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EMBRACING CHANGE

VOL. 8 ISSUE 8

APRIL 2026

COMMUNITY CARE CONCEPTS

Woolwich, Bellesley and Wilmot

Feature Business

PHARMASAVE®

ON THE COVER:
COMMUNITY CARE CONCEPTS
VOLUNTEERS – ELAYNE FUTHER,
ARTHUR (ART) BAUMAN, AND LIZ
CHALMERS

Seniors and
with disabilities
independently
in their own home.

OUR TRUSTED
BUSINESS DIRECTORY
LISTING: PAGE 27



COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE
EMPOWERING SENIORS TO EMBRACE THEIR LIMITLESS POTENTIAL



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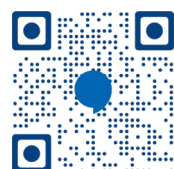


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*Christensen et al. (2024). Evaluating Real-World Benefits of Hearing Aids With Deep Neural Network-Based Noise Reduction: An Ecological Momentary Assessment Study. American journal of audiology, 33(1), 242-253. **A comprehensive hearing assessment is provided to adults ages 19 and older at no cost. The results of this assessment will be communicated verbally to you. Depending on the province you're located in, an administrative fee may apply if a copy of an Audiological Report is requested. Child hearing tests are conducted at select locations for a fee, please contact us for more information. Offers not valid in Quebec. See clinic for details. Offer expires April 30, 2026.

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On The Cover

This month's cover reflects three of Community Care Concepts' volunteers - Elayne Futher, Arthur (Art) Bauman, and Liz Chalmers. See the full cover story on page 14.

Cover Story & Photo By:
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

April often feels like a bit of a turning point. The days are getting longer, people are starting to spend more time outdoors again, and there's a renewed sense of activity in our communities. It's a great time to take a moment to recognize the people and businesses that help make our community such a great place to live.

In last month's issue, I invited readers to nominate a reliable local business that consistently goes above and beyond for their customers. I'm happy to share that we received some fantastic nominations

from readers who truly value the businesses they trust and support. Thank you to everyone who took a moment to reach out and share their recommendations — it's clear that our community is filled with dedicated professionals who care deeply about the people they serve.

You can now find the **full list of nominated businesses on page 25** of this issue. I encourage you to take a moment to read through the nominations and see which businesses have been recognized by fellow readers.

Now it's time for the next step — **voting**. If one of these businesses has made a positive impact on you or someone you know, I would love to hear from you. Please feel free to call or text 519-574-6428, or email embracingchangeinfo@gmail.com to place your vote. Voting will remain open until **April 20**, and the winning business will be revealed on May 1 and included in our May issue of *Embracing Change*.

April is also **Volunteer Month**, which makes it the perfect opportunity to recognize the incredible volunteers who quietly give their time to make our communities stronger. Whether they're helping at local events, supporting charities, assisting neighbours, or volunteering with community organizations, their generosity makes a real difference in the lives of others.

To all of the volunteers who give their time, energy, and compassion — thank you. Your kindness and dedication help make our community a better place for everyone.

As always, thank you for reading *Embracing Change* and for being part of this wonderful community. Wishing you a bright and refreshing April ahead.

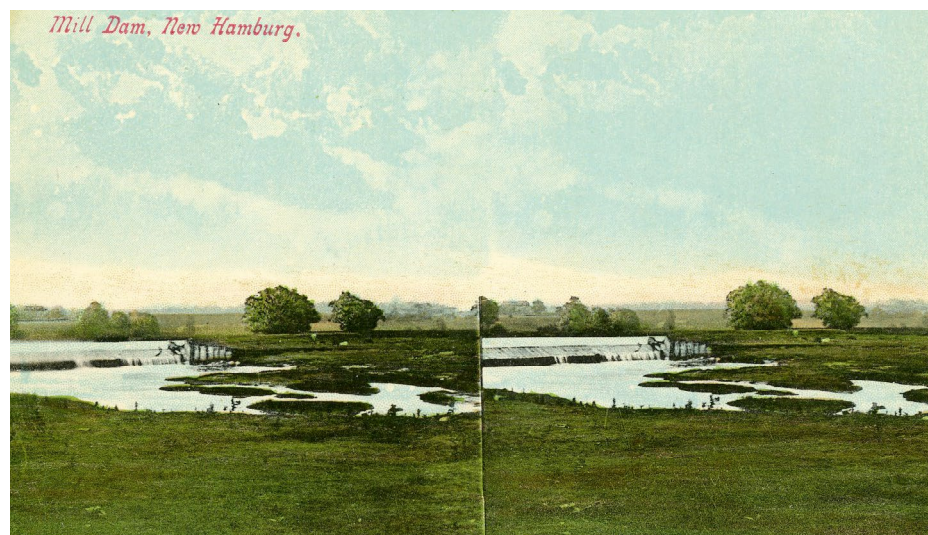
Tara



FLASHBACK PHOTO

Mill Dam - New Hamburg

Here is another stereoscopic photograph (those 2D images that look 3D viewed from a stereoscope). This photograph depicts the Mill Dam in New Hamburg. In 1847, William Scott started to use the water that flowed over the dam to travel into the mill race which powered the grist mill. After years of using this waterpower, the mill started to rely on electricity and the mill race was buried in the 1950's. The mill dam remains a central feature in downtown New Hamburg through warm sunshine, freezing temperatures and the yearly thaw.



