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Delivering for Vaughan: Francesco Sorbara  
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Feature Story on page 16

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## Letter from the Editor



### Spring is on the Horizon!

This winter brought the most snow we've seen in years! While the weather was tough, it reminded us of the strength in our community. As we move past the icy days and look forward to the promise of spring, there's something special about seeing tulip beds bloom and feeling the renewed sense of energy that warmer days bring.

In this issue, I'm proud to feature Francesco Sorbara, MP for Vaughan–Woodbridge. I've watched Francesco work hard for many years, consistently showing up for our community. He's more than just a government representative—he's a dedicated leader who supports Woodbridge and its many diverse communities. His commitment over the past 10 years, along with his team's constant availability, has made a real difference for so many.

March also brings International Women's Day—a time to celebrate, empower, and reflect on the progress women have made and the work still ahead. Behind every successful woman is her soul and energy. Let's continue to champion more opportunities, equity, and awareness, both in the workforce and beyond.

As we move into April, many will come together to celebrate Easter and Passover—holidays rooted in hope, peace, and reflection. Wishing peace and happiness to all during these special times.

While we focus on growth and renewal locally, it's also a moment to reflect on the broader ties that shape our future. Canada's long-standing relationship with the United States is complex, deeply intertwined, and crucial to both nations. As neighbours and partners, we look forward to continuing this journey together, fostering mutual respect, collaboration, and positive progress.

Let's embrace the new season with optimism, gratitude, and community spirit. Wishing you and your family a peaceful and joyful spring.

*Unity!*

Josie Alonzi



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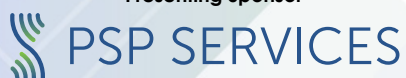
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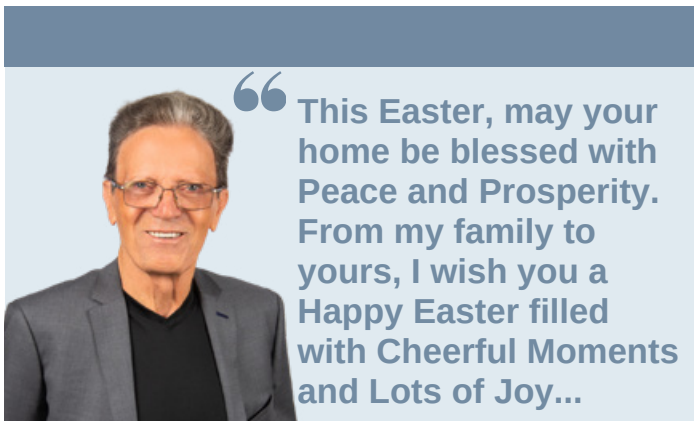


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## Reassess, Reset, and Recharge: Spring into Better Health

By Dr. Sarah Capetola, ND

Spring carries a quiet invitation—a reminder that just as nature renews itself, so can we. It's a season of possibility, of movement, of coming out of hibernation and into a space where energy flows more freely. There's something about the way the days stretch longer, the air softens, and life seems to reawaken that naturally calls us to do the same.

You don't need to wait for burnout or illness to take action. This season, listen to your body and take the steps it's been asking for—because small shifts now can lead to lasting health all year long. It's easy

to slip into cycles where survival mode becomes the norm, where fatigue lingers and clarity feels just out of reach. But spring offers an opening. It's not about overhauling your entire life or following rigid protocols—it's about tuning in and finding what helps you move forward with greater balance and energy.

Often, we treat feeling “off” as something to ignore until it becomes impossible not to. But what if you didn't? What if the foggy mind, sluggish energy, or restless nights weren't just parts of life you had to push through but signals inviting you to slow down and recalibrate?

Spring is your natural reset point. If you're feeling sluggish, off-balance, or stuck in survival mode, it may be time to recalibrate. The opportunity to feel energized, focused, and resilient is there—you just have to take it.

Reassessing isn't about judgment; it's about curiosity. Where are you thriving? Where are you running on empty? Sometimes, the answers lie deeper. This is the season to investigate the underlying causes—nutrient deficiencies, immune imbalances, hormonal shifts, or chronic inflammation—that may be silently affecting your energy, mood, and overall well-being. Identifying these factors provides clarity and empowers you to make targeted, effective changes.

