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STRATFORD TIMES

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Stratford police recover stolen memorials

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

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Local police have recovered over a dozen memorial plaques from the Avondale Cemetery.

On Nov. 5, the Stratford Police Service received a report of stolen plaques from various memorial benches and memorial walls within the cemetery. The investigation into this matter led to the Street Crime Unit obtaining a search warrant for a residence on Woods Street on Nov. 10, which resulted in the arrest of two individuals identified as an age 42-year-old male and a 39-year-old female, both of whom are residents of Stratford.

The search warrant also resulted in the recovery of approximately 14 memorial plaques from Avondale Cemetery.

The 42-year-old male was located nearby the residence on Woods Street, while riding a stolen bicycle. He was arrested without incident and transported to Stratford Police Headquarters. A second stolen bicycle was also located at the residence during the search.

The 39-year-old female was located within the residence and was arrested without incident. She was also transported to Stratford Police Headquarters.

Both were held in custody to attend a bail hearing and have been charged with Possession of Stolen Property Over $5,000 for the memorial plaques. A charge of Possession of Stolen Property Under $5,000 was also laid for the stolen bicycles.

The Stratford Police Service would like to encour-

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Several local children took part in the kids' race at the fifth annual Stratford 5K Run/Walk on Oct. 4, helping raise money for the Local Community Food Centre. From left are Aidan Mugford, Micah Mugford, Kira Henderson, Sullivan Wagler, Fitz Turpin, Tomo Hatanaka and Helen Wilken. Also participating were Ezra Toohey and Ronan Streicher. Wagler raised the most money among the young participants after joining his mother, Nikki Wagler, from Coles and Keys Stratford, who takes part in the annual fundraiser with her business partner, Nicole Streicher. Wagler said raising money for the Local felt good and encouraged other children to participate next year. "If you like cool shirts and raising money, you'd probably like to go next year," he said.

New council sworn in; new mayor lays out priorities in inaugural address

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Stratford officially has a new city council.

On Nov. 16, the 2026-2030 Stratford city council was sworn in at the city hall auditorium. Couns. Brad Beatty, Lesley Biehn, Chris Giannakopoulos, Bonnie Henderson, Larry McCabe, Sarah Merkel, Ian Morton, Harj Nijjar, Cody Sebben and Geza Wordofa one by one took their oath and were signed in by Justice Martha A. Cook.

Mayor Robert Ritz was the first to swear in. After being presented with the Chain of Office, he gave his

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New council sworn in; new mayor lays out priorities in inaugural address

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

inaugural address, thanking his supporters and all those who voted this election, whether they cast a ballot for him or not.

"Four years ago, when I came within 345 votes of winning this office, I could have walked away," Ritz said. "Instead, I stayed involved, delegating with council on behalf of my clients and neighbours, at committee meetings, around kitchen tables … The point is, you don't need a title to work for your community. So to everyone who ran this fall and didn't win a seat, I know how it feels. Please stay involved. We want to hear from you over the next four years.

"This fall, Stratford asked for change. I ran as a mayor for a change and I want to be clear about what kind of change I mean. Not the kind one person imposes on everyone else. No, collaborative – work them together in the open with the people it affects. First, we bring citizens into the room, and we bring them in early. Too often, consultation means asking people what they think after a decision is all but made. By the time an issue reaches council, the report is written and the options are set. This is not involvement. This is notification. Even being heard at council is harder than what it should be."



(CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

Stratford's new city council officially sat down together for the first time at the inaugural council meeting on Nov. 16, where each of them were sworn in.

Ritz laid out how he hopes to change that. Among other things, he hopes to have agendas published on the Tuesday preceding Monday night council meetings, make it easier to speak at council meetings and a ward representation system where each councillor will be assigned a ward to represent.

"We will restore public trust," Ritz said. "Trust is built in the daylight. Closed session will be an exception … used only where the law requires it, and we will report out as fully as we can afterwards. No more backroom deals."

Another priority is the City of Stratford's lawsuit against the province over strong mayor powers. In his address, Ritz asked council to drop the suit.

Speaking with reporters after the council meeting adjourned, Ritz said he has already informed Perth-Wellington MPP Matthew Rae of his intention to withdraw the challenge. As he stated, that decision will be before council soon, Ritz hopes, and he is optimistic of the outcome, having spoken with some councillors about it.

"It's a waste money," Ritz explained. "In my world, we face lawsuits, right? You work with your lawyers and you evaluate whether it's a go or no go, or whether you should even do it – and generally you dodge it if you can. And here we walk right into them. And I'm going, what are your odds of winning? It's so slim. Like, look at City of Toronto, three losses, and the court said at the end, 'If you want to change the way the government's working, change the government through an election.'"

During his speech, Ritz said he would only use strong mayor powers to protect the people's voice. Perhaps the largest component of the powers is the endowment of the city's annual budget to the mayor's office, allowing the mayor to guide it before presenting it to city council. In that vein, Ritz said the people have been clear: they don't want higher taxes.

Budget meetings between Ritz and senior leadership have already begun. Although there is much to go over, his goal would be no higher of a rate increase than 3.5 per cent.

"And I've been told that we will be that or less," he predicted.

Franklin E. Hinz



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Police recover stolen memorials

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

age all community members who have loved ones at Avondale Cemetery to check those sites for any missing items.

Many of the recovered plaques were found to have been damaged with all inscribed information removed, while others were found to be undamaged and fully intact.

If any items are discovered missing, please report the theft through the Stratford Police Service's online reporting system at www.stratfordpolice.com under the Reporting a Non-Emergency tab. Or by calling our non-emergency number at 519-271-4141, ext. 2.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Stratford police have recovered 14 memorial plaques, suspected to be from Avondale Cemetery, in various states of damage. Community members are encouraged to check the memorials of loved ones in Avondale to check for any missing items.

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Avondale presents Powering Through Turbulent Times with John Watson

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

Avondale United Church will host an event where homeowners and other residents can learn about energy consumption and switching to more sustainable resources.

In partnership with Climate Momentum, the Small Change Fund, and the Kiwanis Club of Stratford, Avondale will welcome John Watson for his presentation Powering Through Turbulent Times at the Church on Dec. 2 starting at 7 p.m.. Watson, part of Bluewater Energy Inc., will be talking about sustainable energy alternatives to carbon fuels, such as wind and solar power.

He will also share real-life stories of those who made the energy switch, reached net zero in their homes, and even returned unused energy to the grid and of changes in energy within Ontario and across Canada, as well as worldwide.

"He saw how things were shifting in terms of energy and he decided to devote the rest of his life to informing people and helping them make the necessary changes that are happening," said Karen James-Abra, chair of Avondale's climate justice team.

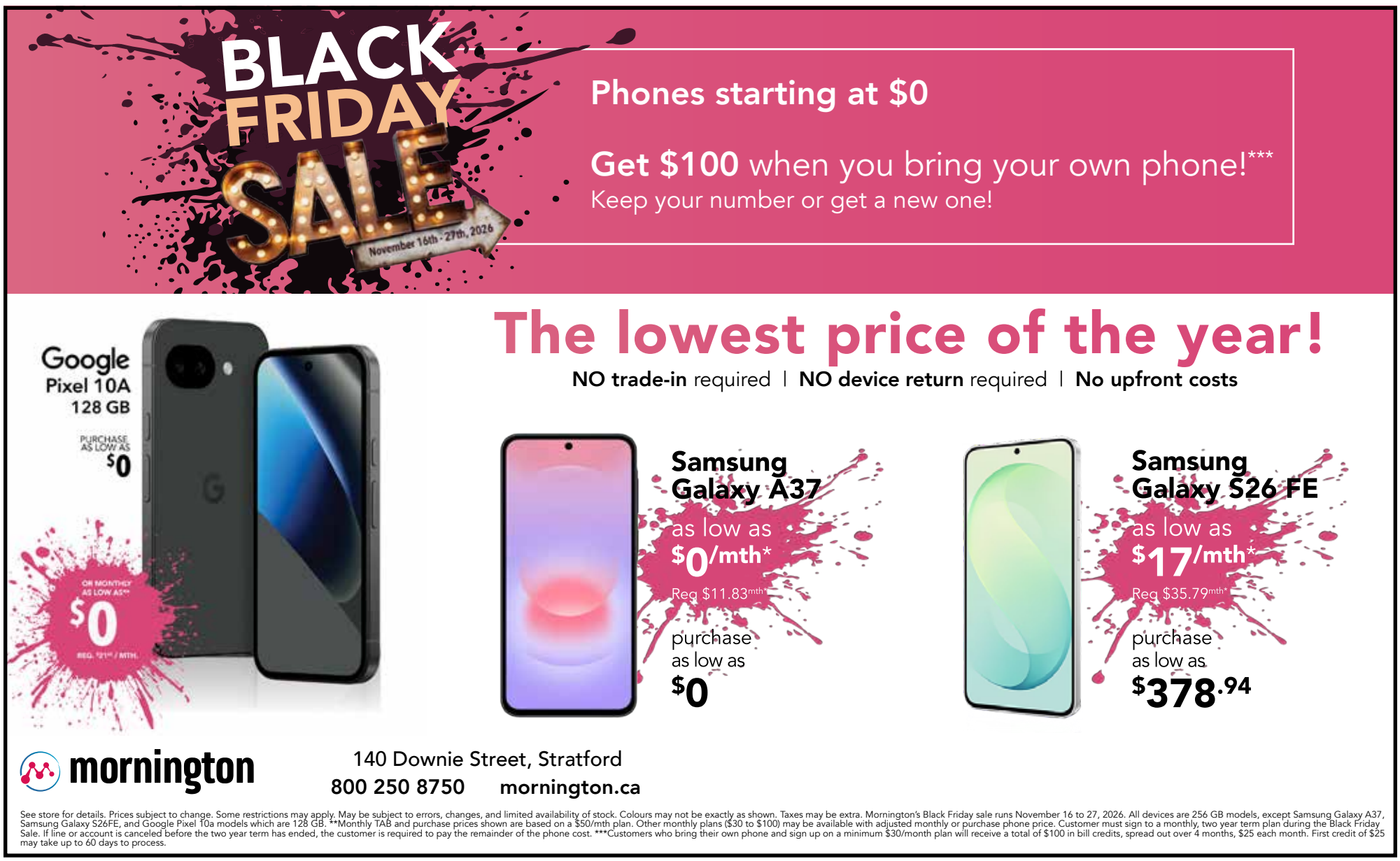
Watson's presentation, which will look at positive sustainable achievements, comes during a time where climate change and subsequent climate anxiety have been at the forefront globally for several years.

"A lot of people have fears and they talk about all the negative things that are happening and they end up feeling powerless to do anything about it, so he focuses on the good things that are happening and there are some very positive changes that are happening worldwide," said James-Abra.

There will also be a chance to ask any questions.

"People may have questions about the finances of all those shifts," James-Abra said. "They might have questions about insurance or they just want an opportunity to talk to other people in the community about what they have done and how they've done it."

Powering Through Turbulent Times is a free event but registration is encouraged. To register for the event, send an email to eventsavondale@wightman.ca.



To Stratford With Love returns for 38th year with focus on food, fellowship and community

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

For 38 years, To Stratford With Love has brought friends, neighbours and strangers together around the dinner table to celebrate the Christmas season, and this year, organizers are hoping to make that experience even more special.

The annual free community Christmas dinner, organized by Simple Dreams Ministries co-founders Ruth and Richard Kneider and their family, returns to the Stratford Rotary Complex Dec. 12, with dinner beginning at 5:30 p.m.

This year, the Kneiders and their three daughters – Katey Kneider, Jillian Chambers and Morgan Kneider Patterson – are preparing to welcome 600 guests for an evening of food, music and fellowship, with a renewed focus on slowing down and enjoying one another's company.

"It's all about the experience," Chambers said. "Before, it's all been like numbers, and we just want to create an incredible experience."

Rather than focusing on serving as many people as possible, organizers are providing more space between tables and dedicated servers who will take a more personal approach to serving guests.

Chambers said the hope is to give everyone an opportunity to enjoy a memorable evening, complete with good service, meaningful conversations and the festive atmosphere for which the dinner has become known.

"I think I'm hoping we can learn how to slow down again," Ruth added.

As always, guests can look forward to a traditional roast-beef dinner with potatoes, carrots, coleslaw, buns and plenty of homemade pies.

"We never say no to pies," Richard said, sporting a T-shirt bearing the familiar phrase.

Live entertainment will include Upside of Maybe and the Stratford Concert Band, while volunteers will once again transform the Rotary Complex into a festive Christmas setting.

The dinner has become a multi-generational family tradition for the Kneiders, with their daughters now taking leading roles in organizing volunteers and preparing food, and their grandchildren also getting involved.

That tradition extends well beyond the family. Volunteer registration filled in just one day this year, something Richard Kneider said speaks to the community's longstanding generosity.

For some guests, To Stratford With Love offers a chance to enjoy a Christmas dinner they might otherwise be unable to afford. For others, it provides an opportunity to spend an evening surrounded by friends and neighbours rather than celebrating alone.

Katie said the organizers hope the more relaxed atmosphere will give volunteers an opportunity to connect with guests and learn their stories.

For Richard, those connections are what have made the dinner so meaningful for nearly four decades.

He recalled one year when two couples from the same family, who had not spoken in years, attended the dinner and reconciled before the evening was over.

For more information or to reserve free tickets for the Dec. 12 dinner, visit tostratfordwithlove.ca.



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTO)

Donning his new T-shirt, which bears his favourite catchphrase, "We never say no to pies," Simple Dreams Ministries co-founder Richard Kneider, his wife and co-founder, Ruth Kneider, and their three daughters, Morgan Kneider Patterson, Jillian Chambers and Katey Kneider, are urging locals to reserve their tickets for the 2026 To Stratford With Love free community dinner at the Stratford Rotary Complex Dec. 12.



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTO)

The community hall at the Stratford Rotary Complex was decorated in holiday fashion as community members, friends, neighbours and family sat down to enjoy a meal of roast beef and all the fixings at last year's To Stratford With Love community dinner.

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Weekend Quiz

By Jake Grant

1. Jiminy Cricket first appeared in what book?
2. The apostle Paul was called by Jesus on the road to which city?
3. What items did the Stamp Act levy a tax on?
4. What is the layering process of making pastry called?
5. Who is the villain in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*?
6. The 1976 Summer Olympics were held in which city?
7. What bird can swim but cannot fly?
8. Where do "Yoopers" live?
9. SpongeBob SquarePants lives in a house shaped like what?
10. What is Wales' national dish called?

This week's answers are found on pg. 27

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McCabe named chair of AMO Small Urban Caucus

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Coun. Larry McCabe has been appointed chair of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's (AMO) Small Urban Caucus and chair of Ontario Small Urban Municipalities (OSUM).

The Small Urban Caucus brings the perspectives of small urban municipalities to AMO's board of directors and helps inform the association's provincial advocacy. OSUM is a committee of AMO whose principal work includes organizing an annual conference where municipal leaders exchange ideas, discuss shared challenges and support the priorities of small urban communities.

"These roles offer an opportunity to bring Stratford's experience to provincial discussions and support the priorities of small urban communities across Ontario," said McCabe in a media release from the City of Stratford. "Housing, infrastructure and the cost of delivering municipal services are challenges we share. Working with colleagues from other municipalities helps us identify practical solutions and make a stronger case for the tools and support our communities need."

