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- Golf in the rough?
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On the cover: MappedIn co-founder Hongwei Liu

EXCHANGE

PO Box 248, Waterloo ON N2J 4A4
Tel: 519-886-2831
editor@exchangemagazine.com

Publisher
Jon Rohr
jon.rohr@exchangemagazine.com

Editor
Paul Knowles
paul.knowles@exchangemagazine.com

Contributors
Paul Knowles, Jon Rohr, Melanie Reist

Production
EBCLLP Creative

Photography
**Jon Rohr, Tomasz Admanski, Simpson Print,
Jennifer Condick-Grand River Hospital**

Account Manager
Luke Knowles
luke.knowles@exchangemagazine.com



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IT'S THE PEOPLE

Meet the people behind the economy

by PAUL KNOWLES



PAUL KNOWLES is editor of Exchange Magazine. He is an author and public speaker
email: paul.knowles@exchangemagazine.com

There is a well-known political trope: "It's the economy, stupid!" Apparently, when it comes to building an attractive political platform, that is all that matters. Although one rather hopes not.

But when it comes to the economy itself, I would argue that "It's the people!"

In this issue of Exchange, there are articles about a very wide variety of businesses, all making their mark in the local economy. But in reality, it's not the "business" that is having the impact – it's the people who are building those businesses. And one thing that has always made me proud to be editor of this magazine is our unfailing focus on "the people".

I'm intrigued by the energy and vision of Hongwei Liu, a very young entrepreneur who, with his colleagues at MappedIn, may have just created the next big digital thing.

But I am also very interested in the very non-digital vision of Mandy Brouse and David Worsley, who bought the totally un-high-tech enterprise, Wordsworth Books, a few years ago, and are making it work in the face of a series of significant challenges.

Someone else making his mark on the economy – locally, nationally and internationally – is Dr. Michéal Kelly, Dean of the School of Business and Economics at Laurier. Dr. Kelly is astonishingly frank about why his school, which has produced many business leaders around the world, has failed to market its own brand. It's a compelling article. X



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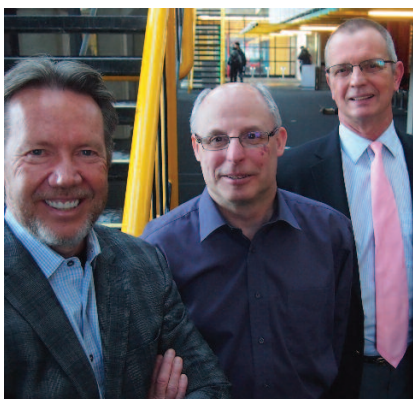
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REQUIRED PROGRAMS ARE NOT IN PLACE

Failures spotted by Ministry of Labour inspectors

by MELANIE REIST



MELANIE REIST, Employment Lawyer, Mediator; morrison-reist .com, Twitter: #@Melanie_Reist

Most parties in Ontario workplaces have some understanding of the Occupational Health & Safety Act ("OHSA"). The OHSA is built upon an Internal Responsibility System ("IRS"). The IRS is a system in which everyone – employers, supervisors and workers – all have key roles in ensuring a safe and healthy workplace.

Between April 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014, Ministry of Labour inspectors visited new small businesses with fewer than 20 workers in the industrial sector. The inspectors checked to ensure that the workplaces were complying with the OHSA and its regulations, and had knowledge of the IRS and resources to help them comply.

The high number of orders issued by inspectors were for employers failing to:

- Post the OHSA;
- Take reasonable precautions to protect worker health and safety;
- Prepare health and safety policy and maintain a program to implement that policy;

Many workplaces did not have the required policies concerning prevention of workplace violence.

In particular, many workplaces were found not to have required policies and programs to address the prevention of workplace violence and harassment.

There was a flurry of attention focused on Bill 168 when it was implemented in 2010 (An Act To Prevent Workplace Violence and Harassment). The amendments require workplaces to have policies and prevention plans to address



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and respond to harassment and violence and to train workplace parties on them. It is also important for employers to know that the OHSA provides protection for employees who come forward with health and safety concerns from any form of reprisal.

In the Ontario Labour Relations Board decision of *de los Santos Sands v. Moneta Marketing Solutions Inc.*, the employer, Moneta was found to have violated section 50 of the OHSA when it dismissed an employee who had complained about the safety of her workplace.

Ms. de los Santos Sands was hired in September, 2013 by Moneta, an investment and marketing company in Thornhill, Ontario to handle human resources duties. As part of her job, Ms. de los Santos Sands on occasion had to meet with angry investors who came to Moneta's office. Ms. de los Santos Sands and the receptionist frequently felt threatened when they had to deal with irate investors. Ms. de los Santos Sands repeatedly tried to speak with a manager about her concerns and about developing standardized procedures in human resources to deal with such matters, in order to respond to employee complaints regarding workplace violence and harassment. Her concerns were ignored.

Ms. de los Santos Sands contacted the Ministry of Labour and shared her concerns of feeling threatened in her work environment. Shortly thereafter an OHSA safety inspector visited the workplace after receiving a telephone call from Moneta's receptionist. The inspector completed a site visit report and issued compliance orders requiring the employer to prepare a policy with respect to workplace violence and harassment. The next day, Ms. de los Santos Sands' employment was terminated. When she asked why, she

"Everything was fine up until the Ministry came in yesterday and pushed them over the edge."

was told "everything was fine up until the Ministry came in yesterday and that pushed them over the edge". Ms. de los Santos Sands initiated a section 50 OHSA reprisal complaint.

Section 50(1) of the OHSA provides that no employer or person acting on behalf of an employer shall:

- (a) dismiss or threaten to dismiss a worker;
 - (b) discipline or suspend or threaten to discipline or suspend a worker;
 - (c) impose any penalty upon a worker; or
 - (d) intimidate or coerce a worker;
- because the worker has acted in compliance with the Act or its regulations.

The fact that it was the receptionist and not Ms. de los Santos Sands who had initiated the most recent contact with the MOL was not relevant. The Board ultimately concluded that the employer terminated Ms. de los Santos Sands' employment at least in part because she had raised concerns and wanted the employer to adopt a formal policy to deal with workplace harassment and violence.

It is important for employers to understand that the Board has broad remedial powers and that the presumptive remedy for a reprisal contravention of section 50 of the OHSA is to reinstate the discharged employee and provide him or her with their lost wages from the date of the discharge up until the date of the reinstatement, subject to any earnings that the employee has generated since dismissal. Within four weeks of her dismissal Ms. de los Santos Sands found another job and did not wish to return to work for the employer.

She was, however, awarded damages of just under \$5,000 representing four weeks lost wages.

X

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Boston Pizza's Brian Haase

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL GENE

It's in his genes – although Brian Haase admits that he didn't recognize this for a while. Brian is the son of well-known Waterloo region entrepreneur Murray Haase (honoured in April at the Mayors' Dinner). Murray was the founder of the Kwikie Minit Market chain – which included 32 stores when he sold the chain in the 1980s.

Today, Brian has his own chain of businesses – he owns three Boston Pizzas in Kitchener and Waterloo.

Brian grew up immersed in a retail, entrepreneurial environment. But he tried to leave it all behind, moving to Toronto in his early 20's to work in the golfing supplies business.

