

STRATFORD **TIMES**

VOLUME 6 • ISSUE 12

OCTOBER 30, 2026

FREE



Maria Walsh
519-272-3229
walshremax@gmail.com



Judah Bootsma
519-272-4378
Judah.remax@gmail.com



REMAX
a-b REALTY LTD. BROKERAGE

NORTH+END PHARMACY

Your Community Pharmacy in Stratford

Easy Prescriptions Transfer

E-240 Graff Ave, Stratford Phone: 519.273.3773

GET YOUR **FLU SHOTS** HERE

Ritsma reflects on his defeat

AMANDA NELSON

Times Reporter

In a tough finish, Martin Ritsma lost the mayoral race to Robert Ritz, finishing third behind Jo-Dee Burbach in Monday night's municipal election.

Ritsma held a small gathering at the family farm Monday evening for campaign volunteers, family and friends. Through tears, he thanked everyone involved in the 2026 campaign, as well as all the candidates who put their names forward.

"I've been blessed to serve the city of Stratford for 16 years," he said. "Three terms as councillor, two of which were deputy mayors, selected by your own peers, which is a real tip of the cap."

Ritz won the mayoral race with 4,246 votes, or 31.1 per cent. Burbach finished second with 3,738 votes, while Ritsma received 2,899 votes. Voter turnout was 47.5 per cent.

"I want to also thank those who allowed their names to stand for this election. I believe there were 26 councillors and five mayoral candidates. This reminds me that democracy in Stratford is strong and vibrant. I believe over 45 per cent of our residents voted, which is unheard of across this country. I want to congratulate all the successful candidates."

Ritsma congratulated Ritz on his victory and said he planned to call him later that evening to offer his congratulations personally.

"And my congratulations to Robert Ritz for his success here tonight," Ritsma said.

Thanking the women in his life, Ritsma reflected on the support of his mother and wife, Kathryn, throughout his life and public service.

"I cannot stand before you tonight without saying

CONTINUED TO PAGE 4



(CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

Robert Ritz looks up to the projected screen at Stratford City Hall on election night Oct. 26, seeing for the first time he was elected mayor.

Robert Ritz elected next mayor of Stratford

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Robert Ritz is the Festival City's next mayor.

Ritz, an architect and lifelong Stratford resident, won the local race on Oct. 26, with 4,246 votes cast for him, 31.1 per cent of the vote count.

"It is fantastic," Ritz told reporters shortly after the results were posted. "It's meaning a lot for our city now. They will have true involvement with council, the interaction is going to be a lot stronger. We're already talking about little changes up here tonight, and how the citizens feel like they're really part of the decision-making process."

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



Stacked
PANCAKE & BREAKFAST HOUSE

\$6.99
Breakfast
Special



MON - FRI
7 AM - 9 AM
Dine-In Only

925 Ontario St Unit No- 5B,
Stratford

Open Everyday | 7 AM - 3 PM

Uber
Eats

stackedpancakehouse.ca

SKIP THE DISHES

Robert Ritz elected next mayor of Stratford

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

It was a hard-fought contest. Ritz beat out four other candidates for the win, by a narrow 500 vote gap. According to the unofficial election results, city councillor Jo-Dee Burbach had 3,738 votes (27.4 per cent), Mayor Martin Ritsma had 2,899 votes (21.3 per cent), Coun. Mark Hunter had 2,542 (18.6 per cent) and Andrew Rea had 206 votes (1.5 per cent). Out of the 29,175 eligible electors, 13,844 citizens cast a vote, a 47.5 per cent turnout rate.

This is round two for Ritz, who first ran for mayor in the 2022 municipal election, losing to Ritsma by an even narrower 345 votes. Ritz attributed stronger winds for change and a larger presence during the campaign as the reason for his win this time around.

"We learned a lot in round one," he said. "... This time we had 10 groups out doing door-to-door. I think that was key

to the campaign, great competition with the other people running for mayor. We had our sign wars with each other, who had the most signs is always part of the battle, and then also the other side, the media side with social media, was sort of part of the change and the strength in it, and we were also on the radio ... I think those were the two that really surged us ahead.

"I think people just wanted a change. I was truly the outsider looking in. People saw me delegating on a regular basis over the last 40 years, which illustrates that I did have the experience. It isn't like I haven't been upstairs, and it isn't like I don't know the media team, right? And I think they recognized that was enough to make sure I could make it happen as mayor. And I have ideas, and I think they also like my creative side, and the side to speak up for the people, and more than

speaking up for the people, having the people speak, and have them actually state their ideas and what they want. I've been on the other side delegating. I want to make that process easier. It shouldn't be intimidating. It should be welcoming. These people, these 10 people that were elected tonight on council, should treat every citizen that walks up to that podium like their best friend, and we're here to help them get what they want. ... Our goal as a council and as a city is primarily to provide the life that our citizens want in harmony with respect to each other, and without being of a danger to each other."

On Monday night, Ritz said the real work begins Tuesday, beginning discussions with city staff on moving forward – though nothing official will occur until Nov. 15 when a new term of office begins. Currently, his inaugural meeting is

scheduled for Monday, Nov. 16, though that date is set to change.

Ritz will lead a 10-person council, which largely looks the same as last term's council. Only Burbach, Hunter, and Coun. Taylor Briscoe will not be returning. Newly elected councillors Christopher Giannakopoulos, Sarah Merkel and Ian Morton will join Brad Beatty, Lesley Biehn, Bonnie Henderson, Larry McCabe, Harj Nijjar, Cody Sebben and Geza Wordofa around the horseshoe, after they were all re-elected.

"I'm anxious to get into the car, figure out how it works, and let's go," Ritz said. "We got a group with us, and you know some days I'll be driving, other days other people on council will be driving, and that's my goal. The goal is to get in the right direction, go in the right direction for our City of Stratford to make a Stratford that works for you, citizen."

Burbach, Hunter, Rea send best wishes for Ritz and new council

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

After a nail biter election on Oct. 26, Stratford has a new mayor and council for the 2026-2030 term. The mayoral hopefuls who didn't win the top spot, Jo-Dee Burbach, Mark Hunter and Andrew Rea nevertheless wished Ritz and the new council a productive term.

Second place finisher, with 508 votes between her and Ritz, was Jo-Dee Burbach, who vacated her seat on council to run for mayor this election. While she did not respond to the Times' request for comment prior to press time, she posted the following statement to her campaign's Facebook page:

"Thank you Stratford," Burbach wrote. "It's been an honour to serve you over the past eight years, and I'm in-

credibly grateful to everyone who supported me throughout this campaign. To the many generous people who volunteered, knocked on doors, put up signs, donated and encouraged me along the way – thank you. To my family and friends, your support, enthusiasm and love was a vital part of my campaign – thank you.

"I'm proud of the campaign I ran, the conversations we had, and the opportunity to share my vision for Stratford. Congratulations to Rob Ritz and all the elected council members. I wish them success in leading our city.

"To everyone who placed their trust in me – thank you. Please know how much that means to me. Although the campaign has ended, my commitment to Stratford hasn't changed. I'm proud to call this city home, and I'll always care deeply about its future."

Hunter, who likewise vacated his councillor seat to run, came in fourth place with 2,542 votes (21.3 per cent of the share). He posted a video to his campaign's Instagram page, where he congratulated Ritz and everyone elected to council.

"I wish you every success as you take on the responsibility of shaping the future of our city," Hunter said. "I would like to thank everyone who put their name forward in this election. Running for public office takes courage, time and a genuine willingness to serve. Regardless of the outcome, your participation has strengthened our community and our democracy."


Franklin E. Hinz



Donna L. Hinz

Maximize Your Return
Conservative Advice for Intelligent Decisions

196 Ontario St., Stratford, ON
519.273.1633 • franklinehinz.com

"... The election is over, but our commitment to Stratford continues. I encourage my supporters to put your support now behind the new council. Although we didn't agree on every way on how to move our city forward, we all want a city that is a wonderful place to live, work and raise a family."

"It was an honour to serve our city alongside my council colleagues and city staff," Hunter further told the Times. "Stratford is lucky to have the staff we do. Everyone I had the pleasure of working with was professional, hardworking and very dedicated to serving our community."

Andrew Rea, who was a political outsider running on a campaign of top-to-bottom change in city hall, received 206 votes, 1.5 per cent of the share.

He said he was grateful to have been part of this year's election and feels that Stratford's citizens had a chance to be as best informed as they could have been.

"I entered this race to set an example; that if it's felt that our council, or our mayor has been inadequately representing citizens, then a regular citizen can, should and will step up and speak out to challenge them – win or lose," Rea said. "I feel I accomplished that."

"I hold true still, that I did not run for any personal reason, but rather I wanted only for the city to see the benefits of change, to have leadership from a fresh perspective of someone from the outside, looking in ... and I feel that was equally achieved with Mr. Ritz's victory."

VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.STRATFORDTIMES.COM






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

A Passion for People

SURROGATES NEEDED!

Receive Expense Coverage of up to **\$45,000**

Help make a family's dream come true.

Your generous gift can help intended parents welcome the baby they've been dreaming of.

Contact us Today!



(519) 527-2404

www.surrogacy.ca

sally@surrogacy.ca

Canadian Law Compliant Experienced Trusted

BUILDING A **STRONG** ECONOMY FOR ALL **CANADIANS**

The Government of Canada is taking action to build a stronger economy:

- | Driving major nation-building initiatives expected to create 337,000 jobs
- | Securing more than 20 economic and security partnerships across four continents
- | Reducing trade barriers across provinces to create one strong Canadian economy
- | Creating Build Canada Homes to build affordable homes faster than ever

**LEARN MORE
ABOUT OUR PLAN.**

canada.ca/BUILDSTRONG



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada

‘The luckiest man on the face of the earth’: Ritsma reflects on defeat

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

I’m here because of my mom’s strength. Lou Gehrig was known as the Iron Man, playing 2,130 consecutive games of baseball. That’s a hard thing to think about, but I think about my mom as an Iron Woman, raising 11 children in poverty.

“I’m the luckiest man on the face of this earth because of another Iron Woman too. That’s my bride, Kathryn. I wouldn’t be standing in front of you here tonight without her support, her love and belief in me for 50-plus years.”

Reflecting on the campaign, Ritsma thanked his mayoral opponents and referenced former U.S. first lady Michelle Obama’s well-known words about taking the high road.

“I want to thank those individuals who ran for mayor as well. It was a spicy campaign, but I went back today and thought about when I ran in the last election,” he said. “Sometimes I would go in the shed and listen to Michelle Obama’s speech over and over again. You know, ‘When they go low, we go high.’ And that’s been my mantra all along, whether it’s in education or in this role.”

Looking ahead, Ritsma said he hoped council would continue to build on the work completed during his time in office. He emphasized the importance of maintaining a positive outlook and ensuring all residents feel valued, regardless of their circumstances.

“Everybody is important in this city. Everybody, whether you’re housed, whether you’re unhoused, whatever your social or economic status,” he said.

Ritsma also referenced Lou Gehrig’s famous farewell speech, delivered at Yankee Stadium on July 4, 1939, after the baseball player was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), commonly known as Lou Gehrig’s disease.

Gehrig died on June 2, 1941, nearly two years after the speech. His words about considering himself the luckiest man on

earth, despite facing a terminal illness, resonated with Ritsma as he reflected on his own election loss.

“You know, I do really consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth. But I’ll say this: Lou Gehrig ended that speech, and he said, ‘I might have been given a bad break, but I’ve got a lot to live for.’

“And I’m thinking, if Lou Gehrig can carry that mantra, knowing that he had ALS and he passed in about 18 months, if he had the courage to say that in front of 61,000 people, I can say it in front of you tonight. It’s a bad break, but there will be other opportunities.”

Ritsma said he would continue serving the city until the transition to the new mayor is complete. He added that he remained committed to helping residents during his final weeks in office.

“I don’t know what the next couple of weeks will bring for me as I turn over the office, but I will continue to be there. I’m in the office between 5:30 and 6 in the morning, and I will continue to serve people until I make that successful transition of office over to the next mayor. So thank you, thank you, thank you.”

During his four years as mayor, Ritsma focused on housing, homelessness, infrastructure and the long-term future of the Grand Trunk site. The city advanced plans for the redevelopment of the former railway property, invested in road and underground infrastructure and supported housing initiatives, including supportive housing for residents with high needs. Ritsma also championed the establishment of a warming centre for people experiencing homelessness during dangerously cold weather.

Ritsma said he hoped the next council would carry forward the work accomplished by the current council.

“I hope that the work by council will be respectfully brought forward into the next.”



(AMANDA NELSON PHOTO)

Martin Ritsma speaks to family, friends and campaign volunteers at a gathering at the family farm Monday evening after finishing third in Stratford’s mayoral race. Ritsma thanked his supporters and reflected on his 16 years of service to the city.

