. 12 Loreen Morley, Ailsa Craig	\$50.00
Aug. 13 Jill Armstrong, Stratford	\$50.00
Aug. 14 Steve Jacques, St. Marys	\$50.00
Aug. 15 Glenn Rounds, Lakeside	\$50.00
Aug. 16 Ken Bettles, Tavistock	\$200.00
Aug. 17 Cindy & Scott Roper, London	\$50.00
Aug. 18 Roy Ready, St. Marys	\$50.00
Aug. 19 Pierrette Grondin, Fergus	\$50.00
Aug. 20 Chris Murray, Stratford	\$50.00
Aug. 21 Jesse DeGroote, St. Marys	\$50.00
Aug. 22 Kathy Pretty, St. Marys	\$50.00
Aug. 23 Dave Beatty, Stratford	\$200.00



Franklin E. Hinz

196 Ontario Street, Stratford

519-273-1633

YOU LIKE TO SING

and the Stratford Concert Choir is looking for new members!

We are a warm and welcoming choir looking forward to an exciting season under our new Artistic Director, Alexander Cann. Four concerts of beautiful, moving music, including Handel's Messiah and Mozart's Requiem.

If you would like to join us, we will be pleased to arrange an audition for you.

For more information contact auditions@stratfordconcertchoir.org

Razzamajazz and Light up the Night Kayaking adjusts their summer season amid Lake Victoria draining

EMILY STEWART

Times Reporter

A live music series on a pontoon boat and an illuminated kayaking group have had to make new plans due to Lake Victoria draining.

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) announced online on July 29 that a sluice gate part of Stratford's RT Orr Dam opened during the July 24 storm and released water to prevent flooding of upstream buildings and roads. The area accumulated enough debris under the gate so it couldn't be completely closed, steadily draining Lake Victoria.

Although later closed, an Aug. 5 update on the UTRCA website said that "filling Lake Victoria without significant precipitation will be a slow process and it is difficult to forecast how quickly it can be filled."

Meanwhile, Razzamajazz and Light Up the Night Kayaking have had to re-adjust their summer programming to accommodate the low water-levels.

The Razzamajazz music series that

normally cruises through the Avon River and Lake Victoria had to pivot for the rest of the summer amid the river drainage. The remaining concerts on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Friday nights are held at the Boathouse from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Skipper Dan Scarborough said the adjustment comes just after installing a new electric motor for the Razzamajazz pontoon boat.

"Yes, after years of fundraising to replace our old gas motor with an electric one, we have only been able to use it for one month so far this season. It is disappointing, but luckily, we have teamed up with the Boathouse, which is in the same position as us," Scarborough said.

The motor costs \$4,800 more than what was quoted, so Scarborough is thankful for the \$3,000 raised so far. He's also confident that the final \$1,800 will be raised by the end of the season and he's grateful for the community support.

"We are very appreciative of the people who have sponsored us and also all the public that have donated their time

and money coming down to the Razzamajazz donating in our donation box," he said. "We truly appreciate it and hope they continue to support us throughout this year and many years to come."

Monetary donations to the Razzamajazz can either be done via e-transfer (Razzamajazz1992@gmail.com) or by cheque.

Light Up the Night Kayaking also had to relocate two of their events – the Christmas in July and Superhero paddles – from Stratford to St. Marys due to low water levels. The Superhero event on Aug. 16 had plenty of kayakers and watchers alike.

"It went really well. We had 37 people show up to put their kayaks in. They have a really awesome dock there," organizer Sue Clark said.

However, she said she missed hosting the event in Stratford for the crowd and the lighting. At last year's Superhero paddle in Stratford, kids were calling out for the characters they saw kayaking like the Hulk and Deadpool, but it was difficult to see the characters clearly as it wasn't as illuminated. It was

also tricky to photograph.

"We missed the great amount of people in the shoreline because usually we get a whole lot of people on the island there in Stratford," Clark said. "We get them on the bridge, we get them walking down the street, we get them driving beeping at us. That part, we all miss."

Clark said the group is monitoring the updates on the river to see if the levels return to where they should be. However, the Lantern Parade paddle scheduled for Oct. 18, which was requested by Stratford Lantern Parade organizer Playmakers! Theatre School, is up in the air. If the paddle is a go, it will be running alongside the main event.

"If the water's not back in October, then we won't be doing that one for sure so that'll be a big disappointment because we go on the water and help them pick up the stuff in the water that they need," she said.

Updates from the UTRCA can be found online by visiting <https://thames-river.on.ca/water-management/recreational-dams/r-t-orr-dam>.

\$0 Down, sign & drive event

Finance a 2026 Seltos LX FWD for:

\$97 /wk

for 84 Months @ 5.99% O.A.C. +HST

Finance a 2025 K4 LX FWD

\$89 /wk

for 84 Months @ 5.49% O.A.C. +HST



KIA
Movement that inspires

Finance a 2025 Niro EV for

0%
For 84 Months
O.A.C.

Stratford
(519) 508-5755
www.stratfordkia.com

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT GRANTHAVEN.COM

Stratford Dance Co. student Attwell Martin's journey to the stage with *Annie*



(LISA CHESTER PHOTO)

Meet Attwell Martin, the young Stratford local currently cast as orphan Clara in the musical *Annie*, currently held over with the Festival until December.



(CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

On Aug. 15, theatre-goers explore the grounds of the Festival Theatre during intermission of the matinée performance of *Annie*, in which Stratford-native Attwell Martin plays orphan Clara.

LISA CHESTER

Times Reporter

Stratford resident Attwell Martin has landed the role of orphan Clara in this year's production of *Annie* with the Stratford Festival – and her coach with Stratford Dance Co. is elated. The young singer, dancer and pianist has been with her coach, Breanna Willis, for two years studying many styles of dance.

Willis started Stratford Dance Collective in 2018 and rebranded as it evolved into Stratford Dance Co. in 2023. Through the years it became evident that there wasn't quite a service such as hers where professionals could brush up and dancers can train or explore theatre skills.

"I started it as summer workshops because we have such a vast array of professionals in town, I wanted to give kids in town the chance to learn from these incredible professionals during the summer. I started with three summer workshops of different styles and brought in people from our Stratford community and Toronto and surrounding area. Then it branched out to fill the void for us as professionals and I really ran it as a collective," explained Willis.

They were originally out of Factory163. Teachers would come and teach a class and would then be free to take as many classes as they liked. The collective provided an opportunity for professionals to keep up skills while in town. In 2023 permanent space was secured and the evolution to full dance studio, musical theatre company and competi-

tive dance company began.

Attwell Martin has been with Stratford Dance Co. since 2023 at the tender age of seven. She does ballet, tap dance, jazz, lyrical, contemporary, hip hop and is a member of the musical theatre company. She does competitions as a member of the dance company and does performances as a member of the musical theatre company. She takes her community classes all year long so she also studies technique.

"I really like jazz, hip hop and lyrical, a dance where it is combined with jazz and ballet, so it is energetic and also emotional," shared Attwell Martin. "I think my favourite is hip hop because I can express a lot of emotion doing it, so if I'm angry I can do it, if I'm happy I can do it or if I'm sad I can do it. You can be any emotion and do it."

Being a part of Stratford Dance Co. has done a great deal to prepare her for her role as Clara through many dance competitions and musical theatre performances. In fact, in 2023 Martin performed a solo of "It's a Hard Knock Life" from *Annie*, one of the songs she would later have to perform in her audition for the production with the Stratford Festival.

"In 2023 she did her first solo ever and she did 'It's a Hard Knock Life,' so that gave her experience with song and dance on stage and dance competitions, which isn't done anywhere else in Stratford. We are the only studio that provides song and dance training for dance competitions on stage, so that gave her that impetus to really train in song and dance. Because of the things we run all

year round, the technical training in all of the styles, you are learning and expanding your skillset. Through the summer dance intensive and musical theatre intensive she really has gained the skills of how to audition and all of those things," said Willis.

The audition process for *Annie* was in two stages. The first audition Martin tried out for didn't work out for her as she was too young at eight years old. That gave her the opportunity to continue with her competitive training and improve her skills for the remainder of the year. The second audition was a different story.

While the first audition was with a large group of kids, the second time around featured only seven.

"We would go in all at once and do the dance which we had to learn on the spot; it was kind of fun and exciting and kind of nerve wracking. Then, we went in one by one and said lines and sang. I sang 'Tomorrow' and 'It's a Hard Knock Life.' (The audition process) was fun and I liked it. Going in one by one was cool because at the first one we would just get to go in all at once. This one was more private with not anybody else watching me. I get a little nervous when others are watching me," shared Martin.

Two days after the audition she got a call promising that she got the role. "It must be really hard for the girls to come back and forth, back and forth, try to get places to live, so I'm really lucky I'm local and am only five minutes away," said Martin.

"It's challenging to step in at a ran-

dom time. Everybody gets to know everybody at the first day and from the beginning, where I have to step into the middle of the season and it's kind of hard to get to know people, when everyone else knows people," confessed Martin.

While that may be a challenge, the reward is great. Playing to an audience like at the festival is a dream come true. It's not like a dance recital or showcase. "It's cool to hear the audience clap that loud," said Martin.

"It's amazing. Attwell is inspiring to the other students. I really think she is such a great role model. She is an example of strength and tenacity. She didn't get the role at first, she got cut, but that didn't stop her from working harder and taking her classes and growing and getting better the next time, and she got it," enthused Willis. "Because I worked professionally across Canada and internationally, this honestly felt better. It felt more fulfilling for her to get this role than any show I had ever booked. I couldn't be more proud; elated."

To see her student in a Donna Feore show dancing and singing is full circle for her as Willis too performed with Feore. For Attwell Martin, the future is bright. She would like to play additional child roles with the festival, and if you really want to see her eyes light up, ask her about her dreams of Broadway.

If anyone else has the dancing and musical theatre bug, see Breanna Willis at Stratford Dance Co., which can be found online at stratforddanceco.com. Registration for the 2025/26 season is underway.

Stratford and District Saddle Club hold weekend horse show

GARY WEST

Times Correspondent

With near perfect weather on Aug. 17, the Stratford and District Saddle club held another western riding competition at the Schlotzhauer riding facility between Stratford and Shakespeare on Line 37.