He told Exchange, "As a guy in his 20s, I did the 'move-to-Toronto' thing. I worked in the golf business... [but] I came home at 25. I had entrepreneurial blood in my family. I watched, growing up, not really knowing what I was absorbing at the time."

He decided that he needed more schooling, so he studied accounting at Conestoga College; but he says he did so to get the "body of knowledge" for life as an entrepreneur, not to become an accountant.

While in school, he needed employment, so he took a job as a waiter in a restaurant. He became aware that Boston Pizza was looking for local franchise owners, and with a partner, and some seed money from Murray (who no longer has any stake in the business), "we met Boston Pizza and signed an agreement in 2002 to build three stores in five years, which was kind of ridiculous, because we barely had enough money for one. But we had a lot of blind faith, and that's how we got started."

Brian explains, "I picked BP because it was a Canadian brand with a good partnership base... It was a bigger brand with that small company feel to it."

And yes, despite the name, it is a Canadian brand, founded in 1964 in Edmonton by a Greek immigrant who for some reason believed the name "Boston" had a cachet in Canada. It seems to have worked. Brian says, "When I started they might have had 140 stores, they now have 350."

Only a few years later, the partners parted ways; each kept one store. Eventually, Brian re-acquired two from his former partner. Today, at age 40, he owns three, with no immediate plans for expansion. "I think I am content for right now. I have to keep it status quo for a while until the timing comes up again."

His three "stores" have 140 employees.

While Murray never played a significant role in his son's business – in fact, he says, "I wasn't making pizza. Brian did it all by himself." – Brian credits his Dad

as his mentor.

"If I run into those difficult, 'hey, what would you do situations', I ask him, but he's never told me outright what he thinks I should do." Instead, Murray tries to be a sounding board. Says Brian, "He's my mentor. Whenever it comes down to the bigger parts of the business, whether it's an ethical decision, or about a good time to expand, he'll quietly say, yes or no, without saying yes or no directly."

One lesson Brian definitely learned from his father is to give back to the community. Murray was honoured in April, not for his business acumen, but for his philanthropy, and Brian operates his Boston Pizza stores with the same sensibility. "We do a phenomenal job in the community of raising money. We've done a very good job that way," with a special focus on KidsAbility. Brian says their fundraising has contributed about \$150,000 over ten years, in addition to

contributions to other local charitable and community groups.

He says it's not a big issue, but Brian admits he would like it if more people in the community realized his three stores are locally-owned and operated, even though they are part of a larger chain. "A lot of people don't understand a franchise concept doesn't always mean somebody owns it from some other town or some other province. But we're locally raised, here, and I think when people drive by, they don't know that Brian, who has lived here all his life, owns that. It's not some guy from the States or some investor."

GOLF: IN THE ROUGH OR DRIVING AHEAD?

Last summer, Maclean's magazine carried the headline, "Why Canadian golf is dying."

Even taking into account Maclean's propensity for bombastic headlines, there clearly was a story there. Some Canadian golf courses are struggling; some have closed. The reasons cited are numerous... the game is too costly, there are too many courses, younger people don't golf as much, there isn't as much leisure time, and so on.

Maclean's stated that there are 2,400 golf courses in Canada, serving about 1.5 million golfers – or one course for every 625 players – and that is probably too many courses. There are also statistics suggesting that less golf is being played.

But is the golf industry dying, or re-tooling for a revitalized future?

Brad Duench is the new General Manager at the prestigious, and private, Westmount Golf and Country Club is Kitchener. He's well placed as an observer of his industry – he came to Westmount in December from a similar posting at Whistle Bear Golf Club in Cambridge (where he led the successful effort to lure the LPGA Manulife Classic to the course, from its original site at Grey Silo in Waterloo). Before that, Duench ran Rebel Creek, in Petersburg, a course that is now part of the Golf North "family". He's a qualified PGA professional. As a Waterloo Region native, Duench knows the local golf scene well.

And while he acknowledges that there need to be changes in the industry, he believes – and is staking his future on it – that golf is by no means in rough shape, at least not in this area.

One large chunk of evidence sits right outside Duench's door – the venerable Westmount clubhouse is surrounded by fencing, as the facility undergoes a \$2.6 million renovation. That's \$2.6 million of faith in the future. The course itself also had a facelift last season, with all the bunkers restored or, in some cases, completely redesigned and rebuilt; this work was carried out by golf course designer Doug Carrick – who worked to remain faithful to Westmount's original Stanley



Brad Duench

Thompson design.

None the less, Duench doesn't actually believe that if they build it, they will automatically come – he acknowledges that it's a new era for golf, and that to succeed, courses have to change their approach to attracting members and players. "At any good club anywhere in the world," he says, "the future focuses on families joining the club."

At Westmount, for example, where he admits "the demographic of the membership here is a little older," he is leading the way to attract younger members. The initiation fee

is still pricey – \$22,000 (down from previous years, though) – but for younger adult members, it can be paid over 15 years, and yearly golfing fees have been cut to under \$1,000 annually. Westmount is still not a bargain, but for regular golfers, it has suddenly become a viable alternative. For the venerable Westmount course, that's major-league out of the box thinking.

Another bit of evidence that the golf industry is winning the fight for survival in this region can be found at Whistle Bear, which will host the LPGA Manulife tournament – featuring the best female pro golfers in the world – from June 3-7 this year. For the past three years, it has been held at Grey Silo, the course owned by the city of Waterloo and operated by Golf North. But after the 2014 tournament, the decision was made by the LPGA and Sports Properties International to move it to Whistle Bear – a significant coup for the members-only club, which opened in 2000.

The current agreement states that the Manulife Financial Classic will be held at the course in 2015 and 2016, although Duench, who was an integral part of the pitch in his previous position, says there will be negotiations concerning carrying it into the future.

It has been reported that the main reason for the move south from Waterloo is that Whistle Bear has just opened its impressive, new, 40,000 square foot clubhouse.

Whistle Bear, owned by the Landmark Group, certainly has plenty of room for such an event. In addition to the spacious new clubhouse facility, the entire property covers 232 acres. Most of that will be needed – in the first three years of the Manulife tournament, at Grey Silo, attendance has totalled 184,000.

Hugh Morrow, CEO of Sports Properties International, which manages the tournament, says, "I know our partnership with Whistle Bear Golf Club will be successful for this world-class event."

One of the more controversial players in the golf game in this region is the company called Golf North. Golf North was once owned by former BlackBerry co-CEO Jim Balsillie, who told Exchange many years ago that "the real estate play" was a big reason for investing in golf courses. Balsillie has since sold his share in the company, and Golf North apparently continues to thrive, now owning or operating 25 courses in Ontario, most in or near Waterloo and Wellington, although their list of courses now reaches from near London to this side of Peterborough, and from south of Hamilton to the Bruce Peninsula.

Golf North courses are frequent topics of conversation among golfers, who are quick to debate the general upkeep of the courses, the amount of money invested in maintaining quality, and so on.

Duench believes Golf North is good for the local golf industry, for a couple of reasons. He says that the company has "a niche in the market place," offering attractive price points for golfers. He also suggests that Golf North is a great insurance policy – that while in other geographical areas, courses may go bankrupt and disappear, here, Golf North "tends to pick up any courses that might close."

"Golf North introduces people to the game, at a price point where people are participating," Duench pauses. "Our hope is that these people evolve into our fu-

ture members."