Meet your new city council

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The City of Stratford has a new city council, and although there was big change for the mayor’s seat, the new council looks remarkably similar to the last.

Twenty-six candidates ran for mayor this election, all vying for a spot around the 10-person horseshoe. The successful candidates, in order of their vote share, were:

Cody Sebben (6,335 votes, 7.4 per cent)
Lesley Biehn (5,880 votes, 6.9 per cent)
Sarah Merkel (5,631 votes, 6.6 per cent)
Harj Nijjar (5,186 votes, 6.0 per cent)
Brad Beatty (5,078 votes, 5.9 per cent)
Ian Morton (4,919 votes, 5.7 per cent)
Larry McCabe (4,825 votes, 5.6 per cent)
Geza Wordofa (4,764 votes, 5.6 per cent)
Bonnie Henderson (4,629 votes, 5.4 per cent)

Christopher Giannakopoulos (4,458 votes, 5.2 per cent)

Sebben, Biehn, Nijjar, Beatty, McCabe, Wordofa and Henderson are returning, 70 per cent of the former council (not including the mayor). Only Jo-Dee Burbach and Mark Hunter, who vacated their seats to run for mayor, and Taylor Briscoe will not be returning. Briscoe ran this election and came 13th with 3,446 votes, four per cent of the share.

Nearly all of the returning candidates who responded to the Times’ request for comment said they were excited for what was to come, but were mourning the loss of four colleagues, including outgoing mayor Martin Ritsma.

“I am deeply grateful for such an incredible show of support from the people of Stratford,” said Lesley Biehn. “It makes the last four years of pouring over agendas, attending meetings and pursuing connections and relationships with the province, other municipalities and nonprofits seem incredibly worthwhile. It feels good that it meant something to the community.”

“... I am processing the loss of four incredibly hardworking colleagues. Each one of them offered strengths and displayed character that feels really hard to lose. You get to know people well when you wrestle through ideas together.”

“I also feel excited for all of the new things that we can look forward to. I hope to hit the ground running and see some of the ideas brought across the finish line. Specifically, seeing the supportive housing up and running.”

“... This is my first experience of a major transition on council, and I hadn’t fully anticipated the emotions involved,” McCabe added. “Over four years, you develop bonds with the people you serve alongside. You work through difficult issues, disagree, find common ground and share the responsibility of making decisions for your community. Then, almost overnight, those familiar relationships are disrupted.”

“Knowing that four of my colleagues won’t be returning is strangely disconcerting, regardless of where we may have differed on issues. I will miss working with them. Genuinely good people. The

human reality is often missed in the clamour of ideas and policies.

“I’m genuinely grateful to the people of Stratford for the opportunity to serve another four years. I also want to thank everyone who participated in the election, whether as a candidate, volunteer or voter. I was heartened to see participation increase. There’s a deep reservoir of civic engagement in this community and I hope we use it wisely.”

“Thank you to everyone who voted, put up a sign, shared a post, stopped to talk with me or simply offered some words of encouragement along the way,” Nijjar said. “The support throughout this campaign has meant a lot. There’s still plenty of work ahead. Affordability, housing and homelessness, infrastructure and responsible spending are all important issues. I’ll continue to listen, be accessible and work hard for the people of Stratford.”

“I heard so many ideas during the campaign and feel some we could work on right away and others will fit in later on with the Official Plan, the recreation plan, the Grand Trunk to name a few as they come forward during this term,” Henderson shared. “Thanks to everyone who voted for me I’m truly honoured and I will work hard to help make our city an even greater place to live, work and play in.”

“After 16 years on Stratford city council, knowing that the community continues to place its confidence in me is incredibly meaningful,” said Beatty. “It’s something I’ve never taken for granted. What excites me most is that, even after all these years, I still have the same enthusiasm and passion for serving Stratford that I had when I was first elected in 2010.”

“We have important opportunities and challenges ahead, and I look forward to working collaboratively with my council colleagues, municipal staff and the community to continue moving Stratford forward.”

The three new faces, Merkel, Morton and Giannakopoulos expressed the same gratitude as those returning councillors – along with a commitment to do good work these next four years.

Merkel, who topped the new councillors at third place, said she was blown away by the support shown for her.

“But wow, am I ever excited and ready!” she said. “I’m ready to work hard, to listen, to ask questions, to collaborate, and to continue moving us toward action.”

“I’m looking forward to meeting the municipal staff and building relationships with the other councillors and the new mayor. I believe that strong teams are built by recognizing the different strengths, experiences, and perspectives that each person brings to the table. I’m excited to learn from those around me, find common ground, and contribute to a council culture that values collaboration, and a shared commitment to moving our community forward.”

“I am deeply honoured by the support I’ve received throughout this campaign, I don’t take that lightly,” said Morton.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 5

Stratford General Hospital grateful for \$10,000 donation from Optimist Club towards labour and delivery pain management protocols

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

The Optimist Club of Stratford donated \$10,000 to the Stratford General Hospital Foundation to provide flexible pain management for those in labour and delivery.

"The Optimist Club has been a strong supporter of the hospital for many years and it's just great to walk alongside community volunteers that do tremendous work that make our community better," said Cheryl Hunt, executive director of the Stratford General Hospital foundation. "We feel very, very fortunate and blessed."

The donation from the Optimist Club will be put towards the Maternal Child unit, specifically for portable nitrous oxide, a.k.a. "laughing gas" units, that provide pain management during labour and delivery.

The portable units allow for more flexibility for pregnant patients as they move around the hospital.

"No matter where mom is, if she's in bed or needs to move to a different area or is walking the halls, she's able to be in charge of her pain management system," said Hunt. "It's all set up. It's very safe so mom can't overuse it and it provides a very patient-focused experience during a labour event."

The units provide health and safety benefits such as keeping gas away from the walls and thus preventing gas leaks while also reducing carbon emissions.



(STRATFORD GENERAL HOSPITAL FOUNDATION PHOTO)

The Optimist Club of Stratford donated \$10,000 towards the Stratford General Hospital Foundation, which will use the funds towards portable laughing gas units to provide flexibility while managing pain during labour and delivery.

The Stratford General Hospital is not fully funded by the government and relies on donations and fundraisers to keep operations running smoothly and equipment updated.

"It's just heartwarming and encouraging in today's day and age that people are still philanthropic," Hunt said. "People still understand the need of supporting one another and organizations step up and go above and beyond to engage and to raise funds and to ensure that our community

is strong."

The Optimist Club of Stratford has supported the Stratford General Hospital Foundation for more than 20 years. Since 2018, the club has contributed more than \$80,000 for the hospital's Maternal Child unit medical equipment including the portable laughing gas units.

"Our mandate is to support children and to make their lives better so the hospital donation was made to support children and family

needs," said Stu MacCuaig, treasurer of the Optimist Club in Stratford.

In addition to the Stratford General Hospital, the Optimist Club of Stratford also supported Optimism Place, L'Arche Stratford, the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board STEM program and other initiatives like youth athletics and education to enhance the lives of children and youth in the area.

Meet your new city council

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

"Thank you to Stratford voters who gave me this opportunity and to everyone who shared their important stories with me during this campaign. My emphasis on reaching as many people at their doors as possible has allowed me to connect with so many people and issues throughout the city and in different neighbourhoods. This only makes me a better councillor. I am excited to bring your voices and priorities to city hall and to continue these vital conversations. I also want to congratulate my new council colleagues. I can't wait to roll up my sleeves and work alongside you to build a thriving city that works better

for all."

"I'd like to thank everyone who ran for council and all who voted," Giannakopoulos said. "This morning I'm feeling grateful and aware of my responsibility – winning a seat in an election this tight doesn't come without a humble acknowledgement of those who were close in the race. My commitment is to work together with our new council, to ensure that residents are both heard and well-informed, and to always do my homework. To my family: I love you, and I couldn't have done this without you. To my friends, volunteers and supporters in Stratford: my sincerest thanks for your confidence."

STRATFORD TIMES

"I know the paper is free, but can I get a subscription anyways?"

Yes. We understand that some people might like the convenience of the Stratford Times arriving at their home (located near or far) through Canada Post, so we do have subscriptions available for this purpose.

The price for a subscription is \$77.00

To subscribe, please e-transfer granthavenmedia@gmail.com and include your full mailing address in the comments, or send a cheque with mailing address to Grant Haven Media, PO Box 2310, St. Marys, ON N4X 1A2.

Weekend Quiz

By Jake Grant

1. Who played the role of Hannah Montana?
2. Andy Bernard from *The Office*, attended what University?
3. How many prime ministers has Canada had?
4. What year was Make-A-Wish Foundation founded?
5. What major network bought Warner Brothers?
6. What is the name of Thor's hammer?
7. A 24-clock is known as, _____ time.
8. What was Rasputin's cause of death?
9. Who was the first female commander of NASA's Space Shuttle?
10. Ascorbic acid is commonly referred to as what?

This week's answers are found on pg. 27

Perth County named Canada's safest public-sector employer at national awards ceremony

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

Perth County has been recognized as Canada's safest public-sector employer, an achievement county leadership says reflects years of commitment from staff, management and council to building a workplace culture where health and safety are everyone's responsibility.

The county received the national honour at the 2026 Canada's Safest Employer Awards ceremony in Toronto Oct. 22, recognizing its workplace safety record, innovative programming and ongoing efforts to protect employees and the public.

"I think what set Perth County apart is that safety isn't just a program here, it's part of our workplace culture," CAO Lori Wolfe said. "We take a proactive approach by identifying risks, investing in meaningful training, listening to employee feedback and continuously improving our practices."

The county's health and safety initiatives include monthly workplace inspections, job-specific hazard assessments, specialized defensive driving training, regular safety education for employees who interact with the public and a proactive mental health program for paramedics.

According to Wolfe, the county's approach goes beyond meeting legislated safety requirements by empowering employees to identify potential hazards and suggest improvements.

"Safety is a shared responsibility, and this achievement belongs to our employees, managers, health and safety represen-



(PERTH COUNTY PHOTO)

Perth County representatives celebrate being named Canada's safest public-sector employer at the 2026 Canada's Safest Employer Awards ceremony in Toronto Oct. 22. Pictured, from left, are Krystal Holmes (HR generalist), Bill Wilson (director of public works), Vanessa Giroux (executive assistant to the CAO), Charlotte Gravlev (manager of legislative services/clerk), Lori Wolfe (chief administrative officer), Ian Brown (commander, paramedic services), Marion McKeen (director of human resources), Sue Orr (deputy warden), Stefan Zhelev (executive director of legal/corporate services) and Jill Pacheco (court services clerk).

tatives, council and management team," Wolfe said.

Perth County Warden Dean Trentowsky credited the consistency of the county's health and safety programming and the collective commitment of employees, management and successive councils for the recognition.

"It brings credibility to everyone in the organization – credibility in the decision making, the planning and the execution of the corporate health and safety program, a program that is designed to protect all of our employees and to protect all of the public that we serve," Trentowsky said.

Beyond recognizing the county's existing practices, both Wolfe and Trentowsky

said the award could help Perth County attract and retain employees by demonstrating its commitment to providing a safe, supportive and respectful workplace.

"People want to work where they feel valued, supported and safe," Wolfe said. "This award reinforces that Perth County is an employer that prioritizes employee wellbeing and invests in its people."

The Canada's Safest Employer Awards have been presented annually since 2011. Winners are selected through a multi-stage evaluation process involving research, verification, employee perception surveys and assessment by an independent panel of occupational health and safety experts.

Despite the national recognition, Wolfe emphasized the county's commitment to workplace safety will continue evolving through training, investment in equipment and resources and ongoing assessments of both physical and psychological workplace risks.

"This recognition is something we're incredibly proud of, but it's not the finish line," she said.

Trentowsky echoed that sentiment, emphasizing that continued learning, improvement and attention to detail will remain essential to the county's success.

As warden, Trentowsky also extended his gratitude to current and former county employees and councillors whose contributions helped establish and maintain the program.

"This award belongs to every employee," Wolfe said. "We're incredibly proud of this recognition, but even more proud of the people behind it."

Rotary Club of Stratford annual Christmas Arts and Crafts Festival is back once again

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Looking for the perfect way to kick off the holiday season? The 25th annual Christmas Arts and Crafts Festival is back at the Rotary Complex from Nov. 13-15.

With over 70 local vendors showcasing their talents, both annual favourites and exciting new ones, the wide range of vendors will offer some of the best in unique, beautiful and practical Christmas gifts for just about everyone on a shopping list. As well, don't miss out on delicious offerings from numerous food vendors while you stroll through the show. Grab some lunch or a light snack and coffee from Black Angus.

