

FALL 2025/WINTER 2026

PULSE

CELEBRATING THE ENERGY OF
DOWNTOWN LINDSAY

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Downtown Lindsay is the perfect combination of modern and historical, eclectic and traditional, and above all, a place that cherishes its local community, while welcoming visitors with open arms.

*Cover, Bistro 93 Grilled Vegetable Flatbread.
Photo taken by Mary Hackett*



WELCOME TO THE SECOND EDITION OF PULSE!

We're thrilled to present our Fall/Winter edition of Pulse, your ultimate guide to everything Downtown Lindsay has to offer. From unique shops and essential services to incredible restaurants and cozy cafés, this edition is packed with inspiration for exploring, enjoying, and celebrating our vibrant downtown community.

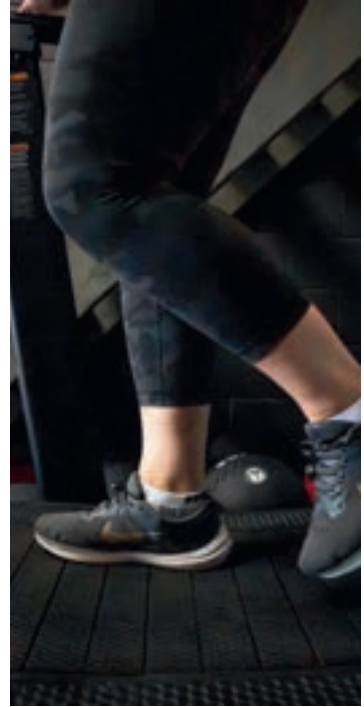
This edition has a special focus on generational businesses and the families behind them—highlighting the stories, dedication, and passion that have been passed down through the years. These businesses are more than just shops and services; they are a reflection of the heart, heritage, and resilience of Lindsay itself.

Whether you're looking for a new favourite local spot, revisiting a cherished downtown gem, or simply discovering the stories behind the people and families who make our community thrive, Pulse has you covered. We hope this edition inspires you to connect locally by supporting the generations of entrepreneurs who are the pulse of Lindsay Downtown.

*-The Lindsay Downtown BIA, and
the Creators & Editors of PULSE*



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Van Halteren's Music Centre
Photo by Katelyn Rose Media

LEISURE

Downtime is very important to mental health and happiness. Spend time with your friends, your family, or recharge with some time alone by playing a game, reading a book, watching a movie or listening to your favourite album.



KEEPING THE BEAT ALIVE JOHN AND THE LEGACY OF VAN HALTEREN'S MUSIC CENTRE

BY MARY HACKETT, *LINDSAY DOWNTOWN BIA*

When Van Halteren's Music Centre first opened its doors on November 18, 1974, it was more than just the start of a business — it was the beginning of a musical legacy in Lindsay. Founded by brothers Jerry and Zeger Van Halteren, the idea was sparked by Jerry's wife, Grace, who noticed a gap in the community after Lindsay lost its only music store the year before. With little more than determination and a belief that "the town needs music," Jerry secured support from the bank, and within a month, the store was open for business.

From the very beginning, music was a family affair. Jerry's 16-year-old son John started working in the shop the day it opened, teaching guitar lessons while balancing school. Within a year, John left high school to dedicate himself fully to the business, splitting his time between running the store, teaching, and performing live gigs with local bands at schools, bars, and private events.

Now, over 40 years later, John is still at the heart of Van Halteren's Music Centre, joined by his son Jeremy and his brother Gerald. Together, they've worked tirelessly to keep music alive and accessible in Lindsay. What began as Jerry's vision has grown into a true generational business — one that has adapted, endured, and thrived through decades of change.

For John, the customers and community connections built over the years are countless and priceless. When his father retired, John and Gerald took over the business. Eventually, Jeremy stepped in to continue the family tradition, and for the past 15 years, father and son have run the store side by side. John says one of the best parts of the journey is working with his son. His advice to anyone considering a generational business is simple but powerful:

"Get along. Work out your differences for the good of the business, and the business will thrive."