Stratford will host the OSUM conference in 2027, bringing municipal representatives together to discuss issues affecting Ontario's small urban communities.

"Hosting the conference gives Stratford an opportunity to showcase our community and contribute to those conversations," said McCabe. "It also creates an opportunity to connect the discussions at OSUM with the ongoing advocacy work of AMO's Small Urban Caucus."

AMO represents Ontario's municipal governments and advocates on issues affecting their ability to serve their communities.

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Next Flavours of Home gives opportunity for Afghan women

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

What if sharing a meal in Stratford could help open the door to education for women thousands of kilometres away? Thanks to the Provocation Ideas Festival (PIF), in partnership with Mercer Kitchen and the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW), that idea is now a reality.

On Nov. 25 and 26, the partners will present Flavours of Home: Afghanistan, two special evenings celebrating Afghan food, culture and storytelling while raising funds to help women in Afghanistan continue their education.

"The heart of Flavours of Home remains the same: a memorable meal created collaboratively by a newcomer family and a local restaurant, accompanied by stories that illuminate the cultural significance of the food and the family's experiences of coming to Canada," Mark Rosenfeld, founding director of PIF, told the Times. "What makes the Afghanistan evenings distinctive is that they also have a very specific humanitarian and educational purpose … We're bringing together two forms of connection: understanding the lives of newcomers in our own community and reaching across the world to support women whose opportunities have been profoundly restricted.

"It's an opportunity not only to learn about an important issue, but to make a tangible contribution."

Taking place from 6- 9 p.m. at 151 Albert Street in Stratford, the evenings will feature a three-course Afghan meal developed collaboratively by Stratford residents Hussain Karimi and his mother, Maleha Sadaqat, working with the culinary team at Mercer Kitchen. Throughout the dinner, Karimi and Sadaqat will share the cultural significance of the dishes, their family traditions and reflections on their journey from Afghanistan to building a new home in Stratford.

The evenings will also feature Khadija Yawari and Karen Shigeishi-Waite, who will speak about the CFUW-supported initiative helping women in Afghanistan pursue educational opportunities despite the severe restrictions they face.

Thirty-five dollars from every ticket sold will be donated to Right to Learn Afghanistan, supporting educational opportunities for Afghan women, with purchasers receiving a charitable tax receipt for that amount.

Flavours of Home: Afghanistan continues a series launched by PIF earlier this year to celebrate the cultures, cuisines and lived experiences that newcomers bring to Stratford and the surrounding region.

The inaugural Flavours of Home: Congo evening, held at Foster's Inn in March, featured a Congolese meal developed in collaboration with Esperance Nyantungane and her family. In May, Flavours of Home: Vietnam, presented at the Common in collaboration with Asian Heritage Month Stratford, featured a Vietnamese-inspired dinner curated by Huong Vo, whose poetry and storytelling explored memory, identity and belonging.

"The response to our first two Flavours of Home events – Congo in March and Vietnam in May – was extraordinary," Rosenfeld said. "Both sold out, and what struck me most was how naturally food and storytelling brought people together who might otherwise never have met. Flavours of Home is built on a simple but powerful idea: food can open doors to conversations and connections that might never happen otherwise. Every dish carries stories of family, culture, memory and belonging. By bringing newcomer families together with Stratford restaurants, we're creating something more meaningful than a culinary experience. We're inviting people to discover the lives, traditions and experiences of neighbours they may know very little about."

For the Afghanistan evenings, PIF is once again collaborating with Ryan O'Donnell, owner and general manager of Mercer Kitchen + Beer Hall + Hotel and Foster's Inn, who helped bring the inaugural Congolese event to life.

"We had such a great experience with the first Flavors of Home: Congolese dinner at Foster's, and we do share some staff, myself included. And we thought it was a great opportunity for Mercer's team to do something similar because … it's a lot of work for the chefs, and it's definitely outside of their normal day to day. But there's so much reward to it … When you do research on a cuisine, of course, there's lots of information you can find. But getting their real experience of it and how it's actually used in their family's life is just it's much deeper and richer."

The Afghanistan evenings have an additional purpose beyond celebrating food and culture. With educational opportunities for women and girls in Afghanistan severely restricted, initiatives such as Right to Learn Afghanistan are working to create pathways for continued learning, including through access to technology, connectivity and remote educational support.

During the dinners, Khadija Yawari and Karen Shigeishi-Waite will help guests understand the educational challenges facing Afghan women, the work being undertaken to support their learning and how contributions from Stratford can make a difference.

The Provocation Ideas Festival is also planning a Flavours of Home: Syria event at Bluebird Restaurant in early 2027, continuing its collaboration with local newcomer families and Stratford restaurants.

For tickets, visit tinyurl.com/mpkdtxep or contact Mercer Kitchen by calling or visiting their website.

Unemployment increases to 3.8%

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

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Despite maintaining the second-lowest unemployment rate in Ontario, the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula economic region experienced a notable decline in employment and labour force participation in October.

The unemployment rate in the region increased by 0.2 percentage points to 3.8 per cent. Meanwhile, the provincial unemployment rate decreased 0.1 percentage points to 7.2 per cent, both unadjusted for seasonality. Total employment in the region fell by 2,900 (-1.8 per cent) to 161,800 with losses in full-time employment (-3,200; -2.3 per cent) and small gains in part-time employment (+200; +0.8 per cent).

In October, the region's overall population aged 15 or over increased by 600 whereas the labour force size decreased by 2,600 people. The number of people not in the labour force in the region increased by 3,200. This in turn reduced the region's participation rate by 1.0 percentage points down to 56.4 per cent. Employment in the region decreased in both the goods-producing sector (-5.0 per cent; -2,800) and the services-producing sector (-0.1 per cent; 100).

The goods-producing sector saw a decrease in overall employment numbers in October (-5.0 per cent; -2,800 people). Losses were reported in all industries apart from forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil (+5.3 per cent; +100) and agriculture which remained unchanged from last month. Construction experienced the largest percentage decrease (-11.2 per cent; -1,800 people), followed by manufacturing (-4.2 per cent; -700 people) and utilities (-1.5 per cent; -200).

Overall employment in the services-producing decreased marginally by 0.1 per cent (-100 people) in October. Accommodation and food services experienced the largest percentage decrease (-14.1 per cent; -1,000 people) followed by other services except public administration (-10.0 per cent; -600 people) and health care and social assistance (-5.9 per cent; -1,000 people). Gains were noted in business, building and other support services (+56.0 per cent; +1,400 people), public administration (+13.8 per cent, +800 people), educational services (+8.7 per cent, +600 people) and professional, scientific and technical services (+8.5 per cent; +1,000 people).

Ag society and farmer's market raise money

GARY WEST

Times Correspondent

For a number of years, the Stratford and District Agricultural Society, has supported the United Way of Perth-Huron at the Stratford Farmers Market.

The society is directed by farmers and those interested in growing and promoting local food and agriculture in Perth County and beyond.

To raise funds for the local United Way, they ask commodity groups like Perth County dairy producers, county egg farmers, local pork producers and Grain Farmers of Perth to donate chocolate milk and cheese, back bacon, fresh shell eggs and newly baked buns to make bacon, egg and cheese on a bun, along with chocolate milk, with all money collected going to the United Way.

This year, they collected over $1,300 and they thank everyone who came out to the Saturday Farmer's Market and show support.

They want to help in any way they can, to reach its annual goal, to help area organizations who can use the funds.

Over the years thousands of dollars has been raised and the United Way's Sonya Heyen was on hand on Saturday to accept the cash raised for this good annual cause.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Angie Fawcett, Sonya Heyen, Elaine Landsborough and Kyle Moore at last Saturday's Stratford Farmers Market, collecting funds for the United Way's annual campaign. This year, the funds from the breakfast sandwich netted the charity over $1,300.

Silent disco takes over SDSS

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Students at Stratford District Secondary School (SDSS) will be trading their phones for headphones on Friday, Nov. 27, as the school brings a silent disco to the gym during the school day.

The event is being organized by Morgan Kneider Patterson's Positive Psychology and Wellbeing course, with support from Destination Stratford. The initiative combines classroom learning with a unique, school-wide experience focused on movement, enjoyment and social connection.

"This course is about improving mental wellbeing and teaching students to be flexible in their thinking," said Kneider Patterson in a media release. "We explore topics such as resilience, managing emotions, social connection and character strengths. The silent disco gives students an opportunity to experience some of these concepts in a different way. We wanted to try something that gets students moving, interacting and having fun together."

Students will attend the event by grade, spending 30 minutes in the gym with wireless headphones and three music channels, curated by three senior SDSS students. They can switch between channels throughout the session, creating a shared dance floor where everyone can listen to different music while participating in the same experience. Three SDSS students will be mixing tunes for their peers.

Destination Stratford has partnered with the school to make the event possible, bringing its silent disco equipment and experience into the school community.

"Destination Stratford is thrilled with the community response to our silent disco partnerships, including this unique collaboration with the Positive Psychology students. Silent discos offer a creative and fun way for students to disconnect from their devices and reconnect with themselves and the love of music," said Zac Gribble, executive director of Destination Stratford.

The event is also a student-led learning opportunity. As part of their course, Positive Psychology students are responsible for planning and hosting the disco. Their work includes developing playlists, creating decorations, coordinating grade schedules and managing the event. Students will also observe and reflect on how their peers respond to the experience, connecting the event back to their learning about wellbeing and social connection.

Kneider Patterson says, "We are trying to create opportunities for students to apply classroom learning beyond traditional assignments while working with local organizations to bring new experiences into the school. I'm really excited about this!"

Zac Gribble also recognizes others reading this article may be envious of the students and invites the broader community to connect and celebrate together by attending a free silent disco in Market Square on Friday and Saturday evenings during the Lights On Stratford Winter Festival from Dec. 18 through Jan. 10.



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTO)

Volunteers Carol Irwin and Judy Neeb mix together the traditional Christmas pudding for the annual St. Peter's Lutheran Church Starlite Bazaar, which will take place from 9 a.m. until noon on Nov. 28. The bazaar will include Christmas pudding with sauce, tourtière, a bake table, gift baskets, crafts, wreaths, treasures galore and more. The bazaar is sponsored by the St. Peter's Mary Martha Society.

WWW.STRATFORDTIMES.COM

March 2027 is Fraud Prevention and Senior Safety Month thanks to push at city council

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Stratford city council has formally recognized the work and legacy of the John Parkinson Family Foundation, approving a proclamation designating March 2027 as Fraud Prevention and Senior Safety Month and March 22, 2027, in recognition of John Parkinson, whose death last year inspired the organization's creation.

March 22 would have been Parkinson's 97th birthday.

When his son, Dave Parkinson, chairman of the foundation, shared council's decision on his personal Facebook page, his entire message was just three words:

"Happy birthday, Dad."

John Parkinson died in Stratford on Aug. 30, 2025, at age 95. A retired Toronto Transit Commission employee of 30 years and a father who raised his children following the death of his wife, Joyce, in 1972, he spent his final years in Stratford.

His son Dave, together with Tracy Lamourie and Jane McCormick, established the John Parkinson Family Foundation in January 2026. What began as a family tribute has since developed into a national initiative addressing fraud prevention, financial exploitation and systemic barriers families encounter when seeking protection and justice.

In its first ten months, the foundation has:

Received coverage from 28 media outlets across three countries.

Engaged federal officials, Ontario government representatives, financial regulators, police services and organizations working on financial exploitation and fraud prevention.

Met with officials at Ontario's Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility to discuss concerns about legal protections that can prove difficult for families to access in practice.

Discussed the development of case studies documenting the experiences of Ontario families attempting to navigate the justice system, following a suggestion from a provincial government representative.

Delivered community education presentations and secured a place on the December agenda of the Stratford Police Services Board.

The foundation's work has expanded beyond public warnings about scams to include concerns about what happens when families attempt to use existing legal protections to address suspected financial exploitation.

In discussions with Ontario's Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility, foundation representatives raised the gap between legal rights that exist on paper and the practical difficulties families report encountering when trying to exercise those rights.

A provincial government representative suggested that the foundation develop case studies illustrating what Ontario families are experiencing when they attempt to access justice.

The issue has gained renewed national attention following a recent CBC The Fifth Estate investigation into the case of an 86-year-old Toronto woman, Dorelia Licorish, whose circumstances raised questions about powers of attorney, financial exploitation and institutional responses to concerns raised by families and professionals.

The foundation had been raising related systemic concerns with Ontario officials before the investigation aired.

For more information on the organization, visit johnparkinsonfamilyfoundation.org



School boards welcome new trustees

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Stratford's local English school boards have welcomed their new board of trustees, following the municipal election on Oct. 26.

Both the Avon Maitland District School Board (AMDSB) and Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board (HPCDSB) held their inaugural board meetings recently, on Nov. 17 and 16, respectively.

Michael Bannerman (Stratford), Deepika Mishra (Stratford), Carling Buchanan (North Perth), Qui Phuc Cao (Perth East), Alysha Dowson (Central/East Huron), Robert Hunking (Northwest Huron), Sheila Marshall (St. Marys, Perth South and West Perth), Patricia Smith (North Huron, Morris Turnberry and Howick) and Marnie Van Esbroeck (South Huron) make up the new board for the AMDSB, with Smith and Hunking being elected to chair and vice chair.

For the Catholic board, Amy Cronin, Heather Marcy, Alanna Fitzpatrick, Derek Van De Walle and Graham Keys are the new trustees. Cronin and Marcy have been elected chair and vice chair.

"On behalf of our entire staff and school communities, I extend a warm welcome to our new and returning Trustees," said Karen Tigani, CEO and secretary of the HPCDSB board of trustees, in a media release. "We are blessed to work alongside chair Cronin, vice chair Marcy, and the entire 2026-2030 Board. With chair Cronin's proven governance leadership, vice chair Marcy's deep roots as an educator, and the fresh perspectives of our newly commissioned trustees, we are well-positioned to advance our Multi-Year Strategic Plan and support every learner in reaching their full potential."



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Amy Cronin and Heather Marcy have been appointed chair and vice chair of the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board (HPCDSB)'s board of trustees.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The new Avon Maitland District School Board (AMDSB) board of trustees sit during its first meeting. Pictured in the back, from left to right, are: Michael Bannerman, Carling Buchanan, Qui Phuc Cao (Ethan), Alysha Dowson and Robert Hunking. In the front row are Sheila Marshall, Deepika Mishra, Patricia Smith and Marnie Van Esbroeck.

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Swimming towards success: Amiera Black earns two medals and reaches personal goals at World Down Syndrome Swimming Championships

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

Stratford swimmer Amiera Black was proudly showing her gold and silver medals earned at the 12th annual World Down Syndrome Swimming Championships during a Zoom interview with the Times.

During the Worlds competition in Portugal, Amiera earned a gold medal in the senior division for 200 metre butterfly and a silver medal for 800 metre freestyle in the senior division. Although she was in third place for 200 metre freestyle, the awards are distributed based on preliminary scores and not final scores, so she did not receive a medal.

In the team relays, her team earned fifth overall for mixed medley, fifth for women's medley, and sixth for women's freestyle.

"I was overwhelmingly proud of her," said mom and coach Jennifer Black. "Not just as her mom but as her coach because I could see her in the water utilizing all the skills that she had worked so hard to develop up until Worlds."

