

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SCHOUT CORPORATION



The 25' x 60' indoor pool at the new Stonecroft rec centre in New Hamburg.

The centre is surrounded by three acres of landscape gardens, including a pond.

A WATERLOO REGION ADULT LIFESTYLES COMMUNITY, Stonecroft Homes in New Hamburg, has opened the second largest residential community recreation centre in Canada. Stonecroft President **Mike Schout** says that, at 18,000 square feet, it is second only to the centre in the **Village by the Arboretum** in Guelph.

The new Stonecroft rec centre includes a 25 foot by 60 foot indoor pool with 26-foot ceilings to allow sports such as indoor volleyball; a state-of-the-art, all hydraulic fitness facility, a banquet facility licenced for 250, and billiards, card and craft rooms. The centre is surrounded by three acres of landscape gardens, including a pond. Schout notes that "we recycle all the water from the parking lot and the roof into the pond,



Mike Schout, President of Stonecroft Homes.

which does all of our irrigation of the property."

Stonecroft is in the third phase of a 10-phase plan that will see 500 homes at completion. It is a project of **Schout Community Partnership**, which currently has projects under development in Baden, Jackson's Point and London.

DAVID CHORNABY has started with **ARISE Technologies Corporation** as Chief Financial Officer, effective April 25, 2007. As CFO, Chornaby will be responsible for all aspects of financial reporting and management for the company. He is a Certified Management Accountant who brings 23 years of diverse financial and managerial experience to ARISE. He has worked in both technology and manufacturing environments, predominantly with **Hewlett-Packard (Canada) Ltd.** Most recently, he was VP Finance & Operations for **SBS Technologies (Canada), Inc.**, a division of **General Electric.**

COM DEV INTERNATIONAL LTD. has been awarded a follow-on civil space contract valued at \$39 million. Work will begin immediately on this phase of the program and is expected to be completed by the end of COM DEV's 2009 fiscal year. The customer and the satellite program involved cannot be named at this time due to contractual restrictions.



Mike Pley, president of COM DEV.

"This contract, which is among the largest in our history, represents a major milestone in our ongoing strategy of growing our civil space business," said **Mike Pley**, President of COM DEV. "As we expected, new order activity in our fiscal second quarter has been very solid, with many smaller contracts complementing this major one."

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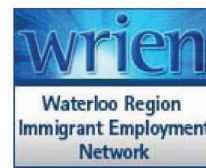
- To make it easier and cost-effective for employers to fill vacancies with immigrants.
- To promote more immigrant-friendly hiring practices and work place cultures.

- To promote the immigrant workforce so it will be more visible and accessible by private and public sector employers.
- To engage and facilitate the immigrant employment service provider network to develop new client based synergies and service delivery cost-effectiveness.
- To ensure that WRIEN initiated programs and initiatives will be sustainable beyond the three year mandate.
- To ensure, immigrants, skilled in particular, will be attracted to and feel welcome in Waterloo Region.

How do I get involved?

Meet with WRIEN representatives to discuss your future labour force needs.

Learn more at www.wrien.com or by calling: Peter McFadden, Executive Director at **519-749-6033** pmcfadden@greaterkwchamber.com



"An initiative hosted by the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber of Commerce"

THE CITY OF GUELPH has announced that **Larry Kotseff** has decided to leave the position of Chief Administrative Officer for the City.

MAZAK CORPORATION CANADA has opened its **Canada Headquarters and Technology Centre** at 50 Commerce Court, Cambridge. Grand opening was held May 2. Mazak Corporation is the North American manufacturing, sales and support arm of the leading international machine tool builder, **Yamazaki Mazak Corporation** of Oguchi, Japan.

"Mazak is a wonderful addition to our community and their services will support manufacturing industries such as automotive, aerospace, oil and energy, medical and heavy equipment, to name a few," said Cambridge Mayor **Doug Craig**. Mazak produces machine tools and systems for the precision machining of metal parts, including CNC turning centers, horizontal and vertical machining centers, multi-tasking machining centers, turnkey cells, and software solutions to help customers achieve lean, efficient manufacturing operations.

