

Let's Get Social [f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [in](#)

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## 8 40 UNDER FORTY BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Niagara's next generation of business leaders win big.



## 10 COMMUNITY LEADERS: 2 MINUTES WITH

Spotlighting some of Niagara's community leaders.



## 12 WHAT GOALS DO YOU SET FOR A SALES CALL?

Making a sales call means conducting a sales interview.

SEE INSIDE: COLLECTORS EDITION { Canada's Sesquicentennial } FEATURING Grape Growers of ONTARIO

VOLUME 15 ISSUE 5 // NIAGARA

JUNE 2017

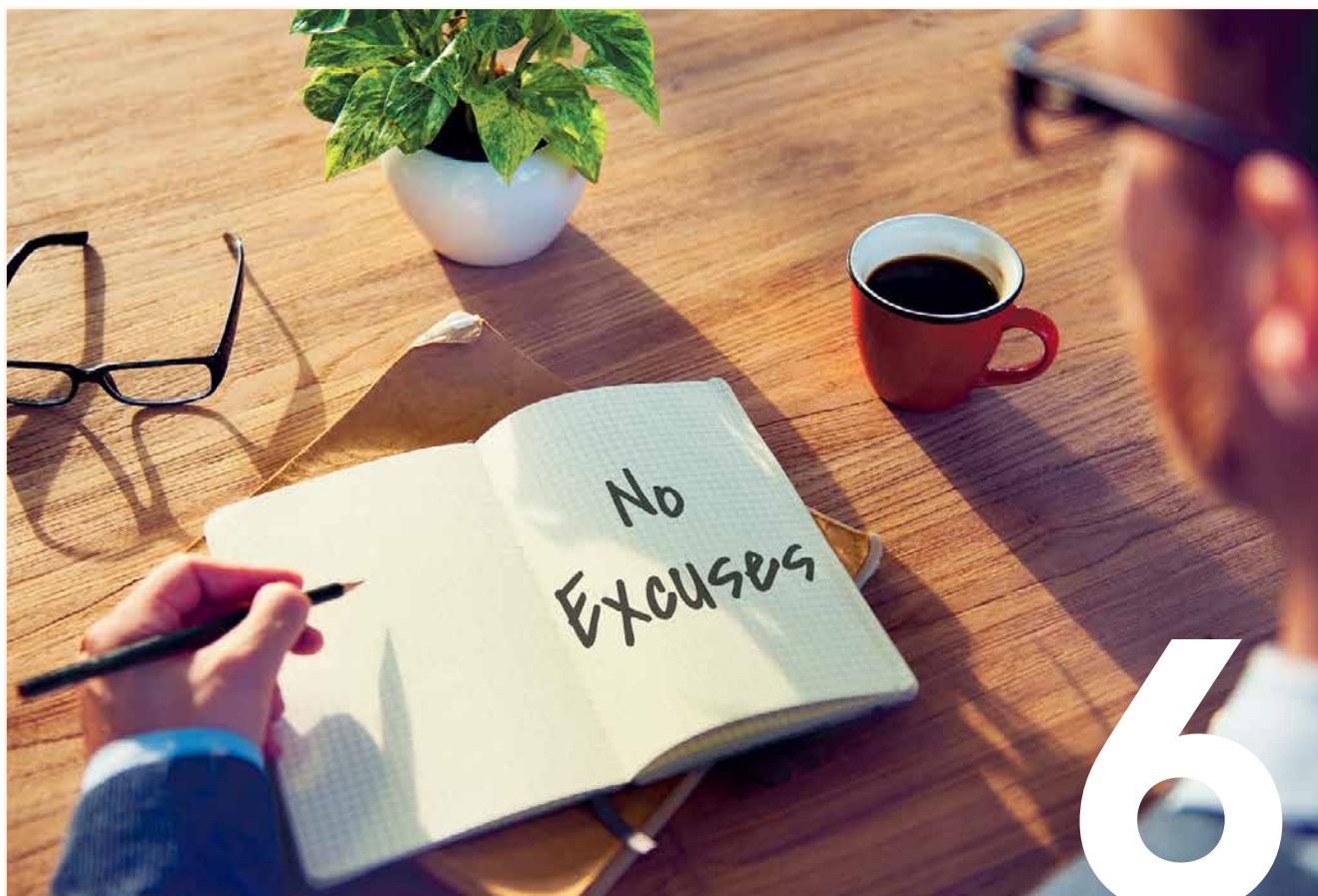
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# EXCUSES LEAD TO MEDIOCRITY

BRETT MEADOWS

**E**xuses. We all make them and we all use them. The problem is when we start hiding behind them to avoid the reality of what is really happening around us. An excuse is you altering reality and the bigger issue becomes when you start believing the excuses you have made up instead of looking for a solution or putting the effort in that it really takes to become a success.

Many people ramp up the use of their excuses when they are not reaching their goals or targets. There is always a "Why." Why they couldn't close the account, why they can't lose weight, why they're not doing the right activity. I bet I could write a novel on the list of excuses that I have heard over the years.



6

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# How Young Professionals Are Revolutionizing CSR

PROVIDED BY JAN KELLEY

**S**eventy-six percent of millennials believe businesses can have a positive impact on the wider society in which they operate, and also believe that multinational businesses are not realizing their potential to alleviate society's biggest challenges, according to the Deloitte Millennial Survey 2017. And while corporate social responsibility (CSR) is traditionally understood as a company's initiatives to take responsibility for its impact on environmental and social well-being, young professionals in the workforce present a real opportunity for a CSR revolution—and it's about time.

Brock University's Goodman School of Business recently held an expert panel, Making Business Matter, where industry experts discussed the latest trends in corporate social responsibility, how organizations choose which causes and initiatives to support, and how they communicate their social responsibility efforts to the public. Young professionals continued to come up throughout the discussion as a catalyst for change in the CSR space. So, how might the new generation make a difference in CSR?

#### EXPECTING MORE FROM EMPLOYERS

Despite being labelled as entitled, lazy and materialistic—millennials are focused on social impact more than any other generation. Their decisions are guided by their own moral compass, and they aspire to work for an organization that aligns with their own values. The 2015 Cone Communications Millennial Survey showed that 62% of millennials would take a pay cut to work for a more socially responsible company. This puts a new type of pressure on businesses, knowing that the best and brightest minds of the future may have higher expectations around their employers and the impact of CSR initiatives.

#### INITIATE CSR ACTIVITY

No matter the field of expertise nor level of seniority, young professionals are taking control of CSR activity. Too often companies are choosing a charity to support, and then patting themselves on the back for their good service to the community. Traditional CSR initiatives can also be ineffective when they are run by committees functioning in a silo with programs that are not all that aligned with the company's broader business objectives. When this happens, CSR looks less authentic to an outsider, even though employees often have the best intentions. For example, a pet food company that values the health and well-being of animals will likely make more of an impact and appear more authentic working with the SPCA than donating to a cancer charity.

Fortunately, new generations are pushing for an integrated approach, looking for ways to incorporate social responsibility into the bloodline of their organization, and instill it within the company's business objectives, where profits and human and environmental sustainability go hand in hand. Young professionals are looking at CSR as a more natural bi-product of an organization's existence, rather than a company pet project.

#### BRINGING ACADEMIA TO THE WORKFORCE

CSR is an important part of business studies where students gain valuable exposure to research and key insights into some of the successful (and not so successful) CSR initiatives in the marketplace today.

For example, at the Goodman School of Business, there is a distinct focus and approach to teaching students about social change through business exposing them to research, best practices, and experts from the workforce as well as experiential learning where students work with companies firsthand in developing and executing CSR strategies. The Making Business Matter panel discussion is just one recent example of how educators are finding new ways to engage their students with the real world and learn how CSR is practiced every day.

The Goodman School of Business is continuing to progress this area of study through its own CSR research initiatives. Researchers are currently studying the public perceptions of CSR initiatives and seeking to identify some of the key factors that contribute to a successful CSR strategy for businesses.

"Research should really be a top consideration when companies are looking to engage in CSR," explains Todd Green, professor at the Goodman School of Business. "This can help guide initiatives towards strategy rather than personal ties to a cause."

When this type of thinking is brought to the workforce, organizations will be better equipped than ever to make strategic CSR decisions that are best for business and for society at large. **BL**

Jan Kelley is located on 1006 Skyview Drive in Burlington. For more information, please call 905.631.3942 or visit [www.jankelley.com](http://www.jankelley.com).



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# GONE BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN

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Here are just a few of the many dedicated people that worked at the former McKinnon's / General Motor plant ...



Kathy Lyon's family worked at McKinnon's for many generations. Her father, Sid Filko, was a tool and die maker for McKinnon's for many years working at 282 Ontario Street in the forge building. Her mother, Connie Filko, was the registered nurse at plant 1 (282) for over 22 years. Her husband, Mal Lyon, also worked in the heat treat and chemical control department for 30 years, retiring only nine years ago.

In the photo above, Robert Megna, Kathy Lyon and Chiara J-Megna are holding up a plaque from when Sid Filko worked on the west side of 282 Ontario Street. A commemorative brick was graciously given to Kathy for her family's dedicated work at the former GM location.



Billy Marenchin started working for General Motors on February 4, 1985 in the foundry plant, focusing on expansion and electrical duties. Every morning, Billy would come home covered in a black sand-like material after his long shifts. He worked nights for over nine years until 1994 when the foundry closed down. Billy then moved to the former GM location at 282 Ontario Street where he serviced electrical for the west side. During his move from the foundry and at 282, Billy says there was so much to learn because of the evolution of technology. Even though the same company owned both locations, 282 was extremely advanced for its time. As years went by, Billy would continue to hone his skills with all the new additions that took place before finally retiring from General Motors at the age of 65.



General Motors has had a long and impressive history in the Niagara Region. McKinnon, the forerunner of General Motors, originally got its start in 1878 when L.E. McKinnon and his partner A.L. Mitchell opened a modest factory and hardware store on St. Paul Street in St. Catharines. McKinnon would take over the business from his partner and move the operation to Ontario Street in 1901. By 1925, the new "McKinnon Industries" had purchased the J.H. Williams Company in St. Catharines and become a leader in Niagara's burgeoning auto industry. In fact, McKinnon Industries were so successful that they became the General Motors Corporation's largest customer and were acquired by the U.S. auto giant in 1929.

Over the next decade, McKinnon dramatically expanded its auto parts plant on Ontario Street and added ignition coils, shock absorbers, steering gears, spark plugs, distributors and voltage regulators to its list of products. During the Second World War, McKinnon workers would also produce an average of 125,000 fuses per week – and by the height of the conflict in 1942, factory production had increased an incredible 700 percent over pre-war levels. The General Motors plants on both sides of Ontario Street would continue to play a major role in the Niagara economy until they closed in 2010.



# CONTENTS

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Let's Get Social



## 29 ENDOWING THE FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE FOR CANADA'S 150TH

Leave your mark on health care for years to come.



### 2 HOW YOUNG PROFESSIONALS ARE REVOLUTIONIZING CSR

Better equipping organizations to make strategic CSR decisions that are best for business and society at large.



### 28 WHY "WHAT'S THE NEXT BIG THING?" IS THE WRONG FIRST QUESTION.

Smart business growers say growth begins by creating a plan based on what they believe won't change.

## INSIDE

### 7 WHY YOU SHOULD BECOME A MENTOR

### 10 COMMUNITY LEADERS: 2 MINUTES WITH

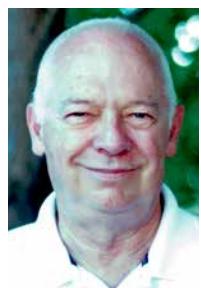
Get to know a few of Niagara's top community leaders.

### 26 ALIGNING BUSINESS ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

### 30 FOUR WAYS TO ENHANCE YOUR ENDPOINT SECURITY

These steps will help to ensure that your SMB is better protected and more resilient against online attacks.