Gallery Stratford will be hosting a

hands-on activity for the kids on Saturday and Sunday. That, along with carollers, photo ops with Santa and more is sure to provide enough for any visit.

This year admission is by donation. Organizers say 100 per cent of all profits go directly to our ongoing commitments to community needs like Rotary Hospice Stratford Perth, Rotary Respite House, Stratford General Hospital, the Local Community Food Centre, Stratford Public Library (Public Library on Wheels), scholarships and academic awards, Rotary Minor Hockey and more. This means your attendance helps those in need locally.

Opening dates and times:

- Friday, Nov. 13, 5-9 p.m.
- Saturday, Nov. 14, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sunday, Nov. 15, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Captain Hook, Laura Douglas from Operation Smile, Jane Van Nes, Diane Murray and home owner and Skeletons of Vivian Line operator Melissa McKelvie pose for a photo at the donation booth. Each year, the Skeletons of Vivian Line raise money for Operation Smile, and this year the goal is to raise \$40,000. In addition to \$80,000 donated between two anonymous donors, that would mean \$120,000 for the charity this year alone.

Empty Bowls fundraiser returns for Stratford House of Blessing

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

The Stratford House of Blessing Food Bank is excited to announce the return of its annual Empty Bowls fundraiser on Nov. 6 at the Stratford Rotary Complex. The popular community event brings together local artists, restaurants, musicians, businesses and supporters for an evening of food, entertainment and fundraising in support of people experiencing food insecurity.

Guests will choose from more than 900 unique bowls hand-painted by local volunteer artists before sampling delicious entrees, breads and desserts from more than 25 local restaurants, caterers, bakeries and food businesses. Participating vendors include 53 North, Anna Mae's, Bluebird Restaurant, Chris's BBQ & Country Style Catering, Curry Zone, Dave's Diner, Demetre's, Foster's Inn, Mercer Kitchen, Shakespeare Pies, Sunset Diner, the Parlour Inn, the Sugar Maple Restaurant, the Wild Hog and many more. The full list is available on the Stratford House of Blessing's website.

The evening will be hosted by Brittlestar (Stewart

Reynolds) and features live music from local singer-songwriter Nora Joy, jazz musicians Phoenix Jazz Duo and Kitchener-Waterloo cover band Better Than Nothing. Guests can also bid on locally donated items and experiences through the silent and live auctions.

"Empty Bowls is such a special night because it brings so many parts of our community together around something that really matters," said Eva Hayes, executive director at Stratford House of Blessing in a media release. "From the artists and restaurants to the musicians, volunteers, sponsors and everyone who comes through the doors, it takes a community to make this event happen."

Last year's Empty Bowls fundraiser raised more than \$44,000 for Stratford House of Blessing. The organization hopes to build on that success and surpass last year's total. All proceeds from Empty Bowls support Stratford House of Blessing's food bank, delivery program, Christmas Toy Program and other essential services that help individuals and families throughout the year.

For tickets and more information, visit www.shob.org/empty-bowls.

Canada Summer Jobs 2027 now open for applications

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Perth-Wellington MP John Nater has announced that the employer application process for funding under the Canada Summer Jobs 2027 program is now open until Dec. 3.

"Through Canada Summer Jobs, young Canadians have an opportunity to gain the skills and experience they need to get jobs now and in the future," Nater said in an announcement. "I encourage employers to apply for funding to create jobs that will help students, employers and our local economies. Last summer over 300 jobs were created across Perth-Wellington through the CSJ Program."

Nater noted that while the application period has opened a week earlier than last year, the employer notification date for program funding has not changed from previous years. It is anticipated notifications will begin around the beginning of April.

"Not only is the April notification date much too late for most students to find out if they have a summer job, but employers also must budget and therefore need confirmation of whether or not they will receive funding well in advance of this date," said Nater. "University and college students in particular must have an idea of where they

will be working in the summer by mid-February."

Canada Summer Jobs provides wage subsidies to support employers in creating quality work experiences for youth aged 15-30. It is designed to focus on local and national priorities while giving thousands of young Canadians the opportunity to develop and improve the skills they need to be competitive in the workforce. Additionally, local employers are supported in addressing skills and labour shortages in their community.

Funding is available for not-for-profit organizations, public-sector employers and small businesses (under 50 employees).

To be eligible for funding, businesses and organizations must have been operating for at least two years, unless they had an approved funding agreement in 2026.

Employers interested in applying for CSJ 2027 funding are encouraged to submit their applications electronically on the Grants and Contributions Online Services (GCOS) portal. Creating a GCOS account is a one-time process that allows organizations to apply for various Employment and Social Development Canada funding opportunities in a secure web environment.

More information on the program, including the 2027 application package, can be found by calling Service Canada at 1-800-935-5555 or on the Canada Summer Jobs website: <https://tinyurl.com/y9nnpcp7>

From The Vampire's Song Book

(on the occasion of Halloween)

I look for the white throats

those panting little snow-valleys
with that endlessly sweet virginal
throb shuddering like a sparrow's
heart beneath the alabaster.

The neck must be slender

precise as a flower stalk
bleached in its tubular dazzle
expectant as a field of wheat
luminous before the sickle.

And the face must be a story

poems etched into the eyelids
lips a thin line of regret
a face suffused with longing
for the embrace she cannot forget.

Yes, these are the ladies I seek
the swan-necked café lovelies
the rouged mysteries with their
bangled wrists, the careless waft
of a cigarette and always
at the nape that one moist
curl to command my tongue.

And when into the snow-drifted
polish of their sleeping flesh
I sink my fanged daggers
I chant into their
petals how beautiful they are,
how kind to lie so still while I drain
their soul to perfect the universe.

David Stones, Stratford Poet Laureate

Optimist Club of Downie Inc.

OPTI-CASH CALENDAR DRAW

Sep. 20 Daniel Bald, Stratford	\$50.00
Sep. 21 Perry & Linda Keller, Tavistock	\$50.00
Sep. 22 Cliff & Sandra Wilson, St. Marys	\$50.00
Sep. 23 Roy Bissonette, Lucan	\$50.00
Sep. 24 Ryan Seaton, Woodstock	\$50.00
Sep. 25 Michelle & Craig Campbell, Embro	\$50.00
Sep. 26 Ken Smale, St. Marys	\$200.00
Sep. 27 John & Leah Verbaan, Thorndale	\$50.00
Sep. 28 Paul Govaest, St. Marys	\$50.00
Sep. 29 Elaine McLaren, Stratford	\$50.00
Sep. 30 Arlene Robertson, St. Marys	\$50.00
Oct. 1 Paul Wybrow, Grand Bend	\$50.00
Oct. 2 Matt Clifford, St. Marys	\$50.00
Oct. 3 Laura Thompson, Rostock	\$200.00



Franklin E. Hinz

196 Ontario Street, Stratford
519-273-1633

STRATFORD TIMES

"I know the paper is free, but can I get a subscription anyways?"

Yes. We understand that some people might like the convenience of the Stratford Times arriving at their home (located near or far) through Canada Post, so we do have subscriptions available for this purpose.

The price for a subscription is \$77.00

To subscribe, please e-transfer granthavenmedia@gmail.com and include your full mailing address in the comments, or send a cheque with mailing address to Grant Haven Media, PO Box 2310, St. Marys, ON N4X 1A2.

Ballinran documentary to explore how China's auto industry could reshape our relationship with cars

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

A Stratford-based production company is partnering with one of Hong Kong's largest broadcasters on a new documentary examining how China's rapidly evolving automotive industry is changing not only how vehicles are built, but how people interact with them.

Ballinran Entertainment and Phoenix TV signed a memorandum of understanding in Shanghai Oct. 13 to co-produce *Driven: Inside China's Automotive Revolution*, a documentary exploring the technology, culture and global implications of China's growing electric-vehicle industry. Ballinran founder and executive producer Craig Thompson said the goal is not to promote Chinese vehicles, but to help Canadians better understand an industry already reshaping automotive markets around the world and likely to have a growing influence in North America.

"We want to make a film that, it's not a promotional film about the Chinese automotive industry, but it is a film to erase some misconceptions and misunderstandings about what is happening in China," Thompson said. "Whether we like it or not, it's going to wash up on our shores."

The documentary will look beyond manufacturing and trade to explore how Chinese automakers are changing the cultural role of the car itself.

Thompson compared the transformation to the impact Henry Ford and mass-produced automobiles had on North American society more than a century ago,



(CRAIG THOMPSON PHOTO)

Ballinran Entertainment signs a memorandum of understanding with Phoenix TV during a Canadian trade mission to China. From left in back are Tracy Diehl, Canadian consul general in Shanghai; Marc Miller, Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture; and Francis Bilodeau, Deputy Minister of Canadian Heritage. In front are Liu Qingsheng, vice president and head of Phoenix Chinese Channel, and Craig Thompson, president and executive producer of Ballinran Entertainment.

spawning everything from highways and gasoline infrastructure to drive-through restaurants and changing how people travelled and lived.

In China, Thompson said, widespread automobile ownership is comparatively recent, meaning manufacturers are developing vehicles around a much more connected, technology-driven lifestyle.

"Their approach to the car is not as a utility. It's an extension of your life at home," he said.

In China, cars are equipped with lidar, dozens of cameras and sensors, rotating heated and cooled massage seats, head-up displays and artificial-intelligence systems capable of connecting with other devices.

"The car is just another device, another connected device," Thompson said.

For southwestern Ontario and Stratford specifically, where the automotive and auto-parts sectors remain major employers, Thompson said understanding that shift is particularly important.

"It's really a wake-up call, and how are we going to adapt to the changes that are already accelerating around the world?" he said.

The film will also examine what the growth of Chinese automakers means for consumers, workers and competing industries as those companies expand internationally. Thompson said the project will combine Ballinran's experience producing documentaries for international audiences with Phoenix TV's reach and knowledge of China.

Thompson said the MOU signed during Canada's creative-industries trade mission was an important first step because securing partnerships and access is essential before filming can begin.

"Now that we have that permission and the partnership, we're going to go ahead and start putting the team and the financing together to make the film," he said.

The hope is to begin shooting in Shanghai in April during the city's auto show.

For Thompson, the documentary ultimately comes back to education.

"We're not coming out saying Chinese cars are good or bad," he said. "We're just showing what's happening in China so that people watching this film can make their own decisions."



FARMLAND FOR LEASE BY TENDER – 3 YR TERM

Part lot 19, Conc. East Mitchell Road
Blanshard Ward – approximately 18.2
acres adjacent to landfill site

Tenders are to be submitted
no later than 12:00 noon on

Tuesday, November 10, 2026.

Tender forms are available at the Perth
South Township Office, 3191 Road 122,
St. Pauls, ON NOK 1V0 or online at
www.perthsouth.ca

Please direct inquiries to Will Jaques,
CAO email wjaques@perthsouth.ca or
Phone 519.271.0619 ext. 231



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Members of the 2027 Ontario Pork Congress executive are shown above at their annual: Victoria Stewart, Mike Mitchell, Samantha Villeneuve, Mandy Ropp, Abel Lopez, David Ross, Sabina Czacher-Mills, Maddy Merrick and Matt Aarts. Part of the meeting was to discuss this year's Hog Jog charity run recipient, the Emily Murphy Centre, who received \$52,000 towards their Tiny Homes ... Big Impact campaign.

STRATFORD *TIMES* SPORTS

Warriors extend point streak to nine straight

Stratford Warriors 2026-27 Stats (as of October 26, 2026)					
Player	Pos	GP	G	A	PTS
Colin Slattery	F	11	6	7	13
Coen Galbraith	F	12	5	6	11
Grady Murphy	F	12	5	6	11
McQuen Haylock	F	12	9	1	10
Dominic Marshall	F	12	2	8	10
Max Wildfong	F	10	4	5	9
Aaron Green	D	12	3	6	9
Ethan Bridges	F	12	2	7	9
Jaxon Broda	D	12	1	6	7
Will Coward	D	11	0	6	6
Francesco Sanita	F	12	3	2	5
Declan McCotter	F	11	0	4	4
Gibson Grendel	D	11	0	3	3
Drew Hodge	D	12	0	2	2
Chase Martin	F	10	1	1	2
Colten Brenzil	F	9	1	0	1
Carter Brownlee	D	9	1	0	1
Mateo Craievich	D	11	1	0	1
Ethan McPhee	F	6	0	1	1
Lucas Minard	F	9	0	0	0
Goalies	Record	GAA	SV-%		
Noah Bender	4-0-0-1	2.52	0.917		
Gage Hurst	4-2-0-0	2.85	0.896		
Travis Vanderzwaag	0-1-0-0	4.12	0.778		

MICHAEL WILLOUGHBY
Times Correspondent

After earning three of four possible points over the weekend, the Stratford Hunter Steel Warriors extended their point streak to nine games. The Warriors fell in a shootout at home to the Strathroy Rockets on Oct. 23, but edged out a win on the road against the Elmira Sugar Kings on Oct. 25.

