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EMBRACING CHANGE

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MAY 2026

Feature Business of the Month

Alison Wilsey
BROKER



ON THE COVER:
CHERI PETCH OF ARTICULATE
NURSING SHARES A LIGHT MOMENT
WITH CLIENT JACK FLER, WHERE
FOOTCARE BECOMES CONNECTION,
TRUST, AND PEACE OF MIND.

OUR LOCAL & REPUTABLE
BUSINESS DIRECTORY
LISTING: PAGE 26

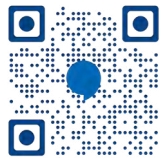
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*A comprehensive hearing assessment is provided to adults ages 19 and older at no cost. The results of this assessment will be communicated verbally to you. Depending on the province you're located in, an administrative fee may apply if a copy of an Audiological Report is requested. Child hearing tests are conducted at select locations for a fee, please contact us for more information. Offer not applicable for industrial hearing tests. Some conditions apply, see clinic for details. Up to \$2,500 off offer expires on June 30, 2026.

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On The Cover

Cheri Petch of Articulate Nursing shares a light moment with client Jack Fler, where footcare becomes connection, trust, and peace of mind. See the full cover story on page 12.

Cover Story & Photo By: *Scott Dunstall*



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

May is here, and with it comes a chance to recognize the people and businesses who make a difference in our community. I'm also happy to share some exciting news from our recent Business Directory voting.

First, a heartfelt thank you to everyone who took the time to participate in our recent Business Directory voting. Your support truly makes a difference in highlighting the businesses that go above and beyond in serving our community. I'm pleased to announce that this year's winner of the Free 1 year Business Directory listing is **Hillcrest Service in New Hamburg**. Congratulations to their team for the positive impact they continue to make, and thank you for being such a valued part of our community.

May also brings a special opportunity to celebrate the mothers, grandmothers, and caregivers in our lives. Mother's Day is a time to recognize the love, strength, and guidance they provide each and every day. Whether it's through a visit, a phone call, or simply a quiet moment of gratitude, it's a wonderful reminder to show appreciation for all they do.

This month is also dedicated to recognizing those who care for others in meaningful ways. National Nursing Week runs from Monday, May 11 to Sunday, May 17. It's a time to acknowledge the compassion, dedication, and expertise that nurses bring to their work every single day.

In addition, Personal Support Worker Day is observed on May 19. PSWs play an essential role in supporting the health, comfort, and dignity of so many individuals—often going above and beyond in quiet, powerful ways. Their kindness and commitment do not go unnoticed, and this month is a perfect time to say thank you.

As we move further into spring, I hope you're able to enjoy the warmer days, connect with loved ones, and take a moment to appreciate the people who make a difference in your life.


As always, thank you for being part of the Embracing Change community.


Warmly,


Tara




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Embracing Change is proud to be a Community Voice. We hope to foster connections within the community in a positive way. The expressed or implied opinions of authors and advertisers are not necessarily those held by the publication, it's editor or publisher.

In the Garden with the Ottmans

In honour of spring, this month we feature some family photographs that also show off the outdoors!

Charles Ottman Jr. was inducted into the Waterloo Region Hall of Fame in 2019. One of the earliest photographers in Wellesley, he was active from 1902 to 1906. WTHHS is fortunate to have copies of his early photographs, and many feature Ottman family members outside.

Charles Ottman Sr. ran a successful saddle and harness shop in Wellesley. He and his wife, Elizabeth Ziegler, had twelve children. The eldest, Charles Jr., would become a photographer, and opened a studio above his father's business. The photographs captured early life in the village, preserving stories for today.

Oftentimes researchers are happy photographs exist at all of the people they are researching. Photographs taken outside can offer even more information into not only what life looked like, but also what the landscape offered early residents and how it shaped their experiences. Early efforts in photography required a great deal of practice with lighting and staging to ensure solid results, making photographs like these a delight for researchers.

Perhaps photography ran in the Ottman family, Charles' sister Henrietta Ottman was also known to take photographs. Noted in the Wellesley Maple Leaf, the Women's Institute picnic was held in September of 1908 where "Miss Henrietta Ottmann took several photos of the company from different points of view." Henrietta is pictured in the garden here with Herbert Kaufman. They married on February 24, 1914 in Wellesley.

For more information about the Ottmans, visit our website to view a virtual display of Charles Ottman Jr.'s photographs.



Charles Frederick Ottman, Elizabeth (Ziegler)



The Evolving Landscape of Senior Housing: Challenges, Choices, and Opportunities Ahead

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the housing landscape across Waterloo Region, Perth County, and Oxford County has evolved dramatically, presenting both challenges and opportunities for seniors. As we look toward 2027, thoughtful planning and informed decision-making will be essential in navigating an increasingly complex real estate market.

One of the most notable shifts is that downsizing no longer guarantees financial relief. While seniors may move into smaller homes, the cost per square foot, along with expenses such as condo fees, land lease payments, and lifestyle community charges, often offsets anticipated savings. As a result, many are discovering that downsizing in size does not always equate to downsizing in cost. Some are even postponing retirement or continuing to work in order to maintain financial stability.

Physical limitations also play a significant role in housing decisions. Many seniors are compelled to sell multi-level homes in favor of accessible, single-level accommodations. However, bungalows, condominiums, and retirement residences remain in high demand and are often priced at a premium. Similarly, land lease and mobile home communities throughout Southwestern Ontario present an alternative, yet high monthly fees and limited financing options—particularly for homes on leased land or modular units—can pose additional challenges.

Since COVID, multi-generational living has become increasingly common. Seniors are moving in with their adult children, prompting a rise in in-law suites, accessory apartments, and “granny flats.” While these arrangements offer financial relief and emotional support, they require careful planning. Establishing clear boundaries, structuring ownership appropriately, and updating wills and estate plans are essential—especially when multiple heirs are involved. Professional guidance from legal, financial, and real estate experts can help ensure fairness and minimize future tax implications.

Another critical factor influencing senior housing decisions is location. As driving becomes less desirable or feasible, proximity to hospitals,

amenities, and reliable public transit becomes paramount. Communities designed with accessibility, walkability, and convenience in mind are increasingly attractive, though often more costly.

Global economic conditions also play a role. Inflation, fluctuating interest rates, and geopolitical uncertainty continue to affect housing affordability and cost of living. While markets are stabilizing, experts anticipate modest growth and relative balance over the next few years. This suggests that waiting for dramatically lower prices may not yield significant advantages. Instead, seniors who plan proactively will be better positioned to secure suitable housing.

Encouragingly, several positive trends have emerged since the pandemic. Many seniors have sold matrimonial and recreational properties, such as cottages, to fund retirement and simplify their lifestyles. Adult lifestyle communities, age-friendly condominiums, and accessible housing developments are expanding, albeit gradually, to meet growing demand. Additionally, government incentives, including tax credits for accessibility renovations and multigenerational housing, provide valuable financial support.