Amiera, who goes by the superhero moniker "Aquaflash" when swimming, uses her underwater swimming skills as her superpower during the competition.

"If she got a little bit tired, she would focus on the next wall and she would use her underwaters and she would catch right back up or pass the person next to her," Jennifer said.

Amiera loves to earn medals whenever she can. When she and her mom realized just how many fast swimmers were at the competition, however, they focused more on achieving personal accomplishments.

"We just shifted the focus rather than worrying so much about medals or being on the podium and found personal goals for her to obtain and she took them and ran with them," Jennifer said.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Amiera Black added two more medals to her collection from the 12th annual World Down Syndrome Swimming Championships earlier this fall.

Already, they're making new goals for the next Worlds competition.

"Next time, I'm going to try the 1,500 freestyle," said Amiera.

"She realized she's really good with long distances, that's where she excels and so her goal is to try before the next world championships to qualify for the 1,500 time to be able to compete for that," said Jennifer.

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Author Ian Hamilton shares journey from journalist to crime novelist of Ava Lee series

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

Author Ian Hamilton spent a little time over tea with about 30 new and old fans of his novels. The eager readers packed the tearoom of the Leonor on George Street to hear about Hamilton's life journey from journalist to senior civil servant, businessman and crime novelist of two successful series.

"Ian is one among the most successful Canadian authors in the last two to three decades in terms of the mystery genre. He's created an iconic character in the Ava Lee series, a Chinese-Canadian forensic accountant who some have compared to a Canadian Lisbeth Salander," said Michael Welsh in his brief introduction.

Hamilton began his career as a journalist, albeit short-lived, before joining the government in communications and several senior positions. Eventually he became the director general of Fisheries and Oceans Canada which meant involvement with the fish business. He ultimately became the Canadian Consulate Trade Commissioner in New England.

When that ended, he went into business and spent the better part of 20 years traveling in and out of all parts of Asia.

"We were doing production in the Philippines, Indonesia, China, we were in and out of Hong Kong all the time. I'm very curious and so as I was traveling, I was reading about the places I was doing business and trying to understand the culture, understand the society and ended up making a lot of Chinese friends in Hong Kong in particular. So, I started being invited to family events," explained Hamilton of his experiences.

All these experiences fed into his curiosity, and he was always asking questions about what was going on around him. Then, in 2009 he was faced with a health crisis. Time on his hands and the clarity that facing a crisis brings, Hamilton thought about what he hasn't done that he always wanted to do and that was write a book. Once released from hospital, he called his partner in Taiwan and quit the business. He began his first book two days out of the hospital and hasn't looked back. The first book, The Water Rat of Wanchai, is an award-winning novel that introduced the character Ava Lee.

"Ava Lee came to me 100 per cent fully formed. A lot of writers take a character and outline all the characteristics they want the character to have. I never did that. She was just there and I just started to write. I had no plot; I just had a very rough idea where I wanted to go with the book," said Hamilton.

When he started to write, he had one sentence in his head, "She didn't know where the call came from. Somewhere in Asia from someone unaware of the time or too desperate to care." He just kept writing like he was addicted to it and halfway through he realized he had the plot for a second book. So, he built it into the first book, and upon completion, started the second book the next day.

As a new writer unaccustomed to the world of publishing, Hamilton quickly learned that publishers don't want to talk to writers, only agents. So, he set out to get an agent which was proving to be as difficult as getting publishers to talk to him.

"One of my daughters knew someone who knew someone, and I ended up with three names and I cold called. The first two wouldn't talk to me. The third woman answers the phone, and I think it was by mistake. She said, 'Yes, can I help you?' and I said, 'Well, I've written a book.' She asked what it's about and I said, 'A Chinese-Canadian lesbian forensic accountant who chases big bad debts' to which she said, 'At least that's different. Send the manuscript,'" Hamilton laughed at the memory.

Hamilton has written 16 books in the Ava Lee series with a prequel novella and four books in the Uncle Tung series. The last book, The Fury of Beijing leaves Ava persona-non-grata in China and back in Toronto and has Hamilton thinking Ava's days are numbered and this could be the end of the series.

"In the end, she can't go back to China, she's totally persona-non-grata in Hong Kong or Asia so I ended it right there. Leaving the characters behind has been hard, I had a hard year the first year afterward," confessed Hamilton.

The Ava Lee series and the Uncle Tung series are available through the various online shops like Amazon as well as available at the Stratford Public Library.



(LISA CHESTER PHOTO)

Author Ian Hamilton is introduced by book enthusiast and arts ambassador Michael Welsh to a packed house of fans at the Leonor.

STRATFORD TIMES
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Why We Build Arks

(on the occasion of the "ribbon cutting" at L'Arche Stratford's new community hub, November 7th 2026)

Today we open not just a structure
composed of bricks and mortar, but
a door to the infinite architecture of
the heart, a portal to the golden core
of the human soul. Here rises L'Arche's
noble footprint not just as a building,
but as the promise incarnate of its
enduring mission of hope, respect,
and the foundational belief that inclusion
is the name of the game. We're better
together, this building tells us, a truth
that is the luminous life force for those
living with intellectual challenges.

For L'Arche is indeed an ark, a vessel
built not to escape the world, but to
provide the support and sanctuary that
permits us all to enjoy its benefits
within the sweet embrace of community
and absolute acceptance. The metaphor of
"ark" reminds that independence is not
an island, that every life is threaded
through another in the heart pulse
braid that is the eternal, reinforcing twine
of what it means to be human. These
are the support beams not seen on blueprints,
the retaining walls that define a home.

And so today we close a chapter but
beautifully open futures built around
the harmony of shared and supportive
lives, meals prepared together, a
special moment remembered, a difficult
day met with patience, victories
celebrated, each oasis of silence honoured.
May this ark sail long and with wondrous
grace upon the troubled waves of this
world, guided by hope, buoyed by tenderness,
compassion the wind in its sails,
kindness the resolute spine of its keel,
and love its one true compass.

David Stones, Stratford Poet Laureate

102-year-old Holocaust survivor, D-Day veteran to share remarkable story of survival, resistance in Stratford

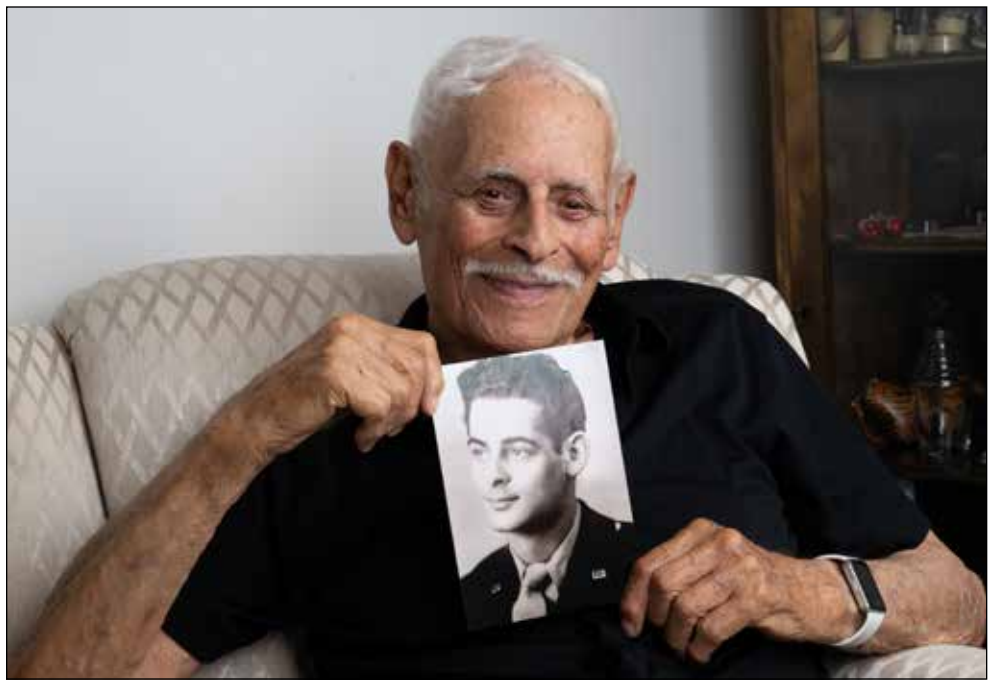
GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

At 102 years old, Second World War veteran, former spy and Holocaust survivor Jack Boeki is among the dwindling number of people who can share firsthand accounts of the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany and the fight to liberate Europe.

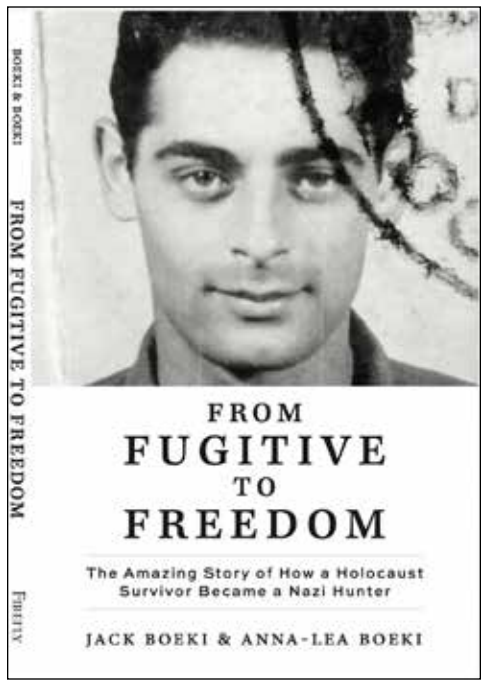
On Nov. 23 at 7 p.m., Boeki will share his remarkable story of survival, resistance and the pursuit of justice during a special Remembrance Month event, From Fugitive to Freedom: An Evening with Jack Boeki, at Lazaridis Hall in the Stratford Festival's Tom Patterson Theatre. Presented by Stratford-based Ballinran Entertainment, the event will also feature Boeki's daughter, Anna-Lea, with whom he recently co-authored the book, *From Fugitive to Freedom: The Amazing Story of How a Holocaust Survivor Became a Nazi Hunter.*

"I've known Anna-Lea Boeki for over 20 years," Ballinran executive director Craig Thompson said. "For as long as I've known her, I've known the story of her father, in snippets, a remarkable story about her father, and she always said, 'You should make a documentary about this.'"



(ANNA-LEA BOEKI PHOTO)

Second World War veteran, spy and Holocaust survivor Jack Boeki holds a photo of himself in dress uniform.



(ANNA-LEA BOEKI PHOTO)

***From Fugitive to Freedom: The Amazing Story of How a Holocaust Survivor Became a Nazi Hunter* by Jack Boeki.**

Born in Rotterdam, Netherlands, on May 31, 1924, Jack survived multiple arrests and 10 escapes during the Nazi occupation of Europe. With help from the Dutch underground and French Resistance, he eventually became involved in espionage with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), predecessor to the CIA.

After training with the U.S. Army's Counterintelligence Corps, Jack landed on Utah Beach in Normandy on June 8, 1944, just two days after D-Day. He later helped hunt down Nazi war criminals, provided security during the Nuremberg trials and accompanied Gen. Dwight Eisenhower on a visit to the Ohrdruf concentration camp.

After the war, Jack learned his family had been murdered at the Sobibor extermination camp.

"It's really important that we're hearing from people who actually lived this experience, to share the truth so we don't forget," Thompson said. "We're really living in a time of rising intolerance and hatred and antisemitism."

Thompson said the event reflects Ballinran's longstanding commitment to sharing untold stories, particularly during what he considers Remembrance Month.

"How often do you get to hear from a 102 year-old who'll have you at the edge of your seat as they relate their personal brush with history?" Anna-Lea told the Times. "I've watched my dad captivate, inspire – regardless of age – and leave a room feeling a renewed sense of purpose. We all could use that these days.

"Growing up, I was fortunate that my dad shared his remarkable adventures, filled with synchronicity, rare coincidences and pure luck with our family. I feel honoured to share my father with a Stratford audience to bring a rare experience that shows how light can prevail in a dark time."

Local business owners Carrie and Jeremy Wreford are helping organize the event after being approached by Thompson, who remembered the couple had previously sponsored the Anne Frank House exhibition at the Stratford Perth Museum.

Wreford, who grew up in Toronto's Jewish community surrounded by Holocaust survivors, said hearing their stories firsthand had a profound impact on her understanding of history.

"Stratford doesn't have a large Jewish community, so many people haven't had that exposure," Wreford said. "I try to support Holocaust education whenever I can. Hearing Mr. Boeki's lived experience is especially vital for younger audiences, who will be the last generation able to hear from a living survivor."

Beyond ensuring the atrocities of the Holocaust and the six million Jewish lives lost are never forgotten, Wreford hopes those attending will gain a greater appreciation for the strength and resilience of survivors who rebuilt their lives after the war.

"I hope it opens hearts and minds to the value of human connection so we can better understand each other's lived experiences," she said.

The evening will be moderated by historian, journalist and former Stratford Perth Museum general manager John Kastner, who helped bring the Anne Frank House exhibition to Stratford and later became the Amsterdam institution's director of Canadian activities.

"I want people to hear firsthand from someone who went through the story of the Second World War so that nobody forgets," Thompson said. "There's nothing I want to get out of it except to change people's perceptions and give people a new perspective or reinforce a perspective that they already have."

Tickets are $25 plus HST and are available through www.eventbrite.com/e/jack-boeki-from-fugitive-to-freedom-tickets-2004379608365. More information about Jack Boeki and his book is available at www.jackboeki.com.

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Nov. 8 Matt Aarts, St. Marys	$50.00
Nov. 9 Bruce Armstrong, St. Marys	$50.00
Nov. 10 Murray Barber, Granton	$50.00
Nov. 11 Ed Muegge, Waterloo	$50.00
Nov. 12 Liane Tomkins, Shakespeare	$50.00
Nov. 13 Matt & Erin Verellen, Stratford	$50.00
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Café Bouffon brings back wine dinner series for third year

AMANDA NELSON

Times Reporter

Café Bouffon is bringing back its Wine Dinner Series for a third year, beginning Thursday, Nov. 19, with a collaboration between chef Matt Gaynor and sommelier Steve Doyle.

The pair will work together to create curated menus celebrating French cuisine and wine.

Gaynor has a longstanding relationship with the Pazzo Company, having worked in the kitchen when the company first opened in Stratford in 1998.

A graduate of the Stratford Chefs School, Gaynor has honed his culinary skills throughout his career, working in Stratford, Europe, Turks and Caicos and, most recently, Hamilton.

"I was the original sous chef when we opened back in 1998. I came back in July as head chef at Café Bouffon and I'm very excited to be back and running the kitchen this time," said Gaynor.

Gaynor and Doyle have worked together on several occasions in both Stratford and Turks and Caicos.

"Together, they bring a natural synergy to the table, combining Matt's culinary creativity with Steve's expertise in wine," said Chloe Miller, Café Bouffon's chief administrative officer. "We are excited to reunite this talented duo as we embark on our third season of Café Bouffon Wine Dinners."

The next dinner, Joyeuse Noël, will take place Thursday, Dec. 17, featuring refined takes on French Christmas classics, wines from Champagne and Burgundy, and a cozy Christmas atmosphere in the Café Bouffon dining room.