Duench's take on the overall business is that it will continue to thrive in this region, although not without significant changes – membership fees are dropping for private courses, and the big kid on the block, Golf North, continues to acquire independent public courses. He points to the waning of the "golf craze" of ten years ago, when "all the new places built were high end." Today, corporate memberships aren't as common, and people are not eager to spend \$100-plus for a round of golf. They want to play – but the ground has shifted, even for the private courses.

Duench understands his own assignment very clearly – he has been brought into Westmount to generate excitement and attract members. "We need more people in the membership here than we currently have."

But his faith in the business – and the game – is rooted in reality. "Golf is still the number one participant sport in Canada," he says. "People are recognizing that it can be a great social activity."

There are plenty of successful golf clubs, but they are those that target a younger demographic, and offer a "family-based" experience, he says.

That's all in the works for Kitchener's prestigious and venerable Westmount. But first, the renovations have to be completed – some by this spring and some by early summer, although golfing will not be disrupted. And is that the end of the changes at the club?

Duench says No: "We're not done here. We're moving forward." – Paul Knowles

MAPLESOFT, UW LAUNCH "STEMS" PROJECT ACROSS THE WORLD

Ian Goulden calls it "a beautiful tool. A powerful engine."

Ian VanderBurgh says, "It's a wonderful opportunity." Jim Cooper adds, "students everywhere will gain."

They're all talking about the rather prosaically named "Secondary School Courseware" project, a partnership of the University of Waterloo, and Maplesoft.

Goulden is Dean of the Faculty of Mathematics at UW. VanderBurgh is Director of the Centre for Education in Mathematics and Computing (CEMC). Cooper is President and CEO of Maplesoft.

And they're all excited about the newly launched partnership, created to provide



From left, Jim Cooper, Steve Furino, and Ian Goulden; Ian VanderBurgh was not available for photo.

"effective, engaging, online education for science, technology, engineering and mathematics courses" – otherwise known as STEMs – at the Grade 12 level.

Another fan is Steve Furino, Associate Dean in the Department of Mathematics, who sees the new project as an important tool in attracting students to math and what are called "the hard sciences." In the past, the university would send representatives into classrooms; the Maplesoft project takes an entire university classroom, professor and all, into high school classrooms.

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Furino told Exchange, "It's a relatively inexpensive outreach. We're already had 6,000 individuals take a look at it within a month, with relatively little advertising. [In contrast] the cost to actually visit schools and see 6,000 people is non-trivial."

The Secondary School Courseware project is part of an initiative to provide engaging online math content for STEM education. And for the teachers and students in classrooms around the world – it is absolutely free of charge. A release says, "Combining rich course materials developed by the University with Maple T.A., Maplesoft's online testing and assessment system, and Maplesoft technology for developing, managing, and displaying dynamic STEM content, the collaboration has produced a platform for engaging and efficient learning."

The first result of the collaboration is the new Secondary School Courseware. This site was launched by CEMC, to support high school students and teachers in their Precalculus and Calculus courses. Interactive investigations and on-screen text with synchronized audio teach the concepts from Grade 12 Advanced Functions (Precalculus) and Grade 12 Calculus and Vectors. In addition, self-assessment questions, exercises, and solutions help consolidate learning.

VanderBurgh told Exchange, "It's been a wonderful opportunity for two groups who do lots of work in mathematics education to get together. The faculty of mathematics and CEMC have always been huge supporters of mathematics in schools and in trying to give teachers resources they can use quickly and effectively in their classrooms. We were able to provide the content, and Maplesoft was able to provide the technology and the engine to make it work and produce a wonderful product. We're really excited to watch this role out."

VanderBurgh added that the new project dovetails perfectly with current trends: "There's also movement in high school education right now, with something called the flipped classroom, where rather than the teacher teaching materials in the classroom and students going home and doing homework, the students watch the material at home and they learn it, and then they come to class and do work in class. A lot of teachers are creating their own videos with great time and effort to do this, but now, if they are teaching one of these courses, they now have a ready resource they can go to." He adds, "Education really is changing; this provides a lot of options. What is unique here is the quality of the material that is captured for world-wide use, and it will live, potentially, for decades. I don't think there is anything else that would come close to the quality of this material... They will be blown away by the quality of the material."

This first roll-out involves Grade 12 calculus, but the experts involved expect it to grow, significantly. They are aiming to cover more areas of mathematics, and to "reach back" grade by grade, ideally bringing this marriage of content and technology to the Grade 7 level, depending on time and resources available.

VanderBurgh says that the solution is a very useful tool in the classroom, but he says a larger purpose, as well. "We could draw people into hard sciences, into math-related programs – I think this has the real potential of doing that. It reverses a trend we have seen in North America, a trend away from hard sciences."

Maplesoft, born in Waterloo, is now a subsidiary of Cybernet Systems Co., Ltd. in Japan. Maplesoft has over 25 years of experience developing products for technical education and research. Its products include Maple, the technical computing and documentation environment; MapleSim, the high-performance, multi-domain modeling and simulation tool for physical systems; and Maple T.A., a web-based system for creating and assessing online tests and assignments. Maplesoft also introduced Clickable Math and Clickable Engineering initiatives.

Over 90% of advanced research institutions and universities worldwide, including MIT, Stanford, Oxford, the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and the U.S. Department of Energy, have adopted Maplesoft solutions to enhance their education and research activities. In industry, Maplesoft's customers include Ford, Toyota, NASA, Canadian Space Agency, Motorola, and DreamWorks, covering sectors such as automotive, aerospace, electronics, defense, consumer products, and entertainment.

XQUOTE

"Waterloo Region is succeeding in creating new business, new employment ... and is revitalizing the economy of the city.... From the municipal government and our education institutions, to an emphasis on incubators, accelerators and discovery spaces, this region has created a network and community that is pivotal to the success that our startups are seeing." – Mike Kirkup, Velocity

MURRAY HAASE HONOURED AT MAYORS' DINNER



Murray Haase - Mayors' Dinner honouree

Waterloo region entrepreneur and "legendary fundraiser" Murray Haase was the Guest of Honour at the Twenty-Eighth Mayors' Dinner in April. The event, co-sponsored by Kitchener Mayor Barry Vrbancovic and Waterloo Mayor Dave Jaworsky, was held to raise funds for The Working Centre and St. John's Kitchen.

Murray Haase's reputation as a businessman was launched in 1971, when he became involved in the Kwikie Minit Markets chain. Haase told Exchange, in his usual forthright fashion, that, "Kwikie started in 1964. I got involved in 1971, when it was broke... I came in to try and turn the company around in 1971. I eventually owned it all in about 1978."

His only retail experience to that point came from owning a small convenience store in Cambridge, which he and his wife founded in 1966. But he built the Kwikie chain to include 32 stores; he sold the chain in the 1980s, to the Nova Scotia company Green Gables.

Haase also has a long-time connection with the hospitality business, and continues as a director of the Mercedes Corporation, based in St. Jacobs. He has been a partner in several hotels, including Homewood Suites in Waterloo, which is owned by Mercedes.

However, he was honoured at the Mayors' Dinner, not for his business success, but for the contributions he has made to his community. The organizing committee said, "Murray Haase is known as a driving force behind many local boards, committees and organizations... When Murray Haase gets behind a project, he gives his complete dedication to helping that project become successful... He is known as a legendary fundraiser."

