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# BEA+

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Chamber of Commerce

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## President's Letter

It is with great pride that the Cornwall and Area Chamber of Commerce publishes its the third edition of the BEA+ magazine—a true celebration of local business success stories.

When we first published this magazine in 2020, we thought that we would be “back to normal” within a few short months. However, the past few years have not only shown us that the world is now a different place, but also that we, as a community, continue to develop and grow.

Now, in 2022, we are on a new journey as a Chamber of Commerce. Led by Angela Bero and supported by Beth Alexander, we are back to our core pillars: advocate and be the voice for the business community, provide education and learning opportunities, and create the environment to develop business-to-business connections and networks.

This year we were able to bring back some much-loved events and initiatives: the monthly Pub Nights hosted at local establishments, Small Business Week's Bridges to Better Business, and of course, the Business Excellence Awards Night. As we begin to move toward 2023, we are excited to see the return of more community events, along with new initiatives and projects.

The Chamber could not achieve this success without the ongoing support of our Board of Directors, sponsors, members, and wider business community. Together we create a true community of collaboration, where we support one another through adverse times and celebrate each other's achievements.

Congratulations to all of the 2022 Cornwall and Area Business Excellence Award finalists and winners—we look forward to seeing what you achieve in the future, and who you inspire to become future award recipients.

Gina Scandrett, President



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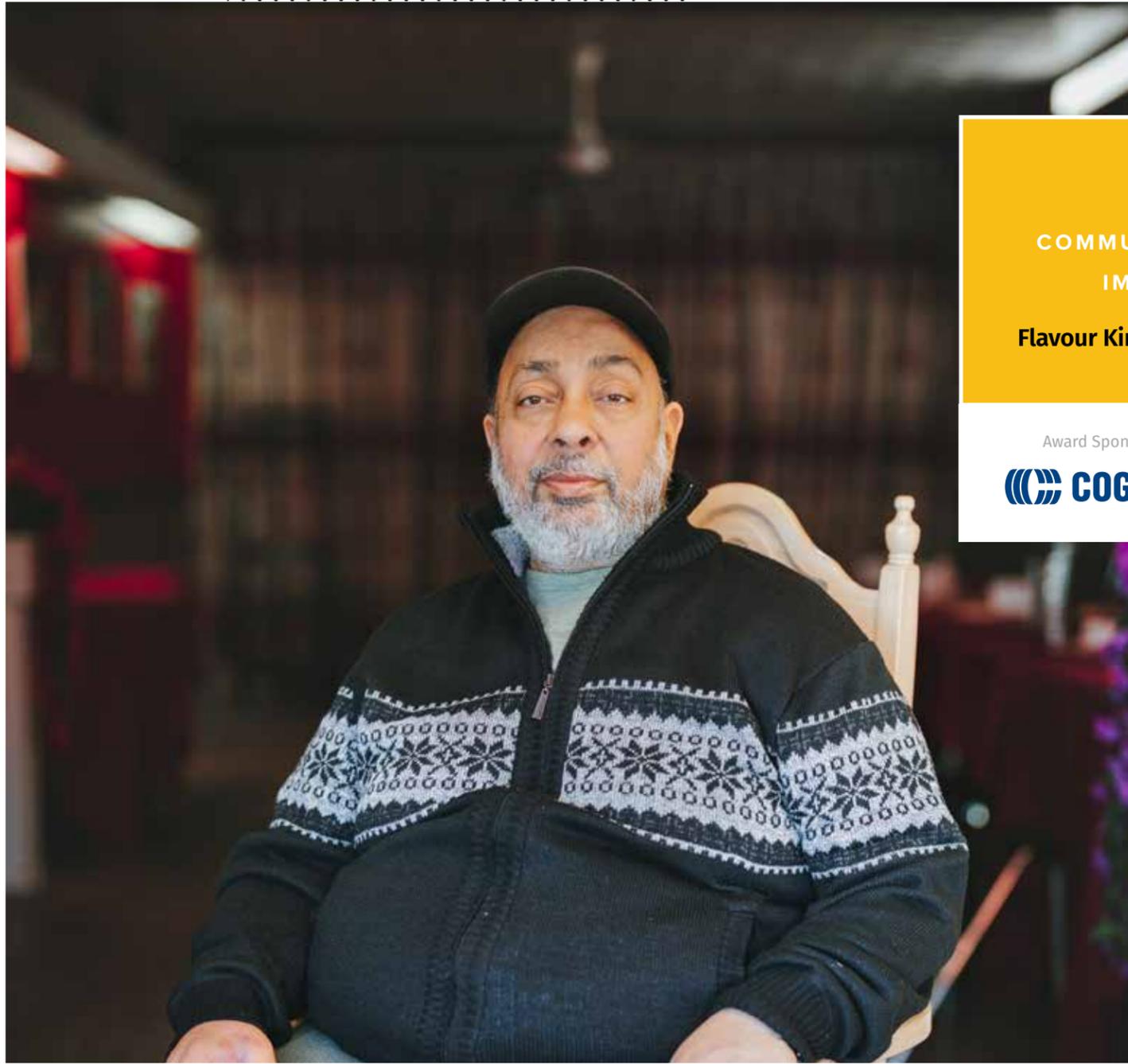
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COMMUNITY IMPACT  
Flavour Kingdom

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**COGECO**

# Kitchen With Kindness

One family brings fresh meaning to meal sharing.



In 2013, Gurpriya Kaur came to Cornwall to study Pre-Health Sciences at St. Lawrence College. While there was lots to love about her new country, she really missed Punjabi cuisine. So when her parents came for a visit and fell in love with Canada too, Gurpriya eagerly suggested they move here and open a restaurant.

“Our kitchen is always open for anyone in need of food.”

People were initially confused by the concept, and the family fielded questions like, “Why are you doing this?” and “Do I need a coupon?” But locals soon embraced their generous offer. The restaurant now gives away upwards of 700 free meals each month and also hands out free meal kits for kids on the 20th of each month.

Paramjit Singh and his wife Baljit Kaur—experienced chefs and business owners in India—first opened a restaurant in Toronto. And then in January 2021, they opened another in Cornwall. Flavour Kingdom offers authentic Punjabi Indian food at 208 Montreal Road. The family—and their food—were quickly embraced by the community. They hit their sales goals in the first month and have continued to do so ever since. “It was a wonderful response from the people of Cornwall,” Gurpriya says.

Part of the Singh-Kaur family ethos is to give back to the community, so shortly after opening, the restaurant introduced a monthly langar meal. “Langar to End Hunger” is the Sikh practice of providing free meals to the community, and it is open to all. On the 13th of every month, anyone is welcome to pick up a free meal at Flavour Kingdom, which includes a vegetarian curry, roti, rice, dessert, and a bottle of water.

 @FlavourKingdom

## Finalists



### Diversity Cornwall

Founded in 2016, this volunteer-run organization has continuously evolved. What hasn't changed is how much its members want to make our region “an inclusive and welcoming place for 2SLGBTQ+ individuals to live, work, and visit.” Through its Gender Affirmation Program and 10 annual events, more than 100 individuals in the 2SLGBTQ+ community have connected with support services. Plans for new staff will help with their goals of increasing education and fundraising.

[diversitycornwall.ca](http://diversitycornwall.ca)



### Habitat for Humanity Cornwall & The Counties

Since 1998, 16 local families have secured new houses and interest-free mortgages thanks to this local non-profit. Last year, one family moved into their Cornwall home on land donated by the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne; in 2023 one South Dundas and two Glengarry families will get their housewarmings. HFH continues to run Furniture Partners in Le Village with the Agapè Centre. Funds raised from the sale of furniture and home goods support operations for both organizations.