In the same way nature effortlessly transitions from dormancy to bloom, you too can move toward a space of vitality. This isn't about chasing perfection—it's about creating space for more energy, more clarity, and more ease. Spring reminds us that growth is always possible. Sometimes, it just takes a moment to pause, listen, and choose a new path forward.

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# Spring Awakening: Revitalizing Your Relationship for a New Season of Growth

By Dr. Mary Marano

As the chill of winter fades and the world begins to bloom, spring reminds us that renewal is not only possible but essential. Nature sheds the old, welcomes the new, and flourishes in the warmth of longer days. Relationships, too, go through seasons—some filled with warmth and connection, others marked by distance or stagnation. If winter represents the periods of disconnect, stress, or emotional hibernation, then spring offers a fresh opportunity to breathe new life into your relationship.

Just as gardeners' clear away debris and prepare the soil for new growth, couples must also tend to their emotional landscape. This season of renewal invites us to nurture our relationships with care, attention, and a sense of possibility. Here's how you can embrace the energy of spring to refresh your connection with your partner.

## 1. Clearing the Weeds: Letting Go of Resentments

A thriving garden cannot flourish if it's overrun with weeds. Similarly, unresolved conflicts, unspoken frustrations, and lingering resentments can choke the intimacy in a relationship. Spring is a perfect time to do some emotional weeding.

- Take time to acknowledge and release old grievances. Have an open conversation about any lingering hurts but focus on solutions rather than blame.
- Practice forgiveness—not as a way to excuse harmful behavior but as a means of freeing yourselves from the weight of past pain.
- Let go of unrealistic expectations that may have stifled your relationship. Instead, embrace what is and build from there.

## 2. Planting New Seeds: Setting Intentions for Growth

Spring is about planting new possibilities. What do you want to grow in your relationship? More laughter? Deeper intimacy? Better communication? This is the time to be intentional about what you want to cultivate together.

- Set a shared vision: Talk about what you want your relationship to look like in this new season.
- Try something new together: Whether it's a hobby, a date night idea, or a fresh way of communicating, novelty brings excitement and curiosity.
- Prioritize quality time: Be present for each other without distractions—put away devices, make eye contact, and truly listen.

## 3. Refreshing Your Emotional Soil: Reconnecting with the Basics

Like the earth needing nutrients to sustain growth, relationships require fundamental elements to stay strong—communication, appreciation, and affection.

- Water with words: Express gratitude and admiration daily. Compliment your partner, acknowledge their efforts, and speak words of encouragement.
- Sunlight of touch: Physical connection matters—hugs, kisses, holding hands, or even a reassuring pat on the back can reignite warmth.

- Prune unhealthy patterns: Notice any habits that create distance, such as criticism, avoidance, or emotional withdrawal, and replace them with healthier interactions.

## 4. Opening the Windows: Inviting Fresh Energy into Your Relationship

After months of being indoors, there's something invigorating about opening the windows and letting fresh air in. Relationships benefit from the same renewal—breaking routines, embracing spontaneity, and breathing new energy into your connection.

- Break the monotony with small surprises—leave love notes, plan an unexpected date, or simply do something out of the ordinary.
- Laugh together. Humor is one of the best ways to shake off emotional stagnation and create a sense of connection.
- Change your environment. A simple weekend getaway, a walk in a new neighborhood, or rearranging your home can shift the energy in your relationship.

## 5. Embracing the Unpredictability of Growth

Spring doesn't guarantee perfect weather; there are still storms, unexpected chills, and sudden bursts of warmth. Relationships, too, have unpredictable moments. The key is learning to navigate them with patience and resilience.

- Understand that growth isn't linear—there will be setbacks, but they don't define the entire relationship.
- Cultivate adaptability by embracing change rather than resisting it.
- Celebrate progress, no matter how small. Every effort to reconnect, communicate, or show love is a step toward a stronger bond.

## A Spring Challenge: 3 Simple Practices to Start Today

1. Morning Gratitude Ritual – Each morning, share one thing you appreciate about your partner. This sets a positive tone for the day.
2. 15-Minute Connection Time – Set aside at least 15 minutes daily to talk without distractions—no phones, no TV, just focused attention.
3. Weekly Adventure – Do one new thing together each week, whether it's a different restaurant, a nature walk, or a creative activity.

## A Season of Renewal

Spring is nature's way of reminding us that new beginnings are always possible. Relationships, like gardens, require care, attention, and intentional nurturing. By clearing emotional clutter, planting seeds of connection, and embracing growth, you can transform your relationship into a flourishing, vibrant space of love and renewal.

