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Durham Region Community Publication

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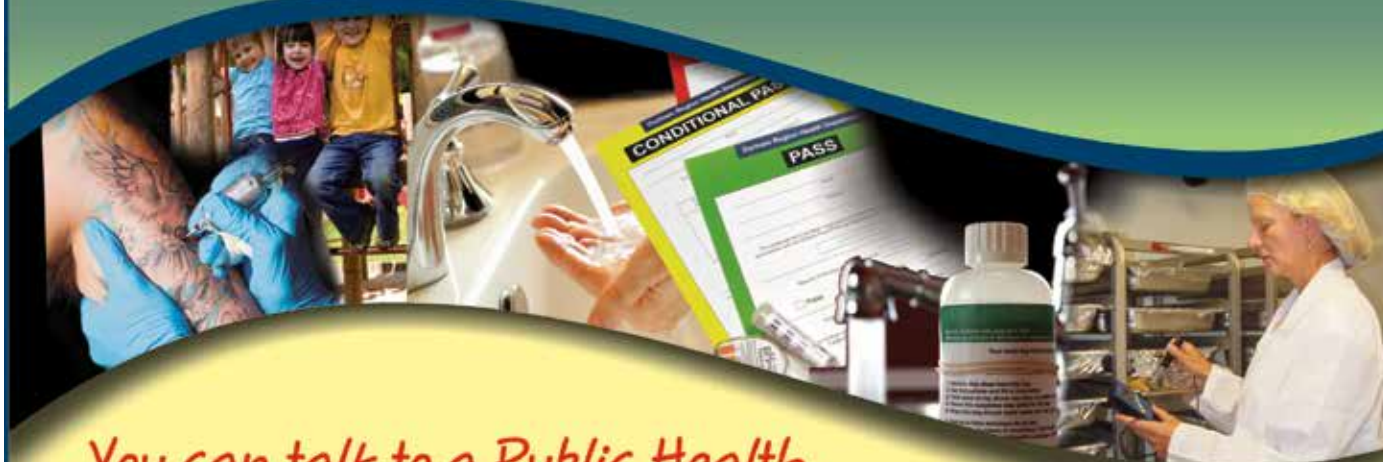
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From the Publisher

Summer is finally here!!! I'm sure you are all ready to get outside and enjoy the hot weather that we've been anxiously waiting for these past few months, so I'll keep this letter short and sweet!

Here's what our columnists have in store for you this issue:

Shirley Ouellette in "Tasteful Talk" tells us about the advantages of eating a Mediterranean diet, which is not only great during the hot summer months but also is healthy. I eat a Mediterranean diet and I can honestly say that the food is delicious and nutritious for you!

If you're planning on travelling with your pet this summer, then you definitely need to read Corry Hamilton's "Taking the Lead" where she offers up some simple tips to make travelling with your pet a stress free experience. Speaking of travelling and vacation, Linda Calder in "The Golden Years" talks about cruising as a vacation option.

Victoria Cozza in "Teens, Tweens & In-Between" writes an inspirational article about feeling beautiful and loving yourself (and your bodies this summer)! Although her column is geared towards younger readers, it's good advice that even we adults need to heed! And of course, when it comes to advice, no one does it better than Malachi Brown in "The Coach Corner". Malachi relays two events in his life to teach us yet another important lesson of our life's purpose. And for some financial wisdom, read Karl Marshall's "Financial Fitness" where he explains how you can save money, simply by tracking how you spend it.

Finally, be sure to check out Stephanie Pommells "Treat Yourself" column as she continues to familiarize us with salon lingo; Stephanie Herrera's "At the Box Office" for the latest movies, Sue-Ann Bavlnka's "Ask Sue-Ann" advice column and Julie Antoinette's horoscope predictions for you.

Don't forget to visit The Local Biz Magazine web site (www.thelocalbizmagazine.ca) and read up on what our bloggers are up to as well. Have a safe and happy summer everyone!

Antoine Elhashem
 Publisher



From the Editor

My first real trip with my husband back when we were dating was camping. We drove 3.5 hours from our homes in Scarborough to a campground on the St. Lawrence River. It was our first time camping, and we camped for two weeks on a site without electricity and water. Mother Nature was temperamental, giving us some days of sunlight, but also a few days of wind and pouring rain. The sunny days were great; the rainy days not so much, mainly because we weren't properly prepared for it. We packed a lot of food (enough for three weeks!), but somehow forgot to pack certain essentials. For instance, the backdoor of our mini-van served as our "tarp" to shield us from the rain while we sat outdoors. But we learned from that first trip and have become better campers since then.

I know camping may not be for everyone, but we wanted to demystify it for those hesitant about it. There are many ways to camp and many places to camp, and writer Suffia Malik breaks it all down for you in her article, "Sleeping Under the Stars".

If you are still not sold on camping, then what about travelling? I bet you like that. Rhian Torontow, our resident travel blogger shares with you her experiences for vacationing as a family. Not only has Rhian travelled practically everywhere in the world already, but she is also a travel consultant and offers some must-read tips for families travelling with children of different ages in her article, "Don't Let Another Summer Slip Away Without a Family Vacation".

Stepping away from camping, travelling and vacationing, Susan Fedorka looks at why seniors should take advantage of the Healthy Homes Renovation Tax Credit (HHRTC) offered by the government. If you aren't aware of the HHRTC or haven't utilized it yet, then her article, "Why You Need to Take Advantage of the HHRTC TODAY!" is a must!

Finally, Pan Am is almost here! I hope you did not forget because it's going to be in our own backyards (figuratively speaking)!! We already gave you the rundown on everything you need to know about the Games in our last issue, so this time we wanted to focus just on the impact here at home. Check out "Pan Am in Durham: What You Need to Know!" to learn how Durham is gearing up for Pan Am this summer.


That's pretty much it folks. I hope you enjoy reading our summer issue, and as always, if there are any talented writers and bloggers in Durham Region who would like to join The Local Biz family, please feel free to contact me.

Wendy Chiavalon
Editor-in-Chief

Have Your Say

Are you attending a Pan Am or Parapan Am event this summer?

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PanAm in Durham

On July 10 - 26 and August 7 - 15, the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games will be coming to the GTA and specifically Durham Region! In this article, we'd like to focus on the impact of the Games here in Durham, so we interviewed individuals from the 3 hosting communities — Ajax, Whitby and Oshawa — and asked them a few questions we're pretty sure you'd like to know the answers to.

1) What has the town /city been doing to raise awareness for the games among Durham residents?

Ajax The Town implemented a marketing approach with three target audiences: residents, businesses and visitors. For residents, there have been several engagement events (2yr Countdown Event ; 1yr Countdown (La ViVa Loca); 150 days promotion, 100 days promotion, etc.). In addition, at each of the Town's events since the 2yr Countdown, there has been a Pan Am presence to raise awareness and recruit volunteers. Several presentations have been made to various organizations to share the excitement and promote the games, and in late March the Town hosted a Community Information Session in partnership with TO2015 to educate local residents. To continue to inform and engage residents, in late May, staff will be providing information and a baseball-themed snack to thousands of GO Train Commuters just ahead of the Torch Relay in Ajax. The Pan Am presence will start to resonate when close to 500 street banners are installed in May, and promotion of the local 'Host Businesses' begins (*see question #4*). The best resource to stay up-to-date on activities, promotions, news and alerts is www.panamajax.ca The website features videos, news, Q&A's and more. In addition, the Town will be producing a Town's

special Pan Am Guide and establishing specialty phone lines closer to the games.

Whitby The Town has participated in an organizing committee with TO2015 since November 2009. The aim of this committee is to work with municipalities to ensure they are game-ready and to assist in community engagement. The Town created a Local Host Committee in January 2014. This committee consists of local residents who volunteer their time to assist with the two-year and one-year countdown events held at Abilities Centre and to prepare for the upcoming Pan Am and Parapan Am Torch Relays which will be received in Whitby on June 8 and August 5 respectively. Representatives of the Town have made presentations to community groups, service groups, individuals and to Town Council. All municipal facilities equipped with televisions show advertising pertaining to the Games, ticket sales and volunteer opportunities. The Town created a mini-website, whitby.ca/panamgames to allow residents, visitors and business to keep abreast of information about the Games. A business breakfast was held in March to inform business that the Town is relaxing the rules associated with off-peak hour deliveries in order that business can receive deliveries later and avoid rush hour traffic. The Games have been widely promoted to all of our program patrons and through the Whitby Public Library, Station Gallery and Abilities Centre.

Oshawa The City has hosted a number of events leading up to the Pan Am Games: Two year Countdown in 2013, and One Year Countdown in 2014, a Resident and Business Information Session and Volunteer Information Sessions. A website section has been devoted to Pan Am communication: www.oshawa.ca/panam The City brought a group of residents/organizations/businesses together in 2013 to form the Local Host Committee and this group of approximately 30 individuals have been working with City staff on pre-Games events and spreading the word throughout the community.

The following initiatives are planned in the next month to further the awareness:

Pan Am Torch Relay — The Pan Am torch will be in Oshawa on June 5, and will be stopping at the Civic Recreation Complex and City Hall. Norma Douglas will carry the flame as Oshawa's community torchbearer. (An 84 year old Oshawa resident, Norm won a silver medal in team synchronized swimming in the 1955 Pan Am Games in Mexico. Norm founded the Oshawa Synchronized Swimming Club, now Durham Synchro.)

Pan Am-themed gardens — Our talented gardeners are at it again! Look forward to seeing the City gardens lined in the bright Pan Am colours!

Pan Am-themed camps — A variety of active Oshawa's summer camps will be based around the excitement and sportsmanship that the Pan Am Games embody, including Pan Am Amazing Race (Pan Am flags), Pan Am Explorers, Pan Am themed dance camps and artistic camps and Pan Am Pandemonium.

2) How does the town/city intend on handling the extra traffic congestion in the areas of the games?

Ajax More than 30 regional partners are working together to ensure athletes, spectators, residents and businesses keep moving during the Games. Together, we have developed a Five Point Plan: Games Route Network, Spectator Transportation Services, Reducing Demand on Transportation, Venue Traffic Measures and Regional Coordination. Temporary HOV Lanes will be open along Highway 401 from Don Valley Parkway to Westney Road, 5:00 am to 11:00 pm during the games to: Games vehicles (athletes, officials, media), Vehicles with 3+ occupants (June 29 to July 27), Vehicles with 2+ occupants (July 28 to August 18), Emergency vehicles, Electric vehicles with green license plates, Public transit and Taxis. Prior and during the games everyone is being encouraged to visit www.ontario.ca/games2015 for transportation information and advice to help people plan ahead. Detailed maps and information about traffic changes near venues, as well as traffic alerts, will also be available.