[habitatcornwall.org](http://habitatcornwall.org)

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**INCLUSION & DIVERSITY**

**Powell School of Dance**

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**economical**

# In Leaps and Bounds

A family makes sure that everyone can dance.

For the Powells, dance is a family affair. Susan and Anthony work alongside their three daughters, Lindsay, Hilary, and Ainsley, to run Powell School of Dance (PSOD), a multidisciplinary school for 250 dancers. They offer classes in classical ballet, Broadway tap, and jazz ballet in both competitive and recreational streams.

While the family's passionate personalities lead to many discussions and debates, they all share the same vision for the school: "Our objective is to instill proper techniques and to teach dancers to be conscientious students of the beautiful form," says Susan, matriarch and Artistic Director.

Though the growth of their programs—from Discovery Dance to Adult classes—has been organic and steady since the doors opened in 2004, one of the school's most notable developments took shape in 2011.

It all started when a family joined PSOD with their two children. One child participated in the recreational program; the other was differently abled, so the Powells started working with her one-on-one. This experience laid the groundwork for their Ballerina Dreams program.

Today, PSOD offers private one-on-one dance therapy and small group classes for about 25 students with disabilities ranging from 4–24 years old. The teachers are flexible (no pun intended!), accommodating a variety of abilities. When needed, they work

“There’s never a dry eye in the house.”

closely with the dancers’ caregivers and modify the program based on individual requirements. In the group classes, each dancer is assigned a shadow to help. “We solicit the help of our senior dancers and they meet the challenge with a lot of enthusiasm,” explains Susan. Many of these students have gone on to pursue an education in this field and are now working with people with disabilities.

At the end-of-year recital, all the hard work by the students, the shadows, and the teachers comes to light. According to Susan, “There’s never a dry eye in the house.”



The success of the program runs deeper than simply seeing students engage in artistic movement. Each session has also become a welcome respite for parents of Ballerina Dreams dancers as well. Knowing their children are safe and in good hands, they have been able to connect in the waiting area or over coffee down the street.

In building an outlet for children to express themselves, the Powells have created a successful ecosystem that revolves around skills development, diversity and inclusion, discipline, leadership, and community building. As their tagline says: “The best is yet to come.”

[powellschoolofdance.com](http://powellschoolofdance.com)



## Finalists



### Olymel

Faced with a labour shortage, Olymel innovated. The company has so far recruited foreign workers from Mexico, Mauritius, and the Philippines for two-year commitments. It has its sights on hiring 100 more. Upon fulfillment of their terms, employees can apply for permanent residency and bring their families to join them..

[olymel.ca](http://olymel.ca)



### ElectroDust

Thanks to a 20-year partnership with Community Living Stormont County, this family-run manufacturer of reusable furnace filters has continuously employed people with intellectual disabilities since its founding in 2001. According to President Jean Cardinal, these workers are exceptionally loyal and dependable. Thanks to ElectroDust’s diverse workforce, there’s a truly collaborative environment where employees are empowered to both lead and learn.

[electrodust.com](http://electrodust.com)



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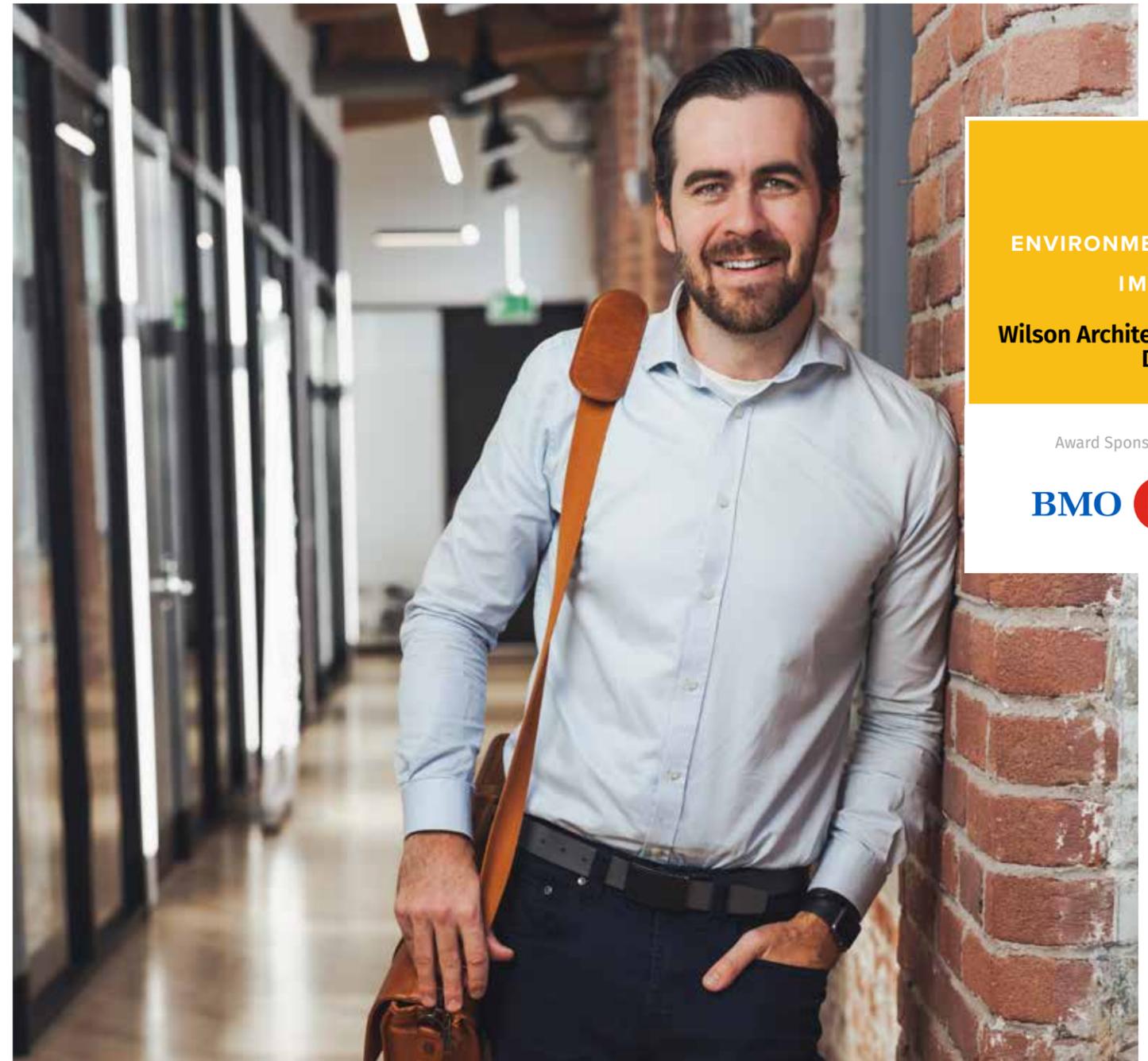
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# Passive Plans

A small architecture firm builds for the future.



When he was young, Brock Wilson didn't favour colouring books. Instead, he drew floor plans of his ideal dream home—including fun elements like bowling alleys or games rooms.

Now 33, he is still drawing house plans, but this time around, it's for clients.