Tomohisa Yamazaki, President of Yamazaki Mazak Corporation, Oguchi, Japan, said, "Yamazaki Mazak was founded in 1919, 88 years ago. Although there have been incredible changes since then, we are always developing the most advanced metal cutting machine tools and technology to better support our customers. Worldwide we have four plants in Japan and another four full scale production facilities overseas including in the US, UK, Singapore and China. We believe we are the only machine tool builder in the world with these kinds of global manufacturing resources. For instance, we opened our World Technology Centre in Japan in

April 2006. Our Canadian Technology Centre becomes the 8th in North America and 29th worldwide."

RESEARCH IN MOTION has introduced the **BlackBerry Curve** smartphone – the smallest and lightest full QWERTY BlackBerry smartphone. "The BlackBerry Curve offers a unique blend of communications, multimedia and web features to provide people with an exceptional mobile companion for both work and leisure," said **Mike Lazaridis**, President and Co-CEO at RIM. "The BlackBerry Curve delivers RIM's industry leading email and messaging capabilities in a highly approachable smartphone design that is packed with consumer-friendly features including a 2 megapixel camera, enhanced media player and high-performance browser."

OPEN TEXT CORPORATION has reported unaudited financial results for its third quarter that ended March 31, 2007. Total revenue for the third quarter was \$156.1 million, compared to \$100.9 million for the same period in the prior fiscal year. License revenue in the third quarter was \$43 million, compared to \$28.4 million for the same period in the prior fiscal year. Adjusted net income in the quarter was \$17.5 million or \$0.34 per share on a diluted basis, compared to \$13.7 million or \$0.27 per share on a diluted basis for the same period in the prior fiscal year. Net income was \$3.9 million or \$0.08 per share on a diluted basis, compared to \$7.3 million or \$0.15 per share in the prior fiscal year.

"We met our operating goals and generated strong cash flow. The **Hummingbird** integration is for the most part complete, and I continue to be pleased with the positive response from our customers and the synergies we are realizing from our employees and products," said **John Shackleton**, President and CEO.

PETER BENNINGER AND JOE BENNINGER of **Coldwell Banker Peter Benninger Realty** have announced the sale of 50 Ottawa Street South in Kitchener, a 193,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility, for \$2,600,000 to Access Property Developments Inc. (operating as Access Storage).

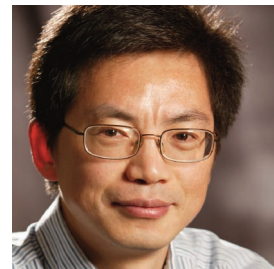
The manufacturing site has been home to **Canada Cordage** (formerly Doon Twines) for nearly 90 years and the company will continue to occupy a substantial section of the building. The new building owner, Access Storage is a Canadian

owned and operated property development company with over 1,000,000 sq. ft of real estate space in locations throughout Southwestern Ontario.

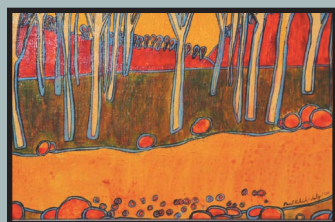
By late summer Access Storage plans to be using 30,000 sq. ft of the building for its self-storage and commercial businesses and will renovate and lease the remaining space. By converting the space into new office, commercial and industrial units, Access Storage plans to inject new business opportunities into the area. Plans for the property include making improvements to the exterior and renovating the interior that will renew and invigorate the industrial downtown area of Kitchener.

The Waterloo Region has long been an attractive expansion locale for Access as several of the owners have personal ties to the community. Senior Partner **Tom Allen** is a **Wilfrid Laurier University** alumnus and former athlete who is a dedicated fundraiser for the Golden Hawks football program. In addition, Junior Partner and company's controller, **Iqbal Khan** is a graduate of the **University of Waterloo**.

THREE WATERLOO REGION TECH LEADERS took top honours at the **Premier's Catalyst, Discovery and Summit Awards** held in Toronto in April. Premier and Minister of Research and Innovation, **Dalton McGuinty**, recognized the leadership of **Slipstream Data Inc., DALSA Corporation, and Research In Motion** for revolutionizing business



Dr. En-Hui Yang, cofounder of Slipstream Data Inc.



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and industry in Ontario.

