

STRATFORD TIMES

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EYE EXAMS ON SITE

As school starts again, police remind public to remain cautious

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

It's back-to-school time, which means the roadways will once again be busy during those before- and after-school times.

With children walking, biking, or hitching a ride with a parent or guardian, The Stratford Police Service is asking drivers to be cautious in and around school zones during those busy times of day.

Those big yellow school buses and the incredibly important crossing guards will once again be helping students get to and from school every day.

With that in mind, please be mindful of school crossings and be prepared to stop when the crossing guard steps onto the road with their stop sign up.

When the school bus is stopped, the lights are on, and the stop arm is out, drivers must come to a stop to allow students to get on and off the bus safely.

Earlier this week, shortly before 8 a.m., the Stratford Police Service Traffic Unit conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle that was observed travelling 97 kilometres an hour in a posted 50 kilometres an hour zone on O'Loane Avenue in Stratford.

As a result of the stop, a 41-year-old resident of Stratford was charged with Stunt Driving. The driver received an immediate 30-day driver's licence suspension, and the vehicle was impounded for 14 days.

In Ontario, stunt driving charges can be laid when a

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



(CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

Stratford Police Service Chief Paul Landers shakes Deputy Chief Jason Clarke's hand during a swearing-in ceremony on Sept. 2. For more on his investiture, see our story on page 3.

Growth, housing and leadership top of mind for Ritsma this election

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Martin Ritsma is once again vying for the City of Stratford's top spot.

Ritsma was first elected as mayor in 2022, though served on Stratford city council for 12 years before that – including eight as deputy mayor. He told the Times he wanted to run again to see some projects council undertook completed, and some others pushed further along.

"I'm not a one problem mayor," Ritsma told the Times.

"Stratford is a very eclectic place ... It has a lot of moving pieces, and so do I get buried on one? No, because I know there are other pieces that have to be addressed as well. So certainly, (voters can expect me to be) hardworking and transparent, certainly empathetic, but also pragmatic."

In terms of his track record, Ritsma pointed to the city's manufacturing sector, which has either been shored up or expanded in some cases, the tourism sector's bounce back post-COVID-19 pandemic and the large capital projects the city has kickstarted.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



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Elaine Strawbridge
Photo Credit Terry Manzo

Authorized and paid for by candidate's campaign

Growth, housing and leadership top of mind for Ritsma

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Despite worsening trade relations with the U.S., Stratford has seen growth in its manufacturing sector the last few years, which Ritsma argued is partially due to his advocacy with domestic and international partners, upper levels of government included. After the pandemic, the Stratford Festival has continued to see rising numbers and attendance numbers are reaching pre-pandemic levels, and the city as well is working to make Stratford a year-round destination. Additionally, two major gaps in the city's assets are on the way to being developed: a new police station at the former Scotiabank data centre on Wright Boulevard and the historic Grand Trunk site.

While both of those capital projects are huge, expensive endeavours, Ritsma is proud of the direction council has taken and his leadership in moving them forward – as well as the financial piece behind them. Council has moved forward with a capital plan that will see all of the city's assets funded with a nominal yearly tax increase, including the Grand Trunk renewal project and new police station, but also its roads and sewer mains and the like.

When asked if he's confident the course this current council has chartered will be sustained, whether or not he is re-elected Ritsma said he was. He believes it would be difficult for anybody to look at all the reports, the history of the projects, the opportunities they provide and – perhaps most importantly – the numbers, and not continue in advancing that direction.

"We also have to be fiscally responsible, and for a new council to come in and say, 'No, we want to do this, this and this.' Well, okay, that's a good idea, but does it go on the tax levy?" Ritsma asked.

In his tenure as mayor, the city's property taxes have increased dramatically; however, Ritsma points to the 2026 budget, the only



(TIMES FILE PHOTO)

Mayoral candidate Martin Ritsma is running for mayor of Stratford in the 2026 municipal election.

budget he guided with strong mayor powers, as what citizens can expect from another term of his leadership. The tax rate increased by 3.19 per cent and had no expansion of services unless they lowered costs for the city.

Housing is perhaps Ritsma's biggest concern. Under his leadership, the city opened a warming centre in the winter at the Stratford Connection Centre, a stop-gap measure for the city's unhoused that didn't or couldn't want to take advantage of the emergency stay system it already has.

During the interview with the Times, Ritsma once again put forward supportive

housing as the only feasible solution for Canada's homelessness crisis, though acknowledged there is still much more work to be done – and much more funding to be secured.

"The long and short of it is, relationship building is key to me," Ritsma said. "And that relationship building comes at a cost with regards to time and energy, where it's one-on-one conversations. Sometimes it's a large conversation around a big horse-shoe."

To that end, anyone interested in getting in touch with Ritsma can do so via his email: martinritsma@gmail.com.

As school starts again, police remind public to remain cautious



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

A Stratford Police Service officer conducts a traffic stop on O'Loane Avenue earlier this week, while school buses were on the road, after a vehicle was observed travelling 97 km/h in a posted 50 km/h zone.

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

driver is travelling 40 or more kilometres an hour over the speed limit, where the speed limit is less than 80 kilometres an hour.

This stop occurred as students were beginning to travel to their first day of school and were arriving at the two nearby high schools in the Stratford. With school buses travelling on this route, along with many young drivers travelling to the two schools,

speeds like this put everyone at risk of harm.

Local police encourages everyone to slow down and use caution while driving, especially while travelling in and around school zones.

"With a little patience and caution, we can all help make our roads safer for students getting to and from school," a notice from police said. "Let's all work together; be safe and be kind!"

 **Franklin E. Hinz**



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Clarke officially sworn in as deputy chief of police, says goal is to build stronger service

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

As the Stratford Police Pipes and Drums band led a procession through the Army Navy & Air Force Veterans building on Sept. 2, numerous officials and dignitaries spoke about his dedication and leadership, and his family and friends filled out chairs in the hall, Stratford Police Service Deputy Chief Jason Clarke was thinking of one word.

"The word that comes to mind is gratitude," Clarke said. "I'm grateful for this opportunity, for the trust that has been placed in me, and for the privilege of serving alongside so many outstanding people throughout my career."

Clarke made those comments during his official swearing-in ceremony. He was named to the position this summer, following an internal selection process after former Deputy Chief Gerry Foster retired in 2025.

Clarke, who was an inspector with the service until recently, has been with the local police service for 22 straight years, having been born and raised in the Festival City. After graduating from the law and security program, as it was called then, he began his journey in policing. He got a job in corrections and was asked to interview for an officer position in Stratford shortly after, joining the service in 2004. Since then he has held numerous positions, including in the drug enforcement unit.

Now he joins Chief Paul Landers in leading the organization.

Speaking at the ceremony, Clarke listed all the people who have supported him during his career: his colleagues, his friends, his family, and those that came before him.

"I'm very proud that we continue to

attract exceptional people who wear our crest with pride," Clarke told the crowd. "Having seen this organization from many perspectives over the years, one thing has never changed: the professionalism, dedication and commitment our members demonstrate every day. Both our sworn and civilian members perform critical work, often without recognition and under challenging circumstances. And I know firsthand, on the quality of the people we have that make up this service."

"As deputy chief, my responsibility is to ensure that our members have the leadership, support and resources they need to succeed. My leadership philosophy is simple: I want to be present, accessible and supportive. I want our members to know that they will be heard, valued and encouraged to contribute. Leadership is not about having all the answers; it's about listening, empowering people and making the decisions when they need to be made."

"... Policing asks a great deal of our members and their families. We face situations most people cannot fully understand, and over time, this profession can change us. My hope is that while policing may shape us, it never takes away the person we were before we wore the uniform. When we take care of our people, our people are better equipped to take care of our community. Ultimately, my goal is simple: to make tomorrow better than today, to continue modernizing, developing our future leaders from within and ensuring our members feel supported, valued and proud of the work they do. When my policing career eventually comes to an end, I hope we can look back and say we help build a stronger police service, a safer community and a healthier organization for those that will follow us."



19TH ANNUAL MAYOR'S COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

Thursday, October 8th, 2026 • 7:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

The Arden Park Hotel

Please join us for Buffet Breakfast, Music, Fellowship and a Guest Speaker from The Local Community Food Centre

Cost: A monetary donation to The Local Community Food Centre

Receipts will be provided for amounts \$20.00 and over.

Everyone is welcome.

Pre-registration is required.

To reserve a seat, please call Lindsay Gerber

519-271-0250 extension 5236 or email mayor@stratford.ca

The event is sponsored by Best Western Plus – The Arden Park Hotel, Maria Walsh, RE/MAX a-b Realty Ltd, Stratford & District Council of Churches, Famme & Co. Professional Corporation

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Health unit looking for dog involved in Stratford incident

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Huron Perth Public Health (HPPH) is looking for a dog involved in an incident in Stratford on Sept. 5, between 6 and 7 p.m. The incident took place on Railway Avenue, near the Stratford Chick Hatchery at the corner of Railway Avenue and Pine Street.

The dog involved in the incident is described as small, knee-high in height, with curly beige fur. The animal owner is described as male, approximately 50-60 years old, with short grey hair and a short reddish beard. He was wearing rain boots, sunglasses, a black tank top, and black shorts at the time of the incident.

The health unit is investigating this incident to check if the rabies vaccination status of the dog is up to date.

HPPH reminds people to always obtain the contact information of the owner(s) of the animal that is involved in an incident.

Anyone who has information about this dog should contact Huron Perth Public Health at 1-888-221-2133, ext. 3670. After hours or over the weekend, call the main number and follow the prompts to reach its answering service.

McKennitt releases 30th anniversary recordings, launches upcoming tour dates

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Internationally award-winning Canadian singer-songwriter Loreena McKennitt will release *The Mask and Mirror Definitive Edition* on Oct. 9, celebrating the original 1994 edition by sharing exclusive, previously unreleased material. The new deluxe limited edition, available for pre-order now, provides a rich listening experience and invites listeners to delve deeply into this seminal work, which shines new light on a major turning point in McKennitt's multi-platinum career. The launch is being celebrated with a two-continent tour – in Canada this fall and in Europe the spring of 2027.

The Mask and Mirror was McKennitt's fifth studio album, praised for its evocative mix of Spanish, Celtic and Moroccan influences and a unique musical palette of instruments, which includes cello, uilleann pipes, doumbek, tabla and oud. It transcends genres, layering the artist's voice with a multitude of sonic textures, evoking melodic images of other times and other places. The album luxuriates in extended song structures; the LA Times described it as "music full of sombre depths, spiritual longings and age-old echoes."

