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MAGAZINE FOR ENTREPRENEURS / ENTERPRISES / ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS / EDUCATORS

Vol. 32 No. 7 July/August 2015 - \$6.95

## FAMILY BUSINESS



**Not just a “Mom & Pop”  
operation at  
Trade-Mark Industrial**

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- The artistry of sign making
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On the cover: the astonishing growth of Trade-Mark Industrial

## EXCHANGE

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## DYNAMISM!

Area family businesses with panache

by PAUL KNOWLES



PAUL KNOWLES is editor of Exchange Magazine. He is an author and public speaker  
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The phrase “Family business” can sometimes conjure up a rather laid-back image, kind of a “Mom & Pop” sort of thing.

So it's a pleasure to do some mold-breaking with this issue, as we feature several family businesses that smash the stereotypes.

Consider, for example, Trade-Mark Industrial, most definitely a family business (including Mom and Pop and their five children), but not in any way laid back: Trade-Mark employs hundreds of people, and has just moved into a new 365,000 square foot facility.

We also interviewed brothers Steve and Frank Voisin, who have launched their first joint venture, redeveloping the original Goudies Department Store. It's hard to know which has made more local history – the building, an iconic landmark in the community, or the Voisin family. Steve and Frank's grandfather, also named Frank Voisin, launched his land development business 70 years ago. Frank's sons, especially Greg and Mac, are entrepreneurial legends. And now, Greg's sons Steve and Frank are partnering in an exciting project in the revitalized heart of Kitchener.

A family business that trumps even the Voisin legacy of longevity is the Jukes family, whose great-grandfather, Reuben Jukes, founded Signs by Jukes, 75 years ago. Today, the fourth generation is in the house, as great-grandson Paul is VP of the company, bringing an artistic sense to the craft, a creativity his fascinating ancestor would have appreciated.

X

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Photo Courtesy Paul Knowles

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# HARMONY AND PROSPERITY

*Managing the complex factors in selling a family firm*

by DOUG DAWDY



DOUG DAWDY, CPA CA, CBV, CF IS A MANAGING DIRECTOR OF KPMG CORPORATE FINANCE INC., DOUG IS BASED IN WATERLOO, ONTARIO.

**B**ackground: Sunset Distribution Enterprises was founded in the 1970s by John, who continues to act as President of the company, most often from his condo in Florida. The company has grown significantly over the past 35 years, particularly through the late 1990s. His son and daughter are both active in the business, one as a Sales Manager and the other as General Manager.

The Canadian industry has experienced increased U.S. competition as the large public company competitors take a more

aggressive approach to the market. Neither Mike nor Meghan are really interested in increasing their managerial duties. In fact, there is some concern that both are looking to make a lifestyle change. John initially ignored his children's plans; however, it is now time to make some decisions and he is considering selling the company.

As business advisors, this is the scenario we are faced with all too often. Business owners need to consider the dynamics within the family business in relation to the roles of family, ownership and manage-

By and large, the current M&A market is favourable to the seller. Strategic acquirers have indicated their desire to complete more transactions in 2015.

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ment, and how the three intersect. These dynamics must be balanced against the family business goals, which should include: family harmony and long term financial prosperity, when considering a selling transaction.

Generally we are contacted at some point during the selling decision making process and the sooner, the better. During this process, the issue of maximizing shareholder value when considering a transaction is commonly one of the more important issues that a business owner wants to address.

Value will be impacted by controllable, typically internal, items and also external market factors. Controllable factors of consequence can generally be summarized as "getting your house in

Family business owners should continually assess their position in the market place, their plans, and their readiness for future activities, which may include an ownership transition.

order" from a financial, operational, tax and legal perspective. Nowadays, both strategic and financial buyers have increased the level and complexity of due diligence they are completing in getting deals done. Make sure you are ready.

External market dynamics will also have a significant effect on value and the ability to consummate a transaction. By and large, the current M&A market is favourable to the seller. Strategic acquirers have indicated their desire to complete more transactions in 2015. Private equity in the U.S. has over \$450B of assets

under management that is available for investment and there is increased availability in the debt markets. A seller should always balance these factors against the competitive landscape within an industry.

We would advise family business owners to continually assess their position in the market place, their plans, and their readiness for future activities, which may include an ownership transition. Consider the following questions as they pertain to your family business: do family members think like investors; is there a realistic strategic plan; does the company have a leadership development and transition plan?

In our experience, business owners like John at Sunset Distribution do not put enough time and consideration into answering these questions. X



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## FISH! FOR FAMILY BUSINESS



In May, 2012, my wife Terri and I had the pleasure of spending a day at the incredible Pike Place Market in Seattle, Washington. We saw a large crowd gathering around the Fish Market. Lunch hour visitors as well as tourists were stopping to watch the employees in action. The employees were fun loving, entertaining and totally engaged with their audience. Their energy was compelling and contagious as they conducted their daily tasks at the fish market. What a great atmosphere!

When I dug a little deeper into this fabulous work setting I discovered that this

business – world famous for its incredible energy and commitment to service – inspired the FISH! Philosophy. The workers at the Fish Market have a difficult and cold job every day. However, they decided they could change the way they approached their jobs. Instead of complaining about their working conditions, these employees developed four simple, yet profound, principles that guide them each day at work and at home.

### The FISH! Principles

After having the same experience as my wife and I, John Christensen created the FISH! Philosophy in 1998 and many businesses have since used the principles to great success. What he recognized was these workers developed four interconnected principles that built stronger relationships with each other as well as with the customers they serve.

The principles:

**Be There :** Being emotionally present for people. It is a powerful message of respect that strengthens relationships.

**Play :** Tapping into your natural way of being creative and having fun. It allows curiosity and enthusiasm to flow in childlike wonder without being childish. Play is an attitude you can bring to everything you do.

**Make Their Day :** Finding simple ways to connect with everyone you encounter for no other reason than to serve them in a meaningful way.

**Choose Your Attitude :** Taking responsibility for how you want to show up in this world. While you cannot control what happens to you, you can decide how to respond. You control your attitude.

These four principles help us focus our energy to ensure we impact our businesses and in a positive way. FISH! is about choices and awareness. FISH! gives us a new language. It impacts how we treat each other. It helps us influence others positively and ensures the importance of always being present in our daily interactions.

### FISH! For Family Businesses

In November, 2014, the Centre for Family Business invited Deb Fawcett (aka The FISH! Lady) to our breakfast event to share the FISH! Principles and practices with our members. The response to Deb's presentation was so positive, our members wanted more. A second FISH! Presentation took place in April, 2015. Almost 100 participants enjoyed each event. One of our member organizations registered 20 of their staff for the April event.

What can family businesses learn From the FISH! Principles?

**Be There:** When dealing with customers, be attentive 100% of the time. Make them feel important. Is that not the way that we want to be treated? Pay attention. Notice when someone is down and be supportive toward him or her.

**Play:** How can everyday tasks be made fun and challenging? Play is not about games or toys. It is about our state of mind. Be creative in our problem solving. Encourage people to dare to dream. Give them the freedom to innovate. The energy will multiply.

**Make Their Day:** Turn an everyday encounter into a pleasant one for someone. Our kindness, patience and thoughtfulness will be returned. We might even enjoy making someone's day. Look at grumpy people as a challenge. What will bring a

smile to their face?

We can value and recognize others through planning a customer appreciation day or providing a special service for loyal customers. We can reward our staff for years of service with restaurant vouchers or a holiday on their birthdays. We can provide bulletin boards for sharing special event pictures of births, birthdays, weddings or anniversaries, etc. We can have pizza parties and develop wellness programs that include healthy meal preparation, weight loss or smoking cessation.