*This season, step into the warmth, open your heart, and allow your relationship to bloom.*



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## Stephen Lecce Re-Elected for Third Term as MPP for King—Vaughan in Landslide Victory

*On February 27th, Stephen Lecce was re-elected as the MPP for King—Vaughan in a landslide election for the third time in a row, winning over 64% of the vote.*

“We fought for Canada — we fought for a better future for our country and our kids. I am so proud, humbled, and energized to stand before you as the re-elected member of Provincial Parliament for King and Vaughan,” said Stephen Lecce. “I want the families of this community to know that I’m ready to roll up my sleeves, and to keep working and delivering for you, in the community I was born and raised in. Thank you to my family, team, and our incredible community for your continued support. The work starts today — and I won’t let you down.”



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# Undefeated and Unconquered. Confident and Encouraged. Triumphant and Uplifting.

by *The Honourable Senator Tony Loffreda*

For nine days, Canada was host to some of the bravest athletes the world has ever seen as Vancouver-Whistler hosted the 7th Invictus Games.

Founded by Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, the Invictus Games celebrate the resiliency, perseverance and sheer determination of injured and sick service personnel and veterans. They are essentially a small-scale version of the Olympic Games for the valiant men and women who have served their country with dignity and who have been wounded, physically, psychologically, or otherwise.

More than 500 athletes from 23 nations competed in eleven adaptive sports in British Columbia earlier this month and, for the first time in its young history, the Games held winter sport competitions including alpine skiing, snowboarding and skeleton.

I had the pleasure of attending the Opening and Closing Ceremonies as well as a few competitions, including the finals of the wheelchair rugby where France came from behind to capture gold against the United Kingdom. Seated next to Prince Harry and two-time Rugby World Cup winner, New Zealander Richie McCaw, it was a high-intensity affair that had everyone on the edge of their seats.

With a star-studded lineup of international music acts, the Opening and Closing Ceremonies were uplifting gatherings where the competitors, their coaches and support staff took centre stage. And rightfully so!

To no surprise, as the athletes paraded into BC Place, Team Canada received the loudest cheers. It was truly electrifying to hear the crowd and feel the rumble as thousands were waving the Canadian flag which, incidentally, just turned 60 years old this month.

Another moving moment during the ceremony was the roar of the crowd generated by the Ukrainian delegation as it entered the stadium. Three years into Russia's shameful and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, the Canadian people continue to firmly stand behind Ukraine and it was on full display during the Games.

Canada's True Patriot Love Foundation is a proud founding partner of the Games and the largest funder of Team Canada. At the heart of Canada's military community, True Patriot Love is an important partner and advocate for Canada's military community and funds

various programs that support military members, veterans and their families through mental health, rehabilitation, therapeutic arts, and employment programs.

The success of these Games can also be attributed, in great part, to the 1,900 volunteers from 18 different nations as well as the corporate sponsors who recognize the need to celebrate, honour and support our military heroes from around the world who have sacrificed so much.

In his address at the Closing Ceremony, Prince Harry said something that deeply resonated with me. He promised that the Invictus Games would go on so long as our soldiers and veterans are striving to heal and grow, and so long as there are those around the world who view these heroes with sympathy rather than admiration and respect.

While gracious and well-intentioned, I believe we are too often compelled to feel bad for or pity these wounded individuals. Rather, as Prince Harry observed, these athletes deserve our admiration, not our sympathy. After spending more than a week among them, I can firmly say that they have all my admiration and respect.

And above all, they have my deepest appreciation for they have chosen to wear the uniform and defend the values of peace, prosperity, and security. The journey that led these athletes to Vancouver may have been a struggle, but the legacy they leave behind is one of inspiration.

Indeed, as Prince Harry alluded to during his remarks, these brave men and women have touched the lives of so many and changed them. As he said, "being a hero, being a role model, it's not just about resilience, skill, or power. It's about integrity, compassion, and courage. You give us hope through your healing, through your honesty and through your humanity... You may swear allegiance to different flags, but you stand united in your decency, your compassion, and your spirit of service."

Thanks to their exceptional strength, courage, and drive, they have overcome adversity and trauma. They are all Invictus!

