

NORTH

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Volume 5 | July 2025

BELLEVILLE

LIVING

BRIDGING COMMUNITIES:

One Stitch at
a Time

INSIDE: Expert Advice + Neighbourly Stories + Local Events + More!

Cover Photo by
Fred Rutherford

POWERED BY



Your Community. Your Connection. Your Belleville.

Expert Contributors

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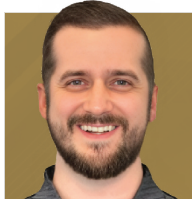
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DEAR RESIDENTS,

Happy July, neighbours!

Summer's in full swing, and many weeks remain to revel in the season's seemingly endless days. So, we hope you're making the most of this time to enjoy the sunshine, play outdoors, reconnect with friends, and head off for some much-deserved travel.

Each month, we get to feature some residents in order to help you get to know your community a little better. This month, you'll get to meet Emebet Belete and her public art project called *Bridging Communities*. We had such a fun time learning about their story, and we think you will, too. Be sure to check out the article on page 4!

If you're interested in being featured in an upcoming edition, we'd love to hear from you! The process is very simple, and it's a great way to get your story out into the community.

As always, a huge thank you to our sponsors who make this publication possible—we couldn't do it without them. So, enjoy this month's edition of *North Belleville Living*!

Ashley Foley, Content Coordinator

Alejandro Neckles & Amy Lett, Publishers

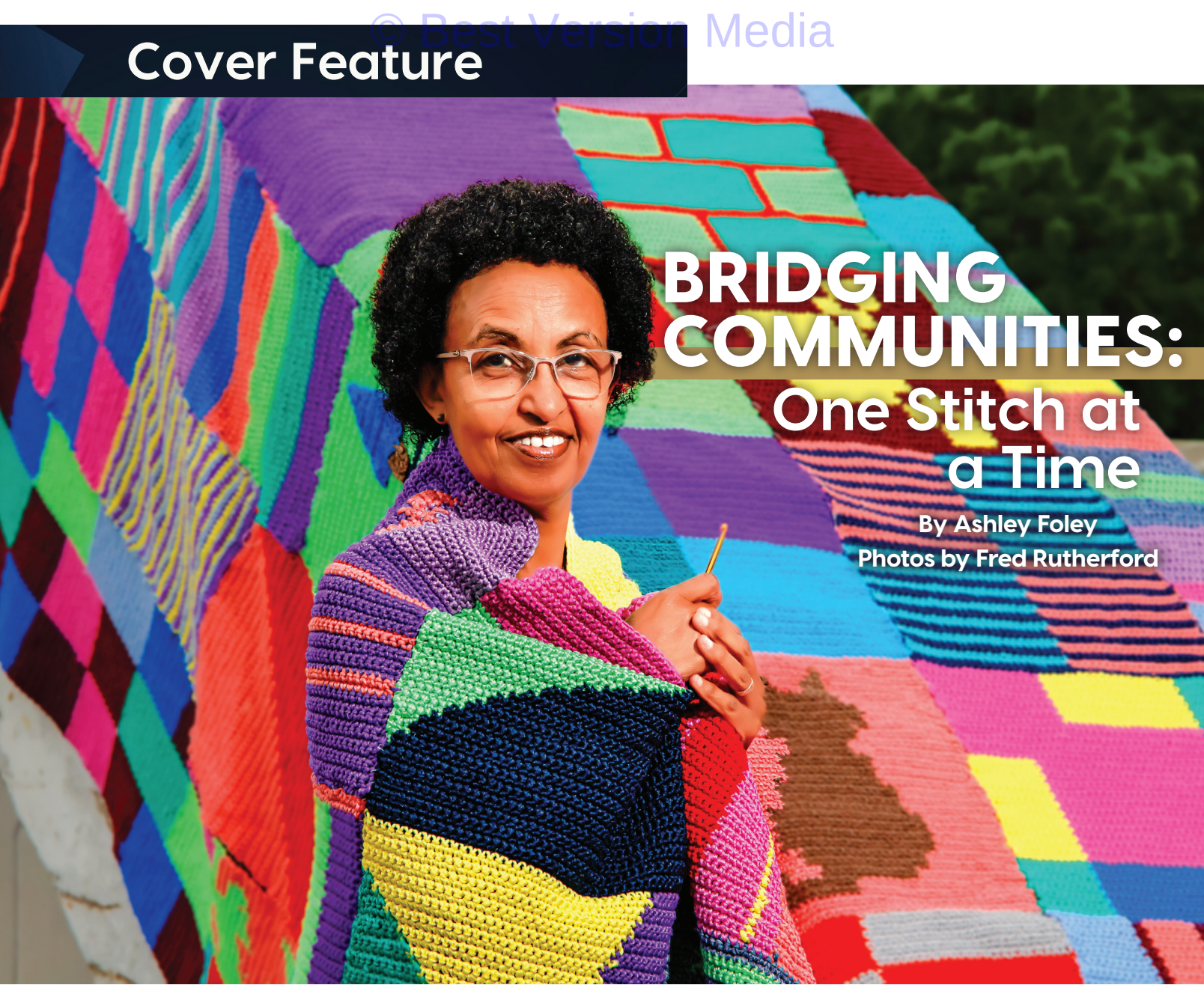
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Finished reading your copy of *North Belleville Living*? Don't toss it - pass it on! This community drop-off spot ensures that more residents, including those outside the distribution area, can enjoy the stories, local highlights, and great content inside. Plus, recycling is great for our planet - it's a win-win! Let's keep our community connected - one magazine at a time!