**Choose Your Attitude:** We can consciously choose how we show up at work, at home and at play. When we make a conscious effort, we will recognize our impact. When we choose to make the FISH! practices part of our lives, we will notice a positive differences, not only in our businesses and relationships but also within ourselves. - Dave Schnarr is Executive Director, Centre for Family Business

## CFFB HONOURS FAMILY BUSINESSES AT ANNUAL GALA

The Centre for Family Business held its annual Gala on May 28, to honour milestone anniversaries of its members, to hand out awards for business leadership and volunteer contributions, to thank family business owners who have spoken to the CFFB in the past year, and to celebrate the significant role family businesses play in the economy of Waterloo Region. Keynote speakers for the evening included Dave Schnarr, Rick Baker and Sheila Hannon, CFFB's incoming president.



Dave Gascho (Gascho Automotive) & Anne and Lewis Straus, Lewis Straus Construction 30 year anniversary.



Barry Reid (representing Flanagan's on behalf of Dan Flanagan), speaker, & Rick Baker



Sigrd Gibson, Stu Gibson, Jessica Gibson (Gibson Sound & Vision) & Sarah McNeil (BMO Nesbitt Burns) & CFFB Board Member - Gibson's 60 year anniversary

Photo courtesy CFFB





Jon Rohr, left, family business speaker and Donald Linders, Georef Systems (CFFB Board Member)



Sheila Hannon (Systems Plus) CFFB's incoming President, Tim Martin (Country Lane Builders) & Clare Martin (Homestead Woodworks), family business speakers.



Michelle Tupman (Great Canadian Holidays & Coaches) CFFB Board Member, speaker and 20 year anniversary, with Rick Baker, CFFB Board Member and speaker.



Stu Gibson (Gibson Sound & Vision), winner of the Board Recognition Award & Dave Gascho (Gascho Automotive) CFFB Board Member



Garry Ruttan (Systems Plus), Sabrina Fitzgerald (PwC) & CFFB Board Member, Gina Ruttan (Systems Plus) & Sheila Hannon (Systems Plus) - Systems Plus 30 year anniversary



Donald Linders (Georef Systems) CFFB Board Member, Marilyn & Garnet Shaver (Minotaur Stormwater Services), 15 year anniversary



Matt Caudle (Caudles Catch Seafood) accepting the Leadership Award for his father, Ron Caudle & Dean Jutzi (D.H. Jutzi) CFFB Board Member



Sheila Hannon (Systems Plus) Leadership Award Recipient & Rick Baker



## FAMILY BUSINESS: RE-MAKING HISTORY



Steve, left and Frank Voisin at 8 Queen

It's a project that is absolutely packed full of historic resonance. The building is historic, and a repository of generations of nostalgia. The new owners have a 70-year family history in Waterloo Region. And the entire undertaking is one part of the ongoing, dynamic, historic redevelopment of the cores of Kitchener and Waterloo.

The building? Generations of Kitchener shoppers knew it as Goudies Department Store, located at 8 Queen Street North, the original home of the business before it grew to reach King Street (that addition now houses TheMuseum, which is unaffected by the redevelopment).

The redevelopers? Frank and Steve Voisin, sons of Greg Voisin of Boardwalk and Sunrise Centre fame, and grandsons of veteran KW developer Frank Voisin, who launched his development business 70 years ago.

The brothers – Steve is President of Brick by Brick Developments, and Frank is President of Voisin Capital – began working toward the purchase of the 40,000 square foot building from owner Abraham Mathew, last fall. Mathew, who owns and operates a thriving religious art studio, will continue to operate his business in the high-ceiling basement of 8 Queen. The sale closed June 1.

The Voisin brothers both work with their father, Greg, in many of his projects, and have also collaborated with partners on other endeavors, but Steve says this is the first time the two have been sole partners in a venture.

Frank told Exchange that the building was irresistible. “This is where it's all happening,” he said, referring to the core area of Kitchener. “This is the centre of the universe, right now.” He believes that “this is the end” of the 30-year decline in downtown Kitchener – the very situation that put Goudies out of business.

The building – which the partners say is in amazingly good shape, bottom to top – was constructed in 1925. Relics of that era are still at 8 Queen today – including a large safe, locked tight since Goudies closed in 1988. No one knows what, if anything, is locked inside, and Steve says it will be opened sometime this summer.

The building is full of historic details – beautiful hardwood floors and wooden ceilings, panel-and-glass offices that were the headquarters for Mr. Goudie, as well as perhaps the last operating vintage freight elevator in downtown Kitchener.

History will be honoured – the brothers intend to pay tribute to the Goudie family with historic articles and memorabilia put on display throughout the building – but modern style will also be embraced. The building is currently two-and-a-half storeys. The top floor was two-thirds completed by the Goudies, and a wooden floor extended out toward Queen Street and then covered by a flat roof. The Voisins are going to complete the building with a dramatic, glass structure. The roof of the third storey will then house the largest roof-top patio in the region, says Frank.

The redeveloped building will include office space on the second and third floors, and retail or hospitality opportunities on the first floor, which will include a mezzanine.

“There's going to be more and more demand for retail and commercial space,” says Frank, from the kind of companies that are attracted to restored, historic buildings with the kind of unique details found at the former Goudies.

Frank has lived in Europe, and sees the cores of Kitchener and Waterloo about to transform into vibrant city centres like those in European cities. He points to the number of “highly skilled people who are going to be living in the core,” because of all the influx of digital businesses, and the coming of Light Rail Transit.

Steve notes, as well, that while the LRT will create transportation alternatives, 8 Queen is within moments of a lot of covered automobile parking – in fact, the walkway from a covered parking lot at Duke and Ontario, to TheMuseum, is a corridor right through the centre of their building, which will give access to 8 Queen.

Steve is very excited about the partnership with his brother. He says, “It is great working with my brother on this project; Frank brings his financial and legal expertise and I bring my construction background. Together we feel we can contribute something of value that the community can be proud of and continue our family's long history as developers in the Region.” – Paul Knowles

## SIGN-MAKERS THROUGH FOUR GENERATIONS

When you listen to Paul Jukes, it seems as though things have come full circle for the four-generation Kitchener company, “Signs by Jukes”. It was founded by Paul's great-grandfather, Reuben (Rube) Jukes, an artist, one-time vaudeville strong man and entrepreneur. Rube brought a passion for art to his trade; today, after generations of technological innovation in the sign-making business, his great-grandson is interested in combining artistic skills with technology.

This is the 75th anniversary of the founding of Signs by Jukes. Reuben passed away in 1959, at age 71, but his successors – his son, Don, Don's son, Lee, and Lee's son, Paul, sat down with Exchange magazine to talk about 75 years in business. Today, Don is retired, while Lee serves as President and Paul, as VP.

Rube's descendants delight in telling stories about the man. Lee recalls, “He fought in the first war; he was gassed, was in an infirmary in England, after the war, he joined a vaudeville troupe across the US and Canada, as a strong man, and as an artist – he did the backdrops for the stage performances.”

One of his stunts involved carrying a grand piano across the stage, on his back, while two girls played the instrument. Rube also pulled busses and trucks up hills – with his teeth.

You get the impression Lee is understating the case when he says, “He was quite a character.”

Reuben brought his artistic talents to a trade, first working with a KW signpainting firm, and then starting his own businesses in partnership with another painter. He launched out on his own, in 1940, in a building beside his home on Onward Avenue. Don joined the company as a full time staff member in 1947. The company moved to its present location on Whitney Place in 1958.

Don recalls that, like the other sign painters of the era, Rube truly saw himself as an artist, painting landscapes and other works of art, and selling them from time to time. “Some guys were really artists, but they didn't make money painting pictures... that was the case with my Dad. He taught art lessons in our building on Onward. He had an art gallery upstairs in the house.