He has volunteered for Junior Achievement, Family and Children's Services, Grand River and St. Mary's Hospitals, The Working Centre and Lutherwood. He helped create the Kitchener Rotary Club's Dream Home Lottery, and also chaired the Tree of Hope.

THE REAL THREAT TO THE BOOK-SELLING BUSINESS

Wordsworth Books was founded 31 years ago as a shop that sells things in print – books, magazines, and such. So today, three decades later and deep into our ever-evolving digital age, what would you guess to be the biggest threat to Wordsworth's existence?

You probably guessed "e-books." You would be wrong.

Wordsworth Books is owned by David Worsley and Mandy Brouse. They bought the business in 2011 from founders Tricia Siemens and Chuck Erion. Worsley and Brouse agree that readers switching to e-books from print has had a small impact on their business; their biggest current concern is right outside their front



David Worsley and Mandy Brouse of Wordsworth Books

door – the construction of Waterloo Region's new Light Rail Transit system, the ION.

It's not that they are necessarily opposed philosophically to the LRT, and besides, everyone knows that train has left the station. They're worried that the extreme disruption to King Street – their shop is located right on King, in Uptown Waterloo – coupled with the city's concurrent plan to rip up sidewalks as part of a streetscape upgrade, will make it very challenging for customers to reach their store.

The LRT “is almost 100 per cent of what we are focused on right now.”

Worsley also fears that, after the work is all done, the newly upgraded area will be in for newly upgraded rent rates, and he contends that he and his neighbours cannot afford the 50 per cent rate hike some are anticipating.

But while these concerns are very real, the business partners are, bottom line, optimistic – they would have to be optimists, or they might not have purchased a bookstore in 2011. But Brouse insists that was a sensible decision – she joined the Wordsworth staff in 2005, and Worsley had been there since 1999, so both knew “the business from within the industry and from within the bookstore. We saw where the industry was going, we saw the independent book store renaissance on the horizon.”

Worsley adds that the former owners developed a realistic succession plan. “They wanted it to continue. They made it as easy as they could in a dollars and cents kind of way. That's how a most small businesses transfer. It's the only way it can work.”

The three years since the ownership change have been challenging. Year one, the business was moved to a new location, two doors away to 96 King Street South. Year two, in Worsley's words, was “all about e-books” – the technology that was going to destroy print. Now, “the LRT is coming.”

But despite all that, “we are surviving,” says Worsley. In fact, adds Brouse, they have been in the black from the beginning, and have shown modestly improving profits ever since.

On their website, Wordsworth is described as “a champion of the printed word.” The owners – and their four-person staff – truly believe they can carry out that mandate. E-books, once seen as the death knell for such businesses, have actually made a minimal impact on the sales at Wordsworth. Worsley says that at their shop, only “three to five per cent of sales” are lost to e-books, and he adds that studies carried out by the book industry in North America “seem to suggest that the e-book thing has worn off. Now, they are growing by single digits and some are falling back. The trend seems to have stopped or slowed to a crawl.”

Brouse suggests that a full-service independent bookstore like Wordsworth suffers less from e-book competition than Chapters-Indigo, because the big chains

focus on best-sellers, which are more impacted by e-book readership. She adds, “people are starting to realize the assets to having an independent bookstore in the community,” and she points to the United Kingdom, where well-known bookseller Waterstones are opening new stores.

The only thing shaking their current confidence is the unknown impact of LRT construction.

Brouse is now a member of the local BIA, joining to have input into how Waterloo businesses cope with the disruption. One current plan, she says, is to transform the alleyway behind the stores on the east side of King into a pedestrian walkway, with access to the stores, and special events planned to attract shoppers.

She is concerned that the current plan calls for four months of construction to happen this fall. She doubts the time frame – “I'm suggesting four to six months” – and she is lobbying, with others, to push the construction period from pre-Christmas months to next spring, where it would have less impact on the retailers.

But whatever the timing of construction, Brouse and Worsley can't wait for it to be done, so that – having moved, having seen the threat of e-books diminish, having seen discounting reduced at their chain competitors, and, getting past the drama of construction – they can simply enjoy their stated mission as champions of the printed word. – Paul Knowles

IN BUSINESS FOR THE NOT-FOR-PROFITS



Joanne Young Evans, CEO of Peaceworks Technology Solutions

Even the name of the business suggests that there is something unusual going on: “Peaceworks Technology Solutions”. It's as though two significant Waterloo Region worlds have collided – the peace-making, philosophy rooted in the local faith-based community, and the high tech business world that has put Waterloo region on the map.

And that analysis would be spot-on. Peaceworks is indeed a for-profit business, but one specifically designed to serve the not-for-profit sector. It's also a company entirely owned by its own employees.

Joanne Young Evans is CEO at Peaceworks; she came to the company in November, 2013, succeeding Peaceworks founder Nolan Andres, who launched the company in his basement, 20 years ago. Andres left to become Chief Information Officer at the Mennonite Savings and Credit Union.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

Young Evans has a history in not for profit organizations. Most recently, she had served as Executive Director of Guelph Independent Living.

She explains the raison d'être of Peaceworks. "We focus on not for profits. Our client base is mostly not for profit, although we do some for-profit. The for-profits that come to us, they come because of our philosophy and also because of our reputation in the field."

Peaceworks' clients include organizations involved in environmental concerns, health, social justice, education, government, some political parties, faith-based groups, and churches. Specific clients include Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), Ten Thousand Villages, CMHC, Community Health Centres, Alzheimer Society, Kin Canada, Stonehenge (the mental health and addiction service in Guelph), and KW Sexual Assault Support Centre.

Young Evans says that her company has a two-pronged-plus approach to providing service to clients. Asked why Peaceworks does, she flips the question, replying, "What don't we do? We literally are a one-stop shop."

She goes on to explain that, "Organizations are usually software development or infrastructure services. What we offer is everything from hosting and backup, we offer re-selling, we have custom development software, we do data and engagement – customer relations management (CRM), fundraising, charities, all that kind of work. Then we have all our infrastructure services, which is all our tech services. Then we have consulting in all of those areas as well."

In the case of two clients, including MEDA (which has an international footprint), Peaceworks is their complete, outsourced IT department. Young Evans says, "MEDA doesn't have an IT department, and they're global. We're it. We have an expertise across the board, and that's what you get when you out-source."

According to the CEO, human relationships are at the heart of all they do. "When it comes to IT, we're client-relationship focused. You'll have some IT firms where you never know who's going to walk through your door." Whereas at Peaceworks, a tech support person is assigned, individually, to each client. "We match up on personality, on need, based on experience, on skill base, and he will be your partner for life. We always want to be sure that relationship is number one. You want to be able to trust him, to work with him. You don't have a revolving door of tech."

She claims this is one of several key elements that make Peaceworks unique. And she adds, "Also, we have a not for profit experience. It's 20 years that we've been working with not for profits. We understand how they function, we understand cash flows, staffing, privacy issues – that's our knowledge base, we pride ourselves in that." Young Evans claims that the ethical high ground demanded by the not for profit world is the reason some for-profits also seek out their services.

Peaceworks has two offices – about 22 team members are based in KW, another six are in Winnipeg. Both groups are seeing increasing interest from businesses involved in the relatively new "B Corp" initiative. The B Corp ("b" for "benefits") movement promotes the idea that business has a responsibility to look beyond its own bottom line, and to focus on a "triple bottom line" – profits, people and planet. There are 1,200 B Corp registered companies in 35 countries, including about 125 in Canada; Peaceworks was one of the founding businesses.