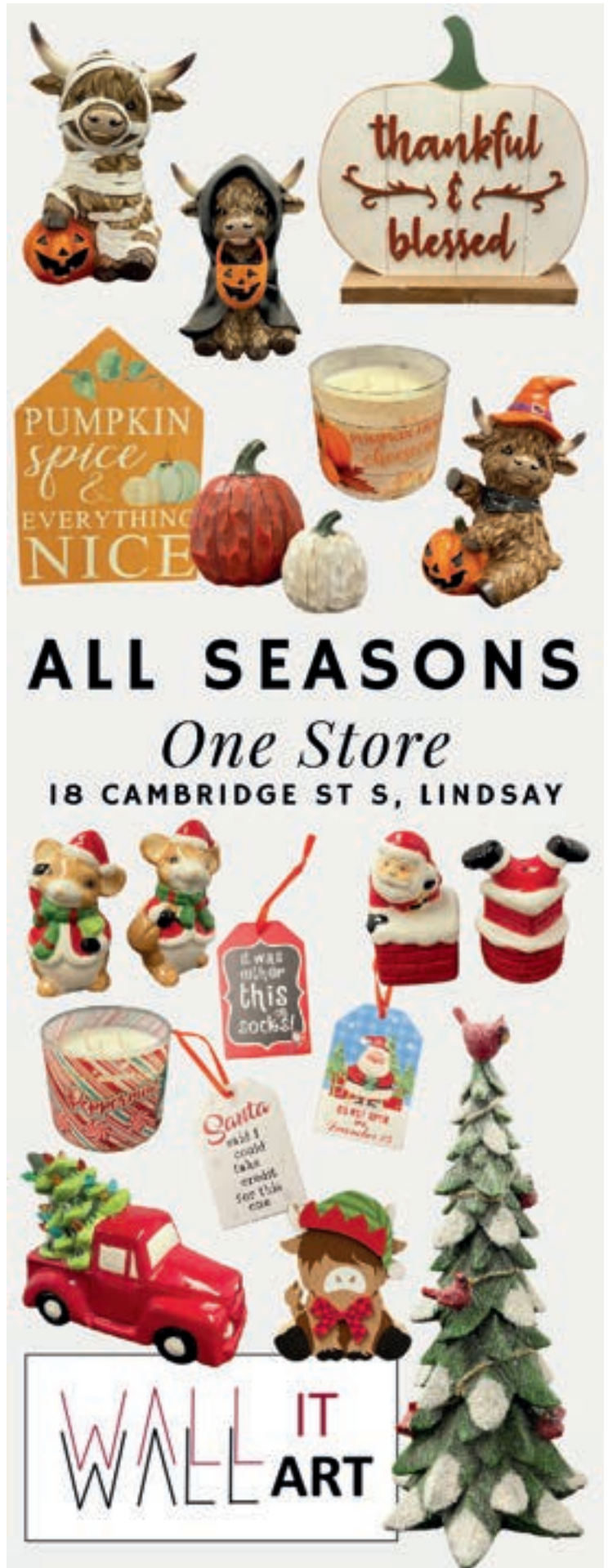
Van Halteren's current location at 55 Kent St. W.



John and his son Jeremy Van Halteren.

But Van Halteren's isn't just about selling instruments. The shop has grown into a full-service hub for musicians. They specialize in repairs and tech services, offer a wide range of equipment and instrument rentals, and continue to provide opportunities for anyone looking to schedule music lessons. Beyond the storefront, Van Halteren's is dedicated to nurturing community spirit. In partnership with the Flato Academy Theatre, they host monthly Open Mic Afternoons, giving local talent the chance to shine while creating a welcoming space for music lovers to connect.

So, what's next for Van Halteren's Music Centre? In John's words: "To keep on rocking and rolling... nothing's going to stop this freight train."





Skateboards are a new addition to the shop.