“During the first world war, he made 150 paintings right on the battlefield. Our family still has them. He sent them home to his mother. He was acting illegally... he was supposed to be an artist working for the government.”

Don also paints, although he claims he is not as talented as his father was.

Lee does not attempt artistic endeavors (“I did the spraying and the screen printing and the installation”) but Paul has caught the bug, convinced in that let-



Founder Reuben Jukes

Photo courtesy Jukes Family





From left, Don, Lee and Paul Jukes

tering by hand is more artistic – and often produces a more satisfactory result. So some of his work – including the new Signs by Jukes logo – was lettered by hand, and then reproduced by current technology, a happy marriage of tradition and tech.

Hands-on craftsmanship is essential in the sign trade. Paul points out that “Any sign is completely custom, not off the shelf. Any product we make – there are some that are kind of standard regarding height and width, but most things are completely custom.”

Despite Paul’s ongoing artistic interest, he admits that the days of any widespread use of hand-lettering are gone; so is silk-screening, in the sign-making trade. Today, the business involves cut vinyl and digital reproduction – and sign-makers have to be familiar with structural media including “plastics, metals, vinyls, adhesives, paint, you’re working with glass, sometimes you’re contracting masons and working with concrete, it’s really every medium available,” according to Paul.

He explains, though, how hand-lettering still has a place – when coupled with technology. “Hand-lettering is trendy, now, especially in big cities like New York. People are doing it now, but usually just young guys who are trying to reinvent it, but it’s not going to take over big industry signs. It’s not suitable. But what I see are people who letter by hand on a small scale and then reproduce it in larger scale... that’s what I like to do. Lettering, not a font.”

For many years, the Jukes family also ran other businesses – the Carpenter Shop Christian bookstores and music stores in Waterloo and Stratford, now sold to other owners. Lee says their faith has been a big part of each of their business ventures. “The Lord has brought us through many hard times and he’s always provided. We’re very thankful for being here all these years.” – Exchange

## REGION SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH NETHERLANDS



King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima of the Netherlands (centre, back), were in Waterloo in late May. They visited the University of Waterloo, and were on hand to witness the signing of two important memoranda.

The first is a continuation of a strategic agreement between Waterloo Region and Brainport Eindhoven. Shown above are, front, from left, John Jung of Canada’s Technology Triangle, Brainport Eindhoven Mayor Rob van Gizel, and Waterloo Region Chair Ken Seiling.

As well, The University of Waterloo in Canada and Delft University of Technology

## BUILDING COMMUNITY ONE CONNECTION AT A TIME

The Waterloo Region Connector Program is underway, launched in mid-June during the Employer Recognition Event presented by the Immigration Partnership. WR Connectors is a pilot activity in the second year of the Improving Prosperity for Immigrant Women project, led by Focus for Ethnic Women in partnership with KW Multicultural Centre. The goal for the pilot was to involve 25 Connectors and 25 Connectees. Within days, the program had 25 confirmed Connectors with 10 more waiting to be interviewed, and 12 registered Connectees.

“In its first year, the Improving Prosperity for Immigrant Women project looked at the barriers that limit immigrant women from achieving their employment potential,” said Lucia Harrison, executive director of KWMC. “At the Strategy Planning Session in November 2014, participants prioritized networking opportunities and



Julie Wise, left, Project Coordinator, Improving Prosperity for Immigrant Women (Waterloo Region) and Nora Whittington, the coordinator for WR Connectors.

childcare as the areas to focus on in the pilot phase of the project.”

The purpose of WR Connectors is to help immigrant women develop professional networks and tap into the hidden job market. The program connects job-ready immigrant women with women in business and professions in Waterloo Region. WR Connectors is part of the highly successful National Connector Program ([www.connectorprogram.ca](http://www.connectorprogram.ca)). Local organizers say that Connectors are easy recruits: the process is simple and the program respects their daily schedules.

In a recent survey by Moneysense, Waterloo was rated as the fourth best place for new immigrants. The study said 24.6% of Waterloo residents are immigrants.

Brenda Halloran, CEO of Waterloo Innovation Network, is one of the first WR Connectors, and a committed champion of the WR Connector Program. “It’s a simple and effective way to build professional relationships,” Halloran said, “and it’s an easy ask of Connectors. We commit to meeting with a Connectee for 30 minutes over coffee for an informational interview. At the end, we provide three referrals from our networks to help the Connectee in her job search.”

The new program also has the support of the local Chamber of Commerce., which is partnering with the KW Multicultural Centre in the WR Connector Program pilot. “It is a great way to build stronger networks for immigrants in our community,” explained Ian McLean, President and CEO of the Greater KW Chamber.

Anna Ghannad, a newcomer to Waterloo Region from Iran, has first-hand experience of the importance of making connections. At the Strategy Planning Session for the Improving Prosperity for Immigrant Women project, she connected with Joanne Young Evans, CEO of PeaceWorks Technology Solutions. “If it wasn’t for Joanne, who introduced me to potential employers, I wouldn’t have my current job,” she said. “Many immigrants have great attributes such as knowledge, experience and willingness to work hard, but the missing ingredient is having good connections. The Connector Program targets the most critical barrier for the success of professional immigrant women in our community.”

in the Netherlands signed a new memorandum of understanding that allows exchange opportunities for students, staff and researchers, collaboration on research projects and the exchange of research publications and reports in quantum information.

Shown are University of Waterloo President Feridun Hamdullahpur, (front, second from right), and Anka Mulder, front right, vice president for education and operations at Delft, who signed the university memorandum.

The royals also visited the Mike & Ophelia Lazaridis Quantum- Nano Centre.



## BUILDING BRAND BY THE BLUES

I believe we all can agree that a sense of community is vital in acquiring individual satisfaction, and even, happiness. Events draw community together. At their best, events are in the form of a celebration, and none the better than a music festival. A “we’re all the better for it” crowd pleaser.

I think that we can also agree that an investment of one’s time in one’s community has tremendous value. Gatherings, groupings, involvement and a common narrative occurs that builds relationships. Through relationships comes a common community dialogue, and when that dialogue is repeated time and time again, we’re “all the better for it”.

Over time, events develop their own character. Strategically, they hone an audience, a demographic, and identify with a mass group of like-minded people, who appreciate a specific character in the community.

With music, this character can be determined by genre, and whether it’s Jazz, Jam, Rock, Blues, Classical, Calypso, whatever, musical performances have done a great job at developing communities artistically, nurturing an alluring appreciation for a niche. New Orleans could be called the proud daddy of the Blues theme, but Kitchener, Ontario, is fast becoming a go-to destination for not only the local blues fan, but also the international one.

This August, The TD Kitchener Blues Festival is held from the sixth to the ninth. It cleverly features the two front men from the “Guess Who”, although not together this time, but in back-to-back nights. The event has achieved what I refer to as Brand Status. Thanks to the volunteer board and lean staff, it’s a “we’re all the better” because of it kind of festival.

A full disclosure is required. I’ve got a bias. I love real, live music, and I’m a sponsor of the TD Kitchener Blues Festival, because I believe music is one of the best ways to “move” a large group of people.

What motivates sponsors to put up the capital to “make a difference” in their community? There are many benefits that go along with sponsorship, beside



Sponsors Mark Goetz - Grand Valley Tile; Mike Dye - TD Bank Group; Terry Polyak - Milestone Integrated Marketing; Debbie Goetz - Grand Valley Tile; and Jim McIntyre, Re/Max Solid Gold Realty II Ltd.; missing is Carol McIntyre - Re/Max Solid Gold Realty II Ltd.

building brand, and in helping make something happen, there is community engagement at a high-magnitude level.

“It’s important that when you invest in a sponsorship you understand the impact it has in the community. How many people have been helped? How many participated and attended? What age, demographic and diversity groups are impacted?”, asks Paul Amaral, Marketing and Communications Manager for TD Bank Group. “Sponsoring a major festival like the Kitchener Blues Festival creates stronger brand awareness and is a sense of pride with our customers, employees and the community.”