*Undefeated and unconquered. Confident and encouraged. Triumphant and uplifting.*





## Give Your Health Goals Another Shot

*By Vince Soda*

Falling back into old habits can be discouraging. After all, nobody likes to set their sights on something only to fall short. But when it comes to health and wellness, as with so many other aspects of life, you can learn from your failures. It's all about identifying good mistakes.

The term "good mistakes" sounds like an oxymoron. Mistakes are bad, right? Well, sometimes. It all depends on how you frame your thinking.

Turning these mistakes into good mistakes will require a little bit of self-reflection. Why did you fail to achieve your health goals? Did you set realistic, measurable goals for yourself? Did you schedule early morning workout time even though you are absolutely not a morning person? You know yourself better than anyone, and so you will be able to identify where you went wrong. With this knowledge under your belt, it's time to commit to starting again. Pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and dive right back into your health journey—but this time with a few changes.

### **Step One: Identify Good Mistakes and Commit to Starting Again**

Falling back into old habits can be discouraging. After all, nobody likes to set their sights on something only to fall short. But when it comes to health and wellness, as with so many other aspects of life, you can learn from your failures. It's all about identifying good mistakes.

### **Step Two: The Psychology of Habit: Creating Routines That Stick**

Typically, you don't or can't change your health overnight. It's an ongoing process that requires consistency and the easiest way

to maintain consistent behavior is to form a good habit. When people make lifestyle changes and then drop them within a few weeks, it's often associated with drastic changes and the newly adopted behavior never became a habit.

This is all fine and good, but it raises a crucial question: how can you successfully create habits that stick? Fortunately, this is a question that psychologists have already sought to answer. Studies show that one of the key elements of forming health-related habits is specificity. The more specific the desired behavior, the easier it will be to solidify as a habit. Take healthy eating, for instance.

Many people have a common goal: they want to "eat healthier." While this is a great lifestyle change to try to make, this goal is very vague. A more specific goal might look something like this: "I want to eat more fruit every day." Still, this isn't as specific as it can get. Taking it a step further, we end up with this: "I want to eat an apple with lunch every day."

### **Step Three: SMART Goals**

Goal setting is a bit of a balancing act. You want to set goals that are achievable, while also ensuring that your goals push you to reach your potential. In business settings, many teams and individuals use the SMART framework for creating their goals. SMART is an acronym that stands for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound—all of these are qualities that your goals should have.

### **Choosing a Method That Works for You**

There's no one right way to make lifestyle changes. It's an individual process that varies from person to person. So if SMART goals don't seem like your thing, don't worry! Find a method that works for you. And remember: failure doesn't have to be the end.



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## IT'S TIME TO STAND UP FOR CANADA'S ECONOMY

*By Councillor Tony Rosa (Town of Caledon)*

At 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday March 4, 2025, The United States of America, under the leadership of President Donald Trump, launched a Trade War on Canada their closest Ally and Trading Partner. Donald Trump imposed tariffs using the international Economic Emergency Power Act that gives the President authority to control economic transactions after declaring an emergency on fentanyl at Canadian Boarder Crossings. To be clear, this claim is completely false.

As a proud Canadian Politician, I am challenging our over 40,000,000 citizens from coast to coast to stand up for CANADA! Donald Trump's has set out to weaken and witness a total collapse of the Canadian Economy in the hopes of taking control of our future. Canadians must now stand united with our response. To date, 3/4 of our population has already changed at least one purchasing behaviour since President Trump began to threaten a 25% tariff on all Canadian goods.

As of 12:02 a.m. on Tuesday March 4, 2025, I enthusiastically called on 100% of Canadian across our country to stand united against Trump's rhetoric. Our retaliation must include selecting made in Canada products and avoid purchasing U.S. made items as much as possible. In addition, I challenge Canadians to cancel any future travel plans to destinations south of the boarder and select Canadian Hospitality and Tourism for your next family vacation.

The time has come for all levels of Government to work collaboratively to protect jobs and our economy. We must send a very clear message to Washington that Canadians should not be underestimated and we will not back down from this Trade War. Together, we need to make a very strong stand as a Country. Start today by flying our flag proudly outside your home and place of business. **Canada is NOT for sale and never will be!** Always remember, we are the true north strong and free!



