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Are you turning up your television? Do you find yourself struggling to catch the conversation in groups? Are your family and friends noticing a change in your hearing? Have you been exposed to noise in the workplace?

If you answered yes to any of these, it is time to considering testing your hearing. “People are usually diligent when it comes to testing their vision, however hearing loss often goes unchecked as it is more of an invisible impairment that people tend to ‘live with’, explains Tina Stafferton, Doctor of Audiology at Sound Hearing Care. “Untested and untreated, hearing loss can gradually isolate someone from the things and activities that they were once active participants in.”

As May is Better Hearing and Speech month, it is a great time to meet your audiologist and begin testing your hearing. “We are offering complimentary hearing testing, hearing aid checkups, refreshments and prizes during May 12th-13th”. Tina adds “Establishing a baseline hearing test is important so that there is something to compare to down the road, as hearing loss worsens over time.”

While most hearing loss typically requires hearing aids, some may need assistive listening devices for specific issues such as the television or telephone. Others can learn communication strategies to optimize their hearing in the workplace or noisy environments. “We work with our patients to determine which treatment best meets their current needs”.

Being proactive about hearing can actually help you optimize the hearing that you have down the road. Research has shown that delaying treatment for hearing loss can limit your later success with amplification. “Hearing aids, by stimulating the pathways from the ear to the brain in the way that it is naturally used to, keep those pathways healthier and better able to understand speech, so it is always a good thing to consider treating a hearing loss earlier rather than later.” With such rapid advances in technology today, and the variety of amplification from tiny in-the-ear to discreet behind-the-ear or even rechargeable hearing aids – there are affordable options to suit everyone.

“Come in this month for your complimentary hearing test. We would love to meet you!” invites Tina.
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IT'S YOUR CHOICE. MAKE 2015 YOUR YEAR
ON THE COVER
Windsor’s Songstress performs at Caesars Windsor Friday, June 19th.
Photo: Ryan Pallotta.
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The past few months have seen an explosion of new techniques and devices many of which we have acquired. The Venus Viva rejuvenates the skin, treating fine lines, textural irregularities, tightens pores, and treats skin laxity with superb results. The Diamond Pollar (another handle of the Viva) tightens the face, neck, and décolleté, and is especially effective around the eyes creating a lift even after 1 treatment.

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Publisher’s Note

This issue of Windsor Life celebrates home-grown taste and talent. The abundance is for all of us to enjoy.

Windsor’s own Tamia is coming home to launch her new album, Love Life, with a special one night concert at the Colosseum at Caesars Windsor on June 19th. The singer songwriter’s mesmerizing voice has earned 6 Grammy nominations and Tamia’s new material is already garnering accolades.

Devon Hansen is another gifted musician from Windsor. Read how he followed his dream all the way to Carnegie Hall, where the pianist performed this past winter.

Author Mick Ridgewell has a talent for making his readers’ spines tingle. We dip into his new book, Evil Unleashed.

Three Windsor-area women have brought their own flavour to sports reporting with their webcast BarbWire TV. Even people who don’t follow sports are tuning in to their cheeky and insightful interviews.

In Windsor Life’s #YOUbeautymoment, Kelli Sirianni reveals how Project BLAST is empowering local teens to move past challenges to become their best selves.

The determination of the local folks spearheading Windsor’s Great Canadian Flag Project is paying off. They are sending a positive message about our patriotism by erecting a giant Maple Leaf flag at the foot of Ouellette Avenue.

Peggy and Allen Shearn are proud to let people know that they live in Canada whenever they are on one of their frequent travels abroad. The American couple could have retired anywhere in the world, yet happily chose Windsor. In this issue, we follow the Shearns to Israel and the Seychelles Islands.

Windsor Life traveled to Toronto in March to unearth the new gardening and landscaping trends at Canada Blooms, the national gardening show put on by Landscape Ontario and The Garden Club of Toronto.

Step with us onto two private properties that will blow your gardening clogs right off your feet. One is on Bob-lo Island and has features worthy of a five star resort, including a putting green with the hole sunk in a tiny islet.

The other is in LaSalle and successfully marries grownup elegance with kid friendly amenities, including a swimming pool and a pit for campfires.

Pull up a patio chair and savour a good read about the people and places in your own backyard. When you’re done with this issue, please pass it on and share the bounty!

All the best,

Bob Robinson
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Windsor’s Powerhouse Songstress Returns Home

STORY BY KAREN PATON-EVANS
PHOTO BY RYAN PALLOTTA
Windsor’s Tamia has toured extensively yet has never sung professionally in a big show in her own backyard. She has been close, taking the spotlight at the Fox Theatre and other venues in Detroit. To celebrate the release of her latest album, the six-time Grammy nominee is headlining at the Colosseum at Caesars Windsor on Friday, June 19th.

“I’m really excited to be able to go back home and perform for my hometown,” says Tamia, who now lives in Orlando, Florida with her husband, former NBA star Grant Hill, and their young daughters, Myla and Lael Rose.

For the one very special night, Tamia will be revealing her past hits and personal favourites from her extensive discography and the new music on her sixth album, Love Life, featuring her latest single, Sandwich and a Soda. “This is a long time coming so I have a lot to go through,” she says.

“The great thing about music is it connects heart to heart,” Tamia reflects. She hopes that bond will be strong when she is in town. “I’d like to see a lot of people who I grew up with and stayed connected to through Facebook and Instagram,” as well as new fans, says Tamia, noting, “Windsorites are very polite and nice.”
As a kid living with her family at Glen-garry and McDougall Avenues in downtown Windsor, Tamia Washington, as she was known then, was able to develop her skills in the Walkerville Centre for Creative Arts program for visual and performing arts students, just introduced at Walkerville Collegiate Institute.

She also found outlets for her emerging musical talent by singing in local churches and with theatre groups and choirs. Windsor musician Eugene Davis taught her piano and voice and encouraged Tamia to pursue music professionally.

While Tamia was singing at a birthday party for Luther Vandross, producer Quincy Jones took notice. Not long afterward, her first single, You Put a Move On My Heart, was released in 1995. Produced by Quincy and included on his Q’s Jook Joint album, Tamia’s song peaked at #12 on the Top 40 hits on the R&B charts.

Mastering R&B, neo soul, gospel, jazz and hip hop soul, Tamia has proved herself to be a versatile talent with staying power. Other hits include Stranger in My House, Fabolous, Into You, Me and Beautiful Surprise.

Music has opened doors to musical greats including Gladys Knight, Brandy and Chaka Khan, with whom Tamia recorded Missing You in 1996. The single was featured in the blockbuster movie, Set It Off, and scored #10 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and #25 on Billboard’s Hot 100.

Another musical connection had a profound effect on Tamia’s life when singer Anita Baker introduced the Windsorite to her future husband. Tamia and Grant were married in 1999. They share interests in art collecting and investing. Grant, who plays piano, accompanies his wife on occasion. The couple created the philanthropic Tamia and Grant Hill Foundation and are involved with several charities.

The singer’s fifth studio album, Beautiful Surprise, garnered praise from her peers and two more Grammy Awards nominations in 2012 for Best R&B Song and Best R&B Album, which was a first for a Canadian artist.

In 2014, Tamia signed with Def Jam Recordings and immediately went to work on her new album, releasing on June 9th, 2015. Tamia was very involved in the writing of her new material. Packed with messages of romance and relationships, “it’s all love songs,” she says. “It’s about love and life.”

Whenever crafting an album, the singer...
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"When my time comes, I want things to be Simple…"

“...I never put anything on there that I don’t want to sing for the next 20 years.” She laughs, “If you’re my friend and you tell me a story, you might end up in a song. So be careful!”

Looking forward to Tamia’s local concert, Jhoan Baluyot, the casino complex’s manager of PR and communications, says, “We are proud to host the launch of Tamia’s new album at Caesars Windsor. We’re just around the corner from where she grew up – so it really is a homecoming for her, her family, friends and fans.”

It will be a concert unlike anything fans have experienced before. “I’m working on a few things that I don’t necessarily do in my normal show,” Tamia says, “because this is special for me.”

In the audience will be Tamia’s mother, Barbara, brothers Tiras, Tajhee and Trajan, godmother, cousins and other relatives. “My entire family still lives in Windsor,” Tamia says. She returns as often as possible to see them. “As you can imagine, during the winter, everyone wants to visit me in Florida! My kids want to see snow and my family wants to see sunshine.”

Being in Windsor always reminds Tamia of what it felt like to be a young singer determined to claim her own place in the music industry. She hopes there will be at least one local kid with a dream seated in the audience, taking heart from Tamia’s own journey.

She says, “I’m very fortunate after all these years to still be able to do what I love.”

After the launch of her new album, Tamia and her band will set out on a summer tour, with her daughters in tow. “I think it is important for my girls to see how hard Mommy works,” Tamia says. Between shows, “we try to carve out family time for each other.” Her husband often meets them along the way.

Besides backstage passes and the chance to see new people and places, there are additional bonuses for the couple’s daughters: “My kids love room service and tour buses and all that stuff.” Tamia expects, “They will want to explore Caesars Windsor’s room service!”

Tickets for her show at the Colosseum at Caesars Windsor start at $20 and are on sale now at caesarswindsor.com.
Not a week goes by that a client doesn’t ask “how much do I pay in fees?”, “why are there fees on my investments?” and “how much do you get paid?”

All very legitimate questions and even more sensitive today in this time of the Client Relationship Model. CRM as it is known, is a comprehensive, financial-industry-wide reform package aimed at enhancing the relationship between investors and advisors. Part of the CRM focuses on transparency and reporting, notably what product and service costs investors can expect to pay including charges involved in the operation of the account, making, holding and selling of investments, and any other compensation received by the dealer or advisor.

A lot to talk about, however, it breaks out quite simply. Let’s look at a portfolio investing in mutual funds. In a Bundled strategy, a $10,000 investment that charges 2.5% MER (management expense ratio), the first year cost could be $250. Roughly half of that figure covers professional investment management and administration of the fund and taxes. While the balance represents the cost of advice and is passed along to the dealership your financial advisor is affiliated with. The dealer retains their portion and the advisor is normally paid a percentage of the amount received by the dealership. The advisor’s portion covers the cost of any number of services they may provide, as well as their business operating costs.

In a Direct strategy, like Manulife Securities Incorporated’s Premier Investment Program, you choose to pay for advice. Again let’s use the same $10,000 mutual fund investment. In the Direct strategy, the cost of your mutual fund will not include any advisor compensation so you can expect to pay an annual fee of about 1.4% or $140. This amount covers the cost of investment management, administration of the fund and taxes. The cost of advice is paid directly by you to the dealership your advisor is affiliated with. Although there are a number of ways an advisor may choose to operate their business, the vast majority are paid a percentage of your total investment. In this scenario, let’s assume 1.1% or $110 inclusive of taxes. Again the amount you pay is shared between the dealership and the advisor.

Remember, these are just examples of a mutual fund portfolio and may not be totally representative of your portfolio. Things can change when your portfolio includes stocks and bonds.

I would love to chat with you about your investment portfolio. Please call me at 519-250-0515 or contact me through my website.

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From 9:30 to 11 a.m. every Saturday, the Thunder Road team loads motorcycles onto the Jump Start ride simulator. "You can ride the bike while it's running yet securely stationary," Rob explains. "Even seasoned riders get on to practice clutch engagement, rear braking and shifting."

Jump Start riders don't need special equipment – just closed shoes, pants and shirt. "Our simulator gives you free exposure to the sport of motorcycling before you decide to sign up for the beginner's motorcycle safety training course," says Rob. "If you go on to complete the course, right now, Harley-Davidson® will give you a $250 gift card toward the purchase of a new motorcycle. It's a sweet deal." Thunder Road can guide rookie riders to local training programs.

Though motorcycle enthusiasts enjoy hitting the open road on their own, most like to get together and talk shop. To connect new riders, Thunder Road hosts informative events, like the annual spring Garage Party for women and Boot Camp for guys. "This year's gatherings were as fun as always, with people learning about new bikes, riding gear and safety courses, as well as getting on the Jump Start," Rob says. "Since everybody is new, no one feels awkward."

Looking ahead, Thunder Road is hosting its annual Iron Horse Golf Tournament on Fri., June 5th at Kingsville
Golf & Country Club. Then, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sat., Aug. 22nd, the Platinum dealership will fire up the barbecue for its open house, with live entertainment and a bike raffle to benefit the Heritage Village Motorcycle Museum.

The new fleet of 2015 demo bikes have just rolled into Thunder Road. “We are stoked to have the Road Glide, Ultra Limited, Street Glide and Street 760,” Rob says.

Veteran riders are intrigued by the return of the Harley-Davidson Road Glide model, part of the Project RUSHMORE® line. With its redesign, the Road Glide is more popular than ever. Its distinctive, modern look is backed by solid features like new dual Daymaker™ reflector LED headlamps and Twin Cam 103™ engine heritage.

For riders looking for something smaller to maneuver, the new Street bike is available in 500 and 750 cc engine sizes. “The Street delivers with its liquid cool twin engine, ergonomic style and economical price point,” Rob says.

Although Thunder Road sells used bikes, “our new sales are very strong as more riders realize they can buy new for about the price of a used Harley-Davidson,” says Rob. “If you compare the cost of buying a Harley-Davidson® in the U.S to purchasing in Canada, you’ll find it’s a better deal here.”

Buying local also helps the community through Thunder Road’s support of charity events, including the 10th annual Ride for Dad fighting prostate cancer on May 24th and the 5th annual Bob Probert Ride for cardiac wellness on June 14th.

To register for rides or book a personal test drive of a demo bike, just call Thunder Road Harley-Davidson® at 519-966-1520.
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“Since we are located in a design loft above Coulter’s Furniture, one of Ontario’s largest furniture stores, we have access to a massive selection of furnishings to inspire and excite our clients,” says Paulette Nicodemo, a member of The Room’s design team that also includes Robby Lynn Young, Cindy Catton and now, Stephanie Evola.

The talented design force handles projects of every scope, from the redesign of a single room to the creation and implementation of the interior of a residence, office, hotel or institution. “From conception to completion, we can do it all,” says Robby Lynn, an interior designer registered with ARIDO, IDC and NCIDQ.

“Some clients just need direction and help getting started. Others have a design dilemma that is causing them concern and delay,” Cindy finds. “We can come up with a cohesive plan for them.”

“We also work with architects and builders to complement their work and add finishing touches,” Paulette says. The Room’s design savvy is frequently on view, with many of their showcase homes featured in the local media. The team has also enhanced show homes in new communities. “We recently teamed up with Stephanie of Evola Builders to furnish their model. We are very impressed with Stephanie’s talent and are delighted she has joined our team.”

The Room’s team listens carefully to a client’s vague or very definite ideas regarding the new or rejuvenated space’s feel, style, function and budget. They are skilled in picking up subtle clues, as well. “Sometimes people can’t clearly express what they want until they actually see our design drawings and material selections. It’s very satisfying for all of us when our client says, ‘That’s it! That’s me! How did you know?’” Cindy says.

It all comes down to details – lots of them. “That is what overwhelms or baffles people who aren’t in our business,” Robby Lynn believes. Depending on how much support the client wants, The Room’s team can provide colour consultation, coordinating a custom colour palette; draw an intelligent furniture layout to maximize space, usage and flow; select accessories to accent or update a room; choose and design innovative window and wall treatments; and specify flooring materials and area rugs.