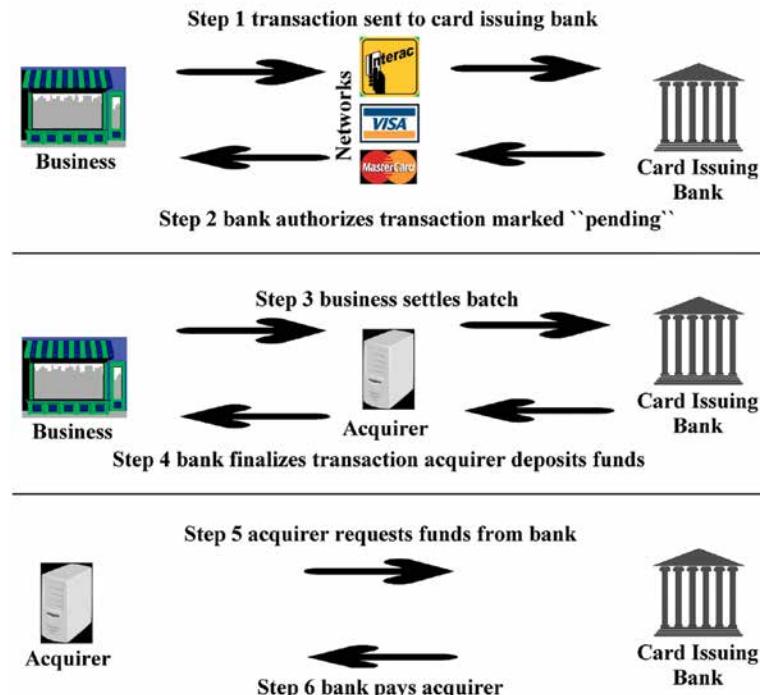


## HOW CREDIT CARD / DEBIT CARD PROCESSING WORKS

RICK SMITH

**T**here are a number of entities involved each time a credit or debit card transaction is processed. They are:

- The customer presenting the card for payment.
- The business accepting the card for payment.
- The credit or debit card network.
- The card issuing bank.
- The acquirer (sometimes referred to as the processor).



1. A transaction is processed at a processing terminal, POS station, online website or online "virtual terminal." To facilitate transmission of the transaction to the network, an API (Application Program Interface) either built into the terminal or into the website directs the information to a gateway that facilitates sending the information through the network.
2. Information is sent through the appropriate network Visa, MasterCard or Interac to the card issuing bank.
3. The card issuing bank authorizes the transaction and communicates the authorization to the terminal, POS station, website or online virtual terminal.
4. The card issuing bank puts a hold on the funds and notes a "pending" transaction on the customer's account.
5. The transaction remains on hold until the terminal, POS station, online website or virtual terminal settles the batch containing the transaction.
6. The acquirer confirms the transaction to the card issuing bank and requests payment.
7. The card issuing bank then converts the transaction from pending to firm.
8. Funds are transferred to the business's bank account.
9. Funds are transferred from the card issuing bank to the acquirer.

Note: Should the batch not be settled within 72 hours of the transaction being authorized, the card issuing bank removes it from the customer's account until it is settled. Should the customer's credit limit be reached before the batch is settled, the transaction will not be authorized. **BL**

*SmallBizAssist is a small business consultant specializing in payment processing. For more information, contact Rick Smith at 905.714.1487, 1.800.946.2367, 905.317.5560 or visit [www.smallbizassist.ca](http://www.smallbizassist.ca).*

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## EXCUSES LEAD TO MEDIOCRITY

BRETT MEADOWS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

**H**ave you used an excuse to make you feel better instead of holding yourself accountable to reaching your full potential?

Here are a few of the most common excuses that delay you taking action and achieving success:

### 1 I DON'T HAVE THE TIME

"I don't have the time" is an excuse that has been used so many times because it is the easiest one to use. The clock ticks forward and no one can argue with you that the day is over.

But let's have a look at some of the most successful people in the world. We all have the same 24 hours in a day and the reality is that time cannot be altered, but we can control how we use our time and where we spend

those precious hours we waste every day. Once you start making success a priority you will find the time to focus on tasks that will make you more successful.

### 2 THAT WON'T WORK IN MY TERRITORY

I love this one, "I know my market better than you." This is your ego or your pride speaking and the reality is that you are in denial. Unless you are selling on Mars there is not a business owner on this planet that would not want to make more profit, have better employee moral, a better image and more loyal customers, to name a few things. If bringing ideas to your customers and helping them solve some of the issues they are experiencing with your products or services won't work then "Nanu Nanu" (A Mork And Mindy Reference).

### 3 I DON'T NEED TO UNDERSTAND SOCIAL MEDIA

You may not think that your customers or potential customers are not on social media or would like to be. Your customers need a better reason or need to have an online presence and if you really want to separate yourself from everyone else become a subject matter expert on social media and help your customers build their social media presence.

**FACT #1:** Companies are charging \$600.00 U.S a month to run one social media platform.

**FACT #2:** More and more of your customers, customers are making buying decisions from social media engagement.

Remember if your customers (and you) are staying offline, their (and your) competition is online and they are connecting with a larger customer base that they (and you) are obviously ignoring!

### 4 PRICE

Seriously? When a customer says to you your price is too high, what they are really saying is that the perceived value in doing business with you is not high enough to meet your price.

When the customer says your price is too high, engage the customer with conversation that uncovers the real reasons on their buying motives. If you uncover the buyer's motive, you make the sale regardless of price. If you engage the customer in a value based conversation, you might be able to get them to see your point of view.

If your customer perceives no value between you and your competitor and no real value between what you are offering then the only thing that is left is price.

As Eric Thomas says, "You owe you." You owe yourself and your family your full potential. Stop making excuses and pointing the finger at other people and blaming others for not becoming successful and start looking in the mirror and asking yourself "what did you not do?" **BL**

Brett trains, coaches, and speaks to salespeople all over the country. For more information on having Brett train your sales staff, please call Meadows Performance at 289.698.3605 or email info@brettmeadows.com.

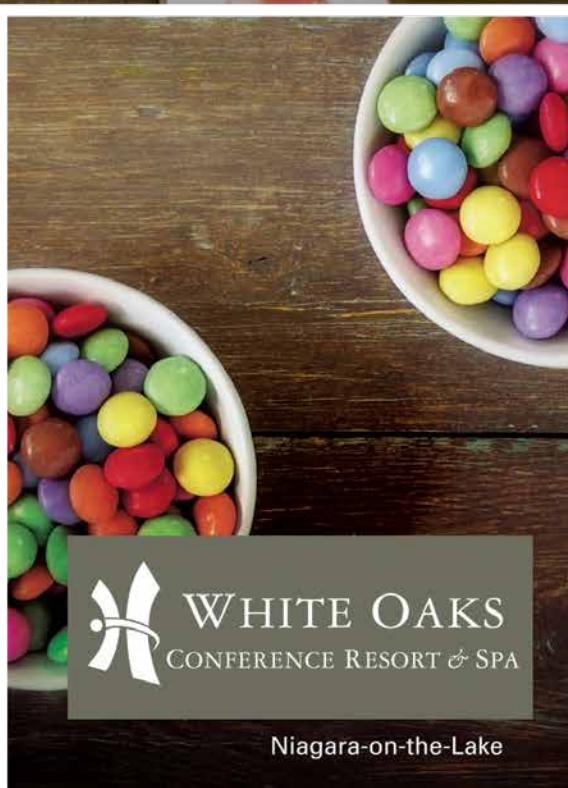
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# Why You Should Become a Mentor

LAURA FYFE

**D**o a quick internet search for "the top five qualities of a CEO" and you will undoubtedly see "leadership" appear on almost every list from Forbes to the Harvard Business Review. On closer inspection, it is immediately clear that leadership is not simply the ability to control a room, make big decisions, and manage a staff. Indeed, a strong leader is a good strategist, but they are also someone who has a positive impact on work culture and sees and grows potential both inside and outside of their workforce. Most successful CEOs and business leaders would tell you that these career-forming abilities were cultivated and nurtured by one or more individuals—or mentors—who made an impact on their career. As Richard Branson, founder of Virgin Group, wrote of his mentor: "If you ask any successful business person, they will always [say they] have had a great mentor at some point along the road."

The Niagara Workforce Planning Board (NWPB), in partnership with the local Employment Ontario network, facilitates a newcomer mentorship program (the Niagara Immigrant Connections Initiative) that pairs internationally trained professionals (ITPs) with established local professionals in their field. The result is an eight week mentoring relationship designed to introduce ITPs to Canadian workplace culture and to help build their social and professional network. Mentorship is a critical step in the course of a newcomer's career that benefits not only Niagara's vibrant internationally trained professional community, but significantly enriches local businesses, industries, and emerging leaders.

Additional benefits of mentorship to Niagara's internationally trained professionals are clear: being coached by a local professional helps skilled immigrants build a professional network, increases their knowledge of sector-specific workplace opportunities and qualifications, develops crucial soft skills, and builds familiarity with Canadian workplace environment.

The benefits of being a mentor can be equally fulfilling. Mentorship can teach emerging professionals about their own leadership style and increase workplace confidence, industry knowledge, and intercultural awareness. Becoming a mentor and actively developing these skills while giving back to the community can help emerging professionals across all sectors take the next step in their career. "A small amount of time invested on your part to share your expertise can open up a new world for someone else," says Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook on his mentor, Steve Jobs.

NWPB is currently searching for established professionals who are eager and willing to dedicate their time to developing a supportive professional relationship with one of Niagara's highly skilled immigrants. The commitment for this program is 12 hours of face-to-face interaction over eight weeks; however, many mentorships result in long-lasting and mutually supportive relationships that span entire careers.

NWPB welcomes mentors from all industries and professions. We are currently in need of individuals in the medical, finance, engineering, environmental, and education sectors. Being a mentor with the Niagara Workforce Planning Board is a strictly voluntary position and mentors are not expected to employ their mentees or to find them jobs. **BL**

Laura Fyfe is the project coordinator for the Niagara Workforce Planning Board. For more information about becoming a mentor, please contact Laura at 905.641.0801 ext. 130 or email [lfyfe@niagaraworkforceboard.ca](mailto:lfyfe@niagaraworkforceboard.ca).



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### I HAVE HEARD THAT THE LIABILITY EXPOSURE FOR DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS OF COMPANIES IS INCREASING. IS THIS TRUE?

Yes, according to Christopher Mutcheson, Head of Directors and Officers and Financial Lines Canada for Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty Insurance, the liability landscape for directors & officers (D&Os) is increasingly fraught with risk. Since the 2008 global financial crisis, governments have sought to hold D&Os personally liable for the actions or inactions of the companies they govern. He goes on to say that the top cause of D&O claims is the non-compliance with laws and regulations, followed by negligence and maladministration. Actions against directors and officers are being dismissed or resolved more slowly. This results in lengthier litigation and higher settlement expectations.

In addition to all of this, there are two areas of evolving risk in Canada. Firstly, environmental cleanup costs are once again being assessed against D&Os personally. Under new laws, there are no defences. "Directors and Officers will be unable to claim that they did not cause the contamination or are not at fault. Their liability is absolute," says Mutcheson.

The second evolving risk is Administrative Monetary Penalties. These penalties are explicitly framed in legislation as "non-criminal" and "non-penal." They are meant to encourage compliance, not punish. These penalties are becoming increasingly popular and are being used in a host of legislation including Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation, immigration compliance regulations for employers and environmental legislation across the country. These penalties may not trigger coverage from D&O policies. While directors and officers currently rarely face personal liability under these impositions, it is expected that the use of penalties will increase and D&O policies will have to respond. Growing public concern over the conduct of corporations, the quality of oversight by D&Os and the increasing awareness of the importance of environmental protections means that D&O policies must cover ever-more complex risks. **BL**

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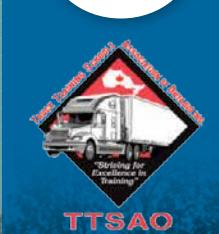
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# Business Link Media Group's 14th Annual 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Awards

PRESS RELEASE

*Business Link Media Group celebrates the accomplishments of Niagara's next generation of business leaders.*

**O**ver 320 attendees joined Business Link Media Group in celebrating the achievements of Niagara's top 40 Under Forty winners at the Holiday Inn Suites Parkway Conference Centre in St. Catharines. Jack Peets, of the 102.9 K-Lite FM Midday Show, was the MC for the event and highlighted the achievements of these 40 incredible individuals.