With classes for all age groups of riders, beginning at seven years of age and under to 18 years of age and over, the friendly competition taught the young and not so young how western horse riding can be fun and an equally enjoyable competing experience.

This month's competition came

under the judging and adjudicating of a qualified judge, Lauren Poppy from Seaforth. She herself had competed at this same show many years ago as a young rider.

Saddle club organizers, Bonnie, Mike and Sarah Jacobs, along with Helen Thomson, continue to see higher numbers in all classes, which they do appreciate, for all those riders and spectators.

They invite everyone to participate or come and watch the final competition next Sunday on Aug. 24, beginning at 10 a.m. at the Schlotzhauer Farm on Line 37, with free admission and a barbecue lunch on site by the Kreyger family.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

At nine years of age, Savannah Jacobs holds the 14-year-old donkey Molly while her younger sister Lennon Jacobs, 2, saddles up.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

At this weekend's Stratford and District Saddle Club show, the horses came in all sizes, as Rocky the two-month-old colt of Pearl Fawcett is fed treats from Morgan Askew.

“Hot Summer Savings” @ Stratford Nissan

2021 Nissan Kicks SV FWD



\$19,500 OR **\$158 B/W**
LOW KMS - 61,004 KM + HST & lic.

2020 Honda Civic LX FWD



\$22,495 OR **\$182 B/W**
MILEAGE - 90,005 KM + HST & lic.

2020 Toyota Corolla LE FWD



\$23,495 OR **\$190 B/W**
LOW KMS - 57,131 KM + HST & lic.

2020 Nissan Rogue SL AWD



\$24,495 OR **\$198 B/W**
LOW KMS - 73,390 KM + HST & lic.

2024 Nissan Sentra SV FWD



\$24,999 OR **\$180 B/W**
LOW KMS - 20,842 KM + HST & lic.

2025 Kia Seltos LX FWD



\$25,495 OR **\$183 B/W**
LOW KMS - 39,407 KM + HST & lic.

2022 Hyundai Tucson SEL AWD



\$26,495 OR **\$190 B/W**
MILEAGE - 109,437 KM + HST & lic.

2022 Subaru Crosstrek PREMIUM AWD



\$30,999 OR **\$223 B/W**
LOW KMS - 37,645 KM + HST & lic.

2022 Toyota Prius Prime Upgrade FWD



\$32,999 OR **\$237 B/W**
LOW KMS - 34,265 KM + HST & lic.

2023 Toyota Corolla Cross LE



\$33,999 OR **\$244 B/W**
MILEAGE - 82,646 KM + HST & lic.

2021 Mazda CX-5 SIGNATURE AWD



\$34,495 OR **\$279 B/W**
LOW KMS - 38,072 KM + HST & lic.

2022 Ford Edge TITANIUM AWD



\$34,730 OR **\$249 B/W**
MILEAGE - 43,227 KM + HST & lic.

2024 Jeep Wrangler SAHARA 4WD



\$53,999 OR **\$388 B/W**
LOW KMS - 35,892 KM + HST & lic.

*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. Bi-weekly payments are based on an interest rate of 7.99% O.A.C. Some terms and conditions may apply.

Find Your Perfect Match: Pre-Owned Cars for Every Taste and Budget!

BAD CREDIT... NO PROBLEM! All Credit Approved with \$0 Down.

T&C APPLY, O.A.C.



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

2001 Ontario Street, Stratford ON

519.273.3119

www.stratfordnissan.com

Our Service Department is Now Open on Saturdays

STRATFORD NISSAN



Opinions

FOR SALE: 18 acres in downtown Stratford



BRUCE WHITAKER

Times Columnist

For decades, the Cooper/Grand Trunk site has stood still while Stratford has continued to grow and change. Despite the City of Stratford's best efforts – and the dedication of many passionate citizens – the site remains rela-

tively unchanged. Passion and perseverance alone have not been enough to spark transformation. It's time for a new direction.

That new direction should involve putting the property up for sale, with a focus on attracting experienced developers and visionaries who have the proven capacity to deliver bold, large-scale projects. Personally, I would love to see something modern and forward-thinking – a neighbourhood that overcomes many of the limitations of existing communities. Even if my own vision is ambitious, it is clear we need experts who can imagine, plan, and deliver results.

Asking our hardworking city staff to take on a project that could approach a billion

dollars – on top of their current responsibilities – is neither realistic nor fair. Even if we could attempt it, the costs of construction, maintenance and ongoing operations would quickly add up, leaving us with a financial burden we cannot sustain.

By shifting our approach to a revenue-positive opportunity, we could instead generate significant funds for Stratford – supporting infrastructure upgrades, community programs and perhaps even easing the property tax burden on residents. With more than \$27 million already invested in this site, the tendering and bid process must be done carefully and professionally, targeting buyers with strong financial backing, proven experience

and a clear vision for success. We should add some requirements – such as heritage elements – but avoid restrictions that scare off qualified developers.

To those who care deeply about our history: I hear you and I respect your passion. A balanced approach can honour Stratford's past while ensuring a strong future.