The next 12 to 18 months may present an opportune window for seniors considering a move. With a more balanced real estate market and gradually improving inventory, those who act proactively will benefit from increased choice and greater negotiating power.

Ultimately, the key to a successful transition lies in preparation rather than reaction. Seniors are encouraged to begin planning early, consult trusted professionals, and prioritize lifestyle needs alongside financial considerations.

As the housing landscape continues to evolve, one truth remains clear: with the right guidance and foresight, today’s seniors can make confident, informed decisions that support both their financial security and their quality of life well into the future.

Alison Willsey

Real Estate Broker, REALTOR since 2005

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Young at Heart - Adult Board Games Night

Join us for an evening of fun! Different games every month, with the option to bring your own game to teach the group. Snacks are included at every event. A great night to socialize, meet new friends, learn new games, and enjoy time with others.

Monthly on the 4th Thursday
5:30 - 8:30 PM

In person at 1401 Queens Bush Rd., Wellesley



Managing Cholesterol with Nutrition

Nutrition plays an important role in lowering your risk of chronic health issues like heart disease, which is one of the leading causes of death in Canada. This workshop will help you learn which foods raise your cholesterol and which ones help lower it. Learn practical tips from a dietitian to take control of your heart health!

May 7, 2026
10:00 - 11:30 AM
In Person or Zoom



Healthy Habits for Life

Healthy Habits for Life is a free 8 week program for adults who want to build healthy habits and lower their risk of long-term health problems. Each session is interactive and includes easy tips and tools you can use in your daily life. After each session, you'll get helpful resources by email to support your learning and help you stay on track. Registration allows you to join one, two or all sessions!

1. ~~Small Steps to Better Health~~
2. ~~Healthy Habits that Stick~~
3. ~~Eat Well, Live Well: Simply Nutrition~~
4. Move for Health
5. Sleep and Stress: A Two Way Street
6. Health Info Without the Overwhelm
7. Decoding Health Info Online
8. Alcohol, Smoking and Screen Time



Tuesdays from March 3 - June 9
Times vary, in person or Zoom



If you would like to register, please visit our website at www.WCHC.on.ca, or email Tariq at tabdulhadi@wchc.on.ca, or call at 519-664-3794 ext. 222

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Following industry best practices for accurate testing



Earwax removal:
Helping people in a 'sticky situation' through cerumen removal



Access to all levels of hearing technology from all manufacturers:
Proudly independent to find the right solution for patients



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Our team is available to help you as soon as we can with same day services.



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Central Auditory Processing (CAP) testing:
For residents of Elmira, we offer CAP testing to understand your auditory processing abilities.

MEET OUR EXPERTS

Emily Giau, Audiologist

Emily has extensive experience working with older adults which has led her into the hearing care industry for the last 5 years. As an audiologist, Emily has mainly worked in private practice settings and has traveled to retirement, long-term care and personal residences to provide exceptional hearing health care.

Education:

Bachelor of Science in Honours Health Studies/Aging Studies Option – Psychology Minor (University of Waterloo)
Master of Clinical Science in Audiology (University of Western Ontario)

Selina Mauro, H.I.S

Selina has 10 years of experience in the hearing industry as a Hearing Instrument Specialist and has also been certified in ear wax removal for 10 years as well. Selina also has experience working directly at a hearing aid manufacturer doing audiology support and training for all of Canada. Working as direct sales and training support for clinics traveling all over Ontario.

Education:

Bachelor of Science in Biology/Psychology Trent University
H.I.S. Diploma Conestoga College



CONTACT US

If you or a loved one requires support with their hearing health or hearing devices or want to start their journey to better hearing, we are here to help.

Elmira:

(519) 669-3131 | elmira@arnoldhearing.ca
315 Arthur Street South, Unit E3 Elmira, ON, N3B 3L5

New Hamburg:

519-662-3277 | newhamburg@arnoldhearing.ca
3 Waterloo St. New Hamburg, ON N3A 1S3 (Inside the Affinity Health Clinic)





First Steps after a diagnosis

Soci t  Alzheimer Society
WATERLOO WELLINGTON

A diagnosis of dementia can feel overwhelming, but it can also be a turning point. If you've been worried about changes in your memory or thinking, finally having an answer may bring a sense of clarity. While there is no cure, there are many ways to live well with dementia, and you are not alone. The Alzheimer Society Waterloo Wellington is here to support you every step of the way.

It's important to recognize that a wide range of emotions may come with a diagnosis. You might feel sadness, fear, frustration, anger, or even relief. These feelings are all normal, and they may come and go. Sharing how you feel with people you trust can make a meaningful difference. Family and friends are often experiencing their own emotions too, and open conversations can help everyone better understand and support one another. If your feelings become overwhelming or persistent, don't hesitate to speak with your doctor.

Learning more about dementia is one of the most empowering first steps you can take. Understanding how the condition may progress, and exploring strategies to manage day-to-day changes, can help you feel more in control. You may also wish to talk with your doctor about medications that can help manage certain symptoms, and whether participating in research is something you'd like to consider.

If you feel comfortable, **consider telling those close to you about your diagnosis.** Explaining what dementia is and how it affects you can help others better understand your experiences and

give you the opportunity to express how they can support you.

Living well with dementia also means focusing on what you can do. Continue to enjoy the activities that bring you happiness, whether that's listening to music, pursuing a hobby, or spending time with loved ones. Small adjustments - like keeping a notebook, using a smartphone, or establishing a daily routine - can make everyday life more manageable. Many people also find comfort in talking with others, whether it's a friend, family member, therapist, or a support group.

Planning for the future is another important step. This may include organizing important documents, making decisions about finances and healthcare and choosing someone you trust to speak on your behalf if needed. Taking these steps early can provide peace of mind and ensure your wishes are respected.

Above all, take care of yourself. Stay active, eat well, and prioritize rest. Keep up with medical appointments and medications, and continue to make time for the people and activities that bring you joy. While a dementia diagnosis changes many things, it does not take away your ability to live a meaningful and fulfilling life.

If you've been given a dementia diagnosis, reach out to the Alzheimer Society Waterloo Wellington. We're here to help, and to make sure that no one walks this journey alone.



Register today!

Scan code or go to
alzheimerww.ca

Soci t  Alzheimer Society
WATERLOO WELLINGTON

IG WEALTH
MANAGEMENT
**WALK FOR
ALZHEIMER'S**



Prevent Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) Today

CHF is a condition caused by the heart not functioning as it should. **Heart disease** is the second leading cause of death in Canada, but almost 80% of early heart disease and stroke can be prevented through healthy behaviours.