The 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Awards give recognition to Niagara's next generation of business leaders. These 40 individuals are under 40 years of age and consistently make their mark in business, and contribute regularly to their respective communities.

A sincere thank you is extended to all who took the time to nominate these outstanding individuals. Without your efforts, these people may not have received the recognition they deserve. To all the winners, all the best in your continuing efforts, and once again, CONGRATULATIONS! **BL**

[www.businesslinkniagara.com/40under40](http://www.businesslinkniagara.com/40under40)

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**BRETT POOLE**  
Bell Media

**MARILYN VENDITTELLI**  
INdustry Hair and Esthetics





## 2 MINUTES WITH **BEN AUDET**

PRESIDENT | ONTARIO CONCRETE RAISING LTD.

- ✚ **NICKNAME:** Benji
- ✚ **WHERE ARE YOU FROM:** Welland, Ontario
- ✚ **WHERE DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL:** Niagara College
- ✚ **FAVOURITE FOOD:** Pizza and sushi (but not sushi pizza)
- ✚ **WHAT DO YOU LOVE:** My family
- ✚ **WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE:** Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. (Luke 6:31) This applies in business as well as I try my best to always treat people with respect.
- ✚ **YOUR DREAM:** Run a full marathon without crying. Help more people.
- ✚ **FAVOURITE QUOTE:** "Hard work beats talent when talent fails to work hard."
- ✚ **YOUR TOP 3 CHARACTERISTICS:** Positivity, patience and honesty (This is an important trait that is sometimes overlooked in the sales/service industry.)
- ✚ **YOUR STRENGTHS:** I value hard work and consistency and don't dwell on mistakes. Always try to stay positive and have a good laugh. I'm really humble, the most humble guy on Planet Earth.
- ✚ **FAVOURITE ACTIVITY:** Running - especially early morning runs
- ✚ **OTHER INTERESTS:** Hiking and spending time with my wife and dogs. **BL**

Ben Audet is the president of Ontario Concrete Raising Ltd. located at 600 Ontario Street in St. Catharines. For more information, call 289.969.5437, email [ben@ontarioconcreteraising.com](mailto:ben@ontarioconcreteraising.com) or visit [www.ontarioconcreteraising.com](http://www.ontarioconcreteraising.com).



## 2 MINUTES WITH **TAMARA COLEMAN-LAWRIE**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | UNITED WAY SOUTH NIAGARA

- ✚ **NICKNAME:** No nickname, it's always "Tamara."
- ✚ **WHERE ARE YOU FROM:** Niagara Falls, Ontario
- ✚ **WHERE DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL:** A.N. Myer Secondary School, Mohawk College (Business Marketing)
- ✚ **FAVOURITE FOOD:** Poutine (the best is in old Montreal, a place called La Banquise)
- ✚ **WHAT DO YOU LOVE:** My family, especially my one and only daughter Zoey
- ✚ **WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE:** I believe that when you give goodness, you shall receive greatness!
- ✚ **YOUR DREAM:** To move to a warmer destination in five years.
- ✚ **FAVOURITE QUOTE:** "Be the change that you wish to see in the world." — Mahatma Gandhi
- ✚ **YOUR TOP 3 CHARACTERISTICS:** Commitment, determination and integrity
- ✚ **YOUR STRENGTHS:** Organization, communication and the bringing together of great ideas
- ✚ **FAVOURITE ACTIVITY:** Boating
- ✚ **OTHER INTERESTS:** I love the sun and warm weather. Whether it's a day at the beach, a summer festival or joining friends on a boat ride, I wish it was warm all the time! **BL**

Tamara Coleman-Lawrie is the executive director at United Way South Niagara located at 800 Niagara Street in Welland. For more information, call 905.735.0490, email [tamara.coleman-lawrie@unitedwayniagara.org](mailto:tamara.coleman-lawrie@unitedwayniagara.org) or visit [www.unitedwayniagara.org](http://www.unitedwayniagara.org).



## 2 MINUTES WITH **ROGER D. ALI**

PRESIDENT & CEO | ONEFOUNDATION FOR NIAGARA HEALTH SYSTEMS

- ✚ **NICKNAME:** None, although some people call me "Rog."
- ✚ **WHERE ARE YOU FROM:** Trinidad, I have lived in the Hamilton/Niagara region for 30+ years
- ✚ **WHERE DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL:** McMaster University (undergrad), Athabasca University (eMBA)
- ✚ **FAVOURITE FOOD:** Braised lamb shank, pan-fried duck breast
- ✚ **WHAT DO YOU LOVE:** Being around family and friends I care about the most
- ✚ **WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE:** "Carpe diem"—savor the moment
- ✚ **YOUR DREAM:** To travel the world
- ✚ **FAVOURITE QUOTE:** "If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude."
- ✚ **YOUR TOP 3 CHARACTERISTICS:** Adventurous, dependable and confident
- ✚ **YOUR STRENGTHS:** Strategic, perceptive, reliable and disciplined
- ✚ **FAVOURITE ACTIVITY:** Working out at the gym and cooking
- ✚ **OTHER INTERESTS:** Enjoy planning trips. I've been to 90+ countries to date. **BL**

Roger D. Ali is the president and CEO of OneFoundation for Niagara Health Systems located at 1200 Fourth Avenue in St. Catharines. For more information, call 905.378.4647 ext. 43862, email [roger.ali@niagarahealth.on.ca](mailto:roger.ali@niagarahealth.on.ca) or visit [www.niagarahealth.on.ca](http://www.niagarahealth.on.ca).



## 2 MINUTES WITH **PAM CICCI**

OWNER | GWEN'S TEAS

- ✚ **NICKNAME:** Bookworm
- ✚ **WHERE ARE YOU FROM:** St. Catharines, Ontario
- ✚ **WHERE DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL:** Sir Winston Churchill, Brock University (honours in English), Niagara College (P.R. Diploma)
- ✚ **FAVOURITE FOOD:** Mom's Italian cooking!
- ✚ **WHAT DO YOU LOVE:** My kids of course!
- ✚ **WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE:** There is nothing so serious a cup of tea won't solve.
- ✚ **YOUR DREAM:** That downtown St. Catharines continues to evolve into a thriving destination for residents and visitors alike
- ✚ **FAVOURITE QUOTE:** "It's better to regret something you have done than to regret something you haven't."
- ✚ **YOUR TOP 3 CHARACTERISTICS:** Fun, generous and honest
- ✚ **YOUR STRENGTHS:** Creativity, enthusiasm and my sense of humour
- ✚ **FAVOURITE ACTIVITY:** Reading
- ✚ **OTHER INTERESTS:** Gardening, history, travel and bike rides with my kids. **BL**

Pam Cicci is the owner of Gwen's Teas located at 90 Welland Avenue in St. Catharines. For more information, call 905.397.8184, email [pam@gwensteas.com](mailto:pam@gwensteas.com) or visit [www.gwensteas.com](http://www.gwensteas.com).



## 2 MINUTES WITH STEPHEN CANJAR

BROKER OF RECORD | PEAK PERFORMER REALTY LTD. BROKERAGE

- NICKNAME:** "Stevo"
- WHERE ARE YOU FROM:** Welland, Ontario
- WHERE DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL:** Notre Dame College and Brock University
- FAVOURITE FOOD:** Grilled steak
- WHAT DO YOU LOVE:** My three kids Jacob, Kaila and Nikolas
- WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE:** Doing the right thing will always pay off in the end.
- YOUR DREAM:** Own a professional sports team
- FAVOURITE QUOTE:** "Dream big. Work hard. Stay humble."
- YOUR TOP 3 CHARACTERISTICS:** Trustworthy, respectful and sincere
- YOUR STRENGTHS:** Being a real estate professional is not just a career but a lifestyle and my passion. Simply put, I love what I do...it truly does make a difference in service.
- FAVOURITE ACTIVITY:** Attending live sporting events—Leafs, Jays, IceDogs—you name it—nothing beats being in the action.
- OTHER INTERESTS:** Aside from public speaking/teaching, I enjoy putting pen to paper and contributing to a book on business I hope to publish one day. **BL**

Stephen Canjar is the Broker of Record of Peak Performer Realty Inc. Brokerage located at 165 Highway 20 West in Fonthill. For more information, call 289.820.9309, email [scanjar@movingniagara.com](mailto:scanjar@movingniagara.com) or visit [www.peakperformersrealty.com](http://www.peakperformersrealty.com).



## 2 MINUTES WITH MICHÈLE BOSC

VP MARKETING & ADMINISTRATION | CHÂTEAU DES CHARMES

- WHERE ARE YOU FROM:** Newfoundland
- WHERE DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL:** Dalhousie University, B. Sc. in Biology
- FAVOURITE FOOD:** Wine
- WHAT DO YOU LOVE:** My boys
- WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE:** We are all one people. No qualifiers.
- YOUR DREAM:** See my son become an honourable man. (He's 10-years-old).
- YOUR TOP 3 CHARACTERISTICS:** Mom, wife, cancer survivor
- YOUR STRENGTHS:** Tenacious when I believe in something, I can see the forest and the trees, comfortable in front of a crowd, I'm told that when training new staff, I take complex concepts and break them down into digestible pieces.
- FAVOURITE ACTIVITY:** Watching live music and reading
- WHAT YOU PROBABLY DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME:** I'm a sucker for a romance novel. My preferred music genre is hard rock/metal and I have always shared my home with at least one cat. **BL**

Michèle Bosc is the VP of marketing & administration at Château des Charmes located at 1025 York Road in St. Davids. For more information, call 905.262.4219 ext 226, email [michele@chateaudescharmes.com](mailto:michele@chateaudescharmes.com) or visit [www.chateaudescharmes.com](http://www.chateaudescharmes.com).

## STANDING IN THE LANDLORD'S SHOES: SEEING YOURSELF AS A PROSPECTIVE TENANT

JEFF GRANDFIELD AND DALE WILLERTON – THE LEASE COACH

**S**ecuring a commercial tenancy isn't always an easy process. For one reason, landlords and tenants have different motivations. For the landlord, owning commercial property and leasing space to tenants is their primary goal. For the tenant, however, leasing space is not the primary goal. Instead, the tenant should focus on running a profitable business or providing great service. The property is a place to attract customers to your business—it's not an end unto itself. Tenants don't always want to lease space; it's simply a requirement if they want to see their business goals come to fruition—a means to an end, if you will.

Therefore, landlords and tenants are not equal. The tail can't wag the dog. If the landlord is the dog, then the tenant is the tail. And, as we know, dogs chase their tails. Consider that a commercial tenant typically only has one landlord, whereas a commercial landlord may have hundreds (or even thousands) of tenants. The relationship between a tenant and landlord is not like an equal marriage with common goals.

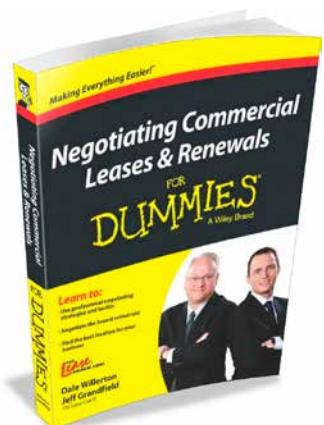
It amazes us how, during the leasing process, many landlords avoid meeting their tenants—and most tenants avoid meeting the landlord. When it comes to new lease deals, often there's a real estate agent (or two) brokering the deal between the parties. Rarely, in our experience, does the agent try to bring the landlord and tenant together to meet personally or to even talk by telephone. Being busy is no excuse. If a tenant isn't creating a relationship with the landlord and making deposits to that relationship, how can the tenant ever expect to make a withdrawal when they need a favor?