Some have suggested community facilities, such as a new library or YMCA, be included in this project. These are exciting ideas, but we must be practical. Our library is already a beautiful, historic building. If additional space is needed, why not use nearby vacant storefronts as digital satellite branches? Similarly, instead of building a new YMCA, why

not improve the existing one – adding a rooftop parking deck and using the freed-up existing parking area for a new pool? With some upgrades, the YMCA building can continue serving our community effectively.

Let's be frank: the Cooper/Grand Trunk site is not a project that Stratford can or should manage on its own. What we need are full-time, dedicated experts with the resources to make this transformation possible – and ideally, to do so in a way that generates revenue for the city, not more costs.

The time has come to think bigger, act smarter, and move forward. Together, let's ensure that the Cooper/Grand Trunk site finally becomes something Stratford can be proud of.

Web-crawling through the summer



SHEILA CLARKE

Times Columnist

It is a thrill to see so many pollinator gardens appearing! Biodiversity lives when we meet the needs of nature in our planting. Pollinators have host plants for their eggs, baby birds have caterpillars for nutrition and plants have more pollinators for their growth. It's a circle game!

It's also a circle game with climate, the framework of my web-crawling series. Biodiversity (variety of life) is one of our best safeguards against climate change. The biosphere acts as a carbon sink to help remove the excess carbon produced by fossil fuels. Just sit under a tree on a hot day, bask in the cool breeze created by the leaves. Plant more trees around your home for healing shade! Some

side benefits: leaves to fertilize your lawn without chemicals and summer and winter habitats for pollinators and birds.

If you're not ready to give up the lawn yet, plant a flower bed with native plants and watch biodiversity unfold before you. This year in my native garden I've spotted black swallowtail butterflies, giant swallowtails, orange sulphurs, monarchs, bumblebees and other pollinators galore – and the real prize, a snowberry clearwing, a moth that thinks it's a bumblebee hummingbird!

This year, for the first time, I needed to help some native plants along with water. Usually after the first year, you never have to water native plants; they've lived in our conditions for thousands of years. I don't know what you found, but this summer seemed unusually hot – brutal, even. June and July both had record-breaking heat in southwestern Ontario and it has been an unusually dry summer. According to the Ontario Drought Report, as of August 2025 approximately 45 per cent (489,478 square kilometres) of Ontario is under drought conditions. Forests are described as "tinder boxes" and we know what has happened to the forests of

Canada, from Newfoundland to Vancouver Island. Weather cycles, right? Coincidence? It's happened before?

Not so fast, Batman.

We are all wearing this summer, through our consumer society, through an economy based on constant growth and extraction, through our fossil fuel consumption and through our silence. In 1958 a man named Keeling found a curve. He was able to make a graph that showed carbon levels in the atmosphere connected to fossil fuel emissions. Sure enough, the more fossil fuel emitted by industry and transportation, the higher the carbon content in the atmosphere. So?

That carbon doesn't just disappear. Some of it hangs around for a hundred years. In the meantime, our fossil fuel emission rate keeps accelerating. According to NASA, "the rise in heat-trapping carbon dioxide – and other greenhouse gases – is the primary reason for the planet's soaring temperatures."

What can we do? Pay attention. When we hear about the Ring of Fire intended mining, we are also hearing about a huge methane field within the peat bogs in the same area. Methane is an even more pow-

erful greenhouse gas than carbon. Its effects last a shorter time (approximately 12 years) but disturbingly it will certainly accelerate global warming.

Pay attention to our own use of fossil fuels. There are alternatives, especially in transportation: walk, bike, take a bus, take a train, explore hybrid vehicles and EVs. Seek the science opposing vigorous campaigns for fossil fuels and more highways.

ADVOCATE for public transportation to your governments, not more emission-causing major highways. Pay attention to what we use. Plastic is a direct product of fossil fuels. Plastic firms and oil companies are working overtime to increase our use of plastic, from garbage cans to containers for everything, to food wrapping. ADVOCATE for your government to ban plastic use as much as possible. Change your style, to glass, paper, cotton tea towels, rags and homemade dishwasher soap in a tin. There are micro-plastics swamping our environment and our bodies. Not only is plastic production increasing global warming, microplastics are implicated in health conditions, such as endocrine disruption, weight gain, insulin resistance, de-

creased reproductive health and cancer.

We are not helpless. We can voice our concerns to our governments, we can vote with science, we can make choices in our shopping – our ultimate economic protest tool! And finally, we can speak for biodiversity. Our planet depends on it. Pay attention and speak to others.

UPDATES:

1. As of Aug. 17, 2025, the Atmospheric carbon count is 424.57 ppm. 350 ppm is considered to be a safe level.

2. See more on native plant help at cfuwstratford.ca, just under the "How We Help – Advocacy Climate Action" dropdown menu.

3. Homemade dishwasher soap – really!

- Mix equal parts washing soda and borax (about one and a half cups each).

- Add a half cup of salt.

- Add a half cup citric acid powder.

- Mix and store in airtight container.

4. Reminder: Goldenrod is wonderful for pollinators and does NOT affect allergies. The culprit is ragweed, smaller and widespread. Ragweed is native... but not welcome!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT GRANTHAVEN.COM

Opinions

How to truly know someone



IRENE ROTH

Times Columnist

In a world where people share more about their lives online than ever before, it's easy to mistake visibility for intimacy. We might see someone's vacation photos, their job updates or their passing thoughts on social media and believe we know them. However, true knowing is something deeper – it's built slowly, intentionally and with presence.