Young Evans says, "B Corp was very new to me. It's much more prominent in the States, but it's coming along in Canada. It espouses the same philosophies that we do. Our owners are concerned with social justice." In fact, she insists that this fundamental commitment is so strong, "There are clients we would not work with."

Peaceworks is happy to be primarily active in the not for profit field. "With 80% of our clients being not for profit, that's who we go after. We believe their impact is our impact. Our not for profit is really what our core is."

She adds, "We do have for-profit clients who come to our door. They believe in what we do, they're B Corps, they fit into how we function. We're good, and our reputation precedes us. So we want to work with them."

Peaceworks' management structure is unusual, in that the board of directors is made up of employees. The CEO points out that none of the board members report directly to her. Young Evans herself is not yet an owner – staff must be employed for two years before they can become part of the ownership structure. But when that deadline is past, she will definitely join the ownership group, she says.

The CEO believes that employee ownership is an important contributor to the success of the company. "This is an awesome, awesome organization, because you know that when our employees are going out to work with your staff, their reputation is on the line as well. They work here because they are proud of what we do, what we stand for, and the kinds of organizations we work with."

GREATER CHAMBER'S 2015 BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The Greater Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce honoured the best in regional business at the annual Business Excellence Awards. Twelve of the prestigious honours were handed out, including Businesses of the Year, to New Hamburg's Ontario Drive & Gear (over 50 employees), Caudle's Catch (10-50 employees) and Zoup! (1-10 employees).



Photos by Tomaz Adamski

Young Volunteer of the Year award winner Lesley Warren, receiving her award from Feridun Hamdullahpur, President of the University of Waterloo.



Karen Gavan, President & CEO of Economical Insurance, accepting the Employee Engagement Award from the President of Conestoga College, Dr. John Tibbitts.



George Minow, Manager of Health, Safety and Wellness at Kitchener-Wilmot Hydro (R) accepts the Health & Wellness in the Workplace Award from Malcolm Maxwell, President & CEO of Grand River Hospital.



Bill Creighton, Executive Director of Chicopee Ski & Summer Resort (R), accepts the Non-Profit/Charitable award from Paul Eichinger, COO of MTE Consultants.



Alex Mustakas, Artistic Director and CEO of Drayton Entertainment, accepts the Hospitality/Tourism Award from Mary D'Alton, President and Managing Director at the Waterloo Inn Conference Hotel.



Claire Bennett, Manager, Sustainability Office at Wilfrid Laurier University accepts the Environment & Sustainability Award from Murray Costello, District Manager for Waterloo/Brantford of Union Gas Limited.



Al Hayes (R) accepts the Volunteer of the Year Award from Dr. Michael Kelly, Dean, Laurier School of Business & Economics



Ron Caudle, President of Caudle's Catch (L) accepts the Business of the Year (11-50 Employees) Award from Dwayne Kuiper, Partner at Miller Thomson LLP.



Heather McLachlin, CEO of Cowan Insurance Group accepts the Michael R. Follett Community Leader of the Year Award on behalf of Maureen Cowan who was unable to attend. At left is CTV News anchor Meghan Furman, emcee.



Don Shilton, President of St. Mary's General Hospital (L), accepts the Innovation Award from Greg Dunko from BlackBerry.



Daryl Hunter, Owner/Operator of Zoup! (R) accepts the Business of the Year (1-10 Employees) Award from John Deans, Vice-President, Client Relations at S. G. Cunningham Limited.



Michael Eckardt, CEO of Ontario Drive & Gear (L) accepts the Business of the Year (Over 50 Employees) Award from Ross Johnston, Director of Employment Relations, Co-operative Education & Career Action at the University of Waterloo.

BECAUSE THINGS CHANGE

A precise indoor positioning system...
and a world of related applications

by Jon Rohr

Remember that time you got lost driving to a new destination or attraction? Well, if you do, odds are good it wasn't a recent experience. Because the easy availability of location sensors on your smart phone has virtually eliminated that problem.

Location sensors are based on a GPS positioning signal made available, free of charge, during the Clinton years in the US Presidency. The organization that made the most effective use of GPS was the US Military; commercially, it was probably Google, an international giant with a growing footprint in Waterloo Region.

There's another player in the game, by the way, a firm called Esri, which is a leader in geographic information system or GIS, which is crucial to applications such as mapping the world, indoors and out.

Esri recently invested in a Waterloo start-up, a company that is poised to make a very large footprint in the world of indoor positioning. Having just closed a \$1.55 million second round of fund raising, MappedIn is planning to triple their business by year end. Think of what they do as a highly accurate location tool – for use indoors.



Mitchell Butler, left, and Hongwei Liu, co-founders of MappedIn.

Why would you want an indoor positioning app? Well, you may not have been lost in downtown Toronto, but maybe you have been inside a mall, or on a university campus, or in an airport and have no idea where to go. And there, conventional GPS would not be a lot of help. Hongwei Liu, co-founder of MappedIn, explains the problem – GPS has a drawback called “drift”. His own term for it is “jittery”. In other words, unless you have assisted GPS, there is a margin of error of at least 50 cm. Not a problem if you are looking for a house in a specific street. Big problem inside a building, where you might find yourself on the wrong side of a wall.

MappedIn has such potential that Esri Canada is a major investor. This is the only occasion on which Esri has invested outside its own operation; the experts in the field clearly have their eyes on MappedIn.

Liu explains the problem that MappedIn has solved. The drift inherent in GPS “is enough to create a ‘jitter’,” he says, translating that term as “one that feels like this is wrong.” Trust in technology is paramount for any software developer, but “if it keeps moving around, I can’t trust it.”

But while GPS may be fine for road navigation, it has one drawback when users try to apply it to more precise calculations.

Hongwei Liu studied electrical engineering in his first year at UW. But finding his entrepreneurial wings, he dropped out of school, and four years later unabashedly admits that he may either be a big success ... or a big failure. “We’ll see,” he says.

Liu’s company was founded in one of those fragments in time when entrepreneurial people, living in a shared space, create brilliance. “It’s

funny,” he says. “When we started this out of Velocity, we got there and they said, ‘Forget about building a company, just build something cool.’ And so the cool thing we built that first weekend was, ‘let’s help people find stuff’. It was this little show thing.” It was the precursor to MappedIn.

Liu and his team of students wanted to do something with positioning that has been tried for the past two decades – to apply the concept of positioning to “building something that helps people find stuff inside”.

The challenge was not new to the Velocity group. For the past two terms, first cohort Velocity students had attempted to do this, without success.

“We quickly realized that the hardest thing about indoor mapping, is that outdoors, the streets and stores building don’t change much in five years, [but] indoors, they change every two

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days." Liu refers to retail malls, university campuses and airport terminals as examples of locations that can change layouts quickly, sometimes every 30 minutes. So how do you create a system that accurately updates that information and gets it into the hands of users, "because the minute you're wrong is the minute that user walks away for ever."

Liu was born in China, and relocat-

Trust in technology is paramount for any software developer, but "if it keeps moving around, I can't trust it."

ed to Waterloo from Ottawa in 2011. He makes it a point to say he "loves this place". And he has good reason. He was hired as a first year co-op student at Blackberry, at that time called RIM. There, Liu worked in the RF Lab. He included his project in the Lab on his application for Velocity and he was accepted. However, he states, the real reason why he applied was a little more Machiavellian – he did it for the air conditioning. "My buddy got into Velocity, and he said, 'Check it out, I just got accepted into this residence,' I said, cool what's it about – I looked it up, AC!, mine didn't have it, so I said – 'I'm in'."