Whitby Because Whitby is only hosting Parapan competitions we do not anticipate any increased traffic affect on Whitby over and above that which is currently being experienced associated with the construction of the Highway 407 links. The HOV+3 lanes are not planned to extend on the 401 east of Ajax. Detailed information can be accessed from the Province of Ontario at www.ontario.ca/travel-and-recreation/pan-ampapan-am-games-transportation-plan.

Oshawa The City is encouraging residents to review the Ministry of Transportation's website for travel planning guides. There are two different documents available: (1) for residents, focusing on communicating temporary traffic changes and expected higher traffic volumes, and proactive

measures to take; (2) for businesses, to communicate strategies and recommended measures to ensure that daily operations continue as close to normal as possible. These can be found at www.oshawa.ca/panamtransit. The City will be distributing additional communications on transportation in the coming weeks.



Did You Know?

Temporary HOV Lanes will be open along Highway 401 from Don Valley Parkway to Westney Road, 5am to 11pm during the games to:

- Games vehicles (athletes, officials, media)
- Vehicles with 3+ occupants (June 29 - July 27)
- Vehicles with 2+ occupants (July 28 - August 18)
- Emergency vehicles
- Electric vehicles with green license plates
- Public transit
- Taxis

3) Is there still a need for volunteers?

Ajax Yes, the Town is looking for volunteers in all areas: Team Leads, Diversity & Inclusion Volunteers, Information Kiosk Volunteers, Mobile Community Ambassadors, Bike Corral Volunteers and Event Volunteers. The Town requires close to 400 volunteers. Interested volunteers can sign up by visiting panamajax.ca/volunteer. Volunteers will be required to create a volunteer profile, sign up for interviews & training and attend training workshops.

Whitby: The Games are always looking for volunteers. With competition taking place in Whitby, Ajax and Oshawa there is a demand. Interested parties can sign up to volunteer online at toronto2015.org

Oshawa The City of Oshawa is still looking for volunteers. Volunteers will be needed to assist with: TORONTO 2015 Pan Am Torch Relay celebration (stage hands, human corridor, handing out flags, crowd control); Pan Am Games Ambassadors (July 10 - 26). These positions would welcome visitors to Oshawa, give information regarding local eateries, local events and directions; Staffing information booths; Assisting with the TORONTO 2015 Parapan Am Torch Relay.

4) Do you have suggestions on how businesses can take full advantage of the influx of tourists during the Pan Am Games?

Ajax Being informed and having as much information shared with customer-facing staff will be key in being

able to take advantage of the visitors coming to Ajax. Since the 2yr Countdown, the local business community has been informed and engaged through the Ajax Business Network. The Town has launched its first ever Tourism Campaign called 'You're Invited' (visitajax.ca) where staff have recruited several 'Host Businesses' to play a role in welcoming visitors to Ajax. Part of the campaign includes a new Tourism Magazine that highlights the many tourism points in Ajax, and promotes local businesses to visitors. Host Businesses will be promoted by the Town as tourist information locations and supplied with materials and information that can be shared with visitors, customers and staff. Businesses are encouraged to contact the Ajax Business team to participate in either or both programs. (priority@ajax.ca or 905-683-3000).

Whitby In March, the Town hosted a breakfast meeting for businesses to explain information about the Games and encourage them to work with one another to develop programs themed around the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games. We shared our findings about activities in neighbouring communities where restaurants and hospitality organizations were creating PanAm themed menus and activities highlighting some of the 41 participating countries. The Town has worked with Whitby Chamber of Commerce, the Brooklin Downtown Development Steering Committee and Downtown Whitby Development Steering Committee to increase business awareness of the "Heart Pan/Parapan Am" program. This program is for businesses. It provides window posters, tent cards, point of sale advertising media for businesses to use to show their support for the Games. These materials are available through the Whitby Chamber of Commerce or the Community and Marketing Services Department of the Town of Whitby.

Oshawa Businesses are encouraged to show their support for the Games through the TO2015 Heart Pan Am program. Interested businesses can contact Laurie Jones (ljones@oshawa.ca) to learn more.

Wendy Chiavalon is the Editor-in-Chief of The Local Biz Magazine. In her spare time, she doubles as a cake decorator, baking and decorating cakes for special occasions at Wendy's Cake Shoppe.

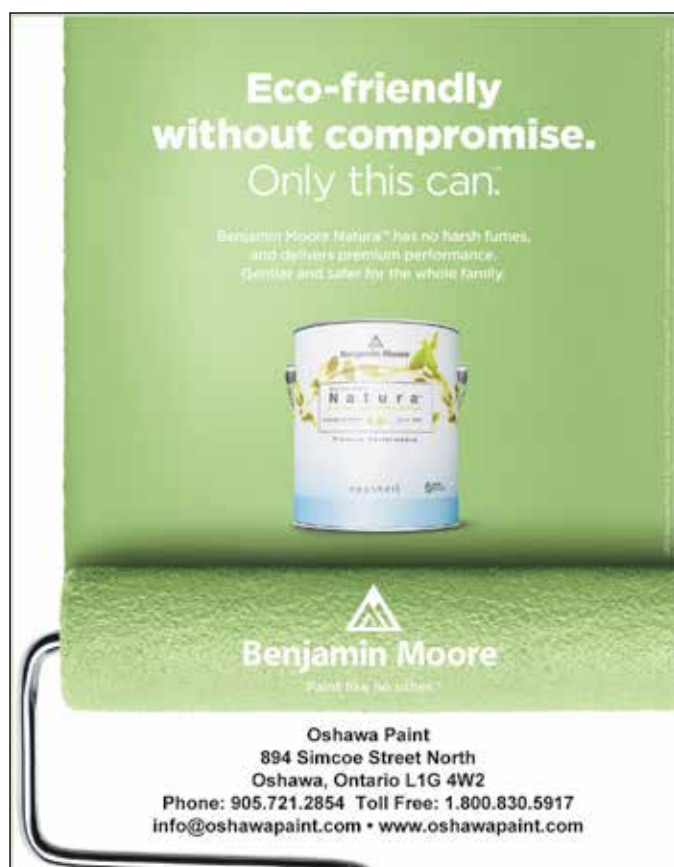
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A photograph of an elderly couple smiling. The man is in the foreground, wearing a light blue sweater, and the woman is behind him, also smiling. They are in front of a house with a blue sky and clouds in the background.

Why You Need to Take Advantage of the HHRTC TODAY!

The facts speak for themselves. We know that 91% of Boomers want to stay in their homes forever; 86% are willing to pay for help to make this possible; 60% want to stay in their current communities and 19% are willing to make substantial changes to their homes so they can live in them independently, longer.

Those who have identified themselves as wanting to stay in their homes forever may not necessarily be talking about their current homes. They may be part of the 60% who want to remain in their community, but not in their current home. Or they may be part of the 40% who are looking to move into a smaller home or condo which will necessitate leaving their current community.

In order to live independently, both these groups are going to have to make some modifications to their homes. Living in a condo may require less maintenance, but no condo development has been specifically designed to meet the needs of the elderly. So that means, no grab bars in the bathtub, no walk-in showers and no additional lighting, to name just a few possible modifications.

The Healthy Homes Renovation Tax Credit

Back in 2012, then premier Dalton McGuinty appeared on TV

with his elderly mother to announce the introduction of the Healthy Homes Renovation Tax Credit (HHRTC). The purpose of the HHRTC is to help seniors make modifications to their homes so they can live independently for as long as possible. The difference between this tax credit and the one that was offered by the Federal Government years ago is that this is an ongoing, or yearly, tax credit.

Who Qualifies for the HHRTC?

If you, or your partner or spouse, are 65 years or older, or if you have a senior over the age of 65 living with you, you qualify for the tax credit. The tax credit allows a senior or, family member with whom they are living, to make modifications to their home, up to \$10,000 a year for which the homeowner will receive a credit of \$1,500. A list of modifications covered by the HHRTC can be found at www.ontario.ca/seniors/healthy-homes-renovation-tax-credit

The Normal Aging Process

Although the HHRTC has been available to those over 65 for almost three years, Boomers are not taking advantage of it. Whether they are put off by the television ads or just not planning ahead is hard to determine.

This is unfortunate as the reality is we are all getting older and the HHRTC was designed to cover items that relate more to the aging process than catastrophic illnesses. By the time we are in our 40s most of us will need glasses and more light in

order to read anything. In addition, 42% of us over the age of 50 will begin suffering from some level of hearing loss and the percentage climbs to 70% for those over 70.

By the time we reach our late 60s, more than 40% of us will have to have a total knee replacement with more women than men undergoing this procedure. And finally, almost 17% of Canadians experience arthritis and again, women suffer from this chronic disease more frequently than men. According to Arthritis Society, 56% of those suffering from arthritis are under the age of 65 and these numbers will continue to increase as Boomers start to age.

Boomers see themselves as being in excellent health and not in need of anything that would scream “elderly”. However, Boomers, like their parents before them cannot escape the aging process. It’s inevitable. Thinking you will be invincible from age related ailments is like burying your head in the sand. This is why taking advantage of the HHRTC now, when we have the patience and ability to manage these renovations is such a good idea. The government knows that there will be inadequate housing and care facilities as we age, hence the introduction of the tax credit to alleviate the anticipated shortage.

Your Forever Home

You may not know whether your current home is your forever home and therefore might be reluctant to make any changes. But some of the changes that qualify under the HHRTC will be of benefit to anyone, no matter what their age.

In addition, leaving changes until you are either incapacitated or too old to cope, is not a wise move as by then it will be too late. Small changes made now, can make living independently later on easy and stress free.

What Changes Should You Initially Consider?

Most of you will have seen the commercials of the woman holding on to the bar as she gets into the bathtub/shower, or the elderly man with the walker making his way down a ramp located in the front of what appears to be his son’s home.

It’s not surprising that items such as ramps, grab bars in the tub and shower and close to the toilet, as well as the renovations required to secure them properly are covered, as are ‘comfort height’ toilets and non-slip flooring.

However, other items that are also covered (and that won’t adversely impact the sale of your home should you decide to sell) include garage door openers, hands free faucets, door levers and motion activated exterior lights, just to name a few. The cost of installing the items listed is covered if done by a professional, however the cost to repair any of these items, such as a garage door opener or an elevator, are not covered.

