

HURON-PERTH boomers

A FREE magazine for adults 50+

Winter 2017/18 — Volume 2, Issue 4

HISTORY

Riding the rails

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Huron and Perth counties

HEALTH

Winter blahs

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Thanks for picking up the winter issue of Huron-Perth Boomers! We have another great issue for you, with one story in particular that gave me pause. It's about beating the winter blahs (Page 4), and it explains how we're physiologically dispositioned to conserve energy at this time of year, so we need to stop being so hard on ourselves when we feel the need to hibernate during the cold winter months.

The seemingly endless grey days that winter can bring does dampen my spirit, so this year I'm going to make an extra effort to get outside as much as possible, whether just going for a walk (read our story on Page 8 about safe winter walking), cross-country skiing, playing with my kids or public skating at our local arenas. Sometimes, the crisp air is all I need to get the bounce back in my step.

Much of our ability to enjoy the outdoors this time of year, of course, depends on what Old Man Winter brings. With the past two winters being so mild, the prognosticators are unsure of what to expect this year – some say we're in for a 'true Canadian winter' with deep snow and long cold snaps, while others see another 'open' winter, with yo-yoing temperatures and on-again, off-again snow. Though I'm not a huge fan of the white stuff, I do hope it's one way or the other instead of bouncing between cold and mild. It could be an old wives tale that cold weather kills the bugs that make us sick, but I know the past two winters have allowed cold and flu season to hang around our house for what felt like the entire winter, as it did with most of our family and friends as well.

Regardless of what the winter brings, I must thank our writers, advertisers, distributors and readers for their continued support as we approach our second anniversary, which we'll achieve with our Spring 2018 issue. Your kind words and willingness to be a part of the magazine allows us to be an important and entertaining resource for adults 50+ in Huron and Perth counties.

Happy holidays and all the best in 2018!

Amy Irwin, Publisher
Huron-Perth Boomers

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Happy holidays from The Irwins, Dwight, Amy, Layne (10) and Jace (7).

WINTER 2017/18

HURON-PERTH boomers



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BEAT THE BLAHS

THE WINTER BLUES ARE REAL, BUT YOU CAN DEFEAT THEM
BY JULIE TALBOT

As the seasons shift and transition, so does the weather, landscapes, vegetation, and habitats and behaviours of animals.

It is no wonder we humans also change accordingly. People shift and transition with the seasons as part of our physiology rooted in 'old-brain' survival responses. Physiology, in this context, is defined as the ways in which our bodies function, including processes such as nutrition, movement and sleep.

We are fortunate to experience the diversity that all four seasons offer. Spring is the time of new growth; summer is the season where nature flourishes; autumn is the season of bounty and harvest; and winter makes us slow down and conserve energy.

As winter approaches, many of us may feel changes

occurring in our environment and minds and bodies. We tend to judge these changes in a negative way. We may begin to feel cold, tired and hungrier than normal, and we may begin lamenting the shorter days ahead, heating bills, snow removal and winter driving. This type of thinking and feeling can contribute to the winter blues, which is referred to by the medical system as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). When our physiology changes and we feel ourselves slowing down, we may experience a lack of energy, which can then interfere with and interrupt our ability to function in our daily lives. If this occurs, seeking medical attention can help to improve your mood and ability to function, as medication is an option in some cases.

The Mayo Clinic defines SAD as being a type of depression related to changes in the season. Most people experiencing SAD begin to feel symptoms in the fall and this continues

by Julie Talbot

throughout the winter months. These symptoms may include irritability, interpersonal problems, heavy feeling in the arms and legs, oversleeping, craving food high in carbohydrates, and weight gain. The lack of sunlight experienced in fall and winter months play a large factor in the cause of SAD. The lack of sunlight leads to drops in serotonin (our feel-good hormone) and melatonin (sleep-aid hormone), while our internal clock (sleep/wake cycle) is offset.

Let's consider what bears do to prepare for the winter season. A bear eats more to increase its body fat. The cold weather and lack of sunlight triggers the bear's biological response to prepare for hibernation. So, the bear is not producing hormones to keep it going, it conserves energy in order to slow down these physiological processes. Bears spend most of their time in their dens over the winter months, only coming out for short periods during warmer days. They conserve their energy by slowing down and going with (not against) their natural physiological rhythms.

The bear does not say to himself, "What is wrong with me? Why am I so tired? I'm such a loser because I'm not able to get anything done." Yet we humans do this to ourselves. OK, we are not bears and we have responsibilities and obligations to fulfill even though it's winter; however, I invite you to consider being kind and gentle with yourself and accept the changes we experience, and perhaps lower your personal expectations.

During the winter months, it may be helpful to consider being introspective and avoid beginning new projects, and instead reflect on what we have accomplished over the year. What if the slowing down of our energy is neither good nor bad, but it is just what it is? In today's society, we demand much of ourselves, even when our rhythms are slowing, so we tend to get into a pattern of negative self-talk, telling ourselves that we are not good enough and there is something wrong with us. It is vital to stop this thinking in its tracks!

Since we are not bears, let's consider some ways to beat the winter blues! Let's assume we are no longer thinking negative thoughts about winter and we understand it's natural to conserve energy. There are small lifestyle changes that can improve your mood over the winter months.



Major study finds untreated hearing loss linked to dementia

Although the reason for the link is as yet unclear, a recent Johns Hopkins and National Institute on Aging study shows that seniors with hearing loss are significantly more likely to develop dementia over time than those with normal hearing. Researchers say these findings "could lead to new ways to combat dementia, a condition that affects millions of people worldwide and carries heavy societal burdens."

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Get more sunlight – Get outside (even if it's overcast) between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Your body is craving sunlight!

Light therapy – Using a light bank for 15 minutes every morning simulates dawn and helps our bodies adjust in the morning when it is still dark out.

Eat well – You may be craving simple carbohydrates (chocolate, chips), however these foods increase negative moods over the long term. Try to eat complex carbohydrates (root vegetables, oatmeal, popcorn) that take longer to digest.

Music – Play upbeat, energetic music.

Exercise – Studies show that 60 minutes of cardio three times a week, can improve symptoms of mild to moderate depression.

Volunteer – Get out into your community and lend a helping hand to those in need.

Plan a vacation – If it's in your budget, go for it!

Have some winter fun – Think of all the ways you can enjoy the season. Have fun outside by going ice fishing, snow-shoeing, skiing, tobogganing, hot-tubbing, feeding the birds or gathering around an outdoor winter fire to watch the stars.

Have fun indoors – If you prefer to stay indoors you can decorate for the season, curl up with a book, watch uplifting and funny movies, and have people over to share food and/or play board games. Enjoy this winter and plan some new traditions so that winter is a celebrated season.

Julie Talbot, MSW, RSW, social worker and yoga alliance certified teacher, has worked in primary health as a clinical social worker for 11 years. She also has extensive training in addictions, trauma, cognitive behavioural therapy, mindfulness meditation, relaxation training and cross-disciplinary yoga. Julie is passionate about her community and in holistic health, which has sparked her most recent venture in writing. ■

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WALK SAFELY

this winter

DON'T LET THE SNOW AND ICE KEEP YOU INSIDE
BY EMILY POWELL AND MARGUERITE THOMAS

Winter – the season many love to hate.

Unless you plan to move to a warmer climate, it's time to embrace it. Enjoying winter can be enhanced by safe outdoor winter activities, especially walking. Fall prevention experts recommend keeping active by doing things you enjoy. For some, this means snowshoeing or cross-country skiing, while for others it's going outside for a walk.