Dr. En-Hui Yang, co-founder of **Slip-Stream Data Inc.**, was named Innovator of the Year. **Dr. Savvas Chamberlain**, founder of DALSA Corporation, received the nod for Lifetime Achievement in Innovation. And Research In Motion was named Company with the Best Innovation.

"These awards are a testament to the high quality of innovation that happens throughout Waterloo Region's tech industry," says **Iain Klugman**, president and CEO, **Communtech: Waterloo Region Technology Association**. "There's a particular brand of entrepreneurial spirit and innovation that thrives here. Slipstream, DALSA, and RIM embody that entrepreneurial spirit."

BRICK BREWING CO. LIMITED has significantly enhanced its sales agency business through its affiliate **Direct Cellars Beverage Co.**, which has completed three new representation agreements. The new brands to be represented are expected to add significantly to DCB's sales in the short term, with the potential for significant longer-term growth.

DCB's new agreements are with **Diamond Estates Wine & Spirits Ltd.** of Beamsville, Ontario, **Flat Rock Cellars** of Jordan, Ontario and **Wellington County Brewery** of Guelph, Ontario.

"These agreements are part of our ongoing strategy to increase DCB's portfolio of significant brands and to leverage DCB's growing strengths in the licensee and LCBO channels," said **Doug Berchtold**, President and CEO of Brick Brewing. "The addition of these brands both strengthens our current position in the market and affords increased opportuni-

ties for market share expansion."

RDM CORPORATION has announced that **Xign Corporation** has signed an agreement to sell Xign to **JPMorgan Chase Bank**, N.A. Upon completion of the transaction RDM expects to receive net cash proceeds of approximately \$9.0 million (\$7.95 million U.S.). In addition, RDM may receive additional proceeds of up to \$1.2 million (\$1.05 million U.S.) which are being held in escrow for a one year period from the closing date. The amount received from escrow is impacted by a number of items including the final purchase price adjustments.

The closing of the transaction is subject to shareholder approval, U.S. regulatory approval and customary closing conditions, and is expected to occur within RDM's current fiscal year which ends September 30, 2007. Upon closing RDM expects to record a one-time after-tax gain of approximately \$2.6 million to \$3.8 million, or \$0.12 to \$0.18 per share depending on the escrow amount.



Douglas Newman, president and CEO of RDM Corporation.

"This transaction will benefit RDM by enabling us to more effectively redeploy capital to growth opportunities," said **Douglas Newman**, President and CEO of RDM Corporation.

AREA EMPLOYERS were honoured with the Passport to **Prosperity Employer Champion Award**, presented to employers who offer outstanding school-work opportunities to high school students. School-work programs include career talks, worksite visits, job shadowing, the **Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program**, school-work transition programs and cooperative education placements. A Champion award went to **The Holiday Inn**, Cambridge, while two of the five Merit Awards went to local recipients: **The Guelph Holiday Inn**, and **St. Mary's General Hospital**, Kitchener.

AGILE SYSTEMS OF WATERLOO, an international manufacturer of high performance motor drive and motion control systems, has introduced its next generation single axis micro-

MAXR controller. As demands for higher productivity and smaller footprints grow in the semiconductor, life sciences and electronics assembly industries, so does the need for progressive control systems.

Agile Systems' microMAXR integrates the motion control, servo amplifier, networking capabilities and user - all within a very compact package. The microMAXR allows the customer to incorporate multiple controllers using a traditional connector or a backplane version that simply "plugs in" to the user's printed circuit board. This lego-style connection substantially reduces the interconnect wire complexity and the system integration time.

Agile has designed a unique Peer to Peer network architecture allowing the user to create individual distributed programs to interact with each other. With this true distributed control network scheme, register values are exchanged between controllers in a synchronized fashion, ensuring motion functions associated with each exchanged register value are executed at a defined point in time and synchronized between all axes in the system. Peer to Peer networking of motion tasks reduces the bandwidth requirement of the network connection between machine control and the motion system.