On Jan. 8, the restaurant will celebrate Lights On Stratford with an exploration of cool-climate cuisine and Canadian cool-climate wines.

Gaynor said he is particularly excited about incorporating local ingredients from across the region, including beef, pork and cheese from Perth County.

"Featuring Canadian ingredients and showcasing Perth County really highlight the beauty of Canadian ingredients for everyone. One of the final desserts is my mom's butter tart recipe, and it doesn't get much more Canadian than that. Celebrating the roots here in Perth County; we're so fortunate to live in such a beautiful region of Canada," he said.

Tickets can be purchased online at www.pazzo.ca



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Chef Matt Gaynor, left, and sommelier Steve Doyle are teaming up for the return of Café Bouffon's Wine Dinner Series for a third year. The pair will collaborate on curated menus celebrating French cuisine and wine, with the series featuring several themed dinners throughout the winter.

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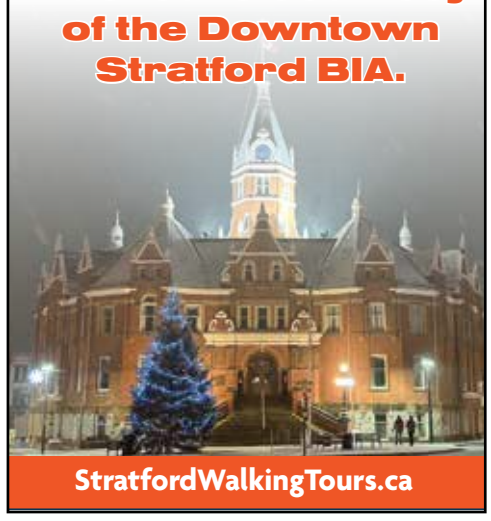
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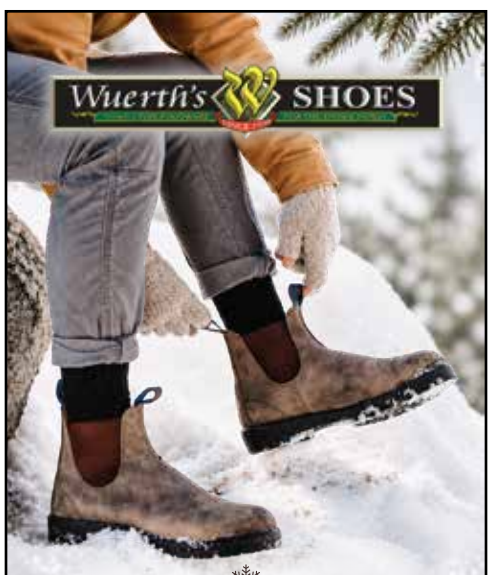
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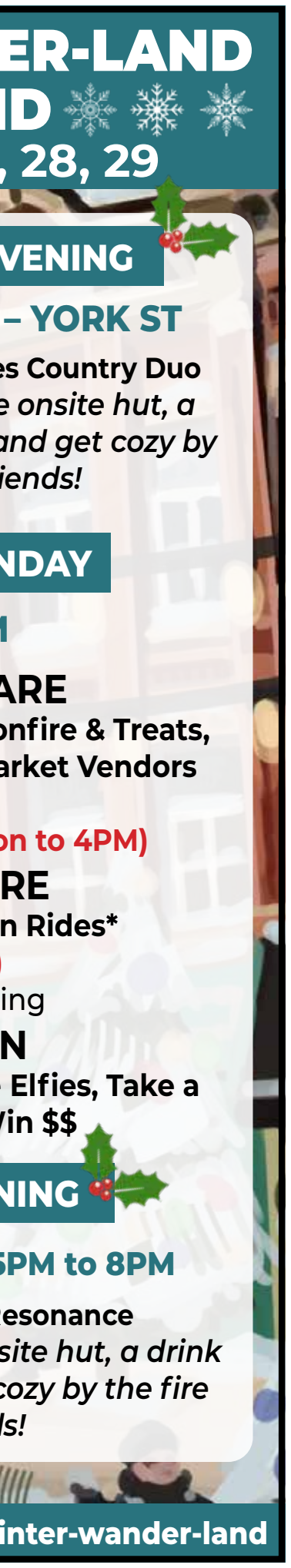
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Winter Wander-land returns

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF
stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Next weekend, downtown Stratford will be transformed into a winter wonderland.

Or, as Stratfordians know it as, a Winter Wander-land.

Winter Wander-Land returns Nov. 27-29 this year. The popular holiday event is hosted by the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area (BIA) and participating businesses, a family-friendly event with treats, carollers and activities to get everyone in the holiday spirit.

On Friday and Saturday evening, from 5-8 p.m., there will be live music on York Street courtesy of Amanda and James and Retro Resonance, respectively.

On Saturday and Sunday, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Market Square will be packed with Polar Express train rides around city hall, bonfires and treats, Christmas trees for sale, scattered festive photo backdrops for holiday pictures, Yuletide cabins and food trucks, crackling fire pits to keep everyone warm and for roasting Rice Krispie Treats.

Roaming carollers will be out all weekend, filling the air with festive songs, and horse and wagon rides from the Avon Theatre (weather permitting).

And the big man himself, Santa Claus, will be in his sleigh for photos from noon to 4 p.m.

According to organizers, one of the most exciting features is the Winter Wander-land Passport – which starts Nov. 23 and runs until Dec. 23. Collect eight stickers from participating local businesses and enter to win one of three Downtown Dollar prizes.

Passports will be available for pick up at 47 Downie St. or at participating businesses. Passports are to be returned to 47 Downie St. by Dec. 23 at 5 p.m.

The draw this year will occur on Dec. 23 at 6 p.m. Winners will be contacted directly.

For a full list of participating businesses, visit tinyurl.com/24w6mmw7.



(TIMES FILE PHOTO)

Winter Wander-Land returns Nov. 27-29 this year! The popular holiday event is hosted by the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area (BIA) and participating businesses, a family-friendly event to get everyone in the holiday spirit.



(TIMES FILE PHOTO)

Attendees at last year's Winter Wander-land go for a ride on the Polar Express train ride around city hall.

STRATFORD TIMES SPORTS

Senior Boys' Golden Bears win HPAA volleyball championship on home court

MICHAEL WILLOUGHBY

Times Correspondent



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The HPAA Senior Boys Volleyball Champions: Chahil Patel (2), Yug Patel (3), Nate Meadows (5), Davis Longston (6), Evan Abercrombie (7), MJ White (8), Cohen Bernard (9), Ryan Cassone (10), Jordan Diep (11), Zack Davidson (12), Brody Sinclair (13), Ashton Van Kooten (15), Evan Ehnes (16), Jack de Graaf (17). Coaches: Bear Gough, Katey Kneider, Mark Cassone.

Nov. 12 at Stratford District Secondary School was a memorable day for the Golden Bears Senior Boys Volleyball team, which rallied to defeat the St. Michael's Warriors and claim the school's fourth-straight HPAA Senior Boys Volleyball championship.

The Senior Boys squad advanced to the semifinal with a convincing straight-set win over the Central Huron Phoenix (25-9, 25-18, 25-14) on Nov. 10 at the Stratford Burnside Agriplex. Across the gym, St. Mike's secured a spot in the finals with a straight-set win over St. Marys (32-30, 25-13, 25-10).

Following the semifinal win, SDSS head coach Bear Gough was satisfied with the performance, attributing it to limiting mistakes and playing fundamental volleyball.

"Really happy. Today was a great day for our team. We played a team from Central Huron who was playing really strong volleyball, and we were able to limit our mistakes, play our game and do a lot of things well. I'm also very happy that we were able to get everyone in the game and win together as a team. It was a complete team effort," Gough said.

After the Junior Boys winning the championship, the Senior Boys squad aimed to complete the school's championship sweep against their neighbouring rivals.

The Golden Bears took the opening set 25-19, but the Warriors bounced back from 14-10 to go on a 15-8 run to win the second set 25-22. Stratford District started strong out of the gate with an 8-0 led to start the third set, only for St. Michael to mount a comeback with a 21-13 run to win 25-23 and lead the championship match 2-1.

Stratford District outlasted St. Mike's 25-21 in the fourth set, setting up for the decisive fifth set. The Golden Bears started strong and held off the rival Warriors 15-8 to finish their HPAA Senior Boys Volleyball season undefeated.

After the match, an elated Gough credited the team's veteran presence and unwavering belief in one another for coming back from a 2–1 deficit. Gough also said the championship match showed that Stratford's volleyball scene is in great shape.

"First of all, I feel very proud of my players. They had to work very hard. They had to stay together, and they came out on top today," Gough said.

"Secondly, I'm really happy for just volleyball as a sport in Stratford. I think a Huron-Perth final like today's, with two great teams from Stratford, just shows how much the city loves volleyball and how great the talent pipeline is. There's no one we'd rather play than our in-city rivals, and I'm just very proud of our players for winning a very hard-fought match."

On Nov. 19, the Senior Boys travel to A.B. Lucas Secondary School in London to face the host A.B. Lucas Vikings in the Western Ontario Secondary School Athletic Association (WOSSAA) 'AAA' Championships. The winner will meet the winner of Oakridge-Saunders in the afternoon final, with a berth at OFSAA on the line.

The OFSAA 'AAA' Championships take place in Chatham from Nov. 26 to 28.



A celebration of women's hockey in Stratford

MICHAEL WILLOUGHBY

Times Correspondent

It was an eventful four days for the growth of women's hockey in Stratford last week, as the city hosted its annual Stratford Aces Festival Cup Challenge from Nov. 12 to 15.

First held in 1995, the tournament featured 95 teams from the A and B classes across age groups U9 to U18. Games were played at the Stratford Rotary Complex, William Allman Memorial Arena, Dufferin Lions Complex and in Tavistock, Milverton, Monkton and Embro.

Aces president Sean Cameron says the tournament has been successful and welcomed the bonus of holding it earlier than in past years. Cameron also highlighted what makes the tournament unique.

"It's been a great tournament so far. This year was a little bit special. We started on Thursday night to get all the games in, and we've been on time, and lots of cheering and lots of fun are being had here. Overall, a very successful tournament," Cameron said.

"It's really a progression for all the girls who play in Stratford. They get their first taste of a Stratford tournament at U9, and then we go all the way up to our senior girls that are graduating in their senior year, and talking to some parents in the stands, they put vacations off to make sure they're at the Aces tournament because it's really important to the girls. So you start young with the girls running around in red suits, and then, as they progress, they can finish their careers here with the Stratford Aces."

When it comes to tournament operations, Cameron credits the two individuals who have run it over the past decade.

"We're very lucky that we have a guy like Terry Soper and Jamie Antonio, who's been running our tournament … for at least the last 10 years, these guys know what they're doing. It's a very well-oiled machine, and the entire Aces organization owe these two gentlemen a lot of thanks," Cameron said.

"They put so much time into it. I know Terry starts planning back in August, and all the work culminates today. It's a long process, and we're thankful for everything he's put into it."

The 215-game schedule began on Nov. 12 at the Rotary Complex when the Orr Insurance U11A Aces faced the Lambeth Lancers.

The Stratford Black & McDonald Aces (U15 C) finished second in the round-robin with a 3-1-0 record, then beat the Huron Heat 6-1 and the Stittsville Rockets 3-0 to win the tournament.

The Stratford Taylor Fluid Aces (U18 A) finished first place in the round-robin via tiebreaker with a 3-0-1 record and defeated the Clarington Flames 3-0 in the championship game.

Other Festival Cup winners included the Lucan Irish (U11 A & U11 C), the Wilmot Wolverines (U11 B), the London Devilettes (U13 B, U13 C & U15 B), the Chatham-Kent Crush (U15 A), the Twin Centre Hericanes (U18B) and the Smith Falls Cubs (U18 C).

Warriors unlucky against Elmira, bounce back on the road in Welland

MICHAEL WILLOUGHBY

Times Correspondent

On Nov. 13, the Stratford Hunter Steel Warriors dropped a tough 5-3 decision on home ice against Elmira, but reversed their fortune with a 2-1 win over the Welland Jr. Canadians in Welland on Nov. 15.

The Stratford Hunter Steel Warriors were looking to bounce back after a tough home loss to the Fort Erie Meteors. Head coach Dave Williams told the Times what to expect from the Sugar Kings, who appointed Tyler Ertel as their new coach earlier this month (Nov. 2), and discussed the cross-conference matchup in Welland.

"I just think we're going to see a really good effort from Elmira on Friday night. So, you know, I think the biggest thing is … it's that consistency. We see that we can play good hockey for stretches, and you know that's what we've got to aim to do: be as consistent as we can in all three zones and be really good with our details, because that's what you have to do, I think, to give yourself an opportunity to win," Williams said.

"So we need to learn from Friday that there are some really good teams in our league, and if you don't play, you know, the way you're capable of or the way you need to, you can have a bit of a humbling night, so hopefully we learn a lesson from Friday night, and we'll turn the page and move forward this weekend."

In the first period against Elmira at the William Allman Memorial Arena, Stratford created several quality chances but was unable to capitalize. The visitors opened the scoring with 4:01 left in the period, as the puck snuck past the left pad of the Warriors' netminder Gage Hurst.

Early in the second period, bad luck continued for the Warriors as the Sugar Kings doubled their lead at the 1:08 mark after a Stratford defensive error deep in the Warriors' zone led to the goal. On the powerplay with 1:10 left in the middle frame, the Warriors finally solved Elmira netminder Colin Ellsworth as Colin Slattery and Coen Galbraith set up Grady Murphy for the one-timer in front of the Elmira goal.

On the powerplay early in the third, the Warriors tied the game after Ethan Bridges' shot from the left circle and through the partial screen in front of the Elmira net 1:45 into the period. Midway through the period, the Sugar Kings restored their lead with 10:02 to play and added another with 5:27 left, making it 4-2. Bridges connected on his second of the game on the power play to bring the Warriors within a goal with 2:12 left, but the Sugar Kings answered late with an empty-netter, giving the Warriors their second straight home defeat in a 5-3 score.

Despite the loss, the Warriors' biggest positive from the game was the special teams' performance, going 3-for-4 on the man-advantage and perfect on three penalty-kill opportunities. Williams says the team competed well for an opportunity to win the game but needs to execute better in the attacking zone, despite taking more than 40 shots in three of their last four games.

"I thought we played a pretty good game. I just went in there and told them that I thought we played well enough to win, and they should leave here tonight feeling obviously a little bit of this thing of losing. But I thought we did a lot of things that we want to do and need to do," Williams said.

"We just struggled to find a few pucks around the net, but you know I thought we had more than enough opportunities, and I thought we had territorially some really good zone time. I thought our specialty teams were both good on the PP and PK. So again, I think that's a positive we have to take from it. I thought we played a pretty solid game."

In the cross-conference regular-season clash with the Jr. Canadians, the Warriors got off on the right note when McQuen Haylock scored his tenth of the season from Aaron Green and Bridges with 7:17 left in the first period.

Welland tied at 1:12 of the second period, but the Warriors' Galbraith, assisted by Slattery and Will Coward, put the Warriors back in the win column with 5:53 left in the third period. Noah Bender picked up his second win in his last four starts, improving his regular-season record to 5-2-0-1 with 16 saves on 17 shots.

Next up for the Warriors is hosting Sarnia Legionnaires on Ladies and Aces Night on Nov. 20, followed by a trip to St. Marys with a matchup against the Western Conference's top-ranked Lincolns on Nov. 21.