This article will focus on winter walking because, other than investing in warm winter clothing and quality footwear, it is an inexpensive way to get out and about and enjoy time with others. Walking is an activity that helps us to avoid falls as it improves our balance, strength and posture.

Think about walking briskly during an invigorating, but mild, winter day. It feels good! Walking outside provides a change of scenery that can improve your mood and supports good mental and social health. Try finding a walking group in your area or ask some neighbours to join you. Any amount of company is better than none!

Where to start?

- Begin gradually and build up stamina. If you haven't been walking, it is wise to build up your stamina by increasing daily physical activity – spend less time in a chair and/or join an exercise group. Check out local exercise options at www.southwesthealthline.ca.
- Choose clothing that is bright and reflective so you can be seen easily.
- Consider the warmth of your clothing and include gloves and a hat if needed. Dressing in layers can also help keep you comfortable and allow you to make changes as you warm up.
- Choose footwear that is stable, well insulated and has a non-slip sole. Fashionable boots are only good for their looks, not for vigorous winter walking. Visit www.ratemytreads.com for the results of the iDapt lab testing of winter boots for their slip resistance in different winter conditions.
- Monitor the weather forecast and do alternate activity if it is too icy, cold or an otherwise hazardous day. Many falls happen on days following an ice storm, when

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by Emily Powell and Marguerite Thomas

perhaps going for a walk was too risky.

- Use assistance if needed – canes, walking poles, ice grippers and other assistive devices can help prevent falls.

What should be considered during the walk? —

- Tell someone where you will be going and for how long. Take along a cell phone in case you run into difficulty.
- Scan your environment for dangers that could cause a fall. Look for trip hazards, black ice, cracks, uneven and changing surfaces, and other objects that block your way.
- Keep your hands free, not in your pockets. Should you start to slip, you can regain your balance more readily with your hands free.
- Take your time and enjoy the walk.
- Judge your stamina and don't overdo it.
- Walk on designated paths and look for areas with benches if you need a rest.
- Plot out where the washrooms are located if you know you will need a pit stop.
- Move slowly if you find yourself walking on ice. Keep your knees loose, shorten your strides and shuffle your feet. Wet leaves, rain and snowdrifts can be as risky as ice.
- Give time for your eyes to adjust when going from outdoors to indoors and vice versa, especially if you have glasses with lenses that turn dark in sunlight.
- Wear sunscreen, especially around your ears and lips, when the UV index is high. Just because it's cold doesn't mean the sun's rays can't cause harm.

After your walk

- Assess how you feel. If you are sore, switch to shorter walks and gradually increase your walking time.
- Enjoy a glass of water. Dehydration can make you dizzy, which increases the risk of falling. Drink six to eight glasses of water each day to stay hydrated.
- Look out for others. Inform your municipality about any trip hazards that are the responsibility of the local administration. They would rather hear and act on it than face a lawsuit.

Helpful tips

- If you drive to a walking area, take time to slowly exit your vehicle. Turn your whole body out of the vehicle and place both feet firmly on the ground before attempting to exit.
- Remember that good nutrition is valuable to your

overall health and plan your walks for when you are well hydrated and not overly hungry.

- Maintain a regular schedule of vision and hearing checks to assist in adding to your enjoyment of the walk while being fully aware of potential hazards.
- Keep your doctor informed of your physical activity level. Medication could increase your risk of falling!
- Take extra care on the last step of stairs. This is a common place for a fall. Use the handrail when available for extra support.
- Take your time (the best tip!).

If you would like additional information to keep yourself independent by avoiding falls, the partners for Fall Prevention Month, which was November, put together a toolkit of resources including a large section for older adults and their caregivers. Visit www.fallprevention.month.ca, contact your local health unit or visit the Southwest Healthline at www.southwesthealthline.ca for additional resources.

This resource was developed as a collective effort by the Southwest Region (Ontario) Falls Prevention Network (SWRFPN) and may be reproduced for other winter walking fall prevention resources.

Emily Powell, MCL.Sc., MHM, SLP, CHE, is a Health Promoter at the Grey Bruce Health Unit. Marguerite Thomas, RN., BSc., is the coordinator of the Fall Prevention Community of Practice www.fallsloop.com, sponsored by the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation (www.onf.org). Both are members of the national Partners for Fall Prevention Month, Southwest Ontario Regional Fall Prevention Network, the Huron Perth Stepping Out Safely Coalition, the Grey Bruce Fall Prevention and Intervention Program, and the Community Coalition for the Prevention of Falls in Older Adults.

Resources

Canada Safety Council: Canada's Voice and Resource for Safety. Safety Tips for Winter Walking. <https://canadasafetycouncil.org/senior-safety/safety-tips-winter-walking>
My Health. Alberta.ca. Winter Walking Tips: Lower Your Risk of Falling. <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/winter-walking-tips.aspx>

Board of Health. Preventing Injuries from Wintertime Slips and Falls in Toronto. City of Toronto: Board of Health; 2016 Oct. Report No: PW17.14 Available from: www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2016/pw/bgrd/backgroundfile-98004.pdf.

University of Calgary. Risk - Environmental Health and Safety. Safe Winter Walking. <https://www.ucalgary.ca/safety/home/report-incident-incident-oars/safe-winter-walking>
PEO Canada. 9 Winter Safety Tips You Didn't Know. <http://www.peocanada.com/peo-blog/9-winter-safety-tips-you-didnt-know/>

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DEVELOP PLANS FOR LATER IN LIFE WHILE YOU'RE STILL HEALTHY
BY JUDY WHITE

by *Judy White*

I am tired of watching my patients die in a way they did not choose simply because they didn't talk about how they want to die, or even where they want to die.

I am tired of family members being asked to speak for their loved one when they have no idea what their loved one wants, simply because they have never had that conversation. I am tired of being told, "Don't talk about it. I am not ready to talk about death."

Sally suddenly collapses at home and is rushed to the hospital. She is unconscious and in the intensive care department. Her family holds vigil at her bedside. The doctors do not feel she will leave the hospital alive, so they ask the family of Sally's wishes. Does she want to be kept alive using machines? The family is unsure of what her wishes are and have different opinions as to what she would want.

We are the Baby Boomer generation. We grew up in a time of dramatic social change (give peace a chance) and have gone through a cultural shift from the silent generation before us (work hard and keep quiet) to a generation that has refused to go quietly into any life stage. The silent generation (our parents) believed that a good death was all about growing old and to accept the inevitable pain and burdens that dying would bring, no matter how long the battle took.

We Baby Boomers don't see it that way. We tend to believe that a good death is all about the good life and, when we can't have that any longer, we have little patience to prolong the 'battle.'

So, what's the issue you ask? The issue is that no one is talking about it! Dying is still cloaked in secrecy, and yet dying well is just as important as living well. We need to talk about how and where we want to live, right to the end of our life. We need to talk about what we want to happen if there ever is a time we cannot speak for ourselves. We need to shout it from the rooftops or, at the very least, have the conversation with our partners, parents, siblings and other people who are important to us – people who will speak for us if we no longer can.

We are all too aware that the end of our life can occur at any time – some of us may never get the chance to grow old, but we have the right to look dying in the eye and say this is how it will go.