"Following Agile's history of building state-of-the-art controllers, the microMAXR was built for cost-reduced single axis applications. But with the new simple plug in style connector, it can be used as a superior multi-axis solution," says **Ralph Steedman**, President and CEO.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS EXPERT RAMESH THAKUR, former senior vice-rector at the **United Nations University** in Tokyo and former UN assis-

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tant secretary-general, has joined the **Centre for International Governance Innovation** in Waterloo. The appointment was announced by **John English**, Executive Director of CIGI. The Waterloo centre is a leading Canadian international relations and policy research centre.

Dr. Thakur, is appointed as a CIGI Distinguished Fellow. He will also take up a cross appointment as professor of political science at the **University of Waterloo**. Dr. Thakur's areas of expertise include the United Nations, peace operations, arms control and disarmament, Indian politics, and international relations of Asia and the Pacific.

He will be involved with the CIGI-supported new joint **University of Waterloo/Wilfrid Laurier University** Ph.D. program in Global Governance. He will contribute to CIGI's research programmes in a number of areas including large emerging economies, fragile states and global security issues.

CIGI Distinguished Fellows are prominent leaders in their field with extensive expertise in areas of international governance. As such, they are part of well established networks of actively engaged policy makers and academics contributing and responsive to CIGI research projects and activities. Distinguished Fellows participate actively and guide the overall strategy, research and development of CIGI research projects.

Dr. Thakur joins other CIGI Distinguished fellows **Andrew F. Cooper** (Associate Director), **John M. Curtis** (Emerging Economies), **Louise Fréchette** (Nuclear Energy), **Paul Heinbecker** (International Relations) and **John Whalley** (Economic Governance).

PETER LOVE, Ontario's Chief Energy Conservation Officer, presented a Certificate of Recognition to undergraduate students at the **University of Guelph** for their conservation initiatives. Undergraduate students recently passed a referendum they initiated to raise money for lighting and water efficiency across campus. Every semester for the next 12 years, \$10 per undergraduate student will go toward these conservation initiatives. They expect to raise \$4.3 million, which the university has agreed to match, for a total of \$8.6 million.

OSHAWA AND TORONTO are the only Ontario cities expected to rank in the top half of Canadian census metropolitan areas (CMAs) for economic growth in 2007, according to the **Conference Board's Metropolitan Outlook** - Spring 2007. "Despite modest gains this year, it will be 2008 before the manufacturing sectors in Ontario CMAs find a solid footing," said Mario Lefebvre, Director, Metropolitan Outlook Service.

Kitchener's manufacturing sector is shedding jobs, leading to subdued growth of 2.3% this year. As the manufacturing sector begins to turn around in 2008, Kitchener can expect much better results over the next four years.

Although Oshawa's key manufacturing sector is still struggling, improving conditions in the services sector and strong population growth will boost the CMA's growth to 2.7% in 2007 from 2.1% in 2006. Toronto's forecast calls for a modest acceleration in real GDP growth from 2.1% last year to 2.5% in 2007, well short of the CMA's economic potential. A mixed manufacturing outlook and weakening growth in both the services and the construction sectors will limit overall growth.

Ottawa-Gatineau's economy cooled in 2006, but still surpassed the overall growth rate for the province of Ontario. With real GDP growth of 2.2% in 2007, Ottawa-Gatineau will again outperform Ontario as a whole. Prospects are particularly bright for the high-tech sector, while the public sector is expected to resume hiring.

Weakness in Hamilton's manufacturing industries weighed down an otherwise

strong showing by other sectors in 2006. With the key manufacturing industry still struggling, real GDP growth is expected to remain weak, at 1.5% in 2007.

For the second straight year, Windsor is expected to post the slowest rate of economic growth among Canadian CMAs in 2007. Growth is expected to come in at only 0.7% in 2007, on the heels of a 0.4% increase in 2006. Both the manufacturing and tourism sectors are facing difficulties, while the construction industry is doing its best to provide support.

For the fourth consecutive year, Calgary and Edmonton will lead all 20 Canadian CMAs covered in this edition of the Metropolitan Outlook. Calgary's economy is expected to expand by 4.2% in 2007, followed by Edmonton at 3.7%.

DALSA DIGITAL CINEMA has announced new 4K camera models, an on-board 4K data recorder and new 4K anamorphic lenses. The new products were on display at the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) trade show in Las Vegas in April.