Liu is a typical engineering entrepreneur – diverse, energetic, eager to throw caution to the wind and take calculated chances. His desire, when met with a challenge, is to "kill it" – which is interpreted as "knocking it right out of the park."

In 2011 Liu, with his Velocity roomies, Mitchell Butler and Leander Lee, started MappedIn, a company they describe as an ingenious platform for indoor mapping and navigation.

The task is called "wayfinding", and it takes indoor property and property managers into the world of

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MappedIn Director of Engineering Ed Wei, right, with federal Minister of State Gary Goodyear, left, and MP Stephen Woodworth at the announcement of a \$600,000 federal investment in the Waterloo start-up.

analytics and ROI.

As a business model Liu and his co founders knew they had something of value, so the first step was to get on TV. "We went on Dragon's Den, that's how people often hear about us, and pretty much the week that we went on Dragon's Den, we also started a separate formal conversation with Esri Canada, about an investment." Esri Canada,

whose parent is headquartered in Redlands California.

"How Dragon's Den works," says Liu, "is that you film and then four months later your episode airs. And so during this four months, we basically had A or B, and Esri made us a much better offer at the end of the day."

When the show was aired, "we looked really good and for a while that was all the marketing required".

And that's perfect, because Liu isn't very fond of fundraising. "I would say fundraising is one of those areas of weakness... We've always focused on our customers, we've always focused on building something we know they want. Fundraising to me is such a distraction, so I try to avoid it as much as possible."

That attitude hasn't stopped their growth. Liu provides an example using two of his most recent clients, Brookfield Properties and Oxford Properties, two of the world's largest property managers. Managing properties typically involves dealing with three groups: visitors, tenants and maintenance staff. On the customer service side, property managers most likely have a team to manage ongoing development and changes. There would be a team that hires a contractor "to make pretty maps", another contractor "takes the pretty map and puts it on their website" and a third consultant "makes a custom mobile application for the public".

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On the tenant side, they would have a leasing team that would do something “completely separate from everybody else because they need a six hour turn around time to present a tenant a new floor plan they just engaged”.

In addition there are facility managers, cleaning staff, supplies and equipment storage, and all the details of a complex facility.

“So you have these really, large sophisticated organizations, that have this super fragmented process of managing this information,” says Liu,

Their number one goal is to “help you centralize that information, digitize it, and provide better tools to collaborate and update and maintain this information.”

“and they throw it out every two months because it’s so out of date. “

Liu says that system once actually functioned but, as a result of available technology, it’s now a “highly inefficient mess”. MappedIn’s number one goal is to “help you centralize that information, digitize it, and provide better tools to collaborate and update and maintain this information.” Liu cites a considerable amount of time saving: “Five hours [cut] to 15 minutes ... How much better would that be?”

Once MappedIn’s digital infrastructure is in place, “everything else we do”, says Liu, “is really a layer above.”

The “layer above” are the next steps in maximizing the big data collected. “If we already have all of your digital data, this is the best way for you to manage your space. It’s a natural step for us to build some applications that help you communicate locations to people.”

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Butler, right, and Liu: "Three months ago we noticed people are saying, 'I need to do this.'"

cations, plug-ins to websites. Applications that were never considered three years ago, now, "kind of just follow naturally".

The last stage is to analyze what's happening – not just the traffic but also, say in the case of a mall or airport, in-location revenue. "The problem with our big data," says Liu, "is

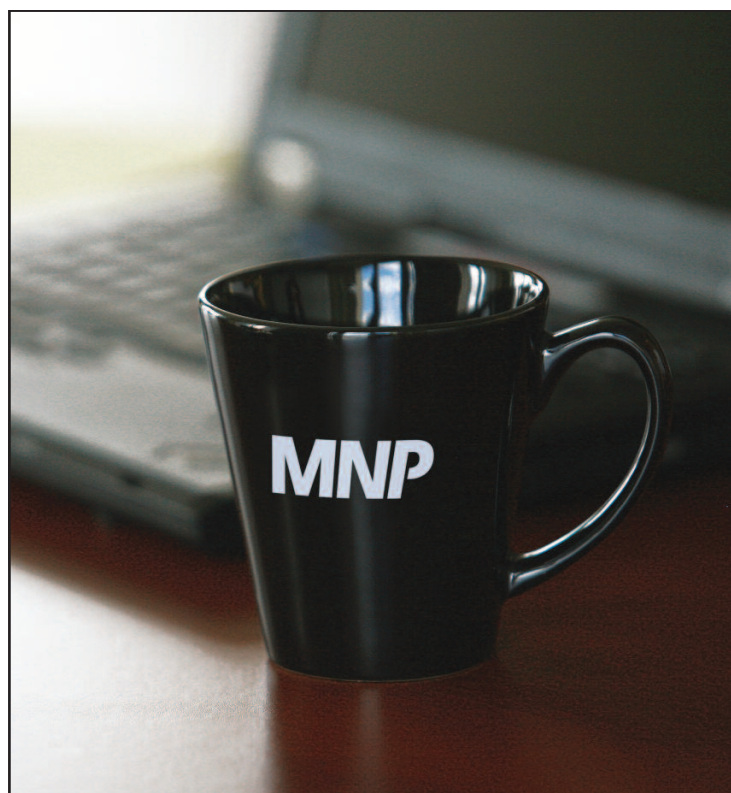
that every business has just so much incoming data, and it's hard to make any sense of it, because, here is one Excel table, here's one Microsoft Access, here's one SQL server and different services are creating different things, and trying to tell you a message and we think that at least for a lot of our businesses, a lot of our

clients, who operate these large business facilities indoors, the best way to make sense of all that is visually."

A customer can load that up on their terminal and see "the interactions between traffic and revenue."

MappedIn is hesitant to get involved in tracking on their own. "We're really interested in the possibilities of tracking, we just don't want to do it ourselves. The reason is because BlackBerry has billions of dollars to throw at this, Qualcomm has even more billions to throw at this. We're a software company, we're already solving a pretty hard challenge."

Until now, the main problem was, the world was not ready for MappedIn. "Four years ago, we started trying to do this and people were like, 'Oh, that's kind of interesting,' and then we had to convince people as to why it was a good idea." But times change. "Three months ago we noticed people are saying, 'I need to do this. You're



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one of the people I'm talking to – why are you better?"

Liu and his colleagues have been waiting for this. "We've been building the only scalable software platform to do this properly. We have lots of competitors... we haven't lost a customer in four years. We're live in over forty sites and we expect to be in over 100 sites by the end of the year."

MappedIn prefers to develop with partners who are also investors. They belong to a global organization, the Inlocation Alliance. It's chaired by Nokia, and includes Qualcomm, Sony, Broadcom, and Cisco among the executive. "Mostly all the guys who make all the phones and routers, are part of this organization – except Apple, because they like to do their own thing".