How can you encourage the landlord to take you on as a tenant? Sweeten the pot. Why not consider giving a gift certificate for your business? This can help make you look good.

Explain your business concept. Don't assume that the landlord understands anything about your business. Depending on his age, marital status, and other factors, the landlord may or may not be familiar with your business and/or your offered product/service. Your business may also be targeted at a certain demographic or carries an exclusive line of products that sets your business apart from others. Be prepared to clearly demonstrate these aspects.

You may, however, have your tenancy request rejected. This may be done for any number of reasons. Often, a smart landlord is striving for a specific tenant mix within his/her property. Consider that if a landlord is developing a retail plaza, they may want a medical complex or a service-focused plaza and their vision does not include your type of planned store. Landlords may also prefer to hold out on leasing space to a retailer geared towards the broader population and look for a higher-end store that attracts more affluent customers or perhaps a chain with a more recognizable brand name. Additionally, landlords sometimes reject tenants who have insufficient capital or bad credit scores. We have also seen landlords turning away prospective tenants who desire to lease less than available commercial space. If you want to save yourself a lot of time kicking tires on different properties, find out what the landlord wants right up front. Ask the agent, "Do you think the landlord wants a (your industry) tenant for this property?" The agent's answer will let you know if the landlord does or doesn't want your type of business in his property.

For a copy of our free CD, Leasing Do's & Don'ts for Commercial Tenants, please email your request to [jeffgrandfield@theleasecoach.com](mailto:jeffgrandfield@theleasecoach.com). **BL**



Dale Willerton and Jeff Grandfield - The Lease Coach are Commercial Lease Consultants who work exclusively for tenants. Dale and Jeff are professional speakers and co-authors of *Negotiating Commercial Leases & Renewals FOR DUMMIES* (Wiley, 2013). Got a leasing question? Need help with your new lease or renewal? Call 1.800.738.9202, email [dalewillerton@theleasecoach.com](mailto:dalewillerton@theleasecoach.com) or visit [www.theleasecoach.com](http://www.theleasecoach.com).

**Is your sales team  
overwhelmed  
by the journey that lies  
ahead?**



# **WHAT GOALS DO YOU SET FOR A SALES CALL?**

*“Making a sales call means conducting a sales interview.”*

LISA VON MASSOW

Wish your sales team could close more business more often?  
Are you accepting mediocre performances?  
Does your sales team lack a process and system for selling?  
**[Do you want to do something about it?](#)**



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**O**ne of the biggest mistakes made by hardworking business development professionals is the failure to prepare effectively for a sales call and understanding the true goal of your efforts.

Is this scenario familiar to you? You're calling to get an appointment with a prospect. You're only asking for 15 minutes of the prospect's time. You believe that once the prospect sees the demonstration of your products or services, they will be as excited about buying the product or service as you are about selling it.

Next you rehearse the product demonstration to ensure you cover all of its features and benefits.

When the time arrives for the appointment, you're prepared to conduct the (multi-) Million Dollar Demonstration. In the 15 minutes allocated for this meeting, your first order of business is to perform the product demonstration.

You successfully complete the presentation, you ask probing questions and head into your carefully-rehearsed closing technique.

Result: Sometimes an order. Always a tired salesperson.

This common scenario happens many times, every day. It's exhausting. Where did you go wrong? The demonstration was great. How could anyone resist buying such a good product/service, especially when it would help their business?

To answer these questions, let's take a look at the following questions:

1. Do you contact a prospect with the intention of qualifying whether he or she meets certain criteria for doing business with your company?
  2. When the initial phone call is made to the prospect, do you conduct a sales interview or merely plead for a small amount of time to see a prospect?
  3. Do you believe that the features, quality or value of your product/service will convince the prospect to make a purchase? Or, do you recognize that there are other reasons why prospects decide to buy?
  4. Companies can spend millions of dollars developing and printing brochures on their products. Unfortunately, the literature is being used as a means of allowing the prospect to end the sales interview, i.e.: Prospect: "Can you just leave me some information to look over and then I'll get back to you?"
  5. Why do you approach the prospect with the intent of providing a product demonstration at any cost, even if it means not closing a sale?
  6. Do you have the pressure of a time limit imposed on you to complete a product demonstration?
  7. Who created that pressure: the prospect or is it self-imposed?
  8. Do you go to the prospect with the purpose of selling or with the purpose of helping?

The answers to these questions may seem obvious. If they are apparent, then why are so many business development professionals falling victim to the scenario described earlier?

Making a sales call means conducting a sales interview. The goal is to sell the product/service; not provide an education through demonstrations. The professional salesperson knows this, and works with a system to conduct the interview and end the sequence at their discretion. Understanding the true goal of your sales call means no more wishing and hoping that someday this prospect may become a customer. **BL**

*Lisa von Massow is the owner and principal of Sandler Training—Endurance Partners Inc., located at 461 Green Road, Unit 11 in Stoney Creek. For more information, call 905.963.1339, email [lisa.vonmassow@sandler.com](mailto:lisa.vonmassow@sandler.com) or visit [www.endurancepartners.sandler.com](http://www.endurancepartners.sandler.com).*

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# Canada's Sesquicentennial

June 2017

NIAGARA SUCCESS STORY

Edition 6

## GRAPE GROWERS OF ONTARIO

*Celebrating 70 years of growing into the future.*

BY SCOTT LESLIE

In many ways, the Grape Growers of Ontario is like any fine wine—it's getting better with age.

If you're not familiar with the Grape Growers of Ontario, this time-honoured organization has been around for seven decades, and represents over 500 grape growers throughout Ontario. That includes over 178 wineries in such picturesque places as the Niagara Peninsula, Prince Edward County and the Lake Erie North Shore.

The Grape Growers of Ontario was formed under the Farm Products Marketing Act back in 1947—a united legislated group of growers, by growers, for growers. Originally known as the Ontario Grape Growers Marketing Board, this self-governing farming organization was designed to ensure a fair minimum price for processing grapes—regardless of which processor was the buyer.

And from 1947 right up to the present day, the Grape Growers of Ontario has been dedicated to working with its industry partners and the government to grow the market for Ontario grown grape products and meet the challenges of an ever-changing marketplace.

### A HISTORIC BEGINNING

The Ontario Grape Growers Marketing Board began modestly enough. In late 1947, the Ontario Grape Growers' Marketing Board held its inaugural meeting at the Agricultural Hall on James Street in St. Catharines



» Matthias Oppenlaender, current chair of Grape Growers of Ontario (harvester in the background).

before moving into a more official office on 3 King Street.

Back in its early years, the board had a small staff which included Bookkeeper W.A. Brown, Office Administrator Peggy Leake and Secretary Keith Matthie. However, the Ontario Grape Growers' Marketing Board was able to get a great deal accomplished, working with various wineries and grape juice processors to obtain contracts for its growers. In 1948, the Ontario Grape

Growers' Co-operative opened one of the country's largest and most modern juice processing plants in St. Catharines, supplying Welch's grape juice.

The Ontario Grape Growers' Marketing Board didn't solely focus on marketing and the production of grapes, however. It was an active participant in the grape growing community.

Continued on page CS2

### How Times Have Changed

1954

Grapes purchased:  
**42,421 METRIC TONNES**

Value of crops:  
**\$1.9 MILLION**

Grape varietals  
**ALMOST ALL LABRUSCA (JUICE)**

Ontario wine sold in Ontario  
**8.1 MILLION LITRES**

1969

Grapes purchased:  
**50,226 METRIC TONNES**

Value of crops:  
**\$7.4 MILLION**

Grape varietals  
**86% LABRUSCA  
14% HYBRID**

Ontario wine sold in Ontario  
**35 MILLION LITRES**

1984

Grapes purchased:  
**74,400 METRIC TONNES**

Value of crops:  
**\$30.6 MILLION**

Grape varietals  
**65% LABRUSCA  
35% HYBRID AND VINIFERA**

Ontario wine sold in Ontario  
**45 MILLION LITRES**

2016

Grapes purchased:  
**70,851 METRIC TONNES**

Value of crops:  
**\$95.3 MILLION**

Grape varietals  
**3% LABRUSCA  
97% HYBRID AND VINIFERA**

Ontario wine sold in Ontario  
**79.6 MILLION LITRES**

# GRAPE GROWERS OF ONTARIO

Continued from page CS1

In 1952, Bevis Walters proposed to the board the idea of having a world-class festival that would celebrate the growers of the Niagara Region. With the support of the board, the City of St. Catharines and the Canadian Wine Institute, the Niagara Grape & Wine Festival would be born that same year.

Over the years, the Ontario Grape Growers' Marketing Board would continue to grow in size and scope. Between 1965 and 1969, its growers were adding 300,000 new grape vines each and every year and making the transition towards French hybrid and vinifera grape varieties.

The board would also begin building relationships with the federal and provincial governments to help grow the Ontario wine industry. In November of 1975 for instance, it worked with the LCBO to open its first wine store in downtown Toronto to sell wines made exclusively in Ontario. The new LCBO outlet had a vast inventory of over 500 wines from all of Ontario's commercial wineries. The idea was so successful that the LCBO would open its 100th Ontario wine store by 1976.

That same spirit of cooperation would continue for years to come. In 1990, the board's efforts resulted in the Ontario government's approval of Sunday openings for wineries, not to mention the use of credit cards onsite. These initiatives would increase the popularity of Ontario wineries significantly, help the industry thrive, and turn Ontario's wine country into a world-class tourist destination.



» Fred Parker, chairman of the Ontario Grape Growers' Co-operative, delivers the first load of grapes, for juice, at the newly completed plant on Yale Crescent in St. Catharines in 1948. The plant later was taken over by Powell Foods.



» Keith Matthie (right), secretary-manager of Grape Growers Marketing Board (1953-1977) and Ministry of Agriculture and Food's Doug Williams at Ontario's first "Wines of Ontario" store in 1975.

The board would also continue to expand its operation through the years, launching a new corporate office on 1634 South Service Road in St. Catharines in 1979.

## A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Over time, the Ontario Grape Growers' Marketing Board would often be the catalyst for monumental changes. In order to help growers improve the quality and scope of their vineyards, the board often encouraged growers to embrace new farming practices. In 1977 for instance, it formed a new Ontario Grape and Wine Standards Committee to test each variety of grape before harvesting and set common standards for various factors such as sugar level.

In the 1940s, Ontario farmers typically grew labrusca grapes which were perfect for uses like juice, preserves and dessert wines. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, a shift took place in the industry. Ontario farmers began removing over 8,000 acres of labrusca grapes like Concord and Niagara as well as some hybrid grapes from their vineyards, replacing them with more traditional European vinifera varieties like Chardonnay and Riesling which were more suitable for the production of table wines.

Continued on page CS4



The Town of Lincoln congratulates the Grape Growers of Ontario for 70 years. With over 50 wineries, Lincoln celebrates our growers for the contributions they make to our community.

[lincoln.ca](http://lincoln.ca) [@TownofLincoln](https://www.facebook.com/TownofLincoln)

Town of Lincoln

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# The Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) at Brock University

The Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) at Brock University would like to congratulate the Grape Growers of Ontario (GGO) on 70 years of success.

The GGO played a pivotal role in CCOVI's establishment in 1996, and since that time, the organization has expanded its contributions to CCOVI to include funding research and outreach initiatives, providing important scholarship support, hiring promising students and alumni, and hosting industry-specific field trips.

Our organizations work together to grow the grape and wine industry, bringing innovative tools and technologies to the forefront to improve quality, competitiveness and awareness of this vital industry in Ontario.

Working with partners like the GGO has allowed CCOVI to establish itself as an internationally recognized research institute on cool climate viticulture, oenology, wine business and wine culture.

Recently, CCOVI has moved its innovative research beyond the science disciplines of oenology and viticulture, expanding activities to look at all areas of the grape and wine value chain, such as wine business, policy research and agri-tourism.