*Thinking
you will be
invincible
from age
related
ailments is
like burying
your head in
the sand.*

The installation of door levers to replace traditional door knobs for instance is a simple change you can make now, and at approximately \$30 or more a handle, it isn’t an inexpensive undertaking. The City of Pickering is thinking of following Vancouver’s lead by banning “wrist twisting door openers” (http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2014/01/17/pickering_considers_calling_for_vancouverstyle_doorknob_ban.html). Whether it gets passed or not, having door handles that are more accessible to everyone only makes sense. The average home has a minimum of ten door knobs. If you install them yourself, you can claim the cost of the levers – just keep your receipts.

Hands free faucets are also included in the list of items covered as is their installation. Hands free faucets are all the rage right now. Pick up any home décor magazine and you will see a number of companies that offer this product. Not only is the installation covered, but should you decide to move

the faucet from the back of the sink to the side, that’s also covered. Although this may seem like a strange idea, not only will it benefit you in the long run but if you have grandchildren, having the faucet within easy reach will help reduce falls by youngsters who try to reach too far, especially if they opt to use any available chair.

Motion activated exterior lights are also covered and should be installed in every home for additional security. Whether it’s in your driveway, at the end of your walk or in the back yard, having more lighting around your home is always a benefit.

In the bathroom, changing the heights of your toilets is another modification that will make life more comfortable no matter how old you are. Walk-in showers are now becoming very popular and will make living independently much easier and yet not diminish the value of your home. If you go to web sites such as Houzz and type in “walk in showers” you will be amazed at some of the designs.

Although walk-in baths or renovated tubs are also covered by

the HHRTC, I would not personally recommend them. Walk-in tubs are not, to my mind, practical. If you check out any of the advertisements for these baths, you will note that people are either sitting in a bathrobe or wrapped in a towel. Obviously, part of the reason is to avoid having naked people in the ads but the real reason is that you have to sit in the tub and wait for it to fill up. So you need to have something keeping you warm while you wait. Then at some point you will have to determine when to remove whatever it is that is covering you. To me, this can only make things uncomfortable and dangerous as people age. Some companies now offer heated seats but they only keep your back warm. In some advertisements people are wearing bathing suits. Again, not my idea of a luxurious bath and if you don't know whether this is your forever home, installing one of these would not be a good investment.

Changes for family members

If you have an elderly family member living with you, "certain renovations" are allowed to permit a person to live on the main floor. If you have the space and your municipal by-laws permit, it might be easier to build a small suite onto your existing house. An addition of approximately 20 x 20 would allow for a bed/sitting area and room for the relative to have some of their belongings with them.

You will want to ensure that person doesn't have to rely on a hide-a-bed as these can be uncomfortable and awkward to use. The suite should contain a bed, good lighting and a space where the person can watch television, sit and read or have a guest over in privacy. Remember, that an older person may listen to the television a little louder than the rest of us, so either put in more soundproofing or make sure that the addition is positioned to allow for as much privacy and noise control (both ways), as possible.

A separate washroom with a walk-in shower, non-skid floor and comfort height toilet will make the suite feel comfortable and safe. Two way switches will ensure that the person can turn the light on as they enter the room and turn it off at their bed.

The Time to Act is Now

Why put off until tomorrow what you should do today is not resonating with Boomers who argue that there is no point in making changes to their current home because they plan to move. Or, they don't know what the future will hold so why waste time and money now.

The response to the HHRTC initiative has not been overwhelming

and it is difficult to determine just how many individuals, or families, have taken advantage of this tax credit. According to the 2013-14 Public Accounts the cost of the HHRTC in the fiscal year 2013-14 was approximately \$14 million. There are approximately 2.1 million seniors over the age of 65 currently living in Ontario, or approximately 15% of the population, and this number is expected to more than double by 2041.

*Why put
off until
tomorrow
what you
should do
today?*

The tax credit may not be significant to you right now, but if your long term goal is to remain in your home, then making small changes yearly, will not only be financially doable, but will also allow you to adapt your home with changes that you believe you will need instead of you trying to adapt to the existing house.

The changes listed in this article are small steps in the right direction and even increase the value of your current home should you decide to move. If you don't know what changes you, or a family member should make, talk to a professional. A knowledgeable designer can help you devise a plan that can be rolled out over several years. Leaving things to the last minute will only add stress and strain to an already unpleasant experience, such as

recovering from surgery or a stroke.

Staying in your own home for as long as you can is a good thing. Being physically and mentally engaged as you age is critical and we all know people who have lived on their own until they die. Having small chores to do around the house, like light housekeeping, cooking and shopping will help you stay mentally and physically active.


The harsh reality is that there will not be enough retirement communities or residences or long term care facilities built to accommodate all of the seniors that will need them. Currently there are more than 5,800 Canadians over the age of 100 and that number will continue to increase at a faster rate than new spaces will become available.

Now is the time to make the important decisions – are you living in your forever home and if so, take advantage of the HHRTC to make the appropriate changes, over time, to ensure that you live out your life on your terms and in the place you call home.

Susan Fedorka is a design consultant at Designed Lifestyles Inc. Susan specializes in aging-in-place design for both inside and outside the home.

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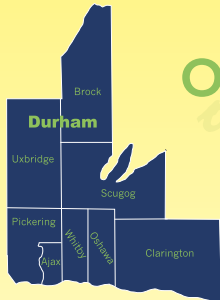
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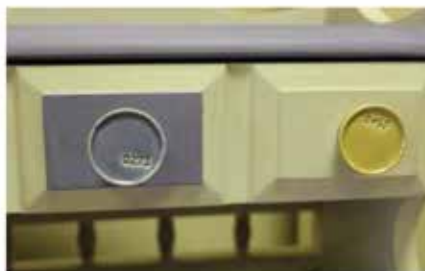
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Summer Events Calendar

June 5 2015

Clarington and Oshawa Pan Am Torch Relay

The TORONTO 2015 Pan Am Games Torch Relay will be a 41-day journey that will share the Pan Am spirit in more than 130 communities. The Pan Am flame will be lit in May 2015 during a traditional ceremony in Teotihuacan, Mexico, before it travels to Canada. The relay will start in Canada on May 30, 2015, and make its final stop on July 10, 2015, at the Opening Ceremony of the TORONTO 2015 Pan Am Games. Locations: Clarington - Garnet B. Rickard Recreation Complex & Courtice Community Complex; Oshawa - Civic Recreation Complex & City Hall

June 5 - June 7 2015

Rockin' Rotary Ribfest

You're invited to Bowmanville's Annual Rockin' Rotary Ribfest! The festival features bbq, craft beer, live entertainment, vendors, and fun for the whole family! Location: Garnet B. Rickard Recreation Complex City: Bowmanville Website: www.rotaryribfest.com

June 6, 2015

PanAm Torch Relay

Join us as the torch reaches Ajax!!! Locations: Throughout Ajax: Pickering High School, St. Francis Centre, Rotary Park Pavilion, Ajax Community Centre, Town Hall, Cedar Park, Operations and Environmental Services Centre, Audley Recreation Centre

June 6, 2015

Spring Food and Wine Festival

This unique event unites renowned chefs, wine and beer masters from across Ontario to explore the marriage of culinary art wine-making and brew masters. Live music, demonstrations, a relaxing tent area with comfy outdoor furnishings are some special features. Participants must be of legal drinking age to attend. Tickets are \$10 in advance & \$12 at the door; Purchase tickets by visiting our website, calling us or dropping by the Big Brothers Big Sisters

of Clarington Office (223 Scugog Street, Bowmanville or call us at 905 623-6646) Location: Newcastle Town Hall City: Newcastle

June 13, 2015

Doors Open Clarington

Doors Open Clarington is a community event that opens homes, businesses, community centres, churches and sites of public interest, to the public for one day. Get your questions answered about the little things that make Clarington so unique!

Location: Clarington Website: www.clarington.net

June 19, 2015

Moonlight Madness

Come and experience downtown Port Perry at twilight as our merchants turn up the savings for you! From opening to midnight, all of Port Perry's eclectic stores, boutiques and eateries will be offering fabulous savings on a wide selection of items. Live Blues Band on the Street! Free Draw for prizes provided by our merchants! Location: Downtown Port Perry, ON Website: www.discoverportperry.ca

June 28, 2015

Durham Caribbean Festival

On Sunday June 28, 2015, Greenwood Conservation Area, located in the city of Ajax will be backdrop to Durham regions' most exciting, fun-filled extravaganza. Street performers, entertainers, singers, dancers, cultural and heritage groups will come together in one place to celebrate the diversity and flavours of the Caribbean. Location: Greenwood Conservation Area City: Ajax Website: durhamcaribbeanfestival.com

June 28, 2015

A Talk and Tour for Boxing Fans!

Join us for this lively and entertaining talk with Sean O'Meara - a former amateur boxer, current Oakville city councillor and the sport-organizing chair for boxing at the Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games! You will also have an opportunity to join Senior Curator

Linda Jansma for a guided tour of the special exhibition Boxing: The Sweet Science.

Location: The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, 72 Queen Street City: Oshawa Website: www.rmg.on.ca

July 1, 2015

Ajax Canada Day Celebrations & Pan Am Ajax Launch

Located at Rotary Park on Ajax's beautiful waterfront, this event is a great way to celebrate the Nation's birthday combined with our Pan Am Ajax Launch evening spectacle. Activities include children's activities, games, inflatable rides, live entertainment, cultural performances, face painting, crafts, displays from local community organizations and so much more for the entire family. Free shuttle bus service is provided as street parking is very limited. Food and beverage concessions are available on site. ATMs on site. Free Admission.

Location: 177 Lake Driveway West Ajax City: Ajax Website: www.ajax.ca

July 8, 2015

Kids in the Square

Heritage Square at Ajax Town Hall is your Wednesday night entertainment destination all summer long. Bring a chair to the Square to enjoy an array of children's entertainers. Free Admission. All summer in the Square events run rain or shine, moving indoors in inclement weather (indoor maximum capacity is 180 on a first come, first serve basis).

Location: 65 Harwood Ave. South City: Ajax Website: www.ajax.ca

July 19, 2015

Spartan Race Toronto

Toronto's annual Spartan race returns to Brimacombe! Location: 4098 Regional Road 9 City: Orono Website: <http://ca-en.spartanrace.com/events>

August 9, 2015

Pioneer Day

Step back in time to the 19th century as you stroll through the Museum Village. Meet the blacksmith and the Woodwright, try out the printing press and write on a school slate. Heritage demonstrations, exhibits, children's games, crafts and more.

Location: 16210 Island Road City: Port Perry Website: <http://www.scugogshoresmuseum.com/events.php>

August 13, 2015

BluesBERRY Fest

Come celebrate the best of Blues and our local berry producers at our exciting new event, the BluesBERRY Festival! Event takes place in Historical Downtown Bowmanville. Location: Historical Downtown Bowmanville City: Bowmanville Website: <http://www.bowmanville.com>

August 13 - 16 2015

Durham Festival

A celebration of culture showcasing food, concerts, cycling, innovation, performances and creative expression of all kinds. This is Durham like you've never seen it before!