Say your widowed mother has had some progressive health concerns. Ten years ago, at the age of 80, she told her children that she loves life and wants to live until she is 100. Your mom has now suffered a catastrophic stroke; she does not recognize any family or friends nor is she able to communicate either verbally or non-verbally. Someone needs to make some decisions about her medical care, but who will make them? Her children or someone else? And how will you know if the decisions are the right choices for your mother?

Advance care planning in Canada is about reflection and talking. It is about communicating what is important to you if you are not able to speak for yourself. It is about sharing your personal and health care wishes.



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Consider these five steps:

1. Think about what you want – what do you value in your life? What is important to you? What are the tradeoffs you are willing to accept to reflect the health and personal care you want in the future?
2. Seek to understand health care choices and alternatives. Who will speak for you if you can't? Who will be your substitute decision maker? 'Speak Up Ontario' (www.speakupontario.ca) is a valuable resource for Ontarians. The website provides easy, step-by-step tools, workbooks and guides to start the conversation with those you trust. There are tools that help to make the medical jargon easy to understand as you consider what choices or alternatives match your values and goals.
3. Determine who will be your substitute decision maker. Who best will speak for you if you are no longer able to make decisions about your care? Who will make sure that you are heard and respected if you cannot speak for yourself? Do you know who will be your substitute decision maker? Start the conversation about end-of-life care, sooner rather than later. It's all about communication, so talk to them and share what is important to you and how you'd prefer to be cared for.

There is nothing more terrifying or lonely than feeling unheard.

4. Start talking with your family, friends and future substitute decision maker. Let them know what you want – no one knows better than you, so start the conversation. Visit www.advancecareplanning.ca for tools to help you to start the conversation at the kitchen table so to speak and not in the intensive care unit.
5. Write it down, talk about it, record it. Communicate. Writing it can help your family, friends or your substitute decision maker articulate your wishes. It literally removes the guesswork. They will have support for the decisions they will make if you were no longer able to direct your care.

At age 63, Michael is at the beginning stages of Alzheimer's. He is well aware that at some point he will not be able to recognize people or make his own decisions. His mother died of Alzheimer's many years ago and he helped to care for her at the end. What if this happened to you? What if you were Michael? How will you make your wishes known? Who will make decisions about your care and treatment when you are no longer mentally capable of doing so yourself? Who will speak for you? Too many people are dying in a way they wouldn't choose, and too many of their family and friends are left feeling bereaved, guilty and uncertain – all because they didn't talk about what it means to them at the end of their life, what their wishes are, how and where they want their dying to "play out."

Huron and Perth counties are very fortunate to have three residential hospices available to individuals as one of their end-of-life care options. These residential hospices are a testament to how compassionate and dedicated individuals and communities can come together to make a vision a reality.

Local hospices

- Jessica's House, Exeter (www.jessicashouse.ca)
- Huron Residential Hospice, Clinton (www.huronresidentialhospice.com)
- Stratford/Perth Rotary Hospice, Stratford (www.stratfordperthhospice.ca)

All three residential hospices are slated to open their doors in 2018.



Advance care planning is all about communication and preparing for a time when you can no longer direct your care. It is about each of us having opportunities to share what we want or don't want for future personal or health care.

One of life's absolute certainties is that every one of us is going to die. Each of our lives is a story unto itself, filled with the joy, sadness, courage, and passion of a good book. Don't leave the final chapter to chance. You, and you alone, are the author of your life book, so write your final chapter now! This might very well be the best gift you can give your family, friends and future substitute decision maker.

So, come on Baby Boomers, stay true to your generation. Dust off your protest signs, put your walking boots on and start talking! ■

Judy White, RN, CHPCN, is a Palliative Pain and Symptom Management Consultant and Educator for Huron/Perth Counties. She has worked extensively in the palliative care field for the past 25 years.

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IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK

STRATFORD'S LIBRARY WAS ONCE OF NO FIXED ADDRESS
 BY JODI JEROME

There has been a library in Stratford since 1842. It began as a 'Mechanics Institute,' a Scottish invention where working men paid a small fee to borrow books and attend lectures.

Yet the location for Stratford's library constantly changed in its first 60 years, until the Stratford Public Library was built in 1902. The following is an attempt to track the library as it moved and changed.

- 1842 - Log school on the triangle of land at St. Andrew and Church streets.
- 1852 - Location unknown.
- 1859 - Stratford Reading Room Association in second floor of town hall.
- 1860 - Jarvis block on the southwest corner of Erie and Ontario streets.
- 1863 - 19 St. Andrew St., in the front room of Central Public School's main floor.
- 1875 - 2 Ontario St., on the second floor of the Redford block.
- 1885 - Erie Street in the Young Men's Liberal Club (presently the site of Scotiabank's parking garage).
- 1892 - Southwest corner of Downie and Ontario streets, on second floor in Corcoran block.
- 1895 - The Stratford Public Library became a free library, with no annual fee and open

by Jodi Jerome



Stratford Public Library,
 19 St. Andrew Street,
 1975, Stratford-
 Perth Archives Street
 Photograph Collection.

to all, including women and children, who had previously not been allowed membership.
 1897 - Ground level of the old city hall and market building until a fire in 1897.
 1897 - Back to the southwest corner of Downie and Ontario streets on second floor in Corcoran block.
 1898 - Returned to 2 Ontario St. until the new Stratford Town Hall was finished.
 1900 - New Stratford Town Hall in two rooms just east of the main front door, while the Reference Section was moved into the basement.

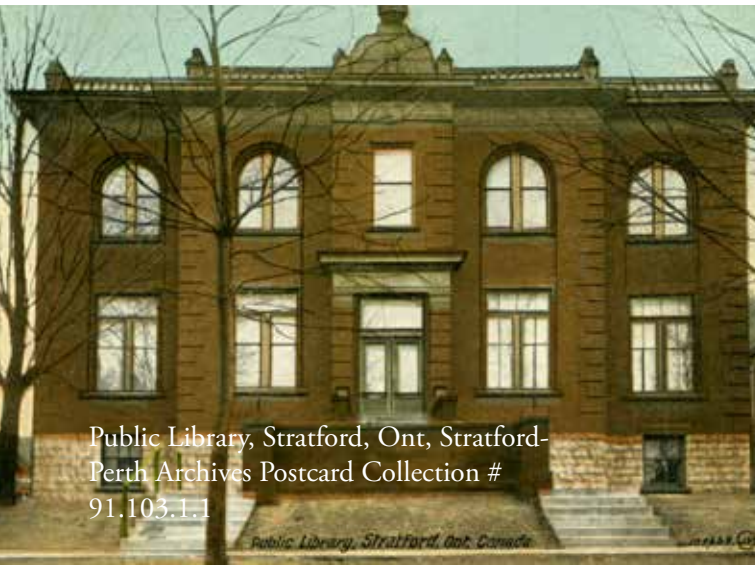
Finally, in 1900, Andrew Carnegie, an American steel mill billionaire, was funding the construction of public libraries. He generally donated about \$2 per resident of a community as long as the municipal council agreed to provide the building site, commit to funding at least 10 per cent of the library grant for annual operating costs, and only use the building as a library.

Initially Carnegie donated to library construction in places personal to him but the program widened in scope. In 1901, he began approving library grants to Canadian towns and cities, with the first being the Windsor Public Library in February 1901.

R. Thomas Orr, Stratford's library chair, wrote to Carnegie to request a grant for a new Stratford Public Library in 1901, after hearing about Carnegie's program from banker William Mowat. He received a reply from Carnegie's secretary James Bertram, dated Dec. 14, 1901.