For nearly five decades, the Van Halteren family has proven that music isn't just something you play, it's something you live. And as long as the doors are open, Lindsay can count on Van Halteren's Music Centre to be the place where the town's soundtrack continues to grow.



Mary Hackett has been part of the Lindsay Downtown BIA team for over a year as the Marketing Coordinator. With a background in graphic design, she helps promote the businesses of downtown Lindsay through creative and engaging marketing initiatives. Mary focuses on connecting the community with the vibrant spirit of the downtown core, making sure local businesses are seen and celebrated.

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The Lindsay & District Chamber of Commerce represents 275+ local businesses and associations across Lindsay and neighbouring communities. The Chamber connects members through advocacy, community development, and informative resources to strengthen the local economy. Our vision is to be the top business and community development resource in the region, working to enhance life across the City of Kawartha Lakes.

Looking to grow your business and connect locally?

Visit us at 180 Kent Street West,
give us a call at 705-324-2393
email: info@lindsaychamber.com
Office hours are Mon-Fri, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM



RESOURCES

Everyone occasionally needs professional help, and it's convenient to find local experts like lawyers, accountants, insurance agents, and real estate professionals. They provide progressive assistance with a small-town warmth and care.

*Coldwell Banker - R.M.R. Real Estate
Photo by Katelyn Rose Media*

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ESTATE PLANNING IN ONTARIO: WHY A WILL ISN'T ENOUGH

BY RYAN O'NEILL, WARDS LAWYERS PC



What do Jimi Hendrix, Pablo Picasso, Prince, Howard Hughes, and Michael Jackson all have in common? They all died without a valid Will. And they're not alone. An Angus Reid poll found that 51% of Canadians don't have a Will at all, while 35% say theirs is outdated. Without proper estate planning, your legacy can quickly become one of confusion, conflict, and unnecessary cost.



Beyond the Will: A Comprehensive Estate Plan

While having a valid Will is essential, complete estate planning goes further. It includes Powers of Attorney and may involve trusts, property agreements, and tax strategies to ensure your wishes are respected and your loved ones protected.

Here's what you can expect in the estate planning process:

1. Initial Meeting – Your lawyer will review your goals and needs. Having documents such as your current Will, investment summaries, and agreements (e.g., marriage or cohabitation contracts) can make this step more efficient.
2. Involving Other Professionals – Your lawyer may work with your accountant, financial planner, or insurance advisor to create a plan that addresses taxes, investments, and insurance.
3. Drafting – Your lawyer will draft your Will and Powers of Attorney, and, if necessary, other documents like trusts or property agreements.
4. Review and Signing – Drafts are reviewed with you to confirm your wishes. Your lawyer then finalizes the plan and oversees signing.
5. Implementation – Estate planning doesn't stop at signing. This may include transferring assets to trusts, updating beneficiary designations, or arranging insurance.
6. Regular Review – Life changes - marriage, divorce, children, or financial shifts - mean your estate plan should be updated periodically.
7. Communication – Sharing your plan with your family, trustees, or guardians can help reduce conflict and ensure clarity.

Estate planning isn't a one-time task but an ongoing process. Done properly, it provides peace of mind, protects your family, and ensures your wishes are carried out. With the right guidance, the process need not be complicated - for many it requires just a few meetings with a lawyer.

If you would like guidance in creating a new estate plan or reviewing and updating your existing plan, our team at WARDS LAWYERS PC is here to help. Contact us today at estates@wardlegal.ca to schedule a consultation and take the next step toward securing your legacy.

The Risks of Dying Without a Will

If you pass away without a Will, you lose control over who manages your estate and how it is divided. The court will appoint someone to act as your Estate Trustee (Executor), and your assets will be distributed according to provincial legislation - not your wishes.

This can mean:

- Assets going to people you never intended to benefit.
- Equal distributions to distant and close relatives alike.
- Inability to name guardians for your children, with inheritances paid outright at 18.