As our institute continues to expand, we look forward to many more years of partnership and support from our friends at the GGO.



Brock University



Connect with CCOVI and learn more at [brocku.ca/ccovi](http://brocku.ca/ccovi)

**Brock**  
University



# Congratulations

GRAPE GROWERS OF ONTARIO  
on your 70th Anniversary



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**CONGRATULATIONS**  
Grape Growers of Ontario for  
70 years of delicious contributions  
to Ontario's agri-food sector.

OFA proudly raises its glass to  
the international success story you  
have built for farmers, consumers  
and the Ontario economy.

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 OntarioFarms | OntarioFarms | ontariofarms



» Grape Growers of Ontario staff. Front left-right: Nick Lemieux, Debbie Zimmerman (CEO), Gillian Williams. Back left-right: Sylvana Lagrotteria, Kelle Neufeld, Maureen Connell, Eleanor Hawthorn, Mary Jane Combe.

# GRAPE GROWERS OF ONTARIO

Continued from page CS2

In the years to follow, the board would increasingly hone its focus on innovation through new research and technologies, and the continuous improvement of its services. In 2008 for instance, it developed a new web-based vine management tool for growers called Vitis. This application uses geographical information and global positioning to help growers maintain accurate information on their vineyards. Following Vitis' successful launch, the organization received the Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence. In 2015, the organization also won the Premier's Regional Award for its Viticulture Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool which gives growers the opportunity to achieve sustainability certification. (Both applications are now part of a larger system called eGrape which acts as a data management, communication and vineyard management tool for the industry.)

Continued on page CS6



» Bill George, GGO Chair (2007-2016) greets Prince Charles at the opening of Niagara College's Wine Visitor and Education Centre in 2009 with Steve Gill, Niagara College.



*New views.  
New tastes.  
No apologies.*



VQA WINES OF ONTARIO | TASTES UNTAMED

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Congratulations on 70 years



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@NiagaraWineFest



» Ray Duc, GGO Chair 2003-2007 (left) presents Art Smith, GGO Chair 1989-1992 with the Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association Award of Merit in 2015.

# GRAPE GROWERS OF ONTARIO

Continued from page CS4

In the new millennium, the Ontario Grape Growers' Marketing Board would also reach a significant milestone in its development.

In 2002, it officially changed its name to "Grape Growers of Ontario." With the name change, and a new vision and mission statement, the organization demonstrated its commitment to tackling the issues of the future—doing everything from price negotiations to participating in government consultations to connecting with consumers and making sure its members' voices are heard.

### GROWING FURTHER, TOGETHER

On a day-to-day basis, the Grape Growers of Ontario is constantly looking for ways to expand the market for its members' grapes and Ontario wines on a domestic and international scale. The organization takes care of various other responsibilities like grape research and inspection, pricing and marketing, government lobbying, and farm labour legislation. The Grape Growers of Ontario even monitors pesticide issues, keeping in close contact with the Canadian Pest Management Regulatory Agency to ensure that the appropriate crop protection is available.

In addition to a permanent staff, the Grape Growers of Ontario has an elected board of directors that meets frequently to approve the organization's policies and direction. The Grape Growers of Ontario also has several committees that work on specific issues and compile strategic studies that can help enhance and promote the interests of its members.

But the Grape Growers of Ontario doesn't just represent Ontario grape growers. It also works closely with the communities in which they operate. For instance, the organization continues to support and sponsor the Niagara Grape & Wine Festival as well as other provincial events like Terroir in Prince Edward County and Vintages in Lake Erie North Shore. The Grape Growers of Ontario is firmly...



» A tradition of distinction. Grape Growers of Ontario celebrate viticulture excellence by recognizing a top grower each year since 1956 as "Grape King." (Photo by Denis Cahill)

...committed to education, acting as a proud sponsor of Niagara College's Wine Visitor and Education Centre and a participant with the Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute at Brock University.

Over the years, the organization has developed strategic partnerships with several organizations like the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, the Wine Council of Ontario, the Winery and Grower Alliance of Ontario, and the LCBO, not to mention all levels of government.

In 2010, the Grape Growers of Ontario would even launch a new marketing campaign—"We Grow the Wines You Love"—that celebrates where grapes come from, the growers themselves, and their suc-

cessful growing philosophies and techniques. (To see a full presentation, go to [www.localgrapes.ca](http://www.localgrapes.ca).)

### AN ENDURING LEGACY

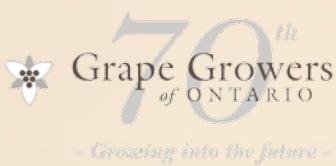
Ontario is now the country's leading producer of grapes, and responsible for about 70% of all grape production in Canada. The Niagara Region in particular accounts for more than 93% of Ontario's total grape growing volume. The industry has also evolved into an acclaimed grape and wine destination with many new innovative products like Icewines that have become popular worldwide.

But one thing hasn't changed. The Grape Growers of Ontario continues to represent its members, act as the voice of the industry, and advocate for issues to strengthen

Ontario's grape and wine industry.

Having championed Ontario's grape growers and their products for 70 years, the Grape Growers of Ontario has clearly become a force to be reckoned with. There've been dramatic changes in the industry and many hardships along the way. But the Grape Growers of Ontario continues to meet each challenge head on.

Its strong commitment to Ontario grape growers—and the communities where they live and farm—is a legacy that continues to grow into the future. BL



### GRAPE GROWERS OF ONTARIO CHAIRS

H.E. Kilman	1947-1949
George Lounsbury	1949-1953
George Stewart	1953-1960
Simon House	1960-1966
Ron Moyer	1966-1980
Keith Wiley	1980-1983
Brian Nash	1983-1989
Art Smith	1989-1992
Tom Greensides	1992-1995
John Neufeld	1995-2002
Wayne Lockey	2002-2003
Ray Duc	2003-2007
Bill George Jr.	2007-2016
Matthias Oppenlaender	2016-Present

### FAST FACTS: THE ONTARIO GRAPE AND WINE INDUSTRY

- » Ontario grape growers have invested over \$684-million in their land and vineyards through the years.
- » The wine industry generates \$825-million in retail sales in Ontario.
- » For every tonne of grapes sold, the industry contributes \$62,000 to the economy.
- » The Ontario grape and wine industry generates more than 18,000 jobs.
- » The total economic impact of the Ontario wine industry is \$4.4-billion.
- » In terms of tourism, more than 2.4 million people visit Ontario wineries every year.

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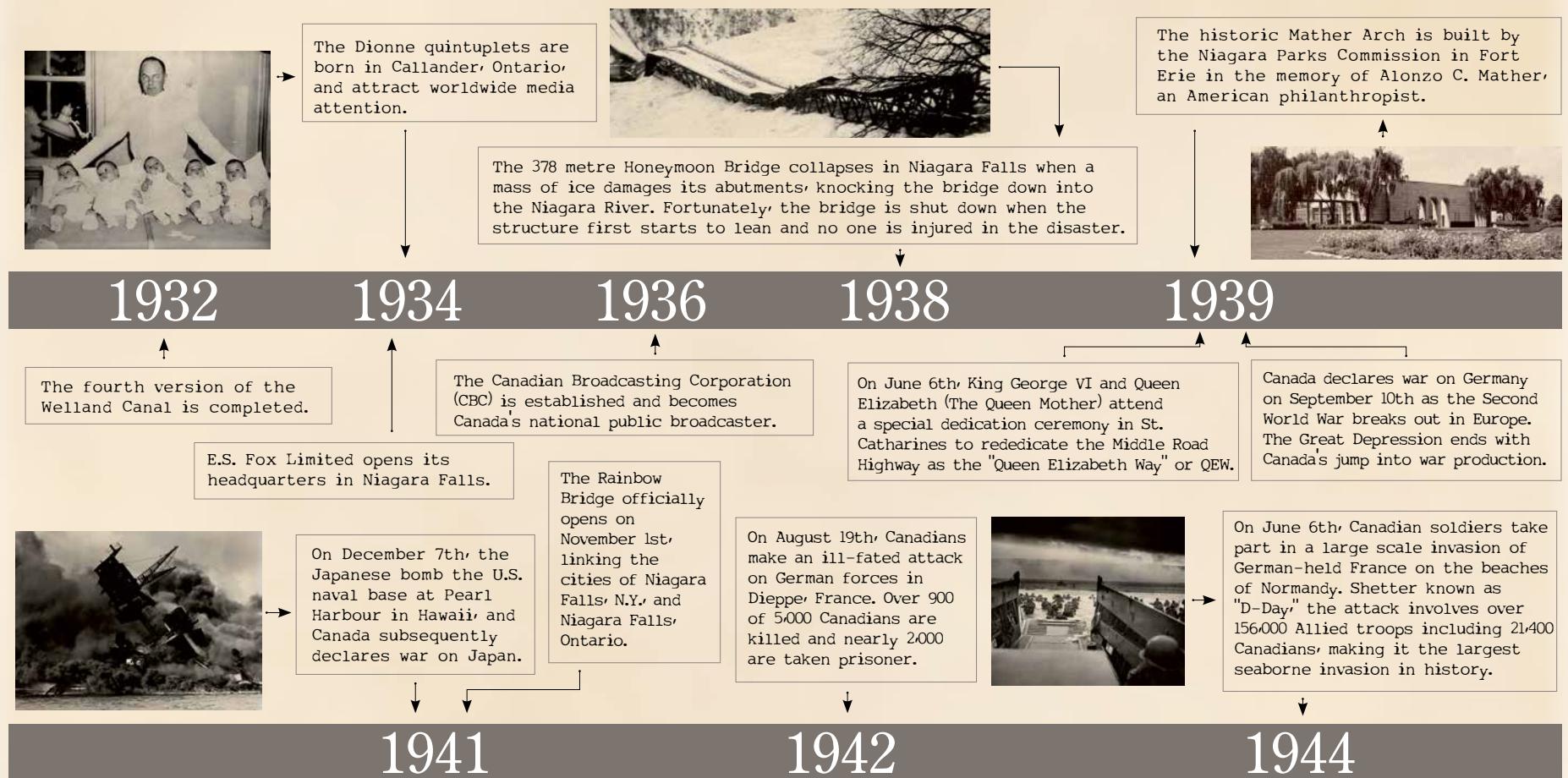
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# A SESQUICENTENNIAL TIMELINE

*Here are some noteworthy events from Canada's illustrious past—and our region's own remarkable history.*



## Celebrating the 150th Anniversary of Canada's Confederation and the 188th Anniversary of the Welland Canal

The 28-mile (44 kilometer) Welland Canal is the fourth version of a waterway link between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, first built in 1829. The present canal was completed in 1932, deepened in the 1950s as part of the Seaway project, and further straightened in 1973. Today its eight locks, all Canadian, lift ships 326 feet (100 meters) over the Niagara Escarpment.

***Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System contributes to over 98,000 jobs and \$15 billion in business revenue within Canada***





## HELPING WITH THE HURT

*Personal injury lawyer Sheila P. Marcantonio is committed to supporting her clients when they need it most.*

SCOTT LESLIE

**S**ome people feel blessed knowing they have gone their whole life without running into a serious illness or accident—until the unexpected happens.

One wrong step on a stretch of icy pavement can have major repercussions on your life, whether it is a long hospital stay, a loss of income, a crippling condition or worse. It is exactly this kind of unexpected experience, which could leave any normal person feeling lost, frustrated and discouraged.

Fortunately, this is a scenario where Sheila P. Marcantonio shines and she can lend a helping hand.

As a personal injury lawyer and an Associate at Lancaster Brooks & Welch LLP, Sheila has spent her entire career looking after the needs of people who are injured, or taken advantage of by unscrupulous parties.

In her line of work, Sheila specializes in several types of personal injury cases including motor vehicle accidents, dog attacks, slips and falls, and catastrophic injuries and fatalities. She also deals with short and long-term disability matters.