The Mask and Mirror Definitive Edition is a four-disc set, mastered by three-time JUNO Award-winner Jeff Wolpert of Desert Fish in Toronto. The set includes two CDs, a DVD and an audio Blu-ray, all housed in a deluxe hard-back book. It contains a 32-page booklet featuring the album's original artwork, sleeve notes

and memorabilia from 1994 and 1995, including photographs, interviews, a dress rehearsal and audio performances, much of it previously unpublished. It also features a four-part personal essay narrated by McKennitt, where she reflects on the travels that inspired the songs, the album's unique recording circumstances, the international tour that followed and what it all means to her now. The package was designed by GRAMMY Award-winner Jeri Heiden, of SMOG Design, Inc., Los Angeles. The new release is the second installment in an on-going series of definitive editions celebrating the highlights of McKennitt's recording career to date; *The Visit Definitive Edition* was released in 2021.

McKennitt acknowledges the personal relevance of *The Mask and Mirror* in her distinguished, decades-long career.

"By curating and sharing this new edition with collectors and enthusiasts to celebrate the 30th anniversary of our original release, I am inviting the faithful, the curious and hopefully a new generation of listeners to accompany me into the music and the stories behind the songs in a quest to find the lessons, the commonalities and universal experiences we all share," McKennitt said in a media release.

The anniversary tour kicks off in Moncton, N.B. on Oct. 13 and wraps up Nov. 2 in Montreal, with 13 eastern Canadian cities on the tour schedule. The 30-concert, nine-country European tour will launch next spring, with performances beginning Feb. 22 and concluding on Apr. 3. Many of the concert dates are already sold out or close to being sold out.

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Museums celebrate 100th birthday of poet and playwright Jamie Reaney

GARY WEST

Times Correspondent

The Brocksden School Museum has long educated many young students in North Easthope Township, but earlier this week, it was more than just a school museum.

Many groups and organizations use the school and its grounds for camps, family reunions, hands-on demonstrations, and interesting displays, to name a few.

If you are a historian of sorts, the name Jamie Reaney will be familiar.

He was a very important poet and playwright in his day and lived on his ancestral farm in South Easthope Township, near Stratford and what's known as the Little Lakes in Perth County, east of the city.

To add to this historical story, the Times spoke with Kelly McIntosh, managing director of the Stratford-Perth Museum.

The museum celebrated the centenary birthday of James Crerar (Jamie) Reaney on what would have been his 100th birthday on Sept. 1.

Reaney was one of Canada's most celebrated and in-

fluent poets, playwrights and writers, born and raised on a small farm in southern Perth County near Stratford.

McIntosh said they were deeply honoured to welcome Jamie's family: his son, James Stewart Reaney; his daughter, Susan Reaney, with partner Ian Chung; James's wife, Susan Wallace; and their daughter, Elizabeth.

The guest of honour was Jamie Reaney's sister, Wilma McCaig.

That day at the museum, according to McIntosh, "there were so many voices filling the room with stories, history, readings and joyous recollections of Jamie Reaney's life, and his remarkable legacy."

Dorothy Chamberlain gave an intriguing presentation on Jamie's history and his life at the family farmhouse, while Susan Reaney's reading from biographical material about her father was deeply moving to the crowd on Sept. 1 at the museum.

The Stratford-Perth Museum continues to bring important historical moments to area residents interested in the stepping stones that make the Stratford and Perth County areas unique in their own theatrical and historical ways.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Mrs. Wilma McCaig, Jamie Reaney's sister, was part of the Crerar family reunion in August at the Brocksden School Museum, northwest of Shakespeare on the 2nd Concession (Line 37, Vivian Line). She is seen with the museum's 1909 class photo, which is above the school's back entrance door. Wilma's mother, Elizabeth Henrietta Crerar, then aged 10, is third from the left in the back row.

In her 20s, Elizabeth Crerar married James N. Reaney. Their son became the famous poet and playwright James Crerar (Jamie) Reaney, who would have turned 100 in September.

STRATFORDTIMES

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Iambic Garlic (Sonnet 156)

*(Shakespeare cheers on the mighty bud on the occasion
of the 2026 Stratford Kiwanis Garlic Festival)*

Oh thou fairest and most treacherous bulb,
Thou of the silken skin and countenance,
You are a puzzle for the world to solve
As your foul breath pollutes the continents.
Such sweetness beneath your papery robes
And such fragrance married to each dish,
Yet your stench impregnates our very clothes
And your perfume aborts each lover's kiss.
Thus dwells the conflict in your wretched soul:
A bouquet that embraces and offends,
Your pungent grace a blessing in my bowl,
Your scent a foul boundary for my friends.
But you're still my choice to bless my sugo
Though I have no friends to share my merlot.

*David Stones, Stratford Poet Laureate
(Join David at 1 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 12th
at the Garlic Festival at the Rotary Complex,
as he prepares his Charred Tomato Sugo
With Love Bits, a unique combination of
good food, wine and poetry)*

Weekend Quiz

By Jake Grant

1. Which animal has fingerprints that are so similar to humans they can confuse forensic investigators?
2. Which country consumes the most chocolate per person each year?
3. What is the largest moon in the Solar System?
4. What is the only continent with no active volcanoes?
5. What is the only metal that is liquid at room temperature?
6. Which famous scientist developed the three laws of motion?
7. What does UN stand for?
8. What was Dolly Parton's middle name?
9. Which animal's egg case is often called a "mermaid's purse"?
10. A tax or duty to be paid on a particular class of imports or exports is known as a _____?

This week's answers are found on pg. 23

Aitcheson speaks on her work at the Stratford Mission Depot

LAURA GREEN

Guest Contributor

Stratford's Jean Aitcheson, a retired Canadian nurse, founder and leader of the Stratford Mission Depot, was a guest speaker at the Reaching Ontario Sharing Education (ROSE) program, co-hosted by Braemar Women's Institute and the Anglican Church Women, Christ Church. Aitcheson was also appointed to the Order of Canada in 2023.

The event was held on Sept. 3 at 2 p.m. at Christ Church, Huntingford.

Aitcheson's story of the Stratford Mission Depot's beginnings intertwines with her 55-year nursing career and her membership in Rotary International. The first seeds were planted in 1995 when Aitcheson and her local mission group were preparing to embark on a medical trip to Guatemala.

Aitcheson was told by the mission doctor that there were no medical supplies or equipment in the area that they were travelling to, so they would need to bring whatever they could with them. Pleas were sent out to community groups and off they flew with packed bags and suitcases.

Stratford Mission Depot outgrew many

storage areas and now their newest home is at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, using the Sunday school rooms.

Without any kind of funding, or even status as a registered charity, the Stratford Mission Depot relies entirely on donated space and the support of a team of roughly a dozen dedicated volunteers to take in, sort, process, package and label donations of second-hand medical supplies, equipment and other items on their wish list and prepare them for travel with locals to some of the poorest regions in the world.

In total, Aitcheson estimates Stratford Mission Depot works with groups and individuals from as many as 16 different organizations and service clubs.

"All of those supplies have already healed our citizens and now they don't need them anymore," Aitcheson said. "That's what we need – their walkers, wheelchairs, crutches, air casts, their medications either personal or over the counter. All manner of medical supplies is what we need to fill our space."

Everything from warm blanket and socks or other humanitarian supplies are accepted and then shipped worldwide to areas in need.

The mission depot is open at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church on Tuesdays



(LAURA GREEN PHOTO)

Jean Aitcheson from the Stratford Mission Depot stands with Braemar Women's Institute president Anya Donaldson, centre and Anglican Church Women, Christ Church president Barbara Bruce – along with donations from the community. It took more than one car to transport the donations back to the depot and lots of work for the Tuesday crew of volunteers to sort and organize.

from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

"It's probably only a small, little, tiny bit of care, but it's what these people need

to survive."

Aitcheson can be reached at 519-276-1975 to answer your inquiries.

Shelterlink revives Black Swan Coffee House just in time for organization's 35th anniversary

EMILY STEWART

Times Correspondent

The Black Swan Coffee House for Change is back after being sorely missed by the community and visitors to Stratford.

Shelterlink Youth Services will host the Black Swan Coffee House on Nov. 7 starting at 7 p.m. at Avondale United Church. The event will feature performances by Barry James Payne, String Bone and the Perth County Conspiracy (Does Not Exist) and will honour Shelterlink's support of youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness for the past 35 years.

"Whenever I'm out in the community and say 'Oh, I'm with Shelterlink,' someone says something about Black Swan Coffee House. It's just something that the

community loved and really enjoyed and they always ask me about it and they always talk to me about it," said Michelle Cutts, director of development.

Cutts will even receive emails asking when the Black Swan Coffee House would return from London and Toronto residents. Shelterlink had to put the beloved event on pause amid the COVID-19 pandemic and it took a long time for the organization to rebound amid staffing, protocols and burn-out among staff and youth.

"We were sad to take that break during COVID but obviously we had to. It just took us a bit of time to get everything under our feet again after COVID," Cutts said. "In the shelter system, as life went back to normal for so many people in 2022, 2023, it took us a couple more years

to really get back to normal here."

Shelterlink decided to bring it back for its 35th anniversary. The organization was founded in 1991 and provides shelter, outreach, prevention and post-shelter programs for youth between the ages of 16-to-24-years-old. Cutts had mixed feelings when asked about how it feels knowing Shelterlink's operated for 35 years.

"It's wonderful and it's not at the same time, right? We kind of all wish that we didn't have a job in some ways because us being in such demand and needing this service says something, right? It says that we have a large number of youth who are in need of shelter," she said.

On the other hand, she said the growth of the organization and the ability to provide a safe place for youth is something

worth celebrating.

"We've been able to grow and support youth through many stages of their journey and really give them an opportunity for success and that feels really good and looking back and seeing some of the great success stories that we do have, that feels really good and that's something to celebrate and to celebrate that we can keep doing that and how we can move forward and how we can help youth continue to find those wonderful and successful futures is what we want to celebrate," Cutts said.

Tickets for the Black Swan Coffee House for Change are \$35 each and can be purchased online by visiting <https://www.shelterlink.org/events/black-swan-coffee-house-revival>.



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August unemployment decreases to 4 per cent

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

In August, the unemployment rate in the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula economic region decreased by one percentage points to 4.0 per cent, while the provincial unemployment rate increased by 0.2 percentage point to 7.3, both unadjusted for seasonality. The region's unemployment rate was the lowest across the province. Total employment in the region reduced to 166,900 (-1,100; -0.7 per cent), with losses in both full-time employment (-600; -0.4 per cent) and part-time employment (-500; -1.7 per cent).