Sourcing pieces to furnish or refresh a client’s home is a big part of successful room design. “We recently designed the new Lexington showroom within our store and included a custom designed chandelier by local lighting designer, Adam Marz of Marz Inc.,” says Cindy. “Our connection with Coulter’s Furniture enables our customers to enjoy unlimited access to the newest trends that will be current for years.”

With their team based approach, the design consultants take exceptional care of their clients, always striving to exceed their expectations. Questions are answered promptly, timelines are carefully tracked and budgets are adhered to.

Backing up their work is an outstanding team of construction and talented tradespeople, all local. Paulette says, “Our carpenters, painters, tilers, flooring installers and other trades are among the best in Windsor-Essex County.”

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24 Windsor Life
May/June • 2015

The ice is off the water, the fish are ready to bite and at Maple City Marine, more than 300 clients’ boats are being brought out of storage and made ready for the best time of the year: Boating season.

For people who want to purchase their first boat or trade and upgrade, the showroom has an impressive fleet of watercraft for everyone, from previously owned runabouts and fishing boats to a custom ordered yacht with luxurious features. Among Maple City Marine’s new beauties this year is the KingFisher aluminum boat collection.

“KingFishers are welded heavy-gauge aluminum boats built in Vernon, B.C.,” says Rob Rule, vice president of Maple City Marine. “Equipped with dependable Evinrude outboard motors, these rugged, robust boats balance performance, ride responsiveness, precision handling and comfort. They are ideal for sports fishing.”

The MasterCraft line was added to Maple City Marine last year. The world’s largest producer of inboard ski, wakeboard and luxury performance powerboats makes an outstanding towboat, as well. “The demand for towboats is growing fast,” Rob notes. He appreciates the power and finesse of MasterCraft’s first class towboat models, able to pull wakeboarders, wakesurfers and tubers on Lake St. Clair and big waters.

Other coveted boat builders are well represented at Maple City Marine, including Four Winns, Bennington, Lund and Ranger. Outboard motors are in stock by industry leaders Mercury, Yamaha and Evinrude, as well as Stern Drive by Volvo Penta and Mercruiser.

“If there is a new or used watercraft that you are seriously considering buying, we will put her on the Thames River, right near our shop. During the water test and review of the boat’s operation, you can experience how she handles and feels on the waves,” says Rob. Helping local families discover the adventures of boating since 1948, Maple City Marine offers shore support, sheltered winter storage and maintenance and repairs done by factory trained service technicians. Clients receive reliable advice and answers at the boaters’ haven and at maplecitymarine.com.

As part of discoverboating.ca, Maple City Marine instantly connects its boaters and interested browsers to the newest watercraft, boating tips and tales of life on the water. There is online Just for Kids activities, a free Beginner's Guide to Boating, marina and ramp finder and more. “The website has a helpful boat selector tool, too. Or you could really immerse yourself in the experience and climb aboard the many boats in our Chatham showroom,” Rob invites.

People considering a purchase benefit from the knowledge of three generations of the Rule family and their staff. “We can show you all of your options so that ultimately, you select the right boat,” Rob says. Ranking among Boating Industry’s Top 100 Dealers for the third consecutive year, Maple City Marine and its crew clearly know what they are doing.

Rob observes, “Boat ownership is more than a pleasure for our clients – it is the fulfillment of their dreams. We do everything possible to make your buying and after care experience outstanding.”

Three Generations to Serve You. Left to right: Grant, Bob & Rob Rule.

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Set on the shore of the 272 acre island in the middle of the Detroit River, the four bedroom, four bathroom, 4,000 sq. ft. house was built by its original owners in 2000. When its present owners took possession in 2012, the wife was quick to observe, “The most appealing aspect of our Bob-Lo home was the water view. Our home is an open concept with views of the water from most angles.”

The view indoors is also very attractive. The homeowner notes, “The house was in move-in condition and we purchased...”
it partially furnished and were able to incorporate most of our furnishings from our previous home in the lower level and the bedrooms.” She explains, “We lived in the home for a year and then reupholstered the furniture that was in the great room from the previous owners to colour schemes that were more appealing to us.” The wife and husband enjoyed adding new pieces, with help from The Room team.

The Room’s designing team of Robby Lynn Young, Paulette Nicodemo and Cindy Catton had fun returning to Bob-Lo Island to the house they were commissioned by the original owners to design and decorate, top to bottom, years ago. “Back then, we chose everything from the flooring to the furnishings. We actually decorated a lot of the homes on the island,” Paulette recalls.

When the current owners, longtime clients of
This page below: the powder room features one of the several attractively detailed ceilings found in the residence. Right: the original staircase receives additional illumination from a new wall mirror, reflecting the sunlight pouring in from the window. Bottom right: guests are welcomed to the foyer by two new tufted chairs in creamy fabric and a carved wood table.
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The Room at Coulters, brought in the team to help them make the island retreat their own, the decorators introduced a calming palette of sand, sky and sea grass to harmonize the interior. “We wanted it to relate to being on the water,” Paulette says.

The home’s island location and the couple’s love of the water are immediately evident by the art pieces found and displayed by the owners, including a glass shell on the sofa table in the great room, a metal and pearlized glass sailboat and silver metal sailboats hung on a wall.

The spacious great room is a natural gathering space for visiting family and friends. The original furnishings were reupholstered in shades of wheat, twine and harbour blue. New lamps and a chest also helped update the traditional décor. The long, tall windows retained their textured flax linen draperies in a soothing sand tone. “They were designed to just frame the windows and are kept open to the water views,” Paulette explains.

One corner of the great room is filled with windows and a trio of armchairs, including the homeowner’s Bergere chair, which was redone in a zebra striped fabric to inject a touch of the exotic. “We added a rustic chocolate leather tufted ottoman in the creation of the cozy conversation area,” Paulette says.

The library/home office, with burnished cherry wood paneled walls and tall windows, only needed a few new accessories and the addition of the current owners’ area rug over the medium stained hardwood flooring to reflect their own taste.

Another area rug warms the master bedroom, elegant with its dark wood king sized sleigh bed and complementary furnishings. By the gas fireplace, a wing chair and ottoman recovered in wheat and blue textured chenille provide a soft place to doze over a good book on chilly nights. Patio doors lead to a balcony overlooking the waterfront.

Overnight guests are made comfortable in three guest rooms and offered chilled refreshments in the bar. A preferred spot for congregating is the large balcony off the great room, homey with its white all weather wicker furniture. Stone and herringbone brick pathways lead away from the house, through the low maintenance green landscaping before reaching the water’s edge, where front row seats offer a clear view of the birds and boats cruising past Bob-Lo Island.

The lovely residence is one of 130 homes dotting Bob-Lo. The island’s master plan ▶
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permits a maximum of 400 residences, while preserving the green space, biking trails and historic Lighthouse Park and Whitesands Beach. “I usually start my day with a two mile walk around the island,” the lady of the house says. After doing some household chores and tending to her garden, she and her husband may go to the mainland to run errands and eat. “We have some very good restaurants in Amherstburg,” she observes. “We also have the option of dining at The Beach Grill on Bob-Lo.”

“I initially thought that the ferry ride would present a problem but it is only four minutes to the mainland: A time to check e-mail or text messages or just to enjoy the surroundings,” the homeowner says. She finds the ferry service convenient, running every 20 minutes all year round. Daytrippers also ride the ferry and spend the day exploring Bob-Lo, recalling past summers when the island was a popular destination for young people and families seeking entertainment and thrills on amusement rides.

Once on the mainland, “it is only a 16 to 20 minute drive to Windsor and a most pleasant drive along the waterfront,” says the homeowner. She and her husband also do their own exploring of the local waterways. “We are power boaters and love to cruise down the Detroit River past the Ambassador Bridge along the parks on the riverfront. We have a couple of favourite restaurants where we can dock our boat out front and have dinner,” she says. The couple keep their boat at the marina on Bob-Lo Island.

Very content with island living, the lady of the house notes, “I would say that our guests and family most enjoy the water view and the magnificent sunsets.” She adds, “My husband most enjoys the serenity of the island and the nature surrounding us: The deer, bald eagles and the beautiful white swans.”

For her, “the best part of island living - the sunsets - is priceless!”

Windsor Life Magazine is always searching for interesting homes, landscaping, gardens, patios and water features to show our readers what others in the community are doing with their living spaces. If you have a home that you feel would be interesting please email photos to publisher@windsorlife.com. Photos need to be for reference only. If your home is chosen we will arrange for a complete photo shoot. If you wish, you may remain anonymous and the location of your home will not be disclosed.
FOR HOME AND GARDEN enthusiasts it is like Christmas 365 days of the year at Glasshouse Nursery and Garden Centre. This 20,000 square foot store located in Chatham is unique to this area. The inventory for the nursery, greenhouse and gift shop are all carefully selected by owners Dave and Sue Van Raay. They take great pride in ensuring that visitors to their store are never disappointed.

This trendy home and garden establishment attracts visitors from hundreds of kilometres away. Whether you are looking to landscape your garden, or find that perfect gift, Glasshouse Nursery and Garden Centre has something for everyone’s taste and budget. Most recently a new 2,500 square foot showroom was created to showcase imported home furnishings.

“This new showroom has everything you need to set up your own man cave,” says Dave.

As the spring gardening season gears up, the Van Raays will celebrate their 40th anniversary in business this year. In addition to their extensive inventory, classes and workshops are scheduled throughout the spring to help gardeners with their gardens and lawns. In addition specialty classes are offered on various topics including fairy and miniature gardening.

Be sure to leave plenty of time when you plan your visit to the nursery. There is something to discover around every corner! Visitors love exploring the nursery, gardens and enjoy the ponds, waterfalls and landscaped gardens. The garden centre is known for carrying the largest selection of plants, trees, shrubs and garden accessories in southwestern Ontario. Everything you need to make your garden beautiful can be found under one roof.

The business is a true family affair. Son Simon now runs the landscape business and daughter Erin has created the increasingly popular Betula Boutique. The boutique offers the latest trends in fashion and accessories including jewelry, shoes, purses, scarves, luggage and more. Clothing lines include Vera Moda, Papion and Neon Buddha to name a few. Betula also sells the popular line of Pandora jewelry.

In addition to the garden centre and boutique, other departments include gifts, kitchenware, home décor, ponds and accessories, patio furniture and children’s toys.

Each member of the Glasshouse Team puts their heart and soul into providing customers with an informed, unique and friendly experience each time they visit. Whether it be in the nursery, the greenhouse or the gift shop they are always available to help and answer questions.

The Garden Club membership and email newsletter group has grown to over 10,000 members. Once you join for $25 you are a member for life and enjoy various perks including discounts, free admission to seminars, newsletters and more. In addition, members received a 5% discount on purchases.

Virtual tours of Glasshouse Nursery & Garden Centre are available online at www.glasshousenursery.ca. Be sure to also check out the new spring magazine online featuring exciting spring specials. The Glasshouse is also very active on social media sites including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Be sure to follow them to keep up to date on the latest trends and information for your garden, home and fashion.

Just an hour’s drive from Windsor, The Glasshouse is easy to find. You will want to make sure to check out all they have to offer as you start your gardening and home improvements this season.
LIKE ITS CUSTOM DESIGNED and crafted sunrooms, Seaton Sunrooms is open year round for your pleasure. The Seaton family has terrific ideas and extensive expertise for creating the space that is about to become your favourite place to be.

Fabricating and installing sunrooms all year, Windsor's own Seaton Sunrooms thoroughly knows the local climate and construction conditions. “It’s wonderful to have your plans ready to go so you can enjoy your new sunroom this spring,” says Brooke Watorek. With her husband, Jason, Brooke helps operate the company founded in 1978 by her parents, Vern and Linda, who are both still actively involved.

Today, Seaton Sunrooms specializes in sunrooms as well as patio covers, home additions, custom motorized screens and more.

With more homeowners choosing to spend their leisure time in their backyards, they are discovering that sunrooms are more than pest-free spots for summer use. As an addition to the house, a sunroom connects fortunate owners to nature, providing comfortable views of sunrises and sunsets, showers and snowstorms, sunshine and moon glow.

This past winter, snug in a sunroom so energy efficient it could be heated with a candle, owners of Seaton Sunrooms’ all-season

“From the first time I entered their showroom to the completion of the job all the Seaton employees treated us in a courteous and professional manner. The installation went as planned and on time. The quality of work was exceptional.” - BRIAN & JOYCE
SIP room were uplifted by natural sunlight and found delight in watching snowflakes swirling around. Now that spring is here, there are surprises to see daily.

Seaton Sunrooms has its own surprise: its showroom has been revamped to display fresh design trends and photos of recently completed projects. There are displays set up in the showroom for you to experience the sturdy construction, handsome design and sense of space.

You can also get the feel of operating motorized and retractable screens, perfect for your residence’s front, back and garage doors or to bug-proof your back deck. Working displays are in Seaton Sunrooms’ showroom.

“Our retractable screens keep out pests when necessary and roll back into a nice, slim profile when not in use,” Jason says. “Our motorized screens are made completely in Canada. They function well when a house’s roof extends over the patio to create a shaded, open outdoor room. Our screens enclose the areas between the support pillars.”

When a sunroom is to be added to the house, everything is done right. “Because the sunroom is custom built from the main house, the fit is perfect. We’re not patching in a standard size unit,” Brooke explains.

All Seaton Sunrooms construction is proprietary to Vern, who designed the component moulds and aluminum extrusions. “They won’t rot or rust,” Jason says. All glass and roof panels are cut to order by Seaton Sunrooms’ own staff. “This makes us unique. We’re not importing from China or the U.S. We proudly manufacture our sunrooms right here in Windsor,” says Brooke.

Whether a three-season sunroom with optional HVAC system and solar blinds or Seaton’s energy efficient year-round S.I.P. Room, the designs are timeless. “We’ve modified our signature style a little to accommodate more glass, letting in as much sunlight as possible,” Jason says.

Brooke adds, “My dad is an avid boater so his designs are sleek, streamlined and easy to maintain.” Just the way a Windsor-Essex sunroom should be.

For more information, please visit seatonsunrooms.com.
“IT’S YEAR 5,” DANI PROBERT observes of the Annual Bob Probert Ride. “It’s bitter-sweet saying that…it’s five years since we’ve heard Bob’s voice.”

The effort that goes into organizing and hosting The Ride helps Bob’s family and friends channel their grief toward a positive cause: Raising awareness and funds in support of heart health care provided by the local hospital system.

“Bob died of a massive heart attack,” Dani says. Only 45 years old, the husband and father of four had made his mark professionally as an all-star enforcer with the Detroit Red Wings (1985 to 1994) and the Chicago Blackhawks (1995 to 2002). With a personal record of 163 goals and 221 assists, Bob had the distinction of scoring the last NHL goal at Toronto’s Maple Leaf Gardens.

At Bob’s funeral, Red Wings hockey star Steve Yzerman

THE RIDE WITH HEART

5th Annual Bob Probert Ride

BY KAREN PATON-EVANS

Highlights from past rides include Probert’s Peeps, Garry, Shona and Sandle MacInnes proudly wearing the former NHL-er’s number 24 on their shirts; Dani’s father, Jim Wood carrying her as his passenger; some of 1,100-plus riders preparing for the official start-up; Declyn Probert, Carlin McCrimmon, Brogan Probert, Dani Probert, Jacqueline MacInnes Wood, Tierney Probert and Ashley Haltman.
eulogized, “He was a rugged hockey player and an unselfish teammate who was willing to do anything for his team. And most notably, he had a kind heart and a gentle soul.” Following the service, Bob’s casket was transported on the special sidecar of a Harley-Davidson and escorted by nearly 60 motorcycles to the cemetery.