Common Symptoms

- ✓ Increased shortness of breath, especially when lying flat
- ✓ Sudden weight gain
- ✓ Bloating or feeling full all the time
- ✓ Cough or cold symptoms that last for longer than a week
- ✓ Loss of or change in appetite
- ✓ Increased swelling of lower limbs, base of spine, or stomach
- ✓ Increased urination at night
- ✓ New experience of confusion or tiredness

Prevention Tips

- ✓ Eat a variety of healthy foods
- ✓ Stay active – 150 minutes per week
 - **Dependent on current health**
- ✓ Maintain a healthy weight
- ✓ Limit alcohol and do not smoke
- ✓ Reduce stress

Risk Factors

- ✓ Diabetes
- ✓ High blood cholesterol
- ✓ Recreational drug use
- ✓ Excessive use of alcohol
- ✓ Exposure to chemotherapy or radiation therapy
- ✓ Smoking
- ✓ Unhealthy diet
- ✓ Not enough exercise
- ✓ Unhealthy weight
- ✓ Sex and age – men are more likely than women to have heart failure, but the difference grows less with age

Have plenty of
vegetables and fruits

Eat protein foods

Make water
your drink
of choice



Choose
whole grain
foods



Local Resources – Waterloo Wellington:

Self-Management Program – bit.ly/waterloowellington:
866 337-3318

Craving Change Program – bit.ly/4oRCqxx

Take Charge Workshop – <http://bit.ly/45HHZgE>

Global Resources:

Heart and Stroke – bit.ly/heartandstrokeCHF

Government of Canada – bit.ly/hearthealthgov

The Canadian Heart Failure Network – <https://www.chfn.ca/links/>

Healthy Living Resources:

Canada Food Guide – food-guide.canada.ca/en/

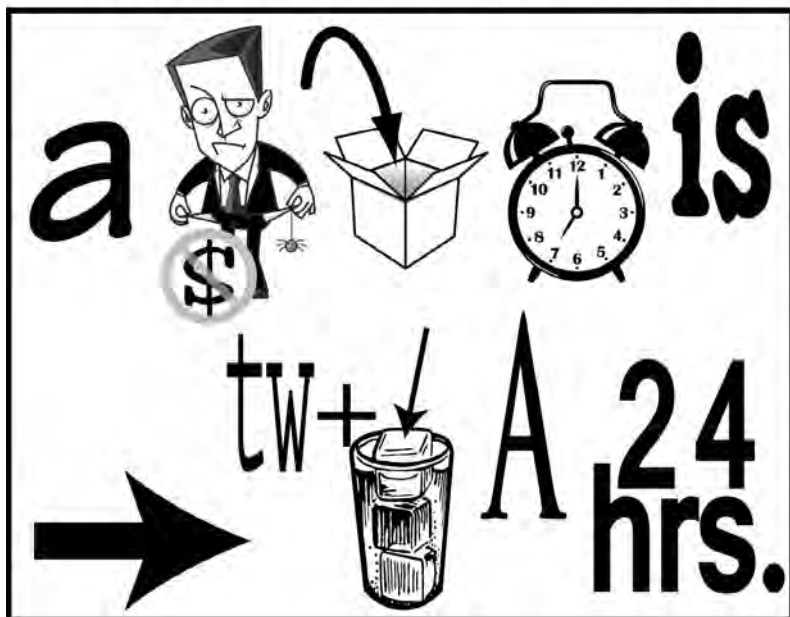
24 Hour Movement Guideline – csepguidelines.ca

Your heart beats over 100,000 times a day – make each one count!

**Talk to your healthcare professional
about how to prevent CHF.**

Concentration Puzzle

Use the visual clues in the puzzle to figure out what it says.

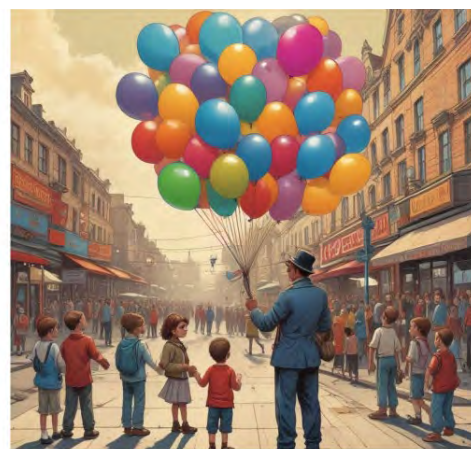
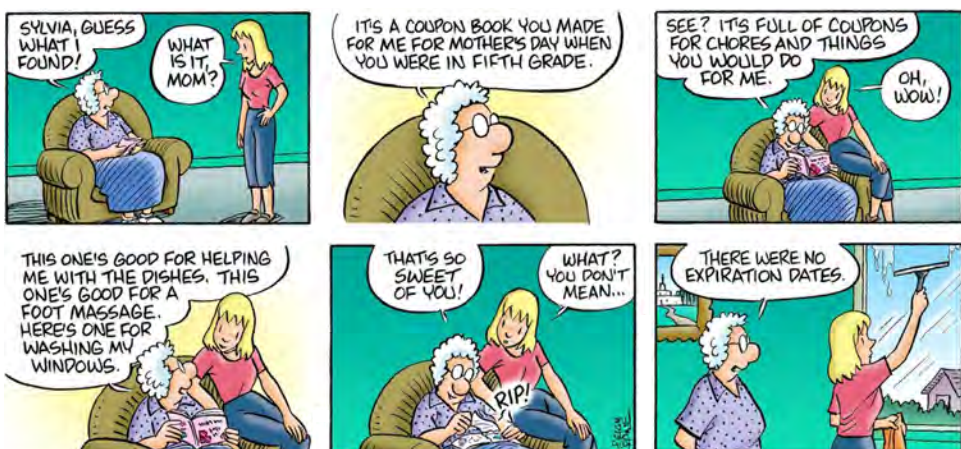


Sudoku

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



May Puzzles



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE
CAN YOU FIND THE 6 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THESE TWO IMAGES?

Solutions on page 30

COVER STORY



PUT YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD WITH ARTICULATE NURSING

BY SCOTT DUNSTALL

Home care is often described as “a little extra help.” It can be, but it is often something more. If health needs change or mobility challenges arise, needs can then become more complex. Not only do in-home healthcare requirements need to be addressed, but so do the running of that person or family’s household. Finding a trusted provider that can meet the entire range of needs is not always easy. With a mother at the advanced age of 97, this story is of great interest to me.

Articulate Nursing was founded by Cheri Petch, a bright and deeply thoughtful woman whose path into healthcare was shaped by personal loss. During her college internship, her father became seriously ill and was admitted to Guelph Hospital, enduring multiple surgeries and the possibility of amputation. After time in ICU, he was transferred to a long term care facility in Fergus, where he had passed away, only days later.

For Cheri, the experience exposed painful gaps regarding care and staffing, which had changed her career decision. While studying to become a Personal Support Worker at Medix College, she made the choice to leave the salon industry behind and commit herself to explore a field that felt more meaningful. She learned of her father’s death the day she completed her exams, and soon after, she founded Articulate Nursing, setting aside her original plan to bridge from PSW to RPN so she could focus on delivering much needed support and compassionate care to the community.