Here are a few ways to truly get to know a person:

Notice the small things

Understanding someone often starts with the little details most people overlook. For

example, the way they pause before answering a question, the book they keep returning to, and the care they take with certain objects. These subtle clues are like breadcrumbs leading to their inner life and authentic self.

This isn't about overanalyzing or prying. It's about cultivating the ability to notice without rushing to judgment. When you pay attention to the texture of someone's habits, speech and body language, you begin to sense what matters most to them, and you do so in a way that honors their humanity.

Ask questions that matter

Surface-level questions have their place, but if you want to truly know someone, you have to be willing to venture deeper. Instead of the automatic "How are you?" or "What do you do?", try asking:

- "What's been on your mind lately?"
- "What's something that's been giving you joy?"
- "What challenges are you navigating these days?"

These kinds of questions sig-

nal that you care about their inner world, not just the outline of their life. And when someone feels safe to answer honestly, they often reveal parts of themselves they rarely share.

Listen without splitting your attention

Listening is more than waiting for your turn to speak. It's an active choice to give your attention fully to another person. That means setting aside your phone, slowing your thoughts and meeting their gaze. It means resisting the urge to fix, compare or offer advice until they've finished speaking.

When you listen in this way, you make space for someone else's story to exist in its own right, without rushing to fit it into your own experiences or assumptions. This is where trust grows – when someone realizes you are there to understand, not to judge.

Leave room for mystery

Even when we've known someone for years, we will never have the full map of their inner life. People are constantly growing, shifting and

revealing new layers of themselves. Accepting this truth frees us from trying to "figure people out" completely.

Instead of assuming you know what someone will say or how they'll react, approach each conversation with curiosity. Let there be unanswered questions. Allow for the possibility that they may surprise you – in wonderful and humbling ways.

Here are some everyday practices for knowing people better that are relatively easy to incorporate into your conversations with others.

1. Slow down your noticing. Instead of rushing past someone's small habits or routines, take a moment to register them. These are often the gateways to understanding.
2. Ask open-ended questions. Give them space to tell a story, not just deliver a short answer.
3. Listen as if they are the only person in the room. Your full presence is more valuable than any advice you could give.
4. Avoid finishing their sentences – literally or mentally. Let their thoughts unfold in

their own time.

5. Be willing to share yourself, too. Knowing is a two-way street; vulnerability invites vulnerability.

Why it matters

Life is richer when we truly know the people around us – family, friends, colleagues, neighbours. Deep knowing fosters compassion. It helps us respond to others not based on stereotypes, assumptions or surface impressions, but from a place of understanding and respect.

When we slow down enough to notice, ask, listen, and remain curious, we give others the gift of being seen. And in the process, we discover more about ourselves – our values, our patterns, our capacity for empathy.

In the end, knowing someone isn't about collecting facts. It's about creating a living connection – a thread of mutual recognition that can stretch across years and circumstances, anchoring both of you in the shared experience of being human.

COMING EVENTS Email to inquire stratfordtimes@gmail.com

STRATFORD SCRABBLE CLUB

Anne Hathawy Residence 480 Downie St., Stratford
Meets every Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. for 3 games.
Check our website for further details stratfordscrabble.ca

OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Meetings: 2nd Tuesday (2-4pm) and 4th Tuesday (7-9pm)

September to May

Church of the Epiphany, 560 Dundas Street, Woodstock Ontario N4S 1C7

If you have never belonged to a stamp club, now's the time. Meet new friends, grow your knowledge and collection. Contact: Don Eaton dhfe@silomail.com

Website: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>

FOOD TRUCKS

Grace United Church. Tavistock
August 25, 2025 from 4:30-7:30

Berlin 95, Born2Eat, Los Rolling Tacos, Beavertails
Donations to Grace United Church

OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Tuesday, September 2; 7:00 p.m.

93 Morgan St., Stratford

Speaker – Peter West of Westcare Medical
Ostomy products, and what's new on the market
Social time and snacks. Everyone welcome.
519-273-4327

GARDEN STRATFORD GENERAL MEETING

Monday September 8, 2025, 7:15 – 9:00 p.m.

Army Navy Hall, 151 Lorne Ave. E., Stratford

Featured Presentation: "Blowing in the Wind – Native Grasses and Sedges", Shaun Booth from In Our Nature, Orangeville. Meeting Open to Everyone; Free Admission.

BURGER & FRY NIGHT

Thursday Sept. 25 and Thursday Oct. 23

Legion 804 Ontario St B1, Stratford

Bring your friends out for a fun and tasty evening, supporting your local legion. No tickets needed, just show

up! The cost is \$13 each or 2 for \$25. Take-out is available if preordered from Dave Hartney at 519-703-6544.

OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY CIRCUIT BOOK FAIR

Saturday, October 25; 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Church of the Epiphany, 560 Dundas Street, Woodstock Ontario N4S 1C7

Free Admission & Parking

Stop in and buy some stamps and meet fellow stamp collectors. About 8 participating stamp clubs.