Courtesy of the Grace Schmidt Room, Kitchener Public Library

FEATURE BUSINESS OF THE MONTH: PHARMASAVE

PHARMASAVE

Home Health Care

Town Square Pharmacy

100 Mill Street Unit D, New Hamburg P. 519-662-9995 F. 519-662-9984

“The winter season is finally behind us. We can finally say goodbye to frostbitten noses, lost mittens, and kids tripping over their bulky snowpants. *Cue The Beatles “Here Comes the Sun”*. Springtime is upon us and it is time to get outdoors, get moving, and breathe in that invigorating air. This month, let’s learn an easy way we can all be active this delightful season.

Do not let the thought of “fitness” seem daunting to you. It is far simpler (and more fun) than you think. The exercise can be completed with the motion of your two legs. That is right, we are deep diving into walking. Also, do not worry if you feel you may need a walking aid, as Town Square Pharmacy sells just the equipment you would need. With the help of walkers, urban poles, and rollators you will be walking (or rolling) your way into a healthier lifestyle.

Walkers, urban poles, and rollators are essential aids for people who feel they need some stability in their step. Whether you are inside or outside, these aids carve a pathway for you to walk with confidence! Walking around the rec center, your house, or building because the outside feels like a little much? No problem! Use your walker indoors to create the ultimate walkway. Not feeling super sturdy? Use a walker with no wheels for extra security. Need a little more horsepower? Then use a two-wheeled walker instead. Zoom your way (not really, let’s all be safe here) or stroll leisurely around with the windows open wide and your music on full blast. However, if you are feeling like taking your little adventure to the great outdoors, you may want to consider using some urban poles to improve your glide. Designed to add all-over body support, help your posture, and work out the upper half of your body at the same time, these little fellas are a great choice for the cardiovascular lover. Furthermore, there is also the option of rollators. While lending a helping hand in your fitness walk, these walking aids offer you a comfy, little seat for when you need to take a break. It does not matter where you

are. Although, please park your manual “vehicle” in a safe place first. Just simply stop, put the brakes on, and take a much-deserved rest. How convenient is that? At the end of the day, make sure you choose the option that is safest and most useful for you.

As a result of using these devices, breezing around the town will be just that, a breeze. Get the girl gang together and walk down to your favourite cafe to chat. Bring the boys down to have a long stride around town. Whoever you are with or if you prefer some alone time, make sure you are prioritizing your health. Getting out and walking is not only essential for physicality, but also your mental health. Overall, it is exceptional for the mind, body, and soul. Let’s get the poles moving, wheels turning, and legs strutting this spring.



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www.granthaven.com/wilmot-tavistock-gazette

FREE WORKSHOPS!

Woolwich Community Health Centre

Patient or not, all are welcome to attend our community programs!



Diabetes & Nutrition

Join us to learn about how nutrition changes can help manage your diabetes. This interactive talk will go over artificial sweeteners, label reading, whether carbohydrates are good or bad, and how much sugar is okay to have. Facilitated by a Registered Dietitian.

Thursday, April 9, 2026
10:00 - 11:30 AM
In person or Zoom



Positive Influence: Helping Your Loved One Get Sober

This 8-week group is for loved ones of people struggling with substance use to learn many skills that can help your loved one change, and to help yourself. 18+

Mondays, April 13 - June 8, 2026
6:00 - 7:30 PM
In Person or Zoom




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Woolwich Community Health Centre



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Healthy Habits for Life

Healthy Habits for Life is a free 8 week program for adults who want to build healthy habits and lower their risk of long-term health problems. Each session is interactive and includes easy tips and tools you can use in your daily life. After each session, you'll get helpful resources by email to support your learning and help you stay on track. Registration allows you to join one, two or all sessions!

1. Small Steps to Better Health
2. Healthy Habits that Stick
3. Eat Well, Live Well: Simply Nutrition
4. Move for Health
5. Sleep and Stress: A Two Way Street
6. Health Info Without the Overwhelm
7. Decoding Health Info Online
8. Alcohol, Smoking and Screen Time


Tuesdays from March 3 - June 9
Times vary, in person or Zoom



Smoking & Vaping Cessation

This 8-week group will help you build the skills, learn the strategies and gain the confidence to reduce or stop your smoking and vaping. Must be 18+ and motivated to change your smoking/vaping or those who have already stopped and want more support.

Mondays, April 13 - June 8, 2026
3:30 - 5:00 PM
In Person or Zoom



REGISTER

If you would like to register, please visit our website at www.WCHC.on.ca, or email Tariq at tabdulhadi@wchc.on.ca, or call at 519-664-3794 ext. 222

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MEET OUR EXPERTS



Emily Giau, Audiologist

Emily has extensive experience working with older adults which has led her into the hearing care industry for the last 5 years. As an audiologist, Emily has mainly worked in private practice settings and has traveled to retirement, long-term care and personal residences to provide exceptional hearing health care.

Education:

Bachelor of Science in Honours Health Studies/Aging Studies Option – Psychology Minor (University of Waterloo)

Master of Clinical Science in Audiology (University of Western Ontario)

Selina Mauro, H.I.S

Selina has 10 years of experience in the hearing industry as a Hearing Instrument Specialist and has also been certified in ear wax removal for 10 years as well. Selina also has experience working directly at a hearing aid manufacturer doing audiology support and training for all of Canada. Working as direct sales and training support for clinics traveling all over Ontario.

Education:

Bachelor of Science in Biology/Psychology Trent University

H.I.S. Diploma Conestoga College

CONTACT US

If you or a loved one requires support with their hearing health or hearing devices or want to start their journey to better hearing, we are here to help.