Liu believes his company has "the optimal solution for indoor positioning" and Esri appears to believe in

that too. What makes MappedIn unique is what Liu refers to as "sensor fusion", which is what the inlocation Alliance is essentially setting up for. The alliance is made up of global companies where half of the membership makes phones and other half

"We haven't lost a customer in four years. We're live in over forty sites and we expect to be in over 100 sites by the end of the year."

make routers. With cell phones getting smart enough, "thorough sensory circuitry," Liu says, "you can use the existing WiFi footprint, to correct for the inaccuracies of GPS, "that is available everywhere".

"You don't need to invest in any hardware, you don't need a really dense WiFi network, just for positioning." Liu says that in most cases, "you rely 90 % of the time with the onboard sensors, which are energy efficient, completely proprietary, safe

and secure, and then every so often you correct for that extra meter that the signal has gone in the wrong direction". Liu states that this technology "should happen in the next eighteen months."

Mappedin software is natively compatible: "All our data is geo referenced, and all of engines are compatible with the concept of positioning or using GSI applications owned by investor

Esri." GIS is effectively the power of mapping that lets us visualize, question, analyze, and interpret data to understand relationships, patterns, and trends based on location and geography. "Esri " says Liu "is surprisingly entrenched."

With 22 employees, closing a \$1.55 million deal, and a mission to triple revenue in 2015, Liu and his team continue to surprise customers and investors... and meaningful surprises always makes you better. **X**



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Olga and Dejan (Dan) Radulovic

DAN AND OLGA RADULOVIC HAVE PURCHASED the regional territory of **JDI Cleaning**, which includes 40 franchises. The Radulovics were once one of the 40 franchisees. Dan's parents, who has

been working at JDI since its beginning, got them involved in their own franchise. His parents retired, but not before his uncles and brother all opened up franchises of their own.

The Radulovics took the leap, and acquired the territory from **Martin Rombout**, who is moving toward retirement; he is in the contract phase of his agreement, so he remains involved in the business.

"Everything is amazing," says Dan. The territory encompasses Kitchener-Waterloo, Guelph, Brantford, Cambridge, Fergus, and surrounding area.

The new territory owners say the experience they gained operating their own franchise translates well into managing all 40. JDIs are located though Southern Ontario; head office is in Burlington.

Olga says, "As a franchise owner you have to keep your handful of businesses happy. In this position you have to keep 400 clients and 40 different franchises happy."

They anticipate growth in the business, hoping to double its size within the next ten years.

MAPLE LEAF FOODS IS CONTRIBUTING \$200,000 to the Waterloo Region Museum to

preserve the important legacy and artifacts of **Schneider Foods** in the region. As part of the contribution, Maple Leaf is donating more than 250 Schneiders artifacts that have been carefully preserved and catalogued over the company's more than 100-year history.

The Museum will showcase select artifacts in a new Schneiders display as part of the Museum's expanded home-life exhibit, which it expects to complete by 2016. Artifacts will also be showcased in other locations in the Museum's Long-term Gallery in early 2015 until the expansion is complete.

VITAMETER, A COMPANY that created a hand-held device that measures your vitamin levels to help ensure proper dosage, was the biggest winner at the **Velocity Fund Finals** held at the University of Waterloo.

During the Velocity Fund Finals, 10 companies pitched their businesses to a panel of judges. Vitameter is one of two life-sciences companies to win the one of the prizes worth \$25,000, plus an additional \$10,000 to cover start-up costs.

For the first time, the other grand-prize winners all have female co-founders. Three other companies were also grand-prize winners of \$25,000 and space at the Velocity Garage and Velocity Foundry: **Fotofox**, **Pout**, and



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K-W ENTREPRENEUR EUGENE GEORGE HAS DIED.

The man who brought the **Kitchener Rangers** to town passed away on March 31, at the age of 84.

George was a significant contribu-



tor to the region, both as a businessman (he founded **GA Masonry, Patene Building Supplies** and **CareLift Equipment**) and as a sportsman (also known for his involvement in horse racing).

THE UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO and **Grand River Hospital** have launched a partnership to enable academics and clinicians to collaborate on research that will benefit patient care and enrich university research.

The collaborative research partnership is the next stage of a long relationship between university researchers and clinicians at the hospital who will bring their clinical and academic skills together to engage in collaborative research projects. This partnership will increase research and innovation activity at GRH.



Photo: Jennifer Condit, Grand River Hospital

Gathered at the announcement of the new Research Centre were, left to right, Ken Seiling, Regional Chair; Geoff Bellew, Vice-Chair, Board of Directors, Grand River Hospital; Tina Mah, Vice-President, Planning and Performance Management, Grand River Hospital; James Danckert, professor, University of Waterloo; Malcolm Maxwell, President and CEO, Grand River Hospital; Feridun Hamdullahpur, President and Vice-chancellor, University of Waterloo; D. George Dixon, Vice-President, University Research, University of Waterloo; Peter Braid, Member of Parliament, Kitchener-Waterloo; Kitchener Mayor Berry Brannanovic.

As part of the collaborative research partnership, the hospital will provide University-affiliated researchers with workspace at its KW and Freeport sites. The two organizations will develop a shared research agenda that supports patient care while developing new evidence to improve health outcomes.

JOHN MILLOY, FORMER ONTARIO CABINET MINISTER, MPP for Kitchener Centre and senior adviser to former prime minister Jean Chrétien — has been appointed assistant professor of public ethics and co-director of the Centre for Public Ethics at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, and a position as the inaugural practitioner-in-residence in applied political science at Wilfrid Laurier University.

THE UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH'S Board of Governors has appointed **Charlotte Yates** as provost and vice-president (academic). Her five-year term begins August 1. Yates has served as dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at McMaster University for the past seven years.

CN HAS ANNOUNCED A \$500,000 DONATION to support research and education programs at the **Centre for Supply Chain Management** in the School of Business and Economics at Wilfrid Laurier University. **Claude Mongeau**, CN president and CEO, said: "CN's donation will support internships and a cooperative education program, providing experience and summer employment to students."

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LANDSCAPE ONTARIO

Photo courtesy Simpson Print



Tony Denison, right, and Martin Johans, of Simpson Print.

TONY DENISON HAS TAKEN OVER the day-to-day leadership of **Simpson Print** of Bloomingdale, Ont. "Simpson has always been a great company," Denison commented "We are going to take it to new levels as the printing business evolves and creates exciting new opportunities." **Martin Johans** remains owner and chair of Simpson, the company he bought in 1987. Denison assumed the presidency March 2, 2015. Simpson operates a 50,000-square-foot shop offering customers screen, UV-offset and digital printing on a broad selection of substrates, from paper to plastic. Products range from decals and large-format display signage for retailers, to books, posters, brochures and stationary.

ONTARIO IS HELPING DC FOODS EXPAND its manufacturing capacity to grow its busi-

ness and create 50 new jobs while retaining 151 existing positions in the Waterloo region. "We are excited about the doors this expansion project will open, and we look forward to drawing from the region's skilled workforce as we grow our team here in Waterloo. We are grateful for Ontario's support as we invest in our company's long-term growth and success", said **Don Kilimnik**, General Manager, DC Foods.

DC Foods is a food processing plant that specializes in breaded chicken, fish and red meat products for private labels. Support from the **Southwestern Ontario Development Fund** will help the company invest in an expansion project that will increase production capacity by more than 30 per cent and enable DC Foods to produce a greater variety of products.

MIKE KIRKUP, DIRECTOR of the University of Waterloo's startup program **Velocity**, and **Brian Zubert**, Executive in Residence at **Communitech**, aim to walk the talk as they launch an app of their own: **Score More Baseball**.