Brock heads up Wilson Architecture Design, launched in July 2020. The company, which operates out of WB Hub in the Cotton Mill district, focuses on custom residential and commercial design. Though the firm is still "fresh," as Brock says, it has been gaining attention for its growth and mindful approach to architecture.

The husband and father of three has focused the bulk of his business on passive house design, a set of principles for attaining living spaces that are more energy efficient, healthier, more comfortable, and built for longevity. In 2021, Brock received his Passive House Designer Certification with the Passive House Institute of Germany.

"It felt like the right time," he says. "I think we all know that we need to be more focused on sustainability over the long term."

The passive house movement has been around since the

1970s and has quietly been building momentum in recent years. The appeal comes from the hallmarks of this building standard: highly insulated, tightly sealed building envelopes; superior windows that retain heat; and state-of-the-art heat recovery ventilation systems. In real terms, passive houses have dramatically lower heating and cooling costs, excellent air quality, and inherent quietness and soundproofing.

Due to increased awareness and demand for this type of building, Brock grew his company by hiring three new employees in the past year,

“ We need to be more focused on sustainability over the long term.”

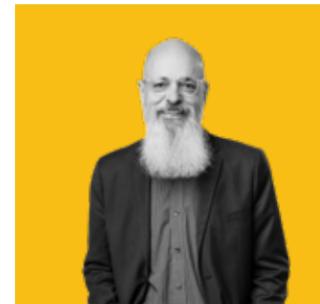
all graduates of Algonquin College's Architectural Technologist program. (As an aside, Brock graduated from and now teaches this same program.) At press time, he and his team have four passive house projects in the pipeline: a two-story semi-detached home in Glen Walter, a slab-on-grade single-family home in Maxville, a 10-unit apartment building in Cornwall, and another single-family home

with a basement in L'Original. All four will be firsts in their respective municipalities.

"These projects will give the community and our clients a greater understanding of the benefits of this type of construction," he says proudly. "We hope this will pave the way to better buildings in the future."

[wilsonarchitecturaldesign.com](http://wilsonarchitecturaldesign.com)

## Finalists



### Raisin Region Conservation Authority

In 2022, the organization planted 58,000 trees (1.1 million since 1994!) and continued to protect 1,644 acres of environmentally significant land including Gray's Creek, Cooper Marsh, and Charlottenburgh Park. RRCA works with surrounding municipalities to balance protecting the environment and natural resources with human and economic needs. It is internationally recognized for its approach to protecting people and property from natural hazards.

[rrca.on.ca](http://rrca.on.ca)



### Ground Soap

For 14 years, Angela Youngs has created handmade bars of cold-process soap with organic ingredients and a minimal environmental footprint. Sustainability runs through everything Ground Soap does, from choosing suppliers to packaging to distribution. Its entire operation is plastic free and aims for minimal energy consumption. Ground Soap continues to grow its loyal following and retail customers in Canada, the US, and Europe.

[groundsoap.com](http://groundsoap.com)



NEW BUSINESS  
OF THE YEAR

Glengarry Market

Award Sponsor



# All Together Now

A businesswoman turns a setback into an opportunity for her community.

For years, Nova Scotia native Amanda Haley enjoyed great success with her homemade fermented food business, The Brine Cellar. But then Ontario's new Food Premises Regulation came into effect on July 1st, bringing important changes for food service businesses across the provinces—including Amanda's.

Faced with the choice of shutting down her business or launching a certified kitchen, the mother of two young girls came up with a concept that would serve not only her needs but also those of local food vendors and producers. The Glengarry Market—with a certified kitchen dedicated to her own business—opened its door on Alexandria's Main Street in the summer of 2019.

At first, she stocked the shelves with products from 15 local farmers, food producers, and artisans, but that number quickly grew to 60. She now sells fresh seasonal produce, cheese, bread, maple syrup and honey, wood items, skincare, and more.

"I pull from as many vendors as I can with all different products," she says. "I want a collaborative environment instead of a competitive one." Anything featured at the Glengarry Market is grown, farmed, produced,

“  
I'm just happy this is a space that everybody can enjoy.”

or crafted within 150 kilometres of the store.

Amanda has set up the business with flexibility in mind. Vendors have a choice of paying a monthly fee, selling on consignment or wholesaling their products. Amanda also offers different options for Community Supported Agriculture shares—a setup whereby members subscribe to receive a farmer's produce for a set period. Meanwhile, customers can choose full-season, bi-weekly, or individual-size options. For added value, Amanda includes recipes with the produce delivery to help provide instruction for meal preparation and preservation.

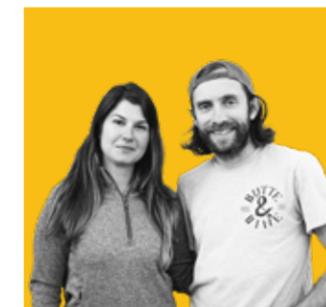
With so many moving parts to her business, Amanda admits that "it's a balance to keep everybody happy and the bills paid." In the same breath, she recognizes the success of the market and attributes it to the strong ties she's cultivated with the vendors, the customers, the Eastern Ontario Health Unit, her landlord, and her loyal employee, Christine.

"We're a market family," she says. "I'm just happy this is a space that everybody can enjoy."

[theglengarrymarket.com](http://theglengarrymarket.com)



## Finalists



### Ferme Butte & Bine Farm

The original plan to open a B&B in Williamstown in 2020 was quickly expanded with a full-fledged market garden and micro-bakery. You'll now find Emeric Deslage in the kitchen full-time, baking loaves of sourdough bread. Meanwhile, partner Sylviane Dutrisac heads up the organic vegetable gardens. For the upcoming season, they'll focus on growing their farmshare community and launching experiential tourism packages.

[fermebuttebinefarm.square.site](http://fermebuttebinefarm.square.site)



### The Water Heater Guy

Owner/operator Dylan Colburne believes the key to a successful business is "treating each customer no differently than your grandmother." After launching his company in 2020, the Water Heater Guy started making up to 10 house calls per day for installs and repairs. An ambitious entrepreneur who prides himself on honesty and fast, reliable service envisions a future with added staff and a four-truck fleet.

[thewaterheaterguy.ca](http://thewaterheaterguy.ca)

## Canadian Tire

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ENTREPRENEUR  
OF THE YEAR

**Karen Brunet**  
ActivKare and Cntrl+

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## The Real Deal

A serial businesswoman identifies with a niche market...and capitalizes on it.



Karen is now spending the bulk of her time focused on a new medical device she personally developed and patented. It's called Cntrl+, a bladder support pessary that helps women prevent bladder leaks. If this innovative product is able to take a mere 5% share of the USD 2.3 billion American female incontinence market, she stands to pull in USD 115 million in revenue.

At times, the forward momentum of her companies can seem



overwhelming, but make no mistake, Karen is motivated to keep going because she has a real understanding of the emotional effects of incontinence.

"The whole premise of my business stems from caring about people and their mental state," she says. "We don't often talk about how incontinence affects people. It's time that we do."

[aktivkare.com](http://aktivkare.com)

Last summer, Karen Brunet told a roomful of 500 people that she had built a brand based on peeing her pants. She was speaking at TiECon Canada, a massive conference in Ottawa for start-ups, entrepreneurs, small- and mid-size enterprises, and investors. Karen's real talk and business savvy have earned her an audience with important angel investors and allies who are interested in the potential of a virtually untapped market.

"I want to turn female and male incontinence on its head," she says. "Like, why is everybody afraid to talk about this problem when 70% of us suffer from it?"