Carnegie approved a grant of \$12,000 to build a new

by Jodi Jerome



Public Library, Stratford, Ont, Stratford-Perth Archives Postcard Collection # 91.103.111

library, as long as the community by Resolution of Council guaranteed the, "Maintenance of Free Library at a cost of not less than \$1,200 a year, and provide a suitable site for the building." Imagine the library board's joy when they agreed to accept the spirit of the proposition subject to the approval of city council. But their joy was short-lived.

When news of the Carnegie grant hit the newspapers, there was a swell of opposition. Labour union members, workers and ministers, such as Rev. Arthur H. Gowing, did not want Carnegie's "blood money." Rev. Gowing and others felt the money was tainted and would be better used by the widows and orphans of workers shot and killed while picketing during the 1892 strike against his steel works in Homestead, Pennsylvania, which broke the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Works union. As a result of the violent strike battle between 300 Pinkerton guards and 100,000 workers, charges of murder were laid against 100 workers and union leaders, who were held responsible for the deaths of seven Pinkerton guards. The costs of paying damages broke the union, allowing Carnegie to increase work hours and decrease pay with no union interference.

Carnegie's philosophy that Canada should become part of the United States also did not endear him to Rev. Gowing and others.

The debate about Carnegie's grant and where to locate a new library raged in Stratford for three months in council chambers, in pubs, pulpits and over tea. On April 7, 1902, Stratford council voted 5-4 to accept the grant and acquire the land east of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church on the corner of St. Andrew and Birmingham for \$800.

The purchase did not get smoothly.

The land being offered for purchase had been a burial site for St. Andrew's church before the establishment of the Avondale Cemetery in 1871. Since 1873, those buried on the site had been moved to Avondale Cemetery, a few each year. Church member James Sharman contended that eight family members had been buried on the site and that his father had received a deed of ownership for the family plot.

Even after assuring Sharman that his family members would be exhumed and placed in plots at Avondale Cemetery, another snag delayed the land purchase. John Idington, Stratford's lawyer, was reluctant to transfer ownership of the land parcel because, upon due diligence, found there was confusion as to true ownership – St. Andrew's Church or the heirs of William Bell, of North Easthope Township. As the matter was legally sorted out, a list of back-up sites was compiled and investigated.

Although the city's library building committee had chosen an architect – Stratford's James Russell – and was talking about design and materials in the summer of 1902, the location decision was not made until September. That did not delay the building committee. In July, the bids on construction, heating and landscaping were awarded based on correspondence that indicated that Carnegie had increased the grant amount to \$15,000.

In September 1902, the City of Stratford received the deed to the 52-foot by 104-foot property, commencing construction. By July 27, 1903, the Stratford Herald had toured the building and published an article about its layout and capacity to hold over 10,000 books.

The new Stratford Public Library building opened its St. Andrew Street doors to the public on Sept. 17, 1903. It was the second Carnegie-funded library to open in Ontario and one of the 73 per cent of Carnegie-funded

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by Jodi Jerome



libraries in the world that did not incorporate ‘Carnegie’ into its name.

One of the unique features of the new library was its basement flat for the caretaker’s family. The “commodious dwelling” along a corridor under the library’s east wing had three bedrooms, a kitchen, parlour and large sitting room, as well as another large room used for storage or a pantry. Most rooms had windows and electric lights. Steam radiators in each room of the caretaker’s apartment and the first floor of the library ensured warmth for all.

Albert Murr was the first janitor in the new building. He was also caretaker for its neighbour, St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church. He, his wife Catherine, and children Walter and Viola lived there from 1903 to 1924. When he resigned, he informed the library board that he was taking the bathtub that he’d paid to install after being refused by the board in 1915. The board reconsidered its stance and paid him for its installation.

Samuel Andrews moved into the job and the apartment in 1924, but left for another position in 1926, when Hugh McMillan and his wife Annie moved in. The McMillans

moved into a remodeled janitor’s apartment due to the enlargement and change of the library entrance’s location. The apartment now contained three bedrooms, a kitchen, pantry, dining room, parlour and bathroom. Hugh worked at the library until 1928.

William Kirkham worked as the janitor from 1928 to ’29, when Fred C. Crerar, his wife Mabel and children Perc, Marjorie, Russ and Audrey, moved into the library. They were paid \$12/month, plus the free apartment and utilities to clean the library and maintain the heat. Although Perc and Marjorie moved away to school, jobs and marriage, Russ and Audrey were young when the family moved in. They grew up helping their parents with the cleaning and care of the library, especially after their father returned to the Canadian National Railway shop in Stratford until his retirement from both the CNR and the library in 1957.

Walter Philip (Butch) Kelterborn followed the Crerars and worked at the library from 1957 until his death in ’71 at Stratford General Hospital. The last live-in custodian was Russell Marlow, his wife Shirley and their children Sonia, Yvonne and Cathy. They lived in the library from 1971-74 and moved out due to the renovations in ’74 and ’75, but Russell remained custodian until his retirement in 1994. The renos included converting the custodian apartment into an audio-visual room and the children’s department.

These are just a few of the changes and happenings at the Stratford Public Library. For a highly entertaining and informative account of all the shenanigans, including leaky roofs, bats, raccoons, its supermarket days, the PLOW mobile library, its art collection, famous authors and actors at the library and more, read Dean Robinson’s book ‘Overdue: Stratford Library Services 1846-2003.’

The walls of the Stratford Public Library truly are as rich with their own stories as those in the books that grace its shelves. ■

Jodi Jerome is a writer, historian and heritage consultant who enjoys finding the stories people have forgotten about in the places they live, and making the local landscape come alive for those who live and visit there. Contact her at jodijerome@icloud.com.