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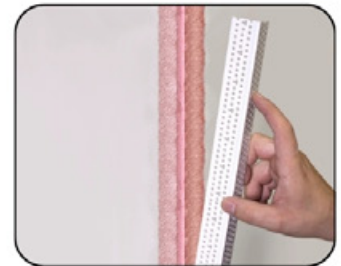
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## Delivering for Vaughan: Francesco Sorbara your Champion in Ottawa

*By Angelo Filoso*

Francesco Sorbara, Member of Parliament for Vaughan-Woodbridge, has been a steadfast champion for Vaughan residents and businesses since 2015. He has held key roles including Parliamentary Secretary (PS) to the Minister of National Revenue during the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, delivering critical relief programs to Canadians and businesses. **Today, Francesco serves as PS to the Minister of Finance and Intergovernmental Affairs.** He also leads critical parliamentary groups as: **President of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association, Vice-Chair of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group,** and chair of the Government's Automotive Caucus, a key industry to Ontario's economy.

An economist and CFA Charter holder, Francesco brings nearly two decades of global financial expertise, having worked at J.P. Morgan Chase, DBRS, and the Bank of Nova Scotia in both Canada and the United States. His financial background and family roots help shape policies that strengthen Vaughan's economy while supporting hardworking families.

Born in Prince Rupert, BC, to newcomers from Italy, Francesco was raised on the values of hard work, perseverance, and community. His father, a union worker, and his mother, a dedicated cannery and healthcare worker, instilled in him and his brothers a strong work ethic. Having worked in a pulp mill and a grain elevator to fund his studies, Francesco understands the value of hard work. His focus and determination guided him to earn an undergraduate degree in Economics and Finance from Simon Fraser University and a Master of Arts (Economics) from the University of Toronto.

Francesco and his wife Rose chose Vellore Village in Vaughan to call home, and together they are raising their three daughters, Eliana, Natalia, and Leia.

For Francesco, serving as an MP isn't just a job—it's a lifelong

calling. His passion for public service began at just 14, when he led the Prince Rupert Federal Liberal Youth Group and met the then-leader candidate, (former Prime Minister) Jean Chrétien. That exciting experience ignited a deep commitment to making a difference, which still drives him today.

Since 2015, Francesco has played a key role in securing historic investments amounting to over \$200 million for his riding of Vaughan-Woodbridge and the City of Vaughan. According to Francesco, his goal since taking office has been clear

***"to bring the voice of Vaughan's residents to Ottawa and secure critical funding to enhance Vaughan's infrastructure and its residents' quality of life."***

Some key projects he has helped secure include \$59 million from the Housing Accelerator Fund to accelerate the building of more homes, \$2 million to enhance community spaces in Vaughan including Woodbridge Ave and the Woodbridge Public Library, \$9.6 million for updates along Jane St, and more recently \$25 million to upgrade the McMichael Canadian Art Collection infrastructure.



MP Sorbara secures a \$25 million investment for the McMichael Canadian Art Collection to renovate and expand the gallery.

## Delivering Results: Francesco Sorbara's Track Record and Vision for Vaughan

### Supporting Seniors

- **Restored OAS and GIS eligibility to 65** from 67, reversing Conservative cuts and putting \$17,500 in the pockets of Canadians.
- **Increased OAS by 10% for seniors 75+**, adding \$766 annually for retirees.
- **Secured \$825,000+ for senior programs** at Hospice Vaughan, West Woodbridge Seniors Club, and more.
- Delivered the **Canadian Dental Care Plan**, saving those covered by the plan on average \$730.
- **Increased the GIS** by up to \$947 for over 900,000 single seniors.
- Engaged with Vaughan's senior community at events like summer picnics, San Giuseppe, and Christmas celebrations.

### Major Wins for Vaughan Families

- **Cut middle-class taxes**, reduced the income tax rate to 20.5% from 22.0% saving couples on average \$5,380 since 2015.
- **Reduced childcare fees by 50%**, saving families up to \$15,000 per child.
- Increased the **Canada Child Benefit**, which helps over 49,000 children and their families in Vaughan.
- Introduced the **tax-free First Home Savings Account**, helping first-time buyers save up to \$40,000.
- Expanded access to dental care for 30,000+ Vaughan residents.
- **Eliminated federal interest on student and apprentice loans.**
- Championed autism advocacy, launching **Canada's First National Autism Strategy and the National Autism Network.**

### Growing Vaughan's Businesses and Workforce

- **Lowered the small business tax rate** to 9% from 11%.
- **Cut credit card transaction fees** for small businesses by up to 27%.
- Expanded apprenticeship training and job-matching programs.
- Created local jobs through **Canada Summer Jobs** funding.
- Invested in small businesses to boost digital adoption and competitiveness.
- **Strengthened the automotive sector** by investing in domestic manufacturing.
- Promoted "Support Local, Buy Canadian" to showcase Vaughan businesses.