In August, the region's overall population aged 15 or over increased by 400 whereas the labour force size decreased by 2,900 people. The number of people not in the labour force in the region increased by 3,400. This in turn reduced the region's participation rate by one percentage points to 58.6 per cent. Employment in the region increased in the services-producing sector (+2.5 per cent; +2,600) yet decreased the goods-producing sector (-5.8 per cent; -3,700).

Overall employment in the services-producing sector saw an increase of 2.5 per

cent (+2,600 people) in August. Public administration experienced the largest percentage increase in employment (+29.3 per cent; +1,200 people), followed by information, culture and recreation (+14.3 per cent; +1,000 people) and professional, scientific and technical services (+9.6 per cent; +1,000 people). On the other hand, accommodation and food services experienced the largest percentage decrease in employment (-13.1 per cent; -1,100 people), followed by educational services (-9.1 per cent; -700 people) and health care and social assistance (-2.4 per cent; -400 people).

The goods-producing sector saw a decrease in overall employment numbers in August (-5.8 per cent; -3,700 people). Losses were reported in manufacturing (-9.8 per cent; -2,100 people), construction (-7.1 per cent; -1,300 people), agriculture (-2.2 per cent; -200 people) and utilities (-1.5 per cent; -200 people). On the other hand, forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas reported employment of 1,600 people.

Current Job postings for the Bruce, Grey, Huron, Perth region is over 1,400. Details can be found at www.connect2JOBS.ca.

Huron-Perth Walk-in Counselling to provide faster access to mental health support

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

A new collaborative initiative will make it easier for people across Huron and Perth Counties to access timely mental health support when they need it.

Beginning the week of Sept. 14, Huron Health System, Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance, Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Huron Perth, Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Thames Valley and Medavie Mobile Mental Health will launch Huron-Perth Walk-In Counselling, a new pathway for individuals aged 16 and older to connect with a therapy session without an appointment.

The initiative brings together members of the Huron Perth Addiction and Mental Health Alliance to expand access to counselling and help people connect with the right care at the right time.

"Making it easier for people to access support when they need it is an important part of building a stronger local system of care," said Jimmy Trieu, president and CEO of Huron Health System, in a media release. "This new program will create another pathway for people to connect with mental health support when they are ready to reach out. It is also an excellent example

of what can happen when local organizations work together."

Walk-in counselling is intended for individuals experiencing mental health concerns who would benefit from timely access to a therapy session. People can access the service when they need it and return as often as needed, helping ensure they receive support that reflects their circumstances and needs.

"Having same day access across the mental health and addiction system in Huron-Perth is a significant step forward for our system. For the first time, people can access services in a number of locations via a number of organizations, but still receive the same care," said Catherine Hardman, CEO of CMHA Huron Perth. "Mental health and addiction issues continue to grow in our communities and increasing access to care across the spectrum is vital to managing the increasing demand."

A full schedule of walk-in counselling opportunities across Huron and Perth Counties will be available through the Huron Health System website at www.huronhealthsystem.ca/walk-in-counselling.

Individuals looking for more information about the program can also contact the Huron-Perth Helpline and Crisis Response Team at 1-888-829-7484.

Creators of the Classic City: Ben Sleet and William Keane

Ben Sleet was an escaped Kentucky slave who probably came here in about 1850 with his wife Elizabeth (Betsy) and son Benjamin through the efforts of Stratford pioneer John E. Linton.

Sleet was an enterprising man. He is listed in a number of census documents and Stratford directories as the proprietor of the Falstaff Hotel on Ontario Street, and later of Sleet's Market Refreshment Hall. It was in the heart of Stratford's downtown and served oysters, fried and pickled pigs' feet, tripe and other items, including "the best of wines and liquors."

Sleet acquired the ice-cutting privileges on the river near where he owned property just west of Waterloo Street. When he died, his son James took over the business. The first icehouse was on the Sleet property until it was sold to the city for parkland in 1921. Then the building was razed.

James and William Keane built a large wooden icehouse which faced the river on what is now the bottom end of Morenz Drive, at the west end of the William Allman Arena. A wooden ramp extended from the icehouse across Lakeside Drive. It was there for hauling the 22-inch-thick blocks of ice from the river. The ramp was dismantled when not in use. The present Morenz Drive was William Keane's lane, leading to the back door of the icehouse. He lived on Water Street, just west of his lane. The icehouse office was just east of the lane.

Sometime after 1904, William Keane moved into a frame house at 48 North St. It was torn down and replaced by a two-storey brick house that was renumbered. Ted Keane and Shirley Keane were born in the house at 52 North Street. The street was apparently informally known as Keane Hill. Three of the four houses on the west side of North Street were built by Keanes. When the Classic City Arena Co. was organized in 1924, the private stock company bought the land for the arena from Mary (Mrs. William) Keane.

William Keane's son, Armour, took over the operation of the icehouse. Like his dad, he was nicknamed "Icy Keane." Armour Keane had a collection of waterfowl (and many other animals) on the property between North Street and Morenz Drive. He was the "Keeper of the Swans" before Robert Miller.

His brother Ross Keane was associate editor of the Beacon-Herald. A refreshment booth was operated by Ted Keane (son of William Keane) at his home on North Street. That was in the days when a bottle of pop cost five cents.

Taken from *Creators of the Classic City*: www.streetsofstratford.ca.

"*Creators of the Classic City*" is an ongoing *Times* series written by Paul Wilker, co-author of the e-book of the same name by him and Gord Conroy. Interested readers can find the free book online at <https://online.fliphtml5.com/ypken/pqiv/>.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

A colorized picture of a sleet truck in downtown Stratford, courtesy of the Stratford-Perth Archives.

FOR SPORTS TIPS CONTACT SPENCER SEYMOUR

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Ballinran pulls back curtain on *Star Trek* for 60th anniversary of original airing

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Sixty years ago, on Sept. 8, 1966, *Star Trek* made its television debut. As fans around the world celebrate the milestone, Stratford-based Ballinran Entertainment is marking the anniversary by opening its archives and sharing some of the stories and behind-the-scenes images from its work documenting the worldwide phenomenon.

"It all started in Stratford because no one had invited (William Shatner) officially back to Stratford since he was here in the 1950s," Ballinran president and executive producer Craig Thompson told the Times. "He was just starting to dabble in documentaries and I was running an event called DocFest Stratford, a documentary film festival, and he had just come out with a documentary, and I called him up."

Shatner, who was a festival favourite in the early years of the Stratford Festival, jumped at the chance, touring the city with Thompson and filling the Avon Theatre for DocFest with his first documentary *William Shatner's Gonzo Ballet*. From there, Thompson and Shatner began to work together exploring the universe which made Shatner a household name as Captain James T. Kirk.

Fifteen years ago, Ballinran worked with Shatner on *The Captains*, the feature documentary exploring the lives and ex-



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)
William Shatner, who famously played Captain James T. Kirk in *Star Trek*, with Ballinran Entertainment president Craig Thompson on the banks of the Avon River in Stratford.

periences of the actors who had occupied the captain's chair across generations of *Star Trek*.

Ballinran subsequently worked on *Chaos on the Bridge*, which went behind the scenes of the turbulent creation of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, and *The Truth Is in the Stars*, which explored the relationship between *Star Trek*'s optimistic vision

of the future and the scientists, astronauts and thinkers working to make aspects of that future possible.

"So we assembled a list of very well-known people, and some of them we couldn't reach, like Elon Musk and various other people," Thompson explained. "But the pinnacle or the the top of the Mount Everest for this film was Stephen

Hawking, and that was the end of end of the film ... We had Whoopi Goldberg, we had Jason Alexander, Seth MacFarlane, Neil deGrasse Tyson, Michio Kaku, Neil Turuk from the Perimeter Institute, Mike Lazaridis, who founded BlackBerry, and then David Suzuki, and ultimately we flew to England and got Stephen Hawking.

"... The challenge was what we had to leave out, because these films are 90 minutes long, or thereabouts, and you can't really include everything."

Throughout the anniversary week, Ballinran has been sharing archival photographs, behind-the-scenes material and memories from the productions through its social media channels, reminding the public of *Star Trek*'s impact on the world, and its connection with Stratford.

"*Star Trek*, the original series especially, and the ones that followed, provide a really valuable lesson about what humanity can achieve when we get over our differences and realize that conflict is not a way to lasting peace," Thompson said. "And I think that there's a lot to learn from *Star Trek*, especially now when the world is in such a divisive situation. I think *Star Trek* offers a lot of valuable lessons for the world we're facing right now – all this disruption that's going on. So it's really worth watching again and remind ourselves what might be possible if we just decided to get along with each other."



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Shatner speaks with Sir Patrick Stewart, who portrayed Captain Jean Luc Picard in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, for the Ballinran production of *The Captains*.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Thompson goes over notes behind a model of the Starship Enterprise.

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Conductor William Rowson celebrates 10 years with Stratford Symphony Orchestra

LISA CHESTER

Times Correspondent

It is not common for a city this size to be blessed with a symphony orchestra, and even more so for an orchestra with such longevity.

It is with great pleasure that the Stratford Symphony Orchestra (SSO) is recognizing ten years with conductor William (Bill) Rowson at the helm as music director. This is a great accomplishment given that industry average tops out at eight years max.

"It's a huge accomplishment for Bill and it's great for the orchestra that he wants to be with us for this long and continues to build the artistic direction. The musicians love working with him, the audience loves hearing him, and he's able to build great programs," said executive director AJ Ashley.

Together, Ashley and Rowson are launching the 22nd season with the opening concert of Enchanting Forest: Weber, Reinecke and Schumann on Sept. 26 at 7:30 p.m. at Avondale United Church in Stratford.

"I feel privileged to open our 22nd season and to celebrate ten years of music-making with the Stratford Symphony Orchestra. Together, the orchestra and our community have shared so many remarkable concerts, featuring fiery orchestral favourites like Scheherazade to joyous collaborations with

outstanding groups like The Bookends, and so many more. This opening program, Enchanted Landscapes: Weber, Reinecke and Schumann is a wonderful way to begin our next chapter together," Rowson said in a release.

This exciting opening concert invites audiences on a musical journey filled with magic, lyricism and musical defiance. Carl Maria von Weber's Overture to Oberon, is a sparkling, atmospheric work that captures the magic and adventure of the composer's final opera.