GOHL Western Conference Standings

(as of November 16, 2026)

Team	W	L	OTL	SOL	PTS	GF	GA
St. Marys Lincolns	17	2	0	0	34	113	42
St. Thomas Stars	15	3	1	1	32	80	45
Chatham Maroons	14	5	0	0	28	85	53
Listowel Cyclones	12	6	3	0	27	81	69
Stratford Warriors	10	6	0	1	21	58	57
Elmira Sugar Kings	10	11	1	0	21	86	87
LaSalle Vipers	10	10	0	0	20	59	77
Strathroy Rockets	8	10	2	1	19	88	84
Woodstock Navy Vets	9	10	0	0	18	73	80
London Nationals	8	11	1	0	17	69	84
Komoka Kings	6	15	0	0	12	68	89
Sarnia Legionnaires	1	16	1	0	3	38	111

Stratford Warriors 2026-27 Stats

(as of November 16, 2026)

Player	Pos	GP	G	A	PTS
Colin Slattery	F	16	7	10	17
Grady Murphy	F	17	7	8	15
Coen Galbraith	F	17	6	9	15
Aaron Green	D	16	3	10	13
McQuen Haylock	F	17	10	2	12
Ethan Bridges	F	17	4	8	12
Max Wildfong	F	15	6	5	11
Dominic Marshall	F	17	3	8	11
Will Coward	D	16	0	9	9
Jaxon Broda	D	17	1	6	7
Francesco Sanita	F	17	3	2	5
Drew Hodge	D	16	2	2	4
Declan McCotter	F	16	0	4	4
Chase Martin	F	15	2	1	3
Gibson Grendel	D	16	0	3	3
Mateo Craievich	D	15	2	0	2
Carter Brownlee	D	13	1	1	2
Colten Brenzil	F	14	1	0	1
Ethan McPhee	F	6	0	1	1
Lucas Minard	F	13	0	1	1

Goalies	Record	GAA	SV-%
Noah Bender	6-2-0-1	2.83	0.902
Gage Hurst	4-3-0-0	3.16	0.881

Send us your sports reports!
Stratfordtimes@gmail.com

St. Mike's runners compete at OFSAA Cross-Country meet









(MARK DEWAN PHOTOS)

Pictured from left to right are Owen Hurley (#2648), James Rae (#2653), Joseph Moss (#2651), Thomas Mott (#2652), and Caleb Hurley (#2647). St. Michael Catholic Secondary School sent 10 athletes to the OFSAA Cross-Country Championship in Sudbury Nov. 9, with Owen Hurley securing the highest of all St. Mike's results, finishing 29th in the novice boys' run. Also in the novice boys race, Miles Marshall placed 147th, Moss came in 192nd, Rae placed 199th, and Mason Bye took 22nd. Overall, the novice boys team finished 20th. In the senior boys division, Mott led the way for St. Mike's, coming in 31st. Caleb Hurley came in 83rd, Lucas De Wit took 159th, Van Koss finished 170th, and Colton Campbell placed 217th. The senior boys from St. Mike's finished 13th as a team overall.

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SMHA AA Weekly: U16 Warriors compete at the Memorial, U18 takes two out of three

MICHAEL WILLOUGHBY

Times Correspondent

Both Stratford U16 and U18 AA Warriors teams had a productive weekend last week, as the U16 made it to the semifinals of the Memorial Tournament, while the U18 squad took two of three on the road in ALLIANCE U18 AA-A regular-season action.

The Stratford U16 AA Warriors participated in the annual Memorial AA Tournament in Waterloo from Nov. 13-15.

In the tournament round-robin opener against the North Bay Trappers on Nov. 13, the Warriors fought back from two one-goal deficits in the first period to take the lead in the second period, only to give it up with 3:52 to play in the third and settle for a 4-4 draw.

Stratford faced the Soo Jr. Greyhounds in the afternoon game and lost 2-1. The next morning, on Nov. 14, against the Toronto Eagles, the Warriors bounced back from an early one-goal deficit in the second period to win 2-1 with a late third-period goal.

With the spot in the tournament's final four on the final day still within reach, the Warriors faced the Aurora Tigers in the early-evening matchup. Stratford scored one in the first and three in the second en route to a 4-1 win, finishing the round-robin with a 2-1-1 record. After the North Bay-Waterloo result, the Warriors squeaked into the tournament's final day by a one-goal goal-differential tiebreaker over North Bay.

In the morning semifinal matchup against the Upper Ottawa Valley Aces on Nov. 15, Stratford was unable to muster another one-goal comeback and lost 3-1, finishing the tournament in fourth place.

The U16 Warriors return to ALLIANCE U16 AA-A regular-season action with games in London against the Jr. Knights Green on Nov. 19 and the Jr. Knights White on Nov. 21. They'll then wrap up their weekend road trip in Brantford against the 99ers on Nov. 22.

Stratford U18 AA Warriors travelled to London for an evening matchup with the London Jr. Knights White at the Western Fair Complex on Nov. 12. The Warriors fell behind 3-0 early in the third period before the visitors mounted a comeback in the final 2:03 of the game, ultimately falling 3-2.

At the Gretzky Centre in Brantford against the 99ers on Nov. 14, the Warriors fell behind, then tied the game on the power play with 3:16 left in the second period. Stratford scored two goals within 15 seconds in the third period to take a 4-2 lead. The 99ers staged a comeback a short time later, scoring two goals in less than two minutes to tie the game at 4-4, before the Warriors got the last laugh with the winning goal 58 seconds left to edge the 99ers 5-4.

The Warriors used their momentum in Woodstock on Nov. 15, as the visitors came from behind in the first period and pulled away in the second period en route to a 3-1 win over the Jr. Navy Vets.

Stratford sits in second place in the ALLIANCE U18 AA-A standings with a 6-5-0 record. Next up for the U18 Warriors is participating in the Boston Pizza November Classic in St. Thomas from Nov. 19 to 22.

Lakers Weekly: U13 Lakers win Jr. Sabres Invitational

MICHAEL WILLOUGHBY

Times Correspondent

The Huron-Perth U13 AAA Lakers won their second tournament of the 2026-2027 season, winning the Buffalo Jr. Sabres Invitational by defeating the Toronto Jr. Canadians on Nov. 15.

Over the past weekend from Nov. 13 through Nov. 15, the U13 Lakers competed at the Jr. Sabres Invitational at the LECOM Harborcenter in Buffalo, N.Y..

The Lakers began their round-robin play with an early-morning matchup on Nov. 13 with the Detroit HoneyBaked, who are ranked 21st in the latest My Hockey Rankings' U.S. 12U Top-100 rankings.

Louis Nadon opened the scoring for the Lakers with a power-play goal just over seven minutes into the first period. The Lakers extended their lead to 2-0 on the penalty kill with 5:21 remaining in the period, when team captain Max Mari came off the bench, forced a turnover near the neutral zone and found paydirt.

Detroit responded with 32.9 seconds remaining in the period, cutting Huron-Perth's lead to 2-1 heading into the second. HoneyBaked tied the game with 3:53 left in the middle frame, capitalizing on a turnover near the Lakers' blueline. But 67 seconds later, the Lakers reclaimed the lead when Nadon scored his second of the game, slipping the loose puck off the backboard and into the back of Detroit's crease. The Lakers outshot HoneyBaked 12-5 in the period, but led 2-1 heading into the final frame.

Less than two minutes into the third, Tyler Walker received a pass from Beckett Ellingsen and went top shelf in the left corner of the HoneyBaked net to give the Lakers a 4-2 lead. The Lakers would contain the Detroit offence for the rest of the way, allowing six shots in the period, to record their first win of the tournament, 4-2. Netminder Jackson Stier picked up the win with 14 saves.

In the mid-afternoon game, the Lakers took on the U.S. ninth-ranked Mid-Fairfield Rangers. The Rangers opened the scoring at 4:02 of the first period, but Walker tied it for the Lakers by pouncing on a loose puck in front of the Rangers' crease.

The Lakers turned the game in their favour in the second period when Nadon's blast from the point, following a faceoff in the right circle, put them ahead with 7:17 left in the frame. Just over a minute later, on the power play, Brooks Ward sent a sharp cross-ice pass from the right boards to Walker, who scored from the left faceoff circle to double the Lakers' lead with under six minutes remaining. After two periods, the Lakers had outshot Mid-Fairfield 3-to-1 and led 3-1.

Huron-Perth put the game out of reach with 6:08 remaining when Tyler Del Bel Belluz scored on a loose rebound in front of the Rangers' net. The Lakers improved to 2-0 with a 4-1 win, while starting netminder Noah Menlove stopped 10 shots.

The Lakers entered day two of the tournament with the morning tilt against the Florida Surf on Nov. 14.

After a scoreless first period and outshooting Florida 9-2, the Lakers broke the deadlock at 2:20 of the second period when Mari passed the puck to Nadon in front of the Florida crease and Nadon scored the opening goal. With 3:10 remaining in the middle frame, Walker skated down the ice and deked the Florida Surf netminder to give the Lakers a 2-0 lead.

The Lakers added another with 1:07 left in the period on the shorthanded goal from Mari, taking a commanding 3-0 lead and outshooting the Surf 24-5 through two periods of play.

Less than a minute into the third period, Florida scored on the power play to cut the Lakers' lead to 3-1. Mari scored his second of the game with under eight minutes remaining to put the game out of reach, and then Nadon added his second with 4:38 left, giving the Lakers a 5-1 lead. Both sides traded goals in the final 2:14, with Beckett Elligsen scoring with 41.6 seconds left as the Lakers improved to 3-0 in a 6-2 win.

Huron-Perth looked to take first place in the round robin finale against the Woodbridge Wolfpack in the afternoon.

In the first period, the Lakers opened the scoring on the powerplay as Reed Henderson received the board dump pass from Roman Bell and buried the one-timer on the right side of the Wolfpack net with 8:43 remaining. With 6:17 left, Maddox Birk fired a shot from inside the Woodbridge blueline, and Del Bel Belluz redirected the shot in front of the Wolfpack net for a 2-0 lead.

The Lakers continued to pour on the offence in the opening frame at 4:34, as Bell tucked the puck into the net for a 3-0 lead, and at 1:58, Nadon's backhand goal made it 4-0 before the end of the first period. Del Bel Belluz notched his second of the game on the powerplay at 7:58 of the second period, and Tripp Matthews at 4:22 put the Lakers up 6-0. In the third period, the Lakers preserved Menlove's shutout, finishing the round-robin in top spot with a 6-0 win.

On the tournament's final day, the Lakers faced the St. Louis Blues in the morning semifinal on Nov. 14.

Cruz Wood put the Lakers on the board at 8:42 of the first period. The Lakers scored two breakaway goals in 26 seconds: Elligsen at 4:10 and Cole Harrison with 3:44 left in the opening frame. Twenty-three seconds after Harrison's goal, the Blues got on the board with a shot that beat Lakers netminder Stier. St. Louis pulled within a goal with 91 seconds left in the period on a similar play.

Huron-Perth had two successful penalty kills late in the second period, and Stier stopped all 11 shots on goal to keep the Lakers ahead 3-2 heading into the third period.

With under 10 minutes remaining, the Lakers restored their two-goal lead as Walker's shot from the point at the right circle found the back of the net. Goals from Elligsen and Mari put the exclamation point on the 6-2 semifinal victory over the Blues, advancing to the tournament final in the afternoon. Stier stopped 23 of 25 shots in the semifinal win.

In a battle between two of the top U13 teams in Ontario, the Lakers faced the Jr. Canadians in the final.

Just 36 seconds into the game, Walker's one-timer from the slot gave the Lakers a 1-0 lead. Toronto nearly tied it with 10:36 left in the first period, but its shot from the Huron-Perth blueline hit the crossbar.

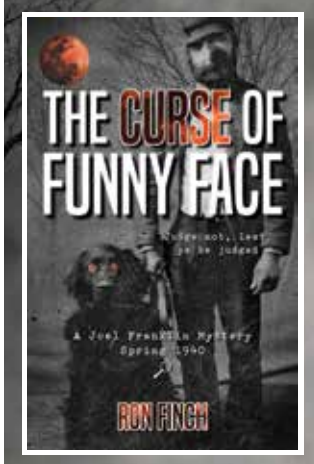
The Lakers went up 2-0 with less than seven minutes left in the second period when Walker scored his second goal of the game. Toronto responded at 2:02, narrowing the Lakers' lead to 2-1 after a scramble in front of their net.

In a tightly contested final with close calls at both ends, the Lakers sealed the win when Nadon fired a shot from centre ice into the empty net with 1:05 remaining. Walker added a second empty-net goal to clinch the championship. Menlove made 21 saves in the title game to earn the win.

Next up for the Lakers is their return to ALLIANCE U13 AAA regular-season play, with three games on home ice. The weekend opens with an evening matchup against the Sault Major Jr. Greyhounds on Nov. 20 at the Stratford Rotary Complex, followed by an early-matinee game against Windsor Jr. Spitfires at Perth East Recreation Complex in Milverton on Nov. 21, and wraps up on Nov. 22 back at the Rotary Complex against the Elgin-Middlesex Canucks.

THE CURSE OF FUNNY FACE

A Joel Franklin Mystery



The Curse of Funny Face is the 16th book in the Joel Franklin mystery series. Most of the action in this series takes place in Perth and Middlesex Counties and centres around London and Stratford a.k.a. Chaseford.

In the early years of the 1900s, a spectral black dog with red eyes haunted the woods and fields around an isolated settlement in Southwestern Ontario. Now, in 1940, that hamlet is abandoned, its former inhabitants all driven off—or killed—by the curse of Black Shuck. All its inhabitants, that is, but one: a man known as Funny Face.

On his way home from delivering a file to his former boss, Chief Petrovic, in Chaseford a.k.a. Stratford, Detective Joel Franklin of the London Police Force decides to take a detour, one which will lead him to an empty barn in an unnamed ghost town and a ladder leading down into darkness … and from there to a series of increasingly curious mysteries.

Who is the man known as Funny Face, the last resident of "the middle of nowhere"? What does he have to do with the brutal murder, the Devil's Well, and the curse of Black Shuck? And is his faithful companion, an enormous black dog, all it appears to be?

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GRANT HAVEN MEDIA

Editorial

Is this what getting older feels like?



GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

I'm not sure if this is a sign of things to come, but exactly one day after I turned 35, I find myself sitting here at my desk, struggling to write my weekly editorial as I endure the worst heartburn of my life.

Maybe it was the burger I had at the casino with Julia over the weekend, or maybe it was the shawarma wrap and fries I had last night, or maybe this is just what getting older feels like now. Whatever the reason, my 36th year on this planet is off to an inauspicious start.

And it's not just the heartburn. While Julia and I were on our honeymoon, I woke up after a relatively decent night's sleep – the bed was comfortable and I didn't toss and turn too much throughout the night – and when I rolled over to get out of bed, I learned I had pulled a muscle in my shoulder at some point in the night.

How I pulled that muscle and why it didn't wake me up when it happened still eludes me, but it took a whole week of massage and muscle relaxants before it started to feel better. While it's not the first time I've pulled a muscle in my sleep, this was, by far, the longest it's taken to feel better.