FOR AN UNPRECEDENTED NINTH STRAIGHT YEAR, composite results from the independent Key Performance Indicator (KPI) surveys show that **Conestoga College** is the overall #1 rated public college in Ontario. Two outside professional research firms conduct the KPI surveys annually for the province's **Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities**. Four independently administered surveys measure graduate employment, graduate satisfaction, employer satisfaction and student satisfaction. Taking the composite score of the four surveys (the graduate employment rate, plus the



Ramesh Thakur, CIGI Distinguished Fellow.

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responses of “very satisfied” and “satisfied” from the three satisfaction surveys), Conestoga emerges with an overall average of 88.5, best among the 21 colleges of applied arts and technology and the three institutes of technology and advanced learning.

Conestoga's performance on the graduate employment survey (95% graduate employment success by 2005-06 graduates six months after graduation) is the best of any Ontario public college or institute measured. This marks the third consecutive year and the fourth time in five years that Conestoga has been tops in this important measure.

“All of us at Conestoga are delighted,” says President **John Tibbits**. “These results flow from our commitment to quality, relevance and excellence, and are testimony to the praiseworthy efforts and expertise of our faculty and staff.”

THE CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE INNOVATION (CIGI) has partnered with the **Canadian International Development Agency's** (CIDA) Office for Democratic Governance in the development of **Governance Village**, a new online network for good governance practices and policies. This free knowledge network, which is set to launch in the fall of 2007, will bring Canadian researchers, policymakers and practitioners together in an effort to establish and share proven good governance practices in international development.

“Canada is committed to promoting effective governance as an essential element of reducing poverty and facilitating development around the world,” said the **Honourable Josée Vermer, Minister for International Cooperation and Minister for La Francophonie and Official**

Languages. “Governance Village is an excellent tool to widely share Canadian expertise in the area of governance and to enhance networking and knowledge sharing between partners in development.”

John English, CIGI's executive director, notes, “There is a tremendous opportunity to increase the stature of Canadian knowledge and expertise on the world stage. Using Governance Village we aim to improve the outcomes of the development work supported by Canada and its partners.”



John English, executive director of CIGI

Governance Village is affiliated with the **IGLOO** network – an international community that facilitates knowledge exchange between individuals and organizations studying, working or advising on various global issues. Thousands of researchers, practitioners, educators and students use IGLOO to connect, share and exchange knowledge, experience and ideas regardless of social, political or geographical boundaries.

For more information on how to get involved or learn more about this network, visit www.insidethevillage.org.

CHRISTINA CAR of Waterloo, a third-year student in the Business Administration – Materials and Operations Management program of



Paul Howatt Vice President of Officer Development and Education for Region VIII, Pam Somers Vice President and Christina Car.

Conestoga College, has earned a national award of recognition from Region VIII of APICS, **The Association for Operations Management**. Region VIII includes all of Canada, representing more than 3,500 supply-chain management professionals, who play an important role in business, industry, government and organizations in advancing productivity, innovation and competitive success.

Car won the \$500 **K.C. Holness Award**, established in memory of **Ken C. Holness** of Vancouver, who was a leader in APICS professional development activities and programs in Canada. Only one Holness Award is presented in Canada each year.

EXPONENTIAL GROWTH OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS earned **Peter De Groot**, with **RE/MAX Twin City** in Kitchener, his second “Broker Owner of the Year” Award at the 27th RE/MAX Annual Awards Gala held earlier this spring.



Michael Polzler (left), Regional Director & Executive VP of RE/MAX Ont.-Atlantic Canada Inc. and Peter De Groot, RE/MAX Twin City.

De Groot was presented with the coveted award for large markets (over 150,000) before an audience of 1,600 real estate professionals and guests at the **Westin Harbour Castle** in Toronto. The real estate veteran, with close to 40 years of experience, has grown his business from 38 sales associates operating out of one office in 1991 to a team of over 300 representatives in five offices located in Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, Brantford, and New Hamburg.

“The key to our success has always been the outstanding calibre of our people,” says De Groot. “The management team of **Adrian Baas**, **Mike Boutette**, and **Bob Stephens** functions as a cohesive unit, inspiring our team of real estate professionals to even greater heights. Through the collective efforts of all, we're now responsible for about one in every four sales in the Region of Waterloo.”