Elmira:

(519) 669-3131 | elmira@arnoldhearing.ca

315 Arthur Street South, Unit E3 Elmira, ON, N3B 3L5

New Hamburg:

519-662-3277 | newhamburg@arnoldhearing.ca

3 Waterloo St. New Hamburg, ON N3A 1S3 (Inside the Affinity Health Clinic)



Understanding Dementia: More than One Disease

The terms “Alzheimer’s disease” and “dementia” are often used interchangeably, but they do not mean the same thing. Understanding the difference is an important first step in building awareness, reducing stigma and supporting those affected.

Dementia is not a single disease. It is an umbrella term used to describe a set of symptoms caused by disorders affecting the brain. Alzheimer’s disease is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for 60–80% of all diagnoses. There are many other types of dementia, each with its own causes, symptoms and progression.

Other Types of Dementia

Young onset dementia refers to dementia diagnosed in people under the age of 65. It can affect individuals in their 50s, 40s, and in some cases even their 30s or 20s. It represents an estimated 2–8% of all dementia cases.

Vascular dementia occurs when blood flow to the brain is reduced, often due to stroke or other vascular conditions. Symptoms may include changes in decision-making, planning and organizing, and difficulties with movement.

Lewy Body dementia is caused by abnormal protein deposits (called Lewy bodies) that develop inside nerve cells in the brain. It accounts for approximately 5–10% of dementia cases. These deposits affect thinking, movement and behaviour. Symptoms can resemble both Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease and may include fluctuations in

attention and alertness, difficulties with planning and organization, hallucinations, changes in sleep patterns, muscle stiffness, tremors and slow movement, and depression and anxiety.

Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD) affects the frontal and temporal regions of the brain - areas linked to personality, behaviour and language. While it accounts for roughly 10% of all dementia cases, it is the most common type in people under 60. Early symptoms often involve changes in behaviour or speech rather than memory. As the disease progresses, more general signs of dementia appear. FTD is sometimes misdiagnosed as depression because of overlapping symptoms.

A Shared Journey

There are also rarer conditions that can lead to dementia. Diagnoses usually involve identifying characteristic features and ruling out other causes. Regardless of the type, dementia is a complex and deeply personal experience. Each diagnosis represents an individual and a family navigating change, uncertainty and the need for support.

If you have questions about dementia, or if you or someone you know is experiencing changes in memory, thinking or behaviour, we encourage you to reach out to the Alzheimer Society Waterloo Wellington. Understanding the differences is the first step toward building a more informed and supportive community.



Register today!

Scan code or go to alzheimerww.ca

Soci t  Alzheimer Society
WATERLOO WELLINGTON





Prevent Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Today

COPD makes breathing hard. It slowly damages the airways of the lungs, making them swollen and blocked. COPD can often be prevented.

1. Do you cough regularly?
2. Do you cough up mucus regularly?
3. Do even simple chores make you short of breath?
4. Do you wheeze when you exert yourself, or at night?
5. Do you get frequent colds that persist longer than those of other people you know?

If you answered "YES" to one or more of these questions, ask your doctor about a test for COPD.

If you are over 40 and smoke or used to smoke, you may be at risk for COPD. This test does not replace a complete medical examination. (The Canadian Lung Health Test)

Common Symptoms

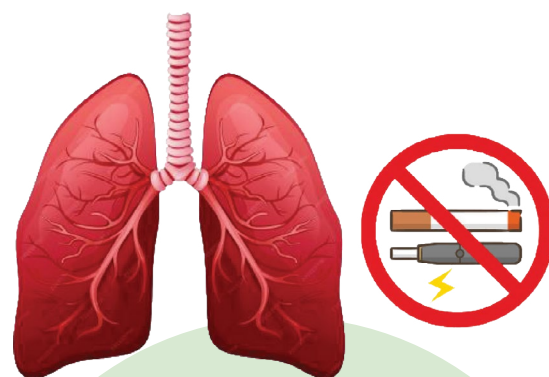
- ✓ A cough that lasts a long time (longer than 3 months)
- ✓ A cough with mucus
- ✓ Shortness of breath, especially during physical activity
- ✓ Wheezing (a whistling sound when you breathe)
- ✓ Feeling tired
- ✓ Losing weight without trying

Prevention Tips

- ✓ Do not smoke. If you do smoke:
 - Ask healthcare professionals for a simple breathing test
 - **It is never too late to quit!**
- ✓ Avoid lung irritants, such as:
 - Occupational dust and chemicals
 - Biomass smoke from burning coal, wood or charcoal
 - Second-hand smoke

Risk Factors

- ✓ Second-hand smoke exposure
- ✓ Air pollution
- ✓ Workplace dusts and fumes
- ✓ Genetic factors
- ✓ Cooking and heating with wood in homes with not enough ventilation



Local Resources – Waterloo Wellington:
Self-Management Program — bit.ly/waterloowellington
866.337.3318

Global Resources:
Government of Canada — <https://bit.ly/govcopd>
Canadian Lung Association — www.lung.ca/copd