Winners of seven straight, the Warriors looked to extend their win streak against the Rockets at William Allman Memorial Arena.

In a tightly contested goaltending duel between the Warriors' Noah Bender and the Rockets' Nikolai Felin-Henriksen, Strathroy opened the scoring on the power play midway through the second period. With 32 seconds remaining in the frame, Grady Murphy answered for the Warriors, scoring on a power-play goal off assists from Aaron Green and Jaxon Broda.

The Warriors took the lead 68 seconds into the third period on Colin Slattery's goal, but the Rockets tied the game with 5:41 left in regulation. In overtime, the Warriors shut down the Rockets' power play, sending the game to a shootout. It took seven rounds to decide the winner.



Despite a heroic performance from Bender, Strathroy earned the extra point, handing the Warriors their first loss since Sept. 18.

Warriors head coach Dave Williams commended Bender's performance and said he was pleased with the team's effort, though he wished they had earned an extra point. He hopes they can carry the lessons from the extra session and shootout into the rest of the season.

"Yeah, I thought Noah (Bender) had a really good game. I thought he made some really key saves, you know, both within regulation and then into overtime. There, starting four-on-three puts a lot of pressure on the goaltender," Williams said.

"It's good to maybe get an overtime under our belt too. We haven't played an OT game, I don't think, where you got to play four and four, and it creates just a different element to it. So I'm going to say probably good for our group that we've got one of those and a shootout out of the way here in the first eleven games."

The Warriors travelled to Elmira for an evening weekend matchup with the Sugar Kings on Oct. 25.

With the game scoreless heading into the second period, Max Wildfong put the Warriors ahead first 43 seconds into the middle frame. Elmira tied the game at

3:57, but Coen Galbraith put the Warriors back ahead with 7:32 left, followed by Murphy with under five minutes left, and Green's third of the year with 1:41 remaining, putting Stratford ahead 4-1.

The Sugar Kings got a goal back before the end of the period, and closed the Warriors' lead to 4-3 at the midway mark of the third period. With 2:02 left, Elmira put in their extra attacker to force overtime, but netminder Gage Hurst and the Stratford defence subdued the late Elmira push and escaped with a 4-3 win. Hurst won his fourth straight start in goal for the Warriors.

With the win, the Warriors earned their eighth victory in their last nine games and picked up a point in all nine contests.

Williams says that despite the close result, he commended the team's defensive effort in sealing the win.

"I thought we kind of weathered through the first and got better in the second, and credit to our guys. We kind of had a tough finish there when they made it 4-3 with I think about nine minutes left to go. Thought our guys really, really buckled down and played really well defensively and did a good job managing the puck and taking risk out of our game. So it was definitely a good win, good road win against a really good team," Williams said.

This week, the Warriors will be on the road for both games, starting on Oct. 30 against the St. Thomas Stars and on Oct. 31 against the Strathroy Rockets.

SMHA 'AA' Weekly: Keeping steady in the standings

MICHAEL WILLOUGHBY
Times Correspondent

Both teams had successful weekends: the U16 Warriors earned three of four points across two games, while the U18 Warriors won their only matchup.

The U18 Warriors hosted the Kitchener Jr. Rangers at the Stratford Rotary Complex on Oct. 24.

Kitchener took a 2-0 lead in the first period, but a last-minute goal cut the deficit to one goal before the period ended.

Stratford tied the game with the only goal of the second period, scoring at 3:19, but the Rangers regained the lead

at 2:32 of the third. The Warriors responded with two goals in 70 seconds and held on for a 4-3 win. The victory leaves the 3-3-0 Warriors tied with the 2-2-2 Waterloo Wolves for fourth in the ALLIANCE U18 AA-A league standings, both at six points apiece.

The U18 Warriors host the London Jr. Knights Green on Oct. 31 at the Rotary Complex, then travel to Galt Arena to face the Cambridge Hawks on Nov. 1.

Stratford U16 Warriors travelled to the Activa Sportsplex for an evening contest against the Kitchener Jr. Rangers on Oct. 23.

The Warriors opened the scoring with 9:50 left in the first period and held

the lead heading into the third period. Kitchener tied the game 3:58 into the final frame, but the Warriors regained the lead on the power play less than two minutes later. Kitchener tied the game midway through the period, and both teams settled for a contested 2-2 draw.

At the William Allman Memorial Arena on Oct. 25, the Warriors hosted the Woodstock Jr. Navy Vets.

Woodstock scored first with 5:13 left in the first period, but the Warriors tied the game on the power play with 58 seconds remaining. The visitors retook the lead 2:57 into the second period, and doubled their lead to 3-1 two minutes later. Stratford responded in

the latter half of the period with a goal at 7:14, then tied the game with another last-minute goal, this time with five seconds left.

The game was destined for a draw until Liam Kelly provided the heroics for the Warriors, scoring with 34 seconds left to put the home side in the win column. Stratford improved to 4-3-2 with 10 points, good for third place and two points back of first-place Waterloo Wolves for top spot in the ALLIANCE U16 AA-A league standings.

Next up for the U16 Warriors is a statement weekend at the Allman Arena on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1 as they face the league-leading Wolves.

FOR SPORTS TIPS CONTACT SPENCER SEYMOUR

CALL OR TEXT 519.859.1049 OR EMAIL SPENCER.SEYMOUR88@GMAIL.COM

Lakers Weekly: A busy weekend, U18 leadership group announced

MICHAEL WILLOUGHBY

Times Correspondent

The U13, U16 and U18 squads had a productive weekend, both at home and abroad.

Despite the start of their 2026-27 season so far, the Lakers shared encouraging news, announcing their leadership group on social media Oct. 26, naming Owen Jarmuth team captain and Tyler Burtenshaw, Knox Harrison and Alex Haynes assistant captains.

The U18 Lakers aim to turn things around when they host the Windsor Jr. Spitfires on Oct. 31 at the Rotary Complex and on Nov. 1 at William Allman Memorial Arena.

On Oct. 23, the U13 Lakers travelled to Sportsworld Arena to take on the Jr. Rangers in an ALLIANCE regular-season matchup. The high-powered offence secured a 6-0 win in Kitchener, improving the Lakers' record to 6-0-1.

The following day, the Lakers travelled to Mt. Clemens, Mich., for a two-day Border Battle exhibition series against the Detroit Little Caesars. The teams opened with a 2-2 draw, before the Lakers edged Little Caesars 4-3 in game two to end day one on Oct. 24. The next

morning, however, the Lakers suffered their first loss of the season, falling 5-1 to Detroit in the series finale.

Later that day, the Lakers played their fifth game in three days, returning to regular-season action against the Sun County Panthers at the Stratford Rotary Complex. Max Mari opened the scoring with 3:06 left in the second period, and Maddox Birk added a goal with under nine minutes remaining in the final frame to seal a 2-0 win and extend the Lakers' unbeaten regular-season record to 7-0-1. Brooks Ward assisted on both goals.

After the victory, U13 Lakers head coach Shawn Walker discussed how the team overcame a demanding schedule and relied on one goaltender throughout the weekend to finish with a win.

"It was a lot of hockey. We played Friday in Kitchener, two games Saturday against Little Caesars, and then this morning against Little Caesars as well. They're high-energy, big, big, big games. I know it's a lot of hockey, and they can be tired after and get some rest this week. But yeah, really proud of how they played all weekend," Walker said.

"We went 3-1-1 through the five games. Pretty good overall, and just to

compete, and we're running one goalie right now, so he (Noah Menlove) played all those games, and he did really well for us, so big, big shout-out to him as well."

Next for the U13 Lakers is a home game against the Waterloo Wolves at the Perth East Recreation Complex on Oct. 31, and a road game in London against the Jr. Knights on Nov. 1 at Western Fair Arena.

The U16 Lakers faced the Windsor Jr. Spitfires for two games at the Stratford Rotary Complex on Oct. 23 and 25, and against the London Jr. Knights in London on Oct. 26.

Against Windsor on Oct. 23, the Lakers were unable to keep up with the visitors and lost 3-2. Logan Tallevi and Nathan Murphy scored for the Lakers. On Oct. 25, the Lakers, led by a pair of goals from Will Molenhuis and Cal Nesbitt, outlasted the Spitfires 6-3. Versus London, the Lakers fell behind early and lost 4-2. Sam Humphrey and Simon Howard scored for the Lakers in the third period.

U16 Lakers head coach Greg Swan says the team is heading in a better direction and is pleased with how the team has grown over the month, having played 14 of the 26 days.

"It was good for us for sure. I think there were a lot of ups and downs, but we're trending in the right direction, and you know the way we played today is the way we want to play for the rest of the year," Swan said.

"I think for us, it's never too high, never too low. But we've been talking about staying positive, picking each other up and playing as a team, and that really helps us, you know, on the scoreboard and just as a team in general."

In the interview with the Times, Nesbitt was pleased with the way the team handled themselves and is setting sights on competing for the league championship at the end of the season.

"It feels great. I mean, the boys were we were all positive, and we weren't down on each other, and really just helped us," Nesbitt said.

"The goal is to make it long way in the playoffs. I feel like we got a good squad. Just come together and hopefully make it to the ALLIANCE Championship."

The U16 Lakers conclude their grinding month in Komoka with the annual ALLIANCE U16 Face Off event from Oct. 30 through Nov. 1. In the event, the Lakers play the Sarnia-Lambton Jr. Sting and Cambridge Jr. RedHawks.



Rotary
Club of Stratford

25th
ANNIVERSARY

CHRISTMAS
ARTS & CRAFTS
FESTIVAL

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13
5PM TO 9PM

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14
9AM TO 5PM

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15
10AM TO 4PM

STRATFORD ROTARY COMPLEX
353 MCCARTHY ROAD, STRATFORD

ADMISSION BY DONATION
ALL PROFITS GO TOWARDS ROTARY
PROJECTS SUCH AS, THE LOCAL
(FOOD BANKS), ROTARY HOSPICE,
AND SGH MENTAL HEALTH UNIT

SSC holding Halloween in the Rink event



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Pictured is Tessa Cheeseman during the Stratford Skating Club's Oct. 27 session wearing her Halloween costume. The SSC is holding their annual Halloween in the Rink sessions this week.

City of Stratford recognizes provincial bowling champions

NICHELE BUTCHER-BONTRUP

Guest Contributor

Local bowling talent was celebrated Oct. 20 as the City of Stratford recognized provincial champions for their outstanding achievements, including several bowlers representing Mike's Bowling Lanes.

The recognition honoured the dedication, hard work and competitive success of Stratford-area athletes who represented their sport at the provincial level.

Six Mike's Lanes bowlers were present to receive the honour, including Owen Martin, Brooke Louwagie, Kevin McKenna, Claire Turner, Dominic Boyles-Keating and Wiatt Robinson. Also recognized were Jocelyn Gethke and Christine Mair, who were unable to attend the ceremony.

Their achievements reflect the commitment, practice and determination required to compete at the provincial level. Mike's Lanes has long been a gathering place for bowlers of all ages, helping develop local talent and foster a strong sense of community through the sport.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Pictured from left to right are Owen Martin, Brooke Louwagie, Kevin McKenna, Claire Turner, Dominic Boyles-Keating and Wiatt Robinson. The six Mike's Lanes bowlers were among the eight local bowlers recognized by the City of Stratford during a recent ceremony. Not pictured were two other recipients, Jocelyn Gethke and Christine Mair.