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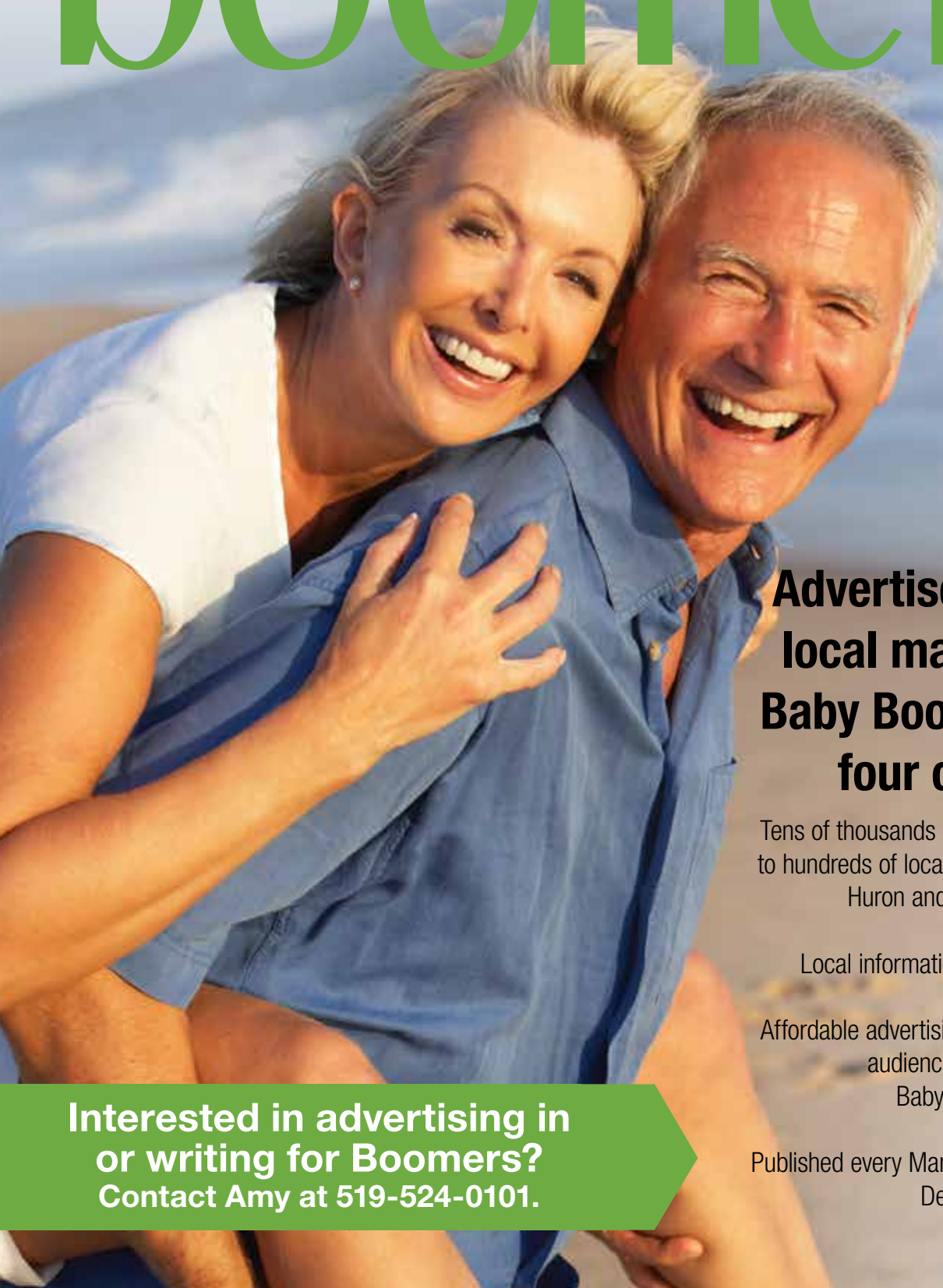
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In the kitchen with

TIM GODDARD, EXECUTIVE CHEF AT BENMILLER INN



Tim Goddard, Executive Chef at Benmiller Inn, has roots that run deep in the area. Raised here, he was a body builder in his younger days and, while working at Robindales in Goderich, he was inspired to build a career as a Chef instead. He attended culinary school in Kitchener, is classically French trained, and has over 35 years in the industry, working in Calgary, Goderich and Seaforth, most recently returning to Benmiller Inn, which has four-diamond status.

Tim is motivated by food, fitness and nutrition, and he loves the variety of local food Huron County has to offer. He is passionate about the science of food and great food pairings.

Five minutes with the Chef

Huron-Perth Boomers (HPB):

What would your last meal be?

Tim Goddard (TG): Beef Tenderloin from Metzgers with potatoes sarladaise (poached in duck fat). For dessert – Benmiller’s spiced pumpkin brulé with ginger-dusted churros.

HPB: What three ingredients can you not live without?

TG: That’s a hard question, as they all have their place. Herbs, olive oil and salt and pepper complement any dish.

HPB: What is your favourite thing to cook?

TG: Flourless chocolate cake and our sorbet.

Almost anyone can eat it, regardless of dietary restrictions.

HPB: What is your favourite kitchen tool?

TG: Sharpening steel. A sharp knife is essential for cooking.

HPB: Where do you find inspiration?

TG: I find my inspiration from other chefs. I love reading about chefs, especially in New York. Alfred Portale from Gotham Bar and Grill inspires me with his menu design philosophy – it’s out there but it makes sense. Also, British chefs are inspiring with their advance in ‘future food’ and the concept that people should come and have an experience, not just dinner.

Chef Goddard chose to share this recipe because it is challenging but still doable at home, and the results can be amazing when hosting company. Braised dishes are true winter comfort food – they’re hearty and fill you up!

To Drink?

A Pinot Noir or a younger, fruit-driven Bordeaux



BRAISED LAMB SHANKS, ROASTED ROOT VEGETABLES AND ROSEMARY JUS – A CLASSIC WINTER DISH FOR TWO

INGREDIENTS

2 Lamb Shanks (New Zealand or Ontario)
1-2 medium-sized sweet onions (Vidalia), roughly chopped
1 medium-sized carrot, roughly chopped
1-2 pieces of celery, roughly chopped
5 garlic cloves cut length-wise
3 tbsp tomato paste
375 ml of red wine (Pinot Noir)
1 bunch of rosemary
1 bunch of thyme
1 piece of parchment paper for covering the stock
Salt and pepper to taste

ROSEMARY JUS INGREDIENTS

6 lean slices of bacon
1-2 medium-sized shallots
Wild mushrooms (local market) your preference
Average for this stock is 60 grams

Method: Preheat oven to 250 C.

Directions: Season lamb generously with kosher salt, and pepper on all sides. In a heavy sauce pan or a Rondeau, heat olive oil on medium to smoke point. Add lamb shanks and brown on all sides. Remove lamb shanks and allow to rest. In the same saucepan or Rondeau, add a mirepoix of coarsely chopped onion, celery and carrot. Slowly sweat them over medium heat, stirring often until translucent. Add garlic and tomato paste. Continue to cook until fragrant, and slightly caramelize.

Deglaze pan with a Bordeaux or Shiraz red wine. Return the browned lamb to same sauce pan. Add enough water to cover the lamb shanks. Cover the liquid with parchment paper.

Place your saucepan in your 250 C preheated oven and braise for about 4 ½ hours. Remove the saucepan and add the thyme and rosemary, return to oven for one hour. When finished, set aside the lamb shanks, strain the liquid and reserve.

Rosemary Jus Directions: Return empty saucepan back to the stovetop and render six slices (chopped) bacon. Once cooked, strain the fat. Add shallots and wild mushrooms and sauté until tender. When finished, add the lamb shanks back to the saucepan and the reserved liquid. Reduce over medium heat until desired consistency is achieved (the longer you reduce, the more concentrated it will become).

Roasted root vegetables

INGREDIENTS

1 small acorn squash
1 small butternut squash
1 or 2 parsnips
1 or 2 carrots

Directions: Place all prepared root vegetables in a bowl, add enough olive oil to coat the vegetables. Add salt and pepper to taste. Place in shallow baking pan and cover with tinfoil and bake for one hour at 350 C (check periodically for desired doneness).

RIDING THE RAILS

STRATFORD-TO-GODERICH LINE CHANGED LIFE
IN HURON AND PERTH COUNTIES
BY JOHN MELADY

by *John Melady*

When the railway from Stratford to Goderich came to be in the late-1850s, it changed the footprint of Huron and Perth for evermore.

In the early years, when steam trains ran, they carried passengers, livestock and material goods of every kind. As the years went by, steam became diesel, and ultimately, no passenger trains ran. Today, freight is still transported, but the wood-slatted red and white cattle cars of the past are no more. Animals are trucked to destinations today.

I am old and curious enough to have been fascinated by this railway, which changed names over the years as different companies became involved. I used the facility and rode when steam engines pulled the cars, when you dared not open the windows because the black smoke from the engine blew soot into your eyes, when the train stopped at long-gone stations like Clinton, Seaforth and Mitchell. When I was five, my father and I even caught the train in Dublin, and rode the same car to Union Station in Toronto.