And speaking of long recovery times, I recently signed on with a personal trainer to help me get back into exercising regularly at the gym. Life had gotten in the way of my regular workout routine – a wedding and a honeymoon will do that – and it had been a while since I had seen a treadmill.

As it always is, the first day back at the gym was intense. My trainer pushed me through the workout, which was relatively mild compared to the workouts I did when I was younger, but by the end of it, my legs were shaking and I could barely get back downstairs to the change room.

What followed was four whole days of muscle pain in my legs, forcing me to take stairs one at a time and utter the least subtle "old-man" groan you've ever heard every time I had to get up from the couch.

Again, this was the longest recovery time I've ever experienced following a return to the gym. Sure, I fully expected a day or two of pain at most, but four days straight was brutal.

Luckily, I've since regained my stamina, and my legs, arms and chest muscles are feeling better after each successive workout, though I have realized I really shouldn't be pushing myself as hard as I did when I was younger.

I guess the lesson here is I need to start paying attention to my own physical limitations, whether it's the food I eat or how hard I push myself at the gym. I've also learned stretching is key, not just before and after exercise, but also before I go to bed at night and when I wake up in the morning.

I might be getting older, but at least I can mitigate my physical decline just a little.

Time to focus on Canadian politics



JEFF HELSDON

Tillsonburg Post Editor

Now that the American mid-terms are over, and the result is what most Canadians were hoping for, will the conversation in coffee shops and arenas switch to our own politics?

There are six by-elections on Dec. 7 to fill vacancies from MPs who retired. Outside of those who live in impacted ridings, this probably isn't on most Canadians radar. It's almost for sure, the majority don't realize this is the highest number of byelections at once since the 1950s.

In the meantime, many other things are going on in Canada that the general public doesn't seem to be following. Parks Canada is facing $145 million in budget cuts over three years. This equates to about 500 full-time jobs and will see at least 13 park warden detachments close across the country, with a shift to a regional approach. The translation of that is less enforcement and the loss of the search-and-rescue team in Banff National Park. And yet, Canada is giving money for parks in other countries.

While on the environmental front, the possibility of drilling for oil has been raised in the western Arctic Ocean. Is anyone talking about the implications of this?

Switching gears, what about cozying up to China? How is it that Huawei infrastructure used by Canada's cell phone companies had to be restricted for security reasons, but imports of Chinese cars can increase? How much did all the infrastructure changes add to our cell phone bills?

And what will a stronger relationship with the EU mean for the average Canadian? Is this part of a longer-term plan to move our currency to the Euro?

Speaking of money, the fact that the proposed 2026-27 budget is the largest budget ever doesn't seem to be front and centre. How about the interest on the $1.2 trillion in debt rising to the point it's more than health transfers to the provinces?

These are all unanswered questions that aren't front of mind for most Canadians. Maybe most Canadians back these ideas, or maybe they don't. However, the reality is they are likely unaware and are instead focused on American politics.

Sure, current trade policies are having an impact in Canada, but Canadian policies have an even larger impact on Canadians, and no one is talking about them. It's time to set American politics aside and pay attention to what is happening in our country.

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CORRECTION: In the article "Avondale CarolFest returns," published on page 10 of the Nov. 13 edition of the Stratford Times, it was incorrectly stated the concert was to be held Nov. 18, rather than the correct Nov. 28. The Times regrets any confusion this error caused.

HAVE A SPECIAL EVENT COMING UP?

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

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

Opinion

UNTIL SOON. LIVE WELL: THE SIMILARITY



STUART LENDER

Times Columnist

The philosopher Alan Watts astutely pointed out that there is a price to be paid for every increase in consciousness. Within a deeper seeing, in every wider expanse – comes a greater understanding of the pain and pleasure, reality and falsehood of living.

It is true that every one of us understands the wanting this and not wanting that of every moment of every day as we plod or dance through the 24 hours we're given for it. Instinctively, in every second, we are weighing our fortunes – liking this, disliking that, often completely unaware that we are calculating our existence from present minutes into the culmination of a lifetime. And we will ask ourselves, at the end of days, what it is that has given our lives meaning? Make no mistake about that; the question will be present if we're cognitively aware enough to – not ask it – but face it!

Approaching those opportunistic points in our lives, when we may pause to wonder and ask that question, near death or not – we talk to ourselves at an incessantly rapid rate all day long, through whatever comes up for us. Between the triad of what we see, feel and think, our silent opinions and analyses colour our experience, and somehow behind it all, there is a correlation between the major question of our lives, namely, "what is it for?" and our tiny responses to the flashing bits of living that enter us through our senses.

There are moments, however, on a normal "everyday-kind-of-day," I find myself hovering in the chasm, the in-between, 'twixt the seeing, the thinking and the feeling – neither one of those with the upper hand. This happens suddenly, and this is where I am often lost in rapture. This too, is where the wave of emotion (the feeling part) eventually begins to rise, drowning out the other two elements of thought and perception. A kind of similarity begins to exist – the subtle distinction between seemingly opposing sentiments; most often in my case – sensing extreme joy and deep melancholy at the same time. Both strangely pleasurable and equally disconcerting.

If pause is the doorway, presence is the key.

In that moment of pure feeling, I try to carry it with me. I'm unaware of the source. I imagine it must have sparked from some "burp" in thought or the particular colour of sunlight through the leaves of a tree – who knows. And really, who cares. When it happens, I am delightfully content and deeply wish to remain within the similarity – despite the fluctuation of joy and sadness. Both feel oddly the same. And yes, sometimes my eyes fill with tears, because I suspect the joy is for the sudden gratefulness I feel for living, and the sadness for the deep-rooted sympathy I hold for the human condition. For my own condition. Both vibrating together.

In those moments too, I'm acutely aware that nothing truly matters, and the universe will continue on – eternally, magnificently, without me. And yet, I'm aware that every single thing that I do, think and feel while my heart is still beating, does matter, does make a difference and contributes to the whole. I know this within every fibre. In that regard, I am a prisoner of all my country's decisions, rules of law and the universal laws of the planet on which I live and yet – I am also essentially free.

This is the great dichotomy of living, indeed, of ourselves. How to come to terms with the infinitesimal particles, the rolling waves of actions and emotions that one's life creates and sends out to every single person that that life touches – and the sense that essentially, I am meant to be in freefall and simply enjoy the ride into oblivion.

What is a good life? I appreciate any contribution my life might make to another. Often, we are unaware of how deeply our contributions go. Human beings don't like to be too demonstrative. But truly, at times, I feel like walking through the day and just hugging everyone I see, out of the realization of our shared magnificence and out of pity for our mutual flaws in living. But I don't. Instead, I carry on – and behind the veil of eternity, anticipate the next time I fall into the euphoria of joy and despair. Just one more failed and glorious human being, stuck in the wondrous similarity.

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

The promise of property taxes



BRUCE WHITAKER

Times Columnist

With recent elections, you've likely heard politicians promise to freeze property taxes, limit increases to inflation or avoid the topic altogether. It's a thorny issue: many voters own homes, and few are thrilled to receive a tax bill. Renters can't sit this one out, either. Landlords often look to recover property taxes through rent, so when taxes rise, rents usually follow.

To ensure that we are paying our fair share of property taxes, it is prudent to hold our elected officials accountable for spending on both day-to-day operations and major capital projects. That means asking not only how much the city plans to spend, but also what residents can expect in return and whether those priorities reflect the community's needs. It also means that we need to be fully informed about how property taxes are calculated.

The main driver of how much property tax we pay is how much the city spends. Stratford's 2026 municipal budget puts operating costs and capital costs at approximately $180 million. After accounting for revenue sources, including provincial and federal grants, user fees such as water and wastewater rates, and municipal service revenues, $90 million remains to be covered by the property tax levy.

The city has approximately 13,000 properties: 12,200 residential and 800 commercial or industrial. Together, these properties have an assessed value of about $5.6 billion. With $90 million raised through the property tax levy, the municipal tax rate is 1.61 per cent. The education rate adds 0.15 per cent. At a combined rate of 1.76 per cent, a home assessed at $500,000 would have an annual property tax bill of $8,800.

There's no hard dollar or percentage cap on the total property tax an Ontario municipality can collect. However, provincial law requires municipalities to pass a balanced operating budget each year. Projected revenues must match projected expenses, so municipalities need to set tax rates high enough to pay for local services, infrastructure, and school-board requirements.

In Ontario, MPAC, an independent, not-for-profit corporation funded by the province's municipalities, determines assessed values. Nearly six million homes are assessed across Ontario every four years. The most recent province wide assessment was completed in 2016. The 2020 assessment was delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In practice, figuring out what a home is worth isn't easy. An assessed value is an estimate of market value – the amount a buyer might pay. Fewer than five per cent of homes sell in any given year. Assessors must estimate the value of every property using prices from the relatively few that do sell. That can be especially challenging at the extremes of the market.

Even if assessed values are below market values, as they are currently, each property owner still pays a share of the city's overall costs. Think of the municipal budget as a fixed pie. A reassessment doesn't make the pie bigger; it changes the size of each owner's slice based on how their property's value has changed relative to others.

The provincial government has delayed making a decision about when the next assessment will take place. If assessments resume, higher assessed values won't necessarily mean higher tax bills. The change depends on whether a property's value has risen more than the Stratford average.

Taxpayers whose homes or businesses have appreciated more slowly or lost value are currently paying more than they would have if the 2020 assessment had taken place. In some cases, the difference could amount to thousands of dollars a year.

Stratford's property taxes have faced upward pressure in recent years as infrastructure and operating costs have risen, in part because the provincial government has downloaded costs. The 2026 budget includes a 3.19 per cent increase, averaging about $172 more a year for a typical home.

You may have heard that Stratford is one of Ontario's highest-taxed municipalities. 1.76 is higher than the Ontario median residential rate of roughly 1.35 per cent and is higher than those in Waterloo (1.43 per cent), Kitchener (1.41 per cent), and Guelph (1.49 per cent). It's comparable to or lower than rates in other municipalities, including Woodstock (1.89 per cent), London (1.73 per cent) and Chatham-Kent (2.32 per cent).

Property taxes are a necessity as they help pay for essential services and infrastructure, but each increase deserves scrutiny. Clear explanations of costs, careful budgeting and open discussion can help residents understand what they are paying for and make informed choices about Stratford's future.

Opinion

The people we remember when November comes



IRENE ROTH

Times Columnist

November has a way of making familiar places look different. Along the Avon, once the leaves have fallen, you can see through trees that screened the river all summer. The benches are still there, though fewer people linger. I find that on a walk at this time of year, with less happening around me, my thoughts often turn to people I miss.

Since my father died at 96, I've thought about how much of a life is carried in details that rarely make it into an obituary. We tend to tell the story of a person's life in milestones. Where they grew up. What work they did. Who was part of their family. Yet the things that come back to us on an ordinary afternoon might be the way they said our name, a familiar expression or how they sounded when they were trying to keep from laughing.

Those memories can catch us off guard. We might be buying groceries or putting away the dishes when we suddenly remember something we would love to tell the person who died. For a second, we can almost hear how they would answer. I think that is one of the loneliest parts of grief, when you have something to say that only one person would quite understand.

Around Nov. 11, remembrance takes a public form. Here in Stratford, as elsewhere in Canada, people wear poppies and pause to honour those who served and those who died in service. For some families, the day brings a particular face or name to mind. Others may find themselves wondering about the lives of people whose names they have only ever seen on a memorial. Standing quietly together gives us a moment to consider what those people gave and what their families carried afterward.

There is also a kind of remembrance that happens across a kitchen table. Someone tells you a story about your father from a time before you were born. A friend remembers a kindness you had long forgotten. Suddenly, you get to see a person you loved from an angle you never had while they were alive. A story like that can be one of the most welcome things to receive after a loss. You may find yourself telling it to someone else before the week is out.

We sometimes hesitate to mention a person who has died. We worry about bringing up a loss in the middle of an otherwise manageable day. I understand that hesitation. There are moments when I would rather keep my feelings private. But there is also comfort in hearing someone say my father's name. A simple "I was thinking about him today" leaves me room to ask what brought him to mind or just say thank you.

Sometimes a photograph starts the conversation. I've looked at family pictures and found myself wondering who took them, what was happening just outside the frame or why everyone was dressed up. Often, there is someone who still remembers. A question about one picture can lead to a whole afternoon of stories, including a few that different people remember quite differently.

There's usually an afternoon in November when it gets dark before I'm ready to turn on a lamp. This year, I think I'll spend one of those afternoons looking through a few family photographs. I may set aside one that makes me curious and call someone who might know the story behind it. We can talk about where it was taken, who was there and whatever else comes to mind once we get started.

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

Worship With Us



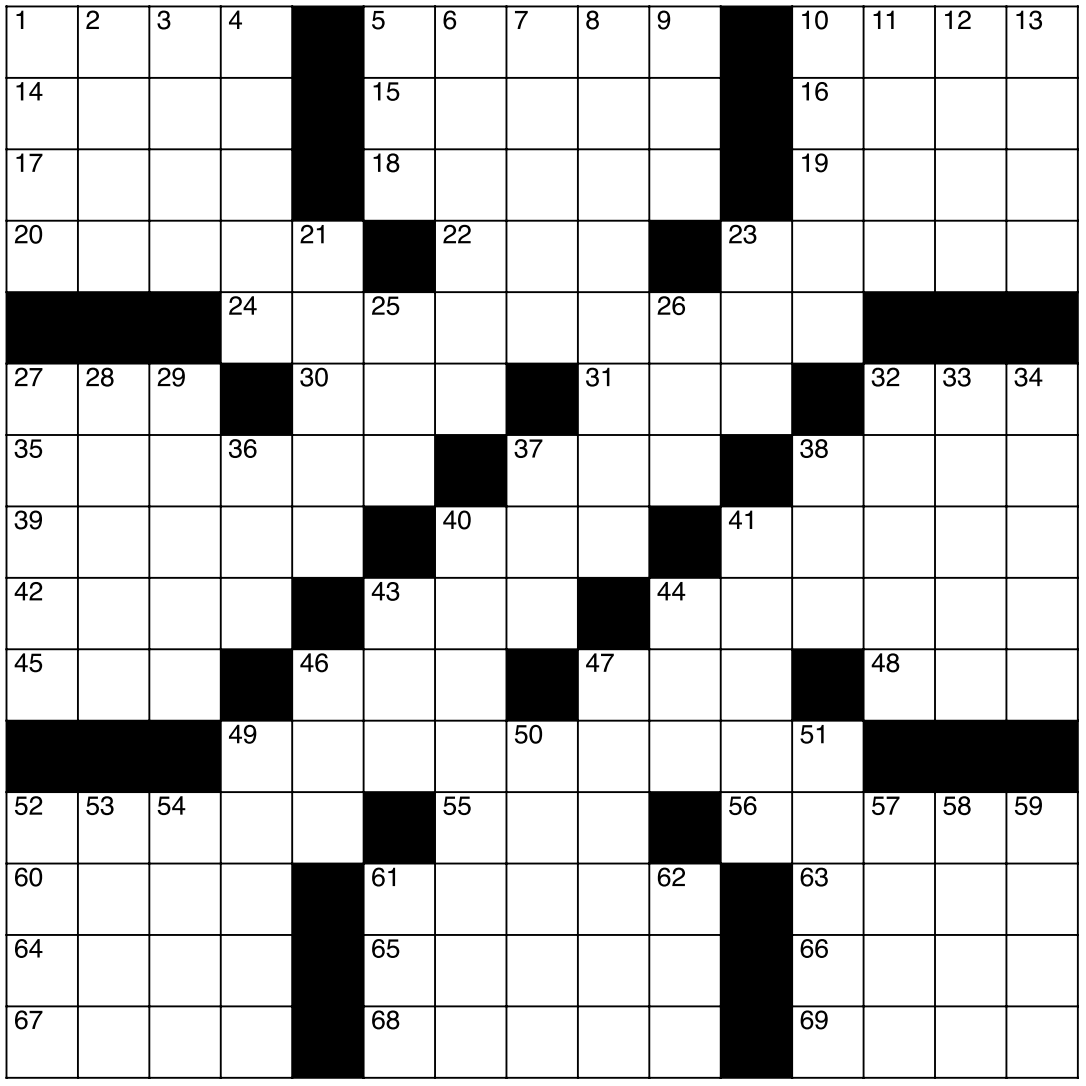
Community of Christ
226 Forman Avenue 519-271-4539
Proclaiming Jesus Christ with communities of
LOVE, JOY, HOPE & PEACE
Worship with us
Sunday 10:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m. – Fellowship and Coffee Hour
We are a Welcoming Community