Family, friends and fans continue to honour Bob’s spirit – and his love of motorcycles – through their support of The Ride directly benefiting Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare’s Cardiac Programs. “We’re closing in on the half-million dollar mark to date raised for cardiac wellness,” Dani says. “It all stays here in the city.”

“Unifor Locals 444 and 2458, the D’Amore Group, AM800, Atlas Tube and Thunder Road Harley-Davidson have been phenomenal. They have been on board since day 1,” Dani says.

“The response from the players this year has been amazing. I love my hockey family!” For the time being, Dani is keeping the roster of players intending to ride under wraps. The Ride captain will be announced on May 6th at a media launch at Thunder Road.

Dani does reveal that fans can count on seeing Zach Kassian, right winger for the Vancouver Canucks, in The Ride. “He is a hometown boy and an awesome kid. We love him.” Another homegrown NHLer, Colorado Avalanche defenceman Ryan Wilson, will also be revving up on the big day.

Out of town guests will be staying at Caesars Windsor, arriving in time for the VIP party on Sat. night, June 13th. They and top sponsors are invited to attend a private event at the Canadian Club Brand Centre. “It’s a chance to mingle and chat. It’s nice to get caught up,” says Dani.

Afterward, everyone will attend a special concert at the Colosseum at Caesars Windsor. John Kay & Steppenwolf with special guest Foghat will be playing at 9 pm. Ticket sales are open to the public; a portion of the proceeds will be donated to The Ride.

On Sat., June 14th, The Ride will launch from Thunder Road Harley-Davidson, just like last year. “We had such an incredible experience with Thunder Road and received positive feedback,” Dani says. “It’s a great location. And it gets us out in the county a little bit faster.”

“At 10:30 am, it’s kick stands up and we’re off to the Verdi Club,” says Dani. The next destination is Colchester Bar & Grill and then on to Parkside Grille at
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**WINDSOR YOUTH CENTRE**

The Windsor Youth Centre officially launched its $500,000 Almost Home fundraising campaign in February and is seeking donations to meet its target. Honourary co-chairs Stephanie and Samantha Zekelman invite donors to support the operation of Windsor-Essex’s only drop-in centre for homeless and at-risk youth aged 16 to 25. Located at 1247 Wyandotte St. E., the WYC provides programs and supports for young people including a voluntary relapse program; a youth led platform for sharing; a positive network for new and expectant parents; and connections for youth seeking education, employment, transportation and housing. Open 5 to 10 pm, Monday through Saturday, the centre serves 1400 meals monthly and provides on-site laundry facilities, takeaway personal items and non-perishable food in a safe haven. thewindsoryouthcentre.org. Pictured above are: Stephanie, Barry and Samantha Zekelman along with Centre Director Tamara Kowalska.

**LUX DINER**

Serving freshly prepared food with attitude, Lux Diner is marking its first anniversary at 33 Amy Croft Dr., Tecumseh. Offering dine in or takeout, brothers, chefs and restaurateurs Kastro (pictured here) and Robert Perkaj also make guests feel welcome on the licensed patio during the warm weather months. 519-735-8001.

**DONATO COLLISION**

Joe Donato (left) is pleased to welcome Ralph Turchi (right) to Donato Collision. After Classic Auto Collision’s owner retired and closed his shop, Ralph joined the Donato team and is now inviting all of his past and current clients to bring their vehicles for repair and restoration to 435 Hanna St. E., Windsor. donatocollision.com.

**THE FLOWER SHOP AT THIESSEN’S**

Krissy Thiessen and her floral design team celebrated their first year in business on April 1st. With 65 years of combined experience, the floral crew specializes in wedding and floral décor in styles ranging from modern to classic, vintage to elegant and everything in between. The rustic showroom is at 400 Talbot Rd. E., Leamington on the Thiessen apple orchard property. 519-326-5282.

**RELAX PATIO**

Observing its 2nd anniversary, Relax Patio, managed by Sales Manager Dave Mitchell, the furniture showroom of Relax Pools and Spas, displays more than 7,000 sq. ft. of the latest in outdoor furniture trends. Southwestern Ontario’s largest all patio furniture showroom features designs by Andrew Richards, Canafoam and Enclover and cast aluminum furniture by Summerset Outdoor Living and Protégé. Relax Patio is at 1715 Manning Rd at E.C. Row Expressway in Tecumseh. 519-727-1120.
NAMASTE YOGA CENTRE

Namaste Yoga Centre’s owner Renee Janisse, a registered massage therapist and certified yoga therapist, has relocated the yoga destination to 1614 Lesperance Rd. at E.C. Row in Tecumseh. The larger centre enables Namaste to expand and offer new programs, including kids’ classes and TRX. namasteyogacentre.com.

THE GLASSHOUSE NURSERY AND GARDEN CENTRE

Over the last 40 years The Glasshouse Nursery and Garden Centre in Chatham has become a unique shopping destination serving SW Ontario. This family run business is operated by Dave, and Sue Van Raay, daughter Erin and son Simon. Customers know they can find quality home décor, gifts, ladies fashions and gardening supplies under one roof. Visit www.glasshousenursery.ca.

TEPPERMAN’S AND AGW

Brothers Andrew and Noah Tepperman celebrated the 90th anniversary of their family furniture and appliance business by gifting the Art Gallery of Windsor with a donation of $45,000 on Mar. 25th. The Tepperman donation will support Look Again! Celebrating the AGW Collection, a project that links the gallery’s art collection with the Ontario provincial curriculum to strengthen visual literacy skills among elementary and secondary school students. agw.ca.

RITA DIBIASE

Rita DiBiase was awarded the 2015 Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario Windsor-Essex Chapter Lois A. Fairley Nursing Award at a ceremony at Leamington District Memorial Hospital on April 22nd. A 1981 graduate of St. Clair College who then earned her Bachelors of Nursing from the University of Windsor and a Masters of Nursing from Wayne State University, the Palliative Care Nurse Practitioner joined Windsor Regional Hospital’s Cancer Program in 2010. The award recognizes her care and compassion.

MADE TO SHADE

Made to Shade Window Coverings is celebrating 10 years in business. Proudly Canadian, Made to Shade designs, manufactures and installs its own custom blinds, shades and drapes. Owner Michael Campoli keeps costs down by not maintaining a storefront. A consultant makes a free, no obligation house call to discuss style options and take measurements for a true custom fit. madetoshade.ca or 519-739-9797.

STAN’S DOG HOUSE

Gourmet street meat is being served at Stan’s Dog House located in the Tecumseh Home Hardware parking lot, at the southwest corner of E.C. Row Expressway and Lesperance Rd., Tecumseh. Stan Meloche presents the famous Nathan’s Hot Dog, New York’s finest since 1945. Also on the menu is the Lafayette style Coney Dog, the Big Smokie from El Paso, Texas, the best of Italian sausage and flame broiled burgers. Stan’s Dog House is now open daily from 11 am-4 pm.

NAMASTE YOGA CENTRE

Namaste Yoga Centre’s owner Renee Janisse, a registered massage therapist and certified yoga therapist, has relocated the yoga destination to 1614 Lesperance Rd. at E.C. Row in Tecumseh. The larger centre enables Namaste to expand and offer new programs, including kids’ classes and TRX. namasteyogacentre.com.
RUTH EVANGELINE, BARBARA SZEMAN AND KELSI MAYNE are the talented trio behind BarbWireTV, an edgy, energy-packed sports web-series focusing on the fun of sports. Founded in 2013, the program features two to four minute episodes that showcase an athlete’s personality.

The women are all from Windsor and first met when they attended Holy Names High School. Although they were in different grades, they bonded over a shared love of sports.

Barbara Szeman, 30, is the Executive Producer of BarbWireTV. She is an avid Detroit Red Wings fan who could regularly be found playing road hockey with the neighbourhood boys while growing up.

Szeman attended the University of Windsor where she was able to pursue her interest in media and entertainment. In addition to her responsibilities with BarbWireTV, she is also an Assistant Director on films. She has worked on feature films including Robocop, Pompeii, Poltergeist and Pixels. However, as a sports enthusiast, she wanted to come up with a concept to combine her passion for media and sports. Once she moved to Toronto she landed a job at The Score, a sports television network. Through this experience, she was inspired to create BarbWireTV.

“I wanted to do something different in sports from a women’s perspective. Sports is a male-dominated industry that can be difficult for women. Together with Kelsi and Ruth, we wanted to capture the fun of sports,” says Szeman.

Kelsi Mayne, 25, has always been an athlete. Her family says that she has been running from birth. Growing up she played basketball, volleyball, tennis and soccer. In high school she discovered her true love was hurdles. She was part of the University of Windsor’s track and field team and claimed the bronze medal at the nationals during her final year. Although she no longer competes, Mayne continues to be an avid sports fan and works as a reporter on the program. She is also pursuing an acting career.

Ruth Evangeline moved to London, Ontario after graduating high school in Windsor. She attended Western University to pursue her dream of a journalism
degree. Working for Western TV she gained experience as an Entertainment reporter covering various activities on campus. It was her love for American football that lead her to sports reporting. Evangeline is also a competitive body builder.

When Szeman approached Kelsi and Ruth to be involved with BarbWireTV they were thrilled.

“Anything involving Barbara always ends up a very odd, entertaining, unpredictable success. She somehow manages to get herself into strange predicaments that always turn up in her favour. Anyone who knows her would agree. She’s the creator, mastermind, and final word. She has incredibly smart, business-savvy instincts that we’ve all just learned to trust,” says Mayne.

The success of the show speaks for itself. In just over two years, BarbwireTV has exceeded their expectations. With over 25,000 Twitter followers, the program has an avid following. Their YouTube page has over 200,000 views and they have loyal followers on Facebook and Instagram.

“Through our collaborative approach we have been able to create something truly unique. We use our fun-loving attitude to combine current pop-culture and sports into comedic sketches with athletes and fans alike. With one main objective, discover who really is the best "sport"—pun intended. I guess you can think of BarbWire TV as the "SNL" of sports,” says Mayne.

“It’s been absolutely amazing,” adds Szeman. “We have been really fortunate, once people started to hear about the program and saw what we were doing, athletes and other sports professionals have reached out to us to be included on the show.”

The women continue to be astonished by the number of followers they have and the amount of feedback they receive via fan mail.

“It’s amazing to connect with these people. I feel like I know all 25,000 twitter followers because we are so connected and we do communicate with them regularly and share a unique experience. It’s overwhelming at times. It is definitely our motivation and how we knew we were on the right path early on. We’ve only been doing this a short time and it’s grown so rapidly,” says Szeman.

Their fun-loving approach allows athletes to show a different side to themselves than what is portrayed in typical interviews. For example, Seattle Seahawks tight-end Luke Wilson was featured in an episode that spoofed the popular Bachelor program.
“We get praised for our unique approach. A lot of people can’t get away with what we do, or are afraid to. We like to keep the fun in sports. It’s much too serious most of the time and should be entertaining in our opinion,” says Mayne.

Evangeline adds, “The athletes have a great time while filming our segments because we make it fun for them! It’s not just a factual, bland, common interview. We love for the athletes to have fun!”

Other athletes who have been featured include Patrick Patterson from the Toronto Raptors and Jose Carreras from the Toronto Blue Jays.

“We have actually had to turn down projects and interviews because we have been so busy,” says Szeman. TSN and other sports outlets have also expressed interest in their work and are consistently reaching out to the women to work together. Several professional athletes follow BarbWireTV on social media and have expressed interest in making an appearance on the show.

“It’s been a journey and we’re learning more each step of the way. We cannot wait for what’s next and where it will lead,” says Evangeline.

Another secret to their success is ongoing involvement in the community. Over the last year the women have volunteered at the Scott’s Mission in Toronto and the Raptors All-Girls Clinic. They are also huge advocates for the Toronto Roller Derby, a women’s sport that is often overlooked in the sporting world.

“Roller Derby is particularly important to us as we can relate to being women in an industry that is male-dominated. BarbWireTV provides us with a platform to showcase stories like this,” says Szeman.

Mayne agrees adding, “We try to empower women in the sports industry by showing what we can do and then pushing standards to do something different. This may include sports or something completely different. Personally my dream is to be that network that aspiring athletes themselves dream to be featured on and viewed as a milestone in their career.”

Looking forward to the future, the women want to continue to grow the BarbWireTV brand as much as possible and pursue opportunities to air episodes of the program on a television network. They have achieved great success through social media and see great potential in expanding their presence using that platform.

May is national Leave a Legacy month. To mark the occasion the Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP) Windsor-Essex Roundtable highlights the benefits and impact of legacy gifts.

Volunteer Members of the Windsor-Essex CAGP Roundtable

Nancy Parker
Chair of Roundtable
Fundraising Consultant

Jody Maskery
CFRE, Member,
Vice-Chair Roundtable
St. Clair College

Martin Sobocan
CFP, CLU, CH.F.C., CHS,
Past Chair of Roundtable
Principal, Sobocan Insurance
and Financial Services

Kim Willis
CFRE, Secretary of Roundtable
Canadian Mental Health Association
Windsor/Essex County Branch

Melissa East Aspila
Member,
Past Chair of Roundtable
University of Windsor

Patricia Valleau
CFRE, Member
Windsor-Essex Hospitals Foundation

Connie Giglio
Member
United Way/Centraide
Windsor-Essex County

Maureen Dodd
Member
United Way of Sault Ste. Marie & District

Tim Jones
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Principal, Rock Harbour
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Lisa Kolody
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Windsor Essex Community Foundation

Jody Maskery
CFRE, Member,
Vice-Chair Roundtable
St. Clair College

Connie Giglio
Member
United Way/Centraide
Windsor-Essex County

Maureen Dodd
Member
United Way of Sault Ste. Marie & District
LEAVE A LEGACY™ is a national public awareness program that encourages Canadians from all walks of life to make gifts through a will, life insurance, or other gift-planning instruments to the charitable organizations of their choice.

A program of the Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP-ACPDP), it is a collaborative effort of donors, charities, not-for-profits and professional advisors. LEAVE A LEGACY™ has twenty one local Canadian programs that operate under the CAGP-ACPDP RoundTables. Each program is unique in its own way, as no two communities are identical.

What remains constant throughout is the message of having a will and making a difference in your community by planning a gift to a favourite charity.

Every day, people are helped and lives are enriched by the work of registered charities and foundations, and other not-for-profit organizations in our communities. Meals for isolated seniors, summer jobs for disadvantaged high school students, funding for mental health or cancer research or a live performance by a local arts organization are just some of the ways not-for-profit organizations improve our lives.

Canadians support these organizations for many different reasons: for some it is a way to ensure their memory lives on, for many it’s a way to ensure that their favourite charity is able to continue its important work, while for others it represents a way to facilitate the tax implications that come with the transfer of one’s estate to surviving relatives.

The majority of Canadians do not have a signed will. Furthermore, many have never considered the possibility of leaving a gift to charity when making their estate plans. Only seven per cent of Canadians support charitable organizations by leaving a legacy gift in their will.

“Leave a Legacy month provides an opportunity to bring awareness to the importance of making a will. It also allows ▶
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Contact us today to learn how your planned gift can build a better Windsor-Essex for today and forever. Make a difference in your community now by starting an endowment fund that is kept in perpetuity. For more information about the NEW Vitality Legacy Program, visit, call, or email the Foundation Office today!