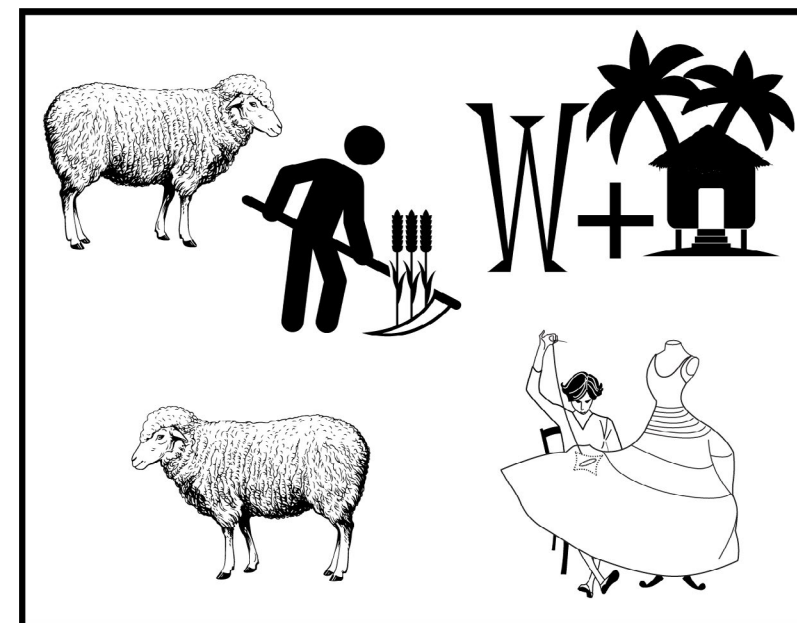
Healthy Living Resources:
BREATHE Better Stay STRONG — www.lung.ca/breathebetter
COPD Nutrition — <http://bit.ly/4HPzOB>

Smoking Cessation Resources:
Smoking Cessation Program (CAMH) — intrepidlab.ca/en/stop/
Smokers Helpline — www.smokershelpline.ca/s/?language=en_US

Don't ignore the signs – check your lungs.

Talk to your healthcare professional about how to prevent COPD.

Concentration Puzzle

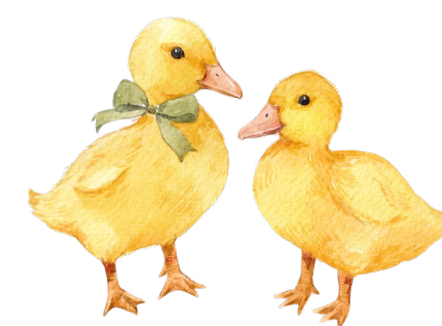


Sudoku

8		1		2	4			6
5	7	4			6			
			8	5				
1				8		5		3
6	2						1	9
3		9		1				7
				6	8			
			9			6	3	1
9			7	3		2		8



April Puzzles



Find the puppy hiding among bunnies



Solutions on page 30

Staying Safe, Strong, and Independent: How Physiotherapy Supports Healthy Aging



As Physiotherapists and co-founders of **Peak Physiotherapy & Wellness in St. Jacobs**, we feel very fortunate to work closely with seniors and families throughout the Woolwich community. We're **Leanne Park and Melissa Norris**, and a big part of our work is helping people stay mobile, safe, and confident so they can continue enjoying life in the homes and communities they love.

As we age, our bodies naturally change. Muscle strength can decrease, joints may feel stiffer, and balance may not feel quite as steady as it once was. These changes can sometimes make everyday activities—like walking, climbing stairs, gardening, or getting up from a chair—a little more difficult.

Physiotherapy focuses on maintaining strength, mobility, and confidence so these activities remain manageable and enjoyable.

One of the most important areas physiotherapists help with is **fall prevention**. Falls are a common cause of injury for older adults, but many falls can be prevented with the right guidance and exercises. Physiotherapists assess balance, walking patterns, strength, and mobility to identify factors that may increase someone's fall risk.

In the photo included with this article, you'll see an example of a **balance exercise we often work on with patients**. Simple exercises like this can help improve stability and coordination, making everyday movements safer and more comfortable.

Another important part of healthy aging is **maintaining muscle strength and bone density**. As we get older, we can lose muscle mass and bone density if we aren't regularly challenging our bodies. Strength training—using bodyweight, resistance bands, or weights—can help maintain strength, improve balance, support joint health, increase body density and make daily tasks easier. Even small improvements in strength can make a big difference when it comes to climbing stairs, carrying groceries, and getting up from a chair.

Physiotherapists can help guide safe and appropriate strengthening exercises tailored to each person's abilities and goals. These exercises are often simple, but when done consistently they can significantly improve mobility and confidence.

Physiotherapy can also help manage **joint pain and stiffness**, which are common with conditions such as arthritis or after injuries. Through a combination of hands-on treatment, targeted exercises, and education, physiotherapy can help reduce pain and improve how the body moves.



At **Peak Physiotherapy & Wellness**, we are proud to support seniors, caregivers, and families throughout Woolwich Township. Our goal is to help people stay strong, mobile, and confident so they can continue living safely and independently in the community they call home.

Interested in booking an appointment? **Call** us at **226-288-9743** or **email** us at **info@peakphysiowellness.com**

Your Path to Peak Health — Leanne & Melissa

3 Simple Balance Tips for Staying Steady

- 1. Keep Moving Daily**
Regular activity such as walking or gentle strengthening exercises helps maintain muscle strength and balance.
- 2. Practice Balance Safely**
Try standing on one leg while holding onto a counter or sturdy surface for support.
- 3. Make Your Home Safer**
Remove loose rugs and clutter, ensure good lighting, and wear supportive footwear to reduce fall risk.



Spring Skin Care Tips

As the seasons change, your skin may need a little extra attention. Colder winter air can leave skin feeling dry and dull, while the warmer temperatures of spring bring more sun exposure and humidity. This makes spring the perfect time to refresh your skincare routine.

Start by switching to a lighter moisturizer to keep skin hydrated without feeling heavy.

Don't forget sunscreen—UV rays become stronger in spring, even on cloudy days, so daily protection is important.