Mike's 5-Pin Bowling Association (M5PBA) Weekly Report

V-Ettes

Jennifer Bester 206
Linda Barraclough 228

Wednesday Ladies

Bonita Baranyi 203
Louise Spantler 201

St. Joseph's

Nancy Groenestege 208
Rod Maia 209

United League

Autumn Stadtlander 208, 233-612
Steve Pickering 206, 219
Dominic Boyles-Keating 224-622
Nichele Butcher-Bontrup 254

YBC Scores

Bowlasaurus

Huxley Wybrow 113
Emmy Hvidsten 86
Bodie Clark 107

Pee-Wee

Evangeline Butcher-Bontrup 82
Avah Davidson 79
Dominic Rowe 109
Kallie Swan 85

Bantam

Noah Saunders 119, 130-347 series
Stella Hurley StPierre 113, 122-324 series
Lincoln Butcher-Cassidy 109, 114, 128-351 series
Grey Davidson 106-304 series
Mason Morris 134
Caleb Luckhardt 150

Junior

McKenna Morris 152
Roland Rains 157, 158, 166-481 series
Brent Louwagie 161, 167
Austin Janmaat 154, 182, 236-572 series
Lincoln McCann 204-426 series
Anna Ward 183-536 series
Brianna Bauer 162, 180, 225-567 series
Abby Smith 161, 241-548 series
Lauren Furtney 166, 182-514 series
Hayden Martin 162, 183, 195-540 series

Senior

Sydney Smith 181, 185, 219-585 series
Wiatt Robinson 177, 181, 187-545 series
Alex Ward 191, 194
Dominic Boyles-Keating 204, 236-608 series
Claire Turner 194
Carter Bage 212
Jocelyn Gethke 191
Zachary Clarke 211, 218, 263-692
Austin Martin 201, 213-598

STRATFORD *TIMES*

SCAN TO READ THE ONLINE PAPER

www.granthaven.com



Alzheimer Society

HURON PERTH

2026 DEMENTIA EDUCATION NIGHT

Join on ZOOM for an evening with
Dr. Heather Keller, RD, PhD
Professor and Schlegel Research Chair,
University of Waterloo

Diet and Brain Health

HOW WE SHOULD EAT AS WE AGE

FREE!
Register
Today

THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 5
7:00 - 8:30 PM



REGISTRATION: www.bit.ly/Dementia-Night2026

For more information, contact Alzheimer Society Huron Perth

info@alzhp.ca | 1-800-561-5012



EVENT SPONSOR



Send us your sports reports!
Stratfordtimes@gmail.com

HAVE A COMING EVENT COMING UP?

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



TAVISTOCK MEN'S CLUB SAUERKRAUT & BBQ PORK CHOP SUPPER

Wednesday, November 11, 2026



4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
TAVISTOCK MEMORIAL HALL
3 Adam St., Tavistock
Pick-Up Only \$30

Tickets available at Men's Club Hall - 78 Woodstock St. N.
Every Wednesday 4-6 pm and Saturdays 11am-2pm
Starting October 10th to November 10th
or from Club members
or call 519-655-3573
or at Tavistock arena booth
or email: info@tavistockmensclub.ca
or online: tavistockmensclub.ca

Director Moze Mossanen returns to Stratford Film Festival with world premiere

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

The world premiere of the documentary *Fallen Star: The Shooting of Ukrainian Airlines PS752*, a film by director Moze Mossanen, is planned for Nov. 6 and sure to be a highlight of the festival.

Mossanen will be remembered by audiences as the filmmaker of the wildly successful doc *You are Here: A Come From Away Story*. This time, he delves into the human side of tragedy in the controversial downing of a Ukrainian passenger flight PS752 on Jan. 8, 2020, in which all 176 on board were killed. Many on board were heading to Canada, many of them Canadian citizens.

In the aftermath of the missile attack in which Iran first denied responsibility, families of six victims unite to seek answers about how and why their loved ones died. Their search forms the heart of the emotionally charged investigation into the shooting of the plane, a story Mossanen felt compelled to tell.

"I knew about the story when it happened in January 2020 and followed it in the media that certainly covered it because there was so many Canadians on board. It wasn't until the summer of 2020, like, eight months later, when a number of the families contacted me. They said they didn't want the story to die because in our news cycle every 10 seconds there's something new happening," said Mossanen. "So, they felt that it was some way to keep the story alive before the public, before the government, in order to help them seek reparations and justice. I was quite drawn to the story because I am Persian and my family had to leave the country because of religious persecution."

In April 2020, families of

the victims formed the Association of Families of Flight PS752 Victims. The association's president and spokesman Hamed Esmaeilion said the association's aim is "to bring the perpetrators of the crime to justice, including those who ordered it."

Esmaeilion will be appearing at the Stratford Film Festival (SFF) in person for a Q-and-A following the screening, along with Maral Gorginpour, Argravan Oveisi, film editor Mike Lalonde and Mossanen. This group should prove to be insightful into what happened to their loved ones and where their battle for justice stands today, especially timely given the circumstances in Iran.

Lalonde's editing in this film is particularly interesting, combining interviews, documentary footage and live performance theatre in one to tell the story of the human side of this pursuit of justice and accountability. This intersection of art forms provides for an unusual and interesting narrative for viewers.

This documentary from Mossanen promises to capture audiences, trusting the magnificent storytelling he has become known the world over for. Bringing this film to Stratford for the world premiere is very meaningful to him. After the successful screenings here in the spring and September with *You are Here: A Come From Away Story*, Mossanen is thrilled to return to the Festival City.

"What better place, because theatre is a big part of the film; it's actors interviewing the families and Stratford being such a famous theatre town, it seemed like the obvious choice," said Mossanen.

SFF has never been shy in its programming and this too proves how the festival brings screenings that creates conversation and perhaps a little controversy.

"Since we finished the film in May, there's been a war with the United States and Israel with Iran and in some circles, Iran has come up as a bit of an underdog. There are certain factions in the west that are very supportive

of Iran's initiative to stand up to imperialistic forces and because of their support of Hamas and Palestine, they're sort of turning a blind eye to the atrocities of Iran's past. So, now I've made a film that is critical of the Islamic regime and, much to my chagrin, some people are not sure about programming the film," shared Mossanen.

Not here, not with the Stratford Film Festival. Welcome to the truth. *Fallen Star: The Shooting of Ukrainian Airline PS752* screens Friday, Nov. 6 at 7 p.m. at the Stratford City Hall auditorium. Tickets are available at stratfordfilmfestival.com.

THANK YOU!

I am honoured to
serve on City Council
and grateful for your
support. Together,
we can make a
positive difference in
our community!

HARJ NIJJAR

AUTHORIZED AND PAID FOR BY THE CANDIDATES
CAMPAIGN

Full eye exam with 3D eye scan from \$99

Call us for an appointment (519) 273-8761
or book online at www.specsavers.ca

Specsavers
STRATFORD



236056 23RD LINE, LAKESIDE**\$825,000****NEW LISTING!****YOUR PRIVATE COUNTRY OASIS IS HERE!**

Looking for space, serenity, and endless possibilities? Welcome to nearly 1.75 acres of pure country bliss—perfectly situated within easy commuting distance to Stratford, London, and area!

Property Features:

Over 3,000 sq. ft. of living space.

Unique fusion of an original 2-bedroom Victorian house + a spacious ranch addition.

Ideal layout for multi-generational living or income potential.

Impressive 25' x 40' shop + separate garden shed for all your tools & toys!

Whether you need room for extended family, a home business set up, or just room to breathe, this property delivers. Country living at its best!

You won't be disappointed. Call your REALTOR today and schedule your personal showing! MLS X14091084

132 ASH ST., CRYSTAL LAKE**\$175,000**

Is home ownership in your future? Perhaps this mobile home with so much potential would get you there? Same owner for over 40 years and now its time to put your stamp on this three bedroom, one and a half bath home nestled in the quiet community of Crystal Lake Mobile Home Court...call your REALTOR today and come check it out! MLS X13886358

195 CEDAR ST., CRYSTAL LAKE**\$399,900****Turnkey Living in a Peaceful Setting!**

Nestled in a quiet community ideally located between Stratford and Mitchell, this move-in ready home offers the perfect blend of peaceful living and convenience, just minutes from all amenities.

Completely gutted and thoughtfully expanded with two permitted additions, this home delivers approximately 1,300 sq. ft. of beautifully updated, open-concept living space.

Interior Highlights:

Gourmet Kitchen & Living: Bright open-concept layout featuring sleek granite countertops, perfect for everyday living and entertaining.

Modern Comforts: Includes 5 appliances and a cozy wood stove for supplemental heating—with all wood included!

Primary Suite Sanctuary: Unwind in the stunning, custom-designed 10' x 16' walk-in closet and a spacious ensuite with integrated main-floor laundry.

Private Primary Deck: Step out onto your private deck complete with included deck furniture and TV, overlooking a serene, park-like backyard.

Outdoor & Extra Features:

Main Outdoor Living: Entertain on the spacious 16' x 20' main deck, fully equipped with included deck furniture and a newer gas BBQ.

Hobbyist's Space: An 8' x 12' wired shed with hydro, ideal for projects, a workshop, or extra storage.

With top-to-bottom upgrades making it feel like a brand-new home, there's nothing left to do but move in and enjoy.

Schedule your private showing today!

MLS X13832306

RE/MAX | **a-b REALTY LTD.**
BROKERAGE
INDEPENDENTLY OWNED & OPERATED

88 Wellington Street, Stratford, Ontario • 519-273-2821

Michael J. Gorse

Sales Representative

Cell: 226-921-1319

michaelgorse@hotmail.com



Come for the music in documentary, *Darlene Love – I Know Where I've Been*

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

Director Barry Avrich is well known to Stratford audiences who will look forward to his latest film, *Darlene Love – I Know Where I've Been* for the deep dive into the world of the famed singer. With a community of artists behind her, she regained fame in her own right.

The film, which won the TIFF People's Choice Documentary award, tells the remarkable story of one of popular music's most recognizable voices, and the barriers Love faced on her journey from an uncredited singer to a music icon. The film relies on interviews with artists – her supportive community, historical footage and performances by Love in the studio to explore the early days to today.

"People just don't know the story; her story out of so many really captivated me because she had a community behind her that supported her and wanted her to win and come back and I love the fact that this community would not let her, with her incredible voice and incredible legacy and pedigree, would not let her fail and that's what amazed me. Show business is very hard, and yet this group of people from Dionne Warwick to Bruce Springsteen, to Paul Shaffer and Cher, all of them that are in the film just said no, you deserve another chance," said Avrich.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Come for the music, stay for the story of *Darlene Love – I Know Where I've Been* by popular director Barry Avrich.

The phrase, "I know where I've been" is a lyric from a song in the musical *Hairspray*, which became a great come back vehicle for Love as she appeared in the Broadway production and started to become noticed again.

"It suggests for me that she has travelled an extraordinarily difficult road and

the hardship, peaks and valleys that she endured. She knows that she was a star once that makes it a double-edged sword to know what stardom feels like and at the same time to not have it and have it taken away is very painful so she has a history and she knows where she's been and she knows where she's going," Avrich

explained.

The point of the film is for the world to take note and certainly, as Avrich said, her going into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame changes everything because that's a big deal and few people get in. He hopes the film memorializes her performances and where Love stands in music history.

The early performances featured throughout the film are a trip to see, it is surprising how much of Love's music is familiar while she was not, though should have been. She was a product of the Phil Spector machine. "The singer saw an instrument, not an artist," according to Spector.

And what a powerhouse Love remains today, who at 85 still sings like never before in studio footage captured for the film. Her laughter interspersed in conversation will endear the audience who too will count themselves as part of the supportive community surrounding her return as an icon.

Darlene Love - I Know Where I've Been is appearing as part of the 2026 Stratford Film Festival screening Nov. 7 at 7 p.m. in the Stratford City Hall auditorium. Following the screening will be a Q-and-A with Avrich and his producer Mark Selby.

Tickets and passes are available online at stratfordfilmfestival.com. New this year is the Next Gen pass for those under 30.

The Last Word from artist Wendy Wacko on 'Embracing Canada'

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

As her exhibition, *Embracing Canada*, at Agora Gallery was closing, artist Wendy Wacko took the opportunity to briefly reflect on Canada's unity through her paintings and to spend a little time with her friend and mentor, Doris McCarthy, by screening the 1983 film *Doris McCarthy: Heart of a Painter*.

Wacko studied under McCarthy, and they became close friends over the decades they knew each other. They would take painting trips together in April each year to remote areas of Canada, sometimes travelling in by helicopter, to capture the rugged beauty in a style that gently moves with light and shadow.

The paintings on exhibit at Agora were landscapes from all over Canada from Haida Guaii in British Columbia to the rocky shores of Newfoundland. After her house in Jasper burnt down during the wildfires two years ago, Wacko has been living and painting on Georgian Bay where she completed this body of work.

"The work is from across Canada. The way Wendy works is she will go to these



(LISA CHESTER PHOTO)

Celebrated painter and filmmaker Wendy Wacko introduces her film *Doris McCarthy: Heart of a Painter* at Agora Gallery before closing her exhibition, *Embracing Canada*.

remote locations and Doris McCarthy works largely the same way; they would go to the locations and do lots of sketches

and then come back to the studio and then make them into finished paintings," said Cindy Hubert of Agora Gallery.

The film came about after there was interest in doing a coffee table book of McCarthy's work, but she felt she had more to say than a book could possibly contain. Since Wacko was also an established filmmaker, McCarthy declared her story must be made into a film.

The documentary is a beautiful art piece that captures the honesty a friendship can reveal and nicely stands the test of time. It follows McCarthy as she travels to sketch, her journeys to achieve her visions and style. The film ends with the artist planning and painting a landscape.