Drop off your gently read magazines at Once Upon a Child, 366 North Front St, #2001.



BRIDGING COMMUNITIES: One Stitch at a Time

By Ashley Foley
Photos by Fred Rutherford

It began with a walk, a bridge, and a dream.

On a quiet day in Belleville, artist and educator Emebet looked across the water and saw something more than just concrete and steel. She saw potential. She saw colour. She saw a connection.

"I was walking near the Bay Bridge and just thought—what if it could be wrapped in crochet?" she says, laughing. "I didn't even crochet at the time. But I knew I wanted to do something that would bring people together."

That spark of imagination became the foundation for Bridging Communities, one of the most heartfelt and inclusive public art projects the region has seen in years. The vision? To cover the Upper Front Street pedestrian bridge in crocheted panels made by people of all ages, backgrounds, and skill levels—from local students and seniors to fibre artists and first-timers across the globe.

"It's not about how perfect the stitch is. It's about the people behind them," says Emebet. "Crocheting reminds me of sitting with my sister and my mother when I was little. It's slow,

comforting work—and it's meant to be shared."

Since launching the initiative in early 2023 with support from the Ontario Arts Council and the City of Belleville, Emebet has led community workshops, school programs, and drop-in crochet circles across the Bay of Quinte region. Over 200 students have already learned to crochet through her school visits, and dozens of adults now gather regularly to stitch, share stories, and find connections in yarn and conversation.

A Safe Space to Learn, Try, and Belong

The crochet circles aren't classes in the traditional sense. They're open, judgement-free spaces where anyone can join in. No experience is required, and all materials—yarn, hooks, even encouragement—are provided.

"If you've never crocheted before, we'll teach you," says Emebet. "If you've tried and think you're not good enough, come anyway. We're not here to be perfect. We're here to create something together."

That spirit of togetherness is central to every part of the project.

From the County Arts Lab in Picton to the Quinte West Community Health Centre in Trenton, Quinte Arts Council in Belleville, and even in libraries and galleries in Kingston, her crochet circles are becoming regular gatherings—places where people from all walks of life come to stitch and stay awhile.

“Some people come for the art. Some come for the social connection. Some come just to try something new,” she says. “But no matter the reason, they leave feeling part of something bigger.”

Last summer, the circles came together for a crochet picnic in Prince Edward County—an afternoon of laughter, shared lunch, and rows of yarn stitched under the open sky. “It felt like one big family reunion,” Emebet says. “Except we were meeting each other for the first time.”