Inspired by her own personal journey, Karen has founded several

companies. The events before, during, and after the births of her two beloved girls, Laurin and Sophie, took their toll on her body and caused aftereffects—including incontinence. She has also suffered a litany of medical setbacks including endometriosis, polycystic ovarian syndrome, and multiple surgeries including a post-pregnancy hysterectomy. The lack of effective, reusable options for personal hygiene sent Karen into overdrive to find solutions for men and women with urinary incontinence.

She started by founding iKare.Med, a B2B company that imported and

“I want to turn female and male incontinence on its head.”

sold medical devices to Canadian retailers. In 2018, she launched ActivKare with a direct-to-consumer business model; its revenues are projected to reach USD 9 million by 2024. Most recently, she started a new division of the business called ActivKare Transition, which focuses on helping people with temporary or permanent incontinence after gender-affirming surgery. "I've learned so much about this real problem for people going through gender-affirming surgery," she says. "Imagine finally becoming the person you've always been and then not wanting to leave the house because you're leaking."

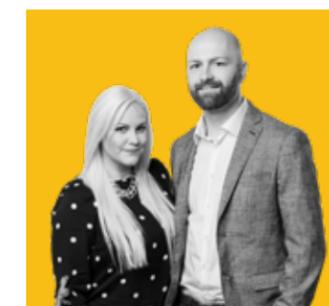
## Finalists



**Wendy Grant**  
Cornwall City Press

Wendy Grant doesn't shy away from a challenge. When she became co-owner of Cornwall City Press in 1994, she had to learn the business from the ground up. She figured out the trade, then in 2011, took over sole ownership and also purchased The Sign Factory that same year. Wendy has steered the company successfully through significant change. With passion, drive, and sharp business acumen, she led Cornwall City Press to its 95th anniversary in 2022.

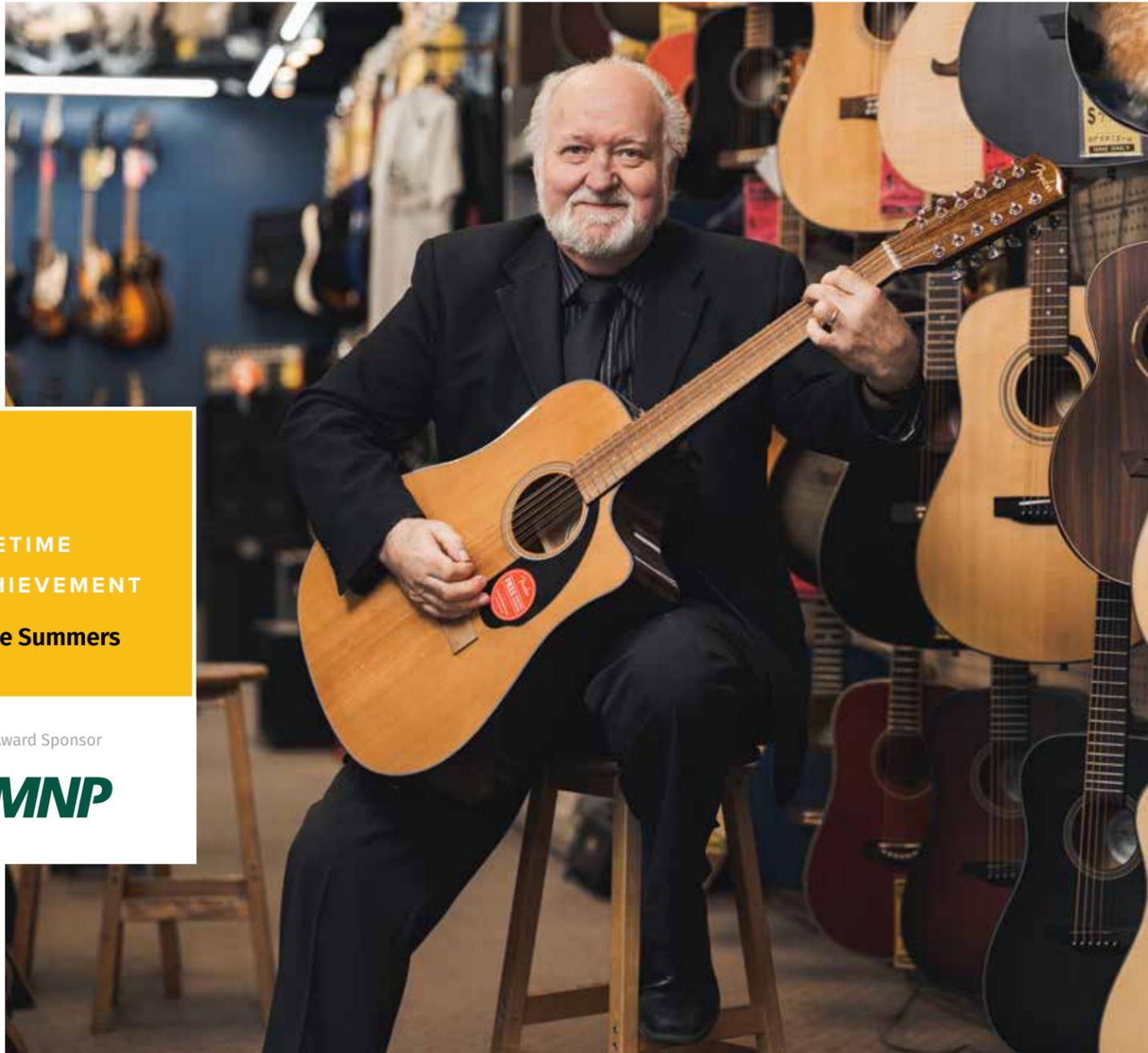
[cornwallcitypress.com](http://cornwallcitypress.com)



**Shannon Ferguson and Kris McCarthy**  
FanSaves

This power couple wanted to offer sports team sponsors what they really wanted: a digital solution to drive store visits while tracking customer analytics and returns on investment. Their FanSaves digital platform connects fans to discounts while giving partners data to help tailor their marketing. The company has grown to a staff of 8, working with 60 teams and organizations, and with 1,100 deals from major brands.

[fansaves.com](http://fansaves.com)



LIFETIME  
ACHIEVEMENT

Steve Summers

Award Sponsor



# The Music Man

For Steve Summers, a life of service has never sounded so good.

For Allan Wilson, a good life is measured by the depth of one's relationships and service to others.

When he opens the door and turns on the lights at Melody Music Centre, Steve Summers is greeted by racks and rows of guitars and amplifiers, keyboards and drum kits, banjos and violins, saxophones and trumpets, sheet music books and strings, and so on.

"It makes me so happy," he says. "I know that someone will take one of these instruments home and make music."

Steve has worked at this local institution ever since he was a 17-year-old lead guitarist for The Jaguars, a local rock 'n' roll band. At age 32, after 15 years as an employee,



"What's that saying—'If you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life'?" Really, I'm just still having fun."

he bought the store. Now 76, his legendary reputation is solidified. It's been built on offering great sales and service but even more so on his humility, kindness, and unflinching eagerness to help musicians, both aspiring and experienced.

Steve is well known and beloved for opening the shop after hours to accommodate musicians with emergency requests, for setting up creative payment plans for those who need the break, and for making trades that benefit the customer more than his bottom line. And while some

store owners frown upon loitering or touching the merchandise, Steve has always taken the opposite approach. He welcomes those who are looking to

linger, browse, strum a guitar, or bang on the piano keys. "I'll hang out and listen to or talk music with anyone, even if it eats up my time. It pays off in the long run."