Gentle exfoliation can also help remove dry winter skin and reveal a brighter, smoother complexion.

Drinking plenty of water and eating fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables can support healthy skin from the inside out.

A simple seasonal reset can help your skin look and feel its best as we head into the brighter, sunnier days ahead.

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COVER STORY



The Heart of Our Community: Celebrating Local Volunteers

BY COMMUNITY CARE CONCEPTS

Throughout the week of April 19 to 25, 2026 we celebrate National Volunteer Week across Canada. The theme for this year is “Connecting Communities,” celebrating the key role that volunteers play in building strong and inclusive communities. This month’s cover reflects three of Community Care Concepts’ volunteers – Elayne Futher, Arthur (Art) Bauman, and Liz Chalmers. Community Care Concepts is a local non-profit charitable organization that supports older adults and adults with unique needs to live independently in their own home across the Townships of Woolwich, Wellesley and Wilmot. Volunteers have been the foundation of the organization’s work for more than 40 years. Each year, more than 120 volunteers contribute more than 8,000 hours, reflecting the equivalent of more than 4 full-time staff! The organization could not do the work that it does and have the impact that it does across our communities without its many volunteers including Elayne, Art and Liz – each fulfilling an important role in building and connecting communities.

Elayne has been a volunteer with Community Care Concepts for 19 years, delivering Meals on Wheels throughout Wellesley Township. In addition to the hot meals that Elayne delivers, her friendly face and conversation provides an important source of social contact for many isolated seniors in Wellesley Township. Her regular visit also provides an important safety check. Elayne enjoys the many benefits of volunteer including seeing seniors and their smiling faces, and the “kind, generous and caring people” that she has the opportunity to work with.

Art has volunteered with Community Care Concepts across Woolwich, Wellesley and Wilmot Townships for the past three and a half years, driving seniors to medical and other important appointments as well as visiting with isolated seniors. Art enjoys meeting people, helping others and seeing the thankfulness that others have for his role. He notes that there are benefits for everyone involved, “improving his own well-being through a sense of helping others.”

Liz has volunteered with Community Care Concepts for the last 4 years, delivering Meals on Wheels in Wilmot Township and more recently serving as a member of the organization’s Board of Directors. Liz acknowledges that she “delivers meals to some lovely people who are always grateful to have meals delivered.” She finds being a Board member “extremely interesting and has learned a lot about the many programs offered by CCC.” Liz enjoys volunteering, feeling that she is “contributing to the wider community.”

As we celebrate National Volunteer Week, we celebrate the important roles that Elayne, Art and Liz and our many other volunteers play in building and connecting our communities, such as delivering Meals on Wheels, providing rides to medical and other appointments, visiting isolated seniors, serving in our dining programs, helping in our adult day programs and active living centres, helping with special events or participating on our Board of Directors. Thank for sharing your hands and your hearts with others! You fulfill such an important role in helping older adults to remain in their homes and in building connected communities across our Townships!



COMMUNITY CARE CONCEPTS
of Woolwich, Wellesley and Wilmot

Helping Seniors and Adults with Disabilities to Live Independently in their own Home

- Meals on Wheels • Transportation
- Day Programs • Homemakers
- Maintenance • Friendly Visitors • Community Meals
- Transportation from Hospital to Home
- FREE Community Exercise and Falls Prevention Classes
- FREE Short Term Home Support



of Woolwich, Wellesley and Wilmot

929 Arthur St. S. Elmira 519-664-1900 **1-855-664-1900** **23 Church St. New Hamburg 519-662-9526**
info@communitycareconcepts.ca www.communitycareconcepts.ca

We Need Your Help! Volunteer With Us!

Driving seniors and adults with unique needs to appointments.



Delivering Meals on Wheels



Friendly visiting in homes and supporting in our Adult Day Programs.

Community Care Concepts

Helping seniors and adults with unique needs to live independently in their own homes across Woolwich, Wellesley & Wilmot Townships.

519-664-1900 519-662-9526 1-855-664-1900

Celebrating Volunteer Month: Honouring the Seniors Who Strengthen Our Community

Earlier this year, I rose in the House of Commons to acknowledge the important work of not-for-profit organizations in our community and across Canada. Their impact is profound, and at the heart of everything they do are the volunteers who make their work possible.

I am continually inspired by the countless acts of generosity happening in our community quietly, consistently, and often unnoticed. Across Kitchener-Conestoga and Waterloo Region, seniors are among the most dedicated contributors. After decades spent working, raising families, and building the foundations of our community, many older adults choose to stay engaged in new and meaningful ways. Whether mentoring young people or newcomers, organizing community events, or crafting items such as quilts or knitted goods for hospitals or shelters, these acts ensure no one feels alone and that our community remains welcoming and connected.

Senior volunteers play an invaluable role in strengthening communities. They bring decades of skills, mentorship experience, and leadership to schools, non-profits, health services, and community programs, offering wisdom that benefits everyone around them. Celebrating them publicly ensures that their often-invisible work is truly acknowledged. Recognizing them during Volunteer Appreciation Month and throughout the year reinforces how much their contributions matter.

Volunteering can enrich seniors' lives in powerful ways. It offers social interaction, belonging, and meaningful relationships. Staying active through volunteering helps maintain mobility, independence, and cognitive health, supporting what I've heard described as "active aging" - a term I use to describe my parents!

Volunteers provide companionship, emotional support, daily assistance, and connection, all while staying engaged with the people and places that make this community feel like home.