Contact: Don Eaton dhfe@silomail.com

Website: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>

FRIDAY NIGHT EUCHRE

Friday Oct. 17 and Friday Nov. 21.

Legion 804 Ontario St B1, Stratford

Doors open at 6 pm, play starts at 6:30 pm. Register your team of 2 people for \$20. Prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. Call Dave at 519-703-6544, Anne at 519-301-0914 or the Legion at 519-271-4540 to register your team.

STRATFORD TIMES

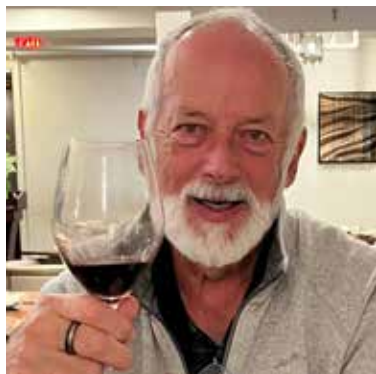
Deadline: Tuesday prior at 3 p.m.

Contact: stratfordtimes@gmail.com

PROMOTE YOUR EVENTS WITH US! HERE'S HOW:

- The Community Calendar is for non-profit organizations to promote their free admission events at no charge. Event listings can include your event name, date, time and location as well as a phone number, email address or website.
- If your event is not free admission or you would like to include more details than stated above, you have the following options:
 - Coming Events Word Ad in Classified section (50 word max.) - \$10 + hst
 - Coming Events Boxed Word Ad in Classified section (50 word max.) - \$15 + hst
 - Display Ad - Sizes begin at a classified business card size for \$35 + hst

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Discovering the freshwater shipwreck diving capital of the world



PAUL KNOWLES

Times Columnist

Here's your trivia question for the day: Name the freshwater and shipwreck diving capital of the world.

You don't have to go too far afield, according to Guillaume Courcy. His answer would be "Kingston, Ont., and the Thousand Islands," and his evidence is pretty convincing.

Courcy, a native of Rimouski, Que., is a veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces. He served internationally and learned to scuba dive while stationed on a peacekeeping mission in Israel. His last posting was to Kingston; he came there in 2011 and joined the local military scuba club and he quickly became aware of the treasure trove of shipwrecks awaiting exploration around the Thousand Islands. He completed his diving instructor qualifications in 2019.

His wife, Martine Roux, a diving instructor from Montreal, met Courcy because of their shared interest in spending time underwater. They became life partners and in 2020, they became business partners as well.

In that infamous COVID year, they acquired their first boat, a tug called the Dorothy J. Guillaume moved straight from his military career into his new life as an underwater entrepreneur. And despite the challenges of the pandemic, Neptune and Salacia Diving prospered. Neptune is the Roman god of freshwater and the sea; Salacia, his consort, is the goddess of the sea. They opened a dive shop in 2022 and bought a second boat, a Zodiac, in 2023.

If you spend some time with Courcy, you will become convinced that the number one reason for their success is the personal enthusiasm of the owners. They live and breathe diving, and even after diving around the Thousand Islands for more than a decade, they continue to be very excited about the experiences that await them on every dive.

Courcy admits his claim about the freshwater and shipwreck diving capital of the world would be disputed by fans of the Georgian Bay waters around Tobermory, but his tongue-in-cheek goal is "to steal that title back from Tobermory."

There is no doubt freshwater divers will find unending opportunities to explore shipwrecks in the waters of the St. Lawrence River, off Kingston. The St. Lawrence starts here, feeding out of Lake Ontario. The estimate is that there are between 200 and 400 shipwrecks in the area. Many of them are ships that floundered in storms; some, like the HMS Princess Charlotte, saw military action

in the War of 1812; many more have been deliberately sunk by their owners because they were no longer seaworthy.

More recently, some, like the Wolfe Island II, have been deliberately sent to the bottom as artificial reefs and dive sites.

If you spend time on the water or in the air over the Thousand Islands, the sheer number of shipwrecks is quickly apparent. I took a helicopter tour that included flying over Garden Island where, in that small area alone, about 20 shipwrecks are easily spotted from the air.

What makes freshwater diving special for shipwreck enthusiasts is most wrecks are wooden ships. Wooden ships that sink in salt water are quickly eaten away by the salt. Courcy told me, "Cold water, fresh water, keeps these wrecks alive." The Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River are home to the largest collection of wooded shipwrecks in the world.

There are a number of ways visitors to Kingston can get up close and personal with shipwrecks. Neptune and Salacia Diving own the first and only PADI certified dive boat in Canada – PADI is the highly recognized Professional Association of Diving Instructors.

Courcy and Roux offered scuba diving charters, scuba courses and snorkelling tours. This summer, they introduced a War of 1812 snorkelling tour.

So would-be explorers have options ranging from snorkelling above wrecks to diving to spectacular sites like the Comet, an 1864 paddle-wheeler now resting in 80 feet of water.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

Guillaume Courcy wants to claim the title of "Freshwater and shipwreck diving capital of the world" for Kingston.

This being Canada, it turns out diving is an all-weather sport. Courcy is a certified ice diving instructor, so he takes well-insulated clients out and under all year round.