This generous, easy-going spirit explains why: "Over the years, my customers have become my friends."

Steve's list of friends is a long one and includes a who's who of successful musicians including drummer Roy Nichol, blues guitarist Paul DesLauriers, rock country singer John McIntosh, and members of bands like Teen Beats, Ritual, and The Barstool Prophets to name a few. To get the full rundown of Melody Music patrons, one simply has to look up at the store's very own Wall of Fame—a series of posters proudly mounted at the store.

No matter a person's status, Steve has taken great pride in treating everyone





who comes into the store—from bona fide rockstars to curious delivery drivers to rambunctious teens—with the same level of care and attention. But he admits to taking extra pleasure from helping newbies choose their first instruments.

“If you want to start playing the guitar, for example, then your first guitar is very important,” he stresses. “I want you to be happy learning how to play it, so I have to be a careful matchmaker.”

Kim Summers, Steve’s son, has worked in the store since he was 12 years old and witnessed how his father has fostered loyalty.

“People who have been coming here since I was a kid are now grown up

and bringing their kids here too. My dad has really helped multiple generations of families,” he says. “The mentality is ‘Go see Steve’ if you need anything. That’s pretty cool, I think.”

For his part, Steve also recognizes that he has built special relationships with his customers over the years, which he attributes to the nature of the business.

“People are just happy to come here. You know, they’re coming to get something that will help them play music,” he explains. “It’s not like they need a new refrigerator and they’re grumpy to go buy it. That’s not fun.”

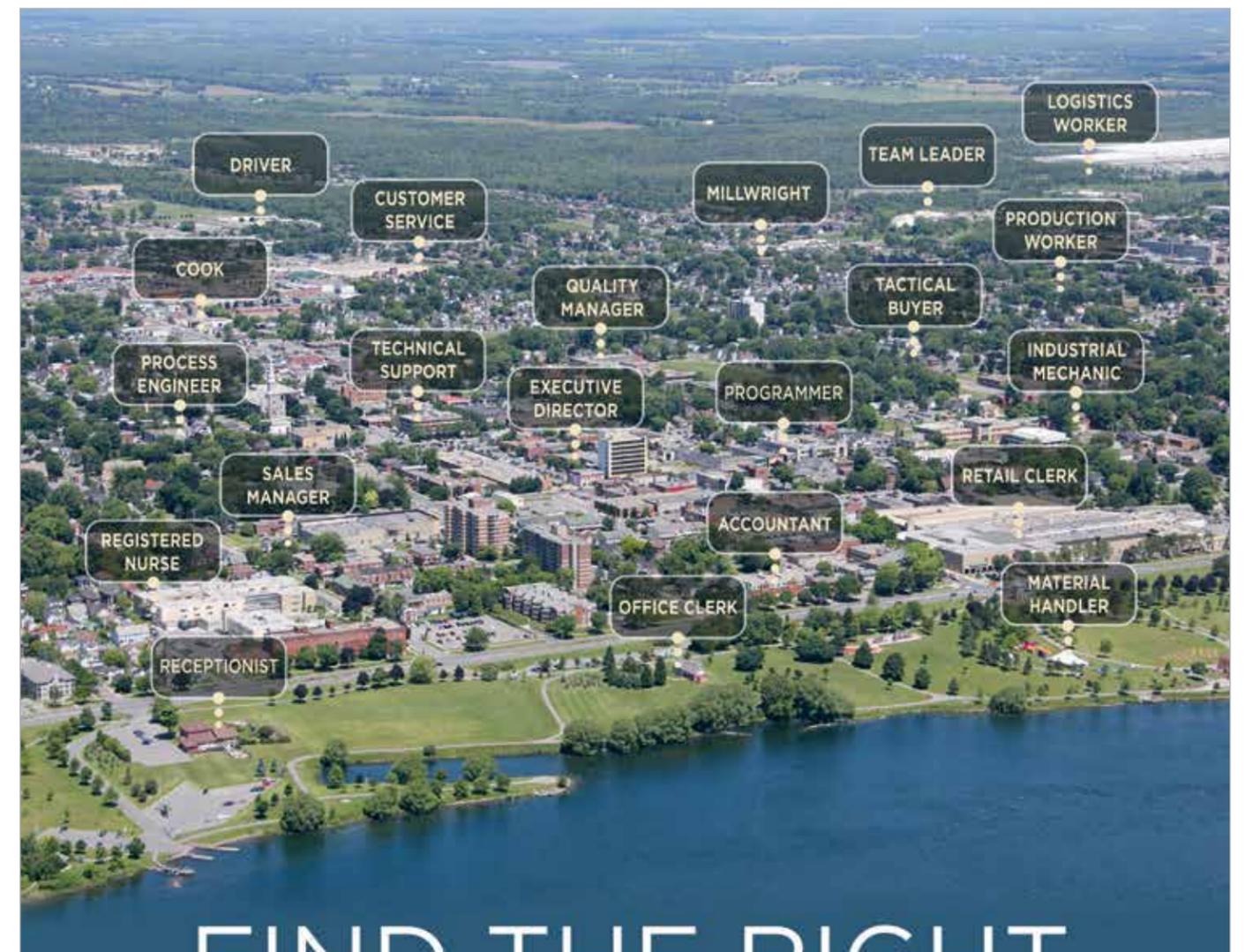
“This,” he says pointing around the room, “is fun.”

This also explains why customers don’t hesitate to pitch in when they see Steve or Kim needing help. When boxes of inventory arrive, there’s always someone offering to put them away. Steve says it’s because “they’re invested.”

This year marks Melody Music Centre’s 60th anniversary, and Steve plans on being around for as many more milestones as possible.

“What’s that saying—‘If you love what you do, you’ll never work a day in your life?’” he asks. “Really, I’m just still having fun. And I plan on doing that until they carry me out of this place. That’s how much I love this.”

[melodymusic.ca](http://melodymusic.ca)



# FIND THE RIGHT JOB FOR YOU

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CITIZEN  
OF THE YEAR

Lynn Chauvin

Award Sponsor

THE CORNWALL & AREA  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



# A Humble Hand

Being a force for good comes naturally to Lynn Chauvin.

When it was first announced that Lynn Chauvin was named the 2022 Citizen of the Year, nobody was surprised... except for Lynn Chauvin.

"I started to cry when I got the call and was told I was getting this honour," she says. "I was just so shocked. It's very humbling to know that my peers would choose me."

Lynn is the kind and quiet type. Most people don't know much about her private life—that she has a twin brother, for example, or that she loves power tools—or about the full extent of her service to the public. By her own admission, Lynn likes to keep things to herself and "work behind the scenes," so being put in the forefront with this award is "really overwhelming."

However, her humility belies her contributions to the community.

For close to two decades, Lynn has volunteered for a host of Cornwall non-profit organizations. The list includes the Children's Treatment

Centre (CTC), Cornwall Community Hospital Foundation (CCHF), Agapè Centre, United Way SDG, Optimist Club of Cornwall, and the Cornwall Chamber of Commerce. For most of those agencies, she has served on their Board of Directors in some capacity, often for five-year stints or longer. And she has always been heavily involved in their fundraising efforts, taking leading roles in high-profile events like the CCHF Trillium Ball; Agapè Wine, Dine & All That Jazz Festival; United Way Holiday Gala; CTC Charity Auction & Dinner; and Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards, among countless others.

