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Business News

Vol No. 1
Issue No. 9

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From start to finish, First Stop Rental can help



Right Rental Choice: Alexis Earl and her dad Neill are the owners of First Stop Rental in Kemptville and can set you up with any item you need, whether it's a Bobcat or a hand tool. They offer friendly, knowledgeable service and competitive pricing on all rental needs for both contractors and homeowners. BUSINESS NEWS PHOTO/BURCHELL

By Veronica Burchell

KEMPTVILLE – If you have a project and need the right tools, look no further than First Stop Rental at 5881 River Road in the town's north end – if they don't have it, then you don't need it.

This rental outlet prides itself on having the right tool for the right job, no matter how big

or how small the project is. From Bobcats and loaders to chainsaws and hand tools, they can supply everything you're looking for.

"We are expanding our line this month with Stihl and Echo products," says Alexis Earl, manager and co-owner. "We want to be able to offer the best and still work within your budget."

Alexis has been with the store since 2012 when her dad Neill Earl hired her for their Winchester outlet and told her if she wanted to be in the business, the best way was to jump in at the deep end and get used to it.

"It really was 'sink or swim' and I swam hard for those first few years," she says with a smile.

Now a co-owner and

manager, she says there is something new to learn every day. Also in charge of marketing and the website, she says she is busy but loves it.

"We strive to give customers the best experience possible and our mission is to give you the best service we can," she says on the company website. "We are committed business owners with committed staff members."

That sense of commitment is why First Stop has been a renter's choice since they began in 1994. Right from the beginning, Neill has kept as much rental stock on hand as he could and taken the business seriously. Even during this year's shaky business market, they rose to the top by only closing for a short time during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic. They were one of the first businesses in the area to quickly make the transition to curbside service and delivery.

Now back in the store and using all proper sani-

tation protocols, they still give free advice and take the time to make sure a person knows how to safely operate any item they rent.

"We like to help people get the job done efficiently and correctly," says Alexis. "We are here to help, not just supply a tool."

That's one reason the Earl's recently moved to the new site on River Road. With 24 acres to work with, they plan to expand even more over the next few years. They closed the store in Winchester and brought everything to this one, central spot in order to serve people better.

That includes their

small-engine and tool repair department. Neill's brother Leeroy is their lead mechanic and holds several mechanics' licenses, as does Neill. You can drop off your item and expect to have it fixed by one of the best.

So if you have a need but don't have the right tool to do the job, take the quick trip to River Road. They offer not only the right equipment and service, it's a place with friendly, knowledgeable owners and staff. When it's time to do the job, do it the very best you can with help from First Stop Rental. It will quickly become your only stop on the way to restoration and renovation.

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NEWS FROM The Farm



Governments aid farmers to bring high-quality products to market

The governments of Canada and Ontario are investing more than \$7.9 million through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership to help farmers improve their business operations and bring more safe, high-quality foods to markets. This funding will support more than 670 projects across Ontario for eligible farmers and agri-food businesses.

“On-farm enhancements are essential to the sustainability and continuous improvement of the agriculture sector,” said the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. “Through this investment, we are supporting a range of farmer-driven projects to improve on-farm practices, strengthen the food

value chain, and support public trust in farming.”

Examples of projects supported through this programming include:

- Improving food safety systems on farms to meet or exceed international certification standards;
- Planting over-wintering cover crops to improve soil health and reduce soil erosion losses;
- Actions to help prevent pest damage at greenhouse operations;
- Developing a product that will open new sales markets for a farm business; and
- Upgrades to animal-handling equipment and improved biosecurity measures.

“Our farmers work tirelessly to supply the array of safe, high-quality agricultural products that

feed our province, our country and the world,” said the Honourable Ernie Hardeman, Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. “By making these strategic investments we are helping to improve the competitiveness of our agri-food sector and secure it for long-term sustainability, especially during these difficult times.”

“These 670 projects support farmers, rural communities, and the agricultural value chain,” said Neil Ellis, Parliamentary Secretary to the federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. “It’s about supporting growth at the farm level, which will have positive environmental, food system, and market impacts across the Ontario agri-food sector.”

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Help for small business: \$27,750 in joint federal and provincial funding to help small businesses use digital means to grow their business was announced in Spencerville late last month. Here, United Counties Warden Pat Sayeau and Kay Matthews of the Ontario Business Improvement Association Authority hold the banner announcing the program while the local MP and MPP look on.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Small businesses receive government aid with online boost

By Veronica Burchell

SPENCERVILLE – An announcement was made last month, confirming that all 13 municipalities in Leeds and Grenville will take part in Digital Main Street funding, intended to help small businesses learn to use the internet to increase opportunities.

Digital Main Street is a program designed to help small, main-street businesses achieve transformation to a digital form of doing more business. The program is built around an online learning platform, structured training programs, grants and service squads who will provide in-person help during the learning phases.

“With the emergency of COVID-19, providing options for our local business community to remain sustainable is more

important than ever,” said United Counties Warden Pat Sayeau at Friday’s announcement which was held at the village park in the middle of Spencerville’s downtown core. “Our small businesses are the foundations and the anchors and have shown great resilience during these recent times.”

The 13 municipalities will share \$127,345 in grant money allotted for the program through FedDev Ontario, a joint federal and provincial program. Prescott, Augusta Township and Edwardsburgh Cardinal applied for the funding together and will receive \$27,750 which will allow 75 small businesses to take part and share one service-squad member. Brockville will get \$30,000, with 120 small businesses taking part and sharing three squad members.

“This is not a ‘cookie-cutter’ event,” said Kay Matthews, Executive Director of Ontario Business Improvement Association Authority. “The COVID-19 pandemic hit Ontario’s main street hard, so Digital Main Street is needed more than ever. We know that businesses that participated in DMS last year were better able to cope when the pandemic hit and we’re excited that FedDev Ontario and MEDJCT (Ministry for Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade) are providing the funding to extend this important program to help businesses across the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville.”

DMS was established in 2018 and extended this year thanks to a grant of \$42.5 million from FedDev and MEDJCT. It is

believed this program will help businesses across Ontario regain lost revenue through creation of an online business model in addition to their on-site operation.

Mike Barrett, MP for Leeds and Grenville, says DMS will “put the tools in the toolbox as shoppers go online,” adding at the event on Friday that consumers will now have two choices: shopping out of the area and possibly the country, “or keeping their business close to home and local.”

MPP Steve Clark was also present at Friday’s announcement and said, “collaboration between local municipalities and the federal and provincial government on projects like this one ... is critical to helping businesses modernize and reach new markets.”