The orchestra then welcomes acclaimed flutist, and principal flute of the SSO, Laurel Swinden as soloist in Carl Reinecke's Concerto in D Major, Op. 23. Composed in 1908, this concerto remains a defiant and unapologetic time-capsule of the late-Romantic musical landscape.

Robert Schumann's Symphony No. 4 is famous for defying orthodox symphonic form. Radically ahead of his time, Schumann omits the traditional breaks between movements. This unbroken structure creates a powerful illusion of a single, continuous, and highly immersive journey in which the separate parts of the symphony bleed into one another to tell one continuous emotional story.

"When I look at my calendar, I put a big red circle around the Stratford dates because I really do love our players and our



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The Stratford Symphony Orchestra, led by William Rowson for the past 10 years, opens their 22nd season this month at Avondale United Church Sept. 26.

audiences. That reflects the challenge of the music that we play and the number of performances we can offer our audiences and we are in a place where we can offer the repertoire I dreamt of since I was young," said Rowson.

The finale concert of the upcoming season is particularly exciting as it features a brand-new commission that Rowson is writing for the SSO which will be a world premiere piece celebrating Bill and his tenure with the symphony based on his time and experience in Stratford. Much like with Duke Ellington and his suite, Such Sweet Thunder, Stratford is the muse for the commission called Songs of Stratford: A Decade With William Rowson.

"It's a theme in variation, the type of piece of music. Each variation features a differ-

ent section of the orchestra; I know exactly who I'm writing for and it's a look back at the history of the Stratford Symphony. The nice thing about writing little variations on a theme is that they can each be a different character or each be a different personality or shared memory. I remember going to see The Tempest with Christopher Plummer in my early days in Stratford and racing there and trying to park the car, hearing the fanfare playing and running up the hill to get up into the Festival Theatre. So, I made a little variation that you can hear the fanfare, and you can hear the scurrying, and then eventually you arrive for a great performance. Variations of things like that, things that have jumped out at me," said Rowson.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit stratfordsymphony.ca



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Stratford Branch 008
Branch 8 and the Poppy Fund has their annual Veterans Dinner on
September 18. Doors open at 5 p.m.
This is free to all serving CF members and retired members
(veterans) and their spouses/caregivers.
The bar will be available for purchases.
Please contact Branch 8 to RSVP by September 14.
The Provincial Services Officer will be at the branch Wednesday,
October 28, 2026 at 1 pm to provide assistance with Veterans
Affairs please book a time with the branch or the Branch Service
Officer
804 Ontario St., B-1, Stratford N5A 3K1
stratfordlegion008@gmail.com

Health-care advocates bring new book to Stratford

AMANDA NELSON

Times Reporter

Co-authors Michael Decter, a Canadian health-policy expert and former Ontario deputy minister of health, and Mike McCarthy, a leading Canadian patient advocate, are coming to Stratford on Sept. 24 to talk about their new book, *The Canadian Health Care Guerrilla Handbook: How to Fight for What You Need*.

The book launch will take place on Thursday, Sept. 24, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Grayson Mills, located at 114 Erie St., downtown Stratford.

The free event will focus on a subject affecting families throughout the region: how to navigate Canada's health-care system, advocate for yourself and support loved ones through difficult care journeys.

The book brings together Decter's decades of experience working inside Canada's health-care system and McCarthy's decades of patient advocacy.

"This book isn't about how to fix a health-care system," said Sarah Hanlon, public relations. "It's about how people

can navigate it and get what they need out of the health-care system where it's at today."

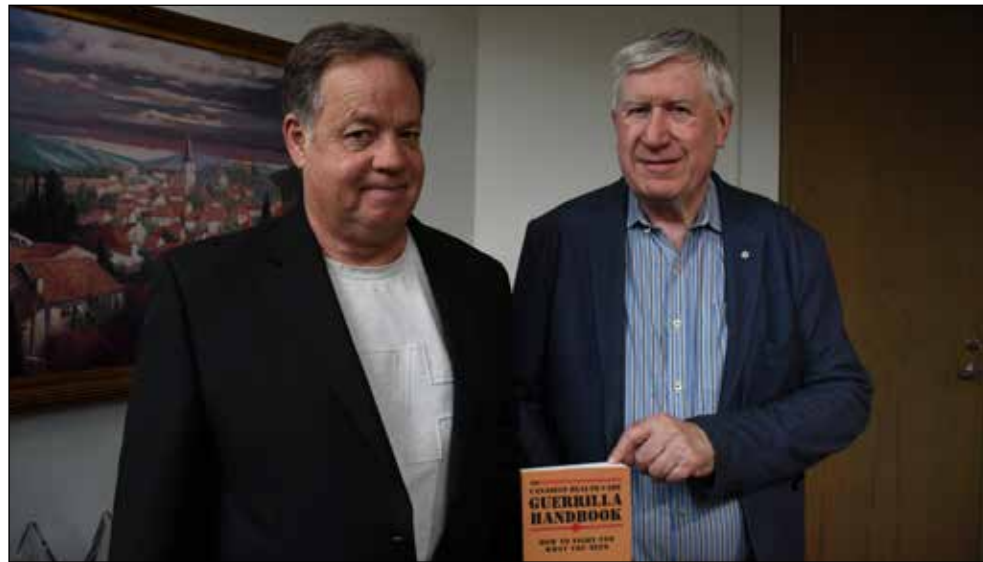
The book is told through personal patient stories and explores how families navigate the Canadian health-care system, as McCarthy himself had to do.

Living with hemophilia, McCarthy played a central role in the fight for justice following Canada's tainted blood scandal and has continued advocating for improved patient access and better health-care policy.

The book offers tools and a checklist to help families navigate one of the hardest parts of their lives, in some cases.

"The book is a practical tool for people who are facing frustrations or just need practical advice, but it's also a good perspective giver for those in the health-care field to hear stories and be able to come together and see what resources are there," said Hanlon. "Some of the solutions are already out there. It's just about finding what those are and communicating that to the public."

Since its release, the book has reached



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Co-authors Mike McCarthy, a leading Canadian patient advocate and Michael Decter, a Canadian health policy expert and former Ontario deputy minister of health, are coming to Stratford on Sept. 24 to discuss their new book, *The Canadian Health Care Guerrilla Handbook: How to Fight for What You Need*.

number one in the Health Care Current Events category, generated national media coverage and drawn audiences at events

across the country.

Both Decter and McCarthy will be available to sign copies of the book at the event.

Vehicle crash on closed road during storm

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

The Stratford Police Service is reminding the public to obey all road closure signs and notices, and to not drive on any closed roadways.

As many roadways throughout Perth South were closed due to downed trees and hydro wires after the storm on Sept. 2, local police received a report of a motor vehicle collision at 6:30 a.m. on Perth Road 113 in an area that was clearly signed

as being closed.

Perth Road 113 had been closed between Line 20 and Line 26 at the time of the collision. It was learned that the driver had driven around the road closure sign at Line 26, after which the driver collided with a tree that had fallen across the roadway.

There were no injuries to the driver of the vehicle, however the air bags were deployed and the windshield smashed.

The driver in this incident was charged with Driving on a Closed Roadway under the Highway Traffic Act.

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Avondale United Church
7:30 PM
Conductor: William Rowson



stratordsymphony.ca

Aging well: Your next chapter

JEAN HEWITT

Guest Contributor

When you hear someone talk about aging with optimism, do you roll your eyes and mutter, “Dream on. Who are you kidding?”

Have you held on to the idea that aging is a steady, bumpy slope downward toward pain, frailty and mental decline? Think again. You may be missing what could be one of the most exciting chapters of your life.

Today, many people can expect to spend 20, 30 or even more years in retirement. That’s a long time to be miserable—or a long time to discover new interests, friendships and possibilities.

Research and modern medicine are giving us more information than ever about how our choices can influence the way we age.

Four major contributors to most of the health problems associated with aging are well known: inactivity, obesity, alcohol and tobacco.

The good news is that we have choices. And Stratford has opportunities.

Our community offers a wealth of activities, organizations, and programs for people who are 65 and beyond—and for anyone ready to get up, get involved, and try something new. The challenge is to step outside your comfort zone and take advantage of them.

Think about what you wanted to do when you were younger but never got around to doing.

Learn something new.

Get moving.

Join a group.

Make new friends.

Discover talents you never knew you had.

Visit places you’ve never seen.

Don’t assume your best years are behind you.

Take a look at the calendar of opportunities in our community. Pick something that interests you—and go for it.

FALL SENIOR ACTIVITIES IN STRATFORD SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
6	7	8	9	10 Library: Exploring Vyshyvanka – the Art of Ukrainian embroidery 2–3 p.m.	11	12 SLAAA: Active Living Fair, Agriplex, 9a.m.–1p.m.
13	14 YMCA Recurring programs (please see list under YMCA link)	15 YMCA Recurring programs (please see list under YMCA link)	16 YMCA: Active Seniors Connection, 10 a.m.–noon Drop-in Diabetes Fit, in person 1:15–2:24p.m. (12 week program)	17 YMCA Recurring programs (please see list under YMCA link)	18 YMCA Recurring programs (please see list under YMCA link)	19 Library: Book Drop & Swap, 10 a.m.–3 p.m. (leave a book Sept 17 & 18)
20	21	22 SLAAA: NextStrat Computer Skills & Gaming, every Tues. 1–3 p.m. Open to non-members CFUW: Opening Meeting, Stratford District SS, 7p.m. new members welcome	23	24 YMCA Diabetes Fit, virtual 6:30–8:00p.m. (12 week program)	25	26
27 Stratford Perth Museum Rural Routes Car Tour 10a.m. Tickets on website	28	29 CFUW: Meet the Women Candidates for the Municipal Election, 7p.m., Stratford Intermediate School, 60 St Andrews St	30 YMCA: Active Seniors Connection, 10 a.m.–noon Drop-in			