On top of this, your bank accounts are frozen until a Trustee is appointed. Without a Will, loved ones must apply to the court, which is costly and time-consuming. As one wise observer put it: "A man or woman who dies without a Will has lawyers for his or her beneficiaries."

For most of us, this isn't the legacy we want to leave.



Ryan O'Neill was born and raised in Lindsay, Ryan returned to his hometown after graduating from the University of Western Ontario Law School in 2005. He has been practicing law at WARDS LAWYERS PC for over a decade, helping clients across a variety of areas including Estate Planning, Estate Administration, and Real Estate.

Contact: 705-324-9273 ext. 1226
ryan@wardlegal.ca

Ken Found and his father.



Atrium in 2025



Atrium in 2002



Wesley and his father Ken.



FOUR GENERATIONS ON MAIN STREET

*Decades, Not Quarters: Four generations
keeping downtown's pulse strong*

BY WESLEY FOUND, OWNER OF LINBOROUGH PROPERTY CORP.
PHOTOGRAPHS PROVIDED BY WESLEY FOUND

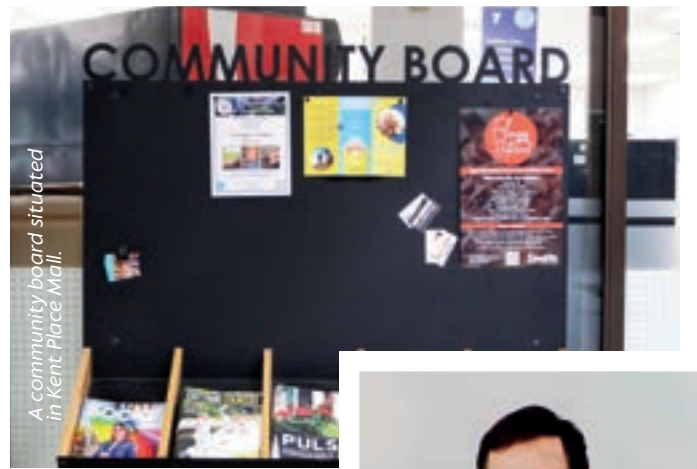
My family's downtown story starts on the block where Burns Bulk Food stands today. My great-grandfather owned the three-storey billiards hall that once occupied that site. After a fire, the building came down; during the war years, my great-grandmother and grandmother lived in an upstairs apartment there, and where my father, Ken Found, was born. Downtown isn't a backdrop for us. It's where our family worked, lived, and began.

Here's the case for generational business in a town like ours: when a family keeps showing up on the same main street, service turns into stewardship. In a farm community, you learn to plant for shade you may never sit in. The town knows the family; the family plans in decades. That continuity is how generational businesses end up helping to build community.

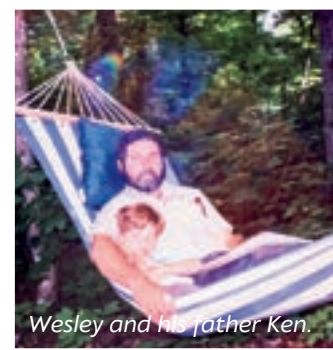
In 1956 my grandfather, Lloyd Found, opened Found Realty – the first brokerage in Victoria County – and helped launch the Lindsay Chamber of Commerce to strengthen the main-street economy. Over time, our family owned and looked after several downtown buildings. Kent Place Mall opened in 1979 with big hopes; the 1980s and '90s brought headwinds – interest rates, recessions, changing retail. We stayed in it. My grandfather served through the Chamber and as Deputy Reeve of Lindsay. My father served on Ops Township Council and local boards. Today I chair the Downtown Lindsay BIA. Different eras, same job: keep the core useful to the people who live here.

Lately, that same mindset has meant reworking spaces we already hold to serve downtown better. At Kent Place, we've rebuilt the atrium as a community hub: a flexible room for gathering – music, forums, markets – where neighbours meet and ideas circulate; a small pop-up kiosk so local makers and new entrepreneurs can test the waters; and a museum-style display that rotates local history and art so visitors encounter the stories that belong to this place.