Whether a serious car crash or a bite by a strange dog causes the injury, Sheila says many of her clients feel overwhelmed by the suddenness of their situation. Reasonable people do not plan for accidents—or how they have the potential to affect the quality of one's life and the lives of those they care about most.

"It can happen right out of the blue," she explains, "and most people are not prepared to deal with it. Most people do not realize what it is like to have something like whiplash for instance. They wake up the next day and can't even lift their head off the pillow. Their life and the lives of their loved ones may be permanently changed."

Sheila goes to great lengths to serve her clients. For instance, if it is too hard for them to come to her office, she will come right to the client, whether that means consulting with them at their home or in the hospital.

Sheila says the first steps in dealing with a client are critical.

"When I first meet them at the hospital, they're just overwhelmed," she explains. "I try not to give them too much information at first. I just reassure them. I say: 'We'll take care of everything and take all the calls from the insurance company. You just worry about getting better.'"

Over a 30-year career, Sheila has always been a firm believer in "keeping it simple" with a client. In many cases, people do not understand how the system works and are dubious about lawyers because their only experience is watching them on TV. That is why Sheila does her best to clear up misconceptions and talks in layman's terms so she can quickly set a client's mind at ease.

Sheila prides herself on being available for her clients 24/7 and insists on telling them she can be reached by phone or email night or day. Sheila feels that little things like these are a critical way to comfort a client and take their fears away.

"I want them to know—they are not alone," she says. "People aren't used to having pain. They may find it hard to sleep and they can get depressed about their situation. I can't change their pain—but I can try to alleviate some of the worry."

### A HISTORY OF CARING

Sheila has had a passion for caring for people throughout her career. Originally hailing from St. George, Ontario, she attended the University of Ottawa from 1979 to 1981, and was later admitted to the University of Western Ontario where she obtained her law degree in 1984.

Sheila officially began her law career in St. Catharines in 1986, practicing personal injury

law, and has come to know the Niagara Region extremely well. Since that time, Sheila has seen a great variety of cases and is regarded as one of the most successful lawyers in Niagara, fiercely defending the rights of her clients. Sheila began practising personal injury law with Lancaster, Brooks & Welch LLP in 2006.

Established in 1882, Lancaster, Brooks & Welch is Niagara's oldest law firm and one of the largest in the region. As a full service firm, Lancaster, Brooks & Welch is set up to assist clients with their every legal need—everything from estates and wills to mediation and arbitration to administrative law, labour and employment law, real estate law, family law and personal injury law.

Sheila says one of her firm's biggest strengths is its strong network of connections, particularly in the local health care field. With that network, Sheila and her associates can make sure their clients are directed to the right medical professionals and receive the best quality treatment available.

"Some people try going to the big law firms in places like Toronto or Oakville," Sheila says, "but these firms don't know Niagara like we do. We know the community, and how the system works here. We know all the doctors and can make sure our clients get looked after properly."

Sometimes when an incident occurs, Sheila will have to meet an injured party outside of Niagara's borders, and that can mean travelling to a place like London or Ottawa. Some personal injury lawyers would hand a task like this off to a junior lawyer or law student—but not Sheila. She wants to be there for people so she can serve them personally.

"I've been doing this for over 30 years now," she explains. "I try to help people and give them the best possible advice. That's part of my job."

It is all about making a firm commitment to her client—and keeping it. **BL**

For more information, Sheila P. Marcantonio can be reached at 905.646.1177. Lancaster, Brooks & Welch have two locations in the Niagara Region to help serve you. Please visit [www.lbwlawyers.com](http://www.lbwlawyers.com) for details.



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Niagara Children's Centre	Infinity Play Place	Children's Safety Village	Autism Society	Hospice Niagara	Scouts Canada Welland
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Niagara Health System	Wellspring Niagara	Heartland Forest	Brushed Aside Program	Hannah House	Wigs for Kids Canada
Family and Children Services (FACS)	Bethesda Community Services	Niagara Symphony Orchestra	The Raft (a resource association for teens)	Adolescents Family Support Niagara	Learning Disabilities Niagara
Heart and Stroke Foundation	Big Brothers and Big Sisters	Women's Place of South Niagara	Brain Injury Association of Niagara	i-CANTER Therapeutic Riding	Niagara-on-the-Lake Library
YWCA	Norm Foster Festival	Gateway of Niagara	Start Me Up Niagara	CNIB	Niagara Youth Orchestra

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**VALVANO 'THE RIDE' FOR WISE GUYS**  
SUNDAY, JULY 16TH, 2017 AT 8:00 AM

VALVANO SALON SPA ★ 134 NIAGARA STREET, ST. CATHARINES

**27TH ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 19TH, 2017 AT 7:15 AM

LOOKOUT POINT GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB ★ 209 TICE ROAD, FONTHILL

**3RD ANNUAL WISE GIRLS TEE PARTY**  
MONDAY, AUGUST 14TH, 2017 AT 12:30PM

ST. CATHARINES GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB ★ 70 WESTCHESTER AVENUE, ST. CATHARINES

**AUCTION & DINNER PARTY**  
TUESDAY, JULY 18TH, 2017 AT 6:00PM

COPPOLA'S RISTORANTE ★ 203 CARLTON STREET, ST. CATHARINES

**11TH ANNUAL LEGENDS BOXING NIGHT**  
FRIDAY, JULY 21ST, 2017 AT 6:00PM

MERRITTON COMMUNITY CENTRE ★ 7 PARK AVENUE, ST. CATHARINES

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## Take your competitor / enemy to lunch

DENNIS O'NEILL

**Y**es, you do put yourself at risk. Possibly you could give away information without knowing. You need to key your mind and mouth to be careful about what you say.

### PREPARATION

At the same time, you have the chance to craft your questions with care. Those key questions can get you back vital info, much greater than anything you might give away.

### STRATEGY

The strategy rests on getting rid of any animosity or ill will. You don't need to make the person a bosom buddy. Just clear the table of malice and under-handedness.

What do you want to find out? Decide. You do want to discern their motivation and possible harmful actions. You then have a hope of deflecting or diffusing any unnecessary serious actions. What else?

### QUESTIONS

Spend time on your questions. Check each word. Ensure that you have them in the right sequence. Scatter them through the conversation as best you can so the other person feels they were just the logical flow of conversation. With your agenda pains takingly worked out, you will come away with a ton of insight and information about the other guy.

There may be areas where you identify common interests. You can offer good suggestions that would help them in those areas.

### TRUST

With your suggestions, you are now hopefully building a bridge of trust. Perhaps you will agree to have lunch or coffee another time or several times. Maybe even on a regular basis. In non-competitive areas, you may even be able to function as a "mentor" to the competitor. Strange things can happen when you offer an olive branch. And your competitor may function as a "mentor" to you in certain areas once trust is built. You may even identify common interests outside of business.

### FIRST STEP

All you have to do is pick up the phone. Invite your competitor to lunch. If you haven't tried it, don't knock it. I have usually found it satisfying and productive. **BL**

Dennis O'Neill, The Business Growth Coach is located in Niagara-on-the-Lake. For more information on how to grow your business, please call 905.641.8777, email [dennis@dennisonneillcoach.com](mailto:dennis@dennisonneillcoach.com) or visit [www.dennisonneillcoach.com](http://www.dennisonneillcoach.com).

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# INNOVATION INSIGHTS



## BIG Thinkers at the PAC: Before, During, and After.



TERRY O'MALLEY

**B**EFORE: One of the subheads on the promotional material for the BIG Thinkers event states: "Inspired by Terry O'Malley." I'm not sure how that came about. I think it happened one noon hour at the Upper Deck Restaurant when discussing possibilities for Innovate Niagara. Albert Ianantuono, chair of the Innovate Niagara Board, and Jeff Chesebrough, CEO, lured me into conversation at the cost of a grilled cheese and a diet Pepsi. (I hope none of my former clients see this.) They know I can't resist giving away ideas. I remember saying, "You guys need an event to let people know what you're doing," I could see something click and what do you know, here we are heading to the PAC for "the event" put together by Jeff and his bright and resourceful team. It's to be an afternoon tribute to local entrepreneurs, revealing their successes and experiences in an effort to encourage entrepreneurial activity in Niagara. Let's see what's next.

**DURING:** This is the first presentation of its kind at the PAC, so as well as being valuable to the attendees, the PAC is learning, too. The Marche lunch and chatter had us

all anticipating the afternoon. The place was full of entrepreneurs and one could feel the ideas generating. The keynote speech came from Dan Magnuszewski, a young Buffalo entrepreneur who set the tone that one doesn't have to be in Silicon Valley, Los Angeles or Toronto to succeed, and he did it well. There were two panels with moderators. One focused on making it in Niagara, the other one was those who have been successful and sold firms to larger entities. The panelists were outstanding in their willingness to share and in their sincerity. I scribbled down two phrases that impressed me: "Entrepreneurs live in the future." and "The harder you work the luckier you get." I've been in the boardrooms of many major corporations and the caliber of people on the Innovate Niagara stage was absolutely comparable.

**AFTER:** There is outstanding talent in our community and we should be so proud of it. I'm just looking at my notes from the

day and I want to leave you with these thoughts: "Don't do it for someone else when you can do it for yourself." "Do it your way and don't be afraid." "Hustle, hustle, hustle and get involved in the community." "Success can be right here." And I'll add, with the help of Innovate Niagara, "Don't be shy."

Too much credit and praise was given to me during the day. I'll be happy with another grilled cheese and a diet Pepsi while we plan for BIG Thinkers #2 next year. ☺

*Terry O'Malley, a native of St. Catharines, is one of the most highly acclaimed creative talents in modern Canadian advertising. O'Malley is the former creative director and partner in the highly influential Toronto-based agency Vickers and Benson Advertising. In more than 30 years at V&B, O'Malley helped build the agency into one of the leading brands in the Canadian advertising industry.*

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## ALIGNING BUSINESS ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

DAVE BROWN

### IN ISO 9001:2015, TOP MANAGEMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- + Ensuring the quality policy and quality objectives are established...and are compatible with the context and strategic direction of the organization
- + Ensuring the integration of the quality management system requirements into the organization's business processes

**O**ne of the main goals of the ISO 9001:2015 standard is to assist organizations in achieving value. Many organizations that are currently registered to ISO 9001 have difficulty in identifying the return on investment that ISO registration provides because they treat their quality system and business activities as two separate operations. In order to achieve value, these two operations must become aligned. The standard provides direction on how to make this possible.

The standard now requires that an organization consider what internal and external issues may affect its strategic direction and the intended results of the quality management system. This implies that an organization have a strategic direction and that it is connected to the quality management system. It also implies that the organization knows what it is trying to achieve through the system. It is important to remember that ISO 9001 does not certify products but systems. So, what is your system trying to achieve and what is the direction of the organization? These answers need to be provided by the top management of organization. Therefore, there is now a greater responsibility on top management to provide leadership in the execution of the quality management system.

Once you have identified the strategic direction of the organization, a quality policy must be established. According to the standard, the policy must be relevant to the strategic direction of the organization and provide a framework for quality objectives. Your quality policy can not be copied from another organization. Your direction is unique to your organization and therefore your policy needs to make sense to your organization. Once your policy is established, it needs to be communicated and understood within your organization.

Now that you have a strategic direction and a relevant quality policy, you can establish quality objectives that are relevant for your organization. These objectives need to be measured and monitored. They need to be communicated throughout the organization so that your staff know what the organization is trying to achieve.

Once the strategic direction, policy and objectives are aligned, communicated and understood your staff will have the ability to make decisions as to what activities are value-added because they will know what the company is trying to achieve. Unfortunately, many organizations either don't have a strategic direction, or if they do, they keep it a secret from their staff. How can you expect your staff to assist you in achieving your goals if they don't know what they are? How many organizations have rogue departments or staff not because of rebellion but due to a lack of leadership or lack of communicating expectations?

### HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW EACH OF THESE ELEMENTS WORK TOGETHER:

If I were part of your organization, and part of your strategic direction was to increase profitability over the next five years, I would expect to see something related to profitability or cost reduction in your quality policy. There could then be an objective related to waste reduction (to reduce costs or increase profitability) perhaps in the amount of time spent on reworking product. As an employee, I should know that there was an expectation that I would follow all procedures, not because "ISO says so," but because by following procedures I reduce the chance of making a mistake. By reducing mistakes, I reduce the need for rework. By reducing rework, I reduce the cost of production which can increase profitability. By measuring rework costs over a period of time, we could see the actual amount the company is saving, and I could know that as an employee I have a valuable role in playing in helping the company achieve its goals. Management could then set new objectives that support the direction of increasing profitability.

If you have treating your quality management system as something extra that you "have to do" in order to satisfy certain customers, I encourage you to take this opportunity of transitioning to the new standard to develop a tool that will actually help your organization in achieving value. **BL**

For more information, please email [dave.brown@revitalizesolutions.com](mailto:dave.brown@revitalizesolutions.com).

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# BRANDING: LOOKS REALLY DO MATTER

**ALYSSA GIBSON**

I'm sure you've heard of the brand "No Name." Now imagine a world where we were only surrounded by these bland brands with no individuality or identity. It sounds like some sort of dystopian movie, and we all know how those end (typically, not well). What about a business in this world? How would you speak up? Set yourself apart or be known without a face to remember you by? When looks are taken away you suddenly realize just how significant visuals are in the business world. As humans we're not only logically programmed, but incredibly emotional and aesthetically driven which is why graphic design plays an integral role in not only establishing a business, but maintaining its success. It's where art and functionality come together to create a brand. Here are some not-so-selfish reasons on why sometimes looks really do matter.

#### FIRST IMPRESSIONS

The make or break moment, the double take...the vital first impression. In a matter of seconds, a consumer establishes whether or not a brand connects with them. If a brand does not convey a sense of perceived value, credibility or interest, trust is not established; which means neither is the choice to take the next step. Visual perception plays a strong role in decision-making as it gives consumers a specific mindset and sets the tone for your entire brand. So before your brand goes out on the town, take a step back and look in the mirror. First impressions are crucial.

#### STAND OUT

With business comes competition which is why setting yourself apart with a creative brand can be that defining differentiator. Let's rewind to that No Name dystopian scenario. Say your company had a sudden awakening and discovered it's own unique identity. You broke all the branding rules and busted out bold colour schemes knowing full well it would go against the grain. Your business would stand out and catch people's eye. Being unique draws attention and peaks interest. It's a great advantage and gives your company a visual edge. So be daring and soak it all in.

#### BE MEMORABLE

Whether it's a half bitten apple, golden arches or a simple swoosh, these symbols share something in common: they all serve as a memorable face for their brand. As a business, your goal should be to achieve a similar connection. Establishing a strong brand image and keeping the design consistent boosts brand recognition and awareness.

Customers are more likely to show their loyalty and prefer you over the competition because of your established brand. You know what they say—with fame, comes fortune!

Never take looks for granted as your brand image is an absolutely critical component of your marketing strategy. Whether you're an established business looking for a brand facelift or a start-up looking to enter the market, your brand should reflect who you are as it will set the tone for how consumers view you. Don't know where to start? Utilize a professional graphic design firm to help develop a cohesive brand and watch your business grow. Be heard, be different, be noteworthy...and look good doing it. **BL**

Alyssa Gibson is a graphic designer at Symetric Productions located at 196 King Street in St. Catharines. For more information, please call 905.933.4910, email [info@spcan.com](mailto:info@spcan.com) or visit [www.symmetricproductions.com](http://www.symmetricproductions.com).

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**SYMETRIC**



## WHY “WHAT’S THE NEXT BIG THING?” IS THE WRONG FIRST QUESTION.

MIKE HANSON

**S**mart business builders like Amazon's Jeff Bezos says growth begins by creating a plan based on what you believe won't change. Not what will change. Bezos may now be the world's second richest guy and it's true much of his wealth comes from his company being the one of the world's biggest investors in R&D. Yes, that's all about creating "what's new?" So what gives? Bezos is wise too.

A while back he told Morgan Housel, noted business writer and investment forecaster, for The Motley Fool, "I very frequently get the question: 'What's going to change in the next 10 years?' but I almost never get the question? 'What's not going to change in the next 10 years?'" Bezos thinks the last question is the more important of the two. Why? Bezos says simply, "because you can build a business strategy around things that are stable in time."

Bezos said, "In our retail business, we know that customers want low prices, and I know that's going to be true 10 years from now. They want fast delivery. They want vast selection. It's impossible to imagine a future 10 years from now where a customer comes up and says, 'Jeff, I love Amazon; I just wish the prices were a little higher.' Or 'I love Amazon; I just wish you'd deliver a little more slowly.'" Yeah, right. Bezos has a sense of humour to go with his wisdom.

He's talking about the cornerstones to any organization's culture: Core Beliefs:

- What the founder believes it takes to be a success.
- How the employees share those beliefs.
- What their customers feel about those beliefs.

Shared beliefs become guides, like the North Star. Rock solid. They are the bases upon which all a company does and likely will ever do are built. They represent the brand. They put the "us" in "trust." Those beliefs are something he, his people and certainly his customers now firmly hold. As long as they do Amazon will grow.

No one knows that better than Bezos, adding: "And so the effort we put into those things, spinning those things up, we know the energy we put into it today will still be paying off dividends for our customers 10 years from now. When you have something that you know is true, even over the long term, you can afford to put a lot of energy into it."

So, what are your business' unshakable beliefs? How ingrained are they in your enterprise's culture? Did they come from you first agreeing on "what won't change in the next 10 years?" Successful business builders know answers to that question represent at least half of what their productive intelligence is. They also know these truths are key to identifying what will profitably change in the next 10 years. Anyway, Jeff Bezos thinks so. For what it's worth, I do too. **BL**

Mike Hanson is a B2B copywriter. For more information, call 416.200.2430 or email mike@mikehansoncopywriter.com.



## COADY'S CORNER

GENERAL MANAGER  
ST. CATHARINES CLUB

The sun is out, the lido deck is open and it has been another terrific month here at the club and for our members.... a big congratulations to Gregory Darte and Wolf Guembel (Lock Street Brewing Co.) for their grand opening at the Brewery in downtown Port Dalhousie.... Another congratulations is in order for Terence Davids (Remax - Team Davids) and his wife Lauren as they have welcomed Charles Davids to their family, born on April 21st.... It is great to see Robert Harder (Ontario Insurance and Risk Management) at the club after a successful operation.... Kudos to Alex Digenis (Henley Honda/Subaru of Niagara) after recently being Roasted for Charity.... another great example of community support....I am happy to report that Jason Plut and his fiancé (Niagara Training Systems) have recently just tied the knot!! Congratulations!! Jason and Ashley.... Great news for Brian Cullen (Brian Cullen Motors) who has been nominated for Canadian Dealer of the Year....Looking for a great place in the community for business, family or both? Look no further than the St. Catharines Club!

Feel free to post pictures around the club on our Facebook page or mention and follow us on Twitter @TheStCathClub #theplace2be Cheers, Coady **BL**

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## ENDOWING THE FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE FOR CANADA'S 150TH

PROVIDED BY HAMILTON HEALTH SCIENCES FOUNDATION

**H**appy birthday Canada! Be a part of our country's legacy by leaving your mark on health care for years to come. Canada turns 150 in 2017, when Canadians celebrate the country's diversity and renew their commitment to making the world a better place for future generations. Part of Canada's 150th birthday celebration is a reaffirmed dedication to building stronger communities that foster a greater sense of belonging, inclusion and reconciliation.

What better way to celebrate this milestone birthday than by giving back with an endowed gift and creating a little history of your own? It is a personal, powerful and permanent opportunity to honour someone in a meaningful way or ensure that your own philanthropic goals are fulfilled. An endowed gift is a realistic option for anyone wishing to make a gift of \$5,000 or more.

Through an endowed gift to Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation, which is the charitable entity for Hamilton Health Sciences and its family of hospitals, you help to ensure ongoing excellence in health care. By conservatively investing your gift, which continues to generate income year after year, The foundation creates a sustainable and predictable revenue stream.

With your gift, you can enable essential equipment purchases, important upgrades to clinical spaces, vital medical research and ongoing education for health care providers. Whether it is a newborn in need of a life-saving procedure, a cancer patient undergoing chemotherapy, a stroke patient having emergency surgery, or a senior requiring end-of-life care, these patients are grateful for the active role that donors like you take in improving their care.

Endowment gifts help enable the talented teams at Hamilton Health Sciences to deliver excellence in patient care for a population of 2.3 million people throughout south-central Ontario. Hamilton Health Sciences is Ontario's most comprehensive hospital system, providing care for the full spectrum of life's journey from pre-natal to palliative care.

Across its sites, it is the regional and provincial leader in many specialized acute and chronic care programs including pediatrics, pediatric mental health, cancer, cardiac, stroke, burn, trauma, neurosurgery, high-risk obstetrics, orthopedics, geriatrics and rehabilitation services.

As an academic teaching hospital, Hamilton Health Sciences is committed to providing exemplary health care while advancing excellence in health education and research. The organization's exceptional track record of inquiry and innovation has earned it recognition as one of the world's leading health science research organizations. Your endowment gift will help Hamilton Health Sciences stay on the leading edge of health care for generations to come.

Celebrate Canada's legacy by leaving your own today. Make a real difference in the future of health care throughout south-central Ontario with an endowed gift to Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation. Visit [www.hamiltonhealth.ca/endowment](http://www.hamiltonhealth.ca/endowment), email [legacy@hhsc.ca](mailto:legacy@hhsc.ca) or call 905-522-3863 for more information. **BL**

## LAUGH ALL SUMMER LONG WITH THE NORM FOSTER THEATRE FESTIVAL

PROVIDED BY THE FOSTER FESTIVAL

**T**he Foster Festival is the only Canadian theatre festival to celebrate the work of a living Canadian playwright. Norm Foster is Canada's most popular and most produced playwright in the history of our country. Foster has written almost 60 plays, receiving an average of 150 productions each year across Canada and internationally.

Fulfilling a longstanding dream of Executive Director Emily Oriold, The Foster Festival was founded by Oriold and Artistic Director Patricia Vanstone in a "Kitchen Cabinet" meeting in November 2014. It was Norm Foster's love of Niagara Region that led us to establish our festival in St. Catharines' beautiful new FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre.

"As a Foster Fan myself, it has been a dream come true to see The Foster Festival soar here in St. Catharines and the Niagara Region. Thank you to all of our patrons, sponsors, and supporters for joining us on this exciting new adventure and for sharing in the laughter," says Emily Oriold, Foster Festival executive director and a 2017 recipient of Business Link Niagara's 40 Under Forty Award.

The Foster Festival's mission is to showcase the humour and heart of Foster's writing in a dedicated environment, employing the finest Canadian theatre practitioners and supporting emerging and established Canadian playwrights interested in stories that are entertaining but also deeply meaningful to and reflective of our audience. The festival produced their first season in the summer of 2016 with a company that included some of Canada's best actors and designers.

The Foster Festival will once again produce three fully professional Norm Foster plays this summer 2017 in the brand new, state-of-the-art FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre in downtown St. Catharines.

The first production of 2017 will be the world premiere of Screwball Comedy by Norm Foster, followed by Foster's Old Love and finally the world premiere of Lunenburg.

"We are so excited to be giving you two new Norm Foster plays this season! Melanie Janzen, Catherine McGregor and Peter Krantz—three extraordinary Niagara-based actors, will light up the stage with their chemistry in our last show of the season. Lunenburg crackles with energy...and fun!" says Patricia Vanstone, Foster Festival artistic director.

The Foster Festival also applauds the recent appointment of Canadian playwright Norm Foster as an Officer of the Order of Canada, the highest civilian honour in the nation.

"I'm the luckiest guy in the world and I happen to live in the greatest country in the world. To be recognized by my country for my work is something very special to me. I have a job I love and I get to work with the most fun, creative people on earth," says Norm Foster, on his recent Order of Canada. **BL**

To learn more about The Foster Festival's 2017 season, please visit [www.fosterfestival.com](http://www.fosterfestival.com).