The quirky, fun side of the business is evident as he talks about their very popular feature, Zombie Apocalypse Diving, where cosplay meets scuba.

Courcy and Roux also spearhead clean-up dives on the Kingston waterfront, run by the local Rotary Club. In the first year of the event, divers collected over 800 kilograms of debris around the harbour. The event has grown to include non-divers on the shore, and in kayaks and canoes, all working to keep the harbour in pristine shape.

The business has grown sig-

nificantly through its five years of operation, but Courcy and Roux are committed to making it better, continually offering new programs and dive experiences. When I met Courcy, there were 11 moorings at dive locations – permanent mooring stations where boats can tie up, thus preventing damage to the wrecks from anchors. The goal, he says, is to have 30 moorings, opening more and more potential for exciting exploration of the shipwrecks in the waters of the Thousand Islands.

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



(PHOTO COURTESY NEPTUNE AND SALACIA DIVING)

The Glendora is one of the many shipwrecks near Kingston that can be explored by divers.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

The elongated shapes in the water of Garden Island are all shipwrecks

Riddles

Why did the dog sit in the shade?
Because he didn't want to be a hot dog!

What do cats like to eat for breakfast?
Mice crispies.

Why don't goldfish play piano?
They're afraid of the scales.

What's a hamster's favorite instrument?
The wheel drum.

Why did the parrot go to the vet?
It was feeling a bit hoarse.

How do you know a snake is good at math?
It can adders up!

What do you call a rabbit who tells good jokes?
A funny bunny.

Why did the guinea pig join the band?
It wanted to be a little squeak star.

What do you get when you cross a dog with a phone?
A golden receiver.

What's a turtle's favorite type of photo?
A shell-fie.

Why don't cats ever tell the truth?
They're always kitten around.

Sudoku

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

Solutions on page 27



Pet of the Month



BADGER

Badger may look a little scruffy, but beneath that rugged exterior is a gentle heart full of love. This sweet, sometimes shy boy is searching for a calm, patient home where he can be the only pet.

He's easily overwhelmed by other animals and needs time to feel safe and start settling in. With patience and a steady routine, you'll see him blossom into an affectionate companion who leans in for pets and purrs like a little motor.

If you can offer Badger understanding, space, and love, he'll reward you with quiet devotion and a bond that lasts a lifetime. Visit kwsphumane.ca to adopt Badger!

Word Search

SPONSORED BY:



Adult Learning Programs of Perth, Upstairs at the St. Marys Public Library
(700 Church Street North, St. Marys, ON) | Phone: 519-284-4408 | Cell: 226-374-8231
alearning@town.stmarys.on.ca | www.adultlearningperth.ca | Facebook: @AdultLearningProgramsofPerth

PETS

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

- DOG
- CAT
- HAMSTER
- RABBIT
- GUINEA PIG
- PARROT
- TURTLE
- GOLDFISH
- FERRET
- SNAKE
- LIZARD
- GERBIL
- FROG
- CANARY
- HEDGEHOG

CLASSIFIEDS

Email to inquire stratfordtimes@gmail.com

HELP WANTED

**GRANT
HAVEN
MEDIA**

**WE ARE
HIRING**

o o o o
o o o o
o o o o

**JOIN OUR TEAM AS A
NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING
SALES REPRESENTATIVE!**

Are you a motivated self-starter with a passion for sales and marketing? Do you thrive in a flexible work environment where you can set your own schedule? If so, we have the perfect opportunity for you!

Location: Work from Anywhere!

Schedule: Your Own Schedule

Type: Commission

About Grant Haven Media: At Grant Haven Media, we are committed to delivering top-quality news and information to our readers. As a leading newspaper company, we take pride in our dedication to journalistic excellence and community engagement. As we continue to grow, we're looking for enthusiastic individuals to join our dynamic sales team.

If you are interested, contact
Heather Dunbar at:
heather@granthaven.com

o o o o
o o o o
o o o o

FOR RENT

Wildwood Care Centre (Retirement Living). Private room accommodations for Senior living available, can accommodate couples. Price \$2800 to \$4600 monthly. Meals, basic care, medication management and staff available 24/7. For tours call Lisa at 519-284-3628.

ONE BEDROOM BACHELOR APARTMENT – Furnished or unfurnished, Washer and dryer included, Parking for one vehicle (tenant responsible for own snow removal or can be negotiated), Appliances (refrigerator and stove) included, Heat and air conditioning included, Water included, Hydro NOT included, Telephone, cable and internet NOT included, Apartment is Non-smoking unit. Monthly rent is \$1800 Contact patriciamr0952@gmail.com

FOR SALE

Hundreds of shade trees, fruit trees, apples, pears, peaches, plums, sweet and sour cherries, apricots, nectarines, blueberries, haskapp grapes, raspberries, elderberries etc. Lots of spruce, pine, cedars for windbreak and privacy hedges. Sizes 1-8 ft. in containers ready to go. Flowering shrubs and much more. Mon-Sat 7:00am to 6:00pm Martin's Nursery, 42661 Orangehill Rd Wroxeter, ON N0G 2X0 (1 Conc. North of Wroxeter on Belmore Line)

FOR SALE, ash firewood 14–16 inch length. Seasoned minimum one year. Stored in shed to keep dry. Pick up \$115 per cord. Delivery available in Stratford area. Also, saw cut ash lumber and oak, elm, ash, and poplar live edge for your woodworking projects. Call Don at 519-271-8839 – leave message

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. We are at the Pinery Market at Grand Bend every Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call or text Stan anytime 519-868-3814.