On her own, she founded the company in 2014, and has not only taken it to a staff of 50 across southern Ontario, but has also continued to personally advance her own portfolio of accreditation. She meets every new applicant in person and with an extensive list of boxes to check, she not only meets governmental, legal, and industry standards, but probably the most important intangible benchmark, is what she looks for in new hires, is the one she sets for herself. Personality and character are ethereal, which makes Articulate Nursing unique. One practical feature of the Articulate Nursing approach is how relationships often begin. By fostering those relationships through understanding, this allows Articulate Nursing to propose the next steps with the family.

Do you know how important it is for a family to have a company in this field bring on board associates that understand what those next steps are, and have the resources to best manage them in a manner that brings peace of mind to individuals and their families? Cheri reflected on a time when she had a regular client that managed a business in Waterloo. She said they would often talk for hours and on one occasion, came up with the name Articulate Nursing. Articulate defines many ideas, it also defines the company as serving many, much needed and unique services. Lastly, it begins with the letter “A”, which would place the company first when listed. They would meet on a regular basis to provide a footcare service. I was surprised at how prevalent the need becomes as we age. I suppose that’s true when you consider it’s the last point we have before falling over. My grandma used to say “getting old isn’t for the faint of heart”.

So it comes as no surprise that footcare is a key service Articulate offers. It is approachable, easy to schedule, and it does not feel like a major life announcement. It also creates a first conversation in a calm setting. So not only do her employees need to be trained at or above standard, be able

to assess current and future needs but also love what they are doing. Because if they didn't they wouldn't be able to provide genuine support that for many, is their first foray into homecare.

Foot care can often reveal other systemic concerns. Pain, balance issues, circulation concerns, mobility limits, and day to day strain can show up quickly when a professional is paying close attention. From there, families often recognize additional needs. The next step might be help with meals, bathing support, respite, or companion visits that reduce isolation and keep routines steady. Foot care is often overlooked, but for seniors it plays a critical role in maintaining comfort, mobility, and independence. As we age, simple issues like thickened nails, calluses, or dry skin can quickly become painful and affect the way we walk. That change in gait can increase the risk of falls, which are one of the leading causes of injury among older adults. In other words, Articulate Nursing plays a critical role in accident prevention.

Cheri's determination has shone through her entire career. It actually started with a familiar pattern that shows itself often. Set an aspirational goal then go and get it. She wanted to be a Hair Stylist, so she went out on sheer determination and extensive training throughout Ontario. [Marvel School of Hair and Skin] And a good one with a long client list. The salon she was working in, one day a week, would not allow her to work any more hours, so she started up her own salon! She saved and found a way to finance and opened another, but with aesthetics and tanning, which was also designed by Cheri. Cheri also taught a Certified Nail Course part time to pay for construction of the salons. She became good at that then created another, then another. That didn't keep her busy enough so over time she acquired 12 properties. Some in which were rentals and others for flipping and a couple parcels of land for the purpose of building. And no, she didn't rent them out right away after obtaining them. And yes, she would often gut the entire unit and not only add value but also attract a better quality of tenant. I would be taking a nap for a year at this point BUT that apparently was not the case for Cheri. Doing all of this as a single mom to her son Shannon is even more remarkable. Now 37, he has his own career and has no plans to join the business. In that respect she plans to continue to develop the business for another 20 years with the possibility of franchising as time goes on.

You can visit Articulate Nursing's website: articulatenursing.com for a quick summary of services please refer to the list below:

Personal Training for Seniors (exercise sessions). Medication Reminders, Personal Care, Bathing and Toileting Assistance), Housekeeping, Companion Care, Live-In Home Care, Meal Preparation, Visiting Private Duty Nursing, Non-Medical Transportation (Shopping and Errands) and Hair Care.

You can find Cheri's (Articulate Nursing) contact information in the directory listing located on pages 26-29 of this issue.

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Caring for the Caregiver

The second Sunday in May provides us with an opportunity to recognize our mothers or others who have played an influential role in caring for us over the years. At the same time, as our parents are aging, many adult children are finding themselves in roles where they are now caring for parents. Some are part of the “sandwich generation”, caring for both young families and aging parents. Across Canada more than 8 million people are in caregiving roles. It is estimated that half of Canadians will find themselves providing care at some point in their lives. Many wouldn't consider themselves as a caregiver but rather someone helping to support someone that they love. Although the level of unpaid caregiving which occurs is staggering and is in fact a critical component of helping people to age in the community, it is often one of the most undervalued components of our health system.

There is no doubt that fulfilling a caregiving role can be difficult. Here are some helpful tips:

- **Take care of your own health.** It is hard to take care of someone else if you are not taking care of yourself. Get plenty of sleep. Make sure that you are eating well. Get plenty of exercise. Take advantage of the many free/low-cost options in our community including accessing trails, attending free exercise programs or participating in programs at several Active Living Centres.
- **Seek support from others.** There are many supports that can provide information, support and practical assistance. Community Care Concepts offers caregiver support through groups for caregivers (including supervision and support of your loved one); Adult Day Programs which provide a day of respite; help in navigating the healthcare system; information and referral services; in-home programming to give the caregiver a break, and practical supports such as help with groceries, meals, homemaking and transportation – all designed to relieve the demands associated with caregiving. Working with Interfaith Counselling Centre and Woolwich Counselling Centre, we are also able to offer many clinical supports to caregivers who are struggling in their role.
- **Accept offers of help.** There are often many people around you who want to offer their

assistance, whether it be running errands or sitting with your loved one so that you can get a break. Sometimes people want to help but just don't know how to best help. Be open to accepting that help and suggest specific things that they can do to provide help. Senior Support Workers available through Community Care Concepts are a great resource.

- **Organize medical and financial information so that it is easily accessible.** The more organized that you can be with having medical and financial information easily accessible, the easier it will be to reduce some of the stress associated with having to provide this information as you fulfill your caregiving role.
- **Learn how to best communicate with your physician and health care professionals.** Sometimes with limited time available in appointments, the stress that you are experiencing or a lack of understanding of our healthcare system, it is difficult to know what and how to best communicate with professionals that are there to support you. There are several roles in our organization and community that can help to prepare you for these important conversations.
- **Caregiving is hard. Take respite breaks.** Sometimes you just need a bit of time away to recharge, take care of your personal needs or spend time with your family. Access the free services of a Senior Support Worker; register your family member in an Adult Day Program; invite our Caregiver Support Worker for a visit to keep your family member occupied while you take a break; learn about overnight stay options that may be available to you, or access the services of many private supports that can lend a hand.
- **Be kind to yourself and give yourself credit for doing the best that you can do!**

For information and assistance, contact Community Care Concepts at 519-664-1900, 519-662-9526 or 1-855-664-1900. We are here to help!