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Mary Ann and Mark Simpson

For more information on legacy giving to the University of Windsor, contact the Campaign Office at legacy@uwindsor.ca or 519-253-3000, ext. 3229.

information to be shared about leaving a gift for charity as part of your estate plans,” says Nancy Parker, Chair of the Windsor-Essex CAGP Roundtable.

“Many people think that it can be incredibly difficult to set up a legacy gift, but it is actually very easy. A lawyer, accountant or financial planner can assist anyone who is interested,” states Parker.

Cathy, a single woman with no children, met with her financial planner and together they were able to establish a plan that allowed Cathy to leave money to her family, but also support charities that are important to her. Based on an analysis of her situation they decided to give charities the residual from her RRIF since it was her most taxable asset.

“Our parents set an example to give back to others and I have supported charities throughout my whole life. I never would have thought to do something like this if my advisor had not suggested it. I feel good about helping people out long after I am gone,” says Cathy.

Estate planning with an advisor provides an opportunity to give the most efficiently and assists in alleviating tax implications. When exploring the different options for doing legacy gifts, many individuals find that they are able to make a significant impact to a charity. In many instances it is of far greater value than they would ever be able to make during their lifetimes.

Shelley Harding-Smith is a local woman who believes in supporting young people and honouring those who are no longer with us. Shelley was born and raised in Windsor. As a young woman, she attended St. Clair College, became an Indentured Electrical Apprentice, and eventually became a Master Electrician/Electrical Contractor. Growing up Shelley worked at Harding Electric, a company owned and operated by her parents Morris and Ruth Harding. Working side by side with her parents, she understood the importance and value of the skilled trades in the Windsor-Essex community. She strongly believes there is not enough support for the skilled trade industry, especially with our history as nation builders.

In 1999, Shelley established the Morris and Ruth Harding Memorial Fund at the Windsor-Essex Community Foundation in honour of her parents. Her direction was to create a bursary fund to support youth. The Harding Electric Bursary supports local students entering the skilled trades. This
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3. Be Specific
4. Consider assets
5. Name an alternate beneficiary
6. Existing life insurance
7. New life insurance
8. Memorial gifts
9. Encourage others
10. Ask your advisor

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type of fund allows donors to make lasting gifts recognizing student potential. The Harding Electric Bursary has provided support to 25 students, over the last 16 years. The Morris and Ruth Harding Memorial Fund is leaving a legacy today and forever.

Choosing to leave a gift from the heart brings meaning, dignity and purpose to a life well lived. Your gift is an opportunity to participate in the charitable and community work most meaningful to you, in a way that allows these important causes to be well supported now and long after you are gone. Personal philanthropy through a will can be an additional way to ensure that your memory lives on.

Surprisingly, a gift can also be a very practical addition to a financial or estate plan when tax issues are taken into consideration – even for those who think they may not have tax issues. In most cases, the tax burden left to relatives is lifted significantly. Your professional advisor can teach you how giving may actually benefit your family after you’re gone. Together we can make a difference – the difference these days, is that you can impact the causes you care about by including them in your will or estate plan.

### A Contribution for the Future

Personal philanthropy can help contribute to the sustainability of a not for profit organization or charity of your choice. In life, many of us require some kind of assistance, whether it’s physical, financial or spiritual. Perhaps a local organization or charity has special meaning to you. Maybe you were given a scholarship that made the dream of post-secondary education possible. You or a loved one may have been shown especially compassionate care in the hospital during an illness or injury. By leaving a gift in your estate you are making a significant contribution to the future sustainability of those charitable and not for profit organizations that you value most.

The Windsor-Essex Roundtable has a special workshop planned for LEAVE A LEGACY™ month on Thursday, May 14 at Essex Golf and Country Club. A panel of three allied financial professionals will provide information, insight and tips about legacy gifts. The event is open to the public. The cost is $35 for CAGP/AFP members and $40 for non-members.

To find out more about LEAVE A LEGACY™ and the Windsor-Essex Roundtable contact Pat Valleau at 519.254.5577 ext. 33966.
THE WINDSOR RIVERFRONT is expected to have a brand new look for the July 1st Canada Day celebration.

For the past two years, there has been a concerted effort by a local group headed up by Peter Hrastovec, prominent lawyer, community activist and writer, to have city council approve installation of a 150-foot flagpole to fly a very large Canadian flag measuring 30 by 60 feet. That dream has now moved a step closer to reality with unanimous consent from city hall.

Hrastovec, whose father came to Canada from Croatia after the Second World War has said, “this flag will show who we are, what we stand for and how lucky we are.” As a matter of fact, the idea of having a huge flag directly across from the city of Detroit has been on his mind for years. After talking to a number of people, doing extensive engineering work and providing a commitment to raise the necessary money, letters of intent were sent to the city’s Parks and Recreation and legal departments. Construction engineer Dave Woodall and Mike Beale were also contacted and they immediately came on board. Both had been instrumental in the installation and commemoration of Dieppe Monuments here and in France. At the time, tentative approval was given by city council, but the project sat dormant for the next couple of years and Beale, who was head of fund-raising suspended any further efforts until official sanction for the project was received earlier this year.

Already $100,000 of the $300,000 total cost is in the bank. The balance is being raised through corporate and individual donations which reportedly, are coming in at a rapid rate. Organizers are optimistic the entire amount will be raised before actual ground is broken. The money is being collected by the Windsor Essex Community Foundation which will issue tax receipts to donors. Online donations can be made by logging on to www.wecf.ca or cheques can be delivered in person to the Windsor-Essex Community Foundation at 2575 Ouellette Place. In the meantime, local school boards are being canvassed for their support in hopes of getting kids involved. “It’s not necessarily the money,” says Beale, “but rather giving these students a vested interest in the project through their ▶
loons and toonies.” Prospective American donations have also been sought and the response to date has been positive.

In order to have the huge flag up and flying by July 1st, construction has to begin no later than 6 weeks before that date with Woodall Construction overseeing the work. The flag will be made out of sail-cloth which is more expensive but more durable than nylon with a longer life expectancy of about 18 months. Frayed edges can be re-stitched once before the entire flag has to be replaced. Plans call for a smaller flag to be flown in the winter because of damage that’s possible because of higher sustained winds.

The flag’s location has been precisely mapped out: “if you follow the centre line of Ouellette Avenue all the way down to the water so that it touches the Detroit River and come back 30 feet...that’s where it is...at the entrance to Dieppe Park,” says Mike Beale. He adds, “that’s where we honour those men and women who served Canada during wartime and the location of a Canadian flag is absolutely perfect in that location. After all, this is where Canada begins. We’re celebrating veterans, our ancestors and ourselves as Canadians. It is the quintessential perfect Canadian project – the perfect Windsor project – the perfect Essex County project. It’s just the right thing to!”

So, exactly how high will be the pole be? The top will be about the same height as the Chrysler Building on the northwest corner of Ouellette and Riverside Drive and the bank on the east side of the city’s main street and will easily be seen by northbound motorists on the hill of Ouellette Avenue across from Jackson Park. The flag will fly 24 hours a day — special lighting will highlight it at night and it could eventually become an attraction drawing more visitors to our city.

In letters to prospective project supporters, organizers say: “we all know Canada is a nation of immigrants. Some arriving over 50,000 years ago...some arrived yesterday. Our ancestral paths are varied. We are all bound by love of country, projected by laws that guarantee our freedom to speak, to worship without fear, to assemble in peace. We are guaranteed the right to vote and a free and unrestricted press. Together we will celebrate these rights and freedoms.”

And what better year than 2015 to do it? Our very distinctive red and white maple leaf flag has just turned 50! WLM
Denture wearers often don’t realize they still require the care of a general dentist who can monitor gum health and diagnose lesions and other concerns. “The Denture Center Windsor ON is bringing patients and the dental community together. The whole team gets involved for the patient’s benefit,” Eric says.

To create durable, high performance complete dentures, partial dentures and implant dentures, The Denture Center Windsor ON fabricates teeth with materials manufactured by Ivoclar Vivadent and implant components from Nobel Biocare. “We have three categories of dentures to meet everyone’s wants, needs and budget,” Eric explains.

“The solution that feels the most secure and natural is the implant denture system,” Eric finds. The center’s denturists are able to rejuvenate a patient’s smile by working collaboratively with an oral surgeon or dentist who places the implants. The denturist crafts a custom solution in the most authentic shape, size and hue to compliment the patient’s mouth function and appearance.

“With the All-On-4 teeth in a day procedure, working with your dentist we can provide you same day permanent teeth in as little as 4 hours,” Eric says. The teeth continually stay in place, restoring confidence and quality of life to the patient who can then eat, talk and laugh normally.

People who wear traditional removable dentures can also count on The Denture Center Windsor ON for dentures that fit and function well. For ongoing support, the denturists do same day denture relines, adjustments and while you wait repairs. Eric encourages, “Just call 519-969-6316 so you can receive our timely help.”

Sharing digital files between the city and county locations, the practice’s denturists can treat patients wherever they are. “We’ve made a lot of progress since we evolved from being the former South Windsor Denture Clinic to becoming The Denture Center Windsor ON,” remarks owner and denturist Eric Kukucka DD.

Denturist James M. Bennett says, “Since Eric has taken over my first practice in Windsor, it has been a great experience for my patients. I am looking forward to providing the Leamington community with all of the innovative technology and customer service aspects The Denture Center Windsor ON brings with its brand of quality and excellence. Working with Eric truly has renewed my love for the profession and my commitment to our patients.”

Judy Durocher, who has worked for Jim for over 14 years, says “It’s been an amazing transition.”

“We have applied our team approach to everything we do,” says Eric. “We are working with dentists through our new Dental Professionals Program, a collaborative care model.” At the heart of the program is ongoing communication between the patient’s dentist, denturist, oral surgeon, dental laboratory and dental materials manufacturer. “We work with all local dentists. Our program is already well-received and extremely successful.”

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Come into the Night Garden

Setting aside yardwork for a spell, Canada Blooms 2015 emphasized the delights of yard play at the national gardening show held from March 13th to 22nd in Toronto. Recognizing that for many homeowners, relaxation and recreation usually occurs after long hours making a living or tending to home and family, Canada Blooms dimmed the overhead lights in the sprawling Direct Energy Centre at Exhibition Place and invited visitors to step into the intrigue of softly lit night gardens.

Over 200,000 people strolled through the gardens to see the latest trends at the 19th annual world-class festival. Connecting people to the joys and benefits of nature through experiences with gardens and flowers, the not-for-profit organization promotes, educates, inspires and celebrates all aspects of horticulture. Founded by Landscape Ontario and The...
Garden Club of Toronto, Canada Blooms is one of the Top 100 festivals in the province recognized by Festivals and Events Ontario.

As garden designers and builders proved at Canada Blooms, there is much to be said for creating a landscape that looks its best in the evening. The style and layout of the garden can encourage playful pastimes that most appeal to the residents: Writing names with sparklers in the dark velvety air; listening to a concert of singing frogs; dancing for the heck of it under patio lanterns; adding another log to the fire before recalling one more story of other magical summer nights, years ago.

People with energy to burn or seeking ways to get fit in their own backyard could find activities throughout Landscape Ontario’s Otium Outdoor Exercise Garden. Developed by Shawn Gallaugher Design, the garden incorporated landscape features that doubled as exercise equipment.

Modern, open arbors and gazebos were equipped with overhead bars and brackets so people could lift their own body weight. Retaining walls were intended to be stepped, jumped and balanced on. The garden employed paving patterns in patios and walkways as markers for cardio exercises. Stretching, yoga...
and meditation were done in dedicated green spaces providing room to move in the fresh, rejuvenating air.

The game was afoot in Near North Hardscape’s Let’s Play garden. A living wall of drought resistant succulent plants was arranged into a clock face, keeping time as players pondered their next moves on the giant chessboard. Knee-high plastic chess pieces were placed on grey and natural concrete penny pavers serving as the squares of the board. Assuring it was all in fun was a life sized fairy, wrought in bronze, watching intently. In another corner, a one hole mini putt blended into the landscape, surrounded by soft globes of flowering hydrangea and delicate Japanese maples.

When the allure of the night is so irresistible no one wants to go indoors to bed, it’s tempting to sleep outside. Especially when there is a treehouse as awesome as the one erected by Bienenstock’s Natural Playgrounds. The designers secured a huge tree trunk upside down and perched a treehouse on top. A log staircase led to the little home; a spiral slide brought visitors back to earth. The Bienenstock Playforest also included a big sand pit with tree stumps for stools and tables, where kids made sand pies and castles.

After the youngsters are in bed, the romance of the softly lit, fragrant garden can be more fully appreciated by the grownups. Adults Play at Night by Genoscape wrought an evocative setting with big stone urns wet with water bubbling from their cores and spilling into a shimmering pond surrounded by large rocks. The soothing sound of moving water was amplified by additional fountains situated throughout the garden.

In most of the Canada Bloom gardens, subtle lighting was set at ground level to
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illuminated plants and tucked amidst rocks to make them glow. White and light hued plants show to advantage in the night garden, such as flowering hellebores, fragrant white hyacinths, variegated zebra iris, sea holly, yellow yarrow, voluptuous white and pink peonies and other perennials. Shrubberies and trees do their part to bring the night garden to life with bridal wreath false spirea, silver variegated pagoda dogwood, white willow, Russian olive and blue arrow juniper. Climbers, like hydrangea vine, silver face vine, wisteria and Clematis, position light coloured plants at eye level.

While spending time in the night garden, there is no need to miss indoor comforts, like reclining in a comfortable chair by the fireplace while watching a favourite television program or sipping a chilled beverage at the eating bar, chatting with the family member preparing dinner in the alfresco kitchen. Aquaspa Pools & Landscape Design unified all of these elements within stone walls under a large, open pergola softened with pale blue sheers. The hue was echoed in the blue illumination of the water feature in the landscaper’s Backyard Sanctuary.

Shunning sunbathing and the harmful UV rays, people who love night gardens can moon bathe instead. Against a hewn stone wall, Royal Stone Landscaping & Design installed an old claw-footed bathtub, filled from a faucet set high in the wall and spouting a thin stream of water into the tub, foaming with soap bubbles. A carpet of tulips bordered the bathing area.

Since all children, young or old, have VIP passes into the world of make believe, they naturally find pleasure in enchanting miniature fairy gardens. The trend is so big it has prompted the manufacture of tiny patio furniture, fountains and all manner of wee folk. At Canada Blooms, Vandermeer turned its garden patch into Fairy Frolic, an entire neighbourhood of dwellings fashioned out of twigs, branches and moss to house sleepy pixies and sprites.

Creating the right setting, garden owners extend an open invitation to drop in. Word spreads and before long, frogs, birds, chipmunks and other wildlife take up residence. Friends come, too.

Perhaps the nicest thing of all about the night garden is that it is harder to spot the weeds creeping out of the darkened earth. With fewer distractions, it is easier to hear nature whispering: Slow down. Breathe deeply. Enjoy every moment here in this place.
Nothing can ruin a backyard aesthetic more than storage. The good news is EuroSheds! Perhaps you want utility space, a garden and potting house, backyard retreat, workout room, pool house or hobby shed. Whatever the purpose, the quality and visual appeal of EuroSheds make them your smartest choice.

EuroSheds can accommodate the size you need, as small as 8 x 4 feet or 6 x 10 feet to substantial 16 x 50 buildings like the one recently constructed for The Bloomin’ Gardener.