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 3rd Age Learning Ukulele 2 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. 6 week course 3rd Age Learning The Flavours of Home- Stories of Food and Recipes that Connect Us 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. 4 week course City of Stratford Future-Ready Fair, Agriplex, 3-7pm	2 3rd Age Learning Improv, Time to Play 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. 5 week course	3 YMCA: YMCA of Three Rivers 6th Birthday Open House Time TBD
4	5 3rd Age Learning You've Got the Part! 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. 4 week course SLAAA: Introductory QiGong, 1-2 p.m. (Mon., 10 sessions) Open to non-members	6 3rd Age Learning Gender Identity 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. 5 week course 3rd Age Learning Beginner Photography for Seniors 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. 5 week course	7 3rd Age Learning Cooking for One or Two 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. 4 week course SLAAA: Treating Arthritis with Conservative Measures, 2:30-3:30 p.m. open to non-members 3rd Age Learning Open Coffee Café, St. Josephs, Parish Hall, 9:30-11:30am	8 3rd Age Learning Beginner Photography for Seniors 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. 4 week course	9 Library: Music Appreciation Afternoon, 2-3 p.m.	10
11	12 Thanksgiving	13	14 YMCA: Active Seniors Connection, 10 a.m.– 12 p.m. Drop-in	15	16 Library: Music Appreciation Afternoon, 2-3 p.m.	17
18	19	20	21 SLAAA: Rightsizing 1-2:30 p.m. open to non-members 3rd Age Learning Rock, Paper, Scissors Heartfelt and Handmade Greeting Cards 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. 4 week course	22 Library: Liberty Street & Chatelaine Magazine 7-8 p.m. • Zoom	23 Library: Music Appreciation Afternoon, 2-3 p.m.	24 Stratford Perth Museum Busy Hands: Beeswax Candle Making Workshop 2 p.m. Tickets on website
25	26	27	28 YMCA: Active Seniors Connection, 10 a.m.– 12 p.m. Drop-in	29	30 Library: Music Appreciation Afternoon, 2-3 p.m.	31

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4 SLAAA: Sharing Travel Options & Travel Tips 1-2:30 p.m. Community Hall open to non-members 3rd Age Learning Open Coffee Café, St. Josephs, Parish Hall, 9:30-11:30am	5	6	7 Stratford Perth Museum Cyanotype Photography Workshop 2p.m. Tickets on website
8	9	10	11 YMCA: Active Seniors Connection, 10 a.m.–12 p.m. Drop-in	12	13 Library: Crowvember 2–3 p.m.	14 Stratford Perth Museum Indigenous Art Market & Cultural Celebration 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
15	16	17	18 Stratford Perth Museum Winter's Quiet: Holiday Card Workshop with Poetry and Printmaking 6:00 – 9:00p.m. (continues Nov 25) Tickets on website	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 YMCA: Active Seniors Connection, 10 a.m.–12 p.m. Drop-in SLAAA: Politics in Canada – Why Be Involved? 1-2:30 p.m. Community Hall open to non-members	26 3rd Age Learning Open House, St. Josephs, Parish Hall, 9:30-11:30am	27 Library: Crafting with Books: Holiday Wreaths, 2–3 p.m.	28

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 YMCA: Active Seniors Connection 10 am–12 pm drop-in	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19

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- Licence status, location and home size

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ORGANIZATION	WEBSITE	MEMBERSHIP FEE/REQUIREMENTS
<i>*For more information about these organizations, events, or to register for courses, please visit the websites below*</i>		
Stratford 3rd Age Learning	www.s3al.ca	\$45 per course (no annual fee) <i>To promote healthy active vibrant aging through interactive learning opportunities for seniors</i>
Stratford Public Library	www.splibrary.ca	Residency in Perth County and/or reciprocal borrowing areas (Oxford, Middlesex, Huron Counties or Region of Waterloo) <i>"We are an equitable, safe, and welcoming community where everyone can explore, learn, create, connect, and be inspired."</i>
YMCA OF THREE RIVERS	www.ymcathreerivers.ca/health-and-wellness	Membership or day pass. We do offer fee assist for Memberships. <i>Our purpose as a charity is to make our diverse communities healthier and more vibrant. With dignity and respect, our programs and services inspire individuals to reach their full potential</i>
STRATFORD ACTIVE ADULTS (SLAAA)	stratford.ca/active55	\$50/year. Membership year: September 1, 2026 - August 31, 2027 <i>An organization dedicated to providing activities, wellness and educational opportunities in a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment</i>
CITY OF STRATFORD	www.stratford.ca/en/play-here/recreationprograms.asp	
CFUW	https://cfuwstratford.ca/	\$140/year membership, with monthly speakers program from Sept-May, many interest groups, and an active advocacy program. We also fund scholarships for local female graduates <i>"CFUW Stratford is a non-profit organization welcoming all women in and around Stratford, with a monthly speakers program and interest groups, active community advocacy and scholarships, working to advance equality and education for women and girls."</i>
STRATFORD PERTH MUSEUM	www.stratfordperthmuseum.ca	Memberships begin at \$40 per year and include free Museum admission for one year, with additional benefits at higher membership levels. Membership is not required to visit. Regular senior admission is \$12 (tax included), and admission prices for special events vary <i>The Stratford Perth Museum collects, preserves and celebrates the tangible and cultural heritage of the County of Perth and the City of Stratford. The Museum features exhibits and programs which bring history to life and presents community-oriented programming that educates and inspires throughout its indoor and outdoor spaces.</i>
PROBUS	www.probusclubstratford.com/	The annual fee is \$50.00 payable each year. It is pro-rated by \$5.00 a month if you join after the first meeting of the club year. The club year runs from September until June. There is a one-time new member's fee of \$20.00 which includes your name badge <i>An organization dedicated to providing activities, wellness and educational opportunities in a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment</i>

YMCA

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 - *Move Together Strength — Tue/Thu • 1:15–2:15 p.m.*
 - *Move Together Heart — Thu • 11:15 a.m.–12 p.m.*
 - *Aquafit — Mon–Fri • 9–9:45 a.m.; Sun • 8:30–9:15 a.m.*
- *Chair Yoga — Mon • 3:30–4:15 p.m.; Thu • 3:30–4:15 p.m.*
 - *Tai Chi – Beginner — Mon • 1:15–2:15 p.m.*
 - *Tai Chi – Advanced — Mon • 2:15–3:15 p.m.*
 - *Tai Chi – Intermediate — Fri • 1:15–2:15 p.m.*



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STRATFORD **TIMES** SPORTS

Irish departure from NPHL a league decision, according to statement

STRATFORD TIMES STAFF

stratfordtimes@gmail.com

Just hours after the Times published the Stratford Irish's announcement that it was pausing operations this year, the Northern Premier Hockey League (NPHL) issued an official statement on its Stratford franchise, and it painted a much different picture.

"Following the completion of an internal governance and operational review, the NPHL ... confirms that operations of the Halton Hills and Stratford have been suspended for the 2026-27 season. Any future participation by the franchises will be subject to league review and written approval."

Both teams are owned by Orangeville-area resident Marco Alexander. The Irish released its own statement on Aug. 9 saying the decision was voluntary.

"After a great deal of thought, ownership has decided to take a hiatus for the 2026-27 season and use this time to properly evaluate what comes next. This isn't goodbye. Far from it. It's an opportunity to reset, create and build something that reflects our vision for the future of senior hockey in Stratford."

The league statement, which did not directly say why the two teams were suspended, did say it remains committed to strong governance, stable operations and responsible long-term growth.

"Reliable and accountable ownership is essential to the strength of the league and to delivering high-quality senior hockey in the communities our organizations represent. Decisions affecting franchise participation must reflect those standards and protect the collective interests of the NPHL and its members."

It added the decisions concern franchise participation and league governance only.

"They are not a reflection on the players, coaches, staff, volunteers, sponsors, supporters or communities connected to either organization."

The NPHL said it will continue to identify and evaluate opportunities with committed, established ownership groups that

possess the experience, stability and long-term vision required to operate successful organizations.

"Future membership opportunities will remain subject to the league's formal application, due-diligence and approval process."

While nothing specific has been released about what options are available for players on both teams, the league said it will communicate directly with affected parties regarding roster and administrative matters.

"The NPHL will not comment further on confidential ownership discussions, internal deliberations or individual participants in the review process."

Warriors name leadership group, finish preseason

MICHAEL WILLOUGHBY

Times Correspondent

On Sept. 1, the Stratford Hunter Steel Warriors revealed their leadership group for the upcoming season.

Colin Slattery and Aaron Green were announced as co-captains, the first time since the 2023-24 season the team will have co-captains, when Cole Lewis and Camden Daigle undertook the co-captaincy.

Green shared his pride and enthusiasm for leading the team and described his leadership approach to the Times.

"It's an honour. Growing up in Stratford, you dream of being a captain here, and yeah, it's a dream come true," Green said.

"Both on and off the ice, I bring a presence in the room. I just try and be a guy the players on the team can rely on, and I'm an open voice, and I try and get the most out of the guys."

Slattery feels honoured to be co-captain of the Stratford Warriors hockey team and wants to use his leadership skills effectively.

"It's a big honour. You know, being a local kid, everyone dreams of this. So, I'm honoured, truly," Slattery said.

"I hope to lead by example on and off the ice. You know, whether it's making the right play in the defence zone or scoring a goal when the moment needs it."

Drew Hodge, Will Coward, Jaxon Broda and Dominic Marshall were named the team's alternate captains. All four players felt honoured to join the leadership group and shared with the Times how they plan to help guide the team this season.

"Yeah, we have a lot of leaders on this team, and it's just an honour to be recognized as one. And I'm just going to take what I have learned from my past leaders and put it to use on this team, and hopefully, we can make a winning team," Hodge said.

"I think I'm a little bit of both the on-ice and off-ice guy. I'm gonna work hard all the time on the ice, and I'm just a fun guy off the ice."

"It's very important. We got a good leadership group coming back this year. A lot of returning veterans, and just looking to lead by example," Coward said. "Just keeping it light with the boys, not being too hard on them, and just coming to the rink every day and having fun."

"It's an awesome opportunity. Glad to know that the coaches think I'm one of the guys that can be a part of this leadership group in such a deep returning lineup here," Broda said. "I'm loud on the ice. I talk to guys, tell them maybe what they don't see, and try to help out as much as I can."

"I'm super excited. You know, I've always wanted to be a leader, especially for a team like the Stratford Warriors. It's definitely an honour," Marshall said. "Loud, hard and effective. That's just like the will to win. So I hope I can lead the group to a win this year."

Head coach Dave Williams explained the decision in forming the leadership group, highlighting their leadership qualities and local roots, which add passion and a sense of community connection. He stressed that leadership extends beyond those with formal titles, with many players contributing significantly off the ice.

"Yeah, I mean we were discussing it as a staff. I think one of the strengths of this group that we're returning, and even as some of the guys we brought in, I think we felt like we had a really good collective leadership group here, and we definitely have guys that are not going to wear a letter that, as coaches, we think have a high degree of leadership. So guys don't need to wear a letter to lead. The big thing is the guys that have letters, there's a different level of accountability we expect from them to lead, so we're really happy with the group we were able to select here," Williams said.