Tenth Anniversary



The owners of North Augusta’s Creekside Diner, (l-r) Bill and Darlena Holmes, were presented a certificate last month by Member of Parliament Michael Barrett and North Augusta councillor Tanya Henry in recognition of the restaurant’s tenth anniversary.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Business CALENDAR



2020 Awards of Excellence Gala Date: October 15, 2020

Time: 6:00pm - 10:00pm Location: Sunnidell Golf Course

The Brockville & District Chamber of Commerce presents the 2020 Awards of Excellence Gala on Thursday October 15, 2020 at Sunnidell Golf Course (1945 Sharpes Lane). Gates open at 6:00 p.m.

Program begins at 7:30 p.m. Admission Fee \$65

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REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Friday October 2, 2020

Lunch & Learn Series - Cyber Security Date: October 15, 2020

Time: 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: Brock IT (43 King St W Suite 202)

Admission Fee: Non - members 10.00 More Info: <https://1000islands.snapt.com/events/view/1309063>

October 22, 2020

Mental Health in the Workplace

'Three on Thursday' Employer Webinar Series offered by the Eastern Workforce Innovation Board
10:00 - 11:00 am Cost: Free.
<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/mental-health-in-the-workplace-tickets-120247807429>

Space to Shop Saturdays Date: October 17 and 31, 2020

Time: 9:00am - 6:00pm Location: Downtown Brockville

King St. will be closed to allow safe room for shoppers! Everyone is welcome to walk the road and shop! Don't forget to bring your mask!

October 21-22

Ontario East Municipal Conference Cost: Full Virtual Conference \$289.00, One-day Virtual Conference \$150.00 An Ontario East Economic Development Commission event. Topics will be offered in 4 different streams: Community Development Municipal Workforce Economic Development

<https://oemc.ca/2020-virtual-conference-registration/>

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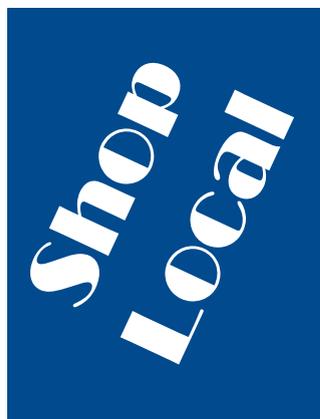
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Money for homeless vets: 15 members of the Legion Riders, Korea Unit, were in Prescott last month to pick up a cheque from the local Legion branch. Prescott Branch 97 donated \$1,000 from their Poppy Fund to the Rider's drive for funds for homeless veterans. Legion President Eric Place is seen here presenting the money to Wanda Duffy-Bertiaume, centre, and Michel Joannette. The Legion Riders are based in Hawkesbury and canvas all of Eastern Ontario for the funds they collect.

BUSINESS NEWS PHOTO/BURCHELL

Augusta Farmer's Market moves to Maitland

By Veronica Burchell

NORTH AUGUSTA – After four months of success in the village of North Augusta, the farmer's market has moved to the MERC Hall in Maitland as of October 3.

The market was a project sponsored by Augusta Township Council and started in June before any nearby markets were open. The idea was to help the crafters and regular farmers' market vendors who had nowhere else to sell their wares due to COVID-19 and the shutdown of so

many venues.

Nicole Walker, Community Development Coordinator for the township came up with the idea and has been on site all summer. She is pleased with the growth of the market itself and the number of patrons who have stopped by every Saturday morning.

"It has been a successful venture and people have really seemed to enjoy having us here," said Walker last Saturday. "We have grown from four vendors our first week to between 14 and 17 every

Saturday."

The market is located in the yard of the old Mason's Hall in the village, which is now empty. The township is planning renovations to the building which used to host meetings, dances and other social events.

The move to the MERC Hall in Maitland comes as temperatures are falling and the vendors agree the timing is excellent.

"It's pretty cool out here this morning," said Marg James, a Scentsy representative, who has been with the market almost since the

beginning. "It's quite a change from July and August". Saturday, September 19 was the first morning there was frost on the ground in Augusta Township.

The hours for the market will remain from 9:00 a.m. to noon, and there will still be fresh vegetables, jams, local honey, and several crafts. There are also handsewn dresses and masks for sale as well as baked goods, metal signs and jewelry. Almost all the vendors are expected to make the move to MERC and new ones are welcome.



Harvest time: Suzann Shannon of Shannon's Pumpkins was at the North Augusta Farmer's Market with a wide selection of her massive pumpkin crop. This was a COVID-19 project at the Shannon's farm and her first time as a market vendor.

BUSINESS NEWS PHOTO/BURCHELL

BUSINESS NEWS EDITORIAL

Stop and smell the taters

Sometimes, if one is very fortunate, life will show up and remind you what it is all about.

As existence during this state of pandemic frustration continues, and every new day seems to seek out new ways to turn up the dial on this pressure-cooker of a year we call 2020, life was kind enough to stop by our house last week with a token reminder that all is certainly not lost.

I came home on Tuesday afternoon and found a huge box of fresh potatoes waiting for me on the front step.

They weren't exactly a surprise. One of my neighbours had texted me earlier to inquire on if we had need for a delivery of home-grown (Brouseville Road) spuds...to which I had responded in the affirmative. The volume was a bit more than the image my mind had conjured. I was thinking perhaps a good meal's worth or two; the box on the step was at least a couple months' worth of side dishes.

It was a lot of tubers.

It was also a reminder that, as much as times may change, the people we know are still the people we have always known.

Amidst all the anguish over who is exempt from wearing masks, how many people we can invite over for supper, rainbow crosswalks, whether or not it's okay to have Aunt Betty living in my camper or a rusty old car parked in my backyard, what colour of lives matter the most, or any other of the myriad of concerns that blur the borders between reality and social media...I urge you to slow down a bit and think about your own neighbours.

What's your box of potatoes?

Is it the guy who sees your hood up and offers up his jumper cables or a lift to the gas station?

Is it the lady who always bakes just a few extra cookies?

Maybe it's the kid who mows grass, or the elderly couple down the road who often seem to have two of whatever particular item the newlyweds are in need of?

The world you see on television and read about of your computer screen, as entertaining and sensational as it can be at times, often forgets a couple basic facts.

Life is good.

So are people.

joe

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BusinessNews

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Don't forget the punctuation

"It's punctuating life that matters," Michael said to me on the road to a cottage getaway last weekend.

It's been a tough year for all of us, for a million different reasons, and for a million of the same reasons. We've come together in many ways, though the realities of our world right now may have pushed us apart.

As we sit on the edge of what appears to be our next COVID tipping-point, Michael and I spent Friday morning packing for a weekend away. We had booked the weekend near Maberly (about an hour and a half away) nearly two months ago, as infection rates were dropping and the "first wave" was seemingly settling down.

Fast-forward to Friday, and I'll admit I was questioning our decision to go away. However, after speaking with our booking site and reviewing the COVID-safety policies put in place (we were asked to bring our own towels, sheets, etc., and to take all garbage home with us, for example), we decided to go ahead with our plans as safely and responsibly as we could.