Many seniors first got involved simply because someone asked, and what starts as a single afternoon of helping often grows into lasting friendships and a renewed sense of purpose. Volunteering looks different for everyone, and opportunities are as varied as the people who fill them. From local non-profits to community centres and events, volunteers help keep the spirit of connection strong and enduring.

If you've been considering volunteering, I encourage you to take that first step. Your experience, kindness, and presence can make a lasting difference.

And finally, if you know a volunteer in your life, thank them. If you are a volunteer, thank you! Your generosity is the heartbeat of our community.



TIM LOUIS

Member of Parliament for Kitchener-Conestoga

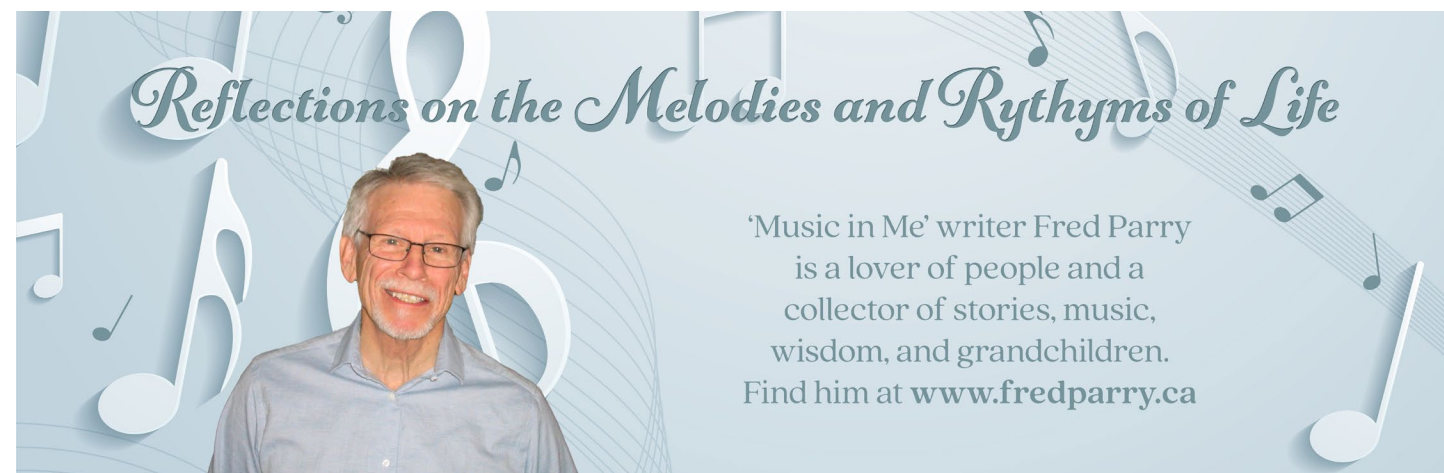


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On Being Lucky

“People who need people/ Are the luckiest people in the world” – People by Barbra Streisand

When I look back on some of my favorite people, they all have a different story ... with the same message.

Bob has been my mechanic for over thirty years. He has taught me a lot about cars, but much more about life. In all the time I’ve known him, I’ve never seen him lose his temper; and as a younger family man, I remember how hard that was when you’re trying to balance family responsibilities and job pressures.

One day, I asked him about it. He told me that the secret was to only work half days. Half days? I didn’t get it. I mean, over the years I have always dropped off my car very early for repairs. I also knew that he often worked well into the evenings. He looked at my puzzled expression and said, “Well, like I said... half days. That’s 12 hours isn’t it Fred?”

That Bob... he’s been the funny one!

One time, my wife gingerly drove our car into his extremely busy garage. She was dragging the muffler system on the ground. Bob stopped everything, took her car in, fixed it all up, and sent her on her way in no time at all.

A few days later, I dropped in to thank him and asked how he was able to help her immediately when his shop was already full of cars. He simply said that if it had been his wife who was in a similar situation, he’d like to think that some other mechanic would do the same thing.

‘Music in Me’ writer Fred Parry is a lover of people and a collector of stories, music, wisdom, and grandchildren. Find him at www.fredparry.ca

Looking back through my young teenage years, I do recall being influenced by some of my relatives in a positive and vicariously religious manner.

From my maternal grandmother, I learned how a simple woman of faith could command the love of everyone who met her. I could tell that she was special because of how she treated me – with kindness, patience and with such gratitude or any little thing I did for her. She had an easy way about her: like the time I stressed over not having any cake mix in the house for my promised birthday cake. Smiling she said, “Don’t worry Freddy, we were making cakes long before Betty Crocker.”

From my paternal grandfather I learned that volunteering of one’s time to help others made you happy. And, although he didn’t act “religious” during his lifetime, he had written on his shed door, “A person is closest to God in a garden, than anywhere else on Earth.”

And, from Aunt Mamie, I learned honesty. She was the matriarch of my Mom’s family and if anyone – especially adults – were to cross swords with her, she had a memory that could expose lies in no time.

My dad used to say that civility doesn’t cost anything, but promotes a caring attitude, understanding and self-respect.

Few practice what they preach; but in my life, I’ve been lucky with my role models. No one had to teach me... it was all there (the good and not so good) for me to see for myself!

That’s the way I figure it.



Dear Readers: April 2026

A profound question—how does the body know how to die? People have been asking it long before medicine had machines, monitors, or words like “vital signs.”

In many ways, the body doesn’t decide to die so much as it remembers how to let go.