A Global Effort with Local Roots

Word of the project has travelled far. After a local news story aired, a woman in the United States reached out to Emebet, wanting to contribute. They met over Zoom, shared ideas, and soon, a package

of handmade crochet squares was on its way across the border. Contributors from Ethiopia, where Emebet was born, are also now involved.

“It’s wild to think about,” she says. “This little idea—something I dreamed up on a walk—is bringing people together around the world.”

But at its core, Bridging Communities remains deeply rooted in Belleville. Emebet’s own backyard—nestled beside a conservation area on the east side of the city—was her first creative refuge when she moved here in 2013. The nature, the people, and the peaceful rhythm of the city gave her space to imagine something new.

“I came here with no job, no plan—just my family and a passion for art,” she says. “And I’ve found so much here. Support, inspiration, community.”

Stories Stitched into Every Square

Each crocheted square tells a story. Some are stitched by experienced artists exploring mosaic and intarsia techniques. Others are humble, first-time creations

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6





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made my day. That's what this is about."

In another school, a young girl ran up to Emebet, beaming. "I'm teaching my mom to crochet!" It was just weeks after the workshop, and already the project had found its way into homes, building bridges not only between neighbours, but generations.

As of now, the full installation is scheduled to be unveiled in mid-2026, depending on bridge renovations. Emebet hopes the bridge may one day become pedestrian-only, transforming it into a permanent public art and gathering space.

"The idea is to build something lasting—not just in yarn, but in relationships," she says. "When you crochet with someone, you slow down. You talk. You laugh. It's just like sitting with your grandmother or a friend. It's peaceful. It's meaningful."

Get Involved!

Everyone is welcome to participate—whether you're a pro or have never held a hook. You can drop into one of the many crochet circles or request yarn to make squares from home. You can also give materials, sponsor a section, or help spread the word. For more information, visit artwithpassion.ca or follow the project on Facebook and Instagram.

"We're not just wrapping a bridge," Emebet says. "We're wrapping our community in care, inclusion, and creativity. Every stitch brings us closer."

So, go ahead—give it a try. Pull up a chair. Pick up a hook. Whether it's your first stitch or your thousandth, there's a place for you here.

from students, seniors, or newcomers picking up a hook for the first time. And every piece matters.

"I had a boy in Grade 5 who struggled," Emebet recalls. "He dropped his hook often. He was behind. But he never gave up. Three months later, I saw him crocheting away—and that moment

DO YOU KNOW A NEIGHBOUR WHO HAS A STORY TO SHARE?

Nominate your neighbour to be featured in one of our upcoming issues!

Contact us at alett@bestversionmedia.com

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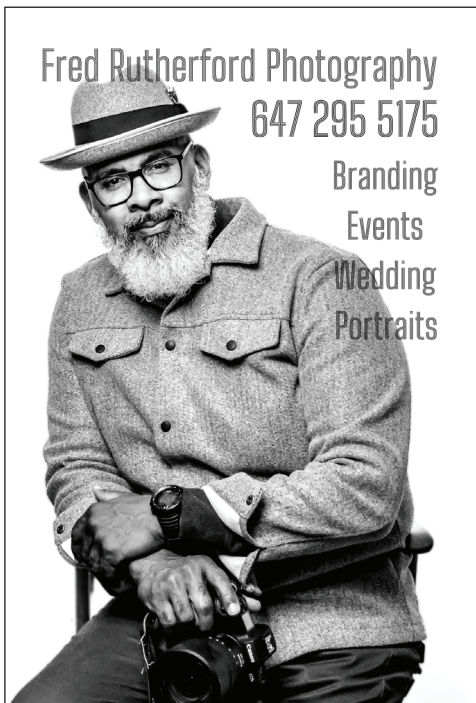
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The Tinkered Decor and More Store:

Where Local Creativity Comes to Life in Downtown Belleville

By Ashley Foley | Photos by Jennifer Hunter



In the heart of Downtown Belleville, *The Tinkered Decor and More Store* is more than just a gift shop—it's a warm and welcoming space where creativity, community, and small business come together. This unique handicraft shop features the work of more than 30 local artisans and small businesses, offering a thoughtful blend of handmade goods, vintage finds, upcycled treasures, and curated gift items. It's also home to a full line of Fusion Mineral Paint, making it a go-to for DIY and décor lovers.