Website: www.durhamfestival.ca

August 15, 2015

Picasso's Picnic

The Visual Arts Centre presents its Annual Picasso's Picnic, a children's art festival.

Location: Visual Arts Centre City: Bowmanville Website: <http://www.vac.ca/picassos-picnic.html>

August 15, 2015

Taste of Ajax

This is a chance to experience all of the culinary joys that Ajax has to offer. Many local businesses will be in attendance to showcase their yummy foods. Please join us for a day of indulgence.

Location: Rotary Park City: Ajax

For events that may have been added after the publication date and other ideas to plan your perfect day in Durham Region, visit www.durhamtourism.ca.



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Don't Let Another Summer Slip Away Without a Family Vacation

At times it may feel like your children will never leave home but in fact, you only get 18 summers with your children before they head off for college or university. Have you thought about how you are going to make this summer count with your family?

In my experience as a travel advisor, I see a lot of families want to take a big family vacation the summer before their eldest goes to university, but why wait? I was blessed to take family vacations every summer of my childhood and I have memories that will last me a lifetime. I also have bonds with my parents and brother all because of my family vacations. With only 18 chances to create timeless and priceless memories, make each summer count with a great family vacation.

I was very fortunate growing up, experiencing many family vacations all over the world and setting foot on every continent before I even left for university. Of the numerous summer vacations I took, I've picked out my top 3. I was pleasantly surprised to notice that each of the holidays were very different from each other.

Skiing, San Francisco and Hawaii

When I was 12 we went on a skiing trip to Mammoth Mountain in California. Technically this wasn't a summer vacation but because we wanted to ski, we went over Easter instead! I grew up in England and we always had

a 2-week break from school over Easter so it was easy to travel. It was a fantastic time to go because quite often we would be skiing in our t-shirts and so I hope that helps towards pretending this was a summer vacation! My aunt, uncle and cousins also joined us for skiing, which was a real treat because they were living in America. It's often difficult to see family members when they are living on a different continent. Skiing with my cousins gave my brother and I the perfect opportunity to bond with them, as we were experiencing a fun activity together and it always gave us something to talk about.

My mother is not a fan of skiing and so we combined skiing with a visit to San Francisco and then onto Hawaii. This is probably why this vacation was so memorable for me. It included something fun for everyone and it also had a lot of variety.

First we were skiing in the mountain, then we explored a unique American city and then we hopped over to paradise with some relaxation in Hawaii.

I can still remember how lucky I felt to be waking up in





Hawaii each morning and after skiing with our cousins, my brother and I had just each other to keep ourselves entertained. Although we spent some well-earned time relaxing by the pool and on the beach, we still explored Hawaii and visited Pearl Harbor and the Polynesian Cultural Center. Variety was definitely the key to this memorable vacation. We had activity, fun, extended family, relaxation, exploration, cultural and historical education, sun, sand and snow.

Visiting Asia

Fast forward 4 years to when I was 16, we visited Asia for the first time, taking in Hong Kong, Bangkok, Singapore and Ko Chang. This was our last family vacation we would ever take as a family of four as my brother was getting ready to leave for maritime college. We still travel together but now my husband and my brother's wife join us.

Having already travelled so extensively by the age of 16, I thought I was worldly, had seen it all, but nothing could have prepared me for the experience of Asia. I had no idea I could experience such culture shock.

We completely immersed ourselves in the cultures we encountered: we ate street food in Singapore, had breakfast with locals in tiny cafes in Hong Kong, hired a local guide in Bangkok, rode on a tuk tuk in Bangkok, and visited Buddhist temples. The sights, sounds, even the smells were all so different to what I had grown up with in York, England. My eyes were used to European sights, such as the architecture of places like York Minster, and had to adjust to the shapes of ancient structures like Wat Pho, the

temple of the reclining Buddha in Bangkok.

I believe this trip really transformed me into an open-minded and flexible teenager. Family travel develops understanding and acceptance, vital in our world today, and I soaked it up like a sponge.

Cruise around Australia

This memorable holiday made the list because I had just graduated high school and I went with my mum and two of my mum's friends. My brother had already left home and my dad couldn't get time off work and so my mum and I made it a mother-daughter trip. Knowing that this was my last summer before heading to university and already starting to feel like a young adult, I revelled in the adult company.

The cruise itself was fantastic and fun, largely because of the other passengers, 90% of which were Australian, and joining in with the activities. On a cruise, you always have the option of doing as much or as little while you are on holiday. We ended up doing a lot of the activities and I soon realized that one of the best



ways to enjoy yourself is to get involved – a great lesson to be reminded of as I headed off to university.

A vivid memory from that trip was staying up until the early hours of the morning waiting for my IB exam results to be released. There was a deck party that evening which we attended and then the party carried on until I checked my results! I fully appreciated enjoying the cruise and not having a lot of time to worry about my exam results. It was also a great experience receiving the exam results I wanted in the middle of a wonderful travel experience.

Not only did I enjoy my time on the cruise ship, I also



fell in love with Australia. I had wanted to go to Australia for a long time and I learned so much about the vast and diverse country, including learning a lot about Australia's wildlife. Admittedly, I blocked most

of the 'this animal can kill you in under X seconds' facts. Perhaps what really appealed to me was how far away Australia was to Canada, where I was about to attend university. With that in mind, we made sure we spent some time in Australia before joining the cruise ship and some more time after the cruise ended, really making the most of travelling all that way.

My Expert Advice

Nowadays, there are different vacations available all at your fingertips and as an expert, I want to recommend 3 different family vacations that you may never have even thought of and whom they would be suitable for. I am going beyond the theme park and the beach here so let's dive in.

1) Families with Middle School Aged Children

Go somewhere exotic! Your children will be old enough that they can handle the longer travelling (with lots of movies in hand, of course) but they haven't quite had their growth spurt yet so they will be comfortable in the airplane seats. They will also be the perfect age to truly enjoy the destination and you will be able to see the destination through their eyes.

So what do I mean when I say 'somewhere exotic'? Well, Hawaii, Bora Bora, Australia and New Zealand are all great examples. They all require quite a trek to get there but are all worth it when you arrive. For those of you who really don't want to travel that far, I'll throw you a bone and add

in Costa Rica.

When you are in your exotic destination, the best way to experience it is through activities such as snorkeling, river tubing, zip-lining, kayaking etc. Your middle schooler will love all the activities and with such an incredible backdrop you will be creating memories that will definitely last a lifetime. You are also sending your children the great message that they don't have to wait until 'someday' to be able cross something off of their bucket list.

2) Families with Teenagers

A guided tour can be the answer to all of your prayers. Did you know that there are guided tours that have been designed specifically with teenagers in mind? They are challenging enough without treating them like adults, even if your teenager may think that they are already an adult. There are also opportunities to have your own exclusive guided tour with as few as 8 people. That's just 2 families of four!

Not only will you be able to bond on holiday as a family, your teenager will also be able to make friends with the other teenagers on the journey. Guided tours provide a perfect balance of spending time together as a group and spending time as a family. The guides will also be in charge of the daily agenda and 'rules,' so your teenager may have less to complain about when the rules aren't coming from you.



Spending time as a family is key when spending your vacation dollars and so why not take a vacation where there are guides in charge of all of the logistics such as figuring out transport between events and dining options, dealing with any language barriers and finding activities to partake in that the whole family will enjoy. There can be a lot of details to think of when travelling the world but with a guided tour, you don't have to think of any of them!

Sometimes you can be questioning whether you are getting the most authentic experience on your travels. You end up checking off items from your "to-see" list without really learning the stories behind the places you visit and you end up leaving without getting to know the people and culture. On the other hand you could travel on a guided tour and experience a destination as opposed to just seeing it.

With a guided tour, you can focus on being in your teenager's next selfie after finishing a woodcutting competition without worrying about how to get to your

next activity where you will go whitewater river rafting.

3) Families with a Child Leaving for University

This is your last chance to really cement those family bonds before your teenager leaves home for university. You'll want to make sure that you make the most of your last summer vacation as a family because although you may still be able to travel together as long as holidays line up with your other children and your eldest isn't working, the family dynamic will be completely different. This isn't a bad thing though!

A river cruise is the perfect opportunity to allow family bonding.



There are no kids clubs on river cruises and this is possibly one of the most important reasons for suggesting a river cruise. There are no distractions to prevent you

all from bonding as a family. Kids clubs are great on the ocean cruises but going on your last summer vacation together and then not seeing your child is a waste of your travel dollars! River cruises are so port intensive that there is little time for your children to be bored and you'll have a great time enjoying each others company.

You are also creating the space on a river cruise for your child to blossom into the young adult they are becoming and to interact with other adults. This also sets them in good stead for when they start interacting with their professors at university. It won't be your typical teacher-student environment and so your young adult will have had plenty of experience holding a conversation with other adults.

Oceans take you to countries but rivers take you through them. You will be completely immersed in the history and culture of the destination and will be able to experience everything as a family. A river cruise is also a great way to reward your teenager for all of the hard work they have done in getting into university. This may be their last summer off as they are likely to start working during the summer or doing placements and then it's off into the 'real world' for them!

Biggest Mistakes to Avoid

Hopefully I have given you some inspiration for your next family summer vacation. With that in mind I'd like to share the 2 biggest mistakes I see families make when it comes to their summer vacations and how to avoid them.

Mistake #1

Going on the same vacation year after year. It's an easy trap to fall into. You go on a particular vacation and enjoy it and so the next year it is easier and safer to stay with something you know than to expand your travel horizons. It also saves a lot of time, as you don't have to research a new place or take the risk that you may not enjoy it. However with the help of a travel expert, you can find a great new holiday and not miss out on what the world has to offer, which is a lot! As I mentioned earlier, not all guided tours are geared with teenagers in mind and so use a travel expert to make sure you are taking the type of vacation that is suitable for your family.

Mistake #2

Not planning any activities. I strongly believe that it is the activities that you do on holiday as a family that catalyzes your family bonding. It gives the whole family something to talk about along with some great memories. Taking a beach vacation with no real activities gives you a lot of time for relaxing but you run the risk of your children becoming bored very quickly and not having anything in common as a family to bond over. Avoid this mistake by planning activities before you even arrive at your destination and taking a look at what the destination has to offer.

Before you know it, this summer will have flown by and your children will be back at school, so start making each summer count!