At the helm of EuroSheds are Chris and Charlotte Blanchette who will make a site visit and help you decide on the customized shed that is right for you. Any of the finely crafted EuroSheds designs will accentuate your landscape and serve you well for years to come.

“Our on-site visit is a relaxed sharing of ideas and discussion about customer requirements and available options. Ultimately that’s how people make their best decisions,” says Chris. He will show you the impressive and inspiring catalogue of previous EuroShed projects and will carefully take you through the customizing and quoting process. It’s helpful to visit their website for excellent examples of what you have to choose from.

Once you’ve ordered your EuroShed, the EuroSheds team will take care of the details, building and pre-assembling as much as possible in their Windsor/LaSalle based shop and then erect your shed in your yard in a single day.

All you have to do is make sure the site is cleared and fairly level, and then, when your shed is complete, put it to use.

EuroSheds compliment any backyard. These durable sheds are fashioned after the charming garden sheds of Europe. “They add heart to your backyard landscape setting, heartscape is what I call it,” says Chris.

Your EuroShed will be constructed with the durability and quality that is not often seen in today’s backyard shed construction. “This is a shed for life,” points out Chris.

EuroSheds are made from thick rough cut knotty pine lumber delivered directly from the mill exclusively for EuroSheds’ purpose. EuroSheds floor, roof, and walls are built with solid lumber which provides an enduring scented experience of a pine forest inside your shed. A EuroShed looks like it belongs in your yard because it is made of nature’s raw materials.

Take a look at a EuroSheds display, viewable any time, at the shop location at 740 Morton Drive, Windsor. As well, BMR Windsor Building Centre and Pools by Angelo on Jefferson each have a EuroShed on display and informative pamphlets that will tell you all you need to know to decide on a purchase. The web site has a comprehensive list of sizes, options and prices that make it easy for you to determine what you can get in your price range. Custom sizes and designs are also available.

EuroSheds are quality constructed to your custom specifications and assembled on site. All windows include flower boxes and shutters when size allows. Doors are assembled with antique hinges and lockable latches. A EuroShed is shingled and stained with your choice of colour selection to create a unique shed that is a beautiful focal point in your yard.

To learn more about EuroSheds quality garden sheds, visit EuroSheds.ca or call 519-987-4335 to book your site visit for your EuroShed today.
SINCE 1989 CINDY’S HOME AND GARDEN has established itself as a destination shopping experience for residents and visitors to Essex County. Located at 585 Seacliff Drive in Kingsville, Cindy’s offers a diverse selection of unique products and exceptional customer service.

Visitors can easily spend an afternoon browsing through the extensive inventory that includes exquisite giftware, clothing, jewellery, artwork, garden accessories and more. Owners Ken and Christine Martin spend an extensive amount of time researching customer buying trends. They take enormous pride in selling items that are not available elsewhere in this region.

Ken began the business in 1989 from one greenhouse, then to five greenhouses, a business state side, and a small gift store in 1997. In honour of his wife Cindy, who passed away in 1997, Ken chose to keep the name Cindy’s Home & Garden. After more than five years of utilizing greenhouse space to operate the original gift shop, a 4000 square foot new gift shop opened March 2004. In 2010, Cindy’s expanded once again when Ken and Christine moved out of their home located at the front of the property and converted it into Cindy’s Too, a second gift shop also serving specialty coffees and premium ice cream.

Most recently a women’s clothing boutique opened in September 2014. The boutique has a wide selection of women’s clothing and accessories. There is also a full-time fashion assistant on staff who can assist women in selecting fashions that best suit them. Women
can participate in group classes or book individual appointments to access this service.

To further enhance customers’ experiences, Cindy’s offers specialty classes and events throughout the year.

Cindy’s Free Customer Club has become extremely popular with customers. For every $25 spent customers receive a stamp on their card. Once the card is full customers receive a $50 gift certificate to use on anything in the store. Customers who complete the card within a year are invited to a special VIP event held annually.

“We have always taken enormous pride in offering customers a unique experience. This includes both our impressive inventory, and also our outstanding customer service,” says Ken.

Over the years Cindy’s Home and Garden has been recognized for their excellence and innovation. Profit magazine ranked Cindy’s as one of the fastest growing businesses in Canada two years in a row and Christine has been recognized as one of the top women entrepreneurs in Canada. In addition, they were awarded the Business Integrity Award by the Better Business Bureau in 2014.

Whether you are looking to add some flowers to your garden, find that perfect gift or add to your home décor, a visit to Cindy’s Home and Garden is a must. It is an Essex County gem that guarantees to impress you.

Visit www.cindysgarden.com to preview this amazing shopping experience!
PELLE WINGS NATURE STORE & PADDLESPORTS SHOP
Helping You Discover the Great in the Outdoors

Life is an adventure, best experienced in person, in its natural habitat. Pelee Wings Nature Store & Paddlesports Shop has all the gear required to put you in the midst of the action.

While people not fortunate enough to live in Essex County shop online at peleewings.ca, local residents can take advantage of the proximity of Pelee Wings on the waterfront in Leamington.

The return of the birds, boats and other intriguing subjects has people pausing for a second look and listen. “Being a nature store, we specialize in birding binoculars,” says owner Michael Malone. “However, with over 200 models in stock, we have binoculars specific to a variety of interests such as boating, astronomy, hunting, surveillance, travel and waterfront viewing.”

Other sports optic options are astronomy telescopes and spotting scopes, two different tools for exploring your interests. The portable spotting scope, requiring a tripod for steady viewing, works for birders, hunters and lakefront homeowners. “Every condo owner on the waterfront should have a spotting scope in their living room or balcony,” Michael believes. “As sailboats, freighters, birds and people come into view, good sports optics magnify life.”

An astronomy telescope reveals the mysteries of the night sky. “As a premier dealer, we offer great prices on astronomy telescopes by Celestron,” Michael says. “With all of our optics, we encourage people to try before they buy. You can’t experience the view online! Take our optics onto our waterfront deck, view the outdoors with different models and determine which best suits your needs, hands, eyes and budget.”

Among the most fascinating people to watch are kayakers and stand up paddleboarders. “Essex County is surrounded by water. We have the Great Lakes, Detroit River, Point Pelee marsh and Conservation Area wetlands to explore. Kayaks can be enjoyed in our 250,000+ lakes here in Ontario,” Michael notes. Pelee Wings stocks 150 kayaks from leading manufacturers. “There is a big new trend in fishing kayaks which offer exercise and fuel savings for anglers.”

The new releases in stand up paddleboards are now at Pelee Wings. “SUPs are great for exploring local waterways – and they are terrific exercise,” Michael says. People who practice yoga also embrace SUPs, taking them on the water to gauge balance as they go through their poses.

From mid-June through to mid-September, Michael sees them every Thursday evening, 6 to 7:30, when Pelee Wings hosts social paddle boarding. Not everyone does yoga during the SUPs social. Some are trying out the boards for the first time; others are building their techniques.

“All skill levels are welcome to our public event,” Michael invites. Participants can bring their own SUPs or rent one for $18 per hour from Pelee Wings to join the fun. Pelee Wings’ certified SUP trainers also host training clinics bi-weekly, or you can make an appointment for personal training. Kayak training courses are offered all summer long.

People who arrive at Pelee Wings Nature Store & Paddlesports Shop range from leisure seekers to extreme sport adventurers. “They all want to step out of the stressful high-tech workplace and get out there to enjoy nature therapy firsthand,” Michael says. “That’s what kayaking, paddleboarding, birding and other fresh air activities are all about.”
Beauty or Beast? The Choice Is Clear.

You work hard to achieve a beautiful backyard pool setting and still something doesn’t click. Maybe it isn’t what’s missing, but what should be missing. Hide that solar blanket.

The practical sense of investing in a ClearDeck Solar Blanket System featuring invisible storage is clear. To get the best use of your pool, which makes it worth the investment, you must use a solar blanket. But, surface mounted solar covers are inconvenient and they end up being unused eyesores in your otherwise backyard haven.

“And that means your pool is either underutilized because it is too cold to swim in, or you end up paying astounding pool heating costs, year after year,” explains Ornella Bertoni Liburdi of ClearDeck Systems.

The innovative ClearDeck solar blanket system solves the solar blanket dilemma with in the deck storage and easy operation by one person. It was invented by Ornella’s father, Italo Bertoni. Today, his ClearDeck system has patents in several countries, offering the world’s only solar blanket reel system that is stored in your deck and out of sight when not in use.

The main concern for anyone with a pool is enhancing their backyard living experience. Where to put that solar blanket has always been a problem. This is what inspired Italo, who owned Sunrise Pools, to come up with the ClearDeck solution.

“It is certainly a beauty or beast comparison,” notes Ornella. “Any other aesthetic you invest in for your pool like lighting or a waterfall, won’t pay you back. You’ll reap the benefits with ClearDeck because of the significant savings on your heating costs.”

New pool installations are most convenient to install a Cleardeck so it is important to think about future heating costs and to discuss a solar blanket with your pool dealer.

ClearDeck can be installed into any kind of deck, including stamped concrete and paver stone decks. Even complex free form pools are no problem for ClearDeck and you will have no unsightly view, no trip hazards and trouble-free winter storage.

The ClearDeck solar blanket system features storage of the solar blanket in the surrounding pool deck. Designed for one person to operate, covering and uncovering your pool is simple and easy, taking less than one minute.

The ClearDeck system uses a 12-milimetre thick, self draining solar blanket, Access is through a flip-up lid and the blanket is pulled across the pool using a strap. Retracting the cover is just as simple, using a crank system. The mechanical components are premium trouble-free aluminum and the lid that lays flush with your deck is anodized to retain its durable finish.

Consider the cost of installing and operating a pool while providing the pleasant surroundings, it pays to invest in a ClearDeck system. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates up to an 85 percent savings on energy costs with consistent solar blanket use and the Cleardeck Reel system makes it easy (besides the added advantage of keeping the pool clean from debris). For the look, heat cost savings and ease of operation there is no question that ClearDeck makes practical sense.

Your pool is inground…your blanket should be too!

Visit cleardecksystems.com and see for yourself that the beauty or beast choice is clear. For a pool dealer referral, call 1-866-607-3325.
YOUR BACKYARD REFUGE NEEDS A PLAN. Landscape projects have become more sophisticated: the costs, the limitless material choices and the innovative installation processes. We are constantly seeking ways to extend and beautify our outdoor living spaces. In order to do these in a thoughtful process, all aspects these outdoor living spaces should be planned and drawn out to visualize how the final product will come together. It saves time, money and aggravation.

The landscape artists of the award winning Bellaire Landscape Inc. are ready to help you enjoy the full pleasures of your outdoor living space whether you are a dedicated do-it-yourselfer (DIY) or looking for a responsible, innovative landscaper to do it for you (DFY).

Bellaire Landscape Inc. encourages this design first, implement second philosophy. Owners Mike Bellaire and his wife Olivia, along with Brother Bob have established their Design/Build Landscape Company on foundation of innovative landscape design and thorough construction practices. In their 22nd season they have assemble a group of dedicated long term employees that work diligently to build your dream outdoor living space.

"Whether your landscaping project is your major undertaking for the year, or a labour of love that you phase in over seasons, you’ve go to have a design plan," says Mike. “That is the most crucial aspect and well worth the time and expense.”

This Award Winning Company proudly uses the talents of seasoned landscape designer Chris Power. He and the design staff are capable of shaping clients’ input into a workable set of landscape drawings that may include a plan, colour plan and a 3-D rendering of the outdoor space.

These drawings allow Bellaire Landscape to accurately and efficiently provide pricing on all aspects of a job. Material choices are defined and can easily be compared to other available options or choices. An estimate is prepared and time lines to complete a job are established.

“Imagining the finished space is the hard part for most homeowners,” says Mike. “To convey the excitement of your design concept, we use up-to-date 3-d software to show clients the virtual fly-through drawings, pictures and actual material samples for their property.”

“Save those photos and sketches that appeal to you,” advises Mike. “A picture is worth a thousand words and they convey the feel you are going for.”

With your portfolio of inspiring images and friendly discussion during an on-site visit, Bellaire Landscaping Inc. will consider space, scale and other factors that influence a design.

“Our comprehensive designs help people to justify an expense and make better budget decisions. “It really gives people confidence in what they are getting,” Mike says.

Bellaire Landscape Inc. stays current and selects the best options for your design and project installation. From arbors to water features, there are focal points just right for your yard and vision.

Bellaire Landscape Inc. also operates Essex Landscape Supply where garden and landscape enthusiasts come to see inspiring displays and purchase the plants and materials they need for their projects. You can also visit them online and see for yourself why their landscape designs are award winning.

Visit Bellaire Landscape Inc.’s virtual showroom online at bellairelandscape.com or visit their real displays at Essex Landscape Supply, where the Bellaire Landscape office is also located, at 2025 Ellis Side Road, just east of Manning and north off Highway #3.
Beautiful landscapes begin with Bellaire Landscape Inc.

Professional results.
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AFTER DISCUSSING WHERE THEY WANTED TO SPEND their next vacation, Windsor residents and retirees Peggy and Allen Shearn decided to combine two trips into one big adventure in February, 2014. First, they would travel to Israel and visit the traditional sites connected to ancient Jewish kings, Jesus and the Prophet Mohammed. Then they would cruise the Seychelles archipelago in the Indian Ocean, which legend maintains is the actual location of the Garden of Eden.

Flying into modern Tel Aviv, Allen was pleased to return to the Holy Land and introduce his wife to its incredible history. “I wanted Peggy to get some flavour of Israel by being in three very different places: Haifa, Jerusalem and Eilat.”

They journeyed to the beautiful coastal city of Haifa and connected with Zeev Lev, a former colleague from Allen’s years as the biology department chairman of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. Since retiring to Windsor in 2007, Allen kept in touch with his old friend and his wife, Mira, who were now eager to conduct the Shearns on an incredible travel itinerary.

“Zeev was better than a professional guide,” Allen says. “We learned a lot and it was meaningful for him, too.”

One amazing stop was Stella Maris Monastery and Church on Mount Carmel in Haifa, overlooking the Mediterranean. Named in honour of Mary, mother of Jesus, it is the world headquarters of the Carmelites, a Catholic religious order of friars and nuns originating in the 12th century. They were massacred by the Saracens in 1291 but returned in 1631, eventually completing the monastery, built like a fortress for protection against hostile forces. Despite the monastery’s turbulent past, “it was gorgeous,” says Allen.

Driving 60 km east to the Sea of Galilee, the Shearns found it to be “a really bleak place.” The heart-shaped freshwater lake in northern Israel is very much as it was in the time of Jesus. Refreshed by the River Jordan, the lake is Israel’s primary water reservoir. Biblical Scripture establishes Galilee as where Jesus called four fishermen to serve as his first disciples; calmed a storm; and walked on water.

Acknowledging how tightly packed Israel’s historical sites are, the Shearns reached Jerusalem by driving 170 km south. After checking into their hotel, they entered the Old City and began exploring its narrow, ancient stone streets. “We were out from early in the morning till late at night and absolutely adored it,” Allen says. He was intrigued by the contrasts in architecture of the historical, living...
Clockwise from above left: The golden-topped and tile-faced Dome of the Rock mosque built in the 7th century gleams in the heart of Old Jerusalem; traveler Allen Shearn visits Judaism’s holiest site, the Western Wall Plaza, where ultra-Orthodox Jews pray before the retaining wall of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem; although Israel is a modern country with good highways and fast transportation options for tourists and pilgrims, it is not uncommon to see people riding camels; the ruins of Capernaum, a village by the Sea of Galilee where Jesus lived, is overlooked by a new visitors’ centre; Peggy Shearn and other swimmers float in the Dead Sea; fish are viewed up close and personal in the underwater marine conservatory in Eilat by the Red Sea. Minerals from the Dead Sea are extracted at a nearby plant.
city. Archeological excavations are ongoing at King David’s palace, where anyone can walk under scaffolding to observe workers at their tasks. “It allows you to feel like you are a part of it.”