The shop is owned and operated by Jennifer Hunter, a local entrepreneur whose journey into business was driven by a dream. "I started working at the store about three years ago, and a year and a half ago, I took over as the owner," she says. Before owning the store, she was a familiar face at local craft and vendor markets—already deeply connected to the creative community she now supports every day through her business.

Those roots in the local maker community are at the heart of everything *The Tinkered Decor and More Store* stands for. The philosophy is simple but powerful: *support small businesses, support local, and support Canadian*. About 95 percent of the items found in the store are sourced from small businesses, many of them local and all of them Canadian. It's a shop that feels personal, purposeful, and proudly local.



"I've always wanted to have this kind of store," Jennifer says. "It's about creating a space where everyone feels welcome. We treat our customers like long-time friends." That sense of belonging extends beyond the customers to the vendors, too. Over time, many of the artisans whose work fills the shelves have become close friends, forming a tight-knit and supportive creative network.

What inspires Jennifer most isn't just the products—it's the people. "I love the people I meet along the way. Customers and

vendors have become friends. I want every customer to come in, feel welcome, and leave feeling wowed by what they saw and bought and how they were treated." With majority of her time spent representing other people's brands, she sees it as her job to make every customer experience a memorable one.

And her passion for local doesn't end at the store's front door. This summer, Jennifer launched a second seasonal location at *Pop-Ups on the Bay* in West Zwick's Park. The lakeside pop-up is a smaller version of the main store and offers another opportunity to showcase local talent. It's a beautiful way to bring what we do to the waterfront. "What is better than getting outside and spending time by the Bay of Quinte?" she says.

Outside of running her business, Jennifer is also a wife, mom, and proud paw-rent to three dogs and two cats. Her entrepreneurial spirit continues with her travel business, *The Inspired Wanderer Travel Company*, and she remains deeply involved in the local business community. She serves as a Director with the Downtown Belleville Improvement Area (DBIA) and co-chairs Quinte Women in Business, where she works to support and connect other local entrepreneurs.

Jennifer's message to the community is one of pride and encouragement: "Being a part of Downtown Belleville is a wonderful experience. We have a beautiful downtown core, and I think a lot of locals are missing out. We get tourists in the store frequently telling us how lovely our downtown is and that they feel safe and welcome. If you haven't been downtown in a long time, come down, support local, and check out the wonderful dining and shopping options."



With its charming atmosphere, ever-changing inventory, and a strong sense of community, *The Tinkered Decor and More Store* is more than a store—it's a reflection of the passion, creativity, and heart that make downtown Belleville shine.

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1. SPRING GALLERY SHOW

@48 Bridge Street East
With guest artists Chris Finkle and Tom Ashbourne and featured member artist Frances Key.
Time: 10am-4pm
Cost: FREE
gallery121artists.com

Thurs., July 17 and August 14

2. QUEER SPACE

@Belleville Public Library
For members of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community ages 16+. No registration required.
Time: 5:30-7:30pm
bellevillelibrary.ca/event/queer-space-8/

Fri., July 18

3. ORGAN EYES KAOS LIVE AT THE PIER!

@1 South Front Street
Time: 7pm
facebook.com/events/528127020361705/

Fri., July 18

4. DEFINITE LEPPARD

@Signal Brewery
Time: 8-11:30pm
Cost: \$22.63
eventbrite.ca/e/definite-leppard-signal-brewery-tickets-1345238999059

Sat., July 19

5. SUMMER FEST FAMILY FUN CRAFT SHOW

@Belleville Shriners Club
Time: 10am-3pm
Cost: FREE ENTRY
facebook.com/events/593233053585079/