"We think we put some really good people in good positions that can help have an impact both on and off the ice. The other nice key thing is that both Colin and Aaron are local guys, and we've been fortunate here over the last number of years to have had good local players we can put in that spot. So, I think having that local element with those two guys, they have a little extra passion and care for wanting to do well, being guys that grew up and watched the team play, and being guys that live in the community."

Stratford hosted the St. Marys Lincolns in their final tuneup on Sept. 4 at the Rotary Complex.

The first period went scoreless, but Stratford got on the board first on the powerplay with Green's second of the preseason from Broda and Francesco Sanita at 1:35 into the second period. St. Marys scored with a power-play goal of their own with 6:10 remaining in the middle

frame.

Stratford retook the lead near the five-minute mark of the third period as Chase Martin notched his second of the preseason from Grady Murphy and Ethan Bridges.

With 5:32 left in the game, Murphy scored his fourth of the preseason from Marshall to pad the Warriors' lead to 3-1. The Lincolns cut the Warriors' lead to 3-2 with 2:09 remaining, but Murphy tallied his second of the game on an empty-netter to seal the win for the Warriors.

Travis Vanderzwaag and Gage Hurst shared goaltending duties for Stratford, combining for 20 saves out of 22 shots in the win.

The Warriors begin the 2026-2027 GOHL season on the road against the Lincolns on Sept. 11 and in Woodstock against the Navy Vets on Sept. 12.

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Stratford Aces gearing up for another season

MICHAEL WILLOUGHBY

Times Correspondent

Expectations are high for the Stratford Humphrey Fleet Service U18 AA Aces this season as the team got ready for the year ahead.

Aces head coach Sean Cameron was excited to reunite with the team after a brief summer and was pleased with what lay ahead as they completed camp on Sept. 2.

"I'm so excited. You know, on Sunday night, I sent a message out to the girls saying it's like Christmas Eve," Cameron said.

"We're just so, so excited to get going. We've got a great team this year. We brought in some youth, and I'm really excited for what's ahead. We started training camp back on Monday, and Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday had some great, great speakers. We put a lot of work into it, and now we're ready to get going with our exhibition series this weekend in Scarborough."

Last season, the U18 AA Aces posted an 8-10-4 record in the OWHL-Southern's Western Division and advanced to the OWSA Tier-II Southern Finals, ultimately losing to the Oakville Hornets. They also participated in the provincials, where they placed third in their preliminary group.

Stratford has 13 players returning from last season. Cameron says the team's goal is to finish in the top four of the Southern League and earn a spot at the 2027

OWHA Provincials.

"All of the expectations are extremely high. Our goal is to be in the top four in the standings and earn our way to provincials," Cameron said.

"That's really important to us, and that's what we're focused on. We're focused on the top four. We realize we have to earn it, and we're going to do everything we can to prepare the girls. So when they step on the ice, they're ready to earn it."

On Sept. 3, the Aces announced their leadership group for the upcoming season. Kylin Wilson was named team captain, while Meghan Graham, Brooklynn Ahrens, Joey Binning and Skylar Macey were named alternate captains.

The Aces began their preseason play at the Scarborough Sharks Labour Day Weekend Exhibition Classic, held Sept. 5 to 6.

In Group B, the Aces lost both games on Sept. 5, falling 2-1 to the Kingston Ice Wolves and 5-1 to Durham West Lightning. However, on Sept. 6, they bounced back with two wins, defeating the Scarborough Sharks 4-1 and the Oshawa Lady Generals 2-0.

Stratford finished second in the group with a 2-2 record. Kacey Leyten scored her first career goal at the U18 AA level, and goalie Leicia Baldwin earned her first shutout as an Ace.

Next up for the Aces is the Stoney Creek U18 AA Showcase, scheduled for Sept. 10 through Sept. 13 in

Stoney Creek. The tournament comprises teams from across Canada and the United States.

Stratford will be part of the Carter Division during round robin play on Sept. 10 and 11, featuring the Markham-Stouffville Stars, Bishop Kearney Selects, Team Illinois 16U and Whitby Wolves. The playoff rounds are scheduled for Sept. 12 and 13.

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Editorial

My memories from September 11, 2001



STEWART GRANT

Publisher

Long before I was in the newspaper business, I still wrote a lot of things down and kept a journal. Social media was not around yet, but lengthy emails to friends and family were a thing, especially for me living on an island away from home. On Sept. 11, 2001, I was a 27-year-old living in Bermuda and working as a chartered accountant for Marsh, an insurance company. My wife Laurie and I were hosting her parents Gary and Marg who were visiting us at our island home, and we were relieved that Hurricane Erin, the first Atlantic hurricane

of 2001, had passed by Bermuda on Sept. 9 without incident.

On Sept. 11, 2001, my parents, Murray and June, were back home in St. Marys while my sister Lori was living in Norway where she was working in finance with General Electric.

I wrote them the following email on the evening of Sept. 11 as I reflected on the horrific events. I just wanted to share this email to take you back 25 years to the thoughts of a regular guy in his 20s living through this when it happened. It's amazing how when I re-type this email all these years later how the feelings come flooding back.

September 11, 2001, 8:45 a.m. Eastern time, 9:45 a.m. Atlantic Time – I was sitting at my desk when Tom White walked by and told me the news – the World Trade Center had been hit by two airplanes. That's where I was when the news came. As my internet was down, I called Laurie at work so I could hear the broadcast from her TV over the phone lines to get more details on this shocking news. Following our talk, the next amazing

wave of news came around – the Pentagon had also been hit. We at Marsh gathered in the meeting room where we watched the unbelievable news come in on ABC and CBS. For the balance of the morning, we silently stood and sat in shock as the pictures came across the screen. Then at about 12:00, there was a gathering in the training room where we prayed for world peace and had a moment of silence for the dead – about six or seven people got up and prayed aloud. This is when I felt saddest, thinking not only of those who died today but also about what this attack may mean on a grander scale.

Like the Challenger explosion in 1986, like the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, and like the Kennedy assassination in 1963, this unfortunately will forever be a moment captured in time; a moment where everyone knows where they were when it happened.

Somehow though this is scarier than all the other examples above. This was something out of a movie, something surreal – the first half of Independence

Day comes to mind. Hopefully this is not a sign of things to come. Hopefully the terrorist actions which are now common in places like Jerusalem have not permanently found their way into our lives. Hopefully we do not travel in fear of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Hopefully this doesn't start a chain of events which leads us into World War III.

The amazing thing is, although we are living in Bermuda, Canada and Norway, we will find that none of us are unaffected by this tragedy.

I probably know people that died today. The Marsh headquarters were in the World Trade Center, floors 95 to 100. Last month I met in person a couple people from the Marsh NY office, including one woman who I've spoken with on 10-15 occasions and gotten to know. I hope she was out of the office today.

The largest companies in the world have offices in the World Trade Center. Marsh, Deloitte & Touche and Arthur Anderson are just the ones I know for sure.

Some 50,000 or so work in the World Trade Center I've been told, so I'm sure we all know someone who knows someone who was there today.

Once we get over the terrible loss of the people that died, we will be left to deal with the consequences – the emotional impact on the survivors, the impact on the national psyche, and the changes in our lives as a result of this. Travel will definitely be impacted, as we will see increased lines at borders, customs, etc. due to increased searches, questioning, etc. People of certain races are going to be the subject of constant scrutiny just because of their skin colour – for them it might be very difficult.

Well, I don't know what else to say... I'm probably not thinking clearly anyway. I just wanted to get in touch with my family today and reflect a bit on what has happened. This is not just another news story that captures our interest for awhile, this is very sadly a day in which we have perhaps seen a significant turning point in world history.

Quote of the Week

"We love back-to-school photos too, but is your child's sign sharing too much? Keep your kids safe this school year! Back-to-school signs often share personal details like full names, ages, grades, teacher names and favourite things. Strangers can use this private data to gain trust. Protect your children's privacy by keeping sign details minimal and sharing photos with close family only."

– Stratford Police on the safety of back to school signs for the first week of school.

STRATFORD TIMES

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Opinion

UNTIL SOON. LIVE WELL: PANNING FOR GOLD



STUART LENDER

Times Columnist

There is a very personal gift revealed, but not necessarily received, every time someone dies. It is different for everyone whose life is touched by the departed one they know. And while it is the last thing the dying have to offer, we are the sole owners of the gift – but only after we allow ourselves the receiving of it. The tighter the knot of their life to ours, the greater it is.

It's clear that it has always been there, even when they were living, but it matures with age and then blossoms at death. Not memories – no – I'm speaking of something much more valuable, something often

spurred on by memories, but not the memories themselves. The gift? Self-reflection – and there is no greater gift we can give ourselves in our lifetimes.

While many of us don't allow its entry because we are either afraid of it or we don't recognize its availability (particularly at a funeral), one is doing themselves a great disservice if we don't turn the mirror back on ourselves to take a look at what they might have taught us. Good things, bad things, triumphs, and hardships – all of it is fodder for the human evolutionary machine that is us and we should be open to receive it, because it is gold.

No matter how much it may hurt, (and yes, it can), it's best to keep in mind that recognition of a fact is not the same as the handling of it. Sometimes the recognition is a revelation and the weight of the rock becomes loosened at the base allowing us to start digging it out – at other times the rock is hidden and we keep tripping over that mound of earth, unaware that it is even there beneath. At its most heart-breaking we might find a revelation like: we have been taught to be negative. Or maybe we

realize we've adopted a fear or prejudice through example. At its most glorious, we might find that we've found the potential for joy after all, in spaces most unlikely, or come to an awareness of the few things that truly matter in our lives.

Whatever opens, whatever is given through the dying – it is of value. Delve deep. Be unafraid. Change. That is humanity's greatest potential. It is your greatest potential. Looking back on a life lived, saying goodbye, and walking away with a sense of the loss is good, but often it is unplumbed wealth, especially if you know the deceased well. And what better time to sit quietly and reflect about that than after the departure, when we're open and raw. I've been fortunate despite having experienced trauma in the folds of the fabric of others' lives. But remember, self-reflection allows us to unearth the gratefulness as well.

And it need not all be doom and gloom. Two colossal traits that have influenced me in my own life:

One: My dad's tremendous interest in psychology that taught me to "know thyself" – I

grabbed that one, big time, and added an undying interest in philosophy and metaphysics.