Despite a detour that cost us roughly

45 minutes, the drive up was full of gorgeous fall views and the bright sunshine of a late September warm spell. We arrived deep in the woods at our quaint cottage on the waterfront, and we proceeded with our big plans to do, well, absolutely nothing. Sitting outside enjoying the views from various lawn furniture, reading and snacking, watching movies, napping, and enjoying time together.

We arrived home Sunday afternoon and were both back to work and routine Monday, but with a little more spring in our step and serenity in our souls.

Sometimes time doing nothing changes how you look at everything. I'm a very lucky person, blessed in every aspect of my life. Though I try to keep a healthy balance in my life, I'll be the first to admit that it often feels like a blur – like a run-on sentence.

Taking a timeout from the day-to-day is an absolute necessity. Whether it's a weekend away, an hour spent enjoying a hobby, or a cheeky afternoon nap – take time to punctuate life and enjoy the beautiful story you create along the way.

PUBLISHER'S
PEN

Kate
Martelle



Stop

The dreaded sight of roadworks with the accompanying detour signs greeted us on Friday. We went from being three minutes from our destination to being over 20 minutes away.

Then the maps app decided to play a very clever trick and send us in a huge circle so we could come back to the roadworks 20 minutes later and still agonizingly close to our journeys end. Surprisingly, the usual annoyance didn't really set in.

We were on our way to a cottage for the weekend on Bob's Lake and there was no huge urgency to get there - although one car sick dog did her best to hurry us up.

Like many folks, we have been literally nowhere all summer. Kate has mostly worked from home. It's been a long time since either one of us felt like we weren't on a perpetual treadmill of work, eat, sleep, repeat. So a few weeks ago we decided we needed a little break. Cottage booked!

It was only when we were there that we realized that this was the first time we hadn't been consumed by work,

yardwork, housework etc.

We stopped.

We stopped thinking about the chores that needed doing. Stopped thinking about the paper (mostly). Mostly we stopped letting outside 'stuff' get in the way of our favourite pastime - hanging out with each other.

We did nothing all weekend and it couldn't have been better, helped by the weather and location we disconnected from the 'real' world and reconnected with each other.

No matter what happens in life, taking a moment to stop and reaffirm what's truly significant is vital for any sort of long-term happiness.

Monday came and we were reenergized and got back into the working week with something approaching enthusiasm!

When things get too much - just stop. Think of one thing or person (or animal) that makes you happy. It helps.

Stop - Sam Brown





Helen's Sewing Room the place for alterations, repairs

By VERONICA BURCHELL

KEMPTVILLE – Do you have a coat that needs a zipper? Pants that need patching? DO NOT throw them out – bring them to Helen and give them new life again.

Helen Rice of Helen's Sewing Room can repair or alter just about any garment. Nestled away in her busy shop at 132 Prescott Street, she has been making ill-fitting or torn clothes serviceable again for 15 years. She also makes beautiful aprons, masks, baby layettes and more, as well as teaching the art of quilting.

She works with her daughter Nancy Herbert to bring joy through needle and thread. One client had a coat she thought was done for due to a small tear in the back. No problem for Helen and Nancy who

found a way to take a bit of cloth from the lining of the hood for a patch, then added a faux belt and decorative buttons. This beautiful coat will now last for many years to come while being fashionable and warm.

"She loves a challenge," laughs Nancy, who proudly tells about a wedding dress which was brought to them because at the last minute it didn't fit. Her mother created a lace insert which ran the length of the back and it looked even better than the original design.

"She is really quite creative and can do almost anything with a needle and thread," says Nancy.

"I just love to sew – I always have," says Helen. "I enjoy making people happy through what we do and I love working with my daughter – we have a lot of fun

but we get a lots of work done too."

And if you've always wanted to learn quilting, Helen has a course which promises to create an entire double quit in a day. She has offered this course before and is hoping to bring it back when COVID restrictions have eased. She supplies all the materials and the knowhow to help you make an authentic, personal-style quilt in just 24 hours.

So before you give it away or throw it out, check with Helen to see what she can do. Chances are she will work her magic for you too, and those favourite pants will fit and your winter coat will last another few years. If it just needs to be shorter, smaller or tighter Helen's Sewing Room in Kemptville is the place to go for all your repairs and alterations.



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Bud the Spud plans renovations, new menu items

By Veronica Burchell

MAITLAND – Summer isn't complete without a stop at Bud the Spud chip wagon, but now the taste of summer can last all year through.

Thanks to the recent addition of a new building, the fan-favourite French fries will now be available through the winter months as well, along with some new items on the already-extensive menu.

"We are so excited about this addition and the other new changes," says Kathy Hunt, employee, relative and cook. "Don's applications were approved at last night's council meeting and we

are on our way to serving pizza and being open all year." A special meeting of Augusta Township Council was held Wednesday, September 16, to deal with several zoning applications and other business. It was at this meeting that Bud's owner Rob Turcotte received word all his proposed changes had been approved.

"We hope to be up and running in about a month," Turcotte said Thursday afternoon.

Bud's serves fries, burgers, hotdogs, poutine and even deep-fried desserts. It is a busy spot, so one of his plans is to provide more parking on the east side of the property. Several coun-

cillors said they had gone to the site and watched for possible traffic problems but found none. They felt more parking will keep the customers and those driving by even safer.

There has been a chip wagon at 1282 Highway 2 for over 25 years and there have been several improvements over that time. Last year Turcotte added more picnic tables under a new, sturdier shelter. Newer menu items include BVRs – his take on a form of the pastry known as 'beavertails' – which have proved to be quite a hit. The regular menu will continue after the addition opens, as well as the popular daily specials.

This season of course, saw Turcotte install order-window barriers and social distancing instructions.

Hunt says they are often asked by the youth of Maitland for ice cream, so that will be another new item on the menu when the addition is operational. She hopes to add popsicles and similar frozen treats by next spring.

"Expanding is something we've talked about for a while," says Hunt. "We all love the community here and the people we meet. So many of our customers are repeat business we really get to know them. Even the folks driving through the area have been wonderful to meet,"

she says. "Pizza is just going to go over really well with our customers," she

says. "Being open all year is going to be great for the community and for us."



Fries please: Ivan Sequeira is seen here placing his order with Kathy Hunt, right and Bianca Turcotte of Bud the Spud on Highway 2 at Maitland. Bud's was recently approved by the township council to create an addition which will allow them to be open all year. Sequeira was driving through the area when he decided to stop and was coincidentally wearing a mask decorated with pictures of poutine.