The sentiment is echoed by all of the responding sponsors. All touched on the intangible benefits that awareness marketing brings. None put it as the key decision maker to their final decision to support the TD Kitchener Blues Festival. Instead, it was passion-driven, with a belief that they can generate/share a like-minded passion with other community members who feel the same way they do about the music - and hats off to them.

Carol McIntyre from the McIntyre group - a long-time Festival sponsor - acknowledges that benefits include visibility, recognition, trust, validation with clients, but the act of sponsoring is done as a donation, “freely given”, because she and Jim love the arts, and share the passion of music and community.

Sponsors evolve in many ways. Debbie and Mark Goetz from Grand Valley Tile came upon this sponsorship opportunity by fluke. After buying four tickets to the event, they fell in love with the event. “The next year we knew we wanted to be part of this amazing event, organized by a group of equally amazing people.” Getting involved the following year, they have steadily increased their sponsorship position, with the main goal of bringing great music, great bands “to the community”. Goetz states, “the best return from the festival comes from being exposed to thousands of our neighbours ... it’s like having a backyard party with 150,000 friends.”

Minto Schneider, leader in the Regional tourism strategy, indicated that despite the free flow of the festival, there certainly are analytics for the festival. In 2013, the organization accounted for 160,000 visitors, generating an economic impact of \$3.8 million.

The Kitchener Downtown Association indicated that the “TD Kitchener Blues Festival adds to the mix of an impressive list of music festivals in Waterloo Region.” Kitchener Downtown is the centre of the festival, a economic ground zero, one that benefits from the festivals patrons, with a “significant increase in economic activity in Downtown Kitchener from hotel stays to shopping and dining.”

A unique environment is created, as the businesses of downtown Kitchener “value more than just the monetary benefit of the Blues Festival.” Financially, downtown goes through a “unique marketing opportunity”, one that “is created when over 100,000 people visit our core.”

The music is the drawing force. Terry Polyak, who was first involved with the festival four years ago, did so “because of the music ... I remember my first evening at Main Stage, listening to Shawn Kellerman, thinking, ‘what the hell?’ - It was just awesome. That’s when I said, ‘I have to get involved somehow’... Musically the festival offers something that you are not going to get just anywhere - from killer international blues and rock artists - actual ‘legends’ - to future stars and legends from our own backyard. Even if you are not a blues fan, you likely will be after attending. It’s much more than what you might expect.” Polyak’s design house, Mile-



TD Kitchener Blues Festival organizers Rob Deyman, Mike Reidel and Liz Cybalski



## ARTS AWARDS HONOUR THE BEST IN THE REGION

The 2014 Arts Awards Waterloo Region were presented in June at a Gala at the Centre in the Square. Winners included, from left, Sylvia Roorda, Textile, Fibre and Quilting Arts; Summer Lights Festival represented by Charlene Le Duc, Festival or Event; Robert Achtemichuk, Visual Arts; Lisa O'Connell, Special Jury; Tasneem Jamal, Literary; Terre Chartrand, Special Jury; Cody Burns, Leading Edge; Tracey Johnston-Aldworth, Festival or Event Volunteer; Night\Shift represented by Eric Rumble, New Festival or Event; Judy Donaldson, Mentor; Quinton Barnes, Leading Edge; Charles Stuart and Rev. Canon Christopher Pratt representing St. John's Anglican Church, Open; Mary Misner, Lifetime Achievement; KW Glee represented by Steve Lehmann, Performing Arts; J. Richard Hutt, Music. Not present for the photo were winners: TD Bank Group represented by Paul Amaral, Corporate Arts Supporter; Anthea Conway-White, Leading Edge; and Katie Parkes, Leading Edge. (Photo by Joe Martz).



stone Creative, is in a unique position with the Festival, "in that our investment includes a significant amount of agency hours of creative – producing themes, marketing materials and production management of nearly all of what the public sees. This too is a major component of the 'feel good' factor."

"Our sponsors are involved!" adds Liz Cybalski, the Events and Sponsorship Executive for the TD Kitchener Blues Festival. "They attend the shows and events, they enjoy the music and the interacting. Many are part of the Kitchener music scene, but all provide valuable input into making this festival a success!"

Cybalski has a "passionate belief about music and community" and she wants the sponsorship of the festival to grow. "Sponsors come on board because they believe in the blues music festival as a community builder. Also their logos are in front of thousands of happy people, who are enjoying the entire experience."

Exchange asked Rob Deyman the numbers on the festival. Working with a volunteer board, Deyman, who is the Executive Director, is very proud of what the community has accomplished. Grateful to all the sponsors, the board hired the research firm Enigma Research Corp. to, as Deyman puts it, "assist the festival in conducting audience surveys and economic impact modelling to measure the economic benefit of the festival and gather key audience demographics and feedback to help us make the Festival better and better each year."

In 2014, Deyman said, the report indicated that the TD Kitchener Blues Festival attracted over 140,000 visits and generated over \$8.0m in new spending, including \$3.9m in local spending, \$3.8m in non-local spending, and \$0.5m spent

by the Festival within the Region to activate the event. "None of this positive economic activity would be possible without the support of our loyal sponsors who have supported and grown their involvement in the event as it has grown from a regional event into a premiere event on the international blues festival calendar."

TD Kitchener Blues Festival Sponsorship Director, Mike Reidel, observes that despite the visual recognition, it seems "the key-care-about" for sponsors is love of music and their community spirit. "You can see that in the sponsor area on King Street where smiling faces, dancing, singing and networking are always present."

Reidel stresses the important role of the sponsors: "Sponsors are an integral part of our ability to put on this festival as their contributions this year will account for slightly more than 40% of the \$1.5 million budget."

"Unlike many sponsorships," adds Deyman, "that trade a cheque for logo recognition, our event seeks to engage sponsors and their staff to experience the event through participation: at shows, in our special sponsor areas, on stage introducing a band they have sponsored, as volunteers, if companies support and encourage volunteerism, business to business networking and other customizable sponsor activation opportunities. We can guarantee their involvement will be a fun time, filled with wonderful music."

And we're all the better for it! As Paul Amaral – himself a Cambridge resident – says, "At TD Bank Group we love music and we understand that music festivals like the TD Kitchener Blues Festival bring people together." – Jon Rohr

## 50 DELEGATES VISIT THE REGION FROM AROUND THE WORLD



In June, Waterloo Region was showcased to 50 international delegates from the Intelligent Community Forum Summit in Toronto. Included in the group were several extremely high powered business people from Taiwan, Australia, Europe and from across North America. The delegation spent a full day learning about the collaborative innovation ecosystem that exists in this region by visiting such places as the Centre for SMART Manufacturing, Perimeter Institute, CIGI, and the Waterloo Institute for Nanotechnology and Communitech. The tour was organized by a team from Waterloo Region, provided attendees with answers to the question, "What is the secret to Waterloo Region's success as the most innovative tech cluster in Canada and one of the world's top Intelligent Communities?"



Photo Paul Knowles

TD Kitchener Blues Festival naming sponsor TD Bank Group received the Arts Awards Waterloo Region Corporate Arts Supporter award this year. Shown are Waterloo Mayor Dave Jaworsky, left, who presented the trophy to Paul Amaral of TD Bank.



# AN INSTINCT FOR GROWTH

## GRANT THORNTON IS AN ACCOUNTING FIRM WITH 'SWAGGER' FOCUSED ON PERSONAL CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS

"This is service-plus," says Lou Celli, with a grin. "We're a lot more than just number-crunchers – we bring swagger to the world of accounting."