The old trains were a part of their time. There was no such thing as air conditioning and, initially, smoking was allowed anywhere on each coach. Then that practice was restricted. There were designated smoking sections until they too were eliminated. The fact the person sitting next to you might be smoking a cigarette, a pipe, or even a cigar is almost unbelievable to us today; yet it was an accepted practice years ago.

Today on passenger trains, tickets are electronically scanned and fewer and fewer paper ones are used, but they, in our so-called paperless society, are still large enough to list, among other things, the passenger's name, his or her destination, the time of departure and arrival, the date and place where the ticket was purchased, the cost, and the seat number to which the traveller has been assigned.

Years ago, you could go into the station at Clinton, for instance, buy a ticket with cash – there was no such thing as a credit card – and you were given a little cardboard ticket, not much larger than a couple of postage stamps. Then a conductor – always a male – punched a cancellation hole in your ticket, shortly after your train got underway. Fortunately today, both men and women work on trains, but they still wear uniforms that are not

completely changed from years ago. However, now you don't see them checking the time on a pocket watch as was once the case.

Older readers will remember other things about the rail cars we once rode. The seats, for instance, were always the same. They came in dark colours; generally blue or wine, and were invariably made of the same material. It was a tough bristle fabric that was never very smooth to the touch, but was presumably long wearing.

Then there were the toilets. They were at the end of each car, and in a crude sort of way, were functional. Waste was simply flushed down onto the tracks. That was why there was always a sign in each washroom that said, 'Please do not flush the toilet when the train is stopped in a station.' The reason for the admonition was manifestly clear.

But on a more pleasant note, in each car there was a silver-coloured metal water container, affixed to the wall, and put there so that drinking water was available for passengers. The water was never cold of course, but it was a hint of decadence in a world that was largely without. The drinking facility was especially loved by every kid on the train. There was always a sleeve of triangular-shaped paper cups by the water receptacle, and, in theory, single cups could be extracted from it. In reality however, several cups often came out at once, and these were indispensable for impromptu water fights. In those circumstances, many a parent had to march enthusiastic little combatants back to their seats.

While the interior of the train coaches were always of interest, it was the exterior that made steam trains memorable wherever they ran. This was particularly true of the massive black, belching engines that pulled the cars strung behind them. These power plants were unique, coal-fired in their later years, and always reliable. Today, they pull a few tourist trains, but apart from that, are chiefly relegated to outdoor displays or are curiosity pieces in museums. Years ago however, they were as common on the Stratford-Goderich line as anywhere else in the country.

These huge machines were recognizable for their sound as well as their looks – especially when they began to move after a station stop. First, they emitted a hissing sound of brakes being released. Then there was a series



of straining ‘shunts’ as they and the train eased forward. In the process, as the large, iron wheels slowly began to turn, the engineer often blew a departure whistle salute that could be heard for miles. In conjunction with these sounds, there was generally a huge cloud of black smoke that belched into the air and drifted back over the departing train – whether it was made up of passenger coaches or was a long string of freight cars.

There was one car in particular that set railway vehicles apart. For years, trains always had a unique coach that was attached to the rear end. It is not there today, but the tail end caboose was as identifiable as the engine up front. Aside from the engineer and any front-end crew on board, there were workers who rode in the caboose on freights and climbed out to perform various jobs while the train was in stations. This sometimes even included feeding and watering cattle that were being hauled at the time.

The caboose was generally a homey thing. After all, train employees lived there during each trip. They caught naps in bunks, cooked meals, told tall tales and often welcomed

friends who were just along for the ride. Farmers who sent cattle for slaughter often shipped them on one or more cars, and they’d share the caboose with the trainmen. As they rode, they ate with the crew, traded jokes and often played cards as the journey progressed. Regular shippers knew the railway men well.

Another train attribute was a huge snowplow that was pushed by an engine to clear tracks following the substantial winter storms common to Huron and Perth. Perhaps because the snowfall amount may be a bit less nowadays, a plow used in this area has sat quiet for some time in the train yard at Stratford. In all likelihood, the company that hauls freight on the Stratford-Goderich line may be just as happy that the plow remains where it is.

No article about the railways in this area should omit the jiggers. They were little handcars used by railroad maintenance personnel. Originally hand-cranked, they were later gas powered. They carried two or more workmen, and were about half as long as an automobile. Sometimes they had a roof, but not always. The little

by John Melady



A train's snow plow, in Stratford.

machines could be lifted from the tracks when a train approached. Now, like the steam trains of the past, jiggers are also gone, but in the time of steam, they were a very important element of the Stratford-Goderich rail operation.

Fortunately, diesel freight trains still run in these two important counties. May they long operate. ■

John Melady, a resident of Huron County, is the author of several books listed on Amazon.ca. He also likes riding trains.



The Mitchell train station. Stratford-Perth Archives Image, 2002.347.10, Postcard Collection.



Seaforth's train station, from the Collection of the Huron County Museum & Historic Gaol.

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FROM MINE *to finger*

LOCAL JEWELLERS GET RARE LOOK AT EKATI, THE FIRST
CANADIAN DIAMOND MINE IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
BY DWIGHT IRWIN

Photo courtesy Maple Leaf Diamonds

Touring a diamond mine is so rare that most people will never be able to cross it off their Bucket List.

Karen and Tim Bakelaar, of Listowel, experienced this dream trip in June when they were invited to tour the Ekati Diamond Mine, owned by Dominion Diamond Mines, which is 310 kilometres north-east of Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. The Bakelaars, whose family has operated a jewellery store in Listowel for 50 years, were invited to join Maple Leaf Diamonds on this trip, for their dedication to the company.

Despite the fact that Canada has the oldest diamonds in the world, the discovery of Canadian diamonds is relatively new. Exploration didn't begin until the 1970s, and it wasn't until 1993 that Ekati, the first Canadian diamond mine, opened. Production began in 1998, and now Canada is the third largest supplier of gem quality diamonds in the world by value.

"The Ekati mine is located approximately 200 km south of the Arctic Circle, 100 km north of the tree line, in an area of continuous permafrost, near Lac de Gras," Karen said.

Ekati means 'Fat Lake' in the Indigenous Tlicho language, and is a surface and underground mine. The mine is situated in the sub-Arctic tundra and is only accessible by ice road in the winter, so the visitors had to fly in from Yellowknife.

The Ekati mine has a number of pits that are accessible by land, which meant the visitors were able to experience the rugged beauty of the open tundra and had the opportunity to see the immense size of the mine. The Ekati mine also has underground operations.

"We flew right over one of the pits and you could not see the bottom. Pictures cannot show just how massive these pits are. It is really barren out there. Low tundra bushes, an endless amount of lakes and rocks everywhere. Wildlife migrates through. We were broken into two groups, and the second group saw a bear among the rocks."

The Bakelaars didn't just take a tour of the Misery and Pigeon surface pits, they also had the opportunity to visit the sorting facility and separate even the smallest natural diamonds from granite pebbles and dust and small

blasting wire which did not get removed at the processing plant. Security, as you can imagine, was tight.

"Hands out and above table at all times," Karen recounted. "However, we did get to handle rough diamonds. It was an amazing experience to be in a room filled with diamonds and people passionate about them."

No matter how many diamonds a person sees in their lifetime, each brings excitement. For Tim, the sorting facility was his highlight because it gave him a hands-on opportunity to sit behind the diamond bench and sort through dirt and granite to find diamonds that could be as small as dust particles or the size of a pebble.