Sat., July 19

6. THE REMEDY LIVE AT THE PIER!

@1 South Front Street
Time: 7-11pm
facebook.com/events/1225104985940892/

Sat., July 19

7. PLAYLIST

@Shorelines Casino Belleville
Time: 8pm
greatcanadian.com/event/playlist-16/

Sat., July 19 and 26

8. YUK YUK'S COMEDY NIGHT – BRETT MARTIN

@Shorelines Casino Belleville
Cost: \$20.06
greatcanadian.com/entertainment/

Mon., Jul 21

9. PLAYTIME: TOYS AND AMUSEMENTS FROM THE PAST

@257 Bridge Street East
For ages 6+. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration is required.
Time: 2-4pm
facebook.com/events/2143185479444323/

Tues., July 22

10. AFTERNOON BOOK CLUB

@Belleville Public Library
We'll discuss The Dictionary of Lost Words by Pip Williams. Registration is required; contact 613-968-6731 or infoserv@bellevillelibrary.ca.
Time: 2-3pm
bellevillelibrary.ca/event/afternoon-book-club-9/

Fri., July 25

11. EMPIRE ROCKFEST: DAVID WILCOX + TROOPER + LUSCIOUS

@Empire Square Live
Time: 6-11pm
Cost: \$70-\$97.80
eventbrite.ca/e/empire-rockfest-david-wilcox-trooper-luscious-tickets-1363379818739

Fri., July 25

12. WHISKEY SMOKE LIVE AT THE PIER!

@1 South Front Street
Time: 7pm
facebook.com/events/1258775123074638/

Sat., July 26

13. EMPIRE ROCKFEST: ARKELLS + LIGHTS + JAKE CLEMONS BAND

@Empire Square Live
Time: 5-11pm
Cost: From \$81.59
eventbrite.ca/e/empire-rockfest-arkells-lights-jake-clemons-band-tickets-1363492224949

Sat., July 26

14. HAPPY HOUR LIVE AT THE PIER!

@1 South Front Street
Time: 7-11pm
facebook.com/events/9431589433629272/

Sat., July 26

15. WICKED FUN

@Shorelines Casino Belleville
Time: 8pm
greatcanadian.com/event/wicked-fun-4/

Sat., July 26

16. DUSTY BOOTS BAND

@Shorelines Casino Belleville
Time: 8pm
greatcanadian.com/event/dusty-boots-band-6/

Sat., July 26

17. WHAT'S NEXT

@Shorelines Casino Belleville
Time: 9pm
greatcanadian.com/event/whats-next-3/

Fri., August 1

18. BONESHAKER LIVE AT THE PIER!

@1 South Front Street
Time: 7pm
facebook.com/events/978758497575389/

Sat., August 2

19. THE MATT SMITH BAND LIVE AT THE PIER

@1 South Front Street
Time: 7-11pm
facebook.com/events/3020735321427112/

Sat., August 2

20. BALKAN FOLK DANCE PARTY AND LESSON

@The Kafana
Beginners are welcome! For all ages.
Time: 7-10pm
Cost: FREE
thekafana.ca/events

Sat., August 2

21. NIGHT KITCHEN TOO – BELLEVILLE'S ACOUSTIC MUSICAL VARIETY SHOW

@Pinnacle Playhouse



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Time: 7:30-9:30pm
Cost: \$5-10
bellevilletheatreguild.ca/

Fri., August 8

22. PITILESS FOOLS LIVE AT THE PIER!

@1 South Front Street
Time: 7-11pm
facebook.com/events/1225568475946865/

Sat., August 9

23. BONE YARD LIVE AT THE PIER!

@1 South Front Street
Time: 7pm
facebook.com/events/979433551047927/

Every Mon.

24. ADULT CHESS CLUB

@Belleville Public Library
For ages 18 and up. All skill levels are welcome.
Time: 5:30-7:30pm
bellevillelibrary.ca/event/adult-chess-club-5

Every Mon.

25. MONDAY TRIVIA

@Boston Pizza
Grab a smartphone and a smart friend!
Time: 8-10pm

Every Mon., Wed., and Fri. (except August 4)

26. 2025 PICKLEBALL FUN LEAGUE

@Quinte Curling Club
Time: 9:30-11:30am
Cost: \$9 per session; \$200 unlimited play
quintecurlingclub.ca

Every Tues.