Lou Celli, CPA, CA leads the Southern Ontario Privately Held Business practice for Grant Thornton, a leading international tax, accounting and business advisory firm, which recently launched an office in Kitchener – Waterloo (KW). "We already had some fantastic clients in KW," Celli noted. "It's a wonderful business community full of very dynamic people."

"Grant Thornton is attracted to dynamic people and businesses, and has – as a result – attracted a dynamic team of experienced professionals with deep community roots," says Jim Whetstone, Grant Thornton CPA, CA.

The team – Greg MacKenzie (WLU), Martha Oner (UW) and Ryan Cressman (WLU), along with Whetstone (WLU), are all local University graduates, have practiced in the community for many years and have community roots spanning 15 years to multiple generations. Add to the team, Nathan deJonge and Don Forbes, and after eight short months people are already taking notice.

"Grant Thornton has assembled a talented, experienced, responsive and service oriented team for the KW area. We are very pleased to be working with them in the delivery of high quality services to a number of mutual clients." – Miller Thomson, law firm.

### DOING BUSINESS DIFFERENTLY

Whetstone believes clients see the swagger – see a difference. "We tend to do business differently than most," he says. "Within our industry, we spend a lot more time building client relationships than is the norm.

Because each local office can draw on the service and expertise of our practitioners across the country, and the world, we're able to offer every possible service our clients

would need from our industry, but with a local touch. Our clients work directly with a partner, not only with the broader team, and that's one of the most significant differences a client will see. For us, it's personal."

"It can be personal because our business is set-up differently," added Celli. "For fear of getting technical, our internal leverage model, on average, is 33% less than our larger competitors – that means significantly more time with our partners. That is meaningful."

To date, new local KW clients have seen this meaningful approach in action. Harsch Khandelwal of the KAIN Group is a relatively new client of Grant Thornton, but describes himself as, "a very happy client". He did due diligence on the company before moving to Grant Thornton from another, larger firm and he says, "I eventually came to the conclusion that GT has a full breadth of services, while being more responsive – more like a boutique firm. And with the U.S. tax services, I get responses within hours. I'm glad I moved". Adds Khandelwal, "the breadth of services is the same but the service is much more personal."

### LOCAL FEEL & GLOBAL REACH

Having personalized service with an international scope and a well-respected brand throughout the business community, Grant Thornton is part of a global network extending to over 130 countries, and has a strong presence in communities across Canada, with over 3,000 professionals in 135 offices. This gives them the ability to draw on all of the resources that come with being a large, multi-national firm, while maintaining the strong local feel.

### OUR TEAMMATES MATTER

Their swagger extends beyond client service to the Grant Thornton core; the culture. This past April, they were recognized as one of Canada's Best Workplaces for the eighth year in a row, placing highest among all participating accounting firms. "Our internal culture is extremely important to us," Celli notes, "and we're bringing that to our Kitchener-Waterloo office."

"It's a culture", he continues, "where team members are never afraid to explore strategic options, challenge direction, ask courageous questions, and provide an objective voice. It opens the door for forward thinking at all levels; it opens the door for the highest level of personal service".

"We recognize what clients want – beneficial long-term relationships. And we recognize what our teammates want – worthwhile opportunities for personal growth", says Whetstone. This way of doing business works through many practical applications, including that fact that Grant Thornton does not "offshore" tax, accounting, financial statements or any other work for that matter. Unlike many large competitors, Grant Thornton offices in Canada keep all that work right here in Canada. "We take a long-term view," notes Whetstone, "in working with clients and our teammates – doing our part to build tomorrow's Canadian business leaders, today".

### BEYOND THE TABLE STAKES

"Today, a client may need help with accounting. Tomorrow, they may need help expanding internationally. When our goal is to help businesses grow, we must go beyond annual financial statements and tax returns" – the "table stakes", as Whetstone calls them.

*Lou Celli; Leads the Southern Ontario Privately Held Business Practice for Grant Thornton LLP*



"Those table stakes give us the ingredients to help companies move forward, and with more time devoted to clients, we can mix those ingredients into something wonderful – as real members of the company's team."

Whetstone shares stories of how clients, both large and small, have discovered new potential for growth and success:

"We began providing services to a large global organization that has a presence in more than 30 countries and 25,000 employees. Early in the relationship it became clear that they had particularly aggressive growth goals. As a trusted member of their team, we were able to work quickly with them to redesign their structure and roles at all levels. The result of this exercise was a successful, data-driven growth strategy."

But it's not only large companies that have become enthusiastic fans of Grant Thornton. Whetstone adds, "We also began providing services to a small family-owned business that had been around for a number of years. We quickly developed a strong rapport and began to help them generate significant growth. In particular, they wanted to expand globally, so we were able to arrange some introductions through our global network. We also helped them with an internal reorganization, implemented an employee share plan, and enhanced their government tax credits. The company is now positioned to take on its first international order and has plans to employ 20 people in the near future."

#### THE COMMUNITY

The future looks bright for Grant Thornton KW. "There are many energized and exciting companies in KW," says Celli, "It's a dream for us to be a part of it. And you'll notice us; we're going to be a part of the community."

Most recently, Grant Thornton was a co-headline sponsor of the annual Kitchener Twilight Grand Prix Cycle Race in downtown Kitchener. "We had a blast," said Celli. "Bringing thousands of people of all ages downtown, with good food, good refreshments and good company – a bunch of real people – KW has its own swagger."

They will also be bringing their national initiatives to companies in the community. Their third annual Private Business Growth Award – in partnership with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce – recognizes privately held businesses that have created growth beyond the top line. This award is not about being "fastest growing" – it celebrates a commitment to sustainability and the use of broad, strategic insight and strategies to grow all areas of the business. The firm expects to see many nominees from the KW area

in the years to come. The award resonates with everything close to the heart of the Grant Thornton team. It's about creating a business culture that utilizes all the best resources, and invests them in personal client relationships. It's about bringing global reach and applying the local touch.

"Our best day? Getting a 'high five' from the owner when the deal goes through – that's good stuff," says Celli. But, Celli smiles, "no one day is the same. Our best day could be watching that private company client become a public company and celebrating the IPO, or our best day could be when we watch the owners' daughter get married. Those are good days."

Those accounting meetings you may not look forward to could become your best days too.....just mix in a little swagger.



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*Grant Thornton KW Team: left to right is Don Forbes, Nathan deJonge, Ryan Cressman, Jim Whetstone, Martha Oner, and Greg MacKenzie. All can be contacted through [www.grantthornton.ca](http://www.grantthornton.ca)*





# NOT JUST A “MOM & POP” OPERATION

The Straus family's Trade-Mark Industrial has experienced a 17-year growth spurt!

BY PAUL KNOWLES

Trade-Mark Industrial Inc. may be a dyed-in-the-wool family business – with seven of the nine executive posts held by people named “Straus”, and all mutually qualifying as “next of kin” – but it is certainly no “Mom and Pop” operation. Russ and Linda Straus founded the company in 1998 with about 30 employees – today, Trade-Mark employs an average of 600 people, and has recently moved into a new, 365,000 square foot facility in Cambridge. Now, that’s a significant growth curve.

Along the way, the company has also spawned several subsidiaries, including a US operation, based in Kentucky.

Since you may not be able to tell the players without a program, here’s the corporate flow chart: Russ Straus is President and Linda Straus, Chief Administrative Officer.







Their five offspring include David Straus, VP Automotive; Connie Straus, VP Administration; Ken Straus, Purchasing Manager; Thomas Straus, VP Millwrighting and Rigging; and Dan Straus, VP Finance.

There are two other members of the executive group: Terry Moore, VP Electrical, and Mark DePass, VP Mechanical. They are not family members – although Russ suggests that they have more or less been adopted into the Straus clan.