Fair value offered for your vinyl records, cassette tapes & hifi components. Please contact **Sound Fixation, 519-801-5421, 4 George St. W, Stratford.**

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

HELP WANTED

Seeking to hire or rent space to an RMT or another quiet business that would complement our spa. Conveniently located in downtown Stratford, this room is fully wheelchair accessible. Contact: Thespa@quadro.net

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



**Stratford Associate
Reformed
Presbyterian Church**

Quality Inn Festival
(1144 Ontario St., Stratford)

WORSHIP TIMES:
10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
stratfordarp.org



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

Reality?

Reality check

Canadian newspapers are powered by journalists, not AI. They check the facts so you can trust what you're reading. That's why 4 in 5 people in Canada come back each week for more. Thanks for keeping it real with us.

nationalnewspaperweek.ca

CANADA'S NEWS MEDIA
**CHAMPIONS
OF THE TRUTH**

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

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 for 2022

519-271-5690

EAVESTROUGH

**EAVESTROUGH
CLEANING**

Fully Cleaned, Downspouts
Unblocked, Free Estimates,
Quality Workmanship

Stratford
519-273-4713

FENCING/DECKS

**ALL
SHORES**
Fencing & Decks

519-273-2003
info@allshoresfd.ca

CLEANING & LAUNDRY

NOW OFFERING
**LAUNDRY
Services**



Spotless Cleaning Plus

St. Marys and Surrounding Area

Sheila LeBlanc

519-630-2665

spotless@write.me.com

spotlesscleaningplus.wixsite.com/clean

HOME APPLIANCES

PHELANS PLACE
Appliances

APPLIANCES • PARTS

237 Huron Road,
Sebringville
519-393-6181

info@phelansplace.com

www.phelansplace.com

INVESTMENTS

Franklin E. Hinz

196 Ontario Street, Stratford
519-273-1633

www.franklinehinz.com

PSYCHIC READINGS

JUDY ABBOTT
Psychic Readings

Phone - Zoom - Events
Cell 519 859-JUDY (5839)
Web www.judyabbott.ca
Email judy@judyabbott.ca

MARKETING



MASONRY

JVK Jacob VanKooten
519-274-9288
jake@jvkmasonry.com

• Restoration Masonry
• Brick BBQ & Outdoor Living Needs
• Parging, Repointing & Rockfacing
• Chimney Removal, Repair & Rebuild

Member of the



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

**Mortgage solutions
to suit your needs.**



Rona Marquez
Home Financing Advisor
226-921-4536
rona.marquez@scotiabank.com

Scotia

© Registered trademark of The Bank of Nova Scotia



**Be Prepared
and Be Safe!**

ROYAL LEPAGE Hiller Realty
Tina Grasby: BROKER, Royal LePage Hiller Realty
ph. 519-275-7663 | tinagrasy@royallepage.ca | tinagrasyrealestate.com

YOUR AD HERE

**THIS COULD
BE YOUR AD
HERE!
CONTACT US
FOR MORE
INFO!**



REAL ESTATE

Sutton

Liz Yundt,
Realtor®

FIRST CHOICE
Sutton Group First Choice Realty
Ltd Brokerage
151 Downie St., Stratford, On

*I will always do
my absolute best
for you!*

Cell: 519-272-9017
lizyundt@sutton.com



LUCIE STEPHENS
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

519-703-0333

RE/MAX REALTY LTD. BROKERAGE

SOLD!

DAVE FAIR
REALTOR®

Make Real Estate a
'FAIR' GAME

www.davefair.ca
905.866.7577

ROYAL LEPAGE Hiller Realty

WINDOW CLEANING

COMMERCIAL - RESIDENTIAL

SQUEEKS

PROFESSIONAL WINDOW CLEANING

JARED GOWAN | HEATHER GOWAN

519-854-5254

jaredsqueeks@live.ca | www.squeeksclean.com

QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1861
- Shopify
- Paris, France
- 2015
- Genetics
- Restricted
- Noel & Liam Gallagher
- Seven
- Latitude
- The Mughal Empire

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

**When social
media blocks
your access to
the news, turn
to your local
newspaper.**

CHAMPIONS
OF THE TRUTH

SUDOKU

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



Home furniture

**16,000 SQ.FT. WAREHOUSE
MUST BE EMPTIED**

HUGE 50% OFF WAREHOUSE SALE

- **SOFAS & CHAIRS**
- **SECTIONALS**
- **PATIO**
- **MATTRESSES**
- **BEDROOM**
- **DINING**

PROUDLY CANADIAN **STRATFORD OWNED**



**No Pressure
Sales Team**

Relax, You're at Home



**519-273-9330
2954 Hwy 7 & 8 E**

**Mon. - Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-5,
Sun. 12-4**

Follow us on:



**www.stratfordhomefurniture.ca
www.homefurniture.ca**