Beyond liberally contributing her time and enthusiasm to these established local organizations, Lynn also spearheaded a personal passion project: For four back-to-school seasons (with a two-year pause during the pandemic), she has purchased

backpacks, filled them with school supplies, and donated them to children in need.

"I think acts of kindness can help change the course of someone's life," she says. "I truly believe that. Besides, when I'm good to people, whether that means helping to fundraise for them or just saying something nice to someone, that brightens my day."



"I think acts of kindness can help change the course of someone's life"

Not blind to her own privilege, Lynn proudly recounts a lifetime of good memories: a happy childhood, a wonderful marriage to her husband Victor, a beautiful daughter and two loving stepdaughters, and an exciting career that brought her across the country with roles in various industries, including real estate investment, oil and gas, and aviation.

"I've been very fortunate in my life and I do recognize all the advantages I've had," she says. "I think that's part of my motivation. I need to give back."

Growing up, Lynn witnessed how her father coached a minor league hockey team and dedicated himself to making sure everybody got what they needed.

She remembers how he'd always make sandwiches for all the boys, how he'd patiently help tie their skates, and how he'd make sure they all got a chance to play—even the kid who barely knew how to skate.

“Because of how my father treated those kids, I learned that simple acts of kindness can have a really big impact.”

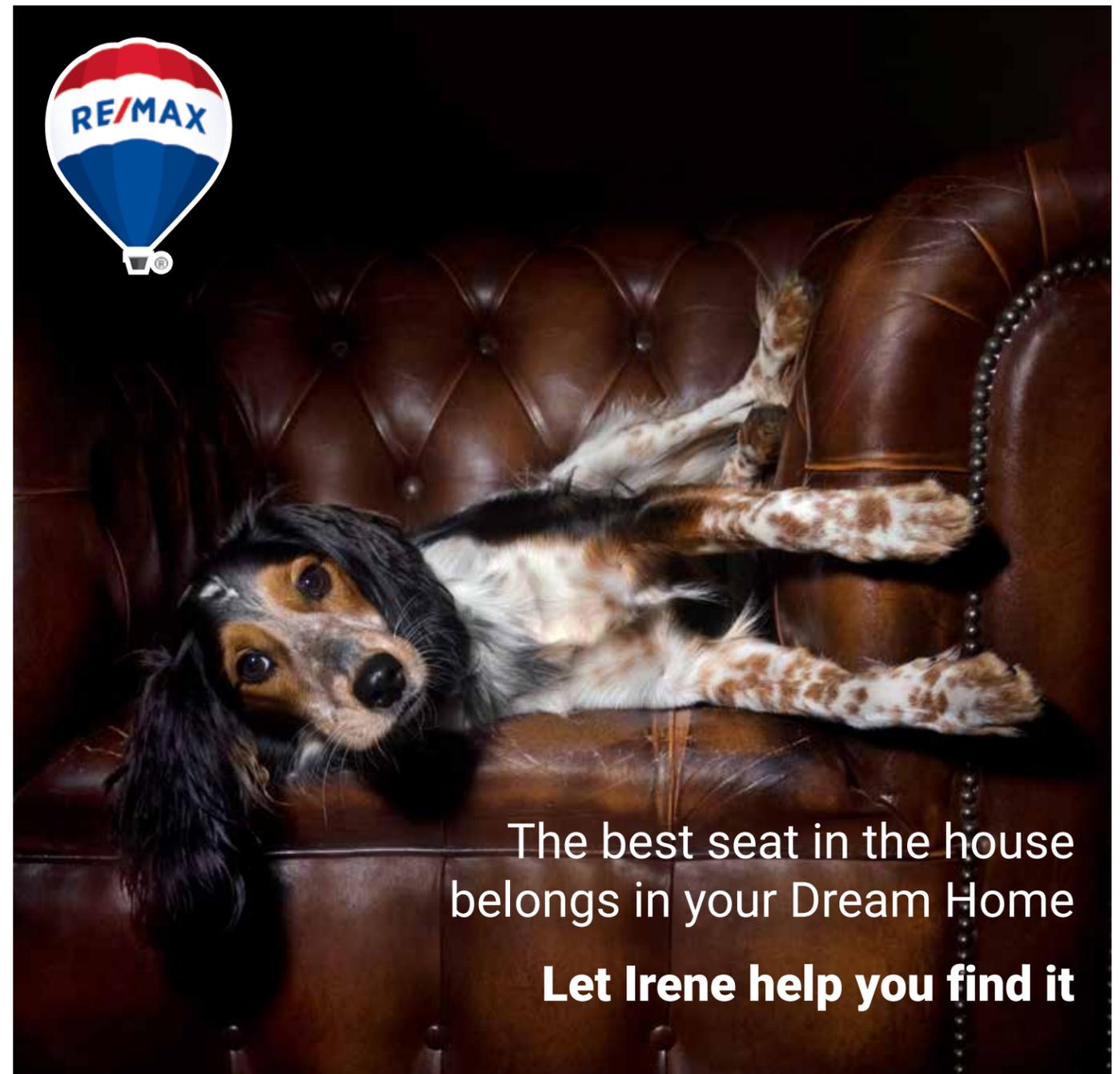
Beyond following in her father's footsteps, Lynn's commitment to her community has also been driven by a sense of urgency, prompted by personal tragedy. In 2010 after 24 years together, Victor—her kind, generous, and fun-loving husband—was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. He

passed away a mere six weeks later. Understandably, it rocked Lynn's world and for a few years, she retreated from public life to grieve and focus on her then-11-year-old daughter, Victoria.

When she reemerged to volunteer again a few years later, she returned with an even stronger sense of purpose.

“Life is short, you know,” she says wistfully. “I have to do what I can while I'm on this earth.”

“So many people, especially in Cornwall, are in need right now. I wish I could build a huge apartment building to help them out, but I have to be realistic. I can't be everywhere and do everything all at the same time. I can only keep doing what I'm doing and hope people understand that the community cares.”



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YOUNG PROFESSIONAL

Gabriel Rivière-Reid

Award Sponsor



# Taking the Shot

An ambitious lad broadcasts his love for his community.

When Gabriel Rivière-Reid's girlfriend from Oakville came for a visit last summer, he took her for lunch at a downtown eatery. Their conversation was interrupted often. Friends, colleagues, and acquaintances couldn't pass up the chance to say hello to "Gabe."

Being recognized and greeted is common for the 34-year-old. After more than 14 years working with YourTV Cornwall—close to 11 years as an employee—he has produced thousands of segments about our community. He's interviewed countless locals and collaborated with hundreds of volunteers, all punctuated with his signature affable style. As a result, everybody loves Gabe.

This gregarious professional's career path started in June 2008 when he

saw a volunteer recruitment ad for YourTV Cornwall. Upon arrival at the studio, he was immediately asked to help with a live-to-air production. By fall, he was working on studio shows and covering city council meetings, Colts hockey games, and Christmas concerts. "I was hooked," says Gabe.

Two years later, he graduated to being the "weekend shooter," dispatched to cover events around the city. Though he didn't have a driver's licence yet, nothing stopped Gabe. "I would pick up the equipment on Friday, and then bus around town all weekend, camera and tripod in hand."

With all his enthusiasm, go-getter



Local news matters. Local stories matter. Local television matters.

mentality, and friendly personality, it only made sense that Cogeco would bring him on as a full-time staff member. When a position opened up in March 2012, Gabe jumped on it.