27. FRENCH CONVERSATION CIRCLE

@Belleville Public Library
Practice your French speaking skills! No registration required. Note: This isn't a French language learning class
Time: 6-7:30pm
Cost: FREE
bellevillelibrary.ca

Every Wed.

28. CREATIVE FIBRES

@Belleville Public Library
A social circle for all fibre arts: knitting, crocheting, spinning, weaving, cross stitching, embroidery, felt work, and more!
Time: 5:30-7:30pm
bellevillelibrary.ca

Every Thurs.

29. THIRSTY THURSDAY KARAOKE

@The Smokin' 116 Bistro & Bar
Reserve your table today! Contact 613-902-5001.
Time: 8-11pm
downtownbelleville.ca

Every other Thurs.

30. BPL WRITERS' COLLECTIVE

@Belleville Public Library
Registration is required. Contact 613-968-6731 ext 2037 or infoserv@bellevillelibrary.ca.
Time: 5:30-7:30pm
bellevillelibrary.ca

Every Sun.

31. SMOKIN' TRIVIA

@The Smokin' 116 Bistro & Bar
Teams must have a minimum of 2 people.
Time: 3-6pm
Cost: FREE
downtownbelleville.ca

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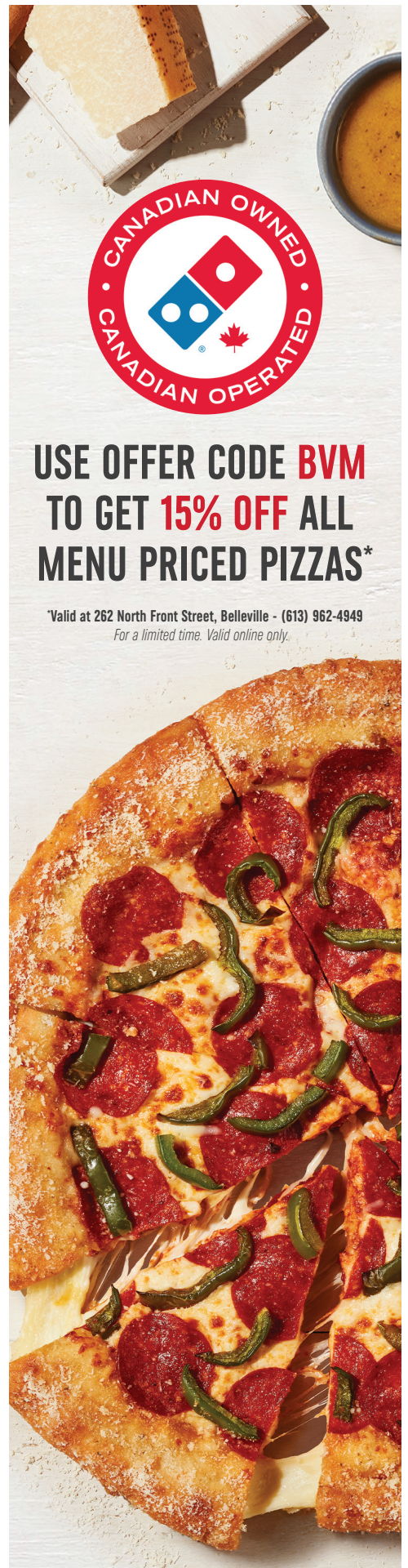
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My Canada, Our Canada:

A Song from the Heart

By Jeanette Arsenault | Photo by Jess Mulholland

As we celebrate Canada Day, I'm proud to share a song I wrote from the heart: *This Is My Canada / Mon cher Canada*.

I wrote it in 1992 as a personal love letter to this country, a reflection of our freedom, diversity, and shared home. Over the years, it has been performed at the Olympics, national torch relays, Canada Day events, and in schools and choirs across the country. It was re-recorded with a bilingual music video in 2017 for Canada 150 and now lives on through a grassroots movement of Canadians singing it with pride.