Rhian Torontow has been travelling since she was 6 months old and has developed a passion for travel. Along with her mother, Carol, Rhian owns the travel consultancy business, Magical Family Adventures. As a Family Travel Consultant, Rhian creates travel experiences that foster connections in your family that will last a lifetime and transform your children into open-minded, flexible, well-travelled people.

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SLEEPING UNDER THE STARS

Imagine the starry sky above your head and the smoke from an extinguished campfire dancing its last dance in the air. The night air is calm and still; you snuggle into your sleeping bag and let the sounds of nature lull you to sleep. Yes, it's that time of that year once again Durham readers, when the summer weather invites city dwellers to camp and enjoy the great outdoors.

In writing this article, I tried long and hard to define camping, but of course, it turned rather futile as what comprises camping is as vast as the parks in Ontario. Additionally, while camping can be a wonderful and memorable experience for some, it can also be a challenging and off-putting experience for those not accustomed to it. If you fall into this latter group, fear not, this article is just for you! We're going back to the basics; think of it as camping for dummies. We're going to talk about different types of camping (there's more than one way to camp!), show you where you can go to camp in Ontario, and most importantly, what to pack when you go camping. So get ready to discover everything you need to know for an outdoor recreation spectacular!

Types Of Camping

There is discrepancy – as there always is – about what constitutes camping. For the purposes of this article, we're going to define camping through the places where a camper would reside in during their stay. This can be a tent, cabin or trailer.

Tent Camping

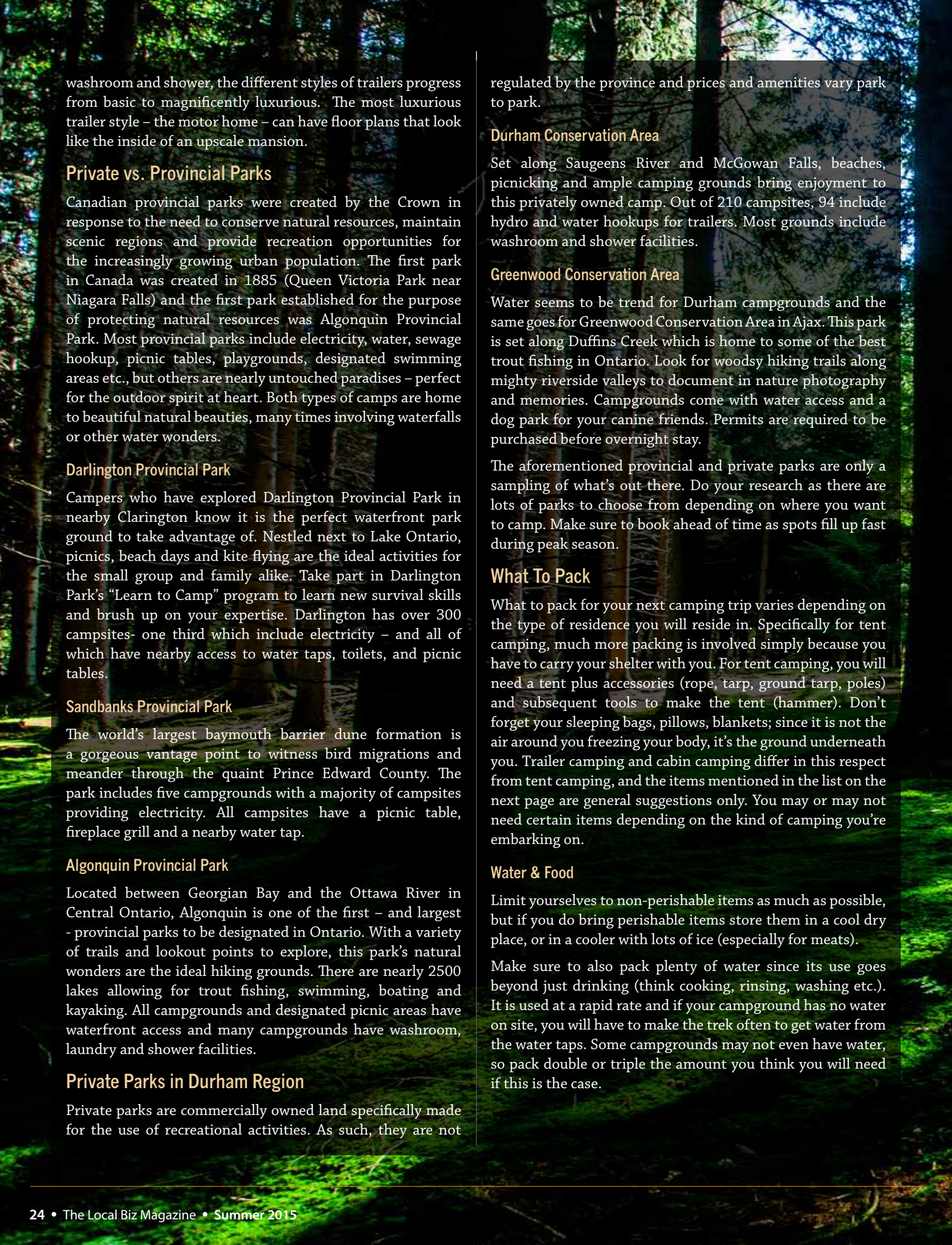
The most traditional and immersive style of the three categories is tent camping. This type of camping was the typical – if not only – way camping was carried out in its earliest modern incarnations. As its name suggests, tent camping involves setting up tent. Tents today come in a variety of styles and sizes, have single or multiple rooms and can sleep anywhere from 1 to 10 people depending on how cozy you want to get! While some tents are low and mainly meant for (crawling and,) sleeping, other tents are tall enough that you can stand and walk around in them comfortably.

Cabin Camping

Cabin camping has the least credibility in the eyes of traditional campers but like all words, definitions evolve. Cabin camping is a great option for those who wish to camp but would like the “luxury” of a comfortable place to spend the night. I say luxury because in essence, a cabin is a simple log house. Some cabins may offer basic cottage-like amenities such as a small sink, fridge, gas cook stove, outdoor cooking grill and fire pit, but majority just offer a roof over your head. In other words, there may be no water service and you will have to use the campgrounds washroom and shower facilities just like those staying in tents.

Trailer Camping

Trailers (or RVs) are the home-on-the-go. Many campgrounds have both tent and trailer camping capabilities and come with water, electricity and sewer hookups. Trailers provide greater safety from the elements such as weather and curious creatures while still maintaining an outdoor aspect. As many campers would know, not all trailers are made alike. While they all provide basic safety and modern amenities like a kitchen,



washroom and shower, the different styles of trailers progress from basic to magnificently luxurious. The most luxurious trailer style – the motor home – can have floor plans that look like the inside of an upscale mansion.

Private vs. Provincial Parks

Canadian provincial parks were created by the Crown in response to the need to conserve natural resources, maintain scenic regions and provide recreation opportunities for the increasingly growing urban population. The first park in Canada was created in 1885 (Queen Victoria Park near Niagara Falls) and the first park established for the purpose of protecting natural resources was Algonquin Provincial Park. Most provincial parks include electricity, water, sewage hookup, picnic tables, playgrounds, designated swimming areas etc., but others are nearly untouched paradises – perfect for the outdoor spirit at heart. Both types of camps are home to beautiful natural beauties, many times involving waterfalls or other water wonders.

Darlington Provincial Park

Campers who have explored Darlington Provincial Park in nearby Clarington know it is the perfect waterfront park ground to take advantage of. Nestled next to Lake Ontario, picnics, beach days and kite flying are the ideal activities for the small group and family alike. Take part in Darlington Park's "Learn to Camp" program to learn new survival skills and brush up on your expertise. Darlington has over 300 campsites- one third which include electricity – and all of which have nearby access to water taps, toilets, and picnic tables.

Sandbanks Provincial Park

The world's largest baymouth barrier dune formation is a gorgeous vantage point to witness bird migrations and meander through the quaint Prince Edward County. The park includes five campgrounds with a majority of campsites providing electricity. All campsites have a picnic table, fireplace grill and a nearby water tap.

Algonquin Provincial Park

Located between Georgian Bay and the Ottawa River in Central Ontario, Algonquin is one of the first – and largest – provincial parks to be designated in Ontario. With a variety of trails and lookout points to explore, this park's natural wonders are the ideal hiking grounds. There are nearly 2500 lakes allowing for trout fishing, swimming, boating and kayaking. All campgrounds and designated picnic areas have waterfront access and many campgrounds have washroom, laundry and shower facilities.

Private Parks in Durham Region

Private parks are commercially owned land specifically made for the use of recreational activities. As such, they are not

regulated by the province and prices and amenities vary park to park.

Durham Conservation Area

Set along Saugeens River and McGowan Falls, beaches, picnicking and ample camping grounds bring enjoyment to this privately owned camp. Out of 210 campsites, 94 include hydro and water hookups for trailers. Most grounds include washroom and shower facilities.

Greenwood Conservation Area

Water seems to be trend for Durham campgrounds and the same goes for Greenwood Conservation Area in Ajax. This park is set along Duffins Creek which is home to some of the best trout fishing in Ontario. Look for woodsy hiking trails along mighty riverside valleys to document in nature photography and memories. Campgrounds come with water access and a dog park for your canine friends. Permits are required to be purchased before overnight stay.

The aforementioned provincial and private parks are only a sampling of what's out there. Do your research as there are lots of parks to choose from depending on where you want to camp. Make sure to book ahead of time as spots fill up fast during peak season.

What To Pack

What to pack for your next camping trip varies depending on the type of residence you will reside in. Specifically for tent camping, much more packing is involved simply because you have to carry your shelter with you. For tent camping, you will need a tent plus accessories (rope, tarp, ground tarp, poles) and subsequent tools to make the tent (hammer). Don't forget your sleeping bags, pillows, blankets; since it is not the air around you freezing your body, it's the ground underneath you. Trailer camping and cabin camping differ in this respect from tent camping, and the items mentioned in the list on the next page are general suggestions only. You may or may not need certain items depending on the kind of camping you're embarking on.

Water & Food

Limit yourselves to non-perishable items as much as possible, but if you do bring perishable items store them in a cool dry place, or in a cooler with lots of ice (especially for meats).

Make sure to also pack plenty of water since its use goes beyond just drinking (think cooking, rinsing, washing etc.). It is used at a rapid rate and if your campground has no water on site, you will have to make the trek often to get water from the water taps. Some campgrounds may not even have water, so pack double or triple the amount you think you will need if this is the case.

Firewood

Some campgrounds have firewood restrictions and won't let you bring in firewood from outside the campground. Some campgrounds may allow you to bring firewood so long as it's purchased from a place in town, for example, a local gas station. Check with your campground in advance to determine their policies.