There's inevitable stress in his fast-paced producer position, but Gabe clearly loves and understands the significance of his job. "Local news matters. Local stories matter. Local television matters," he

says. "Information, sports, events, politics—it's all on our channel, and I'm proud to be part of helping bring that to our viewers. [Our team] works so hard to do so."

Gabe undoubtedly loves his community and that's not only reflected in his



dedication to work but also through his volunteering. He's shared his energy with Big Brothers & Big Sisters, Sexual Assault Support Services (SASS), and Crafting a Cure. He recently wrapped up a five-year stint as a board member of the Agapè Centre and, for his dedication and service to the United Way, was named the recipient of the 2022 Lew Stanley Memorial award.

It seems so obvious: Gabe loves his community. And everybody, understandably, loves Gabe.

[yourtv.tv/cornwall](http://yourtv.tv/cornwall)



SMALL/MEDIUM  
BUSINESS

**Cristill Rock**

Award Sponsor



## Finalists

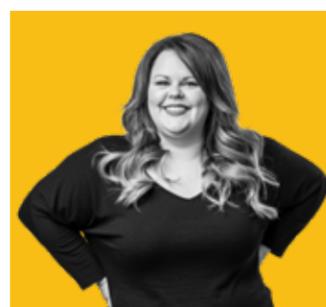


**Dr. Joel Leger and  
Dr. Kylie Draper**  
*Cornwall Spine Care Plus*

Drs. Joel Leger and Kylie Draper, owners of Cornwall Spine Care Plus, stay on top of the latest research and treatment techniques to provide effective, innovative, and individualized musculoskeletal care. The practice started small and grew organically, and in a decade has expanded to a team of 10 with a steadily growing patient list.

Prioritizing communication and collaboration, their multidisciplinary team works with patients to maximize health and well-being.

[spinecareplus.ca](http://spinecareplus.ca)



**Karine Parthenais**  
*Mellow Brew Marketing*

For Karine Parthenais, change is a part of doing business. The Creative Director of Mellow Brew Marketing (formerly the Co. Lab) uses her vast experience gained working for other local businesses and now offers strategic guidance, marketing, and social media support to clients.

Her straightforward approach, big-picture thinking, and ability to connect help her clients find their niche and put their plans into action.

[mellowbrewmarketing.com](http://mellowbrewmarketing.com)

## In Full Flow

A company changes hands and continues to make waves.



From the day Cristill Rock started offering purified distilled water to the local market, Nicholas Plouffe has “always been around.”

“When I was a kid, my ‘job’ was simply to hang around the shop, stay quiet, and wait until my parents were done working,” he remembers.

As he got older, he took on greater responsibilities at the water manufacturing company, including working in the front-of-house retail shop and then on the water production line. When he turned 18, he got his DZ license and hit the road to learn the distribution runs.

“My parents put all the energy they had into the business, and I learned to do the same,” says Nicholas, now 28.

Cristill Rock was founded by Christine and Rock Plouffe in 1994, soon after Nicholas was born. Their business grew so quickly that in 1999, the couple was forced to move production out of their 1,200-square-foot garage and into a 12,000-square-foot facility on Brookdale Avenue.

Though the company initially gained recognition for its flagship product, Cristill Rock Distilled Water, it quickly became known for being the first in the area to sell the Keurig K-Cup coffee

system and the first to offer a convenient 24-hour self-serve water depot. The company also developed Planet Pure, water that is purified with a six-step process and remineralized with more than 72 organic trace minerals.

Today, Cristill Rock employs 15 people and delivers up to 15,000 18-litre bottles of water per week to commercial, office, and residential addresses across Cornwall, SD&G, and Prescott Russell.

After watching Nicholas mature and grow into managing the business, Christine and Rock signed over the company to their firstborn in late October 2020. For a year and a half, they supported him through the transition of leading the company solo after which time they embraced retirement fully to travel the world.

“My parents put all the energy they had into the business, and I learned to do the same.”

“Lucky for me, their phone is always on, so if I have questions, I just have to call,” says Nicholas.

He acknowledges that ownership of the company is “a lot of work” but appreciates the challenges. “I saw a lot of stuff growing up that we learned to do better over the years,” he says. “At the end of the day, my job is to keep doing better.

[cristillrock.com](http://cristillrock.com)

## Finalists



### Roy's Chevrolet Buick GMC Inc.

This company has been a constant in the Glengarry area for 60 years.

Roy's Chevrolet customers value the Labonté family's transparency and appreciate that they stand behind their words. Passionate about their region, they are the main sponsors of the Canadian Cancer Society's Relay for Life in Maxville and also sponsor the Glengarry Pipers hockey team.

Looking to the future, Roy's Chevrolet is investing in becoming an electric vehicle dealership.

[roysgm.ca](http://roysgm.ca)



### Seguin Financial

Seguin Financial makes a point of delving into each client's unique business story and providing tailored service and advice. The company has also always prided itself on its passion for leveraging technology and nurturing a culture of clear communication. In 2022, they took on four new employees, and revenues grew significantly for the fourth year in a row.

[seguinfinancial.ca](http://seguinfinancial.ca)



LARGE BUSINESS

Canadian Tire

Award Sponsor

McDougall75 YEARS

# The Triangle of Life

A company that gives back.



Today, 90% of the population lives within 15 minutes of a Canadian Tire store. The brand has become as much part of the fabric of our country as hockey or snow.

For Marc-André St-Jacques, the venerable company has shaped part of his identity, too.

In the 1970s at age 12, he started his first job at his father's franchise in Valleyfield, tasked with filling the pop-can vending machines. As he matured, he was trusted with greater responsibilities and customer service.

Though he detoured from CT life for two decades—owning and operating a thriving apple orchard in Saint-Paul d'Abbotsford, Quebec—he somehow couldn't get away from the pull of the triangle.

In 2002, Marc-André and his wife, Sylvie Denicourt, began a cross-Canada tour buying, running, and eventually selling Canadian Tire stores in La Baie, Montreal, Trois Rivières, Nicolet, and Yellowknife. Wanting to be closer to their kids, close friends, and families, they were thrilled to land their

franchise in Cornwall in 2019. They added the Alexandria store to their portfolio in 2021.

Marc-André has built the business around family values.

"I'm very involved with my employees and their families," he says. "My interest is sincere, which I hope results in mutual trust and shared enjoyment in our conversations."

Just as he grew up learning the ropes from his father, so too did his son Rémi who has taken over the reins as the Cornwall store's general manager.



I'm very involved with my employees and their families. My interest is sincere."

"I've always been extremely present in my companies, but my role has evolved over the years, especially since Rémi has become more involved. He has the experience and I trust him entirely," he says. "I'm very proud of him."

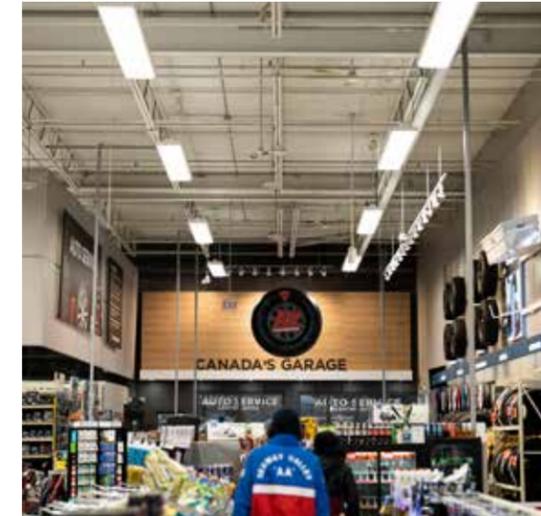
Along with his passion for working with Rémi and his 130 employees, he is also enthusiastic about Jumpstart Charities, a non-profit primarily supported by the Canadian Tire Corporation, the federal and provincial governments, and individual stores—like Cornwall and Alexandria—that solicit funds from customers.