I've come to call it "my little song that could." With no commercial backing, it has quietly garnered over 530,000 views on YouTube, thanks to Canadians sharing it.

This Canada Day, I invite you to make it yours.

Follow and Share:

Listen or watch at: www.nationalsong.ca

Facebook: @ThisIsMyCanadaMoncherCanada

Instagram: @jeanettearsenaultmusic

From my heart to yours — Happy Canada Day!



This Is My Canada / Mon cher Canada

Lyrics by Jeanette Arsenault

Verse 1:

Rocks and plains and visions of trains
from sea to sea

*Forêts et lacs, aurores boréales du Grand
Nord silencieux*

Mountains of snow, the forest below,
hopes and fears

Frozen lands and the rugged hands of
Canadian pioneers

Chorus 1:

This is my Canada, this is my home, my
nation

From St. John's to Victoria, this is my,
this is my Canada

This is my Canada, Canada

O Canada

Verse 2:

*Torrents d'eau fraîche, dunes de sable,
villages côtiers*

*Gens de cœur, gens d'espoir et ancêtres
dévoués*

Peacekeeping roles and noble goals
spark the fire

The Marathon on Hope lives on and the
flames grow higher

Chorus 1

Bridge:

Look to the future, learn from the past

Build today and make it last

So much to offer, so much to gain

It takes more than one link to make a
chain

So many heroes nationwide

So many hearts filled with pride

There's so much more to share

Let me take you there

Chorus 2:

C'est mon cher Canada

Mon pays, c'est ma patrie

C'est mon cher Canada

Canada, Canada, O Canada

Chorus 1

Tag 2x

End

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May 15 – June 13, 2025
Compared to
May 15 – June 13, 2024

	MUNICIPAL DETACHED	MUNICIPAL TOWNHOMES	RURAL
ACTIVELY LISTED	\$793,968	\$598,340	\$764,900
MARKET TIME	50	139	67
	2025 VS 2024		
TOTAL SALES	7 ↑ 16.7%	4 ↑ 33.3%	8 ↑ 60.0%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE	\$738,000 ↓ -3.5%	\$525,750 ↓ -9.8%	\$621,250 ↓ -0.6%
LIST PRICE TO SALE PRICE	99% ↑ -0.9%	98% ↓ -2.2%	97% ↓ -0.6%
MARKET TIME	22 ↓ -35.3%	18 ↓ -58.1%	24 ↑ 50%

*May 15-June 13, 2025 vs same period in the previous year provided by Central Lakes Association of Realtors. Best Version Media does not guarantee the accuracy of the statistical data on this page. The data does not represent the listings of any one agent or agency but represents the activity of the real estate community in the area. Any real estate agent's ad appearing in the magazine is separate from the statistical data provided which is in no way a part of their advertisement.



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Turning Your Home into an Income Property



By George Wang, Pharm.D.
Team George Wang

Hey, North Belleville homeowners! Your house is hiding some serious money-making potential! With the 2025 real estate market ups and downs, now is a great time to learn how your home can bring in extra cash. I'm George from Team George Wang, and I've helped folks around here tap into these possibilities. Let's dive into some easy ways to turn your property into a financial win.

Got a basement with its own entrance? That's prime for a rental suite. Lots of North Belleville homes are set up for this, letting you pocket rent to help with the mortgage. Belleville's rules call for fire-rated drywall, interconnected smoke detectors, and proper exits, like big enough windows or doors for emergencies. No stress—we can hook you up with pros to get it all squared away.

If you've got a bigger place, check this out: Belleville's new 2025 accessory dwelling unit rules let you turn your home into a triplex or even a fourplex. That's a game-changer for boosting rental income and building wealth. It takes some renno work, but our team can check if your house is a good fit and point you to solid contractors.

Not into construction? No problem. Renting out spare bedrooms is super simple. Homes with good parking are a big draw for tenants in North Belleville. You'll share space, which might feel less private, but it's a quick way to make money without changing a thing.