BUSINESS NEWS PHTOT/BURCHELL

Hospitals share \$2.3M of provincial Infrastructure Renewal Fund

By Veronica Burchell

BROCKVILLE – Hospitals which serve South Grenville are richer as of Friday and the money will be spent on aging infrastructure repair and increased COVID protection measures.

MPP Steve Clark was at Brockville General Hospital last month to announce the funding, which totals \$2.3 mil-

lion shared between the Brockville Hospital, Smiths Falls/Perth and Kemptville District Hospital. Brockville's portion is \$973,733 and will be used for new atrium panels, sanitary sewer system improvements and increased infection control. Clark said he was proud to be there on behalf of Christine Elliot, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health.

Likewise, Smiths Falls/Perth and Kemptville Hospitals will be doing work on sewer system upgrades and increasing cleanliness and infection control, according to the CEO's of both sites.

BGH's Board of Directors Chair Jim Cooper said the funding will help them address some of their aging infrastructure and systems in the current building.

"The Ministry of Health and MPP Steve Clark continue to show their support of the dedicated staff and doctors at BGH and to providing

the right environment where they help to keep our community healthy and safe," said Cooper at the announcement press conference. "Our reality is that BGH must continue to adapt to new infection prevention and control requirements associated with COVID-19, and through our (new) tower we will expand to better meet our community's growing healthcare needs."

The press conference was held outside the entrance to the new tower, which adds 22 beds to the BGH Charles St. cam-

pus and is expected to be operational by the end of October. Several physicians and staff were gathered outside to hear the announcement.

"Delivering quality care to our patients and families is paramount in everything we do at Kemptville District Hospital," said KDH CEO Frank Vassallo. "During these unprecedented and turbulent times hospitals face an array of financial pressures. One of those pressures is ensuring that our aging physical plants are maintained," he said.

This new funding is

part of 175 million which the provincial government is investing in hospitals across Ontario. Smith Falls/Perth received \$923,866 and Kemptville got \$425,177. This is part of the Heath Renewal Fund announced by Premier Doug Ford last week and it includes 50 million for COVID-19 related projects.

Other projects announced by the three CEOs include updating HVAC systems to enhance patient and staff safety, creating additional isolation space and negative air pressure flow rooms.



More health funding: MPP Steve Clark was at Brockville General Hospital to announce provincial funding in the amount of 2.3 million to be shared between BGH, and Smith's Falls/Perth and Kemptville District Hospitals.

BUSINESS NEWS PHOTO/BURCHELL

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Health preparedness and rebuilding economy top priorities

TORONTO — The Ontario government returned to the legislature this week, ready to continue implementing its made-in-Ontario plan for growth, renewal and long-term recovery. The government's fall legislative agenda will build on the work undertaken over the summer, focusing on job creation, skills training, attracting investment, strengthening communities, and fortifying the front lines of the province's health care system.

"Our government worked through the summer passing emergency legislation to protect individuals, families and businesses during one of the most difficult

periods in our province's history," said Premier Doug Ford. "Over the past few weeks, we have heard from people in every corner of the province and from all walks of life that they continue to feel the impact of the pandemic each and every day. To start us down the road to long-term recovery, this legislative session will focus on implementing our comprehensive plan to get Ontario back on track."

Priorities for the upcoming session include:

- Investing in Ontario's health care system to ensure the province is prepared for a potential second wave of COVID-19 and for

any future public health challenges;

- Building Ontario's production capacity for personal protective equipment, ventilators and other medical gear so the province never has to rely on any other jurisdiction again for these critical supplies;

- Protecting families and those most vulnerable and helping them get back on their feet as the province reopens;

- Helping young people and workers receive the skills training they need to join the modern workforce and contribute to the recovery of the province;

- Accelerating the construction of critical highway, transit and

broadband infrastructure projects to create jobs and boost the local economies of communities across Ontario;

- Providing relief to Mainstreet Ontario and small business owners so they can recover from the impact of COVID-19 faster and get back to the work of building their business; and

- Expanding manufacturing by creating the conditions to bring investment and jobs to the province and world-class, Ontario-made products to consumers around the world.

"When faced with a global pandemic, Members of Provincial Parliament came together in an unprecedented level

of cooperation to protect people and support businesses," said Paul Calandra, Ontario's Government House Leader. "Working across party lines, we were able to quickly pass important programs and protective measures through a special summer sitting of the legislature. Now, as we return to regular fall sittings, the people of Ontario expect us to continue to cooperate to defeat COVID-19 and rebuild our economy."

In March and through the summer, the legislature met for special sittings of the Assembly, which included unprecedented and innovative public health protections to

allow for the passage of emergency legislation. From March to July, the government was successful in passing 18 pieces of legislation, including emergency measures needed to protect public health and prepare for economic recovery, such as the Economic and Fiscal Update Act, the COVID-19 Support and Protection Act, the Protecting Small Business Act, and the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act. The expedited passage of much of this emergency legislation would not have been possible without the support and cooperation of the Official Opposition and independent Members.

More commercial development for Fort Town

By Conan de Vries

PRESCOTT - Prescott is set to welcome yet another significant new commercial development to the north end of town.

Coming out of a closed session at the end of a regular meeting of council last month, Mayor Brett Todd was pleased to announce that the town had agreed to the sale of 1.5 acres of land on Development Drive to a Kemptville-based manufacturing company called Blacks Creek Innovations.

The company manu-

factures a variety of equipment used in the production of firewood, and the development planned for Prescott will feature not only a maintenance and assembly facility but also a showroom and retail space.

The bylaw to officially authorize the sale of the property will come before council at its next meeting.

At last week's meeting, however, council passed the by-law to make official the sale of another parcel of land for a development that was announced earlier in the summer. The 55 acres,

also on Development Drive, will be the site of a large travel plaza.

The motion did elicit some discussion. Councillor Ray Young sought to clarify that under the terms of the sales agreement, the developer will have three years to come up with a site plan and have it approved and then a further three years to complete at least a significant portion of the project. He also noted, though, that the town would not have to wait for payment but would be paid in full as soon as the sale is made final.

The mayor specu-

lated that because the developer had invested so much in acquiring the property, it is unlikely it would take that long to get the project under way.

The agreement also stipulates that the developer cannot resell, or flip, the property until a substantial portion of the construction is complete. Young also had some questions about who would bear the cost of hooking up to the town's water and sewer services. The town's CAO and treasurer explained that the town was responsible for bringing

service to the north side of the highway but that the developer would be responsible for hooking up to the service.

The new development will also require an extensive traffic study, but Young pointed out that the developer would be covering that cost in its entirety. Young's council colleague, Lee McConnell, also had some questions. Part of the plan for the new development includes lengthening Development Drive to the west so that it links up with Merwin Lane. Such a project would be quite expensive, though,

and McConnell worried about committing future councils to a significant expenditure. The project would also involve not only Prescott but its neighbouring municipality of Augusta as well.