COMMUNITY
CARE
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of Woolwich, Wellesley and Wilmot



COMMUNITY CARE CONCEPTS

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Experience Personalized Hearing Care in Waterloo Region

Hearing plays a quiet but powerful role in how we connect with the world around us. It shapes how we engage in conversations, participate in social settings, and stay present in the moments that matter most. When hearing becomes more challenging, it's not just about sound, it can affect confidence, energy, and overall quality of life.

The Link Between Hearing and Well-Being

Research continues to highlight the broader impact of hearing health. Difficulty hearing can increase listening effort, which may lead to fatigue, reduced social engagement, and even withdrawal from activities people once enjoyed.

On the other hand, addressing hearing changes can help restore ease and connection in everyday life. Many individuals who take steps to better understand their hearing report feeling more confident in conversations, more engaged with family and friends, and more comfortable in group settings.

A New Generation of Hearing Support

Hearing technology has evolved significantly in recent years, with a growing focus on supporting real-life listening experiences.

One example is Oticon Zeal, a newer generation of hearing technology designed to deliver clear, reliable sound in a discreet size. Another thing that sets it apart is its ability to help prioritize speech while still allowing surrounding sounds to be present, making conversations easier to follow without feeling overwhelmed.

This approach reflects a broader shift in hearing care. Rather than simply amplifying sound, modern solutions are designed to support how people naturally listen, helping them stay engaged in dynamic environments like family gatherings, community events, or busy public spaces.

Designed Around Real Life

Today's hearing solutions can be tailored to fit individual lifestyles and preferences, whether that means:

- Enjoying conversations in quieter settings
- Staying engaged in group environments

- Participating in hobbies, sports, or community activities
- Feeling more confident in day-to-day interactions

This level of personalization plays an important role in improving overall satisfaction and long-term success with hearing support.

Taking the First Step

For many people, the idea of addressing hearing can feel uncertain. Questions about what to expect, whether it's necessary, or how it might fit into daily life are common.

That's why starting with a simple conversation can be so valuable.

Speaking with a hearing care professional can help you better understand your hearing, explore available options, and determine what feels right for you.

With three HearingLife clinics serving the Waterloo region, personalized hearing care is always close to home.

In recognition of May Hearing Awareness Month, you may also be eligible to save up to \$2,500 on the latest hearing aids at HearingLife clinics, making it easier to explore solutions that fit your needs.

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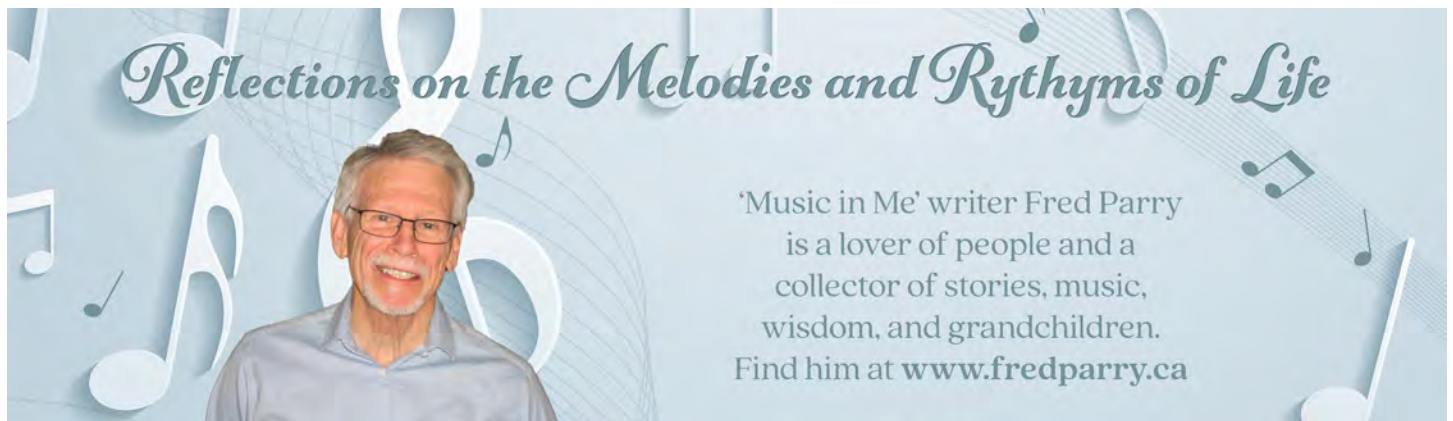
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No Trust No Love

**“If I had a bell
I’d ring it in the morning...
I’d hammer out the love between my brothers
and my sisters
All over this land”**

– ‘If I Had a Hammer’ by Peter, Paul and Mary

I was in a town one morning and sat next to an elderly woman who was also shopping at the local ‘farmers’ market. We, like many others, were enjoying a coffee break. She had lots of bags filled to overflowing with all sorts of carefully selected produce: meats, cheeses, breads, eggs – the result of a morning’s worth of effort. Suddenly getting up, she asks me to look after her bags as she had a couple more items to get. I instantly was happy to accommodate her.

After a while, though, the thought occurred to me: isn’t that strange; she basically left everything, accept her purse, to a complete stranger like myself. Despite the prevailing norms in today’s society to not trust anyone, this lady seemed completely at ease leaving the ‘fruits of her labour’ with someone she had just met.

Why?

When she came back, after a bit, I shared with her my thoughts. I was thinking – with her being much older – perhaps she wasn’t up to date on how desperate things are. She seemed nonplused about my concerns. Then, thanking me, she picked up her valuables and left. And, somehow, I got this feeling that maybe I was the one totally out of touch with what’s really going on.

“Loving people live in a loving world. Hostile people live in a hostile world. Same world.” – Psychologist, Wayne Dyer

It reminded me of an ancient native story, told by a Cherokee elder to his grandson about the

battle between the two wolves inside us. The one is vicious (negative/ bad); the other is loving (friendly/good). The grandchild thought about it then asked, *“Which wolf wins?”* The old Cherokee simply replied, *“The one you feed.”*

We all know that the world can be a very disturbing place, much of it seemingly out of our control. But, maybe, if we’re feeding our good wolf, we can stop a lot of stuff from happening. Seems to me, the old lady chose to trust the best within her; or, our “better angels” as Lincoln called it.

Of course, trust is also something that’s earned.

My dad would often lend money to others, with no expectations of ever getting it back. If he did, all well and good; if he didn’t, he figured he learned a valuable lesson... relatively cheaply: getting to know the person’s real character – regardless of race, colour or religion. He let others decide how they will be. He was okay either way. To quote Wayne Dyer again, *“How people treat you is their karma; how you react is yours.”*

So, rather than being wary of everything and everyone, let’s respond with courage, confidence and trust – instead of mistrust – not frozen in fear. Yet, our positive example is not without limits.