Another cool option is Airbnb, especially since you're close to the 401's handy location. With that being said, Belleville's bylaws mean you'll need a license, but it can really pay off for homes in hot spots. We can walk you through the rules to see what works.

Your home's income vibes depend on its spot, parking, and extras. North Belleville's parks and friendly vibe pull in renters. Even with the market shifting, we've got pricing tricks to keep you in the game. I've helped clients discover their home's money-making side, and I'd love to do the same for you.

Want to see what your place can do? Hit up Team George Wang for a quick chat. Let's make your home a cash-flow machine!



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United Way HPE:

A Local Force for Lasting Change

By Ashley Foley



United Way Hastings & Prince Edward (United Way HPE) is a powerful example of what's possible when a community comes together with purpose. Serving the Hastings and Prince Edward region, this entirely local charity raises funds, supports front-line agencies, and leads initiatives that strengthen the social fabric of the community.

Every year, United Way HPE mobilizes donors, volunteers, and workplace partners to tackle the region's most pressing challenges: from food insecurity and homelessness to mental health and youth support. In 2024, more than 1,777 supporters helped raise over \$2.25 million, with every dollar staying local. These investments supported 40 agencies and reached one in four residents.

The United Way Approach: From Generosity to Impact

Raising the Resources

Through an annual fundraising campaign, United Way HPE brings people together (individual donors, corporate sponsors, and volunteers) to fuel a movement of local giving. It's a collective effort built on the belief that small actions, multiplied by many, can drive real change.

Funding What Matters

With a deep understanding of local needs, United Way HPE invests the funds raised in programs that work. Through grants, partnerships, and special initiatives, they ensure that resources go where they'll make the greatest difference, supporting everything—from food banks and youth drop-in centres to senior care and mental health services.

Building Community

Beyond funding, United Way HPE plays a key role in building community resilience. They connect service providers, strengthen nonprofit leadership, and contribute to collaborative projects like *The Bridge Integrated Care Hub* and the *HART Hub*, which bring healthcare, housing, and social services together under one roof.

The organization isn't just responding to crises—it's creating long-term solutions.

By the Numbers: Local Impact in Action

- 54,226 meals delivered to seniors ageing at home
- 2,000+ youth counselling sessions provided
- 16,749 transportation trips enabled access to healthcare and essential services
- 7,692 individuals received wrap-around supports
- 1,705 needs met through the 2-1-1 helpline

Each of these numbers represents a person whose life has been touched by United Way's work and the generosity of donors across the region.

How to Get Involved

Whether through giving, volunteering, or partnering through the workplace, there are many ways to make a difference with United Way HPE. The organization invites everyone to be part of a movement that is transforming lives—one act of care at a time. Learn more at unitedwayhpe.ca.

United Way HPE isn't just an organization. It's a movement—local people, united for local impact.



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The Canadiana Caprese Salad

By Oliver Kjeldsen

When local tomatoes hit their peak, there's no need to overcomplicate things. This simple salad is all about celebrating what's fresh and in season—from just-picked cherry tomatoes to fragrant backyard basil. Perfect for lazy lunches, patio dinners, or as a side to anything off the grill. For an added touch of Canadian flair, top it off with crispy maple-glazed bacon.

Ingredients

- 1 pint of ripe cherry tomatoes (or local on-the-vine tomatoes, quartered)
- 1 ball of burrata or fresh mozzarella
- A few tablespoons of fresh basil, torn or chopped
- A drizzle of quality olive oil
- Flaky sea salt

Optional Maple Bacon Add-On

- 2–3 slices of maple bacon, cooked until crisp, then roughly chopped

Pro Tip: Look for locally cured options from your butcher or local farm shop

Instructions

1. Place the cheese in the centre of a serving plate or shallow bowl.
2. Top generously with the tomatoes.
3. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with flaky sea salt.
4. Finish with fresh basil.
5. *Optional:* Top with maple bacon crumbles for a sweet-salty crunch that takes it to the next level.
6. Serve immediately, on it's own or spooned generously over warm, fresh-baked focaccia – perfect for soaking up every last drop of seasonal goodness!





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