MP Sorbara working with and supporting Vaughan's autism community.

### A Strong Community Advocate

Beyond his commitment to delivering for Vaughan, Francesco remains deeply engaged with Vaughan's residents. At the core of his work, he wants to enable more neighbours and friends to be active participants in our community, both socially and economically. Francesco actively participates in events, supports charitable organizations, and works closely with local leaders to ensure the voices and diversity of Vaughan residents are represented in Ottawa. His dedication to service and his passion for the community continues to drive his efforts to make Vaughan an even better place to live, work, and raise a family.

Looking to the future, Francesco states that *"Canada stands at a crossroads. Now more than ever, we must be united as Canadians and keep building on the country we know and love, rather than treating it as a three-word slogan"*. Despite US President Trump's tariff threats, Francesco is confident that "Canada's future is bright". He said that *"by building on our progress and continuing to invest in our people, we can weather any storm. Simply put, Canada has what the world needs – starting right here in the City of Vaughan. Canada is the greatest country in the world, and its future remains bright despite the current turbulence."*

To all readers, Francesco wishes to reiterate

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***"Whether you were born and raised here or recently moved to Vaughan, this city is a wonderful place to call home, and the best city in the country. That is why I will continue to listen and deliver real results for families while building a prosperous future for all"***

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MP Sorbara meets with grade 5 students to discuss the role of governments and civic engagement in our community.



MP Sorbara joins families at Villa Gambin to celebrating and honour the incredible wisdom, love, and joy that grandparents bring into our lives.



As Chair of the GTAA caucus, MP Sorbara partners with Vaughan Chamber of Commerce and GTAA CEO, Deborah Flint, to celebrate women in business in honour of International Women's Day.



Celebrating Vaughan's Vietnamese community at MP Sorbara's annual Tét Lunar New Year.



Meeting with the Honda Canada team as Chair of the Government's Automotive Caucus to discuss their \$15 billion infusion into EV and battery production plants in Ontario.



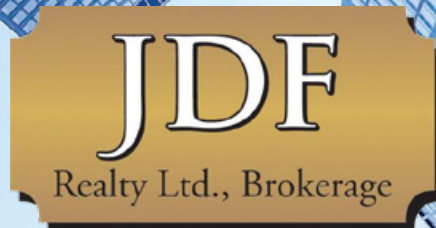
MP Sorbara and MP Sgro visit Primo Pasta to celebrate nearly 70 years of excellence as Canada's #1 pasta brand, made from 100% Canadian Durham wheat.



MP Sorbara highlights inclusion and accessibility with the Sara Elizabeth Centre, a proud recipient of the Enabling Accessibility Fund.



MP Sorbara joins the Club Guardiaregia and Torella Social Club to celebrate the rich Italian heritage and traditions.



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## Our Sweet Journey: From Hobby to Thriving Business

By Marie Chantal

Sometimes, the most unexpected journeys start with a simple passion—something you do just for fun, never expecting it to turn into something bigger. That’s exactly how our cookie adventure began!

We’ve always been creative souls, constantly crafting, baking, and coming up with fun ideas. Naturally, it wasn’t long before we combined our love for baking with our artistic flair, diving into the world of decorated sugar cookies. At first, it was just a hobby—something to brighten our days and bring joy to those around us.

But for Marie, baking became more than just a fun pastime—it became a necessity. She was newly diagnosed with an autoimmune disease, which meant that store-bought treats weren’t an option. Everything had to be made from scratch to ensure that the ingredients were safe for her health. What started as a way to accommodate her dietary needs soon turned into an exciting experiment of trial and error, refining recipes and perfecting the art of gourmet sugar cookies.

As we continued to bake and decorate, we couldn’t help but share our creations online. We’d post our latest cookie designs—each one a little edible work of art—just for the fun of it. And then something incredible happened. People started

noticing. Friends, family, and even strangers began reaching out, asking if they could order some of our cookies.