In the colourful, crowded souk, the shopping district of Old Jerusalem, Peggy browsed merchants’ wares of olivewood carvings of the Holy Family, jewellery, spices, camel hide handbags and skincare products made from salts and minerals from the Dead Sea.

The Shearns drove 100 km to the southernmost end of the Dead Sea to Masada. Built on a hilltop plateau, “it is a remote place in the desert and very elaborate with aqueducts, baths and gardens,” Allen says. The Masada ruins indicate the splendor of Herod the Great’s palace, which he fortified between 37 and 31 BCE against possible Jewish uprisings.

At the outset of the Great Jewish Revolt against Rome in AD 66, Jews took over the palace. About six years later, Roman troops built siege ramps and invaded Masada. “When the Romans got there, no one was alive,” Allen says. Tradition has it that 960 Jews took their own lives. In modern times until 1986, “young Israeli soldiers were taken to Masada to be taught the story of the Jews who would rather die than be enslaved.”

Masada looks down on the Dead Sea and the salt and mineral extraction plants which yield Israeli companies approximately US$3 billion annually in product sales. The Shearns prowled along the Mineral Beach and went for a swim. “The beach is all pebbly and the water smells bad,” Allen observes. “The salt content is so high you just float on top of the water.” Swimmers are warned not to drink, dive into or put their faces in the water.

First made famous when Herod made the Dead Sea one of the earliest health spas in antiquity, the region grabbed headlines worldwide when scrolls from Herod’s time and afterward were discovered between 1946 and 1956 in local caves. The Shearns headed to the Israel Museum of Jerusalem, where most of the scrolls are housed. “It is quite a spectacular museum,” Allen says.

While in Jerusalem, the couple hired a private guide, Ziv, who led them to the Mount of Olives, the city’s highest peak and the place of many
pilgrimage sites, including the Dome of the Ascension, a mosque protecting a rock believed to have been marked by the footprint of Jesus as he ascended to heaven; the garden and grotto of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed the night before he was crucified; and the traditional tomb of his mother, Mary.

After Jerusalem’s stone walls and streets, arriving at Eilat by the Red Sea was a jolt to the senses. Set against purple mountains, the clear blue sea boasts a gorgeous coral reef extending over 1200 metres long and is 35 metres deep at its steepest. “We’ve gone snorkeling in lots of different places but this was something extraordinary,” says Allen.

The delicate shaping of the coral prompted one section to be named the Japanese gardens. Over 270 coral species form an environment for over 2,500 species of underwater life, including sea turtles, dolphins, cuttlefish, octopi and sea urchins. The Shearns waded right in.

Back on dry land, Allen was entranced by the underwater marine observatory. “It’s like an ocean park with sea animals and a movie,” he says. Shielded by glass, “you could see all kinds of fish and drink a soda at the same time. It was like being right in the ocean!”

North of Eilat in the Arava desert is a birdwatching site that the Shearns had heard of. Israel is a significant central migratory path for about 500 million birds who migrate south to Africa in the fall and return to Europe in the spring. Driving their rental car, Allen was somewhat frustrated to learn, “Once you got off the highway, there were no signs. We did a lot of driving around, but we were committed to finding the birdwatching site.” Finally stumbling upon it, “there were only two other people.” The birding was enjoyable and peaceful.

Exploring Israel by rental vehicle, “we didn't have any trouble except for getting gasoline,” Allen says. The pump instructions, written in Hebrew, baffled him. “Fortunately, other people getting gas showed me what to do.”

Saying farewell to Israel, the Shearns flew to the Seychelles Islands and boarded a small cruise ship. Only 30 passengers were on board, giving the couple the feeling of open space after Old Jerusalem’s crowds.

Situated 1,600 km east of the African coast in the Indian Ocean, the Seychelles Islands had always held a degree of fascination for the Shearns. About 20 years ago, Peggy asked her hairstylist, an avid traveler and amateur photographer, to name her ▼
In the land of perpetual summer, natives and visitors swim in the Indian Ocean year round. The Shearns spent many of their precious hours in the turquoise blue waters, snorkeling and searching for angelfish, parrotfish and other inhabitants of the sea.

“Around the world, coral is dying. It’s terrible,” Allen remarks. He had noticed a decline in repeat trips to the British Virgin Islands and was sad to see that the Seychelles are not immune.

El Niño, a cyclical climatic phenomenon, increased seawater temperatures to damaging levels in 1998, resulting in as much as 90% of the Seychelles’ coral reefs dying. There are positive signs now emerging through natural coral recovery and a coral reef rescue project on Cousin Island which transplants live donor corals to dead areas.

Of the Seychelles’ 115 islands, only 60 are inhabited. A member of the African Union, Seychelles has a population of about 90,000. Influenced by French and British rule in its early history, most residents belong to the Seychelles Creole ethnic group.

Curieuse Island, measuring just 1.6 km square in area, is a natural park for Aldabra giant tortoises. “Hundreds of these giant, gentle tortoises roam free,” Peggy notes. Some are senior citizens, living to over 100 years old. The tortoises are among the largest of their species in the world; an average male is 120 cm long and weighs in at 250 kg.

Rimmed with golden sand beaches and shaded by palms, mangroves and takamaka trees, the reserve is also inhabited by geckos, white tailed tropic birds, fairy terns and other species.

More native birds breed on Aride Island, including five species only found in Seychelles.

The island of La Digue immediately reveals why it is often voted as possessing the most beautiful beaches on the planet. Peggy and Allen appreciated Anse Source D’Argent, outlined by huge granite boulders worn smooth by the Indian Ocean.

Leaving behind the balmy climate and laidback pace of the Seychelles, the Shearns were pleased with their cultural, ecological and recreational adventure.
For more than 120 years, four generations of Weingardens and their trained, professional staff have ensured every customer receives personal attention and a proper sizing for a secure and perfect fit.

Specializing in shoes that offer out of the box comfort, Diane Shoes now has in stock this season's most flexible and fashionable collections. For women, nude footwear has become as popular and versatile as black. Metallic and printed leathers are hot style statements available in heels, wedges, flats and sandals. Softness and support at a luxurious level are delivered by Naot, a leading manufacturer of anatomic footwear. Naot's engineering distributes body weight across the footwear and its innovative multi-layered insoles mold to the shape of the foot for superior comfort and balance. Cushioned arch supports and latex padding provide shock absorption. Even people resigned to dealing with foot pain find liberation from discomfort and walk with ease in Naot's shoes, clogs and boots. At this time of year, Naot's sandals are in demand. Handsomely designed and incredibly supportive, these sandals will keep men and women's feet cool and refreshed all day long.

Just in time for the warm weather, the SAS collection of sandals and shoes has launched many styles, sizes and widths for men and women. Supportive SAS footwear is recommended by podiatrists across North America. In Europe, Rieker has been handcrafting fashionable footwear even longer than Diane Shoes has been in business. Its signature anti-stress soles cushion and flex as the wearer moves through his or her day. Lightweight and supremely comfortable, Rieker shoes and sandals are highly rated in North America.

So is ECCO active footwear. Crafted from natural, soft leather, the sporty, flat and wedge heel sandals are soft and breathable, ensuring the perfect inner climate. The hardwearing, flexible and lightweight sole cradles the foot with excellent cushioning.

Diane Shoes has brought in attractive, active comfort lines by many other manufacturers, including new spring models by Mephisto, Pikolinos, Clarks, Merrell, Blundstone, Johnston & Murphy, Taos, Earth, Sperry, Saucony, Remonte and Keds. For dressier occasions, the shoe salon has the best quality name brands, like Cole Haan, Amalfi, Nine West, Ros Hommerson, Trotters and Vaneli. On trend handbags in this season's colours compliment both dress and casual footwear.

An important accessory for active people on the go is a smart looking hat. Diane Shoes encourages men and women to protect themselves against harmful UV damage with the latest collection of Canadian made Tilley Hats. The specially engineered fabric is rated UPF 50+, the highest rating given for sun protection. Mesh fabric sewn into the crown keeps the wearer's head cool and comfortable. Packable, crushable and machine washable, soft Tilley Hats retain their shape, repel rain and even float when accidentally dropped overboard.

For footwear, accessories, socks and shoe care products, come to Diane Shoes, open daily. The Weingarden family and staff invite you to enjoy Windsor's Finest Shoe Salon.
Armando’s Belle River - Pizza made fresh from our family to yours, with all your favourite toppings. Other menu items available. Fast delivery. Located in Aspen Plaza. 1679 County Rd. 22 • 519-727-0660

Billy’s Pub and Grill - 14 craft beer taps, local wines, and food made from scratch. Take the short drive to Essex and see why Billy’s was voted one of Ontario’s hidden gems. See what’s on tap at billyspubandgrill.com 305 Talbot St. N., Essex • 519-776-7094

Capri Pizzeria - Capri’s casual atmosphere and welcoming staff attracts a mix of diners! Come out and enjoy our great pizzas, pasta and more! 3020 Dougall Ave. • 519-969-6851

Casa Mia Ristorante - Experience authentic Italian food, local wines and homemade desserts and crepes served in a casual, completely handicap accessible setting. For 22 years, chef and owner Frank Puccio has been making lunch and dinner fresh to order. Gluten free options. Closed Sunday. 523 Notre Dame St., Belle River. • 519-728-2224

Cramdon’s Tap and Eatery - South Windsor’s friendly gathering place. Offering great food at affordable prices. Satellite sports and billiards in a pub-like setting. www.cramdons.com 2950 Dougall Ave. • 519-736-1228

Fratelli Pasta Grill - Offering flavour drenched “woodfire” grilled steaks, seafood and pasta dishes. A fresh and healthy selection of modern and time tested classics. Located behind McDonald’s on Manning Rd. in Tecumseh. Take-out, catering, private parties. For reservations call 519-735-0355. www.fratellipastagrill.com

Jeff’s Fresh Meats - We make dining at home easy. Choose from one of our many ready made products: stuffed pork chop, stirfrys, cordon bleu, stuffed peppers, meat loaf. 3750 Walker Rd. • 519-967-0988

Joe Schmoe’s Eats N’ Drinks - Family friendly restaurant offering big and bold, made in-house foods you crave! Pulled pork, big mouth burgers and jumbo wings, we have something for everyone. Patio, lots of parking, sports package, 12 beers on tap. Kitchen open late. 5881 Malden Rd. (behind Rexall) • 519-250-5522 www.eatatjoes.ca

LUX DINER’S MENU REVEALS as much about the tastes of the restaurant’s loyal guests as those of the chefs who prepare their meals. Before the menu was created, brothers, chefs and restaurateurs Kastro and Robert Perkaj got to know their guests and learned what they really wanted to eat. Guided by that important input, Lux Diner was officially launched.

The brothers’ consideration has resulted in a successful first year at 33 Amy Croft Dr., Tecumseh. “We are very grateful to be here and appreciate our guests’ continuing support,” Kastro says. “The community has shown us a warm welcome, which we are happy to reciprocate.”

Bringing 15 years in the food industry to Lux Diner, Kastro ensure guests’ preferences are respected. Robert, a qualified chef for 21 years, cooks a wide variety of delicious dishes that would please just about everybody. Kids with decided tastes, vegetarians, rib connoisseurs, seniors, folks who favour home style cooking, adventurers seeking globetrotting flavours: They all leave Lux Diner full and satisfied.

Fresh ingredients bought from Windsor’s Market Square and other local suppliers, signature sauces and home style cooking contribute to the food’s consistent quality.

Eager to please, the Perkaj brothers ensure that breakfast, lunch, dinner or drinks at Lux Diner is an affordable treat. “We are now offering our new Two Can Dine for $24.99 deal,” Kastro says. A pair of guests can share one of several appetizers listed on the regular menu and then relish their own entrée, chosen from six or more selections.

Guests who want to savour the warmer weather can relax on the patio. It’s a great spot for unwinding with friends over drinks and appetizers. After 11 am, Lux Diner is serving Budweiser for $2 on Tuesday and Wednesday and Corona for $3 on Friday.

Lux Diner’s friendly servers know how to treat guests. Breakfast, served till 3 pm, Tuesday through Sunday, has tasty temptations like the farmer’s omelette, pecan caramel pancakes and French toast. “Our skillet’s are popular,” Kastro notes. The hearty version is piled with sausage, bacon, ham, green peppers, onions, mushrooms, home fries, cheddar and the guest’s preferred style of eggs.

Flaming cheese lit at the table is a memorable appetizer. Every sandwich or meal is accompanied by coleslaw and a choice of corn, sweet potato fries, mashed potatoes, Caesar or Greek salad or another side dish.

Robert adds special touches, like homemade cranberry mayo sauce on the roasted turkey club sandwich and his own dry rub and sauce on the slow cooked barbecued ribs. Old fashioned halibut or haddock and wedge fries, liver and onions, meatloaf, lasagna and chicken souvlaki deliver comfort. Burgers weigh half a pound and are topped with mushrooms, mozzarella, bacon and other good stuff.

Kids have their own menu of pancakes, grilled cheese, mac and cheese, barbecued ribs and more.

Families love sharing Lux Diner’s satisfying meal featuring 15 pieces of tender broasted chicken, coleslaw, mashed potatoes, gravy and dinner rolls for just $38.99. The 20 piece chicken dinner is $47.99.

Open from 10 am to 8 pm, Tuesday through Friday and 9 am to 8 pm, Saturday and Sunday, The modern, comfortable Lux Diner also offers takeout and catering. To place an order, please call 519-735-8001.
Johnny Shotz - Tecumseh’s #1 roadhouse and home of the New Chicken Deluxe. 2 for 1 wings (Sun 1-4, all day Mon), Breakfast Sat & Sun. 38 HD screens covering every game, 7 pool tables & 13 beers on tap.
www.johnnyshotz.com
13037 Tecumseh Rd. E. 519-735-7005.

Lux Diner - Family friendly atmosphere. Large variety of items that makes everyone happy. 1/2LB Burgers, BBQ Ribs, Halibut, Pasta, Breakfast, and our famous Broasted Chicken. Open Tuesday thru Sunday.
E.C Row & Manning, Lakeshore, On
33 Amy Croft Dr. 519-735-8001

Mazaar Lebanese Cuisine - An upscale casual restaurant specialized in authentic Lebanese Cuisine in a classy comfortable yet energetic atmosphere. Their extensive lunch and dinner menus promote fresh and healthy delicious options. Free parking after 5pm. Reservations recommended.
372 Ouellette Ave. 519-967-9696.

Neros Gourmet Steakhouse - Indulge in the finer things in life at Neros where modern upscale dining meets traditional steakhouse fare. Fresh, local ingredients, an incredible wine selection and superb service. caesarswindsor.com 1-800-991-7777 ext. 22481.