**“In the squares of the city
In the shadow of the steeple
Near the relief office / I see my people
And some are grumblin’ / And some are
wonderin’
If this land’s still made for you and me.”**

– ‘This Land Is Your Land’ by Woody Guthrie (Canadian version)

We’re all just temporary caretakers for the next “someone” – just passing through – like those before us. Why not pass on a spirit of kindness, love and empathy.

https://youtu.be/_UKvpONl3No
<https://youtu.be/Ld6fAO4idal>



Advance & Comfort Care Planning for Seniors

Sacred Visitations or Healing Memory? Exploring Grief Dreams

Written by Sue Phillips, Serious Illness/End of Life Doula

"When we plan for our senior years & end-of-life journey, we reclaim choice, ease fear, and honour what matters most."

Dear Readers: May 2026

Something curious often happens to those who are grieving. A loved one appears. The conversation feels real. Sometimes there is a message; sometimes there is simply presence. Then we wake with a feeling that is difficult to explain – comfort, confusion, peace, or even awe.

These experiences are often called *grief dreams* or *bereavement dreams*. For many people, they feel less like ordinary dreams and more like sacred visitations.

Across cultures and generations, people have described similar encounters. A father sits at the end of the bed. A grandmother offers reassurance. A spouse simply smiles, healthy again, as if illness had never touched them. These dreams often feel unusually clear and emotionally powerful, and they frequently occur in the months following a death – though some people report them years later.

From a scientific perspective, dreams are part of how the brain processes memory and emotion. During sleep, particularly REM sleep, the brain works to integrate experiences, reduce emotional intensity, and organize memories. When someone dies, the mind is suddenly faced with a deep rupture in relationship. Dreams can become a space where the psyche continues the conversation, allowing the relationship to shift rather than simply disappear.

Researchers studying bereavement have found that these dreams are remarkably common. Many people report dreams in which the deceased appears calm, healthy, or reassuring. Rather than increasing distress, these dreams often bring comfort, a sense of connection, or a feeling that something unfinished has been gently addressed.

Yet science alone does not fully capture the experience.

For many, these dreams carry a spiritual or sacred meaning. People may feel that their loved one has

come to reassure them, to say goodbye, or simply to remind them that love does not end with death. Whether one views these dreams as psychological integration, spiritual communication, or something in between, their emotional impact is often profound.

As a Serious Illness/ End-of-Life Doula, I hear these stories frequently. What is striking is how similar they are: the vividness, the calm presence, and the sense that the dream was somehow different from ordinary dreaming. People often hesitate to share these experiences for fear they will sound strange. Yet when spoken aloud, they are often met with quiet recognition.

Karen Van Kampen, author of *The Brain Never Sleeps*, explores how to use our dreams to improve our everyday lives.

Dr. Joshua Black, currently the Bereavement Initiative Manager for the BC Centre for Palliative Care, is one of the leading academic experts in grief dreams. His work focuses on dreams and the continuing bonds after loss. I had the privilege of attending a presentation by Dr. Black and have been excited to explore my own dream experiences in a more attentive way ever since.

Grief dreams remind us that our bonds with those we love do not simply vanish. The relationship changes form, but it continues in memory, story, and sometimes in the mysterious theatre of sleep.

Dreams often arrive like a small gift in the long landscape of grief – a moment where love briefly feels close enough to touch again.

Resource: [Karen Van Kampen](#), [Dr. Joshua Black](#)

Sue Phillips: E: sPhillips5519@gmail.com
W: www.suephillips.ca

Next month: Hospice Care: Compassionate Support at End of Life

Navigating Complicated Family Relationships: Understanding Intention Versus Impact

Eckhart Tolle says, “Our relationships are often the source of both our greatest joy and our deepest pain”. Familial relationships can hold both profound hurt and the potential for deep healing. In my own extended family, there has been a history of complicated relationships and estrangement shaped by intergenerational trauma. I have done a lot of learning to try and facilitate healthier relationships in my adult life as I hope to decrease this cycle.

I want to discuss a concept today that was helpful to me personally and is something I talk through with others often in my work as a psychotherapist: Intention versus impact.

When we communicate, we do so with a particular intention in mind. I like to give people the benefit of the doubt and assume that most people don't intend to hurt others (even if sometimes they do). For example, when we see someone doing something we feel might harm them, we may approach them with the intention to communicate our concern, desiring them to change their behavior. I think this is especially common in parent-child dynamics, where communication is often rooted in the intention of protecting and guiding.

If we look at the word impact, we now move from focusing on the person expressing themselves to the person receiving the communication. How a person is impacted by communication has a lot to do with their personality, lived experience, and history around communication. Our past inevitable shapes how we interpret the present.

This is where the distinction becomes important: Intention and impact are not the same thing. Intention has very little influence on impact, and I think it's incredibly important to understand this. You can approach communication with the best intentions, and that does not guarantee that what you communicate won't negatively impact the other person.

So how should this influence how someone approaches communication? Start with being curious. Discuss the intention guiding the communication and the impact of the communication on the person receiving it. Don't be afraid to ask someone (mid-conversation) “How is what I'm communicating impacting you?”. If someone tells you the communication doesn't feel good to them, be curious about why. What is the

person receiving the communication hearing and experiencing internally that doesn't feel good to them?

If you are the person facilitating the communication remember that while there are some things you can do to influence how someone experiences what you are saying, like talking calmly instead of yelling and getting dysregulated, there is a lot that is out of your control. Our own lived experiences shape how we interpret communication.

Intention versus impact is a concept that can facilitate more effective communication. I feel it better captures the complexity and nuance present in communication. It challenges us to understand that everyone (even family) has a unique experience in the world, and it will be different from our own.

Danielle Lancaster
Registered Psychotherapist
Interfaith Counselling Centre



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Staying Active, Staying Independent: How the Right Care Supports Healthy Aging

As we grow older, it's natural to notice changes in our bodies – aches and pains, stiff joints, reduced balance, or fatigue that sets in more quickly. While these changes are common, they don't have to limit your independence. With the right combination of movement, nutrition, and professional care, you can stay active, confident, and in control of your health.

Many people assume that rest is the best response to pain or discomfort. But often, gentle and consistent movement is what the body truly needs. Staying active helps keep joints mobile, muscles strong, and circulation healthy—key factors in reducing stiffness and maintaining function.

Equally important, though often overlooked, is nutrition. As we age, our bodies require the right fuel to maintain muscle mass, bone health, and energy levels. A balanced diet supports recovery, reduces inflammation, and helps manage chronic conditions such as diabetes or heart disease.

At [The Health Collective – Baden](#), care is built around a collaborative, team-based approach that supports both movement and overall health:

- **Physiotherapy** focuses on improving strength, balance, and coordination—essential for fall prevention and maintaining independence.
- **Chiropractic care** helps restore joint movement and reduce stiffness, particularly in the spine, improving posture and mobility.
- **Massage therapy** reduces muscle tension, improves circulation, and can ease chronic aches and pains.
- **Pelvic floor physiotherapy** addresses concerns such as incontinence or core weakness—common, but highly treatable conditions.
- **Osteopathy** takes a whole-body approach, helping different systems work together more efficiently for better movement and comfort.
- **Dietitian services** provide personalized nutrition guidance to support energy, digestion, bone health, and chronic disease management.