Here’s what we understand, both medically and through long human observation: the body follows ancient instructions. Your body carries wisdom far older than you are—older than language, older than science. From the first breath, it knows how to regulate, repair, adapt... and eventually, how to wind down. When illness, injury, or age overwhelms the systems that keep balance, the body begins conserving energy instead of spending it.

It’s not failure.

It’s economy.

As death approaches, systems slow in a predictable order. The body quietly prioritizes:

- The heart and brain receiving first claim on energy
- Digestion, appetite, and thirst fading
- Muscles weakening as sleep deepens
- Awareness turning inward

This isn’t random. It’s choreography. Different tempos for different people, but the same music.

The brain shifts states. Neurochemistry changes. Endorphins increase. Carbon dioxide rises gently. The brain often enters states similar to deep meditation or dreaming. This is why many people become calmer, less fearful, sometimes even peaceful—despite what is happening physiologically.

The body is, in a very real sense, self-soothing.

As consciousness loosens its grip, the effort required to stay “here” becomes greater than the effort to let go. The body responds by reducing stimulation—less hunger, less speech, less engagement. Attention drifts. The boundary between waking and dreaming softens.

Advance & Comfort Care Planning for Seniors
The Body Remembers How to Die...
Understanding the body’s natural intelligence at the end of life
Written by Sue Phillips, Serious Illness/End of Life Doula

“When we plan for our senior years & end-of-life journey, we reclaim choice, ease fear, and honour what matters most.”

When we understand dying as something the body does, rather than something that happens to a person, fear often softens. Families may notice changes that feel unsettling at first—longer periods of sleep, little interest in food, fewer words—but these are not signs of suffering or neglect. They are signs of a body turning inward, conserving energy, and completing its work.

This is why presence matters more than productivity at the end of life. Quiet companionship, gentle touch, familiar voices, and a calm environment support what the body already knows how to do. Attempts to stimulate, encourage eating, or “wake someone up” often come from love—but can unintentionally interrupt a natural process unfolding with care and precision.

This isn’t something the person has to do.

The body does it for them.

This is very old wisdom.

Long before hospitals, people noticed this. They spoke of:

- “The light turning inward”
- “The breath changing its mind”
- “The body knowing when it’s time”

Different cultures, same recognition: death is not an emergency for the body. It is a transition it has rehearsed across millennia.

When we stop trying to manage, fix, or hurry the moment—and simply witness—it becomes clear.

The body knows how to die the same way it knows how to be born.

Slowly. Wisely. In its own way.

Resource: Legacy.com

Sue Phillips: E: sPhillips5519@gmail.com
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Next month: Sacred Visitations or Healing Memory?
Exploring Grief Dreams

Reduce Your Risk of Vision Loss from Macular Degeneration

Howard Dolman BSc OD With Thanks to EyeCarePro

What Is Macular Degeneration?

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the deterioration and loss of function of the macula, the key part of the retina responsible for highly detailed central vision. AMD can cause vision changes that can progress from subtle to significant vision loss.

There are two main types of macular degeneration: dry and wet.

Dry AMD occurs when small deposits in the macula called drusen gradually damage the light-sensitive retinal nerve cells.

In wet AMD, fragile new blood vessels grow under the macula. When these blood vessels leak blood or fluid, the damage to the macula and impact on vision is much more significant.

Although both types of macular degeneration can impact vision, wet AMD is the more serious form of the disease as it results in faster and much more significant vision loss.

Who Has an Elevated Risk for Macular Degeneration?

- age 50+
- family history of AMD
- smoking
- a diet high in saturated fat
- high blood pressure
- obesity
- cardiovascular disease

6 Ways to Reduce Your Risk of Macular Degeneration

Stop smoking

Smokers are 4 times more at risk of developing AMD and typically develop the disease around 10 years earlier than non-smokers!

Wear Quality Sunglasses

Ultraviolet rays from the sun can put your eyes at risk, even on a cloudy day! Make sure that you choose high-quality 100% UVA & UVB filtering sunglasses to reduce the damage from harmful UV exposure. Consider getting polarized lenses, as they filter out reflected light more efficiently. UV protection from reflected light is especially important if you spend time on the road, on the ski hills, at the beach, or on the water.

Check Your Blood Pressure

High blood pressure not only harms your heart but also restricts oxygenated blood from reaching your eyes. Have your blood pressure checked regularly. If you already have hypertension, consider using an at-home monitor to keep tabs on it.

Have a Healthy Diet

Cut out saturated fat, which can raise your blood pressure, and reduce animal fats. Replace butter with olive oil, where possible. Look for plant-based, high-protein alternatives to meat, and eat oily fish such as herring, sardines, and salmon.

Dark, leafy greens and certain orange-coloured vegetables are terrific for your eyes. Spinach and kale contain lutein. Orange peppers and sweet potatoes contain zeaxanthin. If you have AMD, ask your optometrist about antioxidant supplements that have been clinically shown to slow the progression to the wet form.

Know Your Family History

Up to 70% of AMD cases have a genetic component. Those with a parent or sibling with AMD have a greater risk of developing this serious sight-threatening eye disease. If you have a family history, make sure to have your eyes regularly tested for AMD.

Get Your Eyes Checked Regularly

Everyone should have regular comprehensive eye exams, especially if you're over 50, have a family history of AMD, hypertension, or other risk factors.

An eye exam that screens for AMD typically includes:

- **Pupil Dilation** – the optometrist applies eye drops to dilate your pupil so they can more thoroughly examine the retina inside your eyes
- **Digital Retina Image and/or OCT** – full colour pictures and 3D imaging of the macula detect leakage from the blood vessels and measure retinal thickness.
- **Amsler Grid** – The optometrist asks you how straight lines on a checkerboard grid appear. “Wavy” or “missing” lines could indicate the presence dry or wet AMD.