The mayor agreed that there needs to be some more clarity provided on several matters, including also exactly how the travel plaza is going to connect to Highway 401, but he also pointed out that there is a lengthy grace period in the sales agreement that will give both parties time to iron out the details to everyone's satisfaction.

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Aquarium celebrates successful season, despite pandemic

By Conan de Vries

BROCKVILLE - Despite the pandemic and the restrictions it imposed, one of this region's biggest attractions managed a good summer season, and the fall promises to be even better.

Brockville's Aquarium re-opened in mid-July amid strict pandemic protocols, but the safety measures certainly didn't stop visitors from coming out and enjoying the unique sights and experiences that guests have come to expect from the Aquarium.

"People were just looking for somewhere safe to get out of their house, and we provided that for them, and we were really happy to be able to offer that to the community," says Sarah Latusus, manager of public relations for the Aquarium at Tall Ships Landing.

The Aquarium will soon be switching over to its fall schedule, and while there will still be strict safety protocols in place, there will be no shortage of new and interesting things to see and do.

Before the pandemic hit, the Aquarium was already planning to expand its exhibits and make some additions to the available attractions. Its menagerie of aquatic creatures has certainly expanded, with two four-foot long eels added to the underwater zoo, and its family of gar – large, pike-like fish – has expanded to eight.

Of course, the Aquarium also has two river otters and a North American beaver, which as the most recent addition to the animal family has certainly proven a big hit with audiences.

"He's the new star attraction. He's a big deal over here," says Latusus.

There is also a brand-new attraction on the fourth floor, with a video planetarium feature added to the pilot's house.

Before the Aquarium could re-open in July, staff had to put a great deal of thought and effort into figuring out how the site's exhibits could be adapted to make sure they remained both engaging and safe.

"There was an enormous amount of work and time put into this by the very small essential staff that remained on site during the shutdown," says Latusus.

Of course, the animals still had to be cared for, too, and visitors to the Aquarium this fall will find all the creatures as content as ever and rather glad to see them.

"Everybody is happy," says Latusus. "They definitely enjoy seeing people come up to their exhibits and interact with them. That's very exciting for the animals."

One of the most notable aspects of many of the Aquarium's exhibits are the interactive features they offer and the opportunity they provide for visitors to get more involved and to discover things for themselves. Retaining at least some of this interactivity while keeping surfaces clean and guests safe was a big task.

All the effort paid off though, and over the summer guests enjoyed an experience as engaging and informative as before the pandemic.

"The whole community really embraced that we were offering virus-safe protocols," says Latusus.

Latusus credits not only Aquarium staff for making sure everything that could be done was done, but also the guests themselves for abiding by the rules and making sure the Aquarium was a safe place to be for everyone.

Visitors who stopped by the Aquarium over the summer will see a few changes if they visit again this fall, and at least one of the innovations introduced during the summer might just be retained, since it worked so well.

No self-guided tours were permitted this summer. All guests had to be escorted by an Aquarium employee, but it turns out guests found they really liked the guided tours, and Latusus said that on the weekends, they would be near sellouts most of the time.

"People really enjoyed the guided tours, because they were learning so much more than they would have if they had just

come in on their own," says Latusus.

The Aquarium also introduced a special schedule that set aside Friday mornings for tours geared particularly for adults, and that also proved a winning idea, one that will be kept up as the Aquarium switches to its fall schedule.

The effect of the changes made over the summer was to turn the Aquarium into less a discovery center, which was its usual model, into more of a museum, and while the restrictions during the fall will loosen somewhat, some of that museum quality will be preserved.

Both guided tours and self-guided tours will be available this fall, and there will be sanitization staff on hand, in addition to the site's regular custodial team, to make sure everything stays as anti-septic as possible. All the exhibits that were open during the summer will remain open. The rope course will remain closed, though, since there was no way to make sure that area remained sanitary.

All guests will be re-

quired to wear masks and social distancing restrictions remain in force. The Aquarium will also ensure that the number of people in the facility at any one time remains low. For that reason, there will be no on-site ticketing and all guests must buy their tickets online in advance. They can then select a time when they can come to the Aquarium and in that way, staff can keep close tabs on and control how many people are on site.

The Aquarium will be open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from September 18 through Thanksgiving, and it will be open later on Fridays and Saturdays this fall, from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. On Sundays the hours will be 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Also, on Fridays the period from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. is set aside for guided tours geared more towards adults, while the entire family will be warmly welcomed to the Aquarium for the rest of the day and the rest of the weekend.

Tickets can be purchased online at aquarium.ca.

COVID-19 school and childcare stats webpage launched

Daily information available to parents and the general public.

TORONTO — The Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education, and the Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy, President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Ontario Digital Service, issued the following statement last week on making COVID-19 school-specific data

publicly available online:

"We know that this September comes with a new set of challenges, as many children return to school. We have pulled out all the stops for Ontario's students. It is why we have ensured that schools can reopen safely, with a \$1.3 billion plan that is endorsed by Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. David Williams.

The Premier and our government made a promise to parents, that we would ensure that they would have access to the same information that we have. Over the last several weeks, we have been working with the Ministry of Health, the Ontario Digital Service and public health authorities, to ensure a rapid and transparent exchange of local COVID-19 data.

Today, the government is launching a webpage to report COVID-19 cases in schools and child care centres. This page will be updated every weekday with the most up-to-date COVID-19 information available, including a summary of cases in schools and licensed child care centres and agencies, if a COVID-19 case is confirmed at your school

and where the numbers come from. Parents deserve to know what we know.

As Ontario students return to school, we are developing new and innovative ways to combat COVID-19 in the classroom, including this webpage, which is just one way the Ontario government is leveraging technology to protect the health and safety of the next

generation. By making it easier for students, parents, and teachers to access important information about COVID-19 in their communities, we continue to deliver on our commitment of building simpler, faster, better services for the people of Ontario."

Visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-cases-schools-and-child-care-centres> to access the webpage.

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Investing in the future of Ontario's tourism industry

The Ontario government is investing \$1.5 million through the new Tourism Economic Development Recovery Fund and offering promotional incentives at provincial attractions to help the province's tourism industry and welcome back visitors after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, made the announcement during a fireside chat with tourism stakeholders at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre last month.

"COVID-19 has caused an unprecedent-

ed, devastating impact on the tourism industry. Our sectors were hit first, the hardest, and will take the longest to recover following COVID-19," said Minister MacLeod. "This important investment through the new Tourism Economic Development and Recovery Fund will support Ontario's tourism industry to ensure it is well positioned to re-emerge, grow and once more showcase how we offer the world in one province."

The fund will support projects that develop innovative tourism products and experiences, drive private sector

tourism investments, workforce development, and support tourism operators to learn more through tourism industry associations.