Population growth in the region has

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also contributed to RE/MAX Twin City's expansion. The demand for residential and commercial properties in the Region of Waterloo has also served to bolster development.

COM DEV INTERNATIONAL LTD. has encountered an unanticipated problem on a program that will require additional work to be done before a multiplexer order can be shipped to the customer. The company has completed a root cause analysis and determined definitively that the problem is isolated to the one program.

The company announced that it is working closely with the customer to determine the extent to which work must be redone in order to resolve the situation to the customer's satisfaction. The overall financial impact to COM DEV is expected to be up to \$9 million, primarily comprised of an up-front recognition of costs that will be incurred in coming months with no matching revenues. More than 90% of the charge were recognized in the fiscal second quarter ending April 30, 2007, resulting in an expected net loss for the quarter of approximately \$4 million. The company is maintaining its previously stated guidance of 10% revenue growth for fiscal year 2007. Gross margin in the second half of the year is expected to remain within the previously estimated percentage range of mid-to-high 20s.

"We are confident that we have identified and rectified the root cause of this problem and we will take every action necessary to ensure that similar issues do not recur," said **Mike Pley**, President of COM DEV. "The reliability of our products is our number one priority, and it was our own rigorous testing procedures that

uncovered this problem. Outside of this issue our business remains very solid. As expected, new orders have been robust in the second quarter."

ST. ANNE'S CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 127 Elgin Street North, Cambridge (Galt), celebrated Arbour Week, April 27 to May 6, 2007 with the support of their community.

With generous donations from **Landscape Ontario's Waterloo Chapter** and a three-way partnership with the **National Toyota Evergreen Learning Grounds Program**, the **Waterloo Catholic District School Board** and the **Cambridge and North Dumfries Community Foundation**, St. Anne's school playground received an extreme makeover on May 1.

With local school grounds often lacking important elements of nature – and the inspiration and joy green spaces can bring – the growing need to bring nature back to the students is a concern for many parents and teachers. St. Anne's has taken a huge step forward in their commitment to address this concern by reaching out for support through donations provided by local businesses.

Dennis Wendland, Evergreen School

Ground Greening Consultant, proposed the idea of adding several shade trees to the St. Anne's school grounds in a presentation to the Waterloo Chapter of Landscape Ontario, earlier this year. To the school's delight, a multi-partner donation was in turn pledged to them in the form of a half dozen shade trees, landscape rocks, and the person-power required to transform their playground into a place of inspiration, fun and learning.

Partners providing the services for this make-over include **Allgreen Tree Service, Fast Forest, Kerr and Kerr Landscaping, Kuntz Landscape Supply, Sheridan Nurseries and TNT Property Maintenance**.

"By teaming up and pooling our resources, we are able to transform a section of St. Anne's into a greener, healthier and happier place for the students to learn, play and grow," said Wendland. "It was also a unique learning experience for students as they watch a tree spade at work, and Evergreen hopes to continue working with St. Anne's on sun-safety education, planting more shade trees and promoting other beneficial school ground additions."

Mike Hayes, President of Landscape Ontario's Waterloo Chapter says, "This is a



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great opportunity for us to support our community. As an organization we are committed to promoting the benefits and joys of horticulture. Through our members and chapters we give back to the community so that we can continue to enhance people's lives in many ways. We are proud to be part of this playground revitalization and recognize the importance of green spaces for children to live, play and grow."

WATERLOO GRAND RIVER KINSMEN are bringing an exciting new cultural festival to the community – the **Waterloo Region Comedy Festival**. Taking a cue from the Montreal, Halifax, Winnipeg, and Vancouver comedy festivals, the WRCF will provide opportunities for up-and-coming comics on the cusp of greatness to showcase their talents alongside well-known comedy professionals.

The WRCF opening season includes two incredible shows to be held at the **University of Waterloo's Humanities Theatre**. On July 6, the WRCF presents "New Faces of Comedy" featuring students and recent graduates of the **Humber College School of Comedy**. July 7, the WRCF brings together a hilarious group of comedy stars to present "Comedy Eh!". This

show will feature established Canadian stars, Tony Krolo, Michelle Shaughnesy, Kyle Radke, and Tim Nutt.