Parkside at Rochester Place - Newly renovated with 3000 sq ft patio with large fountain pool, incredible fire features, large outdoor lounge area, dining area, new sound system that will amaze you and a New menu that will more than impress! See what they’ve done!
Cty Rd. 2 in Stoney Point at Ruscom River.
www.rochesterplace.com. 519-728-2361

Sandbar Steak & Seafood Restaurant - Open year round, featuring great steaks and seafood plus live entertainment Thurs., Fri. and Sat. nights in a casual atmosphere. Lots of guest boat slips off Puce River.
930 Old Tecumseh Rd., Lakeshore. 519-979-5624    www.sandbarpuce.com

Taza Mediterranean Grill - Enjoy a delectable variety of authentic, Lebanese-style dishes rich with flavour and traditional spices. Open to all ages, located in the Augustus Hotel lobby at Caesars Windsor, open weekdays 11 am–11 pm and 7 am on weekends. caesarswindsor.com.

Tony’s Chargrill - Serving authentic Portuguese Cuisine on a real charcoal grill. House specialty is chargrilled chicken. Offering several meat and seafood dishes grilled to perfection. Try our buffet and salad bar Thursday to Sunday Serving lunch and dinner 6 days a week. Closed Mondays. Open noon to midnight. 226-674-1200
3347 Tecumseh Rd. E. (west of Central Ave.)

For information on listings and advertising in the Bon Appetit! section please call Leslie Campbell at 519-979-3419.
As a teenage patient, Mark Parete was also eager to see his corrected smile eventually unveiled. In the meantime, he paid close attention to everything happening in the Windsor practice. When Dr. Robert Voth and Dr. Nazir Lalani talked of occlusions and overbites, they were speaking the language Mark wanted to learn fluently. Every orthodontist visit was like a field trip for the boy.

Fifteen years later, Dr. Mark Parete is now pleased to be a partner with Dr. Voth and Dr. Lalani. “My own positive experience in this practice led me to choose this profession,” the orthodontist says.

Dr. Voth and Dr Lalani chuckle when they recall their newest partner’s boyhood fascination with orthodontics. “Now he has come full circle.” After completing his dental and specialty training at the University of Detroit Mercy, Dr. Parete joined the practice in Jan., 2015 and achieved his dream of working with his mentors.

The practice’s philosophy was established 33 years ago by its founder, Dr. Bryan Williams. A graduate of the University of Western Ontario, Dr. Williams practiced orthodontics while teaching full time in the orthodontic department at University of Detroit Mercy – the same program Dr. Parete would eventually attend. While giving a guest lecture at the University of Western Ontario, Dr. Williams met Dr. Voth as a graduate student, which following completion of his specialty training, led them to practice together for several years. Eventually, Dr. Williams accepted a full time teaching position in Seattle, while Dr. Voth continued to practice and teach part time at Western. It was here he encountered Dr. Lalani and invited him to join the practice.

Sharing great interest in the latest advancements, their office was fully digital long before that was the norm (reducing patient exposure to radiation), and even housed equipment not available at the school, enabling research by orthodontic residents from the University of Western Ontario. They took courses together and continue to teach when time permits, and have been involved in organized dentistry – both having even served as past presidents of the Essex County Dental Society.

Sharing that same passion for teaching and learning, Dr. Parete is excited to combine his training in the latest advances in orthodontic research and treatment options with the 40+ years’ experience of his mentors and partners Drs. Voth and Lalani. Together, as the only three doctor orthodontic specialty practice in Windsor-Essex County, they will continue to advance the practice’s commitment to excellence in orthodontic treatment.

Today, the orthodontists are able to treat more people than ever. Some of their new patients are the children of former patients, and approximately 25% of their patients are adults, “Which is significant!” Dr. Parete observes. “We have many adults who have been unsatisfied with their smiles. Fortunately, we offer braces and other esthetic options to effectively and even discreetly straighten adult teeth.”

With three specialists in the office and a team of highly skilled employees, the office is able to accommodate patients’ busy schedules and needs, ensuring they are treated in a warm, caring and comfortable environment. The clinic is open weekdays as well as evenings and Saturdays. “Our extended hours have been very popular with busy parents and patients,” says Dr. Parete. New patients are always welcome.
As a young educator, Windsor’s Kelli Sirianni looks beyond academic scores and strives to appreciate how each student is affected by realities, in and out of the classroom. To help students learn more about themselves and one another, Kelli organizes Project BLAST events in local high schools.

#YOUbeautymoment, created by Erika Harnish and Carly Nicodemo to spotlight the positive, beautiful attitudes and actions of Windsor-Essex women age 40 years and younger, catches up with Kelli and Project BLAST.

Kelli Sirianni

Breaking barriers
Loving yourself
Accepting others
Similarities not differences
Totally inclusive experience.

Those are the positive elements of BLAST, an empowering project for teens coordinated by Kelli Sirianni.

At age 25, Kelli is not much older than the students she tries to help. “When I was in high school, we never had information so easily accessible to us. I am a strong believer in social media and other technology, but in healthy and positive doses. As someone who has never had significant struggles in my life, I still cannot help but look back on high school and say, ‘Well, I’m happy that’s over with…’ I truly cannot imagine being a teen now, where your life is a showcase for all to see and unfortunately, judge.”

Currently working for the Greater Essex County District School Board and the University of Windsor’s Faculty of Education, Kelli instructs the Leadership Experience for Academic Direction course for teacher candidates and teachers from local public school boards. As part of LEAD, Kelli is responsible for Project BLAST.

Students participating in a BLAST event meet in their school’s gym for icebreaker games and meaningful activities that give the youth opportunity to talk about stereotyping, marginalization, bullying and abuse, mental health, sexuality and other issues that concern them. “Although these are heavy topics, BLAST creates a safe and inclusive environment where all experiences and opinions are respected,” Kelli says. “BLAST uses empathy as a vehicle to openly speak about our challenges - and for some post-event, seek some much needed guidance.”

She finds that, “By the end of the day, the energy is high and there is a clear sense of community present in the room.”

“It is inspiring to hear students be so open and vulnerable in front of their peers, on small
and large scales, at each event and to have so many other students coming forward saying, ‘I had no idea’ or ‘I am going through the same thing: I am here to support you.’ What is even more inspiring is the hope so obviously embedded in them by the end of each event and the desire to reach toward what is better and more positive,” says Kelli.

“Above all, it enforces the fact that everyone has a story, and that everyone carries with them joys and their challenges. It encourages us to be kind, to be empathetic and to be compassionate, because you never know what someone else may be feeling or dealing with.”

Kelli says, “As a teacher, I regularly remind myself of my experiences and the stories I have heard at BLAST events. There are days when I have classes that are a bit off or rambunctious, as well as students who at times are visually distraught, frustrated and sometimes even angry. I make an effort to remind myself that everyone has different things going on – who knows what a student in my class may be going through that may be a reason that he or she just can’t focus and is acting out or perhaps not as productive as others. Patience is key! You just never know. I don’t want to be the person to make someone’s day worse, so I do my best to give students a break and be flexible with them.”

More than 15 BLAST events have been held locally since 2012 and the project is expanding. BLAST and its impact on resilience, sense of belonging, communal respect, empathy, compassion and acceptance were the focus of Kelli’s thesis for her Masters of Education degree. “I have taken BLAST and its now significant research with me to a number of conferences and plan on continuing to do so in hopes of raising awareness about this program,” she says. “In June I am scheduled to attend and present at the Pathways to Resilience Conference in Halifax – I am super excited about this!”

Looking farther into the future, Kelli says, “My hope is to continue with Project BLAST, bringing it to as many schools and organizations as I can. I am looking forward to conducting more research on BLAST on a more long-term basis, as well as continuing to bring forward BLAST as a whole to conferences and workshops. I plan to continue working with and instructing the LEAD course.” For anyone who is interested in Project BLAST or becoming involved in an event, please contact Kelli at kelli.sirianni@gmail.com.
WITH THE SOUND OF BIRDS CALLING to one another in a wooded conservation area that borders a beautifully landscaped backyard, a LaSalle couple relaxes into the Zen-like tranquility of their private outdoor retreat. Gracing the green space and the deep blue pool, numerous statues of Buddha in meditative postures invite serenity into the lush environment.

Until the sharks attack.

As the family’s two young sons clutch their big inflatable fish and jump into the swimming pool, the parents get splashed and the peace is drowned out in exuberant yells.

Before long, the happy noise will increase by several decibels as friends and relatives arrive. For this is Sunday in the summertime, when the family hosts their weekly laidback pool party and al fresco dinner for the people they love best.

“We wanted it to feel a little resort-like in our backyard and hoped our family and friends would escape with us,” says the husband. They happily oblige.

In September, 2011, when the family moved into a new model house built by Lapico Custom Homes, they appreciated the shaded shelter of the covered patio already attached to the residence. They took note of how the yard was used and determined what they could add to elevate it. By the next summer, they were read to tackle the open spaces.

To make the most of their outdoor square footage, the couple called in Lakeshore Landscaping, a full service landscape design and installation company operated by siblings Ryan, Matthew and Andrea Pawluk.

Since the one item everyone in the family wanted was a swimming pool, Eugene Cipparone, manager of Relax Pools & Spas, was also brought in.
Clockwise from top left: The deep blue rectangular saltwater pool is the predominant focal point of a LaSalle backyard. Dark grey chaises in all weather resin wicker help swimmers dry off comfortably in the summer sun. A cabana with a black Sunbrella canopy offers shade; a big sectional encourages lounging. The greenery in the landscaping is tailored yet minimalistic, with clipped globe topiaries growing in modern urns, low boxwood hedges and ornamental grasses. Numerous statues of Buddha and a small stone pagoda bring a sense of calm to the outdoor space.

“We all worked together as a team,” the husband recalls. With the professionals’ innovative ideas, advice and skill, the yard emerged, step by strategic step, into a multipurpose retreat where everybody can enjoy themselves.

A great deal of thought went into the pool’s design, function and operation. Ultimately, it was agreed that a 20’ x 40’ rectangular shape would be most advantageous. The shallow end of the pool is accessed by three wide steps leading into the water. “Little kids will sit there and splash around,” the wife says.

More adventurous swimmers plunge into 8’ of water in the deep end. Adults wanting the benefits of healthy exercise while staying cool in the pool swim laps, end to end.

After installation, “the boys and I would use the pool but it was never hot enough for my wife,” says the homeowner. So a hot tub was built, its warm saltwater overflowing into the adjacent pool.

Though the pool occupies a good section of the yard, there was ample space for other must-have amenities. The homeowners had learned lessons from their previous property, which required more upkeep than their busy careers and family life could comfortably sustain. This time, they sought high visual impact and stylish function balanced with low maintenance.

Ryan presented a landscape plan that the couple enthusiastically gave two green thumbs up. Though the elements and textures of the hardscaping and plants please the eye, the design is “minimalistic,” the husband says approvingly.
Safely corralled within low boxwood hedges, clipped globe topiaries sit like giant balls in squared concrete urns. Mounds of ornamental grasses sway in the breeze. Tall cedars stand at the edge of the conservation area, which seems a natural extension of the yard.

Despite all those Buddha statues, the wife laughingly admits, “We’re impatient people.” To make the new landscaping appear more established, “Ryan gave us mature trees, plants and grasses.”

A new cabana was erected near the pool, from where parents can keep watch on kids playing in the water. The structure is rugged enough to remain outdoors year-round, including its black canopy made of Sunbrella fabric. Everybody piles onto a big all weather resin wicker sectional that seats 12. “That’s our chill area at night,” the mom says.

Sunseekers can recline poolside on the dark grey chaises, also formed of all weather resin wicker.

“Probably 80% of the time in the summer, we will eat and lounge outdoors in our covered porch,” the wife figures. Warmed by an outdoor gas fireplace framed by an attractive mantel, the covered porch is spacious enough to accommodate an outdoor living room and dining area. “We push our seasons so we are out there as late as November,” the husband says.

The dark neutral colour theme continues in the covered porch with a weatherproof wicker sofa and armchairs arranged around a black cast iron coffee table. Leisurely meals are savoured at the black cast iron dining table. The black and soft grey furnishings are enlivened with table linens and accent pillows in turquoise as brilliant as the swimming pool.

It is understandable that turquoise was chosen for the décor’s accent colour, considering how much thought the couple put into selecting the brilliant blue pool liner accented with a faux mosaic tile border. “We knew it would be such a focal point and it was hard to decide from a small sample,” says the wife. “I wanted the blue, blue, blue look of a resort.”
From far top left: The house’s covered porch accommodates black cast iron dining furniture accented with turquoise table linens, as well as a sofa and armchairs in dark all weather resin wicker. An outdoor fireplace warms the protected gathering space on chilly evenings. For making s’mores and telling stories, though, the family’s young sons prefer the round gas fire pit. Mom likes to warm up in the hot tub, overflowing into the saltwater pool. Twelve friends can share the sectional beneath the poolside cabana, illuminated by a contemporary drum chandelier.
To ensure the landscape would appear as uncluttered as possible, a stone wall was built to conceal the pool’s pumps and equipment. When the pool is not in use, its retractable cover glides out from under the diving board, helping to keep the water warm and clean. “Covering the pool also helps prevent evaporation,” the husband says.

Although the covered porch has a fireplace to cozy up to after an evening swim, the boys prefer the round gas fire pit on the concrete decking in a quiet corner. “It’s like a giant campfire, instantly,” their mother says. “It’s s’mores time, anytime.” Everybody claims a funky white plastic stacking chair and begins swapping stories.

“Every space is designed to accommodate more than just us,” the husband says of the yard. An only child, he looks forward to seeing who of his wife’s large extended family and the couple’s wide circle of friends will arrive for Sunday dinner. Though the couple upholds their hospitable tradition throughout the year, the best gatherings often happen during the warm weather months, when everyone is together in the fresh air. Sharks included.

As practical as they are style-minded, the couple chose every element in their yard to last. The pool is surrounded by concrete decking that is easily power-washed when cleaning is required. The furnishings remain outdoors throughout winter. The waterproof polyresin Buddha figures can continue meditating in the snow.

Rather than opting for wood mulch in the garden areas, the couple agreed to dark grey stone. The husband says, “It was a little more of an investment but worth it for durability and maintenance.”

“And the look,” his wife injects.

Although the landscape certainly evokes the chicness of a boutique resort that the wife loves, it is still the backyard of a family home. She says contentedly, “We use it to the max, beginning the second that spring hits.”
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Sir Knight Giustino (Gus) Taraborrelli is a member of the Dean Wagner Assembly in Windsor, Ontario and received the Knight of the Year Award at the Dean Wagner Knights of Columbus annual awards ceremony. Gus was congratulated for his work and dedication to the Council.

PICTURED LEFT TO RIGHT IS NAVIGATOR OF ASSEMBLY 0862

Dr. John Cappucci and Gus Taraborrelli.

A WINDSOR LIFE

86 WINDSOR LIFE

HOROSCOPE

BY LESLIE NADON

ARIES
MAR 21 - APR 20:
You want to go forward, but you keep running into roadblocks. When you think you have it all figured out, someone or something comes along and everything changes. Patience and a loving heart will help you make wise choices. You can do it, one small step each day at a time.

TAURUS
APR 21 - MAY 21:
They say opportunity knocks but once, often right under your nose. You may push it aside, looking to see what lies ahead or to deal with what you already have. Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow is yet to come. It is what you do now that matters most.

GEMINI
MAY 22 - JUN 21:
At times, it is difficult to separate reality from fiction. When you jump into a situation too quickly, it may be impossible to get back on-course. Once you make a move, you cannot change your mind again. The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence until you get there.