The mobile app Score More Baseball has launched for Android, BlackBerry, and iOS. Score More Baseball makes baseball scorekeeping so fast and easy that any coach, teammate, or parent



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THE CAMBRIDGE CAMPUS OF CONESTOGA COLLEGE hosted the official launch of a new applied research facility that will drive innovation, commercialization, productivity improvement and competitiveness for Ontario's manufacturing sector. **The Centre for Smart Manufacturing** provides a regional hub for applied research to support the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the manufacturing sector. **X**

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The Dean told Exchange, "A lot of the initial focus has been on alumni development. As I came, they were launching the fundraising campaign for the business school. Phase One of the university's fundraising campaign is dedicated to the school of business and economics, and so I have spent a lot of time going around with my hand out, which is what business schools do a lot of, these days."

But he insists that he doesn't simply want to collect cheques from alumni. Kelly sees them playing a much big-

ger role than as donors. "We also put a big push on re-engaging the alumni with the school. A lot of my efforts in the last two years have been [focused on] meeting alumni... I have now met about 1,500, and it's been a great experience. They are really committed to the school, they take a great deal of pride in having gone here, they look for ways of being re-engaged with the institution, they have gone on to do great things."

Kelly wants to involve Laurier business grads as mentors, advisors, judges on case competition, and members of Laurier SBE advisory boards. He has created four alumni-based advisory boards in addition to the existing board based in Kitchener-Waterloo.

And again, he is forthright about the changes that are needed. He says the Laurier school had followed the usual pattern of recruiting "names". "The board I inherited had a lot of names on it, that never came. I never heard from them, never met them. I'd rather have... people who were committed to helping us move the school ahead."

He adds, "I built alumni-based advisory boards... I'm more interested in having people who are committed to helping us move ahead." The Dean has built alumni boards by recruiting leading corporate figures in Calgary, Ottawa, New York City and Silicon Valley.

These are not 'drinks and discussion' groups. "The goal

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

of these boards is specifically to help us expand our co-op programs... in New York City, in Silicon Valley, in Calgary."

Kelly admits that his school has "limited marketing resources, so we have to think of creative ways to spread the word." Convincing alumni to promote Laurier is the biggest weapon he has in his arsenal.

He adds, "I've got 20,000 alumni. If I can get them to be brand ambassadors, they're going to have a lot more impact than an ad in the Globe and Mail."

Kelly points out some of the top selling points – the strengths of Laurier's SBE. "It does a really good job of blending a great classroom experience with a really good 'immersive' experience." Students are involved in projects outside the classroom from early in their first year.

As well, "We've built our own venture capital fund where students make investments in start-up companies. Real money, a million and a half dollars." The students involved, mainly fourth year MBA students, work with local mentors.

Says Kelly, "We've made three investments in local companies." ROI was an amazing 43% in 2014.

He also points to the Laurier Launchpad, a start-up program that has already created almost 20 new businesses.

The Dean believes his school needs to do a better job of

seizing the narrative about Waterloo education.

"What's really unique about this community... wasn't my perception before I came here. Only after I arrived and starting talking to companies did I realize that a lot of the technology and the founders have come out of UW, but most people told me that, when they hired Laurier business grads, the companies took off. It's really the marriage of UW computer science, math and engineering and Laurier business that is driving the growth of this community.

We've done a lousy job of telling that story, of demonstrating what an impor-

"We've done a lousy job of telling that story, of demonstrating what an important resource we have."

tant resource we have."

Kelly is anticipating the move into the Global Innovation Exchange. "...Great student space, great activity space.... We've got access through our alumni, to a variety of really interesting speakers, but we have no place to host them. We have the opportunity to do a lot of case competitions, bringing other business schools in, but we really have no place to host it." He sees the GIE as "a community venue, to bring the business community into the school, to make a higher level of engagement between the school and the business community."

Kelly is also excited because "The business school needs a brand that is both separate and related to the university brand. We're very close to having a name of the school



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"We're very close to having a name of the school which will be a big part of the brand."

which will be a big part of the brand."

Kelly believes that the Waterloo community is second to none as an incubator for start-ups, but "where the gap is, is on growing companies. This is where management skills play a really important role. This is one of the best places in Canada to have a business school because the dynamism of the industrial sector. We are in one of the leading tech-

nology communities in North America... Our contribution is to find ways to create the management talent to grow the companies that are being founded in this community so we're not losing them. So we can actually grow them into global competitors based in Waterloo."

His is an expansive vision: "The growth of southern Ontario is going to be generated by what happens in Waterloo, not only the tech sector but the manufacturing sector that grows around the tech sector... so we need to be a key player in helping companies develop. Tech companies can play a big role in regenerating the vibrancy of the manufacturing sector and universities have a big role to play in that."

He praises Laurier students: "Recruiters I've talked to say the same thing: they love our students because they know what it is to work – they've been on co-ops; they have a great attitude, they know how to work in teams. And what they really like about them is, they have no sense of entitlement. They don't believe they should be promoted within three weeks on the job."

He recalls the words of a corporate CEO: "'Your kids are the ones who go into the corner to get the puck. They don't wait out by the blue line for it to come out.' That's the reputation Laurier has in the business community."

That's a reputation Dean Michéal Kelly can build on. X

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“LAURIER HAS DONE AN AWFUL JOB OF MARKETING”

Laurier’s business dean determined to shine the spotlight on “the best program in Canada”

BY EXCHANGE MAGAZINE

Michéal Kelly is a noted expert in business strategy, and his current responsibilities lean heavily toward marketing. But he sure doesn’t sugar-coat his message.

“Laurier as an institution has done an awful job of marketing itself,” he says. Dr. Michéal Kelly is the Dean of Wilfrid Laurier’s School of Business and Economics. And he’s what might be termed, optimistically frustrated. He’s enthusiastically optimistic because “we think we have the best undergraduate business program in the country. I think this is where our brand is built. A lot of the top CEOs in the country are BBA alumni.”

And he says he has ongoing faith in WLU. “Despite all the frustrations of the university and budget cuts and everything else going on and swirling around, this is a fantastic school.”

Kelly can talk passionately about all the solid evidence of success that supports his claim of primacy for his school, but he’s frustrated that the world doesn’t know what he knows – that Laurier is a quality institution. “We are a great school. We just don’t have the brand that reflects the quality of education.”

He says, again, “The brand isn’t there. The brand doesn’t

have the same cachet.... It hasn’t been a priority. Business schools are in a very competitive marketplace, for faculty, for students, for dollars, for corporate sponsorship. Brand plays a key role.”

Kelly came to the school in July, 2012, and clearly sees his job as changing that reality. It’s a work in progress, but well underway.

“We are a great school. We just don’t have the brand that reflects the quality of education.”

Kelly was Dean of the Telfer School of Management, in Ottawa, for a decade, until 2010. He was Chairman of the Six Countries Program, a European research network on innovation and technology policy,

and he’s past President and Executive Board Member of the Canadian Federation of Business School. During his 2010-2012 sabbatical he was an Executive in Residence with the Canadian Advanced Technology Alliance.

But now, his focus is on Laurier.

The School of Business and Economics will move into the much anticipated, \$103 million Global Innovation Exchange sometime in the next 12 months. That’s an exciting prospect, but Kelly has not waited for the new quarters to kick-start his push to promote Laurier’s school of business.



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