Festival Chairman **Bill Sollows** says, "The WRCF will provide the Waterloo Region with a special cultural experience by delivering a humorous, friendly event that will be a destination for Waterloo Region residents, and for tourists." In addition, the WRCF will raise funds to support community needs. In 2007, the WRCF has selected the **Business & Education Partnership of Waterloo Region (BEP)** as its primary charity beneficiary, a charitable organization engaged in career exploration for youth in Waterloo Region.

Tickets are available through the Humanities Theatre Box Office at 519-888-4908 or via email at tickets@wrcf.ca. Additional details at www.wrcf.ca.

EASTFOREST HOMES is showcasing **BluWood** lumber in the K-W, Paris and Brantford area. Bluwood is a revolutionary new wood coating system that addresses the trend of building tighter houses to save energy and ensure better air quality. "As the first developer in Kitchener/Waterloo to offer this product in the housing market, Eastforest Homes prides itself on

speaking to the needs of their customers. Dedicated to using state-of-the-art technology, Eastforest Homes is on the cutting

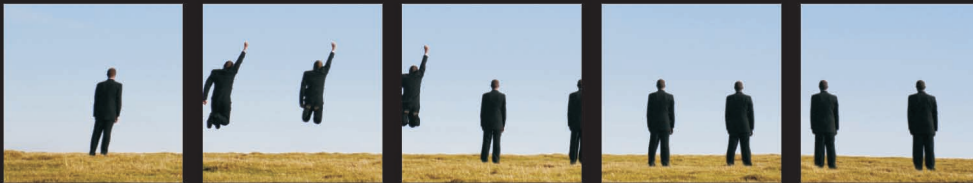


PHOTO: COURTESY OF EASTFOREST HOMES

edge of offering customers the building industry's most innovative, safe, and environmentally-safe products" says Eva Munch from Eastforest Homes.

"In today's building environment, BluWood is fast becoming the industry standard. The building industry needs to address the list of growing concerns when it comes to your family, your health and your home," says **David Gray** of BluWood Canada. The BluWood process is ideal when builders want to close their homes up tighter because there is a higher chance of mould intrusion when building tighter due to less ventilation. X

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start new businesses and to help people who have hobby businesses grow them into a sustainable ventures. "Women, refugees, new Canadians and the working poor are our target audience," Shantz explained. The first phase of the program consists of 10 two and a half hour evening classes held weekly. "Participants have to decide what type of business structure to use, what licences and zoning are required, how to market their business, budget, calculate break-even points and interpret financial statements," Shantz noted. "They then use this information to develop their business plans."

Allan Sauder, President of MEDA, said the Waterloo regional chapter started the program locally after having "seen the positive results of the ASSETS+ program initiated in a dozen locations in the U.S."

"The primary benefit of the program is the confidence it gives to prospective entrepreneurs," Sauder noted. "Many micro and small business persons have great ideas and lots of energy and enthusiasm, but simply lack the skills they need to get started or expand. In some cases it also helps the entrepreneurs to weed out or modify ideas that won't work – a con-



Bob Shantz, project co-ordinator of WRAP

clusion they reach themselves when they follow the planning steps outlined. I think the program also immensely benefits those people in the MEDA Chapter and the community who get involved as mentors, trainers and fundraisers. It is so inspirational to attend a graduation of ASSETS+ students, to feel their excitement and experience the potential they see with their new skills and confidence."

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Waterloo Region MEDA Chapter Chair Gary Leis of Leis Pet Distributing Inc. of Wellesley added, "Waterloo chapter members have always supported MEDA projects throughout the world. By establishing this program in Waterloo Region they can now see their money working locally with a MEDA sponsored project."

Shantz said business people can support WRAP in several ways: by contributing financially; by being a mentor in one of the Business Development Groups; by being a presenter at a Business Technical Assistance Seminar; and by recommending suitable candidates to the program.

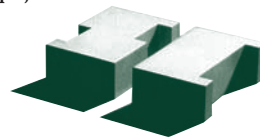
Ingrid Kessler heard about WRAP through Barter Works, another Working Centre program she was participating in last year. Two more groups totalling more than 25 people have completed the first phase of the program in March and June. The Waterloo Region ASSETS+ Program is making a difference by giving them the confidence and skills to launch and sustain their new business ventures. X

Readers wanting more information about the Waterloo Region ASSETS+ Program can contact Bob Shantz at 519-743-1151 ext. 206 or visit www.waterlooregionassets.org.