The next chapter is at 19 Cambridge, where the Kawartha Art Gallery will anchor culture in the core. The restoration keeps the building's character and makes it accessible so more people can take part. It's a simple premise: if you want a lively downtown, put useful, public-facing institutions on main street and make them easy to use.



Ken Found



Wesley and his father Ken.



The new atrium design



Beautiful flowers outside the newly renovated Kent Place Mall in Lindsay.

Our arc hasn't been linear. There were years when survival, not growth, was the win. But the pattern holds: we kept showing up; the town kept us in business. That is how trust is earned here.

Wealth in a town like ours is measured in usefulness and the steady compounding of small, good decisions. Our job is to keep a high standard for our service and to put time into the civic work that makes the core function. Here, being generational means planting beyond your horizon and helping keep downtown Lindsay's pulse strong for the next generation.



Wes Found is a dedicated champion of Downtown Lindsay, serving as Chair of the Lindsay Downtown BIA. He is committed to supporting local businesses, promoting community events, and helping the downtown area thrive as a vibrant hub for shopping, dining, and culture. As the owner of Linborough Property Corp., Wes provides professional and retail spaces in Lindsay and surrounding areas, helping businesses find the right space to succeed.



AESTHETICS

Lindsay may be a smaller town, but our salons and stylists know how to keep you looking your best—just as well (if not better!) than the big city. Book your appointment, then make a day of it: enjoy a bite at one of our amazing eateries and browse downtown shops for the perfect outfit to complement your fresh new look.

*The Streets Tattoo & Piercing
Photo by Brandon Storms*



WELLNESS

Winter can take a toll on your energy and mood, making wellness more important than ever. Staying active, boosting immunity, and finding time to recharge helps you stay balanced all season long.

Lindsay Downtown has you covered, with fitness, self-care, healthy eats, and relaxing escapes to keep wellness a priority this winter.

*Inner Light Metaphysical
Photo by Katelyn Rose Media*

EMBRACE THE CHILL: YOUR FRIENDLY GUIDE TO WINTER SKINCARE AND WELLNESS

BY ALISON DOWN
MEDICAL AESTHETICIAN | LASER TECHNICIAN,
MUSE LASER CLINIC
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KATELYN ROSE MEDIA

As the temperatures drop and the snowflakes start to fall, it's essential to give your skin a little extra TLC to keep it happy and healthy all winter long. With the cold air outside and the dry heat indoors, winter can be tough on our delicate skin. Here are our top winter survival tips to help you keep your skin healthy and maintain that radiant glow, even in the midst of frost and flurries!

1. Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate!

Winter air tends to be drier, which can lead to flakiness and dryness. Make sure to switch to a richer moisturizer that provides long-lasting hydration. Look for ingredients like hyaluronic acid, glycerin, or ceramides to lock in moisture and keep your skin plump and soft.

2. Gentle Cleansing is Key

Choose a hydrating, creamy cleanser that won't strip your skin of its natural oils, you want to make sure your cleanser puts moisture into the skin, rather than taking it out. Avoid hot water, which can further dry out your skin; lukewarm water is your best friend during winter.

3. Exfoliate Wisely

For a winter of radiant, irritation-free skin, skip the harsh exfoliants, instead choose gentler exfoliants like lactic acid and enzymatic treatments, the soothing sidekicks that will help your skin achieve its glow.

4. Healing Power of Red Light Therapy

Red light therapy, with its visible red light, helps to improve skin health and reduce inflammation, while infrared light goes a bit deeper promoting circulation, muscle recovery, arthritis, healing and more.



5. Laser Therapy for Skin Health

Laser skincare is an extraordinary blend of science and artistry, harnessing the power of focused light to target skin concerns with precision. Whether you're fighting the signs of aging, battling acne scars, or seeking to brighten your complexion, laser treatments serve as your ally in this journey

6. Smooth and Silky by Summer

Starting your laser hair removal journey in the winter means you'll be smooth and ready to go when summer rolls around- no last minute shaving before beach day.