Backwoods Camping

For the experienced camping expert, this is the ultimate next step. In essence, backcountry camping is carrying all your belongings on your back, frequently stopping for clifftop photos and marveling at the serenity of the wild. It is the most intense level of camping a person can undertake. What movies and television has shown as portages through the woods, tenting in isolated areas and becoming truly one with nature can be experienced firsthand – and nearby too.

Of course the ever famous Algonquin Provincial Park takes the cake for backcountry camping but nearby Kawartha Highlands Provincial parks is not far behind. Additional nearby backcountry parks (give or take a few hours' drive) include Bon Echo in Cloyne and Massasaugas in Parry Sound.

Why Camp?

The average city-slicker may not see value in camping, but there are some amazing benefits to it. I remember feeling like a whole other person when I went camping several years ago. We were in a secluded cabin campground and when I came back I felt exceptionally reenergized. One of the biggest things I noticed was how when I was away from civilization; I felt like my "internal clock" synchronized with nature. I perceived that I rose and slept at the same time the sun rose and set. I developed a love for early morning nature walks but would feel dreadfully tired by sunset.

Besides this, one of the more modern benefits of camping is getting away from our fast-paced technology oriented lives. We need to disconnect from our wired world and reconnect with ourselves and nature. The next awaited thing is no longer the next text message but the next trout catch or the evening campfire. . .

If you are like me and are beyond excited to take advantage of Canada's beautiful campgrounds then I don't blame you. There is nothing comparable to the spirit of excitement that comes with outdoor recreation and we haven't touched on even half of all that camping has to offer! But no matter what grounds you choose or how many graham crackers you toast on your campfire, camping is what you make of it. Have fun, stay safe, and discover something new in Durham's great outdoors.

Suffia Malik is a student, freelancer and journalism aficionado. Her dream is to become an exceptional writer and connect people's stories with the world. You can find her with her signature Honeydew Milk tea and trusty editing pen as she realizes her grand writing aspirations.

Get Packing!

Food related items to pack:

- Fuel for cooking
- Portable camp stove, grill or bbq
- Utensils and Cookware
- Can opener
- Cooler
- Plenty of Water

General Items

- Foldable Tables and Chairs
- Flashlight and Batteries
- First Aid Kit
- Safety Whistle
- Duct Tape (comes in handy if your tent gets a tear!)
- Garbage Bags
- Insect Repellent*
- Sunscreen*
- Toilet Paper**
- Clothing for day and night (it can get cold at night!)
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Soap and Shampoo
- Towels

**Do not underestimate the importance of these two items. Better to remember the fun times you and your family had rather than the time spend dealing with agonizing insect bites and sunburns.*

***While many campgrounds do include wash-rooms, some may be limited to a deep hole in the ground sheltered by 4 wooden boards and a roof. Be prepared for such facilities by packing multiple toilet paper rolls. In my opinion, there is no such thing as too much toilet paper!!*

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AT THE BOX OFFICE

by Stephanie Herrera

Get ready for the box office hits coming to theatres this summer!

Kids

June 19th we can indulge in the next of the Pixar classics: **Inside Out**. The film is set in the head of a young girl, Riley, where five emotions - Joy (Amy Poehler), Anger (Lewis Black), Disgust (Mindy Kaling), Fear (Bill Hader) and Sadness (Phyllis Smith), try to lead the girl through her life as she is uprooted to a new city and school.

For the kid in us all check out **The Fantastic Four** opening August 7th. This contemporary re-imagining of Marvel's original and longest-running superhero team centers on four young outsiders who teleport to an alternate and dangerous universe, which alters their physical form in shocking ways. Their lives irrevocably upended, the team must learn to harness their daunting new abilities and work together to save Earth from a former friend turned enemy.

Action

Start July with the latest Terminator installment **Terminator : Genisys**. When John Connor (Jason Clarke), leader of the human resistance, sends Sgt. Kyle Reese (Jai Courtney) back to 1984 to protect Sarah Connor (Emilia Clarke) and safeguard the future, an unexpected turn of events creates a fractured timeline. Now, Sgt. Reese finds himself in a new and unfamiliar version of the past, where he is faced with unlikely allies, including the Guardian (Arnold Schwarzenegger), dangerous new enemies, and an unexpected new mission: to reset the future.

Mission Impossible : Rogue Mission opens on July 31st with another thrilling ride. Ethan (Tom Cruise) and team take on their most impossible mission yet, eradicating the Syndicate - an International rogue organization as highly skilled as they are, committed to destroying the IMF. Ethan Hunt's highly effective but destructive Impossible Mission Force (IMF) has been disbanded by vengeful Washington bureaucrats such as the CIA chief (played by Alec Baldwin). But Hunt pulls his team together to battle the shadowy force known as "The Syndicate" and its elusive leader.

Comedy

Amy Schumer has brought her humour to the big screen with **Trainwreck** opening July 17th. Since she was a little girl, it's been drilled into Amy's (Amy Schumer) head by her rascal of a dad (Colin Hanks) that monogamy isn't realistic. Now a magazine writer, Amy lives by that credo-enjoying what she feels is an uninhibited life free from stifling, boring romantic commitment-but she's kind of in a rut. When she finds herself starting to fall for the subject of the new article she's writing, a charming and successful sports doctor named Aaron Connors (Bill Hader), Amy starts to wonder if other grown-ups, including this guy who really seems to like her, might be on to something.

Thrillers

American Heist is opening July 24th which follows the story of James (Hayden Christensen) who owes his life to his older brother, Frankie (Adrien Brody) after taking the rap for a crime they committed together. While Frankie served time, James worked to turn his life around, got a steady job and began courting his former girlfriend Emily (Jordana Brewster). Now, Frankie is released and back on the streets with no money and no place to go. He turns to his underworld connections (Akon) and convinces James to join him in hopes that one last job will be the solution to change both their lives.

Stephanie Herrera is an Entertainment Specialist, speaking, teaching, and writing about Improv, Comedy and Life through her company, Durham Improv & Acting Studio. She is an award winning actor and singer performing regularly on screen and stage.



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Treat Yourself

by Stephanie Pommells

Ombrè, Sombè, and Balayage Oh My!!!

Last issue we were discussing some of the many buzz words that have been floating around the salon industry for the past few years. Sometimes when we don't know the lingo we are left with this feeling of discomfort because the lines of communication with our stylist seem to be really intimidating. But it doesn't have to be. Let's continue with familiarizing ourselves with some more salon lingo, shall we?

I'll start with the color words.

Splash lights – This is definitely for someone who is not afraid of standing out in a crowd. The point to this color technique is to create an illusion that your hair is being hit by a beam of light. It's usually a horizontal band of color lighter than your hair color by a couple of shades, but can be done in whatever color you like. I've also seen it done just on the root. Like a purple on the root to a blonde on the mid shaft and ends.

Echaille – This word means "shell" in French. The idea here is to replicate the patterns and colors one might find on a tortoise shell. Although this one seems really crazy, it is really very beautiful. It's a blend of golds, mahogany's, and soft browns all blending together, but distinctly visible as separate colors. It's a bit of an unstructured hair technique but allows room for personalization, especially around the face.

Grey Hair Trend – This one doesn't really need translation, however deserves a spot in this article as a big trend. Although this color has been pretty trendy the past year, it is really making the rounds in the mainstream world. Rejoice ladies with some natural sparkle in your hair; GREY IS IN! This color is really best suited for those who suit the cool color palette. Those who want to venture into this trend beware; hair this color really needs to be maintained regularly to stay a brilliant steel color. Regular treatments are necessary as well to keep the hair healthy, as the hair is usually bleached to a very light color before the silver or lavender is applied to the hair.

Now for the one cut word in our salon lingo dictionary

Undercut – The undercut has been made popular by celebrities like Miley Cyrus. I love this cut! Basically it's when you cut the side, or back, or both sides and back of your hair very short, then leave the top or bang very long. There is relatively no transitioning between the two. This is super trendy and bold especially in men's cuts right now. It's a very versatile haircut; you can wear it curly or straight.

P.S. Basic blonde is back in a big way. If all else fails ask for highlights.

Stephanie Pommells is a hair dresser and salon owner of Stevie P's Hair Salon. With her artistic sense and impeccable attention to detail she enjoys working with clients to give them what they need. She also enjoys writing and researching the latest techniques in order to expand her expertise.



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FINANCIAL Fitness

by Karl Marshall

Your Money: Track it and You Will Keep More of It

A little over two years ago, I met with a couple who made great incomes by Canadian standards, who were drowning in debt. They had credit cards, a line of credit, car loans, a mortgage, three kids, no life insurance, and to say they were stressed out is an understatement. They were constantly borrowing from Peter to pay Paul and always seemed to be behind the eight ball.

Today, the balances on their credit cards and line of credit are zero and they have one car loan, money invested in an RRSP, life insurance and an emergency fund. Not only are they enjoying life but they can afford to do something they love without worrying how it will be paid for -travel!

How did they do this?

They took to heart and committed to living by this simple statement (that I stole from my dad) about spending, *"Just because you have access to money, doesn't mean you can afford something."*

This was a call to action to simplify their lives and the first order of business was to track where their money was going each and every day. The results were astounding! Over \$200 per month went to Starbucks, \$800 per month on eating out which included lunches and date night (I am by no means against date night for couples) and \$80 per month in gym memberships (which aren't used and a treadmill lies idle in their basement). In a nutshell, after going through this exercise of tracking their money and seeing it on paper (not just on a nice electronic spreadsheet), their eyes were opened to what they were doing and from there we created an action plan.

The tracking process led to the purchase of a Keurig coffee maker where they brewed their favorite beverages and cut Starbucks from a daily visit to a weekly treat. The stuff they bought at lunch time was purchased at the supermarket and they made their own lunches for the most part and used Friday as the day to treat themselves out to a nice lunch. The money they saved by reallocating how and what they spent money on enabled them to pay off their credit cards and lines of credit, and they are now making extra payments on the principal for their mortgage. Are they where they want to be after two years of tracking and being smart with their money? Absolutely not, but they are well on their way!

Tracking where your money is going causes you to step back and re-evaluate your priorities, which invariably leads to smarter choices which will keep you out of trouble and keep more of your money. Get a pen and paper, your credit card and bank statements and track where your money went last month; I guarantee you will find the money for important things you couldn't afford before.

Karl Marshall is President of Marmac Financial Services Limited, an independent insurance and investment brokerage. He lives in Durham Region. You can read his blog, "The Elephant in the Room" online on The Local Biz Magazine website.