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GREAT THINGS ARE BREWING

Innovative program assists people in starting their own business



Ingrid Kessler (centre) serves up white tea to friend Mary Vanderzand (left) and her granddaughter Daniela (right).

PHOTOS: DIANE JOHNSON

by BRIAN HUNSBERGER

Like wine, tea is a comfort drink with its own culture and vocabulary developed over thousands of years. To better understand the nuances of tea and its health and social benefits, talk to Ingrid Kessler. Chances are you'll be offered a cup. Talking tea over "a cuppa" is something of a calling for her.

Even those who are not tea drinkers are aware that there are different varieties of tea, like black, green and herbal. Kessler encourages you to think outside the pot and try white. Perhaps you were not aware that was an option? Kessler is staking her business plan for Walking Fern Organic White Tea Products on the hope that you will want to find out.

"White tea consists of immature tea buds and young leaves that are hand-plucked shortly before the buds open," Kessler explained. "Unlike green tea, which is steamed, rolled and oxidized; white tea leaves are withered and dried slowly at low temperatures." She continues her enthusiastic pitch: "Due to this natural processing, the leaves are left closest to their natural state. This preserves their powerful health promoting benefits, including higher levels of polyphenol antioxidants than any other type of tea."

Kessler sounds like a wine connoisseur when describing her white tea as "straw coloured with a sweet nutty aroma, silky texture and a mellow, fresh

flavour. It possesses a natural sweetness but lacks the grassy undertones sometimes associated with green tea."

Although the tea is grown in China, Kessler imports it from a wholesaler in California and repackages it for sale under her brand name, Tassablanca. She plans to market it from her home via an internet storefront called Great Things are Brewing. Sales to spas, yoga studios and specialty shops are also planned.

On December 11, 2006 Kessler and five colleagues became the first graduates of the Waterloo Region ASSETS+ Program (WRAP), a business training program that assists participants to research and develop a business plan during the first phase. Kessler is now in

Mentoring, start-up financing and business technical seminars are provided to enhance the prospects of success.

the second phase where participants implement the plan and launch the business. Mentoring, start-up financing and business technical seminars are provided to enhance the prospects of success.

WRAP is sponsored by MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates), an international business development agency that recently decided to offer this program locally. To deliver the program, MEDA partnered with The Working Centre, a reputable non-profit agency founded by Joe and Stephanie Mancini that has been providing employment assistance to low-income people in downtown Kitchener for 25 years.

The Project Coordinator is Bob Shantz, former President of Shantz Coach Lines, a local school bus operator prior to the sale of the company to Stock Transportation several years ago. Shantz is also a partner in Tri-Shan, a property management company he owns with his father Elmer and brother Larry. He had been active in the local chapter of MEDA for several years. After selling the school bus business he was looking for a new challenge. He spends between 20 and 25 hours a week on the project and is assisted by two other part-time staff. The Working Centre provides meeting space and other supports for participants in the program.

Joe Mancini explained the partnership this way. "At The Working Centre we constantly see people coming up with home business ideas. Working with MEDA's established program brings this practical, low cost business teaching tool to our community. By integrating the project into our Job Search Resource Centre we have been able to keep program costs low as we develop the infrastructure to support people to develop their home business ideas."

Shantz said WRAP's goals are to help participants

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Jim Schulz, Controller of Taylor and Grant and Dundee Staunton, President, were looking for a partner who would provide them with service and support for their Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV software. Taylor & Grant uses Dynamics™ NAV to manage their company's growth by having better visibility of their materials requirement, production flow, and inventory. "We needed to find an organization that was committed to partnering with us to ensure our ERP system was optimized to support our planned growth. Our goal was to find a solution provider that understood our vision and wanted to work with us to achieve it," states Jim Schulz. "That's when we "asked Dave" to provide a service and support solution."

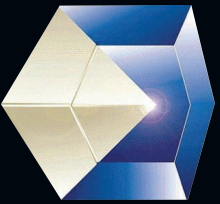
Dave knew.

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