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# FOUR WAYS TO ENHANCE YOUR ENDPOINT SECURITY

TAYLOR HAYWARD CAPM, MCP

**I**t's quite likely you use several devices, such as a smartphone and a laptop or desktop PC, to run your business. Each device, however, represents an access point for threats like viruses and malware. Endpoint security aims to secure these network "endpoints" so that suspicious online activities are blocked at the point of entry.

The need for endpoint security has risen sharply, particularly in response to the rise in mobile threats and the growing internet of things (IoT). Most vulnerable are SMBs with offsite employees who need to access the company's network. But the reality is that all businesses are at risk, given today's ever-shifting and undefinable security perimeter.

So, what are today's SMB leaders doing when it comes to endpoint security? How can you ensure every tech outpost in your business is secure? Here are four key strategies:

## 1 REMOVE OR LIMIT ADMINISTRATIVE ACCESS

Most employees don't need administrative rights to perform their day-to-day jobs. If an endpoint app does require administrative access to your network, it can be added to a database of approved programs by an access control tool. Limiting administrative access in this manner can greatly limit

it damage within your core network caused by an attacker who is targeting the endpoint device.

## 2 USE ADVANCED AUTHENTICATION

Many successful endpoint breaches are the result of employees using the same password across multiple sites. If just one site is compromised, it's only a matter of time before yours is broken into. Two-factor authentication fixes this problem by requiring extra credentials to access the system, such as a token code or smart card. This blocks attackers, even if the password has been stolen.

## 3 KEEP YOUR SYSTEMS UP TO DATE

New security vulnerabilities are being discovered all the time. Hackers are constantly keeping watch—and using them against SMBs to find out which ones neglected to patch their systems. If you use various endpoint devices

in your business, it's important to ensure your business apps, anti-malware programs and other security tools are kept up to date with the latest security patches and virus definitions.

## 4 CONDUCT SECURITY TRAINING AND AWARENESS SESSIONS

A recent IBM study found that 60% of business data breaches originate from employees, with about a quarter of these being accidental. Ongoing awareness and training on security best practices in areas such as data encryption, password security and BYOD (bring your own device) can help keep your network safe.

As your data network gains more endpoints, the number and variety of cyber risks will only increase. These steps will help to ensure that your SMB is better protected and more resilient against online attacks. **BL**

*Taylor Hayward is the account manager at Plexis Limited located at 1931 Fourth Avenue in St. Catharines. For more information, please call 905.684.7253 or visit [www.plexisltd.com](http://www.plexisltd.com).*

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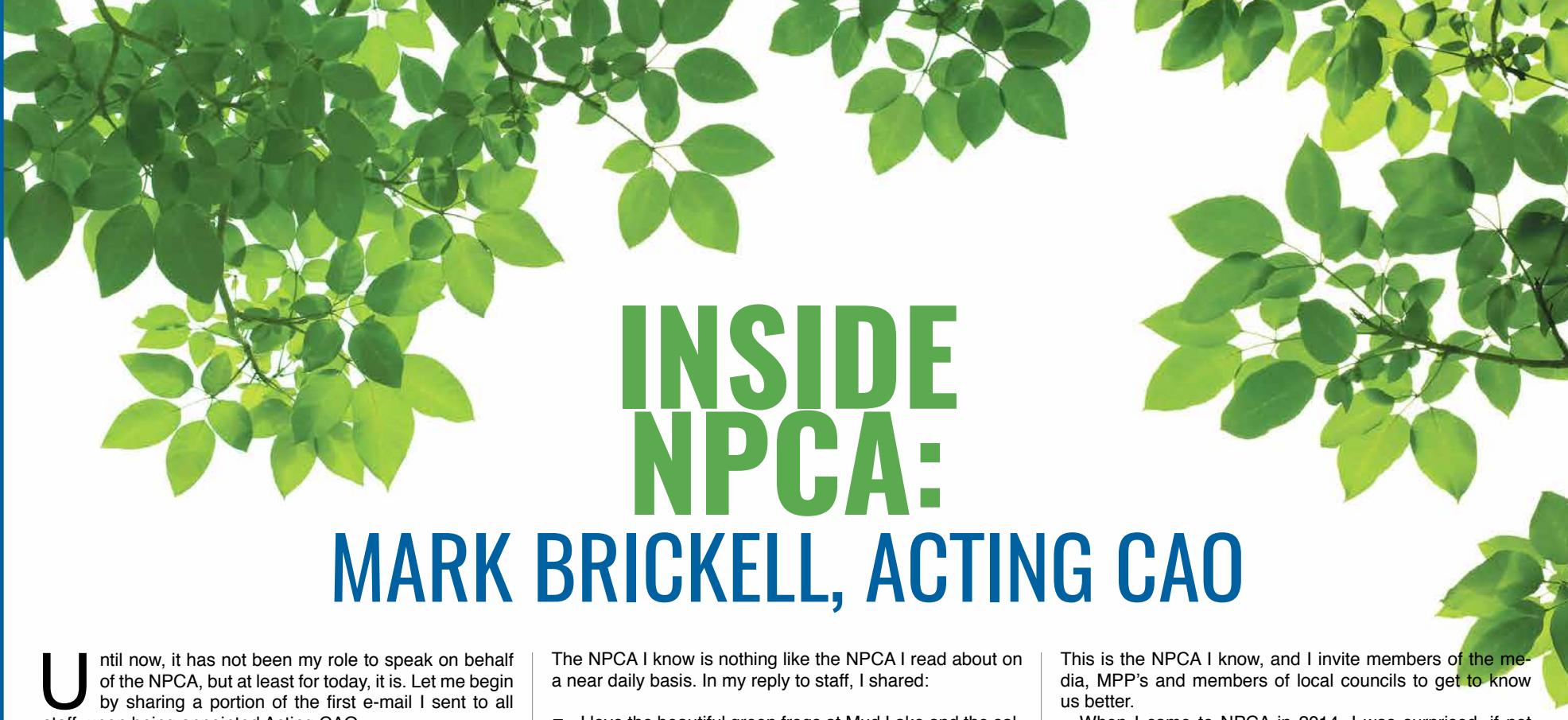
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# INSIDE NPCA: MARK BRICKELL, ACTING CAO

Until now, it has not been my role to speak on behalf of the NPCA, but at least for today, it is. Let me begin by sharing a portion of the first e-mail I sent to all staff, upon being appointed Acting CAO.

Good morning everyone,

Happy Friday! Today like every day is a very special day – all we have to do is seize the opportunity that each day brings us. Today we can bring forth kindness, compassion, empathy, understanding and positivity or we can bring forth things like fear, anxiety, selfishness and negativity. The choice lies within each and every one of us.

I remember my first day at NPCA – how proud I was coming to work for this great organization, a place where we strive to make the world a better place every day. I quickly came to appreciate the extraordinary people that make up this team – their intellect, their passion, and their commitment - from the front-lines of the organization, all the way up to the Board. How lucky are we! None of this is said to negate or diminish the challenges we have encountered along the way, but rather to remind us all that we serve a greater cause.

The Conservation Authorities Act is an excellent piece of legislation. It recognizes that the Province of Ontario is a truly unique place with an abundance of fresh water, unlike most parts of the world. It recognizes that water is a precious resource and that we collectively share a responsibility to protect this resource and manage it wisely, to ensure that future generations will continue to enjoy all of the benefits of our fresh water supply. It also recognizes that water serves as a powerful force of nature, and as such needs to be respected. Finally, it recognizes that there are significant competing needs and demands to be taken into account.

This is where we come in.

The Province realized that decisions concerning the complex regulation of water could not be made by only looking at maps. As such, Conservation Authorities were established to regulate the various watersheds and to take into account local circumstances and realities. An enormous public trust has been placed in this organization. The matters that we are required to deal with are often complex, and people have strong feelings about what they should be able to do on their land. We need to understand that. We exist to serve the public. As such, we need to be great listeners, seeking first to understand the other, second, conveying that we understand the other. When we do this, we are at our best. Again I say, how lucky are we, that we get to serve our community in such an important way."

Many of our staff members wrote about their appreciation for other team members and how great it is doing the work that we do. I could not agree more. Our team is fantastic! Our team members are highly intelligent, dedicated and genuinely passionate about the work they do. And so too are our Board members. We have a Board that would be the envy of most organizations – board members who are thoughtful, dedicated and deeply caring of the communities they serve."

The NPCA I know is nothing like the NPCA I read about on a near daily basis. In my reply to staff, I shared:

- I love the beautiful green frogs at Mud Lake and the salamanders at Cave Springs
- I love that when we work together as a team, as we did on the Cave Springs Management Plan, that we can produce work superior to any private consultant
- I love the work of our watershed team and the beautiful Niagara Peninsula watershed, we serve
- I love the way that Mich and Rob and Henry interact with the public – always positive, always serving
- I love our flagship properties, Ball's Falls, and Binbrook
- I love that we have so many dedicated volunteers – thank you, Kerry
- I love that through our Strategic Initiatives team that we connect people with nature and conservation in so many great ways – thank you Brianne, Catherine, Jill, Adam, and now Alicia too
- I love that we have super Board members who are passionate and thoughtful and so very generous with their time
- I love the way our administrative staff and corporate services team serve us so well
- I love chilling at Long Beach
- I love the perfection of Chippawa Creek as a natural campground
- I love that we serve Ontario's most precious resource
- I love that through our work; we make the world a better place each and every day
- I love the challenges and complexity of our work
- I love Kim and Renee's laughter and unabashed enthusiasm
- I love the beauty of St. Johns Pond
- I love that we have a 90-year-old Board member who is so passionate and full of energy
- I love that we have staff who come to work even when the snow is deep
- I love the highly unique partnership we have with the NCDSB, Brock University, Niagara College and Niagara Native Centre, at the St. Johns Centre
- I love the partnership that we have with DSBN at Woodend
- I love that people love getting married on our great properties
- I love the excitement of children as they experience the Children's Water Festival
- I love the Thanksgiving Festival and look forward to the Roots on the Twenty event coming up May 27-28
- I love the spectacular views at Beamer, and the Hawkwatch festival, as well
- I love our Wainfleet properties – the Gord Harry Trail, the Wetlands, the Bog, Morgan's Point and Long Beach – each one unique
- I love that we participate in pre-consultation and that we understand the importance of customer service
- I love that we engage the public
- I love that we are always trying to improve
- I love the work of our watershed team

This is the NPCA I know, and I invite members of the media, MPP's and members of local councils to get to know us better.

When I came to NPCA in 2014, I was surprised, if not shocked, to discover that in this organization that has been around since 1959, how lacking and outdated many of the core business and management systems were. There was no HR function; jobs were poorly defined, budgets were meaningless and highly inaccurate, there was no multi-year capital budget planning, no asset inventory, no project management framework, poor business planning, and corporate policies were incomplete and out of date.

Also, our Parks and Campgrounds had been seriously neglected for more than a decade. In many cases, our staff was left to work with sub-par tools, machinery, technology and other essential resources necessary to perform their jobs effectively.

Thanks to a solid strategic plan and our Board's commitment to implementing that plan, the NPCA that exists today is more professional, better managed, more customer and stakeholder-focused, more transparent and more accountable than ever before. In addition, we made significant investments in our parks and campgrounds, with more to come. Importantly, our staff now have the tools and resources necessary to do their work. Costs have been controlled, and revenues are up substantially. And we continue along the path of continuous improvement.

That said, the best is still to come. Within the next few months, we will be initiating our next strategic planning process. We look forward to engaging all stakeholders as we plan for our 60th anniversary and beyond.

It's time for all parties to focus on the good, important and often complex work that this organization does, in service to our community and the Niagara Peninsula Watershed. Work with us to create a positive future that we can all be proud of.

*Thank you*  
**Mark Brickell**  
Acting Chief Administrative Officer  
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