STRATFORD TIMES Pick Up Locations

7-Eleven - Erie St
A&W Canada
Ajs Hair and Aesthetic Studio
Annie's Seafood Restaurant
Army Navy & Air Force Veterans
Athens Greek Souvlaki & Gyro
Avon Pharmacy
Balzac's Stratford
Best Western Plus The Arden Park Hotel
Blowes Stationery & Office Supplies Ltd.
Brch & Wyn
Brenda's Place
Burnside Agriplex
Buzz Stop Fine Coffees And Teas
Cedarcroft Retirement
Chartwell - Anne Hathaway Residence
Circle K - Graff Ave
Circle K - Huron St
Coffee Culture Cafe & Eatery
Community Hearing Care
Cozyn's Garden Gallery
Craig & Jess' No Frills
Daisy mart
Demetres Restauant
Destination Stratford
Dick's Barber Shop
Dollar Haven
Domino's Pizza
East End Variety (231 Douro)
Erie Convenience
Esso - Erie St
Esso - Ontario St
Expressway Ford Stratford Features
Stratford Mall
Fix Auto Stratford
Food Basics
Foodland Stratford
Fore! Everyone Golf - Stratford's Indoor Golf Experience
Giant Tiger
Gino's Pizza
Guardian - Sinclair Pharmacy Ltd
H.H. Delea & Company
Home Hardware
Honeywood Tirecraft
James A. Rutherford Funeral Home Ltd
Jenny Trout Centre
Joe's Diner - Stratford
Joe's Variety
LCBO (Stratford Mall)
Matthew Rae MPP
McCarthy Place
McDonald's - Ontario St
McDonald's 709 Erie St
Mornington Variety
Mr.Sub
New Orleans Pizza
Papa Johns Pizza
Quality Inn & Conference Centre Festival
Romeo's Corner Cafe
Rosso Barber-o Shop
Rotary Hospice Apartments
Royal Canadian Legion Branch 8
Sebringville ESSO
Shell
Shell - Downie St
Shell - Erie St
Shell - Huron St
Shoppers Drug Mart - Huron St
Shoppers Drug Mart - Ontario St
Sobeys Stratford
Spruce Lodge
Stratford & District Chamber Of Commerce
Stratford Chefs School Learning Center
Stratford City Hall
Stratford City Mazda
Stratford General Hospital
Stratford Honda
Stratford Hyundai
Stratford Kia
Stratford KW Surplus
Stratford Medical Pharmacy
Stratford Motor Products
Stratford Nissan
Stratford North End Pharmacy
Stratford Perth Archives
Stratford Perth Museum
Stratford Public Library
Stratford Rotary Complex
Stratford Subaru
Stratford Variety
Strickland's Stratford Toyota
The Bruce Hotel
The Livery Yard
The Local Community Food Centre
The Parlour Inn Restaurant
The Split Rail Country Store
The UPS Store
The Urban Barber
Tim Hortons - Erie St
Tim Hortons - Huron St
Tim Hortons - Ontario St
Toner and Ink Shop
Town Crier Marketing
Union Tattoo and Barbershop
United Way Perth-Huron
Video 99
Walmart Supercentre
West End Pharmacy
Wynbrook & Mayfiar
Zehrs Stratford

SEBRINGVILLE
Dave's Diner
Esso - Huron Rd

Crossword



CLUES ACROSS

1. Perceive a sound
5. Pretends to be
10. Type of guitar
14. Actor Idris
15. A citizen of Iran
16. Creative
17. Keep under control
18. Weight unit for precious stones
19. You better call him
20. Fanatical
22. Male cat
23. Jewish spiritual leader
24. One who takes risks
27. A way to nail
30. Cool!
31. Progressive policy supporter
32. "Losing My Religion" rockers
35. Step-shaped recess
37. Round globular seed
38. Somewhat
39. Butterhead lettuces
40. Color at the end of the spectrum
41. Lines where fabrics are sewn together
42. Dodgers great Hershiser
43. Floor covering
44. Traveled aimlessly
45. Rocker Stewart
46. Body art
47. Congressman (abbr.)
48. No seats available
49. Categorizes
52. Iraq-Syria border town
55. Ballplayer's tool
56. Type of sword
60. Baseball team
61. Upper bracts of grass
63. Italian seaport
64. Ancient city in Syria
65. Shoelace tube
66. U. of Miami mascot is one
67. South American nation
68. "Nebraska" director Alexander
69. Upper body part

CLUES DOWN

1. German courtesy title
2. Ancient Greek City
3. Skin care manufacturer
4. A long-legged frog
5. Photo
6. Delivered a speech
7. Lute in northern Indian music
8. Decorated
9. Take a seat
10. Bottom layer
11. Type of horse
12. Ticket part
13. Defunct currency of Guinea
21. Challenges
23. Popular BBQ food
25. Subway rodent
26. By way of
27. Shady garden alcove
28. City in Egypt
29. __ and flowed
32. Large quantities of paper
33. Eurasian wheat
34. Act incorrectly
36. Layer of water right above sediment (abbr.)
37. Al Bundy's wife
38. Ocean
40. Large, round root
41. Sound units
43. Knock
44. Soak in water
46. Hot drink
47. A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
49. Rumanian city
50. Come back from being down
51. Vaccine developer
52. Canadian law enforcers
53. Wings
54. "Perry Mason" actor Raymond
57. Small fry
58. __ Clapton, musician
59. Gamble
61. Semi-liquid food
62. Consumed food

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Pet of the week

BENNETT

Meet Bennett, an 8-month-old rabbit with a curious nature and plenty of charm. This sweet girl enjoys exploring her surroundings, taking in the world around her, and getting comfortable at her own pace. Bennett is looking for a loving home where she can continue to build confidence, enjoy plenty of space to hop and play, and receive the patience and gentle care that helps rabbits thrive. As a mini explorer with a lovable personality, Bennett is sure to bring joy and plenty of bunny antics to her forever family. Meet this lovely girl by contacting our Stratford Centre or on our website at kwsphumane.ca/adopt/small-animals

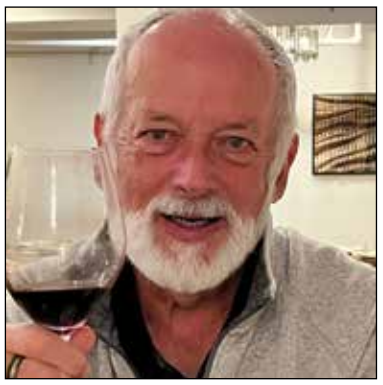


Sudoku

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

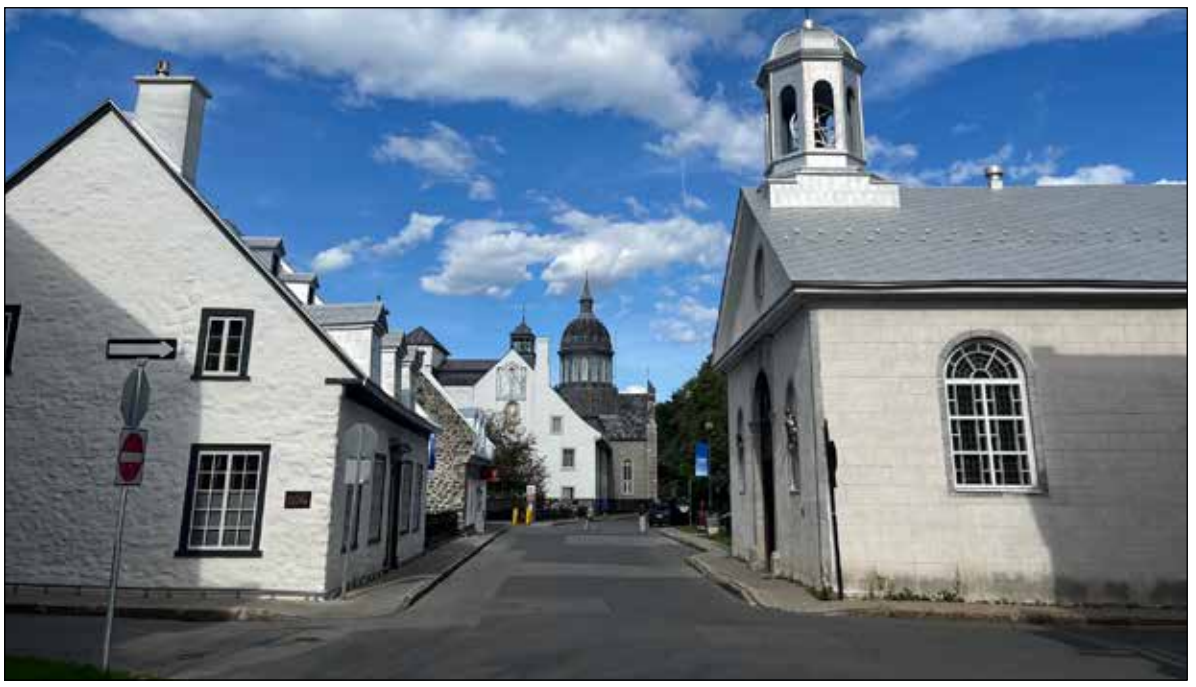
Solutions on page 27

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Trois Rivières: a nice surprise along the St. Lawrence



PAUL KNOWLES

Times Columnist



Historic Trois Rivières: the Usuline Convent is shown at the centre of the photo, the former Anglican church in the right foreground.

(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

It doesn't require an extensive knowledge of French to figure out that the name "Trois Rivières" means "Three Rivers." That's good linguistics, but bad geography because this historic city's name is based on a 16th-century mistake.

In fact, there are two rivers. Here, the Saint-Maurice flows into the Saint Lawrence, but the mouth of the Saint-Maurice is occupied by several islands, splitting this river into three outlets. The first European visitors mistakenly took those three "mouths" to indicate three rivers.

This was just one of a plethora of facts, anecdotes and stories we heard during one of the finest historical walking tours I have ever experienced. Jean-Phillipe Marcotte of "Personare" was our guide as we strolled through the historic centre of Trois Rivières.

Trois Rivières is the second-oldest French-speaking city in North America, but it is not as well-known as the two larger cities located less than two hours away – Montréal and Québec City. Tourists tend to drive straight past Trois Rivières to get to the more popular destinations, but they are making a mistake.

Trois Rivières is has a deep and rich history, reaching back long before written records to the time before Europeans arrived. But it's also a city that offers a lot of modern-day delights to travellers. We were both surprised and impressed.

But back to the history. There are statues and monuments throughout the city honouring the original European visitors to Trois Rivières, names that we remember from history class: Samuel de Champlain, Radisson, Groseilliers, La Vérendrye – all noted explorers with strong connections to Trois Rivières.

But my favourite was the monument to M. Laviolette, apparent founder of Trois Rivières. I say "apparent" because there is scant evidence of the illusive M. Laviolette. Our guide admitted that "we don't have a clue" who M. Laviolette is. In fact, "for a long time, Trois Rivières did not have a founder." But while the city was founded in the early 1600s (there had been French fur traders in the area since 1585), M. Laviolette was not acknowledged as the city founder until centuries later.

In fact, as Jean-Philippe told us with a laugh as we stood before the bust of M. Laviolette, it is generally agreed that even the name is not the real deal. It's probably a nickname; it translates as "The Violin."

But the rest of the story of Trois Rivières is undoubtedly more historically accurate. And that story unfolded as we walked around the surprisingly well-preserved historic parts of the city in spite of a 1908 fire that destroyed hundreds of homes in part of the city centre.

Although the fur trade was the original impetus that created most of Canada's historic cities, Trois Rivières soon had other enterprises on the go, as well. This was the site of what might have been the first forge in North America. Later, Trois Rivières became an important ship-building centre (a historic reality that has an echo in one of today's important economic drivers, the cruise ship port).

Later still, lumber mills dominated the local economy, which was temporarily good for employment and financial gain, but terrible for tourism because of the incessant odors created by the pulp and paper factories.

That business thrived for decades; massive numbers of logs were still being floated down the Saint-Maurice River until the mid-1990s.

Today, that business is almost entirely gone. But here's where Trois Rivières again emerges as an impressive community. On the site of some of the pulp and paper mills stands a state-of-the-art entertainment centre, the Cogeco Amphiteatre. The Amphitheatre has hosted performers ranging from Céline Dion, Bryan Adams and Burton Cummings to Cirque du Soleil. It's an impressive space, but in my historically focused opinion, it's not the most impressive building in town. That one was once home to nuns.

Trois Rivières is still home to dozens of historic buildings, and the city has a program that funds up to 50 per cent (capped at $40,000) of the costs of restoring homes to their original form. Many have taken advantage of this, and walking the streets of Trois Rivières can feel like journeying back in time.

The most impressive structure is probably the Ursuline Convent. The Ursuline nuns played a prominent role in the history of the city. Today, they no longer occupy the palatial building that once housed the convent, though there is still a small group of Ursulines in Trois Rivières. The order sold their convent, chapel, school and more to the city for $1 on the condition that the building could not be converted into condominiums. Instead, it houses a museum and classrooms for students ranging from kindergarten to university age.

Trois Rivières is a city of stories, ranging from its probably fictional founder to community-minded nuns to Ezekiel Hart (1770-1853), a Jewish entrepreneur elected to represent the city in Québec's legislative assembly, but who was not allowed to serve because he was a Jew. So, the city re-elected him, twice more.

And that's the kind of informed determination that has made this city what it is today – an often-bypassed destination well worth your time.

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.



A statue honouring the perhaps fictional founder of Trois Rivières, M. Laviolette.



The Cogeco Amphitheatre sits on the former site of pulp and paper mills.

COMING EVENTS

Email to inquire stratfordtimes@gmail.com

CROKINOLE
Men's and Ladies' Crokinole is held every Tuesday at the Agriplex in the Ritsma Room from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Bring your fingers and cues! For more information, contact Oliver at 519-508-5664.