CANCER
JUN 22 - JUL 23:
This could be your time to break away from negative situations which have held you back. Perhaps you spend too much time trying to solve other people's problems when you need to solve your own. The more you take care of yourself, the better you will be able to take care of others.

LEO
JUL 24 - AUG 23:
Look in the mirror. You ARE unique. This is a point in life where you struggle making decisions. Write a list of priorities so as to spend your time in the best way possible. It is time to start over – a new day, a new way, a new cycle in your life. Make it count.

VIRGO
AUG 24 - SEP 23:
You need to move past the frustration that seems to surround you. A new door will soon open for you. You need to lay the groundwork now in order to have a firm foundation to stand upon when the time is right. Do not lose faith in others. Move slowly based upon proven fact, not fancy.

LIBRA
SEP 24 - OCT 23:
Life in general seems to be having a dramatic effect upon what is going on in your own life. Your mind is going over and over and over the same spot again, like listening to a broken record. You have to separate the old chapter from the new chapter in order to get where you want to go.

SCORPIO
OCT 24 - NOV 22:
Stay in charge of yourself and your reactions to negativity you feel coming from others. A soft word or gentle touch can work wonders where people close to you are concerned. Ask instead of telling someone what to do and you will be far more likely to receive co-operation from them.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23 - DEC 21:
When you separate want from need, you may actually begin to see the results you desire. And when you compromise, it is amazing how much more you can accomplish! Ask yourself, “What would I do, if I were you?” Think about your options carefully before you decide.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22 - JAN 20:
Perhaps, you should take a deep breath and stand-down while others get their act together. You cannot do everything for everybody without losing yourself in the process. There can be more than one answer to any individual question. At times, there are more questions than answers.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21 - FEB 19:
You are looking at life in new ways, and communicating with others in a completely different fashion. It is time to open up the door and let some sunshine in. Carefully of course. Not wide open. You are smart enough to know the difference.

PIRSES
FEB 20 - MAR 20:
Try to keep your options open as new opportunities arise. This can set you on a different path than you had anticipated at one time. If handled carefully, benefits tend to outweigh the risks. If you can be flexible the road less travelled might bring additional gains and pleasures your way.
ONE MIGHT SAY THAT MICK RIDGEWELL leads a double life. By day, he’s an Information Technologist... by night, he’s a horror writer whose stories have earned him considerable praise.

At 56, he has already written 3 novels. His first, The Nightcrawler, which had been recommended for a Bram Stoker award by the Horror Writers’ Association, was released in the spring of 2012. It chronicles the rise and fall of a Los Angeles business executive who travels across the country, always running across the same homeless person that he had treated rather rudely after an initial meeting in Detroit. The book shows the author’s incredible imagination and provides the reader with a preview of what to expect from Mick in the future and sure enough, two more novels are on the market. They’re vampire tales...where the central characters are “true monsters, unlike the depictions in the Twilight books and movies.”

Born in Fort Erie, his family moved to Windsor when Mick was very young. He attended the Sandwich
Secondary School and earned a Business Administration diploma with a Data Processing major from St. Clair College. He’s married to Lynn and both he and his son Cory are employed at DJ Galvanizing on Sprucewood. His daughter Lauren is a grade 11 student at Villanova.

Mick loves to read, often opting for audio books in his car, instead of listening to the radio. He’s read the entire Stephen King library – so it’s no surprise that his writing naturally invites the usual comparison between himself and the prolific American storyteller.

Ridgewell’s ‘Evil Never Dies’ was released in April of last year. It’s the story of Toronto network news reporter Roland Millhouse who has been sent to the town of Kings Shore on the Bruce Peninsula to interview Canada’s oldest citizen on her 120th birthday. Needless to say, the intrepid reporter is dreading the assignment which he considers a fluff piece that could be handled by any reporter – not a veteran like himself. However, once he arrives at the fictional Lake Huron shoreline town, he gets the lowdown on events in the town a century ago...a tragic narrative filled with death and monsters...a story that profoundly changes his life and alters his arrogant attitude. Mick spins his tale in a unique manner and by the beginning of Chapter 3, the reader knows that some pretty nasty stuff has occurred. The woman herself is a pleasant surprise, appearing to be in her 70s...and relates her story to Millhouse from notes in her journal which she started back in 1912. And, the reason for her longevity: “the short answer is, the reason I have lived so long is that evil never dies.” The book moves at a steady pace and builds in intensity as the reader is transported into the world of the undead. The author’s descriptions are vivid – “the air in there had a stale foulness. I could see the anxiety in Bernhard’s eyes when he looked back to check on us. Auntie looked as frightened as I felt.” ‘Evil Never Dies’ is a page turner until the very last word.

Its sequel ‘Evil Unleashed,’ has been on the market since just before Christmas and provides a fitting conclusion to the story of Kings Shore and Roland Millhouse who has opted to stay in the town, where he becomes exposed and ultimately involved in the mayhem and revenge. The story is much more violent than the first one – you could say it’s the ultimate in vampire fiction and from the first word, it’s a grabber. Again, Mick paints vivid pictures: “A blade of sunshine cut across the dirt floor of the basement beneath
the house where Malachi Adams slept. The bright-white streak bled into ever-darker shades of grey that surrendered to total blackness. Just at the edge of that light-deprived tomb lay the lifeless figure of the lord of the manor.”

Like the creatures that Dracula creator Bram Stoker wrote about, Mick Ridgewell’s vampires are true monsters. Despite certain vulnerabilities, they are evil and possess superhuman traits. “Almost exceeding speed that could be seen by the human eye, the demon passed through the woods and fields. It was like trying to watch the wings of a humming bird.”

Mick takes his craft seriously. He’s a member of Write On Windsor, a critique group that meets every other week to help local authors in their endeavours and he continues his own writing. At the moment he’s finishing up book #4 which was inspired by a fellow worker who’s retiring and intends to travel the continent with his wife aboard an RV. “I thought to myself – that could be a book,” he says, “and I envisioned this couple in the RV heading down to the vicinity of nuclear test sites around Carlsbad New Mexico – and some really bad stuff happens.” To flesh out the story, Mick will be adding other couples to the mix to create a more interesting scenario and given his penchant for ‘creepy’ story-spinning, the end result promises to be quite the yarn. Tentatively titled ‘Carlsbad’, he’s hoping to have it in the hands of the publisher by the end of the year.

Ridgewell’s three books, all published by the international company Samhain are readily available and at $15 each, they’re a true bargain. They can be ordered, in paperback, from samhainhorror.com or from Amazon.ca. They can also be bought at Biblioasis on Wyandotte at Gladstone and Juniper Books on Ottawa Street. In the U.S. they can be found at Barnes and Noble bookstores. More information on the author is available on Facebook and on Twitter@mickridgewell.

Mick invites your comments via email at mickridgewell@yahoo.ca.

Many accolades have already come to Mick. Author Brian Moreland says Evil Unleashed is “highly recommended”, while Catherine Cavendish says it’s “deliciously dark reading” and Horror Novel Reviews claims it “will one day be recognized as a classic.”

In Mick Ridgewell’s own words – “one thing is certain. Nobody will be taking any of my vampires to the prom.”
Point Pelee Shipwrecks Presentation
Authors Cris Kohl and Joan Forsberg tell tales of shipwrecks around Point Pelee with a free presentation at 7 p.m. at the Leamington Arts Centre at 72 Talbot St. W. The co-writers will also be on hand to sign copies of their newest book, The Wreck of the Griffon, The Greatest Mystery of the Great Lakes. 519-326-2711.

14th Annual Springsong
Till Sunday, May 10. Springsong Weekend, A Celebration of Birds and Birding, revels in birds and books. Presented with the help of the Pelee Island Bird Observatory and author Margaret Atwood, the weekend of activities includes a 24 hour green bird race competing for the coveted Botham Cup. peleeislandmuseum.ca.

Lillian Plays Mozart
And Sunday, May 10. Windsor violin virtuoso, Lillian Scheirich, under the direction of Robert Franz, is performing the music of Mozart, focusing on his 40th Symphony and an earlier concerto. The concert is at 7 pm on Saturday at Leamington United Mennonite Church at 78 Oak St. E., Leamington and at 2:30 pm on Sunday at the Capitol Theatre at 121 University Ave. W., Windsor. Ticket price is $35. windsorsymphony.com.

Science Rendezvous
Canada’s largest public science festival returns to the University of Windsor. Science Rendezvous is being held from 10 a.m. to 4 pm in the CAW Student Centre at 401 Sunset Ave. Interactive activities present scientific knowledge in fun ways: Frisbee and ball-throwing robots, 3D printing demonstrations, do-it-yourself DNA extraction, the Amazing Science Chase and more. Admission is free. scien cerendezvous.ca/windsor.

Fort Malden Opening Day
Celebrating its 76th anniversary, Fort Malden National Historic Site opens its season with a day of special activities delivering an 1812 experience. From 10 am to 5 pm, visitors can enjoy the mini militia for kids, garden tours, guided walks, cookhouse presentations and musket and cannon firing.
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demonstrations. Fort Malden is located at 100 Laird Ave. S., Amherstburg. Small admission fee. 519-736-5416.

Thursday, 21
Battle of the Hors D’oeuvres

The Big Brothers Big Sisters of Windsor Essex Foundation and presenting sponsors Caesars Windsor are hosting Battle of the Hors D’oeuvres, starting at 6:30 pm. Blending networking with an indoor food and drink festival, the event features 19 Windsor food and beverage establishments gathered in the casino complex’s Augustus Ballroom at 377 Riverside Dr. E. Ticket price is $85. Funds raised help support Big Brothers Big Sisters' local youth mentoring programs. bigbrothersbigsisterswe.ca.

Friday, May 29
ROTARY LOBSTERFEST 2015

Fresh lobster from the East Coast is the star of Rotary Lobsterfest 2015, held in support of Windsor-Roseland Rotary Charities. Dancing, an auction and raffle are part of the entertaining evening, starting at 6 pm at the Ciociaro Club of Windsor, 3745 North Talbot Rd. in Oldcastle. Ticket price is $90 or $850 for a table of 10. 519-981-1713.

JUNE

Saturday, 13
Southern Ontario Military Muster

And Sunday, June 14. Beginning at 9 am, the annual Southern Ontario Military Muster event brings history to life at the Essex Sports Complex Arena and Grounds at 60 Fairview Ave. W., Essex. Visitors can attend the opening day parade, explore a World War I trench, experience the sights and sounds of a World War II battle reenactment, tour encampments and talk to reenactors, see exhibits and learn what life was like at home and abroad during wartime. Admission is $5 per adult; $2 for young people 6 to 17 years old; and free for veterans and children 5 years and under. 519-945-8648.

Blockhouse Dedication and Activities

Bob-Lo Island was once a military stronghold, fortified by blockhouses of white oak square cut logs built about 172 years ago. A blockhouse, reconstructed closely to the original design, will be dedicated by Dr. Carter at 2 p.m. during the special commemorative day. Other activities will occur between noon and 9 pm. Boblo Island is accessible by ferry, departing from 340 Dalhousie St., Amherstburg. 519-736-2330.
“AH! I WANT TO LIVE IN THE DREAM which still intoxicates me on this day! Gentle flame, I keep you in my soul as a treasure!”

As soprano Lynda Charese Wood sang Gounod’s lyrics for Juliet’s Waltz to the enthralled audience in Carnegie Hall one magical evening in February, her pianist, Devon Hansen of Chatham, was happily living out his own dream.

Having accompanied Windsor Symphony Orchestra choirs under John Morris Russell, the Windsor Essex Youth Choir and other groups, Devon has parlayed his Bachelor of Music and Master of Arts in Musicology from Wayne State University into an interesting career. Born in Windsor, Devon is the music director at St. Andrew’s United Church in Chatham and is writing and directing Lot 25, a musical celebrating the musical theatre program at Chatham-Kent Secondary School.

Shaking his head over the misconception that a living can’t be made in music, Devon says, “It takes drive and determination.” Networking is important, too. “You never know who you are going to end up playing a gig with.”

You might even find yourself at Carnegie Hall.

Singing with musical groups in Detroit and as a soloist in Michigan churches, Lynda first encountered Devon five years ago in the Detroit Choral Society. Devon was serving as accompanist under the director. Lynda studied music at Michigan State University but pursued a career in science education. Now the Superintendent of Schools for Southfield Public Schools in Michigan, Lynda sings at events, including Christmas at the White House.

The lyric soprano and the pianist reconnected three years ago. “We started doing little concerts together,” Devon says. During one rehearsal, Lynda revealed she dreamed of performing at Carnegie Hall. Devon admitted that was his long held dream, too. “It is always in the back of every musician’s mind that is where they want to play.”

Ever practical, Lynda decided to make her own dream come true. “More people need to do that,” Devon says.

Though she is not a professional singer, Lynda could still play Carnegie Hall, if she was willing to pay for the privilege. She contacted the venue and rented one of its three auditoriums, Joan and Sanford I. Weill Recital Hall. Devon found, “More than practicing is required to play at Carnegie Hall. There are contracts, rules and stipulations.”

A year of preparation preceded the big night. “In Chatham or Southfield, we would hash things out every week,” says Devon. They practiced a great deal.

Shared Dreams
Realized at Carnegie Hall

STORY BY KAREN PATON-EVANS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD L. HANSEN

Pianist Devon Hansen performs with lyric soprano Lynda Charese Wood and lyric baritone Wil Parker on the celebrated gilded stage at Carnegie Hall in New York City for a special one night concert in February, 2015.
A dress rehearsal of sorts took place Jan. 10th at St. Andrew’s United Church. The pianist, Lynda and her special guest, singer Wil Parker, performed the entire concert of 25 selections from operas, Broadway musicals and church hymns. They began with Amazing Grace Medley, transitioned to Puccini’s El’Luccellino, gave the audience chills with Swing Low, Sweet Chariot and concluded with Gershwin’s Bess You Is My Woman Now.

The Road to Carnegie concert “was good practice,” Devon says. “It was also a good chance for people who couldn’t come to New York.”

Despite geographical challenges, plenty made the trek to the Big Apple. “There were a couple of busloads of people from Michigan who follow Lynda around,” Devon chuckles. Some of his own following of family and friends from Essex and Kent Counties came. Old friends living in New York were in the audience, including Alena (Freeman) Trepanier, Devon’s first piano teacher when he was five years old. “She brought her five year old son, which was awesome.”

Seating 268, the classically decorated hall was filled with people who personally cared about the performers and were generous with standing ovations. “It didn’t matter how you played,” Devon laughs. “I think the people were more excited for me than I was — until I got there,” says Devon. As his fingers pressed the keys of the million dollar, 9’ concert grand Steinway, “it was overwhelming.” Happily, “you get energy from those who have played before and energy from the audience. It was a really great evening.”

Lynda sang two-thirds of the show, occasionally accompanied by Wil, an American lyric baritone. For the remaining third, Devon soloed on piano. “Although I enjoy accompanying other people, it was nice getting to play solo, alone on stage,” he reflects. In such a superb setting, Devon believes it was the best his music ever sounded.

After the last note of the ambitious program was played, Devon notes, “It was definitely like running a marathon for 2-1/2 hours.” Following the concert, “I partied till the wee hours of the night,” he says. Chatting with everyone, it was evident there was a positive vibe emanating from a hope realized.

Now Lynda and Devon are dreaming a new dream. “We’re looking at doing a tour of Europe. It has a rich history of music and some of the best venues in the world,” Devon says. “That’s next on our list.”
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