7. Time for a Fresh Start

Tattoos can be meaningful, but sometimes our tastes, life circumstances or experiences change. With fewer skin baring moments in the winter you can focus on the tattoo removal process without the worry of showing off your ink while it fades.

8. Unlocking Your Hair's Potential

As you embrace the wintery vibes it's the perfect time to care for your hair which can naturally slow. Hair Regeneration can stimulate the scalp and increase your hair growth cycle and stimulate the scalp promoting healthy locks.

9. Discover the Magic of Green Peel Treatments

With fewer outdoor activities, you can focus on giving your

skin the care it needs without worrying about sun damage or pigmentation. A peel can help address texture by exfoliating the top layers of the skin, promoting cell turnover.

10. Let's keep that skin protected all year round!

Even though the sun might not feel as strong, UV rays can still be quite damaging, especially with the reflection of the snow. It's important to keep using sunscreen even in the colder months.

Embracing a winter skincare and wellness routine can make all the difference in how you feel during the colder months! So, take time to pamper yourself and listen to your body so you are able to adapt to its needs as the temperatures drop. With these simple tips, you'll not only

keep your skin glowing but also nurture your overall well-being, making winter a season of warmth, comfort, and joy. Happy winter self-care from Muse Laser + Wellness Clinic!



Alison Down is a Laser Tech, Medical Aesthetician and Acne Specialist at Muse Laser & Wellness Clinic. She got into the industry in 2008. To learn more about her wonderful services please visit: www.muselaserclinic.ca



Muse Laser & Wellness Clinic

We blend advanced laser treatments with holistic wellness solutions to help you look and feel your best.



Muse Laser + Wellness Clinic in Lindsay offers advanced treatments including laser hair removal, skin rejuvenation, tightening, PRP therapies, and cosmetic injectables. Their team provides personalized, non-surgical solutions to help you look and feel your best, starting with a complimentary consultation.

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www.muselaserclinic.ca | hello@muselaserclinic.ca

FITNESS

Find Your Strength in Downtown Lindsay! Whether you're taking your first steps toward a healthier lifestyle or you're a seasoned fitness enthusiast, Downtown Lindsay has everything you need to move, sweat, and feel your best. From boutique gyms and personal trainers to yoga studios and wellness services, our downtown is home to inspiring spaces and passionate professionals ready to support your fitness journey.

*The Market Gym
Photo by Katelyn Rose Media*



Photo by Mary Hackett

MOVE YOUR BODY FREE YOUR MIND

BY KRISTIN QUIBELL, *OWNER OF THE MARKET GYM*
PHOTOGRAPHS PROVIDED BY KRISTIN QUIBELL

These days, stress feels like it's everywhere. Between work, family responsibilities, and the constant buzz of notifications, many of us are left feeling stretched thin. The good news? One of the most effective tools for managing stress is right at our fingertips: exercise.

Most people think of fitness as a way to build strength, lose weight, or improve endurance. While those benefits are true, there's an equally important reason to stay active—your mental health. Physical activity is a natural stress reliever. When we move our bodies, we release endorphins, the “feel good” chemicals that help lift mood and reduce feelings of anxiety. Even short bursts of movement—a brisk walk, a quick stretch break, or a set of bodyweight exercises—can make a noticeable difference in how we feel.