Vision is your gateway to the world. Good vision lets you live an active and independent life, even in your advanced years. Regardless of your age, have your eyes checked regularly, especially if you have a family history of AMD or other risk factors. If you have vision loss from dry AMD, ask your optometrist about a new Health Canada approved treatment option.



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A Care Partner's Guide to Medication Management



While medications may be vital for staying healthy as we age, managing a growing list of medications can shift from a daily routine to a source of stress.

As we age, the way our bodies break down medication changes. This means how medications interact with other medications, including over-the-counter vitamins or supplements, can change over time. Having a care partner's support can reduce stress related to medication management, ensure medications are taken correctly, identify side effects, and minimize dosing errors.

Care partners often understand the importance of this responsibility but are not formally trained in medication management, making it difficult to track schedules, organize pills, and identify side effects without support.

To bridge this gap, researchers Tejal Patel, PharmD, Schlegel Specialist in Medication Management and Aging, Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging (RIA), and Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Waterloo, and Karyman Ghanem, MSc, University of Waterloo, worked with care partners to develop a toolkit that provides solutions to challenges and concerns that care partners encounter in medication management and aims to reduce their stress.

The Care Partner Checklist

Helping someone manage their medication requires a mix of organization and advocacy. Here are a few tips to keep things running smoothly:

- Speak to your pharmacist or doctor to learn more about the medications.
- Keep a digital or printed list of every medication, including dosages, prescribing doctor, and the reason for the medication.
- Take note of sudden changes, such as confusion, dizziness, and changes in appetite, and share them with your pharmacist or doctor. These could be medication side effects.
- Introduce pill organizers or blister packs to simplify medication scheduling and adherence.
- Check if the pharmacy offers refill reminders, so you never miss a refill.

For more information and strategies to improve medication management, visit the-ria.ca.

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Mammography: What Canadian Seniors Need to Know

As we grow older, looking after our health becomes more important than ever - especially when it comes to cancer screening. One of the most vital tools in detecting breast cancer early is mammography, which is a type of x-ray that looks at the breast tissue. For Canadian seniors, regular mammograms can make a real difference in outcomes, helping detect changes in the breast before they become serious.

At Ultrascan we can perform your Ontario Breast Screening mammogram without a doctor's requisition if you are between the ages of 40-74. If you have a doctor's requisition you can have a screening mammogram at any age.

If you're over 74, talk to your healthcare provider about whether continuing mammograms is right for you. Your personal health history, family history of breast cancer, and overall well-being will help determine the best plan.

What is a Mammogram?

A mammogram is a safe, low-dose x-ray used to check for early signs of breast cancer, even before symptoms appear. It can detect small lumps and changes in breast tissue that may not be felt during a physical exam. The mammogram takes only a few minutes and is performed by a specially trained medical radiation technologist, usually in a clinic or hospital.

Why Seniors Still Need Mammograms:

Many seniors wonder if they still need mammograms after the age of 75. The answer is, YES!, as long as you are in reasonably good health and would benefit from early detection. The Canadian Cancer Society and the Ontario Breast Screening Program recommend that women continue breast screening every two to three years into their 70's and possibly longer depending on their health and life expectancy.

Breast cancer risk increases with age. In fact, more than half of breast cancers in Canada are diagnosed in women over 60. Detecting cancer early through screening increases the chances of successful treatment and can reduce the need for more aggressive therapies.

What to Expect:

A mammogram may feel a bit uncomfortable, as the breast needs to be compressed between two plates to get a clear image. The pressure only lasts a few seconds, and our technologist will help you through the process with care and respect. If you have mobility issues or use a wheelchair, we are able to accommodate your needs.

Know What's Normal:

Staying on top of your screenings is an important part of aging well. If it's been more than two years since your last mammogram - or if you've never had one - now is a good time to book. Talk to your doctor or call us to get more information.

Early detection saves lives. Don't put it off - your health is worth it!



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- Rudy Held Performance Centre
- Soles Journey New Hamburg
- Heart & Home Creations NH



- McDonalds (outside magazine stand)
- UltraScan New Hamburg (outside magazine stand)

WELLESLEY TOWNSHIP:

- Schmidtsville Restaurant (outside magazine stand)
- Wellesley Township Community Health Centre

- Linwood Nurse Practitioner Office
- Pond View Retirement Village
- Cooks Pharmacy Wellesley
- Pym's Village Market
- In Season Home & Garden St Clements
- Len's Mill Store - Hawkesville
- Food Town IFT St Clements (Outside Magazine Stand)

WOOLWICH TOWNSHIP:

- Community Care Concepts
- Martin's Guardian Pharmacy (outside magazine stand)
- Kiwanis Transit
- Woolwich Health Care Centre
- MCC Thrift & Gift Elmira
- Living Waters Books & Toys Elmira
- Bonnie Lou's Cafe
- Hillcrest Home Baking
- Dollarama Elmira (outside magazine stand)
- Harvest Moon St. Jacob's

Solutions



Concentration Puzzle: You reap what you sow.

8	9	1	3	2	4	7	5	6
5	7	4	1	9	6	3	8	2
2	3	6	8	5	7	1	9	4
1	4	7	6	8	9	5	2	3
6	2	8	5	7	3	4	1	9
3	5	9	4	1	2	8	6	7
4	1	3	2	6	8	9	7	5
7	8	2	9	4	5	6	3	1
9	6	5	7	3	1	2	4	8

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