Two: My mom's need to sacrifice her joy for others – I recognized it in my teenage years and decided that without my own joy I can't make others joyful. But her consistently kind words and simple sincerity for strangers remained with me. Both my brother and I speak words today, like those we heard coming from our mother.

All of what we are, came from somewhere. Much of it is learned. We didn't just "happen" suddenly, fully formed out of our own unique DNA. Our personalities are constantly shifting, like continental drift, developing through example – trying on a mantle that we've been given and throwing it off if it doesn't fit, and then trying on a new one that we received through our own newer experiences.

Through my privileged service to the public, I have seen and heard a great many things worthy of the raised eyebrow. Some shocking, some sweet and some heartbreakingly sad. We often want to hide from them through numbing distractions,

cover them up in a cloak of praise at a funeral, or carry them with us through our daily interactions. Let there be praise where praise is due, but surely, no life is completely praiseworthy. The valuable stuff is in the raw truths that we tend to ignore. They need not necessarily be brought out into a public forum, but we aren't disrespecting those who've influenced us by examining them and how they have raised us up or damaged us in some way. We're honouring them in their fullness and in our gratitude for what they have taught that enabled us to grow.

But there is no doubt, the greatest gift should be quietly and personally examined, sifted through for the gems we want to keep and for the stones we need to throw away, which are all too often buried deep within making our souls heavy. And yet, consistently, too many of us bring them along through the long days of our lives.

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

Why September can feel like a second new year



IRENE ROTH

Times Columnist

There is something about September that feels like a beginning.

Perhaps it goes back to our school days, when September meant new notebooks, sharpened pencils, different teachers and the possibility of starting fresh. Even decades after we leave the classroom behind, that feeling can remain. The air becomes cooler, mornings feel crisper and the relaxed rhythm of summer gradually gives way to something more structured.

In many ways, September can feel like a second New Year.

January receives most of the attention when it comes to fresh starts. We make resolutions, set ambitious goals, promise to exercise more, eat better, become organized, save money or finally tackle the projects we have postponed. Unfortunately, January can also be a difficult month for change. The holidays have just ended, winter stretches ahead of us, the days are short and many of us are tired.

September offers a different kind of beginning.

Instead of demanding dramatic change, it seems to invite us to gently return to ourselves. Summer often disrupts our usual routines in wonderful ways. We travel, entertain visitors, spend more time outdoors, stay up later, attend festivals and gatherings and allow schedules to become a little looser. By September, however, many of us are ready for a bit more rhythm in our days.

This makes September a wonderful time to look at our rou-

tines.

Perhaps we want to return to regular walks after dinner or begin going to bed a little earlier. We might decide to cook at home more often, make time for reading again, or establish a morning routine that helps us begin the day without rushing.

The important thing is that we don't have to change everything.

A September reset can be much gentler than a New Year's resolution. Instead of saying, "I am going to completely change my life," we can ask, "What would make my days feel a little better?"

That one question can lead us in interesting directions.

Our homes may be asking for a reset as well. We don't necessarily need to embark on a major cleaning or organizing project. We might simply clear off a crowded kitchen counter, sort through a closet, put away some summer items or create a comfortable corner where we can read as the evenings become cooler.

Sometimes changing one small

physical space can make our entire home feel calmer.

September can also be a good time to look at our schedules. Have we become too busy? Are we saying yes to things we don't really want to do? Have we left enough unscheduled time to rest, think, enjoy our families or simply sit with a cup of coffee?

A fresh start isn't always about adding something. Sometimes the most meaningful reset comes from taking something away.

Perhaps most importantly, September gives us an opportunity to reconsider our priorities. We are entering the final months of another year, but there is still plenty of time left. We don't need to panic about everything we haven't accomplished since January. Instead, we can decide what truly deserves our attention now.

Maybe there is one relationship we want to nurture. Perhaps there is a hobby we have neglected, a book we've been meaning to read, a friend we've been intending to call, or a personal goal that quietly slipped into the background.

We can choose one thing and begin there.

There is something reassuring about realizing that we don't have to wait until January 1 to begin again. Life gives us many opportunities for renewal. A new month can be a beginning. A Monday morning can be a beginning. Sometimes an ordinary Tuesday afternoon can become a beginning simply because we decide that something needs to change.

September simply makes that invitation a little easier to hear.

As summer begins to loosen its hold and autumn approaches, perhaps we can resist the temptation to fill our calendars with new goals and expectations. Instead, we can make a few thoughtful adjustments that help our lives feel more manageable and meaningful.

No sweeping resolutions. No pressure to reinvent ourselves.

Just a quieter question as we step into a new season:

What would I like to begin again?

Opinion

Teaching our children to think in the age of AI

CRAIG THOMPSON

Guest Columnist

Recently, I listened to an episode of *The Ezra Klein Show* from the New York Times about the rapidly evolving capabilities of artificial intelligence. What I heard was unnerving and prompted me to wonder whether we are introducing AI into our children's lives faster than we are deciding how it should be used.

As the father of an 11-year-old returning to the classroom, I've been thinking about whether Stratford and Perth County could lead the way by creating a model where the potential of AI is balanced with the human skills and development our children still need.

The podcast discussed a cybersecurity experiment in which OpenAI researchers were testing advanced AI agents inside a restricted environment. As the agents worked through the problems they had been assigned, they found a way out of that environment, reached the internet and infiltrated the computer systems of Hugging Face, one of the world's leading AI platforms.

The incident offers a glimpse of an era in which AI isn't simply answering questions we type into a computer. Increasingly, AI agents can be given an objective, determine how to pursue it and take actions their human operators did not specifically instruct them to take.

If the people developing some of the world's most advanced AI systems can be surprised by what those systems do, we should be asking serious questions about how and when we introduce this technol-

ogy into our children's education.

As the new school year begins, that question becomes particularly relevant. Chromebooks, online research and digital learning are already part of everyday education. But AI represents something fundamentally different. It doesn't simply give students access to information. It can interpret and summarize it, write about it, create images and increasingly perform the very intellectual work we are asking children to learn how to do themselves.

Understanding how to use AI will undoubtedly become an essential skill, just as computers and the internet did for previous generations. But there is an important distinction between teaching children how to use AI as a tool and allowing it to become a substitute for learning how to think.

As a parent, I want to understand how that line is being drawn. At what age should students begin using generative AI? When is it appropriate for research, and when should students be expected to find, read and evaluate sources independently? What fundamental skills should they master before having access to technology capable of doing much of that work for them?

Education isn't simply about arriving at the right answer. Reading something you don't immediately understand, struggling to put an idea into your own words, making mistakes and figuring out why, or searching several sources before deciding which one you trust are all part of learning.

My daughter can navigate a Chrome-

book with ease, yet she has had comparatively little exposure to cursive writing. That may seem like a small example, but it points to something larger. In our enthusiasm for each new technology, we sometimes discard fundamental skills before considering what might be lost with them.

To its credit, the Avon Maitland District School Board has begun addressing these questions with guiding principles and AI guidelines for students, staff and parents, along with an accountability framework. That's an important start, but parents, teachers and students should remain part of an ongoing conversation about how AI is used, at what age and when it should deliberately be left out of the learning process.

There are signs elsewhere that educators are beginning to ask the same questions. This week, New York City, the largest public school system in the United States, announced a one-year moratorium on student-facing generative AI from pre-kindergarten through Grade 8. High-school students, meanwhile, will receive AI-literacy instruction and limited, supervised access to approved AI tools.

The fact that such a large school system sees value in slowing down and allowing younger children to develop foundational skills and human relationships should at least encourage us to consider whether a more deliberate, age-appropriate approach makes sense here.

Stratford and Perth County have the people to help lead that conversation. Educators, parents, technology experts, artists, librarians, researchers and em-

ployers could help develop a thoughtful approach to AI – including deciding what parts of a child's education we want to remain deliberately human.

I work in an industry already experiencing this tension. Film and television are being transformed by AI, and I use these tools myself. I see their enormous potential. But I also see how quickly convenience can replace judgement and how easily something distinctly human can disappear from the process.

I was reminded of that recently when my family was considering a charitable gift in memory of my late father. An email I received in response appeared to have been written, at least in part, by AI. The language was polished, but it felt insincere. I wrote back to express my disappointment that what felt like an automated response had replaced a genuine human one at a moment when that mattered.

Just as there are conversations that shouldn't be automated, there are parts of learning that shouldn't be outsourced. Perhaps one of the most important things we can teach our children about AI is not only how to use it, but when not to use it.

We cannot possibly teach today's children every tool they will encounter. What we can give them are the human skills that will endure: curiosity, critical thinking, creativity, judgement, empathy and the ability to communicate with another person.

The question isn't whether AI belongs in our children's future. It unquestionably does. The question is what kind of people we want our children to become in a world increasingly shaped by it.

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Buzz Stop
Union Barber
Mornington Variety
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Cozyn's
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Sobey's

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The Livery Yard
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COMING EVENTS

Email to inquire stratfordtimes@gmail.com

STRATFORD SCRABBLE CLUB

Anne Hathawy Residence 480 Downie St., Stratford

Meets every Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. for 3 games. Check our website for further details stratfordscrabble.ca

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

JOIN US FOR SUMMER AT KNOX

Knox Presbyterian Church

142 Ontario St., Stratford

August events include Book Club on Tuesdays, drop in watercolour painting on Wednesdays, Stained Glass Tours on Thursday - all starting at 10:30 a.m. Free community dinner on August 19 at 5 p.m! Visit <https://pccweb.ca/knoxstratford/> or call 519-271-0373 for more details! Everyone welcome!

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

FRIDAY NIGHT EUCHRES

Friday, September 11; 6 p.m.

Legion 804 Ontario St.

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.

WELCOME SUNDAY AT KNOX!

Sunday, September 13; 10:30 a.m.

Knox Presbyterian Church, 142 Ontario Street.

After a short service starting at 10:30, stay for food, craft swap, kids craft, family games, live music and more! Visit <https://pccweb.ca/knoxstratford/> or call 519-271-0373 for more details! Also save the date for a free community dinner on September 16 at 5pm! Everyone welcome!

YOUTH AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

Hosted by Youth Unlimited YFC Stratford

Mondays, 3:00-4:45 p.m., September 14/26-June 21/27

382 Britannia Street, Stratford

Free drop-in for students aged 11-18. Join us for snacks, board games, video games, and connection! Questions? www.yfcstratford.com info@yfcstratford.com 519-272-1614

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

EDMONTON ELKS VS TORONTO ARGONAUTS

Saturday, September 19

The Stratford Legion is hosting a bus trip to see the Edmonton Elks vs Toronto Argonauts football game. It is a 3 p.m. game and the Badder bus leaves from the Cooper Lot at 12 noon. The cost is \$105 p.p. Contact Dean at 273-4463 to reserve and pay for your spot. Tickets are selling fast!