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

STRATFORD ASTRONOMY GROUP MEETINGS
St. Michael Catholic Secondary School, 240 Oakdale Avenue, Stratford Rear parking lot off Matilda. Room # l104 - 1st Tuesday of each month from
September to June. 7-9 p.m.
We are night sky enthusiasts. Everyone is welcome to attend. See our website at https://stratfordastronomy.com/ or call 519-275-4472 for more information

STEPS FOR SUPPORT
Every Tuesday morning.
Stratford Location
This walking group is an opportunity for people who are grieving to connect while walking alongside others who are bereaved. Contact Jaclyn at sw@rotaryhospice.ca to learn more and register. This is a free program.
Hosted by Rotary Hospice Stratford Perth www.rotaryhospice.ca

PROBUS CLUB OF STRATFORD
Army Navy & Air Force Veterans Unit 261
151 Lorne Ave E, Stratford, ON N5A 2N9
Probus provides Fellowship, Friendship, and Fun for all men and women in their retirement and semi-retirement years.
We meet the 2nd Wednesday - September until June from 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Website https://www.probusclubstratford.com/
Email probusclubstratford@gmail.com

CAREGIVER CONNECTION
2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month at 1-2:30 p.m.
Arden Park Hotel
Caregiver Connection is a group for caregivers supporting someone with a life-limiting illness or decline due to aging. Learn about community resources, caregiver tools, and talk with others on a similar journey. All caregivers welcome whether you're a spouse, family member, friend, etc. supporting someone from near or far. Contact 226-921-7314 or referrals@rotaryhospice.ca to register. Free program.
Hosted by Rotary Hospice Stratford Perth - www.rotaryhospice.ca

YOUTH AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM
Hosted by Youth Unlimited YFC Stratford
Mondays, 3:00-4:45 p.m., September 14/26-June 21/27
382 Britannia Street, Stratford
Free drop-in for students aged 11-18. Join us for snacks, board games, video games, and connection! Questions? www.yfcstratford.com info@yfcstratford.com 519-272-1614

GRIEFSHARE
Stratford Christian Reformed Church, 190 Athone Crescent (parking on the upper level)
September 14 - December 14
Monday 1:00-2:30pm
When a loved one dies, it can feel like you're alone. Few people understand how painful & isolating your grief can be. At GriefShare, you'll find a safe, comforting place where you can talk with others about your grief. Contact: griefstratfordcrcgroup2627@gmail.com
Register: griefshare.org/findagroup

YOUTH LUNCH PERIOD PROGRAM
Hosted by Youth Unlimited YFC Stratford
Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., September 30/26-June 16/27
382 Britannia Street, Stratford
Free drop-in for high school students. Join us for snacks, games, connection (and occasional pizza parties!).
Questions? www.yfcstratford.com
info@yfcstratford.com 519-272-1614

PURE HEART PROGRAM
Hosted by Youth Unlimited YFC Stratford
Wednesdays, 3:00-4:30 p.m., September 30/26-June 16/27
382 Britannia Street, Stratford
Free art program for students aged 11-18. Join us for discussions, guest artists, art instruction, and more! Questions? www.yfcstratford.com info@yfcstratford.com 519-272-1614

LEARN2SHINE PERFORMANCE CLUB [L2S]
Monthly on Sundays, 2-4 p.m.
Griffith Auditorium, Woodland Towers.
Monthly on Sundays, 2-4pm. Next meeting Nov22 at Infinity Dance, 451 Erie St. Suitable for everyone in the family aged 7 and up. A chance to sing, dance, say lines. Registration $20+HST/hour, with 15% discount if registering 3 or more. www.mckinnamanagement.com/l2s

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR
Saturday, November 21; 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Morningside Adult Community, New Hamburg, off 7/8 behind McDonalds
Crafts, Raffle, Baking, White Elephant, Cafe', Silent Auction. Free Admission.

SAINT JOSEPH'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS MARKET
St. Joseph's Church Parish Hall
96 Huron St. Stratford
Parking access rear of church
Saturday November 21; 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Join us for a festive market where you can purchase a variety of baked goods, crafts, 'new to you' table, silent Auction and lunch bar!
Proceeds to the church and community

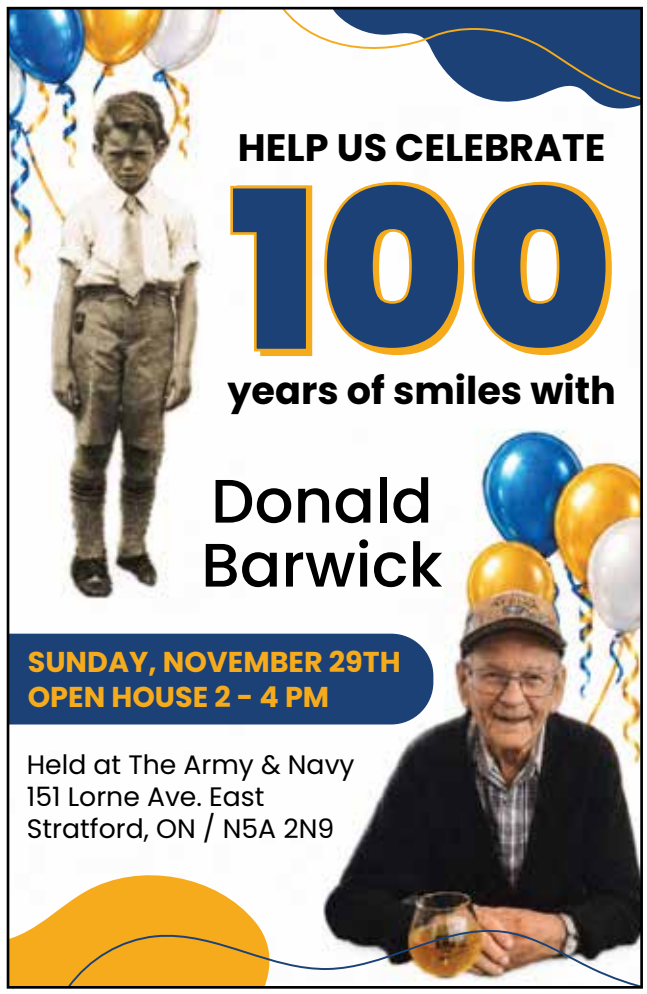
STRATFORD CATCH THE ACE LOTTERY by Kinsmen Club of Stratford, Knights of Columbus Stratford and the Army Navy and Airforce Veterans in Canada Unit 261
Tickets are $5 - purchase online
https://stratfordcatchtheace.ca/
Draw at ANAF Unit 261 on Friday Nov 27th at 11:30AM.

MISTLETOE MARKET
Saturday November 28; 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Holy Trinity Anglican Church
41 Mornington Street, Stratford
All things Christmas! Baking, savouries, tourtieres and home-made crafts just in time for Christmas giving. Be sure to visit our Snowflake Cafe and enjoy tasty treats as our guest.

THE LONDON ORCHID SOCIETY
meets the third Sunday of each month.
Richards Memorial Church, 360 Edgeworth Avenue, London, ON N5W 5C4
Join us December 20, 2026, 2 to 4 pm for Dr. Albert Mok from London, ON his presentation is Orchid Shows that he has visited. Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting for more information at www.londonorchidsociety.com; contact Daryl at 519-666-2927.

STRATFORD MEDICAL DEPOT
Christmas Closure December 22nd & 29th.

STRATFORD LEGION FRIDAY NIGHT EUCHRE
Royal Canadian Legion, 804 Ontario St.
2027 winter play dates are set. You hope you find a teammate and register for any or all four dates, Jan. 22, Feb. 19, Mar. 12, and Apr. 23. Only $20 per team of 2. Prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. Doors open at 6 pm and play starts at 6:30 pm. Call Anne, (519-301-0194) Dave, (519-703-6544) or the Legion office, (519-271-4540) to register.



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**

CLASSIFIEDS

Email to inquire stratfordtimes@gmail.com

OBITUARY



MARLENE GAIL THOMAS

Marlene Gail Thomas, age 85, of Shakespeare, passed away peacefully with family by her side at the People Care, Tavistock on November 15, 2026. Born in Stratford, daughter of the late Samuel and Mary (Gibbard) Campbell.

Predeceased by her husband Lowell Thomas (2002), sisters Sharon Gervais, Linda McLeod and brother-in-law Reginald Thomas (Agnes).

Marlene is survived by her children Michael Thomas and Vicki Thomas (Peter Shillolo). Grandmother to Spencer Marsh (Alannah). Lovingly remembered by several nieces and nephews.

Marlene was secretary/treasurer for the South Easthope School Board for many years. She later worked payroll at Kmart and worked at the Stratford Festival until her retirement.

The family would like to thank the staff at Anne Hathaway Retirement Residence and most recently People Care Tavistock for their care and compassion.

In keeping with Marlene's wishes, a family service will be held with burial at Avondale Cemetery. Memorial donations in Marlene's memory may be made to Shakespeare Community Athletic Association or the Stratford General Hospital through the W.G. Young Funeral Home, 430 Huron Street, Stratford. www.wgyoungfuneralhome.com

FOR SALE

Shade Trees; Maples, Oaks, Birch, Beech, Honey Locusts, Elms, Magnolia, Hydrangea Tree, Tulip Tree, Crab apples, Ivory Silk Lilac, Chanticleer Pear, Golden Weeping Willows and more. Apples, Pears, Peaches, Plums, Apricots, Nectarine, Blueberry, Haskap etc. Lots of healthy strong Spruce, Cedars and White Pine for your privacy hedges and windbreaks. Hundred of flowering shrubs. Reg Hours 7 a.m.- 6 p.m. Mon-Sat at Martins Nursery c/o Emanuel Martin. 42661 Orangehill Rd., Wroxeter, ON

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

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

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

JUNK REMOVAL

JUNK REMOVAL – Garbage, Basements, Yards, Dump Runs. Call Mike 519-276-7766

LOST ITEM

Lost Saturday, October 24th, possibly in the Festival Theatre parking lot near the playground: A woman's medium-coloured solid brown felt hat, cap-shaped, with a visor and decorative buttons on either side of the fore band. This formed hat keeps its shape. Karin Abel 905-410-4244.

AUCTION SALE



Herd Dispersal Live Auction Sale

of 135 Bred Cows/Heifers

Saturday November 21, 11:00am

to be held at 554447 Mono-Amaranth TLine, Mono, ON

Preview on day of sale, or by appointment

Directions: Go west through Orangeville on Hwy 9 to County Rd 16 (Veterans Way at Greenwood Cemetery), turn north 5 miles to farm on East side. OR From Shelburne go east on Hwy 89 for 2 miles to Mono-Amaranth Townline, turn south & go 5 miles to farm on East side.Townline, turn south & go 5 miles to farm on East side.

Cattle: (79)Heifers: (18) Char, (17) Blk Simm, (33) Angus, (11) Red -1st time calvers, bred Angus & Limo, vacc. **(18) X-bred Heifers** - bred Black Angus, vacc. **(17) Angus Heifers** - bred Black Angus. **(10) Blk Angus cows** - all bred Black Angus, vacc. **(8) Charolais Cows** - bred Charolais, vacc. **(3) Mixed Cows** - with calf at side, vacc.
All Cows will be preg checked prior to sale.
Lunch Booth
Washroom Available
Terms & Conditions: Cash or cheque with proper I.D. on day of sale. Owner & Auctioneer will not be responsible for any accidents or loss on day of sale. All announcements on day of sale will take precedence over printed ads.

Auctioneers: Kevin McArthur (519) 942-0264
Scott Bessey (519) 843-5083
Email: mcarthurbessey@gmail.com
www.theauctionadvertiser.com/KMcArthur
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3. Paper Products
4. Lamination
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6. Montreal
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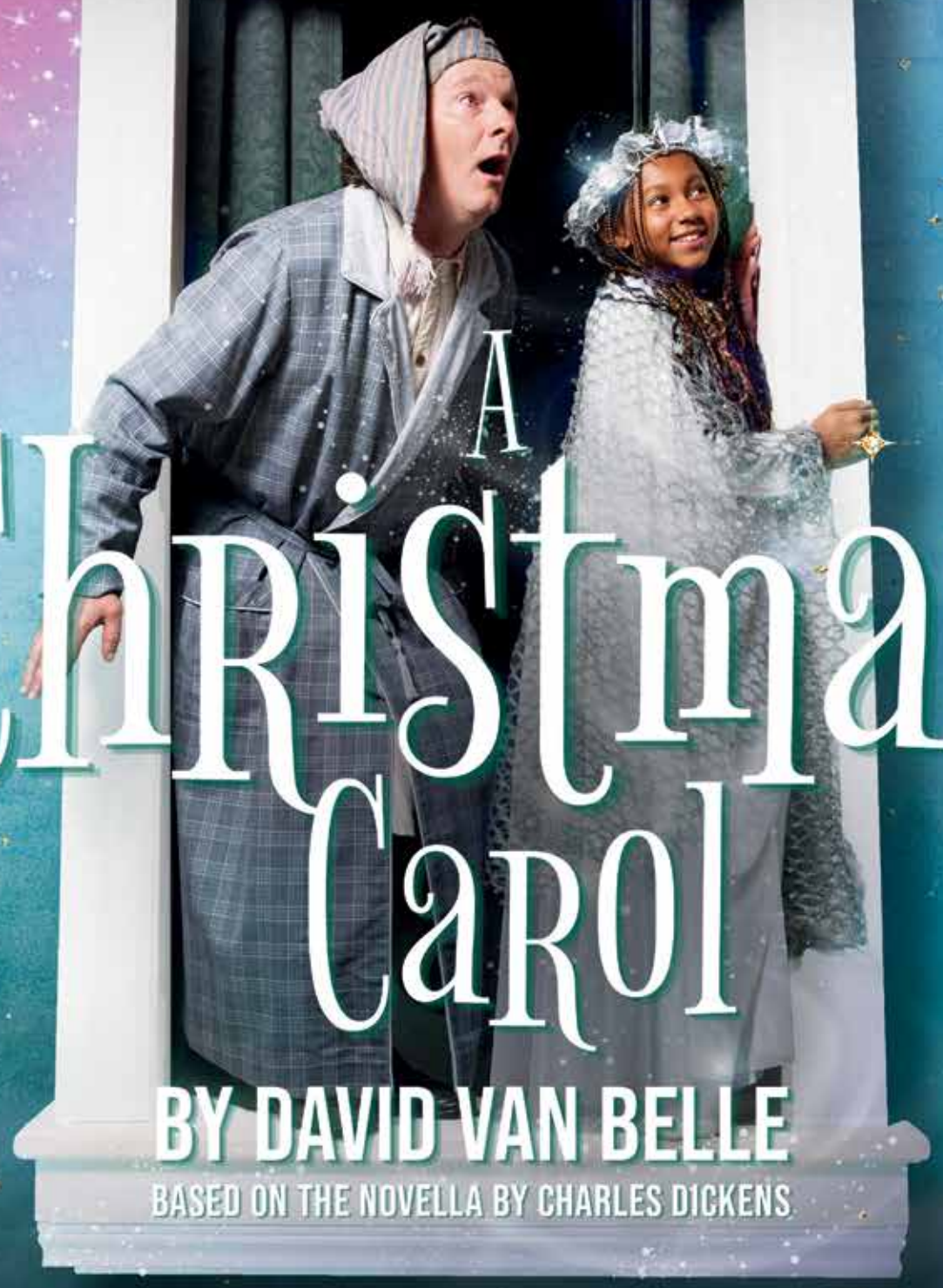
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