Each service plays a unique role, but together they create a more complete picture of care—one that adapts to your individual needs and goals.

One of the biggest risks as we age is falling. Balance and strength can decline gradually, often without notice. With the right guidance, targeted exercises and hands-on care can significantly reduce that risk and improve confidence in daily movement.

Flexibility is another key piece. Tight muscles and restricted joints can make everyday tasks—like bending, reaching, or getting out of a chair—more difficult. Addressing these limitations early helps maintain ease of movement and reduces strain on the body.

The goal isn't to push harder—it's to move and live smarter. Whether it's walking, gardening, or spending time with family, staying active in a way that feels sustainable is what matters most.

If you're experiencing changes in your body or simply want to stay ahead of them, working with a team that understands the aging process can make all the difference.

Because staying active isn't just about movement—it's about preserving your independence, confidence, and quality of life.

Dr. Joshua Dlugokecki
The Health Collective - Baden



Strengthening the Future of Aging: Introducing Our Three Key Impact Areas



At the Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging (RIA), our mission has always been to enhance the quality of life and care for older adults through partnerships in research, education, and practice. We don't just conduct research in a lab; we connect it to the real world by addressing the most pressing challenges of an aging population.

As our work and the needs of older adults evolve, we are focusing our efforts on three key impact areas to better support the experience of growing older in Canada.

Why Impact Areas?

Our work spans research, education, and community collaboration. The three impact areas help bring them all together to tell our story, our why, and our impact. These impact areas were shaped through a collaborative process with our staff, researchers, and community and academic partners. The result is three highly focused areas that reflect who we are and where we're going.

Helping older adults live well

Aging is about more than just “getting by”—it's about thriving. This impact area focuses on creating evidence-based programs and resources that help older adults and their care partners live their best lives. We do this by working with older adults, healthcare professionals, and community providers to understand and address the unique needs and challenges of aging.

Learn more about this impact area and see recent examples of this work by visiting: the-ria.ca/helping-older-adults-live-well/

Strengthening the workforce who support older adults

Proper training equips staff with the skills and confidence to deliver high-quality care, better

support older adults' independence, and reduce staff burnout and turnover. We equip healthcare professionals, students, and other care partners with the latest knowledge and training through evidence-based educational programs and resources that help current and future care professionals grow, develop, and remain in roles that support older adults.

Learn more about this impact area and see recent examples of this work by visiting: the-ria.ca/strengthening-the-workforce-who-support-older-adults/

Changing the perceptions of aging

Perhaps our most ambitious goal is to change the perceptions of aging. People are living longer, healthier, and more engaged lives, yet many older adults continue to face negative assumptions around frailty, forgetfulness, and resistance to new technology.

We are working to transform the culture of aging by eliminating stigma and inspiring change through research-informed programs to help older adults live with dignity and purpose.

Learn more about this impact area and see recent examples of this work by visiting: the-ria.ca/changing-the-perceptions-of-aging/

Looking ahead

These impact areas are not just categories; they're the roadmap for a world where research drives innovation and redefines aging. Whether you are a community member, an older adult, a care partner, or a researcher, you are reflected in this. We are excited to move forward with a strong focus, clearer vision, and commitment to listening, learning, and working together to advance research and redefine aging.

Explore the-ria.ca to learn more about our work, our resources, and how to get involved.



Short and sweet reflections on life's complications

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Life is Short

Regardless of how old you are, when you look back, does it seem like your life has happened in a flash? In particular, do those years of hustle and grind, of juggling careers, kids, courses, and mortgage payments, feel like an indistinct blur?

It turns out the saying, “Life is short,” is true.

I recently listened to a **podcast featuring Dr. Karl Padilla**. He is a professor of gerontology who studies how personal growth occurs over a lifetime. He has interviewed thousands of people in their eighties, nineties, and older, discussing their families and careers, joys and regrets. His biggest takeaway from all this research? Live your life as if you knew it was short.

A younger person who adopts a “life is short” philosophy could find their larger life decisions impacted in a positive way. Would the awareness of limited time impact their choice to stay in an unfulfilling job or an unhealthy relationship? The problem is—no one understands how short life is until they are old. “Too late schmart,” as they say.

For years I have made the claim that I will live to be 108 and I’m only partly joking. I have good reason to believe this is possible; my father was 96 when he died, his brother was 98 and my mother’s sister was 92. Trust me when I say I take way better care of myself than any of those three did. I have lived my life as if I have all the time in the world because I have felt like I did: “Tra-la-la, there’s always next year.”

Having recently enjoyed a “big” birthday, I’m starting to think a little differently.

If I can safely assume I have at least another decade, my agenda sharpens considerably to two questions; What am I going to create? What would I like to do? The to-do list is the external fun things, like travel. Creating is the internal journey. If I think of life being short, then the lens through which I view my time sharpens. My decisions are changing as I’m typing this. “Tra-la-la” becomes “Make a plan, smart one.”

Keep your joy.

Anne



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RESTAURANTS

The Imperial Restaurant

60 Huron St | New Hamburg
519-390-6000 | www.imperialmarketeatery.ca

RETAIL

EasyWear Adaptive Clothing

Mobile Boutique | Cambridge, ON
(888) 908-7177 | Easywearadaptiveclothing.com

Focus Computers

73 Peel St., New Hamburg | 519-662-6720

MCC New Hamburg Thrift Centre

41 Heritage Drive New Hamburg, ON | 519-662-2867

MCC Thrift & Gift

59 Church St. W. Elmira, ON | 519-669-8475

Sobeys New Hamburg

100 Mill St, New Hamburg | 519-662-1374

ROOFING

Allan Beach Roofing

1136 Notre Dame Dr, Petersburg, ON
Office: 519-746-0752 | Cell: 519-741-6296
Email: stephanie.s.goertz@gmail.com
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59 Albert Street West | Plattsville
www.nwroofing.ca | 519-684-7693

SENIOR CARE FACILITIES

TCMH (Tri-County Mennonite Homes)

200 Boullee Street, New Hamburg | 519-662-2718
www.tcmhomes.com | info@tcmhomes.com

Trinity Village

2727 Kingsway Dr., Kitchener | 519-893-6320
Adult Day Program, Independent and Assisted
Living, Long Term Care | www.trinityvillage.com

SOCIAL SERVICES

Wilmot Active Living Centre

Free Drop-in Centre for Ages 55+, Crafts,
Exercise, & more
1291 Nafziger Rd, Unit #1, Baden
519-634-9225 ext. #9340
alc@communitycareconcepts.ca

Woolwich Community Services

Information Centre, Individual Support, Food
Support and more | 519-669-5139

TRANSIT

Kiwanis Transit

Serving Wilmot, Wellesley & Woolwich
(519) 669-4533 or 1-800-461-1355

TRAVEL

Stonetown Travel Ltd.