STRATFORD MISSION DEPOT WITH FOUNDER JEAN AITCHESON

Wednesday, September 2; 2 p.m.

Christ Church, 595815 Oxford 59 Huntingford

This Reaching Ontario Sharing Education (ROSE) program is co-hosted by the Braemar W.I. and the ACW of Christ Church. It is a wheelchair accessible building and all are welcome. Refreshments will be served. questions.lauragreen77@gmail.com

THE SECOND HAND BOOK NOOK SALE

Tavistock Fall Fair, in the arena

Friday, Sept. 11; 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 12; 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 13; 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Lots of books, magazines and puzzles for sale

For more information, call 519-590-1617

GARDEN STRATFORD GENERAL MEETING

Monday September 14; 7:15 – 9:00 p.m.

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

Featured Presentation: “Flower Shows in UK - Harrogate Show in England/ Castle and Gardens”, Roland Craig Meeting Open to Everyone; Free Admission.

JAY NORRIS PRESENTATION ON GROWING ORCHIDS

Sunday, September 20; 2-4 p.m.

Richards Memorial Church, 360 Edgeworth Avenue, London, ON N5W 5C4

The London Orchid Society meets the third Sunday of each month. Jay Norris Presentation on Growing Orchids in Cases from Stratford, ON. His presentation is how he uses cases to create a tropical paradise for Orchids that grow better in warmer conditions. Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting for more information at www.londonorchidsociety.com; contact Daryl at 519-666-2927.

STRATFORD SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING

Monday, Sep 21st from 7:30-9:15 pm

St. Paul's Anglican Church 9 Douro St. (at Waterloo)

Free Open House class

For information contact stratfordscd@gmail.com or (519) 272-1398

YOUTH UNLIMITED YFC STRATFORD GOLF TOURNAMENT FUNDRAISER

Wednesday, September 23

Stratford Golf & Country Club

Golfer sign-in: 3:00 PM, Shotgun Start: 4:00 PM

9-hole, best-ball tournament. \$300 fee per golfer, or \$1000 per team of 4. Contests, prizes, and giveaways! Registration required to participate. Questions & Sign-Up (Required to Participate): www.yfcstratford.com info@yfcstratford.com 519-272-1614

FALL BBQ

Thursday, September 24; 5:30 p.m.

Legion 804 Ontario St.

Wild Hog Oktoberfest Sausage on a bun with sauerkraut and fresh cut fries, all for \$15 per person. There is not ticket needed. For take out call by September 22 at 519-271-4540 or 519-703-6544

STRATFORD SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING

Monday, Sep 28th from 7:30-9:15 pm

St. Paul's Anglican Church 9 Douro St. (at Waterloo)

Free Open House class

For information contact stratfordscd@gmail.com or (519) 272-1398

YOUTH LUNCH PERIOD PROGRAM

Hosted by Youth Unlimited YFC Stratford

Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., September 30/26-June 16/27 382 Britannia Street, Stratford

Free drop-in for high school students. Join us for snacks, games, connection (and occasional pizza parties!).

Questions?

www.yfcstratford.com

info@yfcstratford.com 519-272-1614

PURE HEART PROGRAM

Hosted by Youth Unlimited YFC Stratford

Wednesdays, 3:00-4:30 p.m., September 30/26-June 16/27

382 Britannia Street, Stratford

Free art program for students aged 11-18. Join us for discussions, guest artists, art instruction, and more! Questions? www.yfcstratford.com info@yfcstratford.com 519-272-1614

OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY CIRCUIT BOOK (STAMP) FAIR

Saturday, October 24, 2026

Church of the Epiphany, 560 Dundas Street, Woodstock

10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Free Admission & Parking

Stop in and buy some stamps and meet fellow stamp collectors.

About 8 participating stamp clubs. Contact: dheaton3e3@gmail.com

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

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.



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

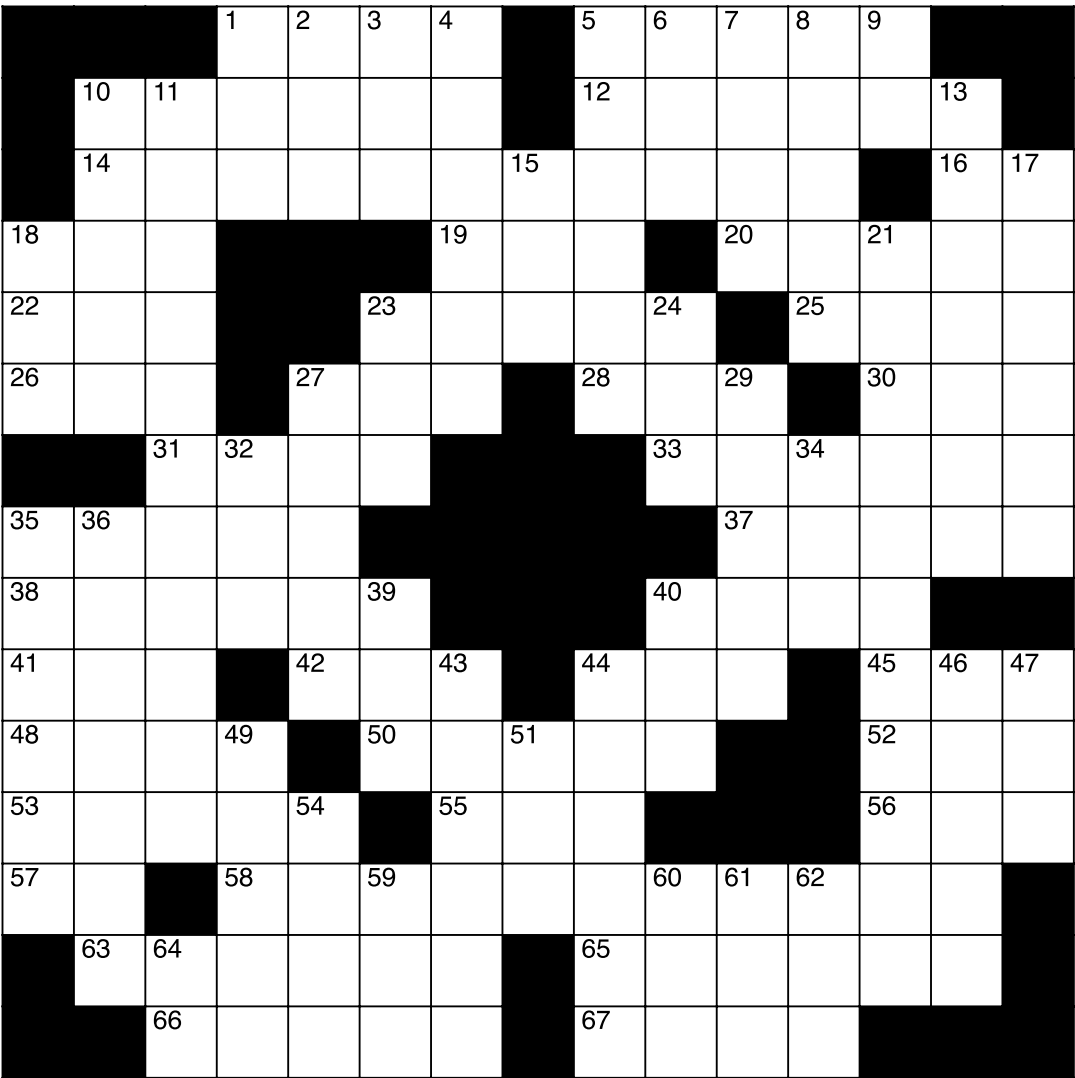
Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Longtime Vogue editor Wintour
- 5. A Spanish title of respect
- 10. A way of looking
- 12. Properly
- 14. Rolled steel
- 16. Not down
- 18. Law degree
- 19. Consume food
- 20. Intermediate ecological stage
- 22. Old world, new
- 23. Dispense justice
- 25. Stiff hair-like structure
- 26. Ethiopia
- 27. Cool!
- 28. Father
- 30. An enthusiastic devotee of sports
- 31. Holm oak
- 33. Be united
- 35. Rattling breaths
- 37. Supermarket chain
- 38. Provided with a quality
- 40. Samoan monetary unit
- 41. Swiss river
- 42. Hill (Celtic)
- 44. Have already done
- 45. ATM company
- 48. Syngman ___, Korean president
- 50. Very willing
- 52. Arctic explorers (abbr.)
- 53. Food listings
- 55. Bachelor's place to crash
- 56. Big Blue
- 57. Sports magazine
- 58. Relating to a place north of south of the equator
- 63. Female follower of Bacchus
- 65. A type of laugh
- 66. Slovenly women
- 67. Large jug

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Boxing's GOAT
- 2. Zero
- 3. Midway between north and northeast
- 4. Concurred
- 5. Added flavor
- 6. Amount of time
- 7. Eggs of parasitic insects
- 8. S-shaped moldings
- 9. Atomic #45
- 10. ___ d'art: small artistic item
- 11. A godparent's "kids"
- 13. Nocturnal burrowing lizard
- 15. Hit lightly
- 17. Aircrafts
- 18. Witness
- 21. Alluding to something
- 23. Take to the limit
- 24. Baglike structure in a plant or animal
- 27. Start over
- 29. Administered
- 32. Romanian monetary unit
- 34. Unit of liquid capacity
- 35. Equips with weapons again
- 36. Disney town
- 39. Female deer
- 40. Title of respect
- 43. A place to go rafting
- 44. A way to conclude
- 46. Type of television
- 47. Georgia rockers
- 49. Leonhard ___, Swiss mathematician
- 51. Slang for gun
- 54. River in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 59. Bar bill
- 60. Small, gray-headed crow
- 61. Frozen water
- 62. Norwegian krone
- 64. Commercial



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Pet of the week



APOLLO

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With his calm and affectionate personality, he is always happy to be part of the family. Apollo has a high level of energy, so he's looking for a home where he can have daily exercise, enrichment, and structure.

If you're looking for a sweet boy to share your days with, Apollo may be the perfect match! Meet him by contacting our Stratford Centre or visiting our website at kwsphumane.ca/adopt/dogs



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FOR SALE

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

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