As the province works with the tourism industry to reopen destinations, agencies and attractions, Ontario is also thanking frontline workers and welcoming back visitors by offering special promotions or discounts at several of the province's top tourist destinations.

"Frontline workers in hospitals, grocery stores, transit and many others across the province have been working tirelessly to keep On-

tarians safe in the fight against COVID-19," said Minister MacLeod. "I'm proud to support our agencies' efforts to show appreciation for the hard work and dedication demonstrated by Ontario's frontline work-

ers during the COVID-19 outbreak."

As the province continues to gradually reopen, Ontario's agencies and attractions are implementing stringent measures to ensure a safe and enjoyable ex-

perience for everyone. Visitors are encouraged to review current COVID-19 updates before visiting attractions and are asked to respect health and safety guidelines to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

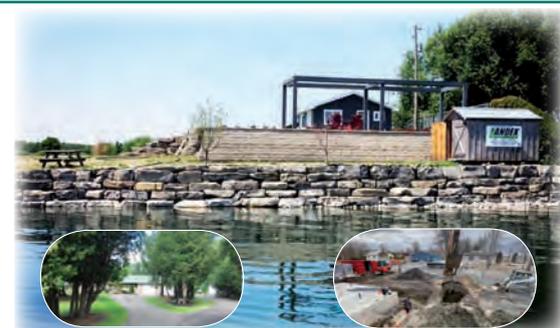
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Mother and son duo can make any vehicle spotless

By Veronica Burchell

SPENCERVILLE – If you want to keep your vehicle looking like new, or just want your older vehicle to look as new as possible, then head to Spitfire Detailing where they put the shine back in your life.

Anna Hammond has built a business doing something she enjoys – cleaning and detailing cars, boats and motor homes. She and her son Dan are getting their new cleaning company off the ground to rave reviews from customers because they go that extra mile. There is an art and a science to cleaning on this scale and they excel at both.

“This is something I have enjoyed doing for a long time – I’ve been

into cars all my life,” says Anna, formerly of Great Britain, who immigrated here 15 years ago with her husband and son. “My husband and I love cars and we always spent hours detailing our own.” Ironically, one of her husband’s first jobs was as a clean-up/detailer for a Nissan dealership in England.

Anna is a member of the Certified International Detailing Association. This is an international group which issues a certificate to its graduates to insure people know they have mastered the art of detailing. She also holds a certificate in marine detailing. As well, she is a graduate of last year’s new business class at Brockville’s Small Business Enterprise Centre.

“My husband was off

work in 2015 with health problems and I had been doing a lot of things from home. One day it just hit me that I have all the equipment here and I have always loved cars, so why not?” explains Anna. “I saw the advertisement for the Small Business Centre, so I decided to take the leap and work on making it into a proper business.”

She credits the centre with offering a very in-depth and informative course which allowed her to put together a smart and inclusive business plan. She had the drive and the interest, and they supplied the business savvy around such subjects as marketing, book-keeping and accounting. She says she wouldn’t be doing this if it weren’t for the knowledge gained

through the course.

“I can’t say enough about them. The information they give you is fantastic, and they work with you every step of the way.”

Her husband Andy is now a police officer, but is also a former member of the Royal Airforce, so the name ‘Spitfire’ was Anna’s first choice for the business. It also describes her as well. With energy and interest to spare, she and her son spent hours researching the idea before setting up shop.

They started their own pilot project last fall to see if the business would succeed and to judge the local market. They had customers immediately but had to stop during the winter. When things were just getting under-

way again in early spring, they were faced with COVID-19 restrictions. It is only the last few months they have been able to open up to new and returning customers, but they are quickly building a grateful clientele.

One reason for that is the extent to which their service goes; every cleaning is preceded by a treatment with an ozone decontamination machine, which pulls bacteria and viruses out of upholstery and carpets. It even takes away the residual smell from cigarette smoke. During the pandemic, the use of this machine is thrown into every cleaning, free of charge.

After that comes a full cleaning of interior and exterior. Carpets look new again and the paint

literally glows when they’re done. The pair once cleaned a 20-year-old pontoon boat and the owner couldn’t believe how much like new it looked when finished.

The next step for this burgeoning business is going mobile. When the pandemic is over and/or things change, their plan is to bring their service to you offering the utmost in convenience.

“We really do love what we do,” says Anna. “Making your investment look as new and special as possible really gives me great joy, and being the only certified car detailer between Kingston and Cornwall shows people that I am serious about what I do. We intend this business to grow and we are in it for the long run.”

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1000 Islands Hearing soon to open third office in Prescott

By Veronica Burchell

BROCKVILLE— Dealing with a hearing loss may be one of the toughest health challenges you face in life, but Sophie Cushing can help you make the transition to hearing aids much easier and certainly with less stress.

Cushing presently has two hearing clinics – one in Brockville and one in Iroquois – with another opening in October at the Prescott Medical Centre on King Street. She is excited about adding another outlet which allows her to help people who are looking for an improvement in their situation.

“People are scared of getting hearing aids and some of them see it as a sign of aging,” says Cushing. “Actually, your hearing loss is much more visible to others than any hearing aid will ever be.”

Today’s hearing aids are virtually invisible in certain cases. Gone are the days of large, bulky additions to your glasses. Some are so small they fit into the ear canal with a tiny wire for easy removal and are all but unseen by those around you.

“We are seeing a healthier more vibrant seniors’ group now than we did even 15 years ago and people are more socially interactive and concerned about what they’re missing,” she explains. “And because we have a generation which has been raised on headphones, we are seeing people younger and younger coming to us.”

Cushing admits that there is a lot more “noise pollution” in today’s world, and people should be paying more attention to what is healthy and what could cause minor hearing loss later on. Video games and phones all seem to be connected to headphones these days and people should be aware of the sound levels they choose.

“The average age people start looking for hearing aids now is 57 as compared to much later just a generation ago.”

She herself is a third generation hearing specialist, following in the footsteps of her father and grandfather. She opened her first clinic in 2016 after rigorous study and 1,000 hours of internship. She truly enjoys her work and that fact is evi-

dent in the cheerful, outgoing attitude present in her clinics. Cushing is an independent healthcare practitioner and acts as a broker for several hearing-aid manufacturers, so she is always going to find the best deal while keeping a client’s particular needs in mind.

“I know hearing aids can be expensive and I try to work within people’s budgets while getting them the most-up-to-date technology possible,” she says. “We are very much client-focused, and we are going to do everything we can to find the right solution for the individual person.”

“Everyone is an individual and every client is special and unique when they come here,” she adds.

The Prescott clinic will be opening this month and will be available three days a week for the first six months, as the need grows. Cushing says that clinic will be staffed by a very qualified technician, Kathleen Lowe.