"One of the things I think is really important is every landscape should tell a story, and what's your story is at the foreground, the middle ground, or the background," said Wacko.

She has been, after decades of painting landscapes, returning to her art school roots by studying portraiture, an entirely new challenge for her to experiment with. She also talked about dabbling with collage to companion with a painting of the same palette. With the exhibition over, Wacko will return to Jasper where she and her husband finally have just received their building permit to rebuild their house.

Stratford Symphony Orchestra continues to demonstrate prowess with two November concerts

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

An ambitious pair of concerts is planned for November by the Stratford Symphony Orchestra (SSO). From the passion of Spanish music to the beauty of Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony No. 6, the excitement of the two evenings will be palatable.

"We're proudly presenting this because we think Stratford audiences will love it, and it showcases our talent working internationally," said SSO conductor William Rowson.

A special chamber concert featuring SSO musicians and David Murray on piano and Kaye Royer on clarinet welcomes Spanish conductor Cristóbal Soler, mezzo-soprano Lorena Valero and pianist Alexander Panizza for an intimate evening. The concert, dubbed Viva España, takes place Thursday, Nov. 5 at 7:30 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church.

"Kaye Royer, who is our principal clarinet player, brought it to us over the summer because she actually participated in the exchange and went over to Spain earlier this year. So, the second part of the exchange is the Spanish artists that she worked with are coming to Ontario and they're doing a couple shows for the week that they are here. They had an extra spot and wondered if we would be interested in bringing them to Stratford and I said, 'Absolutely!'" said A.J. Ashley, SSO executive director. "It is such a rich arts and culture that we have in town, and I know our audience would love experiencing something new."

The second concert planned is Nov. 14 at 7:30 p.m. at Avondale United Church in what is curated to be a symbiotic evening. With Rowson leading a full orchestra he will present what is often referred to as a big bucket list piece of music for music lovers, Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony No. 6.

"It's a famous piece of music because it's the first piece of music that is what we call a program symphony, or a program music, in that it's called a symphony, but it actually tells a story. Prior to that in the Viennese tradition symphonies were very structured; there was a minuet and there was always a little set of variations but a dramatic finale. Beethoven changes all of that," explains Rowson.

Beethoven wrote about arriving in the country, he wrote a piece of music about contemplating the blessings of life while sitting by a stream. He wrote a piece of music about the gathering of country folk which is a big dance. There's a thunderstorm and then there's a beautiful pastoral finale. This symphony is a piece of music that was featured by Disney in the film *Fantasia*.

Opening the concert, the orchestra begins with Canadian composer Claude Champagne's Danse Villageoise inspired by traditional French-Canadian folk music. SSO principal cellist, Gwendolyn

Nguyen, then takes centre stage for Saint-Saëns' Cello Concerto No. 1, a brilliant showcase of lyrical beauty and technical virtuosity.

"Gwen has been a featured soloist with us before, and she always does an amazing job, so we give her bigger and bigger challenges each time so now she's doing the full cello concerto which all cellists will want to see it. It's up and down the instrument. It is a piece of music when it was introduced to the world in the 19th century that just broadened the parameter of what a cello could do," said Rowson.

This is the 22nd season of SSO and 10 years under the artistic direction of Rowson. Together they continue the tradition of bringing outstanding performances, innovative programming and memorable musical experiences.

For tickets, or more information about the concerts, visit stratfordsymphony.ca or by calling 519-271-0990.

Award winning film *Dear Lara* is screening at 2026 Stratford Film Festival

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

Lara St. John is in the throws of film festival season and has been travelling with her debut documentary feature *Dear Lara* to many accolades and, most recently, garnering an Impact award at the Naples International Film Festival (NIFF) in Florida.

St. John is an internationally acclaimed violinist who turns the lens on her own life as she challenges a culture of silence within the classical music world to find that by going public, an overwhelming response chimed in. The film brings together the stories of survivors that gained attention after an article of 2019 was published.

It was the right time and circumstance that lead St. John to go public with her own story in 2019.

"It was a combination of things. It was a little bit sort of the Zeitgeist changing with the 'Me Too' movement. Two people in my film, they brought out a big article in 2018 that was inspirational to me because at last the concert master of Cleveland Orchestra was fired and he was removed from his job at the Cleveland Institute, meanwhile everyone knew what was happening. I started thinking about how many times I had gone back to Curtis (Institute of Music) and tried to get them to make changes but they ignored me. So, I thought, the only way to do this was trial by media," shared St. John of the impetus behind the publication of her story in the Philadelphia Inquirer.

When the story came out, the response from others in music was staggering to



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

International violinist Lara St. John's debut documentary feature *Dear Lara* is changing the classical music world one screening at a time.

her and it made a resounding bang in the classical community and beyond. But the news cycle is short, and St. John felt compelled to find a way to bring all these voices together in a lasting way.

"I wanted to do something that combines all of these people that I'm hearing from and pack it into a really good 92 minute '12345678 punch' so that people can't look away and they can't ignore it. That's what is happening now, it's just kind of caught fire where I'm basically on the road all the time. Now, with my film, for festivals or at schools, it's starting to have real world impact," said St. John.

Having to revisit her own trauma for the film and share in the trauma of others was difficult for her but has been impactful with advocating for the safety of students. Safeguards such as big windows and no locks on rehearsal rooms, background checks and not allowing teaching at home.

"Those are the four big things and schools are dragging their heels on it. It's not really hard to make really positive change for the safety of your students. It took a famous pianist resigning, a petition signed by 6,000 people, three huge articles in the Toronto Star for us to get the RCM (Royal Conservatory of Music) in Toronto

to do a historical sexual abuse of children background investigation and external investigation, that's how much they wanted to keep it hidden," St. John said.

St. John will be travelling to Stratford for a Q-and-A following the film which should appeal to any classically trained musician who has been in the business long enough to bear witness to these kinds of stories too.

Dear Lara is screening Nov. 7 at 4 p.m. Tickets or passes can be purchased at stratfordfilmfestival.com. New this year is the Next Gen festival pass that will appeal to those under 30.

Editorial

Another council, another term ... what needs to change?



CONNOR LUCZKA

Times Editor

Last Monday, the citizens of Stratford chose a new city council, one that is simultaneously very different and very similar to the last.

Robert Ritz defeated three former members of council, including incumbent Martin Ritsma, to become mayor, yet the council he heads will largely be the same. Seven councillors out

of 10 return. Including the new mayor, that means this council is about 64 per cent the same as last term's, so how different does Ritz need to be to change council? After all, if Ritz's campaign could be summed up in one word it would most likely be change.

What will change these next four years? What will stay the same? What political blocs today will stand the test of time tomorrow? Four years inside city hall is longer than four years outside, and there will be events and issues that will surely put pressure on steadfast relationships and will also forge unlikely new ones. The crucible of city hall creates unlikely allies, I've noticed – ones that change item to item. Municipal politics is anything but simple.

I covered the last council from the beginning of its term to its end. I've covered various

councils across the region, but those four years with Stratford city council were a true education in municipal processes and politics, one that will continue the next four years, I'm sure. Through it all, I was pleasantly surprised by how productive politics could be when people's allegiances weren't shown on their name tags, weren't displayed by the red, blue, orange or green on their lapels. Most decisions that were made over the last four years were unanimous or near unanimous – debate was productive and added to the decision-making process rather than for sound bites and poll points. How can that be when councillors ranged from very left to very right and everything in between?

That's the beauty of municipal politics, free from party lines so personal relationships don't get

in the way of political decisions. Right?

I am 29 years old. I don't own a home. I don't pay taxes in the Festival City. I don't know anything about drainage or public works or social services or provincial legislation or tax ratios or amortizations or lending agreements, though I've picked up a few things here and there. My job as a reporter and editor is to ask questions, be curious and double check. I would not presume to give advice to the incoming councillors and mayor, all of whom have more experience than me.

That being said, something former Stratford city councillor Kathy Vassilakos said during her run for mayor in 2022 has always stuck with me, and something I think we should all be thinking about this next term. I'm paraphrasing, but she made

the point during a debate that it isn't enough to just come to meetings and vote yes or no.

We have to come to the table with ideas.

The City of Stratford is a multi-million dollar corporation with about \$1 billion in assets. It is a fallacy to think governments can be run exactly like businesses, but if we took the city as private business and you, the voters, are its shareholders, than wouldn't you want the best, most educated, intuitive, dedicated and creative people leading it? Wouldn't you demand that?

Regardless of whether this council is one you personally voted in or supported, I think it's on all of us to demand the same thing from those we support and those we oppose.

After all, that may change week to week, month to month, year to year.

HAVE A SPECIAL EVENT COMING UP?

Let us know!

Contact: stratfordtimes@gmail.com

or call 519-655-2341

**GRANT
HAVEN
MEDIA**

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

STRATFORDTIMES

Publisher

Stewart Grant • stew@granthaven.com

Editor

Connor Luczka • connor@granthaven.com

Times Reporter

Amanda Nelson • amandajanevriter@gmail.com

Graphic Design / Sales Inquiries

Sarah Cairns • stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Business Development

Heather Dunbar • heather@granthaven.com

Billing Administrator

Cindy Boakes • boakescindy1576@gmail.com

Contributors

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

143 Queen Street E., St. Marys, ON, PO Box 2310 N4X 1A2
stratfordtimes@gmail.com | 519.655.2341 | granthaven.com



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



(CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

Residents wait in Stratford City Hall on Oct. 26, looking at the projected screen and their phones for the municipal election results to update. That evening, Robert Ritz was elected mayor of Stratford and will join a council of 10, seven of whom are returning councillors, starting on Nov. 15.

STRATFORDTIMES

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

As I See It From America: Checking out



PATRICK D. BURK

Times Columnist

The most wonderful thing about Stratford is the people. At this time of year all we think about is saying goodbye to our friends for the season, doing some last-minute shopping and grabbing a hug from those that we care about. Here we are about to check out of our home away from home at the Suburban Inn. I have been working on our plan for 2027. It's always quite the puzzle to fit our Main St. 56 Theater schedule, our own acting, singing and directing schedules, my wife's schedule both at the theatre and at home and fit that in with all the fantastic theatre offerings in Stratford next year.

Seems impossible? Somehow, I did it. We have our tickets and all forays back to your wonderful community are planned.

As I reflect on what has happened this year at the theatre, I look back at some of the amazing performances and how we were enchanted by the likes of Lucy Peacock, in her most transformative performance ever in *Death of A Salesman* and the amazing enlightenment of *The King James Bible Play*, complete with a captivating cast. I chuckled at the antics of Jessica Hill and Jordin Hall as they romped across the Tom Patterson stage in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and was amazed at my wonderful friend Josue Laboucane's incredibly funny portrayal of Trinculo and Jonathan Goad's master class of acting in *The Tempest*. There were so many amazing performances that lit up the stage and superb shows, it seemed like we had a new favourite every time we walked out of theatre.

Perhaps the biggest news and most transformative is the retirement of Antoni Cimolino as the artistic director. The theatre and in many ways the community

has been led by this amazingly talented man who has put his heart and soul into your theatre rich city. At a final Sunday farewell celebration, it was apparent how appreciated Antoni is and how incredibly rich his talent and foresight have been for the theatre in general. His command and creation of the new Tom Patterson Theatre as well as his leadership ushering Stratford back during and after the COVID-19 pandemic are perhaps the greatest accomplishments of his 39-year history. I think he will be most remembered for his humanity, his empathy and his ability to get the best out of hundreds, if not thousands of individuals that make up the Stratford Festival. In short, he is pure genius.

Once again, we met many new people, talked with those that we have known for quite a while, had wonderful discussions with our friends and walked the sunlit streets with a sense of calm. I was infatuated with all your election lawn signs and the colourful banners of "vote for me" requests that were prevalent on all your streets. I know some of you probably find the signs to be annoying, but it was refreshing

that I did not see one negative or nasty comment on them, only reminders to support a well-intentioned citizen seeking to serve your community. You should see what is on some of our lawns and corners. It is the politics of mean that pervades our streets.

We are heading back to perhaps the most important election in the United States' history. I know some feel it is only the dreaded midterms, but it is really a referendum on how people are really feeling not only in the political venue, but the cultural fight for the future of our nation. Are we going to continue being the land of "bring me your tired and your poor" and acceptance of all or are we going to morph into the rich white guy-controlled country that is uncaring about the tired and poor, not to mention the children, elderly and those that need medical care. Are we looking for wealth or compassion? Will we be the good neighbour or the neighbourhood bully? That is what this election stands for. Nationwide the "Trump advocates" are pounding out their need to be in power. Those that have championed his anti-American, anti-hu-

man ideas are either going to achieve their final countdown for negative change or be removed from office allowing a more progressive and positive nation to emerge. We can only pray. We can only hope.