Exchange Magazine interviewed Russ and Dan in their new digs at 250 Royal Oak Road in Cambridge, once home to ATS Automation, but empty for the past couple of years. They're excited about the move, which began in October, 2014, and was completed only a few weeks ago. Their previous quarters, in Kitchener, included five buildings on six properties, and all the attendant inefficiencies. Now, they have room to operate at peak effectiveness, as well

as room for further growth.

### "Multi-Trade Contractor"

Trade-Mark Industrial is a "multi-trade contractor", serving Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) clients. Their list of specializations is lengthy; Dan lists five major categories

Russ and Linda Straus founded the company in 1998 with 30 employees – today, Trade-Mark employs 600, and has moved into a new, 365,000 square foot facility.

– "millwrighting, ironworking, electrical, pipefitting and sheet metal", but that doesn't really begin to cover the extensive menu of services they provide, also including HVAC, machinery moving, 3D Construction, heavy rigging, custom machine shop, and more.

Perhaps the simplest description of their business can be found on the back of their new brochure: "One-stop

service 24/7."

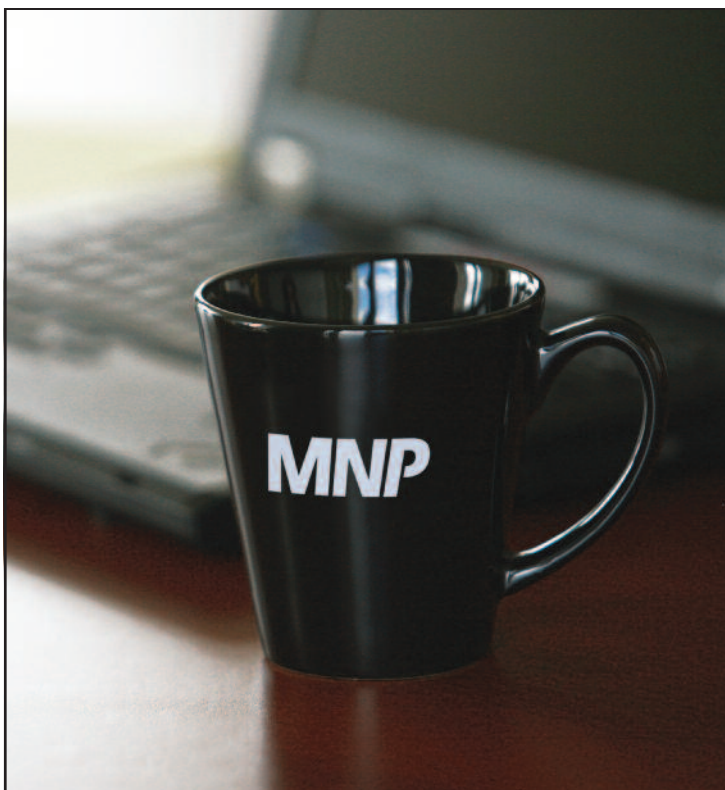
The advantages for clients is clear – if a client needs multiple trades on a job, "they don't have to deal with several contractors," explains Dan.

Russ is a millwright by trade, and has been in the business all his adult life. He laughs that launching Trade-Mark Industrial in 1998 was not highly stressful – because he had some experience with start-ups. He had owned a company prior to starting Trade-Mark, a firm which he sold to a competitor – and he remained on staff (as did

Linda, who has a similar history in corporate administration), until they started Trade-Mark.

"It wasn't as challenging as the first company he had," recalls Russ. "It was a little softer start."

Right from the get-go with Trade-Mark, Russ was already well known throughout the ICI construction industry, and "it went really well right from the start."



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### Family first

Russ and Linda have never lost their sense of community, or their deep commitment to family. Russ was raised in the St. Agatha area, and he and Linda continue to live in that area. He grew up on a family farm, but was lured away from the fields by a fascination with machinery and the trade of millwrighting.

His offspring seem to have adopted their parents as role models. Their daughter, Connie, has her desk right beside Linda's. Sons David, Tom and Ken, all went into the trades – two as millwrights, one as an electrician – progressing through apprenticeship programs, working their way into management of the family firm.

Dan says he was the exception. He began working on the shop floor at Trade-Mark when he was 16, but realized "I didn't want to go into the trades," he says. Instead, he completed a business degree at Laurier, and



*The management team: from left, Connie Straus, Tom Straus, Linda Straus, Ken Straus, Terry Moore, Russ Straus, Dan Straus, Mark DePass and David Straus.*

subsequently qualified as a CPA, and now is VP of Finance in the Straus family enterprise. He contends that his timing was fortunate: "When I attended university, there wasn't room for six VPs, but by the time I finished my degree, there was opportunity here for me."

The Strauses like working together. Russ admits, "We do bump heads once in a while, but we're a close-knit family... Everyone has their role. All are senior

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managers or Vice Presidents.”

He suggests that one reason for their success is that the company is big enough that everyone has a significant job. “They all have their roles to play.” But there’s another key, says Russ. “We all respect each other.” When it’s time for big decisions, though, it’s the seven Strauses – along with DePass and Moore – who are around the board room table, making the call.

That sense of one-ness is reflected in the corporate structure at Trade-Mark Industrial. The parent company has no official divisions or departments – it’s one company with one brand, according to Russ. The Strauses are determined that any Trade-Mark employee should be a direct connection between a client and the entire organization; they are adamantly “anti-silo” – they have built a flat management and operational approach.

Says Russ, “In our business model, we have no departments or divisions. In fact, I don’t let people use the word ‘divi-

sion’ here – it’s a divisive word!” Instead, “Trade-Mark has “multiple disciplines... but just one team.”

Dan adds, “We do this well. We’re one Trade-Mark when we’re on a job site.”

### Growth mode

Trade-Mark Industrial has spun off or acquired a number of other companies, mostly in the past few years. The first expansion, in 2009, was entirely customer-driven – Toyota, for whom they have done a vast amount of work in Cambridge and Woodstock, encouraged them to expand their operations into the United States.

Today, Trade-Mark’s US company is based in Frankfort, Kentucky, with a staff that usually numbers between 30 and 40, and which serves four US states – all of which have Toyota plants. In both Canada and the US, their employee totals can vary significantly, depending on the jobs they’re currently undertaking. They can expand or shrink their workforce with a call to the appropriate union shop; Dan notes that “we’ve had some big projects.”

Back home in Waterloo Region, the Straus family launched a company called TM3. TM3 specializes in street lighting and traffic signals – and it’s a booming businesses, as communities



Terry Moore and Mark DePass are the “adopted” members of the Straus family business.

expand and – perhaps more importantly – as they retrofit lighting and traffic signals to energy-saving options. Russ says that TM3 lists a large number of municipalities as clients, as well as Toronto Hydro, “our biggest client.”

Dan says that TM3 was launched because the Strauses believed the business would be “complimentary” to their core enterprise. Today, TM3 employs about 80

electricians.

As well, their success in the field inspired them to seek further growth opportunities, and in 2013, the family acquired a Guelph company. United Electric is a 55-year-old electrical contracting company with expertise in commercial and street lighting – a natural fit for TM3.

In 2015, the Strauses are launching yet another enterprise: ROC Corp., a start-up company that supplies mobile cranes. The company is up and running,

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and their first crane was delivered in mid-May.

And this is probably not the final act in this rapid-growth drama. Russ says, "We do plan on growing. We have growth in our future. But we plan to grow our existing operations, as well."

The Strauses won't sell the six properties that the companies previously occupied in Kitchener, renting them to clients instead. The family has a real estate holding company.

Trade-Mark's primary service area is southern Ontario. But there are no philosophical fences prohibiting growth beyond this region. Russ says, "If we have a customer that pulls us out, we'll go."

Dan points out that "Toyota pulled us into the States," and to this day, 95% of Trade-Mark's US work is done for that automotive company.