"I could have stayed there all day," he said.

Some stones are obviously diamonds, some stones possibly contain a diamond, and these are returned to the processing plant to remove more of the ore surrounding the potential diamond trapped inside. It was amazing to see fancy yellow diamonds, of which Misery Pit is known.

"I think this was my highlight," said Karen. "In October 2016, a 65.93 carat sparkling yellow diamond was discovered at Ekati, and the staff at the sorting facility are still talking about that diamond. Driving by the Fox Pit, we were told that pit even produces a few pink and purple diamonds. Try to imagine all these colours hidden below the earth's surface.

Kimberlite

Kimberlite, is an igneous rock containing diamonds, which is removed from the surface mine and hauled by massive road trains (a truck with six hoppers pulled behind) or 210 tonne trucks to the processing plant. The ore goes through numerous processes – crushers, scrubbers, and de-gritting and de-sanding screens using water, magnetic belts and grease tables. Once the diamonds are removed, they go to the sorting facility.

Kimberlite pipes, where diamonds are found, are below the Earth's surface and most often under lakes. The Canadian government and the Government of the Northwest Territories work together to ensure that Canadian mines adhere to strict environmental regulations. Although the



Karen and Tim Bakelaar stand with some of the huge mining equipment during their visit to Ekati Mine.

lakes are drained to access the kimberlite pipes, fish are accounted for and are either relocated to other lakes or provided to communities, to minimize the environmental impact. The Northwest Territory Government holds bonds on diamond mines to ensure that once the mining is complete, the area is reclaimed to be usable by fish, wildlife and people. The mine monitors wildlife to ensure they are protected, stopping traffic when wildlife is in the area.

“While the mines run 24/7, they actually come to a stand-still when the caribou migrate through the area,” Karen said.

Life at the mine

The Ekati mine functions as its own city. It houses 900 beds, a fire department, recreation area, dining area, administration, an airport, as well as the processing building, the underground operation building, and the massive truck shop.

“Safety is foremost,” Karen said. “It’s ‘all the gear, all the

time.’ No vehicle moves through a cross street without authorization. From the underground operation building to the truck shop, everything is monitored, with a policy in place for everything.” Employees are generally on a two-week-in, two-week-out rotation, with the skilled labour force including both men and women, with a majority being from the north.

Local culture

The Bakelaars were also able to experience some local culture while in the north, including being welcomed to Yellowknife by the Dene National Chief, Bill Erasmus, and the Dene First Nation Drummers, who performed traditional songs and a traditional blessing. “It was a very moving experience,” Karen said. “Traditional throat singers also enchanted us with their performance at this dinner. We also had the opportunity to enjoy local food at every dinner.”

The group also took a boat tour on Great Slave Lake and was fascinated by the beautiful houseboats, which people live in year round. They were welcomed to a cabin for



Cancan Dancers (left) Johanna Tiemessen, Ashley Deveau, Pascaline Greau, Michelle Hannah, Kate Mansfield and Dene Drummers (above) Bobby Drygeese, Duncan Sangris, Cody Drygeese and Chief Edward Sangris provided the Bakelaars with a taste of northern culture.

dinner, and enjoyed more local talent on the violins. They even experienced a private acoustic performance with Juno award-winning singer Leela Gilday.

Yellowknife is not a large city, but it has large city opportunities, amenities, and a large city look. With a population of 19,500, it has 12 schools and 11 official languages. It is known as the Land of the Midnight Sun, and with 20 hours of daylight in the summer it is easy to enjoy the relaxed atmosphere with the locals.

A trip to Yellowknife, is not complete without the historical Old Town walking tour, given by Rosanna Strong owner of Strong Interpretation, experiencing the history of the northern city, from Ragged Ass Road to Old Town Dancers. They also toured Becks Kennels where generations have raised Alaskan Huskies for dog sledding.

“The summer temperatures must be below 15 C or the dogs cannot go on their summer training runs. Our 8 a.m. run was perfect, and I cannot even describe the noise level of these dogs as they all anticipate the excitement of a run. As soon as the dog musher Grant Beck gives his quiet command it is total silence and the dogs focus on their job.”

A return trip is now on their bucket list to experience a winter dog sled run and capture the Aurora Borealis.

Karen said they recognize how rare their opportunity and experience was.

“Few Canadians will ever experience the diamond mines, and we could not have had this experience without our diamond company. The sparkle of a well-cut diamond mesmerizes everyone and now we have experienced this from mine to finger.” ■

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SIMPLIFY YOUR FINANCIAL LIFE

CONSOLIDATE YOUR ASSETS TO MAXIMIZE YOUR FINANCIAL STRATEGY

BY JOSEF FRANK

by Josef Frank

Diversification is one of the golden rules of investing to reduce risk and boost your return potential over time.

Investor surveys indicate that wealthy investors open multiple accounts of the same type, with different financial institutions and different advisors, either because it simply happened this way over time or because they believe it to be an effective way to diversify. Diversification is about how you invest your money, not where you keep it!

Investing through multiple accounts and multiple advisors instead of consolidating your assets with one trusted advisor may impede proper diversification and potentially expose you to greater risk. The benefits of consolidating your assets include:

Reduced costs – Consolidation is a well-known way to reduce costs. By consolidating your investable assets with one trusted advisor, you will typically pay lower fees, assuming the fees are based on a sliding scale, as they are with many investment accounts and programs. By spreading your investments among multiple advisors and multiple financial institutions, you lose these economies of scale.

Simplified administration and consolidated reporting – With consolidation, you bring together all your investment accounts with one advisor, which makes it much easier to keep track of your investments and their overall performance. The paper statements you receive in the mail are minimized and the tax reporting for your investment income and dispositions becomes easier to manage and more accurate. Your tax preparation fees may also be reduced, since your accountant will be spending less time sorting through all the statements and determining the average cost base of identical investments.

Easier estate settlement process – Having investment and bank accounts spread among many different financial institutions will make your estate settlement process more administratively difficult for your executor/liquidator, and potentially more costly. By consolidating assets, you have peace of mind knowing that, after you pass away, your surviving spouse or other beneficiaries will have one point of contact that you trust to manage their overall assets and ensure they have



adequate income.

Access to comprehensive wealth management services – Consolidation may help you reach a certain level of assets with an advisor so you may then be eligible for certain specialized services, such as advanced tax and estate planning, comprehensive financial planning, managed investment programs and private banking.

More tax-efficient retirement income planning – Consolidation also enables you to manage your investments more effectively, helping you structure your investments to generate the retirement income you need. In retirement, you may have many different income sources, such as government pensions, employer pensions, Locked-in Retirement Savings Plans, Registered Retirement Income Funds, non-registered income and part-time employment income. If you have one trusted advisor managing your investments, it's easier for that advisor to determine how and in what order you should be withdrawing from all the different income sources to maximize your after-tax retirement income.

For convenience alone, consolidation is a strategy worth considering. With consolidation, you work with one advisor who sees the big picture – one who understands your overall financial situation and provides the customized advice you need. ■

Josef Frank is an Investment Advisor with RBC Dominion Securities Inc. Member-Canadian Investor Protection Fund. This article is not intended as, nor does it constitute, tax or legal advice. Readers should consult their own lawyer, accountant or other professional advisor when planning to implement a strategy. Learn more at <https://ca.rbcwealthmanagement.com/josef/frank>.