And so, we turn in our key. We pack our car one last time, we make way to our friends to say goodbye and we look forward to next year. We are in total hope that you all will have a wonderful winter, take a deep breath and prepare for another year season starting in April. We welcome the new artistic director Jonathan Church at the festival, are grateful for Mike and Mandy at the Suburban, hug our acting and theatre friends and send out a big squeeze to Deb Hoy at the Arden Park. We are grateful for Dennis and Dorothea, Tom and Linda and Sharon Butler. We will miss the smile and genuine kindness of Sara-Jeanne. It's nice to know that we have these truly wonderful people in our corner. So here's to the 2026 season in Stratford. Until next year, Patrick and Jane and checking out!

Please let me know how you feel about this article. Contact me at burk.patrick1956@gmail.com.

WEB-CRAWLING THROUGH THE MOST GLORIOUS AUTUMN



SHEILA CLARKE

Times Columnist

It's been almost unbelievable – the intense blue skies, the brilliance of the leaves, the clear air – and mostly sweater weather, which being a Celt, is my very favourite temperature range. What an incredible treat this fall has been. We were lucky enough to be summoned to Thanksgiving at a family cottage up north – of course we took the backroads, rather than the highways. There were breathtaking views at every turn – even the joy of seeing a

loon on the lake.

I read this week that our iconic loons are in trouble – again. We almost lost them with DDT, but thanks to Rachel Carson we were able to reverse the declining numbers, caused by thinning eggshells. This time the enemy is far larger. As Pogo said, "We have met the enemy, and he is us." The Citizen Based Loon Observation Study has determined that loons are losing at a remarkable rate. In just two decades, loon chick numbers have dropped 40 per cent on average. "Loon chick productivity sank even more starkly by 65 per cent across Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba since the early 1990s. Meanwhile, Canada's east coast saw a 74 per cent reduction, according to researchers."

Why? The haunting call of the loon is still heard at times in the northern lakes – but less frequently. There are a number of reasons. More frequent storms are characteristic of global warming. Those heavier rains

bring acid to the lakes, reducing the number of small fish available to the chicks (and adults). Those same storms often swamp the loon nests, drowning eggs and making the nesting conditions hazardous. Just a half hour in high sun and temperatures can destroy an egg. Lakeside residents are urged to keep their shorelines as natural as possible, and to avoid high powered boat motors near the shore, to avoid swamping nests.

How do we deal with the heat that threatens the chicks and eggs? Easy. Just stop global warming. In other words, stop burning fossil fuels. That means making plastic too, and soil additives in agriculture, such as manufacturing herbicides and pesticides. Remember when we discussed AI data centres? Hyperscale data centres are heat machines, heating the atmosphere and ground around them up to nine degrees higher than normal. Transportation is a huge source of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere (43

per cent of the carbon dioxide in Stratford comes from vehicles). Take public or alternate transportation whenever you can! Fifty-seven per cent of our emissions are from waste and building heating systems. Explore cold weather heat pumps – they work and lower our emissions.

I cannot imagine our lakes without loons. Once upon a yesterday, my husband and I took a canoe out at dusk. As the magic of evening descended with only the sound of water lapping against the canoe, suddenly we were surrounded by a shimmering loon chorus. I've never heard anything like it since that night. It was ethereal – and magic.

Did you know that loons must be on water to successfully take flight? A local woodsman found a marooned loon grounded in a storm. A downdraft had brought it to land on a gravel road. Knowing that it needed water to take off again, the woodsman bravely picked it up.

That would be wrestled with a large, very frightened and determined loon. He finally secured it in his arms and took it to his farm pond. It stayed for a day or two recovering, and then took off from the pond, thanks to the bravery and quick thinking of that woodsman!

May we all be quick-thinking and brave in our efforts to moderate global warming.

UPDATES:

Carbon parts per million (ppm) in the atmosphere as of Oct. 25, 2026: 427.13 ppm. We are in "overshoot" and need to diminish the levels to shorten the time in overshoot.

A wonderful film on YouTube! Benedict Cumberbatch narrates *How to Live on Earth*: www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3mRsvFmWi0.

Sheila Clarke is a Stratford advocate for the environment, of our community and of our planet. She is a member of CFUW Stratford, Stratford Climate Momentum, and the Perth County Sustainability Hub.

Opinion

Cruises I have known and loved



JULIA SCHNEIDER

Times Columnist

River cruise or open water transport? Which do you prefer?

This is the question travel writer Paul Knowles posed in a June article for the Times. To answer it, he compared tours on both he'd taken on Viking Lines. He found that, whatever his initial preference for river cruises (their closeness to land and sites-to-visit) the excellent service and interest of both were first-rate.

To hear more, I recently attended a session by Viking competitor Emerald Cruises. The presentation showed the many river cruises in Europe and Asia they offer and, as expected, looked at their ease, their comfort and the spectacular places passengers saw both on land and from the boat.

Knowles' article and the Emerald presentation in Stratford made me remember my own experiences with boat travel in the days when I travelled extensively while working abroad. They were very different! Save thousands of dollars now by buying an Emerald tour for 2027? Most of my cruises cost a few hundred at most!

My fondest travel memories are of the time I spent in Ecuador in the mid-1990s. Every Easter, during school vacation, I would go to the Galapagos Islands off its coast to see a place lost in time. Since I was working in the country I paid the resident rates for travel, which made a big difference.

My first year and third years I opted to stay at a hotel in Santa Cruz on arrival, then take small motorboat trips to the islands, where I'd stay at whatever accommodations were available. Often these were very minimal, but that was part of the adventure; haut cuisine, and lounges weren't.

Island-hopping, we passed vast volcanic rocks thrust toward the sky eons ago; their awesome presence made one feel very small indeed. Reaching the islands one talked to the owners of the available accom-

modations; some spent part of the year closer to civilization and all relied on food brought in from outside. One, however, had been there since 1932 and had a very mysterious past: Margret Wittmer, the senior doyenne of Floreana Island. I wanted to ask the 90-year-old about what happened to the couple from Germany who disappeared there back in the 1930s but couldn't bring myself to do so. Would she have told me? The Galapagos Affair (2013), screened at TIFF a few years ago, looked at this mystery, but came to no conclusions.

The main point of the tours was to view the vast array of wildlife, marvel at their lack of fear of humans, and think of Charles Darwin's trip on the Beagle in 1835 and his subsequent development of the theory of evolution. It was like being transported to a different world. Being there made one feel a part of history.

In my second year, however, I did not experience this. That was the year I cruised the Galapagos on a larger ship and slept on it between island stops. This was very different. I suppose that cruise ships vary greatly but mine was not ideal. My heart sank when I entered my cabin: it stank of cigarette smoke and the perfumes they sprayed to alleviate it only

made it worse. The whole trip was disappointing. The next year I returned to island-hopping and fell in love again.

While working in China in 1988 at a teacher's college in the north I tried to book a river cruise on the Yangzi River, but was told there wasn't one that year. Was it because of flooding?

That wasn't a problem when I returned in 2011, after the construction of the Three Gorges dam. And yet it was not a great tour: there were too many people, they didn't mix and my cabin, though much better than the one in the Galapagos, was next to the common room and noisy. I was not sad when it ended and I left the ship in Yichang, and yet it was a monumental experience in terms of what I saw.

Back in Stratford years later I look back on these tours and am not sure I could embark on them again. I do think, however, that I'm definitely a river cruise person rather than an ocean traveler; I like to see the land nearby and look forward to feeling it beneath my feet.

Nowadays the river cruise that takes off from the Stratford Boat-house throughout the summer and continues through October is my favourite. Though it is short, each second is full of views that

confirm the vibrancy of Stratford's Avon River system: committed members of the city's energy and environment advisory committee do a fine job of monitoring growth along its bank to ensure that native plants prevail, beautiful homes line its shores and an overall sense of peace and delight pervades the entire trip.

How to improve this trip? Why try? People live here for the peace and quiet of Stratford and that, I observe, is what most visitors come for as well – to escape their bustling homes and relax in a different, more natural milieu. In my view, Stratford needs to continue to focus on preserving its natural environment, not try to create a commercial, all season tourist centre that would belie its real attractions. It is not the Galapagos or the Yangzi, it is Stratford and people know its brand. Unlike them we have a winter and it is not one of discontent, but rather one of peace, quiet and the restoration of energy to renew itself in the spring to share again its inimitable beauty again with the world, visitors and residents alike.

That is the natural way of viewing winter, the Indigenous way (as I understand it) and that is the best recommendation I know.

**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



LOCAL MATTERS.



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

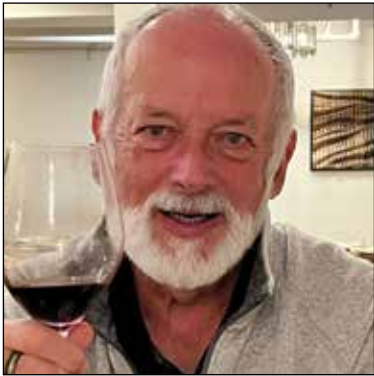


Remember when
Facebook bought a case
of Girl Guide cookies to
support your daughter?



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

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: The incredible dining options in a small town in the Gatineau region



PAUL KNOWLES

Times Columnist

Roberto Catervi is an Italian, Michelin Star chef. He won that highly prestigious honour at the age of 27 in his restaurant in Rome, Italy. He told us, "I have loved food since I was very young."

Today, Roberto is making pizza in a small Canadian town. And behind this, there is a story.

It's actually a love story in two parts. It starts in his restaurant in Rome where a Canadian tourist, Geneviève Parent, came to dine. She was so impressed with the meal that she sent a glass of wine back to the chef. He was so impressed with the gesture that he came out to thank her and their lives changed because they fell in love and he followed her back to Canada and married her.

That's Roberto's first love story. The second has to do with the small town in which they now live and work, Chelsea, Que., only about 20 minutes from Parliament Hill in Ottawa. Chelsea (also apparently known as Old Chelsea) is in the Gatineau Region, an area famous for hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, birding, beaching and all manner of outdoor activities. Roberto told me, "I like living in the park. ... We don't regret moving to



Roberto Pizza Roman, home of incredible, unique pizzas.
Canada at all."

Chelsea is mere minutes from the ominous iron gates that guard Harrington Lake, the country retreat of Canadian prime ministers. And while uninvited visitors are not welcomed past those gates, Chelsea residents will tell you that prime ministers, past and present, frequently pop into town for a meal or a beverage.

That is not surprising because Chelsea offers some of the best eating options we have ever encountered, including, of course, Roberto Pizza Romano. This is pizza like you have never encountered before – Roman style, prepared with an infinite variety of ingredients and served in squares. We opted for five different options, each divided in half so we could sample all five tastes. They tasted like "more."

Geneviève staffs the food counter; she told us Roberto is constantly creating, using local ingredients.

"Our food counter is never the same," she said. So, I'm not going to recommend any specific pizza because the pizzas may have changed by the time you get there. But I promise it will be equally amazing.

You can eat indoors, but in fine weather, most guests opt for the patio in the lovely gardens. Except for a break in November, the restaurant is open year round.

Geneviève was delighted to tell us that she and Roberto now own the building that houses their restaurant after leasing for a number of years. They have no intention of depriving Chelsea of their amazing restaurant.

Honestly, while Roberto and Geneviève's restaurant may be our favourite in Chelsea, because who doesn't love a great love story, they are not alone in making this community a food-lovers' heaven. Just outside town is the award-winning

Les Fougères (The Ferns). Here, Chef Simon Beaudry creates culinary masterpieces using seasonal and regional ingredients, including food from his extensive (and beautiful) gardens that surround the restaurant.

We hugely enjoyed meals that included artisanal bread, wild-caught Atlantic halibut, Gaspesian bluefin tuna crudo, and ravioli with scallops, shrimp, cod and mussels. Yum!

And one thing that Les Fougères has in common with all of the eateries we visited in Chelsea is terrific, personal service. Ten out of 10 in every place.

Less upscale but a lot of fun is the Chelsea Pub, where in good weather, you can dine on the deck and watch the other tourists pass by – and also the locals! We met a lot of locals who are fully aware of the quality of food being served in their little town.

We opted for traditional pub food; I tried to order ribs, which are smoked on site, but they are so popular they were sold out and off the menu for a few days. Our fluently bilingual server (the norm here) recommended the pulled pork poutine. Well, we were in Québec, so it seemed almost obligatory. It was amazing and even I could not quite finish the serving!

Our fourth meal in Chelsea was at Biscotti & Cie (Biscotti & Company), where we had breakfast – delicious pastries, tea and coffee. But don't let the name "Biscotti" fool you; this is another excellent wood-fired pizza restaurant, with lots of other options.