Ross notes that a lot of Trade-Mark's work is repeat business for happy customers, and their client list includes an impressive number of big corporate and institutional entities – St. Mary's Cement, Sifto Salt, Sun Life, Safety-Kleen, Aecon, universities including Waterloo, Laurier, McMaster, Guelph... and many more.

"Half our business," adds Russ, "is based on relationships." That's the key to Trade-Mark's success, he contends. "We're service-minded. We've always been customer-focused. We want to do what they want. We have focused on being efficient and effective on site. We're also always focused on safety on the work site."

There are other keys, as well – factors that the Strauses work hard to communicate to their employees. "We're polite," says Russ. "And we're capable". Dan speaks of the "value" that his company brings to a client. He says that at times, "our price might not be the lowest... but we provide more value."

Both Dan and Russ are quick to praise their employees – and during a during of the massive new facility, their employees are quick to respond positively to them. Says Dan, "The people

make the culture." He adds that their employees "act as if the company is theirs... the don't have the large corporate attitude."

And he admits frankly that one of the biggest challenges faced by a family business that has grown from 30 employees to over 600 – with the potential to "ramp up to 1,000 really fast" – in

"We plan on growing.

We have growth in our future.

But we plan to grow our existing operations, as well."

less than 20 years is "maintaining that small company feeling."

Russ believes the best way to accomplish that is for everyone named Straus to set the example. He's not a President who arrives late or leaves early – in fact, because Trade-Mark service means being on call for clients 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the Strauses are available on that schedule

just like all the other Trade-Mark employees.

### What's next?

When you spend some time with the Straus family, you experience an interesting mix of attitudes – they're laid back, comfortable, proud of their businesses, and yet eager for the next challenge.

They have barely moved into quarters that are almost four times larger than their previous corporate home, and yet they are already looking ahead. "This building allows us to grow," says Russ, enthusiastically.

Dan stresses that they are looking for more opportunities, but "relevant to our expertise." Their growth has been according to that pattern – building or buying companies that complement their strengths.

Russ says, "If opportunity presents itself, we'll engage it." Given the history – and the family heritage – there is no reason to doubt his words. X

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Leadership Waterloo Core Program, Class of 2015 has graduated. These individuals represent local business, government and social sectors, and each is committed to becoming an outstanding community leader. Front Row L to R: Samantha Hunt, Nicole Fernandes, Dana Mayhew, Ana Luz Martinez, Nicole Neufeld, Lorri Detta, Patricia Johnson, Kristen Dajka; Middle Row L to R: Kirsty Roberts, Lise Curran, Dave Thomas, Vanessa Ceccato, Dave Wigg, Rhonda Wadel, Helen Fylactou, Jodi Szimanski, Gwen Stott, Bianca Man; Back Row L to R: Jean Markovich, Thomas Nielsen, Yousif Sworeho, Dennis Purcell, Darren Juneau, Beth Rajnovich, Nancy Hall-Jupp, John Goodman. Photo by Joseph Bergel, JPB Photography

**DR. JOHN TIBBITS WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE** as president of **Conestoga College** as the result of a new agreement that extends his term through August 31, 2018. Over the next three years, Conestoga will focus on building capacity to create additional educational

opportunities and support community prosperity. The college will build on community and sector partnerships for the development of facilities, programming and opportunities for students, and expand applied research activities in priority areas.

**WATERLOO REGION HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION** has named its 42nd President, **Graem Jackson**, succeeding **Steven Harris**.

Jackson was elected to the WRHBA Board of Directors in 2012 and was immediately elected to the Executive Committee, beginning with the role of Treasurer. He has also served on a number of WRHBA's liaison committees including the Region of Waterloo, the City of Waterloo and the Builder/Chief Building Official. Jackson is on the Ontario Home Builders' Association's Board of Directors.



Graem Jackson - Home Builders Association President

Photo Waterloo Region Home Builders Association

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A NEW GENERATION OF DATA-DRIVEN TECH companies is expected to spring forth from a new joint initiative between the Canadian government, **Communitech**, Waterloo Region tech firms and the **University of Waterloo**. The purpose of the \$6-million **Open Data Exchange**, or ODX, is to unlock the commercial value of information previously locked away inside government databases. As part of a worldwide "open data" movement, governments are making that informa-



Photo Anthony Reinhart

tion available to entrepreneurs and others who can build businesses on it.

Communitech's **Kevin Tuer**, who will serve as the project's Managing Director, likened ODX to "a refinery" that will enable companies from across Canada to turn a raw resource – in this case, data – into commercial products.

THE CANADIAN AND ONTARIO GOVERNMENTS have tapped a former top **Toyota Motor Corp.** executive to attract increased investment to their struggling auto sector. **Ray Tanguay**, who was chairman of Toyota's Canadian operations until his retirement earlier this year,



Photo Toyota Manufacturing

was named head of a new automotive investment committee intended to advise the governments on tax breaks and other financial incentives they can offer to lure new automotive plants and convince automakers to keep the ones they already have in Canada.

Tanguay already serves as chairman of the Canadian Automotive Partnership Council, a group that has been working to bring investment and production to the country.

**WATERLOO ENTREPRENEUR DAN LATENDRE**, CEO and Founder of **Igloo Software**, has been awarded the **University of Waterloo's** AHS Alumni Achievement Award. The prestigious awards represents the highest level of recognition a faculty or university college can give its alumni. Igloo Software, a thriving local business has grown from a start-up based out of CIGI, to an 80-employee strong global contender and one of the fastest growing intranet vendors in the world.

**BIOREM INC. OF GUELPH HAS ANNOUNCED** several new orders totalling \$2.5 million. The orders are for air emission abatement projects in North America, the Middle East and Asia.

"These recent orders are a reflection of our customer's desires for reliability and the ability to achieve strin-

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gent performance targets," said **Derek S. Webb**, President and CEO.

**MARK J. BARRENECHEA**, PRESIDENT AND CEO of **OpenText**, has been named the Results-Oriented CEO of the year. As a Gold CEO winner, the prestigious CEO World Awards recognize Mark's leadership and innovation in attaining results for the company and its customers.



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this is a recognition of our 8,000 employees who are focused on making a difference every day," said Barrenechea. As CEO, Barrenechea upholds the company's position at the forefront of the industry. Under his direction, the company has grown both organically and through strategic acquisitions, into a \$1.6 billion technology company.

**A NEW RESEARCH CENTRE** at the **University of Waterloo** that will revolutionize the ability to predict and delay illness and injury associated with aging is receiving \$1.3 million toward wireless wearables and other devices and technology. The contribution from the Canada Foundation for Innovation will support a variety of diagnostic and measurement tools in the Advanced Aging Research Centre (ARCH) at Waterloo, which will house Canada's most comprehensive collection of equipment focused on aging.



Photo: Rob Currie  
Carol Ann Whalen, left, and award-winner Noreen Rajani.

**NOREEN RAJANI**, A 2ND-YEAR CONESTOGA COLLEGE Broadcast Television student, is the 2015 recipient of the Outstanding Achievement in Writer/Producer Specialization Award, a \$200 honour sponsored by the **Media Producers Group of Ontario** (mpGO).

Rajani was recently presented the award by mpGO Chair **Carol Ann Whalen**, an award-winning Conestoga alumna NSco-proprietor of Kitchen-er's C to C Productions.

**THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS** of **Grand River Hospital Foundation** has appointed **Tracey Bailey** as President and CEO of the Foundation. She will assume the position on July 27, 2015.

"Tracey brings more than 30 years of fundraising expertise, communications savvy

and non-profit sector leadership to Grand River Hospital Foundation," said Foundation Chair **Helen Friedman**.

Bailey is currently the President and CEO of **Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation** in Toronto.