From employee to volunteer

Evelyn Rich became a ONE CARE volunteer immediately after retirement

When Evelyn Rich retired from her career in health care, she knew immediately that she would be a volunteer.

Evelyn has been caring for others since she started nursing in 1969. Today, she continues as a volunteer for Meals on Wheels and Friendly Visiting with seniors with ONE CARE Home and Community Support Services. ONE CARE counts on volunteers like Evelyn to deliver services to seniors, frail elderly, and people with health care challenges who live in Huron and Perth counties.

Home and Community Care is the kind of service that Evelyn is passionate about. She delivers hot meals on a regular basis. As a Friendly Visitor, she spends one-on-one time with isolated seniors in their homes, making time for conversation and a cup of coffee.

During her nursing career, Evelyn said she fell in love with home care and became a Personal Support Worker with ONE CARE, and a career that she enjoyed for 30 years.

“It was so nice to see that helping people with a little extra care enables them to stay in their homes as long as possible,” Evelyn said. “It is important for people to remain independent and in charge of their own care.”

When Evelyn retired last year she immediately offered to volunteer for ONE CARE, for the Meals on Wheels and Friendly Visiting programs.

“Evelyn’s commitment to community care, her enthusiasm and her ready smile make her an excellent volunteer,” said Shelley McPhee Haist, of ONE CARE.

“Evelyn is a Game Changer because she continues to give back to the community and the people who live there. She delivers meals to people living in Lucknow, Wingham and points in between. She is also called on when volunteer delivery help is needed in other areas,” Shelley said.



Evelyn also volunteers while being a caregiver for her husband who has health issues and requires ongoing support. Often on her routes Evelyn is joined by her husband and she notes, “He enjoys the ride and I enjoy the enthusiastic and thankful people I meet when I deliver the meals.”

Being a caregiver to her husband is a significant obligation for Evelyn, but she enjoys the time that she can help others.

“I am proud to help ONE CARE,” she says. “ONE CARE was good to me for the 30 years I worked there. I miss the clients, but I continue to visit many people.”

For information on ONE CARE programs, or to be a volunteer, call 1-877-502-8277 or email info@onecaresupport.ca. ■



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EVENTS

December 1

St. Marys Festive Outdoor Light Display

Milt Dunnell Field, St. Marys
www.townofstmarys.com
Runs through Jan. 8

Festival of Lights

1 Courthouse Square, Goderich
specialevents@goderich.ca
Runs through early January

December 2

Goderich Makers Market

Huron County Museum
Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
The market features handmade, high-quality items from local food producers, artisans, makers and crafters.
www.goderichmakers.ca
Also runs Dec. 9, 16 and 23, Jan. 6, Feb. 3, March 3 and April 7.

December 3

Tech Tutors

Stratford Public Library
10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Saturdays,
4-6 p.m. on Wednesdays
Free drop-in help sessions for assistance with your technology. Tech tutors will be available during these hours until Dec. 16, and return on Jan. 9, 2018.
www.splibrary.ca

December 4

A Catalogue Christmas Exhibition

St. Marys Museum, 177 Church St. S., St. Marys
9 a.m.-noon; 1-4:30 p.m.
519-284-3556
Runs through Dec. 22

December 5

Wingham Seniors Dining

131 John St. E., Wingham ADP Office
5:30 p.m.
Home-cooked meal for \$9 with entertainment to follow.
Register by calling Becky at 1-877-502-8277 x2118 by the Friday before the event.
Runs every Tuesday of the month

December 6

Gift Wrap Exchange Party

Stratford Public Library
6:30-8:30 p.m.
Save time and money this holiday season by swapping your unused gift wrap! Stratford Public Library is hosting its first Gift Wrap Exchange Party where you can find newer gift wrap in exchange for yours. This is a free, drop-in program.
www.splibrary.ca

December 9

Blyth Lions Club Christmas Dinner and Dance

Upstairs hall at Blyth Community Centre
Cocktails at 6 p.m., dinner at 7; dance to follow with Mostly Sideways.
http://blythnow.com

December 14

North Perth Seniors present 'The Country Versatiles'

Listowel Legion Auditorium, 565 Elizabeth St. E.
2-4 p.m.
\$3 includes admission, refreshments, entertainment, door prizes and spot dance prizes.
northperthseniorscentre@gmail.com
Entertainment also on Jan. 4

Thursday Theatre

Optimist Hall, 72 Water St., Stratford
1:30-3:30 p.m.
519-273-1000 x230
Runs every Thursday

December 15

An Advent Journey Marketplace

Listowel Mennonite Church, 465 Maitland Ave. S.
First tour begins at 7 p.m., last tour begins at 9
519-291-2350

December 16

Horse Drawn Wagon Rides in St. Marys

6:30-8:30 p.m.
Take a tour of the festive light display.
www.townofstmarys.com
Also runs Dec. 17, 23 and 24

Christmas Carol Sing-a-long

First Baptist Church, 85 Huron St., Clinton
7-9 p.m.
www.centralhuron.com

Christmas Bird Count

Pinery Provincial Park, Grand Bend
Join birdwatchers for an incredible day of winter birding.
pinerypark.on.ca; 519-243-8539

December 17

HuronSong Chorus Christmas Concert

Lakeshore Church, 56 North St., Goderich
2:30 p.m.
Proceeds to the Huron Women's Shelter

Lessons and Carols with Blyth Orchestra

St. Paul's Anglican Church, Clinton
7-9 p.m.
www.centralhuron.com

January 11

Seniors Dining Club

Brussels United Church, 61 King St.
Noon-1 p.m.
www.huroneast.com
Runs every Thursday

January 14

Old Tyme Jamboree

Wingham Legion
Old Time Music and Dance. Jamboree at 1 p.m.
\$5. Dinner available and served at 4:30 for \$10.
www.northhuron.ca
Also runs Feb. 11

WINTER 2017/18

January 18

Playing with Shakespeare

Stratford Public Library
6:30-8 p.m.
This eight-week program will deepen your understanding and enjoyment of Shakespeare by exploring, adapting, designing and staging scenes from Coriolanus. No theatrical experience required; just come and have fun!
Register by calling Robyn at 519-271-0220 x132 or emailing rgodfrey@stratford.ca
Runs Thursdays until March 8

January 19

Stratford Winterfest

Lower Queen's Park, Lakeside Drive
Free for all ages.
www.stratfordwinterfest.ca
Runs through Jan. 21

February 10

Valentine's Dinner and Yuk Yuks Show

Brussels arena
6:15 p.m. to midnight
www.huroneast.com

February 18

Soup's On at Bayfield Town Hall

11 The Square
Bring families together during our provincial Family Day celebrations! Soups available from our local restaurants and service groups.
www.bayfieldtownhall.com

Brussels Lions Breakfast

Brussels arena
www.huroneast.com

Pinery Family Day Weekend

Pinery Provincial Park, Grand Bend
Learn how Pinery's winter residents survive in winter, from tiny predators living under the snow, to winter songbirds and large, awe-inspiring night-time predators like Great Horned Owls and others. Bring your cross-country skis, snowshoes, toboggan and/or skates and enjoy winter! Skis and snowshoes available for rent.
519-243-8539; pinerypark.on.ca

February 23

Cabaret 2018 at Bayfield Town Hall

11 The Square
www.bayfieldtownhall.com
Runs through Feb. 24

Are you holding an event in March, April or May 2018? Email the details to amy@huronperthboomers.com for inclusion in our Spring 2018 issue. ■

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