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Teens, Tweens & In-Between

by Victoria Cozza

"We have to remind ourselves of our worth, and remind the world too. When people try to belittle you and make you feel insignificant, small, worthless, ugly, or a waste of space, you have to stand up to them and tell them off. Even if they turn out to be the face staring back at you in the mirror."

— Unknown

Hello awesome readers! It's summer once again which means another school year has come to a close and summer 2015 is ready to begin. I hope you all took my advice last summer and tried something you've never done before. I know my friends and I had a great time trying new things and just having fun. I can't wait for summer to start up again so we can continue to do new things and experience the great things life has to offer. I also encourage you to keep up with trying new things and having new experiences. There is truly nothing better than spending your summer doing some amazing things.

Since summer is the season for dresses, short shorts, skirts, tanks and bathing suits, I hear a lot of talk leading up to these months about how people need to be "bathing suit ready," or that they have to get into shape for the summer. I'm not going to lie; I say these things too sometimes, but I always notice that these are the months when people get really insecure about their bodies and looks.

As much as I love summer, I hate that this season makes people, including myself, feel like they aren't good enough. Many people get self-conscious when it comes to their physical appearance, so my advice this summer is to love yourself and everything that makes you who you are. Forget what society says about the ideal person, forget your insecurities, and don't care what people think. The only opinions that matter in the end are from the people who love you for who you are. I'm daring you to free yourself this summer from all the preconceived ideas society has put in your head, and just enjoy the fact that each and every one of you are amazing in your own way.

I get that everyone has their own insecurities, but no one said they had to rule the rest of your life. We are able to overcome the things that hold us back, and this summer I want you to face them head on and show the world that you don't care what they think. It's time to stand up to ourselves and tell ourselves that we are beautiful and that we are worth it, because if we don't love ourselves, we'll never believe that others do. Together we can face these things that are holding us back, whether it be another person, a certain look, a stereotype, or yourself. Take back your life this summer!

Victoria Cozza is a 15 year old grade 10 student in Ajax. She loves singing, playing piano and reading. She also has a passion for music and writing. She loves spending her free time with her family and friends.

Tasteful Talk

by Shirley Ouellette



Here we are, mid-way through 2015 already and it just seems like yesterday we were ringing the bells to welcome the New Year. This got me thinking about longevity and how important it is to keep yourself engaged in life as the years roll by. We have an added motivation this year as we are expecting to be grandparents very soon.

Keeping yourself active and healthy is the best medicine to ward off ill health. The #1 cause of heart disease is an unhealthy diet coupled with a lack of exercise which inevitably leads to being overweight. So what is the best diet to follow? Well it certainly does *not* come in a box, nor can you take a magic pill, no matter what you hear or see in the press. Being healthy is more than being able to fit into a pair of size zero jeans!

The Mediterranean diet has long been hailed as the key to longevity. It was based on the dietary traditions of Greece and Italy at a time when the rates of chronic disease in these areas were the lowest in the world, and adult life expectancy was among the highest. This traditional diet - although it was considered the poor peoples' diet - consisted mainly of fruits and vegetables, beans and nuts, healthy grains, fish, olive oil, small amounts of dairy and red wine, proved to be more likely to lead to lifelong good health.

During the 50's when food became an industry, the modern processed laden convenience foods were considered a breakthrough and a sign of prosperity if you could afford to buy these ready-made products. It was not until quite recently that studies have shown that these "artificial" foods are one of the main factors for the burgeoning rates of heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and other chronic diseases.

So how do we follow the Mediterranean diet? Firstly, it is about taking everything in moderation, something we all need to keep in mind when there is so much abundance available to us. Make sure the majority of your meals contain fruits and vegetables, beans and nuts and healthy grains. Eat fish at least twice a week, moderate your dairy consumption and eat red meat less frequently, maybe once a week. Ensure you avoid processed foods and, wherever possible, buy seasonally fresh and locally grown produce, including meat. Olive oil should be considered your principal fat. Appreciate your food, enjoy what you eat, and share meals with family and friends as often as possible. Families who eat together are usually more in touch with each other, and it is a great way to find out what kids are doing with casual chat around the table.

Changing your dietary habits can be hard, but summer is a time when we typically eat more raw foods and enjoy an overall lighter diet. Plus, with the warmer weather we are more likely to exercise as we have the pleasure of getting out more. Fire up the BBQ, and try my octopus salad recipe for an adventure into Mediterranean food, and as always Durhameers, vote at the cash register and buy local. Salute!

Shirley Ouellette grew up in the far south west of England. Since living in Canada, she has been actively involved in promoting the Local Food Movement. Sustainability is close to her heart and she encourages everyone she comes into contact with to consciously practice sustainable living habits.

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Tasteful Recipes

by Shirley Ouellette

Charred Octopus Salad

You will need...

1 Octopus (approx. 2 lbs)
1 Cooking Onion, chopped
1 Carrot, chopped
1 Celery Stalk, chopped
½ Bottle of Red Wine
¼ Cup of Red Wine Vinegar
1 Garlic Clove
1" Piece of Ginger, peeled
¼ Cup Chili Sauce
Juice of one Lime
1 tbsp Clear Honey
Mixed Green Salad
Lemon Wedges



How it's done...

Most octopus comes frozen which is a safer way to buy as it does not keep well. Make sure you thoroughly defrost in the fridge for 24 hours before cooking. I had previously never cooked octopus at home, always afraid it would be tough, however, after reading an article about how to braise in wine I tried it and it was wonderful! The trick is to add the wine cork into the braising pot; no one knows why but it works!

In a large pot gently stir fry the onion, carrot and celery until they are soft but not brown. Add the wine, cork, vinegar and 3 cups of water to the pot and stir, bring to a boil. Now add the octopus and lower the heat to a simmer; partially cover the pot.

Simmer gently until the flesh is very tender, approximately 1 hour. Transfer the octopus to a plate and allow to cool. Rub off the skin with paper towel. Separate the tentacles and slice into equal lengths.

To make the chili sauce, put the garlic, ginger, chili sauce, lime juice and honey into a blender or processor and pulse until smooth.

Now fire up the BBQ! Rub vegetable oil on the octopus pieces and place on the grill, turning occasionally until slightly charred. Brush the pieces with some of the chili sauce and keep turning on the grill until they are caramelized. Arrange the mixed greens on a plate, top with the charred octopus and a light herb vinaigrette, serve with the lemon wedges.

Did you know...

Octopus has more protein, vitamins, calcium and iron than a lean steak. It also contains potassium and is a low fat option with only 2g of fat in an 85g portion. Octopus is fairly high in cholesterol, similar to shrimp, so eat in moderation.

Wine Pick

Outdoor summer barbecues cry out for beautiful chilled wines! This dish is spicy, so an off dry white is perfect. Strewn Two Vines Riesling Gewurztraminer VQA has a bright straw colour; floral, citrus, lychee and spice aromas with a hint of petrol, medium body; tropical fruit and citrus flavours that work well with seafood and spicy dishes and at \$11.95 a bottle it fits everyone's budget!

Taking THE Lead

by Corry Hamilton



Simple Summer Tips for You and Your Pets

The weather is bright and sunny and you've decided to head out on holidays with your pets, but have you considered all the options and are you prepared to make it a safe and pleasurable experience for everybody?

The hotel experience: While many hotels are now offering pet friendly options there are a number of things to consider before you book your room.

- Is your pet prone to barking at any noise or suffer from separation anxiety?
- How long do you plan to leave them alone? If all day, you may want to have either a family/friend or a pet sitter care for your pets while you are away.
- Does the hotel have a weight restriction policy or require your pet to be crated if left alone in the room? You don't want to show up at the hotel with a Great Dane when they only allow dogs under 40 lbs.

The boating experience: There are many things to consider when either renting a houseboat or going out on a boat for a day/week.

- Make sure that pets are allowed onboard
- Can your pets swim?
- Do they like water? Do they get sea sick?
- Are they likely to jump overboard?
- Do you have a life jacket? I know it seems frivolous, but if you are in the middle of a lake or ocean and your pet jumps overboard or if there is a boating emergency, the likelihood of them making it ashore is slim, even if they are a great swimmer.

The camping experience: This is similar to the hotel and boating options in that you want to make sure that pets are allowed and determine how long you will be leaving them as most camp sites will not allow pets down on the beach.

- Is someone willing to stay with the dog while everyone else is having fun?
- How close are the campsites to other campers, and are you allowed to tie up your dog outside?
- Are there shady areas for your pet or do you keep your air conditioning on in the trailer for the day so that your pet doesn't get overheated?
- Is your pet territorial and will they let others walk by your campsite?

The only other thing you may want to consider is if you have to rent a bigger vehicle when heading out on holiday. Due to people having allergies, the majority of car rental companies will not allow you to bring a pet or they will charge you a large clean up fee. If you ask yourself these simple questions and have a plan and a backup plan, you and your pet will have an amazing holiday this summer!

We loved the name of Corry's business so much, that we decided to name her column Taking the Lead. Corry's furry family is full of special needs animals, and when she isn't planning her next great international adventure, you can find her curled up with a book, snapping pictures or taking a nap with her cats.



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"helping those in distress to cope..."

Ask Sue-Ann

by Sue-Ann Bavlnka



Dear Sue-Ann:

I am 50, a mother of two and married for more years than I can count. I need your help. I feel stuck and disconnected from the world. I do not know who I am any more. I do not know what I want or where I am going. Please help me get back on track.

A. What you are experiencing is quite common. For the most part, we as women know who we are and what we want in our 20's. As we age and get careers and married and the kids come along, we begin to live our lives for everyone else and stop evolving our wants and needs. We simply get lost. I suggest you start by going back to the basics of you.

By that I mean the colours and scents and books and media that would have stimulated you in your 20's would no longer suit where you are now in your life. You could probably clearly tell me what every like and dislike is for every family member, friend and neighbour, but you have lost that sense of you. When choosing what scents and aromas you would like to have around you for now I would suggest this process. Before you take a whiff of anything, just relax then breathe in the scent and really consider how that scent makes you feel.

Look for the emotional reward that you are hoping to get from it. That process goes for everything - soaps, cleaning products, perfumes, and candles, anything that is going to be within your close proximity. Then look at your surroundings and box up and remove those things that are evoking negatives memories or emotions. Quite often we will display pictures of ourselves that do not bring back good memories for many reasons. It is time to purge all of those things.

Take an honest look at what you are eating and how much exercise you get and address it. Along the way your imagination will reawaken and now it is time to identify and try either something new or reignite a passion for something from the past that you had to put down because life got in the way. An example is yoga, cycling, knitting, painting, reading, taking a course, cooking, volunteering, joining an organization just to name a few. The goal is to look for something that you could be passionate about. That one thing or many things that you cannot wait to get to because of how it makes you feel.