When the head office in Toronto proposed joint funding for the Akwesasne

Skatepark, he leaped at the opportunity to contribute. In total, the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities donated \$241,000 toward the construction of the 9,600-square-foot park—opened in October 2022—that caters not only to skateboarders but also to youth using scooters, bikes, rollerblades, and wheelchairs.

"It's a beautiful project that brings people together," Marc-André says. "And to have the chance to help build the park, leave my contribution, and have the Canadian Tire name attached to it? That really pleases me."

[canadiantire.ca](http://canadiantire.ca)



## Finalists



### Demolition Plus

If you don't see their fleet of white trucks on the streets of Cornwall, this company might be dismantling dams in Kapuskasing or removing hazardous substances from heritage structures in Ottawa.

What does it take to maintain a culture that values safety, quality workmanship, and timely delivery of services? Leadership that's on the ground, working alongside its team of 140 people.

[demoplus.ca](http://demoplus.ca)



### Cornwall Gravel

This construction and aggregate materials business—helmed by the Grant family—has literally helped establish the bedrock for a strong Cornwall since 1949. They furnished materials for the first Seaway International Bridge, and, 56 years later, paved the low-level bridge. Going from hand-shovelling gravel in a single truck to a workforce of 250 people strong today is a testament to the company's perseverance.

[cornwallgravel.ca](http://cornwallgravel.ca)



TOURISM  
EXCELLENCE

Fields of Gold

Award Sponsor



# Field of Dreams

A young couple's vision to spread joy takes root.

In 2020, Stephanie and Jakob Vogel grappled with a dilemma: Should they sell their 75-acre farm or double down and reinvent it? One day, as they contemplated their next move, Jakob swept the floors and Stephanie doomscrolled through Instagram. She suddenly yelled, "Why can't we plant pretty things like sunflowers?"

From this serendipitous moment, the couple created Fields of Gold, a 20-acre sunflower experience in North Stormont. They knew very little about growing specialty crops, but Jakob was confident the wider agriculture community would be able to provide guidance. "If you throw the questions out there, the resources are available. You just have to be willing to ask."

Their leap of faith has blossomed. The sunny destination, which opened to the public in 2021, has averaged around 2,000 visitors each summer with half coming from beyond the borders of SD&G. Visitors frolic in the sunflower fields, posing for photo ops in front of creative sets like rainbow-hued doors and charming furniture. Fields of Gold also hosts activities like paint nights, sunset yoga, and date night strolls featuring collaborations with local entrepreneurs.

"We opened the farm to the public for one main reason: joy," the couple says. "We want all our visitors to take in the

sunshine and pure happiness as they explore."

Though they fulfilled their original mission, they didn't stop growing their dreams. Last summer, Stephanie and Jakob doubled the size of the sunflower fields, added a pumpkin patch and a corn maze, and planted four waves of sunflowers to extend their season—in total, over a million blooms! They also planted a cut flower field where guests can pick and design their own bouquets. The addition of four more summer employees helped them pull it all off.



We opened the farm to the public for one main reason: joy"

These 30-year-olds have also learned that for their fans, the interest doesn't start and end with the visit. Their more than 2,300 Instagram followers are invested in their compelling story of jumping in with both feet. "They want

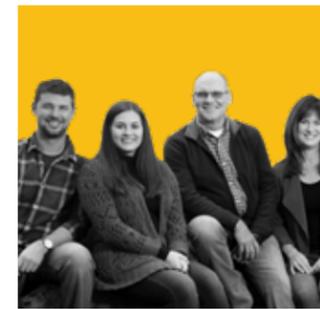
to know what we're doing, where we came from, how we're doing it." Adding to the adventure is their baby, born this past January—another layer of their journey that their followers will surely enjoy seeing.

Fields of Gold is an extension of Stephanie and Jakob's infectious positivity, and it is obviously spreading to their visitors. As Jakob says, "When they leave, they've got smiles on their faces. Every single one."

[fieldsofgold.ca](http://fieldsofgold.ca)



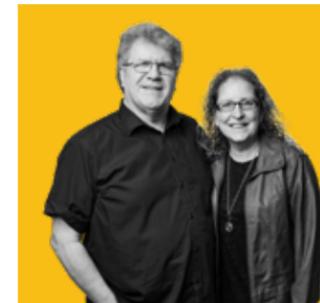
## Finalists



### Avonmore Berry Farm

Avonmore Berry Farm has been an anchor of the agri-tourism industry for more than 40 years. Charming 20,000 people annually with the simplicity of farm life and pie recipes that have been in the family for generations, this "food-based experience" offers a relaxing family outing to pick your own berries, apples, and pumpkins, complete with a wagon ride and a smile.

[avonmoreberryfarm.com](http://avonmoreberryfarm.com)



### Cornwall & Area Pop Event (CAPE)

Carol and Randy Sauve created CAPE seven years ago with the intention of combining all the fun of a big-city event with the small-town perks of family affordability and personal interaction. Averaging 4,700 visitors annually, geeks, nerds, and pop-culture aficionados engage with celebrity guests, mingle with vendors, fawn over cosplay costumes, and embrace all things fandom!

[cornwallpopevent.com](http://cornwallpopevent.com)



PRESIDENT'S  
AWARD

David Murphy

Award Sponsor



## David Murphy (1972–2022)

A community champion who lived large and went out swinging.

In high school, he was “Moonhead.” To his Thursday morning Legends hockey teammates, he was “Mad Dog.” To his beloved girls’ softball team, he was “Coach.” To his daughter Julia, he was “Dad.” To everyone else, he was “Murph.”

It didn’t matter how you knew him or what you called him, Dave always made his presence known.

He was the guy who loved to meme spam his loved ones, quietly gift free Colts tickets, and raise money for Big Brothers/Big Sisters and the Children’s Treatment Centre by shaving his giant noggin’ and throwing punches in the boxing ring, respectively. He was the entertaining master of ceremonies at countless charity events, the animated announcer at the Cornwall Motor Speedway, the sports show host on Cogeco YourTV, and the two-time city councillor who advocated for his city.

No matter the role, Dave used his voice—his big, bellowing voice—to promote every cause he believed in. When he opened his mouth, he talked not only

to entertain, but to explain, to comfort, to convince, and most of all, to bring attention to the community’s needs.

Even when diagnosed with lung cancer at 48, he thought of others. He converted his clout and launched Team Murphy, a fundraiser to support local families facing costs related to cancer treatments. He continued to move forward one day at a time, chiding his friends, coaching kids, helping where he could, and championing Julia’s accomplishments as only the proudest father could.

When it became clear that his two-year fight would quiet his roar, friends and colleagues lined up to fill his final weeks with awards and accolades. It was important to everyone that he understood his impact and most importantly, that he felt the warm embrace of our community’s gratitude.

On November 13, 2022, the night he passed, Cornwall got quieter. Now it’s up to the rest of us to get louder.

RIP Dave.

“

Dave used his voice—his big, bellowing voice—to promote every cause he believed in.

CJSS and CFLG have made it their mission to not just entertain and inform our community but to connect to it on an emotional level and to inspire people daily.

Truth is, for over seventy years, it has been our community, that has inspired and connected with us.

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