210 Mill St. New Hamburg
226-333-9939 | www.stonetowntravel.com

WINDOWS & DOORS

Bechthold Home Improvements

1239 Notre Dame Dr. Petersburg, ON
www.bechtholdhome.com | 519-634-5852
sales@bechtholdhome.com

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If you would like to be added to our growing list of valued local businesses, please contact us at embracingchangeinfo@gmail.com so our readers can be reminded of your services and support local.



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- Bathroom Vanities



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COMMUNITY BUSINESS DIRECTORY

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

**Emergency
(Fire/Medical/Police)**
911

**Waterloo Regional Police
Non Emergency**
519-570-9777

Crime Stoppers
1-800-222-8477

Ontario Poison Centre
1-800-268-9017

**Ontario Problem
Gambling Helpline**
1-888-230-3505

TeleHealth
1-866-797-0000
TTY: 1-866-797-0007

Waterloo Wellington LHIN
519-310-2222

Suicide Crisis Helpline
Call or text 988

**Retirement Homes Regulatory
Authority**
1-855-275-7472

Elder Abuse Response Team
519-579-4607

Interfaith Community Counselling
519-662-3092

Hospice of Waterloo Region
519-743-4114

**Alzheimer Society of Waterloo
Wellington**
519-742-1422

Senior Safety Line
1-866-299-1011

Township of Wilmot
519-634-8444

Township of Wellesley
519-699-4611

Township of Woolwich
519-699-1647

Region of Waterloo Public Health
519-575-4400

**Ontario Caregiver Organization
Helpline**
1-833-416-2273

This space is generously donated by:

TOWN SQUARE PHARMACY
PHARMASAVE 100 Mill St. Unit K, New Hamburg
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WHERE TO GET YOUR FREE COPY

Copies will be available around the first Wednesday of every month at the following locations:

WILMOT TOWNSHIP:

- MeMe’s Café New Hamburg (outside magazine stand)
- Sobey’s New Hamburg (outside magazine stand)
- HearingLife formerly Hemmerich Hearing
- Dolman Eyecare
- Morningside Retirement Community
- Stonecroft New Hamburg
- Nithview Community
- Foxboro Green
- Community Care Concepts
- Town Square Pharmacy
- Cooks Pharmacy
- New Hamburg Thrift Centre
- New Hamburg Legion
- New Hamburg Office Pro
- No Frills New Hamburg
- Baden Village Pharmacy
- Rudy Held Performance Centre
- Soles Journey New Hamburg
- Heart & Home Creations NH



- McDonalds (outside magazine stand)
- LifeLabs/UltraScan Plaza (outside magazine stand)

WELLESLEY TOWNSHIP:

- Schmidtsville Restaurant (outside magazine stand)
- Wellesley Township Community Health Centre

- Linwood Nurse Practitioner Office
- Pond View Retirement Village
- Cooks Pharmacy Wellesley
- Pym’s Village Market
- In Season Home & Garden St Clements
- Len’s Mill Store – Hawkesville
- Food Town IFT St Clements (Outside Magazine Stand)

WOOLWICH TOWNSHIP:

- Community Care Concepts
- Martin’s Guardian Pharmacy (outside magazine stand)
- Kiwanis Transit
- Woolwich Health Care Centre
- MCC Thrift & Gift Elmira
- Living Waters Books & Toys Elmira
- Bonnie Lou’s Cafe
- Hillcrest Home Baking
- Dollarama Elmira (outside magazine stand)
- Harvest Moon St. Jacob’s

Solutions

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

Concentration Puzzle: A broken clock is right twice a day.





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willseyalison@gmail.com

With a career spanning two decades, Alison Willsey has established herself as a respected and knowledgeable Real Estate Broker known for her professionalism, integrity, and commitment to exceptional service. Since launching her career as a REALTOR® in 2005, Alison has built a reputation for guiding clients through one of life's most significant decisions with confidence and care. Today, she proudly represents Peak Realty Ltd., serving clients from offices in New Hamburg and the Kitchener-Waterloo region.

Rooted in Community and Rural Values

Alison's deep understanding of Southwestern Ontario stems from her strong local roots. Raised on a dairy farm south of Belmont, Ontario, she developed an early appreciation for hard work, dedication, and the value of community. In 1984, her family relocated to Tavistock, where she grew up before moving to New Hamburg following her university and college studies. After living there for 18 years, she settled in Plattsville, continuing to serve the communities she knows and loves. These experiences have shaped her approach to real estate, particularly in rural and agricultural markets. Her firsthand knowledge enables her to confidently assist clients with residential, rural, agricultural, and select commercial property transactions throughout Perth and Oxford Counties, as well as Waterloo Region.

Experience, Education, and Expertise

Alison's professional journey is supported by a strong educational foundation and industry credentials. She holds a three-year Business Administration—Management Studies diploma and completed the Real Estate College of Ontario programs for Sales Representative and Broker. Prior to entering real estate, she gained valuable experience in business, agriculture, and construction—an advantage that continues to benefit her clients today. Committed to lifelong learning, Alison has earned several respected designations over the years, including:

Accredited Seniors Agent (ASA) Real Estate Negotiation Expert (RENE) Accredited Buyer's Representative (ABR®) This specialized training has allowed her to expertly serve Buyers, Sellers and mature clients and seniors. Her diversified experience ensures she is equally comfortable handling rural properties, new home construction, and farm sales with professionalism and confidence. A Client-First Approach For Alison, real estate is fundamentally a people business. She is known for her hands-on approach, personalized guidance, and unwavering dedication to her clients. Whether assisting first-time buyers, growing families, or downsizing retirees, she strives to make every transaction as seamless and stress-free as possible.

Market Conditions

Her ability to adapt to shifting market conditions has proven invaluable, particularly during the economic fluctuations of the past five to six years. Through each cycle, Alison has helped buyers and sellers successfully navigate challenges while achieving their real estate goals.

Much of her success has been built on repeat and referral-based business—a testament to the trust and satisfaction of her clients. She takes great pride in fostering lasting relationships and delivering an exceptional customer experience.

Giving Back and Staying Connected

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Alison is passionate about supporting the communities she serves. Having been actively involved in sports throughout her youth, she continues to give back by supporting local sporting organizations and charitable initiatives that keep young people active and engaged. Her enthusiasm for working in small towns and rural communities reflects her appreciation for their unique character and close-knit spirit.

Looking Ahead

As she continues to grow her business, Alison remains dedicated to ongoing education, professional development, and delivering innovative marketing strategies tailored to each property. She is committed to helping local residents find the right place to call home while maintaining the high standards that have defined her career. Alison welcomes the opportunity to connect with new and returning clients alike.

"This is a people business," she says. "I truly enjoy offering guidance and support to help make each experience as smooth and rewarding as possible."

Whether you are buying, selling, or exploring your options, Alison invites you to meet for a coffee or tea to discuss how she can assist with your next real estate transaction—and help you find the perfect place to call home.



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