Bailey has directed eight capital fundraising campaigns with goals ranging from \$3 million to \$500 million, including **Campaign Waterloo**.

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Photo Courtesy Guelph Municipal Holdings Inc.

Bud Smith heads GMHI

appointed board member (R.L.) **Bud Smith** as President and Chief Executive Officer. Smith takes over as head of the company from departing CEO **Barry Chuddy**.

Smith is a Director and shareholder of **Brampton Engineering**, where he served as President, CEO, and Director for nine years. He is a Professional Engineer and spent over 20 years with

**Dupont Canada** in a variety of manufacturing and business management roles until he joined **PCL Plastics Corporation** as President, CEO, and Director.

Day-to-day operations of **Guelph Hydro Electric Systems Inc.** will remain under the leadership of **Kazi Marouf**, who will continue in his role as GHESI Chief Operating Officer reporting to the new CEO. Smith will focus on helping GMHI leverage the assets of the City of Guelph, including implementing the Community Energy Initiative in an environmental and financially responsible manner.

**ESENTIRE INC. HAS ANNOUNCED** that its new European-based Security Operations Center and headquarters will be located in Cork, Ireland. The company protects trillions of dollars in assets and high value confidential data for a global client base monitored through its SOC in Cambridge, Ontario. To match

the regulatory environment in the EU and to continue to expand on the success it has achieved in this market, eSentire will introduce a 'follow the sun' support network through its new Cork, Ireland SOC.

**The Cowan Foundation is celebrating** two significant milestones in 2015 – 20 years of building community and 20 million dollars in donations. "Over the past 20 years, The Cowan Foundation has made a significant impact in Canadian communities, supporting approximately 450 charitable organizations," explained Terry Reidel, Executive Director, The Cowan Foundation. "As our Operating Companies continue to grow and evolve, we look forward to continuing to partner with, and support, charities that matter to our employees, business partners, and clients, and that contribute to the well-being of Canadian communities."

X



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30



Whaley-Chase wants to reach 300 members this year.

real-life examples of their work tend to touch hearts – and garner votes.

Whaley-Chase and Thomson-Latimer are volunteers; when they first founded the local organization, the third chapter in Canada, in April, 2013, they were not only founders, they were also the funders – all out of pocket expenses came directly from

their personal pockets, although a number of corporate sponsors (acknowledged on their website, [www.100womenwhocarewaterlooregion.com](http://www.100womenwhocarewaterlooregion.com)), now cover those costs. Those corporate sponsors also make contributions to the charities of choice.

However, the two founders still contribute countless volunteer hours to the cause, managing the website, producing marketing materials, organizing the meetings – and, frankly, chasing the cheques pledged by members who didn't make the latest meeting. The organizers are determined that if there are 199 members, the charity receives at least \$19,900.

The group started as a Cambridge organization, with about 90 members. However, it was not long before members from south Kitchener suggested they re-brand as “Waterloo Region”, and the original members embraced that idea. That attracted some key members from the rest of the region,

including former Waterloo Mayor Brenda Halloran, one of the group's biggest advocates. Today, the group includes members from across the region, as well as outlying areas such as St. George and Puslinch.

Whaley-Chase is a self-employed project manager; Thomson-Latimer is involved in corporate marketing and advertising. Both had been volunteers for charitable causes and not for profits, and therefore, when they heard the concept, they recognized the opportunity to make a large and unique chari-

Whaley-Chase jokes that there are two differences between the women who care and the men who give a damn – gender, and the fact that the men drink beer their meetings.

table impact.

They were clearly not alone. The two hundred or so members of “100 Women Who Care Waterloo Region” have been joined by a fledging group of between 50 and 70 who have formed “100 Women Who Care Wilmot”, as well as a male group called “100 Men Who Give A Damn,” whose initial meeting was scheduled for June.

Whaley-Chase jokes that there are two differences between the women who care and the men who give a damn – gender, and the fact that the men are meeting at a pub, so they can drink beer their meetings.

Currently, the women's organization meets in donated facilities at Chicopee; the men's group will be meeting at the Huether Hotel in Waterloo.

The founders report that the charities love the concept – and not only the nine that have been the big beneficiaries, so far. There are no losers here – often, the charities that do not win

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the vote nonetheless receive donations, over and above the \$100 a meeting the members have pledged. Says Thomson-Latimer, "Nothing is stopping a member from donating or volunteering for an organization," although their initial \$100 must go to the charity that is chosen by the majority.

As well, each charity that is not chosen goes back into the draw box to have another chance next time. The founders believe that since a winning charity is out of the mix for at least two years, as time goes by most worthwhile causes will receive support from the group.

Thomson-Latimer says that charities often tell them, "We're so grateful for having the opportunity to talk to all these philanthropists."

There are standards concerning which charities can qualify, says Thomson-Latimer. The organization must be a charity, able to issue tax receipts. It must provide a charitable service within Waterloo Region. And the charities must

be inclusive and non-discriminatory – for instance, an organization that banned gay staff on religious grounds would not qualify.

Like many service organizations, "100

Thomson-Latimer says that charities often tell them, "We're so grateful for having the opportunity to talk to all these philanthropists."

Women" provides networking opportunities for its members. Meetings start at 6:30; the business of choosing a charity doesn't begin until 7 p.m. Members can meet one another, and even set up marketing tables for products.

When the meeting begins, the chosen charity from the previous meeting is given the opportunity to share what they were able to do with the donation they received. Then it is on to this evening's



Thomson-Latimer says charities are grateful for the exposure.

pitches, and the vote.

After the meeting, members are invited to reconvene at another site – a restaurant or lounge – although fewer than half participate, perhaps because these are not first of all 199 women who network or sip cocktails – they are indeed, 199 women who care. **X**

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# WOMEN WHO CARE... AND CONTRIBUTE

**"100 Women Who Care" is making a \$20,000 difference for local charities**

*Founders Kolby Thomson-Latimer, left, and Lisa Whaley-Chase*

BY PAUL KNOWLES

It sounds like a charity's dream: a five-minute pitch, a one-hour meeting, and the charity walks away with over \$10,000.

Too good to be true? Not anymore, not since the creation of "100 Women Who Care Waterloo Region". Because that is exactly what happens, four times a year – except that now, membership has reached 199 (at time of writing), so the charity actually picks up \$19,900.

"100 Women Who Care" is a concept that started in the United States. The largest Canadian chapter is in London, Ontario, but Waterloo Region "100 Women" founders Lisa Whaley-Chase and Kolby Thomson-Latimer aim to hit the 300-member mark – and surpass their London counterparts – by the end of this year. "We want to be the largest in the world," they say. New members are immediately welcomed on the organization's Facebook site.

The concept is strikingly simple. Women join the organization, agreeing to donate \$100 to a charity, four times a year.

Members can nominate a charity – there are currently 17 ready for consideration, says Whaley-Chase – and three charities are drawn at random for each of the quarterly meetings.

At the meeting, the member who nominated the charity can make a five minute pitch – or bring someone from the organization to do so. After the three pitches, the members in attendance vote, and the winning charity gets a cheque for \$100 from each member (whether they attended that meeting or not). All members have agreed that majority rules – the winning charity gets the full donation.

Recipients have included HopeSpring Cancer Support Centre, Nutrition for Learning, Sexual Assault Support Centre Waterloo Region, Lutherwood's "Reach for It" program, KidsAbility, Cambridge Self Help Food Bank, YWCA Cambridge, Coping Centre, and most recently, Sunrise Therapeutic Riding Centre, since 2013.

Whaley-Chase agrees that there is an element of good marketing involved, here – charitable organizations that showcase

**Founders Lisa Whaley-Chase and Kolby Thomson-Latimer aim to hit the 300-member mark by the end of this year. "We want to be the largest in the world," they say.**



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