At first, it was just the occasional request—a batch here, a custom order there. But before we knew it, word had spread, and the demand kept growing. What started as a small trickle quickly turned into a flood of cookie orders. Suddenly, we found ourselves spending every spare moment baking, decorating, and packaging cookies to keep up with demand.

And then came the moment—the one that made us stop and think, “Wow, is this really happening?!”

We received an incredible opportunity to supply our decorated sugar cookies to a coffee shop in Carleton Place. It was a huge milestone, one that made us realize just how far we had come. Seeing our cookies on display in a café was surreal and exciting, but it didn’t stop there.

Right in the middle of all this excitement, we stumbled upon something completely unexpected—a beautiful commercial kitchen for sale. It was one of those moments where the universe seemed to be dropping hints, nudging us toward something even bigger. The kitchen had previously been known as The Beckwith Kitchen, and when we saw it, we just knew—this was our next step.

Everything seemed to fall into place so perfectly, almost as if it was meant to be. After a lot of thought (and a fair bit of nervous excitement), we decided to take the leap. We purchased the kitchen, making it our new home for all things sweet and delicious.

Now, here we are—not just making gourmet sugar cookies but expanding into an entire world of baked goods! What started as a simple hobby, driven by creativity and a love for baking, has turned into an amazing adventure filled with challenges, surprises, and the sweetest rewards.

Our journey has been anything but ordinary. It’s been wild, unexpected, and incredibly fulfilling. Looking back, we never imagined that a love for decorated cookies would lead us here, but we wouldn’t have it any other way.

So, to everyone who has supported us—whether you’ve ordered cookies, followed our journey, or simply cheered us on—thank you from the bottom of our hearts. This adventure wouldn’t be the same without you!

Here’s to many more sweet creations and even sweeter moments ahead!

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## Former President of Poland Lech Wałęsa wrote the following letter to Trump - Monday, March 3, 2025

*'Your Excellency Mr. President,*

'We watched the report of your conversation with the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, with fear and distaste. We find it insulting that you expect Ukraine to show respect and gratitude for the material assistance provided by the United States in its fight against Russia. Gratitude is owed to the heroic Ukrainian soldiers who shed their blood in defense of the values of the free world. They have been dying on the front lines for more than 11 years in the name of these values and the independence of their homeland, which was attacked by Putin's Russia.

'We do not understand how the leader of a country that symbolizes the free world cannot recognize this.

'Our alarm was also heightened by the atmosphere in the Oval Office during this conversation, which reminded us of the interrogations we endured at the hands of the Security Services and the debates in Communist courts. Prosecutors and judges, acting on behalf of the all-powerful communist political police, would explain to us that they held all the power while we held none. They demanded that we cease our activities, arguing that thousands of innocent people suffered because of us. They stripped us of our freedoms and civil rights because we refused to cooperate with the government or express gratitude for our oppression. We are shocked that President Volodymyr Zelensky was treated in the same manner.

'The history of the 20th century shows that whenever the United States sought to distance itself from democratic values and its European allies, it ultimately became a threat to itself. President Woodrow Wilson understood this when he decided in 1917 that the United States must join World War I. President Franklin

Delano Roosevelt understood this when, after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, he resolved that the war to defend America must be fought not only in the Pacific but also in Europe, in alliance with the nations under attack by the Third Reich.

'We remember that without President Ronald Reagan and America's financial commitment, the collapse of the Soviet empire would not have been possible. President Reagan recognized that millions of enslaved people suffered in Soviet Russia and the countries it had subjugated, including thousands of political prisoners who paid for their defense of democratic values with their freedom. His greatness lay, among other things, in his unwavering decision to call the USSR an "Empire of Evil" and to fight it decisively. We won, and today, the statue of President Ronald Reagan stands in Warsaw, facing the U.S. Embassy.

'Mr. President, material aid -- military and financial -- can never be equated with the blood shed in the name of Ukraine's independence and the freedom of Europe and the entire free world. Human life is priceless; its value cannot be measured in money. Gratitude is due to those who sacrifice their blood and their freedom. This is self-evident to us, the people of Solidarity, former political prisoners of the communist regime under Soviet Russia.

'We call on the United States to uphold the guarantees made alongside Great Britain in the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, which established a direct obligation to defend Ukraine's territorial integrity in exchange for its relinquishment of nuclear weapons. These guarantees are unconditional -- there is no mention of treating such assistance as an economic transaction.

**'Lech Wałęsa,  
former political prisoner, former President of Poland'**

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