A big dash of spontaneity may be required during this process to shake things up a bit. Embracing change is also a huge element because you need to be ready for things to be different in some way. If you are truly willing and able to move into the change that will not be an issue. I say this all the time to clients, "if you truly want things to be different then you need to do things differently". Life is limitless and I pray that you can embrace what life has to offer for you.

Sue-Ann is a mother of 3 and resides in the Oshawa area. She chooses to utilize her undeniable psychic ability to assist you in resolving all of life's issues. Host and Community Producer of Divine Lane on Rogers Cable 10, Tuesday's at 9 pm. You can find out more and forward your submissions to Sue-Ann at www.divinelane.com

A vibrant poster for the 2015 Youth Camp. The text "2015" is in large, bold, black letters. Below it, "YOUTH" is in large, bold, black letters. "CAMP" is in large, bold, black letters. "LGBTQ + ALLIES" is in large, bold, black letters. "YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP" is in large, bold, black letters. "FOR 13-17 YEAR OLDS" is in large, bold, black letters. "AUG. 17-21" is in large, bold, black letters. The background is a mix of green and yellow with abstract black and white lines. Logos for PFLAG Canada Durham Region, ON, AIDS Committee, University of Ontario, Local Biz, Lynn Gray, and Buzz are visible at the bottom. Registration information is provided at the bottom left.

COACH

Corner

What Season Are You In?

Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn. We know them well in relation to the seasons in the year. You would have a hard time however convincing some people that there are really only two seasons in Toronto, a very short summer and a very long winter.

This leads to a very interesting picture of our lives.

I had the opportunity recently to be at a birthday party for my 1 year old grandson, and the very next day having lunch with an 80 year old business associate, a friend of mine.

The first situation was a young man at the very start of his life, his full potential ahead of him, summer time. Everything in his life is fun, sunny and full of great expectations, God willing. He has the benefit of a clean canvas on which to paint his life.

My friend on the other hand spent most of our lunch lamenting his life, looking over his almost full canvas with regrets. It's not that he didn't have a full life, he has. An executive, entrepreneur, husband, father, grandfather, along with a long list of other accomplishments.

His anguish however was that he spent a lot of time doing a lot of different things; the one thing he felt he was not doing was the one thing he knew he was supposed to do. He knew what it was but always seemed to get distracted. He did other things that seemed like the right thing: more fun, more convenient, more popular, made more money at the time - a list of different reasons.

I will get to doing that life purpose thing at a more opportune time...

The thing at times with our life purpose is, it shows up as something that comes easy to us. However we get side tracked through our conditioning that if something is too easy, then it's to be treated as a hobby. We need to do the serious thing in order to be taken seriously. The easy thing is something you save for your retirement, after you have spent a life time doing the hard things.

The reality is, if it's easy for you, (not necessarily that it's easy in general), it's what you are good at!

We are conditioned to choose careers that are popular, what our parents want for us, what your friends are doing etc. If you are not mindful, you will do any and everything other than the thing that truly paints your canvas with the beautiful, you.

As I watch these two people at different seasons in their lives, I was excited for the young person, saddened by the older person.

Is it too late for us to pursue our true callings? Absolutely not!

I would suggest starting today, whatever season you are in your life. Don't delay as time goes by very quickly. If you are parents of young children, help them pursue what comes natural for them. Wherever you are in your season, start today painting what is true for you. Don't get to the end of your life with an unfinished painting; the world (and you) would be very much deprived of enjoying you, the magnificent work of art you truly are.

Start painting today; the seasons go by quickly and they won't wait for you.



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The Golden Years by Linda Calder

"I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky"; the first line of John Masfield's poem "Sea Fever" often comes to mind. My Welsh grandfather ran away to sea at fourteen and became a cabin boy on a tall ship. Maybe that's where my love of the sea comes from.

However, I don't want to go to sea to work; I want to go on a cruise because I get to be pampered! My cabin is cleaned, my covers are turned down at bedtime and there is always a chocolate on my pillow! A cruise ship is a world of its own; it doesn't take long for it to feel like your second home.

There are so many cruises to choose from. If there's a place you've always wanted to visit there's probably a cruise ship that stops there. Some people may think of the Caribbean, but that is a winter destination and we are talking about summer. In the summer, many of the ships are on the other side of the Atlantic doing Mediterranean, Scandinavian and Russian cruises. There are also Alaskan cruises and many others. The possibilities are endless! Depending on how much money you want to spend, you can cruise for as short as a weekend or as long as a couple of months! Some of the great cruises are called "repositioning cruises". That's when ships cross the Atlantic from North America to Europe in the spring and return in the fall.

There are many ways to book a cruise; directly from the cruise companies, online through sites like Expedia for instance, or through a travel agent. I recommend travel agents because they may offer you better rates and special discounts than if you were to book on your own. They also take care of all the logistics. For instance, they let you know whether you need passports or visas depending on where you're travelling so you avoid unnecessary (border) headaches. I always book my cruises through a travel agent and have used the same travel agent for fifteen years! She books the cruise and transfer (bus) from the airport. When you book this together, the ship has to wait for you if the plane is late. Otherwise, it can leave without you!

When a cruise ship docks there are many choices of tours. You can book these tours (which are led by local tour guides) in advance online to make sure you get a spot, and can cancel aboard if you change your mind.

My last cruise sailed from Venice, a place I had always wanted to visit. We had two nights there so we got to visit the city and then sailed the Adriatic Sea. We visited places I'd never heard of - countries that used to be part of Yugoslavia (Split and Dubrovnik in Croatia and Montenegro). We also visited Malta, Sicily and Naples and ended up in Rome for two days. On a Greek Islands cruise, we visited beautiful Santorini and Mykonos, and also went to Pompeii and Emphasis.

For me, a cruise is an ideal vacation because you get to visit many different places, experience many different cultures and talk to so many interesting people along the way. Besides that, watching the waves always makes me feel that all is right with the world...

Linda Calder is a retired teacher. She likes to write and enjoys spending time with her family. She also enjoys going on cruises, taking pictures and scrapbooking.

Horoscope

(JUNE 2015 - AUGUST 2015)

by Julie Antoinette

Aries (March 21st - April 20th)

Now is your chance to implement all of your wildest and craziest ideas as the Sun shining upon you adds exultation and strength! You have boundless energy to use at your discretion as Mars, your ruler, boosts your resolve. Grab each opportunity that crosses your path as you will lack only the time to accomplish everything offered to you. Work done only for money, or merely for the sake of work is one of the most detestable things in this world. Do something good for yourself.

Taurus (April 21st - May 21st)

You have no lack of energy. You will need this to keep up with the speed of radical changes surrounding you in your career. Circumstances will provide you with lots of opportunity but beware of jealousy from coworkers and competitors. This jealous bunch will be your only obstacles. Love in your world remains stable, as long as you resolve to accept everything as it is. You will find hidden perfection and be pleasantly surprised!

Gemini (May 22nd - June 21st)

This is an especially fortunate time for finance and entrepreneurship as your talent for communication is exalted and unfettered. Focus lavishing this gift on colleagues and partners. New ideas are born of collaborative communication. Nothing you say is trivial right now. Keep the true meanings of these two key words in mind: Collaborate (co-labour - to work together) and Communicate (with unity).

Cancer (June 22nd - July 22nd)

This summer will bring some interesting instability to your world but it will definitely not be a boring season for you as many players enter to stir up your world. Try to preserve your energy as you may feel sapped by increased stimulation. Music and regular exercise will help. Be extra careful in business activities, paying extra attention to details. Remember: the devil is in the details.

Leo (July 23rd - August 22nd)

You will experience an exceptionally dynamic and unpredictable summer, with many "potholes" to navigate around on your road. Be extra alert, proceed steadily and take frequent pauses before proceeding ahead. By evaluating before moving ahead, you will anticipate dead ends. Use your inner "GPS" to suggest the best recalculation of route. Your guidance: Proceed with caution.

Virgo (August 23rd - September 23rd)

Waves of unpleasant emotions may surface with others as business and relationship partners may seem especially critical. Know that this will pass eventually. Life is asking you to revisit your ego and make a few adjustments. If it is true that others are our mirror, could there be a critical streak running through you too Virgo? Subject yourself to intense self-analysis and above all, keep your cool. Cooler heads prevail.

Libra (September 24th - October 23rd)

Be prepared for a full scale change of life this summer. You will overcome the difficult circumstances surrounding you now. You are fully protected from negative influences and unique opportunities are presented to you, especially on the work front. A trustworthy ally has your back. Be proactive and you will be shocked by the results!

Scorpio (October 24th - November 22nd)

You move through a successful period this summer career-wise, Scorpio. However, as the old adage goes: "Keep your friends close and your enemies closer" as many of your personal relationships may destabilize. The planets offer you a counter-balance in your financial sector as you are offered greater responsibilities with big payouts! Remember, to whom much is given, much is required.

Sagittarius (November 23rd - December 21st)

You'll have to work extra hard this summer to stay afloat as work will require the lion's share of your resources. Do not resort to dishonest means to get ahead of your opponents, as these will only result in your karmic defeat. Concentrate your hidden abilities and use of your talents and you will no doubt be recognized for your marvelous authenticity. Your guidance: What comes around goes around.

Capricorn (December 22nd - January 19th)

You have excellent direction, Capricorn. A number of projects grab your attention and you have the capacity to realize them all to full completion by the end of the summer! You also have enough strength to overcome any task. Be careful not to rely on luck or rest on your laurels, as all the effort will rest squarely on your shoulders. Therefore, choose wisely.

Aquarius (January 20th - February 19th)

You receive an extra-dose of planetary help this summer in accomplishing all that you desire. Innovative ideas come to you easily and you are able to turn minimal resource into maximum profit. Concentrate on specific tasks and careful not to spread yourself thin! You are a magician, cast your spell!

Pisces (February 20th - March 20th)

Your acuity is at fever-pitch when it comes to deciphering who is on your team and who is not. A tough battle stands before you. Your best bet is to trick your opponent into believing you have surrendered to defeat. The warlords of ancient times believed that any defeat can turn into a victory. Therefore, gear up for battle and execute your strategy. Your chariot awaits!

Written by Julie Antoinette. Julie is a Sociology and Psychology graduate, a Psychotherapy Intern and a lifelong student of the psyche. In her free time, she is a crochet adventurer and musical muse. In writing this horoscope, she seeks to offer intuitive messages of guidance from the collective astrological archetypes. As above, so below.



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