“Kathleen is truly qualified for this position, as she has a hearing impairment herself – she understands what each client is facing in a very



Helping you hear life: Sophie Cushing of 1000 Islands Hearing is truly concerned about each and every client and is ready to open her third hearing clinic in Prescott later this month. She is seen here with Leo, her “office dog” who is a favourite with clients at her Brockville and Iroquois offices. **BUSINESS NEWS PHOTO/BURCHELL**

serious, empathetic way,” says Cushing. “She is also local, so she understands the community as well.”

In the meantime, 1000 Islands Hearing will continue its fulltime operations in Iroquois and Brockville. Both clinics are fully staffed with kind,

qualified hearing specialists who know their communities and their clientele.

If you have been putting off going for a hearing test, you can trust the professionals who work with Sophie Cushing. They’ll make you feel

comfortable and cared for, and they will make sure you are hearing everything you should be – you’ll feel better and look younger when you stop missing out on all the important things there are to hear in your life.

Farm brings beauty of nature to the local marketplace

By Veronica Burchell

AUGUSTA— A new farm on Lord’s Mills Road is in the business of supplying not only flowers for your table, but food for your soul.

Flowers of the Field is a farm which offers an amazing choice of fresh flowers and a variety of ways to get them to you. Owner Brenda Visser has been growing and selling fresh flowers for over 13 years and recently brought her business to this area.

She and her husband are constantly busy planting, growing and nurturing the stock.

“They didn’t have any gardens here before ... but now we have between 50 and 100 different varieties of flowers,” she says. “Last year we planted 100 peonies and another 200 this year.” There are also dahlias, sunflowers, gladioli, anemones and “a whole bunch of others,” says this graduate of Ontario’s Master Gardener Program.

Visser has always loved

flowers for what they provide to the eye and to the inner person. After moving here almost two years ago, she decided to take her passion and turn it into a larger-scale business by attending the Women Entrepreneur’s course offered by the Leeds and Grenville Small Business Centre in Brockville.

Previously, she had done “front porch sales” from the couple’s home in Athens, where people would call ahead with an order and then pick up

the flowers from her front porch. She has been doing sales in a similar way during the COVID-19 pandemic from a stand at the new farm.

Visser also offers subscriptions, where a person puts in an order for a month at a time and receives flowers every week. They can either be picked up at the farm, or if the subscriber lives as far away as Athens or Merrickville, she can deliver. Right now, she also has flowers at farmer’s

markets in Brockville and Gananoque.

“I don’t have a greenhouse right now, so all the flowers are grown outside,” she explains. “Eventually I would like to add a heated greenhouse so I can offer fresh flowers from October to February too.”

Another plan for the future is to take part in the agri-tourism sector by offering farm tours. There is an abundance of wooded area on their farmland and she and her husband have

started putting in trails which will eventually wind their way through the growing areas, making a breathtaking stroll among the woods and plants.

After all these years in the business of selling flowers, first from her Athens home and now on her own farm, Visser, understands that people need flowers in their lives. Not what not only for their appeal as a centrepiece but for the sustenance of grace and beauty they bring to the soul.

Customizing your décor with local professionals

By Veronica Burchell

BROCKVILLE – If your carpet, hardwood or window treatments are looking tired and need a lift, you can have a whole new look by visiting Custom Decor Carpet One Floor and Home.

Next year will mark the fortieth anniversary of Brockville's premier Benjamin Moore paint store which can supply you with everything you need to redecorate. Flooring choices number in the hundreds with the latest materials and colours in warm, cozy carpeting or stunning hardwoods or lamin-

ates. Paint colours to suit every room are abundant and now Hunter-Douglas window blinds are available to pull the whole look together.

"This is a co-op, independently-owned store and we can offer you the resources of a thousand locations," says store owner Matt Vanderbaaren. His parents first opened the store in 1981, and it has been at its present location – 3011 County Road 29 – since 1996. "My parents started out with a humble beginning, but now we offer a full portfolio for both residential homes and industrial

settings."

Custom Decor added Carpet One Floor and Home in 1997, opening up even more selection. "We are aligned with the best buying group in North America so we can offer fantastic pricing and servicing in all flooring types," adds Matt. "Our latest venture is kitchen and bath design services."

He says another thing which sets this store apart from competitors is the strong team of knowledgeable, committed salespeople he employs. They also offer free measurements and estimates, and they love

helping people with their needs for either a new home or a renovation project.

"No job is too big or too small," says Matt. "We can help no matter what size or scope the project falls within. We deal with both homeowners and contractors and we have thousands of choices when it comes to decorating. We have Brockville's, if not Eastern Ontario's, largest selection of area rugs alone."

Matt and his team aren't just about selling – they sponsor a number of community teams and events and believe in be-

ing a good neighbour. He says one project which is "near and dear to our hearts" is the Brockville Winter Classic, a fundraiser for Memorial Park.

With free estimates, free delivery and a dedication to their community, Custom Decor Carpet One Floor and Home appears to be an excellent choice for you decorating needs. Even the recent pandemic didn't slow them down, and Matt soon hopes to have direct, online services to add even more ease when it comes to decorating. His plan is to host an e-commerce site where you can purchase paint and all the

equipment which goes with it, making shopping locally easier than ever.

When you do come to the store, be prepared to be impressed by the size of the showroom. Every choice in floor covering, paint colours, and now taps and other fixtures are there for you to see and touch, making it easier to imagine how it will look in your home. The friendly, professional team can help with any advice you need and that makes the whole experience of shopping here a personalized treat. Custom Decor takes your home and budget as seriously as you do.

Leeds and Grenville

LEGAL SIDE BAR

Know your limits – Common limitation period pitfalls

Since January 1, 2014 Ontario has had a new limitation period regime. Most people know this and are aware that the general six-year limitation period is now two years. But there are some that are much shorter.

Actions against a municipality for highway property

First off, nearly ALL sidewalks in towns and cities are considered part of highway property. So this category covers slips and falls on sidewalks, and it is the shortest (that is how Municipalities keep their insurance costs manageable). You must give notice to the municipality within 10 days of the event and then commence your action within two years. The 10 days is the shortest and most commonly missed limitation period in Ontario. Even worse it is usually missed by the most impacted and least well off of victims, the elderly.

Defamation – actions against a publisher for libel

This is for written defamation, not spoken (which is slander). You must give notice to the publisher within six weeks of finding out about the defamation then commence your action within three months.

Estate Trustees and Administrators

Actions by or against an estate must be commenced within two years of the death of the deceased. Discovery of the claim has no effect on extending this fixed limitation period.

Dependent's Relief Claims

No action for relief by a dependent of the deceased who was not provided for by the deceased can be made after six months from the granting of a probate or an administration.

Fire insurance

No claim can be made against an insurer of fire loss after one year from the date of the fire.