People come to Chelsea to enjoy Gatineau Park, hiking, biking, skiing and swimming. There is also a thriving arts community. And yes, we did visit art galleries, we did hike and we did enjoy the forests and especially the lakes (Meech Lake, Pink Lake, the Gatineau River and other lakes are within minutes of downtown Old Chelsea), but we would encourage visitors to be sure to set aside time and opportunity to explore the culinary opportunities offered in this amazing small town.

You'll travel a long way before you find a small, friendly community with dining opportunities like Roberto Pizza, Les Fougères, the Chelsea Pub and Biscotti & Cie, and there are still more. We just didn't get to all of them, which seems a shame.

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.



Michelin Star chef Roberto Catervi and Geneviève Parent, the owners of Roberto Pizza Romano in Chelsea, Que.



Geneviève Parent at the food counter of Roberto Pizza with the incredible array of taste options.

Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

1. Lakes
6. Electromotive force
9. Invests in little enterprises
13. Longtime Utah Jazz coach
14. Small sailboat
15. Actor Idris
16. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls
17. System that detects objects under water
18. Harsh, grating noise
19. Steward
21. A fencing sword
22. Infections
23. Actress Ryan
24. Sodium
25. Swedish castle
28. A lump of slime
29. African antelope
31. Insurance providers
33. Choosy
36. Ringworm
38. Unpolished
39. Drenches
41. Pant style
44. Son of Noah
45. Spiritual being
46. Upton Sinclair novel
48. Journalist Tarbell
49. Popular sports highlight show
51. Born of
52. Rich tapestry
54. S. China seaport
56. State of being unclothed
60. Surrounded by
61. Residue
62. Away from wind
63. Dried-up
64. Visionary
65. A very large body of water
66. Garden tools
67. Screen type
68. Ancient Scandinavian poet

CLUES DOWN

1. Millisecond
2. Spanish city
3. A sudden very loud sound
4. “The Indiana Jones of beer”
5. Tin
6. Sea eagles
7. Volcanic crater
8. Type of coat
9. Women’s apartments in Ottoman palace
10. Divulge a secret
11. Norwegian playwright
12. “It’s a Wonderful Life” director
14. Poisonous perennial plant
17. 18-year astronomical period
20. Clothes
21. Places to sit
23. Family of regulator genes
25. New York ballplayer
26. Impressive in size or scope
27. Jacques __, French biologist
29. One from the Big Apple
30. Genus of woolly lemurs
32. Songs to one’s beloved
34. Indigenous person of N.E. Thailand
35. Supplemented with difficulty
37. Farewell
40. Investment account (abbr.)
42. One from Utah
43. Begets
47. A male child
49. Break apart
50. Brief appearance
52. Partner to “oohed”
53. A light informal meal
55. Fabric with smooth, shiny surface
56. One billionth of a second
57. Ancient Italian-Greek colony
58. Close tightly
59. Mail out
61. Language
65. Computer characteristic

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13						14				15			
16					17					18			
19				20						21			
			22						23			24	
25	26	27		28				29			30		
31			32		33		34					35	
36				37		38				39			40
	41				42				43		44		
			45					46		47		48	
49	50		51				52				53		
54		55				56					57	58	59
60					61					62			
63					64					65			
66					67					68			

SPONSORED BY:

Adult Learning Programs of Perth, Upstairs at the St. Marys Public Library

(700 Church Street North, St. Marys, ON)

Phone: 519-284-4408 | Cell: 226-374-8231

alearning@town.stmarys.on.ca | www.adultlearningperth.ca

Facebook: @AdultLearningProgramsofPerth



Pet of the week



LASSIE

Meet Lassie, a 5-year-old dog with a gentle heart and a whole lot of love to give. While she can be a little nervous in new situations, Lassie's sweet personality shines through once she feels safe and comfortable. She loves cuddles, enjoys staying active, and would thrive with a patient family committed to helping her continue building confidence. Lassie is looking for a home without other pets, where she can enjoy daily exercise, enrichment, and plenty of affection while continuing her journey toward a healthier weight and a happy future. You can meet Lassie at our Stratford Centre or on our website at kwsphumane.ca/adopt/dogs



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

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 #1104 - 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 and once a month on a Monday afternoon.

Hosted by Rotary Hospice Stratford Perth www.rotaryhospice.ca

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.

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?

519-272-1614

www.yfcstratford.com

info@yfcstratford.com

GRIEF SHARE

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: griefstratfordcrgroup2627@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?

info@yfcstratford.com 519-272-1614

www.yfcstratford.com

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.mckinnammanagement.com/l2s

14TH ANNUAL STRATFORD PUMPKIN PARADE

Sunday, November 1; 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Market Square (behind City Hall) 1 Wellington St, Stratford

Pumpkin Drop-off: Starting at 12:00 PM

Give your carved pumpkins one last glowing send-off before Patch earns their degree in soil science (and becomes next year's garden compost).

What to expect: Free Hot Chocolate donated by Tim Hortons; Ken's French Fries; Family Photo Stations; Photos with Patch the Pumpkin Drop off your pumpkin starting at 12 PM and then bring the whole family later that evening to stroll through the pumpkin display, grab some warm treats, and celebrate Halloween's grand finale Sponsored by the Stratford Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee

GARDEN STRATFORD GENERAL MEETING

Monday November 2; 7:15 – 9:00 p.m.

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

Featured Presentation: "The Stratford Festival Gardens", by a Gardener from the Stratford Festival
Meeting Open to Everyone; Free Admission.

OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Tuesday, November 3, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

93 Morgan St., Stratford

Speaker – Kimberley Toohey RD, Dietician

'Dietary concerns and considerations for ostomates'

Social time and snacks. Everyone welcome. 519-273-4327

FRIDAY NIGHT EUCHRES

Friday, November 13; 6 p.m.

Legion 804 Ontario St.

November 13 – The next Stratford Legion Friday Night Euchre is Friday Nov. 13th. Sign up your team of 2 for \$20 by calling the Legion at 519-271-4540, Dave at 519-703-6544 or Anne at 519-301-0914. Doors open at 6 p.m., games start at 6:30 p.m.

LONDON ORCHID SOCIETY

Sunday, November 15; 2 to 4 p.m.

Richards Memorial Church, 360 Edgeworth Avenue, London, ON

Meeting Topic: Dan Doucette, Niagara Falls, ON; Presentation Hidden Gems of West Africa

The London Orchid Society meets the third Sunday of each month. Join us November 15, 2026 at 2:00pm for Dan Doucette from Niagara, ON. His presentation is on the Hidden Gems of West Africa, Wildlife, History and Landscapes of Sierra Leone and Mauritania. Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting for more information at www.londonorchidsociety.com; contact Daryl at 519-666-2927.

BURGER & FRY NIGHT

Thursday, November 19

Legion 804 Ontario St.

Doors open at 4 p.m. Take-out orders are from 5:00 – 5:30 p.m. and table service starts at 5:30 p.m. No ticket is necessary, simply show up and enjoy. Bring your friends and help support your local Legion.

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 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

CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Celebration of Life ***Jim Uniac***



Saturday, November 7, 2026

From 5:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Stratford Golf and Country Club

53 Romeo St, North

Stratford, ON

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

- full listing & photos

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

JUNK REMOVAL

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

WANTED

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

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

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

WORKING TYPEWRITER – Will buy or trade for 26" men's bike or 3-wheeled baby stroller with air wheels. Call 519-753-4535.

Run your classified ad here!
Just \$10 + hst per edition
contact:
stratfordtimes@gmail.com

STRATFORD **TIMES**

*“I know the paper is free,
but can I get a subscription anyways?”*

Yes. We understand that some people might like the convenience of the Stratford Times arriving at their home (located near or far) through Canada Post, so we do have subscriptions available for this purpose.

The price for a subscription is \$77.00

To subscribe, please e-transfer granthavenmedia@gmail.com and include your full mailing address in the comments, or send a cheque with mailing address to

Grant Haven Media, PO Box 2310, St. Marys, ON N4X 1A2.

Reality? **Reality** **check**

Canadian newspapers are powered by journalists, not AI. They check the facts so you can trust what you're reading.

That's why 4 in 5 people in Canada come back each week for more.

Thanks for keeping it real with us.

nationalnewspaperweek.ca



FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES IN THE STRATFORD TIMES

CALL 519.655.2341 OR EMAIL STRATFORDTIMES@GMAIL.COM

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Email to inquire
stratfordtimes@gmail.com

ACCOUNTING

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

CONSTRUCTION

FRASER ASPHALT PAVING

"Serving Stratford & area since 1977"

www.fraserpaving.ca

Driveways • Parking Lots • Excavating
Truck Rentals • Asphalt Patching
Call Scott or Denise
for a free quote for 2022

519-271-5690

PAVESTONE PLUS LIMITED

THE PLUS STANDS FOR
FIBERGLASS POOLS
Professionally installed.

PAVESTONE.CA

ONLINE BOUTIQUE

NICHE
Express Yourself
with Style!

DISCOVER CANADIAN women-owned brands for home & self.

@nicheboutique.ca

HANDY MAN

Bruce Burleigh

40 Years of Handy

(519) 703-1936

FENCING / DECKS

ALL SHORES
Fencing & Decks

519-273-2003
info@allshoresfd.ca

EQUIPMENT FINANCING SPECIALIST

CORE CAPITAL GROUP INC.

EQUIPMENT FINANCING

FAST APPROVALS • FLEXIBLE TERMS

HARDY
EQUIPMENT FINANCING SPECIALIST

647-993-1022
Hardeep.Thethi@corcap.ca
www.corcap.ca

SHOE REPAIR

Dmitri's SHOE & LEATHER REPAIR

Celebrating 20 years!
Anniversary sale 20% off.
See store for details.

- Shoe Sales & Repair
- Leather Alterations & Cleaning
- Sports Equipment • Zippers, Purses
- Scissor/Knife Sharpening • Key Cutting
- Lining Replacement

58 Wellington Street, Stratford, ON
519-272-2200

INVESTMENTS

Franklin E. Hinz

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

MARKETING

TOWN CRIER MARKETING

FREE CONSULTATION

OPTICIAN

Eyes to Buy
Family Optical Store

20% off
all in-stock
sunglasses

1020 Ontario St., Stratford
519-275-3413
www.eyestobuyoptical.ca

ROOFING

ROOF TRUSSES & OPEN WEB FLOOR JOISTS

Residential/Commercial/Agriculture

Contact Zach at
Watson's Home Hardware 519-335-3551
zach@watsonshomehardware.com

YOUR AD HERE

THIS COULD BE YOUR AD HERE!

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFO!

f t i



MORTGAGE

Mortgage solutions to suit your needs.

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

Scotia

Registered trademark of The Bank of Nova Scotia

REAL ESTATE

LUCIE STEPHENS
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

519-703-0333

RE/MAX REALTY LTD. BROKERAGE

SOLD!

Sutton Liz Yundt, Realtor®

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

I will always do my absolute best for you!

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

WATCH/CLOCK REPAIR

Watch & Clock Repair

FREE ESTIMATES

Watch batteries, bands & crystals

All makes & models.
New & Old.

House calls available

Antiques in Time
45 York Street | 519-272-0411
www.antiquesintime.ca

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Miley Cyrus
2. Cornell
3. 24
4. 1980
5. Paramount Skydance
6. Mjölnir
7. Military
8. Gunshot wound
9. Eileen Collins
10. Vitamin C

REAL ESTATE

ROYAL LEPAGE Hiller Realty

Tina Grasby BROKER,
Royal LePage Hiller Realty
ph. 519-275-7663
tinagrasby@royallepage.ca
www.tinagrasbyrealestate.com

TRAVEL

STONETOWN TRAVEL

150 Queen St. E., St. Marys
519-284-2332

210 Mill St., New Hamburg
226-333-9939

www.stonetowntravel.com
agent@stonetowntravel.com

TUTORING

Sylvan of Stratford
Get ahead this summer with Sylvan!

Your child is unique, and our solutions are too!
Whether your child needs to catch up or get ahead, our teachers are ready to help create a one-of-a-kind personalized program that will work for your child. Get support with Sylvan today!

SUMMER SALE ON NOW!
Free Assessment PLUS sale. Offer valid in London and Stratford only. Expires 06/26/2026

145-103 Ontario Street, Stratford ON
519-657-7323
southlondon@SylvanLearning.com
SYLVANLEARNING.COM

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

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

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

The Royal[®]

AGRICULTURAL WINTER FAIR

THE COUNTRY COMES TO THE CITY

THE BEST OF CANADA IS HERE



SCAN THE QR
CODE TO BUY
TICKETS NOW

OR VISIT ROYALFAIR.ORG

NOVEMBER 6-15, 2026
EXHIBITION PLACE, TORONTO