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Floating down memory lane

By Conan de Vries

JOHNSTOWN - The Port of Johnstown wasn't always somewhere Maurice Fodey wanted to go back when he was a young deckhand on an old coal carrier, but a couple weeks ago, he was only too happy to pay the port a visit.

Early on in his nearly 50-year career in the shipping industry, Fodey was a deckhand on a ship that carried coal between Montreal and ports on the Great Lakes. Sometimes, usually in the fall, the ship would make a stop along the way at the local port to pick up grain. It was something the entire crew—deckhands especially—loathed, as before the coal-carrier could load food grains into its hold, the bays had to undergo a thorough and laborious cleaning.

"It was long hours and hard work," Fodey remembers, "and not much sleep for a few days."

It was back in 1948, at the age of only 16, that Fodey first stepped aboard the deck of a ship. He was living in Lansdowne and looking for a summer job. His aunt suggested working on a ship. He got a job as a cabin boy on the Keystone.

"My mother and father drove me down to Cardinal and I got on board the ship," he says.

He did a lot of cleaning, served a lot of meals and made a lot of beds, something he could have done at any motel or inn, but there was just something about being on board a ship that made him feel at home. The next

summer, he took a job as a deckhand and got a closer look at how a ship functions, which whetted his appetite even more. When Fodey graduated high school, he climbed aboard the Keyvive and joined the crew full-time.

He spent seven seasons on the Keyvive carrying coal, iron ore, pulp wood and even sulfur along the river and up into the Great Lakes. In the winters, Fodey went to school to pick up additional certifications and to learn the finer points of navigation and ship operations.

The St. Lawrence Seaway opened up in 1959, and in 1961, Fodey took a job on a bulk carrier called the Menihék Lake. He would make many round trips from Duluth, Minnesota or Thunder Bay, where the ship would pick up grain, to Montreal or Baie Comeau, where the ship would offload the grain and pick up iron ore bound for Detroit or Cleveland. When the snow and ice finally arrived and made the Seaway impassable, the Menihék Lake would often tie up for the winter at the Port of Johnstown, giving the ship's crew a most welcome break. There wasn't much in the way of time off in those days, and Fodey would work the entirety of all the ice-free months of the year, which meant a lot of time on the water and not much at home.

"As a single man, I didn't mind that. I had the rest of the winters off," he says. "It was a good life for me then."

He slowly worked his way up the ranks, from second mate to first mate to captain,

and plying the river and Great Lakes, he gained invaluable experience that would serve him well on the next step of his career ladder. When Fodey married and had a family, spending so much time on the water didn't seem so attractive anymore, so he started looking for a job more amenable to family life, and piloting seem to fit the bill.

Foreign ships going through the Seaway must take a pilot on board for certain stretches to help the bridge crew navigate all the channels, canals and locks. In 1972, Fodey took a job as a pilot in the Seaway's district one, and spent the rest of his career giving critical engine and steering orders to the command crews of ships from all over the world as they maneuvered their way through the Snell, Eisenhower and Iroquois locks, and made their way past some tricky spots along the route from Massena, past Prescott and Brockville, to Cape Vincent, on the American side, across from Kingston.

The entire trip took about 10-12 hours, which provided Fodey with a more regular schedule and more time at home. Life on the water wasn't always a bed of roses, though. Working on a ship can be challenging at times, whether one is a deckhand or a mate, and, of course, the weather is always a concern for any mariner. Fodey can remember several harrowing transits back when he was on the Great Lakes.

"In 1949 and 1950, there were two storms I remember that were

pretty bad, one on Lake Superior and one on Lake Ontario," he says.

Lake Superior is especially known for stirring up some rough and dangerous conditions, and early in Fodey's career, weather reporting wasn't nearly as accurate, or as helpful, as it is today, and it wasn't until the early 50s that radar was added to the bridge instruments. Conditions on the river were considerably better, but storms and wild weather could still make things tricky for even the most skilled pilots.

"It's calmer but it's a different problem there," says Fodey. "When the wind is blowing and you're trying to maneuver in and out of locks, it makes it much more difficult."

The big ocean-going vessels were particularly susceptible to the weather, especially when they were empty and riding much higher in the water, which would make them more apt to drift, especially at slow speeds.

"Any wind effects them quite a bit," says Fodey.

Over his long tenure as a pilot, Fodey met many interesting people from across the globe and climbed aboard a great many vessels of various shapes and sizes—from massive freighters to small barges. There were some other, more unique vessels along the way too, including the Forbes yacht, which would often spend summers down this way.

"It was quite grand. Everything was just shining and polished," remembers Fodey. "It was really lovely."

After many years, even a pilot's schedule began to wear on Fodey, but right up to the day he retired, he never failed to get a charge out of standing on the bridge of a ship.

"I always enjoyed the work," he said.

From the first time the young teenager stepped aboard to the last time the accomplished mariner stepped off the gangway, Fodey never lost his love of the water and of the ships on which he spent much of his adult life. He likens the attachment to the one railroaders quickly develop when they first climb aboard a train.

"They get hooked the same way" he says.

He's not quite sure why he loves ships so much. Seeing the big vessels moving so gracefully and purposefully through the water, and with such an important purpose, transporting vital cargo from port to port, always stirred something in Fodey, and helping those big ships thread their way so precisely through locks, around hazards and along narrow waterways was always gratifying.

Some time after retiring, Fodey moved to Brockville, where he has lived for the past 20 years. It's been a long time since he's been on the bridge of a ship, but he still keeps an eye on the St. Lawrence Seaway, checking the computer to see what ships are where and where they are going. When he's not doing that, he's either playing bridge or taking pictures. Both he and his son, Mark, are avid amateur photographers.

It was Mark that arranged the tour of the

port. He and his father had passed by the facility many times. Both thought there might be some good vantage points for their cameras behind the closed gate. Maurice knew there would be some fond memories as well.

Mark called his father one day and told him they were taking a drive. He had arranged with the port's general manager, Robert Dalley, to let them take a look beyond the gate and see just how much the operation has changed since Maurice last tied up at its wharf.

"It's been a lot of years since I was down there, but it was good to be there for a little while," says Maurice. "The port is really growing and I'm so pleased to see that there are some really good people running it."

Over the past decade, the port has invested more than \$50 million into improving and expanding the facility.

"It was a good move," says Fodey. "They've improved it a lot. They extended the dock on the riverfront, where the big ships unload, so it's a lot easier to maneuver in and out of there."

The shutterbugs also got some good shots of the river, though Maurice concedes his weren't as good as the ones his son took.

"I'm just a point-and-shoot compared to him," he says.

The Fodeys both expressed their sincere gratitude to Dalley for so generously giving of his time and going out of his way to make it possible for them to take such a delightful float down memory lane together.