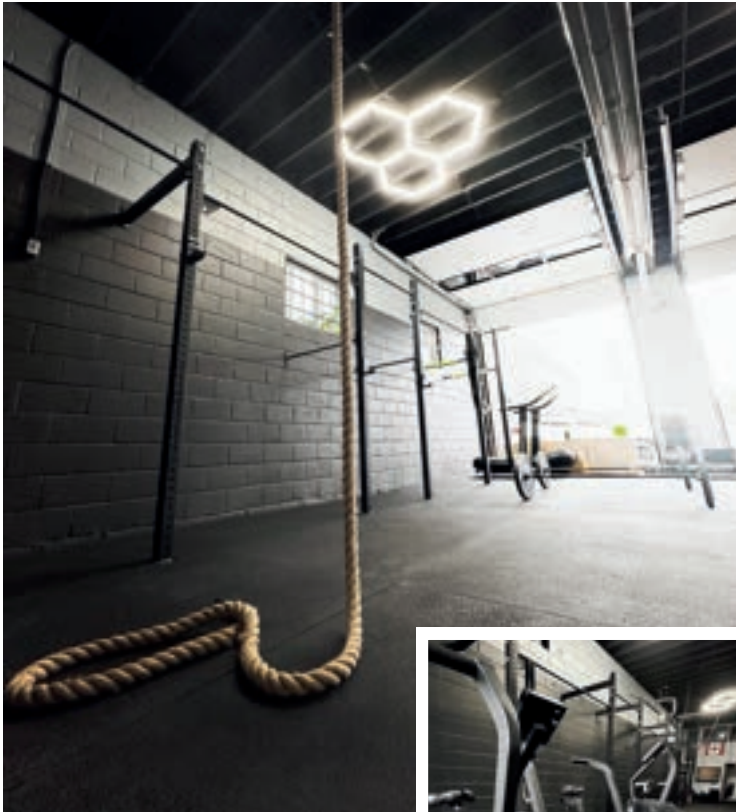


Photo by Katelyn Rose Media

The best part? Stress relief through exercise doesn't require hours in the gym. Consistency matters more than intensity. A daily walk, a few strength sessions a week, or a group fitness class can all be enough to notice a difference. The key is finding movement you enjoy so it becomes something you look forward to, rather than another item on your to-do list.

At The Market Gym, we believe fitness is about more than physical performance—it's about building stronger bodies, calmer minds, and connected communities. That's why we're especially proud to host our second 24 Hours of Heroes this November. This event brings people together for a full day of workouts, honoring the service and sacrifice of veterans and first responders, while raising funds for Wounded Warriors Canada. It's a chance to move with purpose: for our health, for each other, and for a cause greater than ourselves.

Beyond the chemistry, exercise also gives us the gift of perspective. When we're focused on breathing through a workout, learning a new skill, or pushing through that last rep, our minds are pulled away from daily worries. Movement creates space—a mental reset that can make challenges feel more manageable once we return to them.

Another often-overlooked benefit is community. Working out alongside others creates a powerful sense of connection. Whether it's cheering each other on in a class, high-fiving after a tough workout, or simply showing up together, these shared moments remind us that we're not alone. That feeling of belonging is just as important for our mental well-being as the physical benefits of exercise.

Science backs this up. Studies consistently show that people who exercise regularly report lower levels of stress, better sleep, and improved overall mood. Exercise has even been shown to help with resilience—the ability to handle life's challenges and bounce back from setbacks.

So the next time stress starts to pile up, remember this: your body already holds one of the most powerful tools to help your mind. Lace up your shoes, step into the gym, or join a community workout. You'll walk away not just stronger, but lighter in spirit, too.

Save the date: 24 Hours of Heroes, November 8-9. Join us in moving for our health, our community, and our heroes.

<https://www.24hoursofheroes.com/>

Kristin Quibell is the owner of The Market Gym, which opened on July 2, 2024. Specializing in Group Functional Fitness, HYROX, and Personal Training,



Kristin turned her passion for fitness into entrepreneurship after years of working for others. With a strong background in gymnastics and CrossFit, she created a welcoming space where people of all fitness levels can come together, get stronger, and feel supported in their fitness journey. www.marketgym.ca

EAT

From morning coffee runs to late-night dinners, Lindsay Downtown has something to satisfy every craving. Cozy cafés, casual bites, sweet indulgences, international flavours, and local favourites all come together in the heart of downtown. Whatever you're in the mood for, you'll find it here—so bring your appetite!



*Thai By Joe | Chicken Pad Thai
and Lemongrass Soup
Photo by Mary Hackett*



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Starting a business?

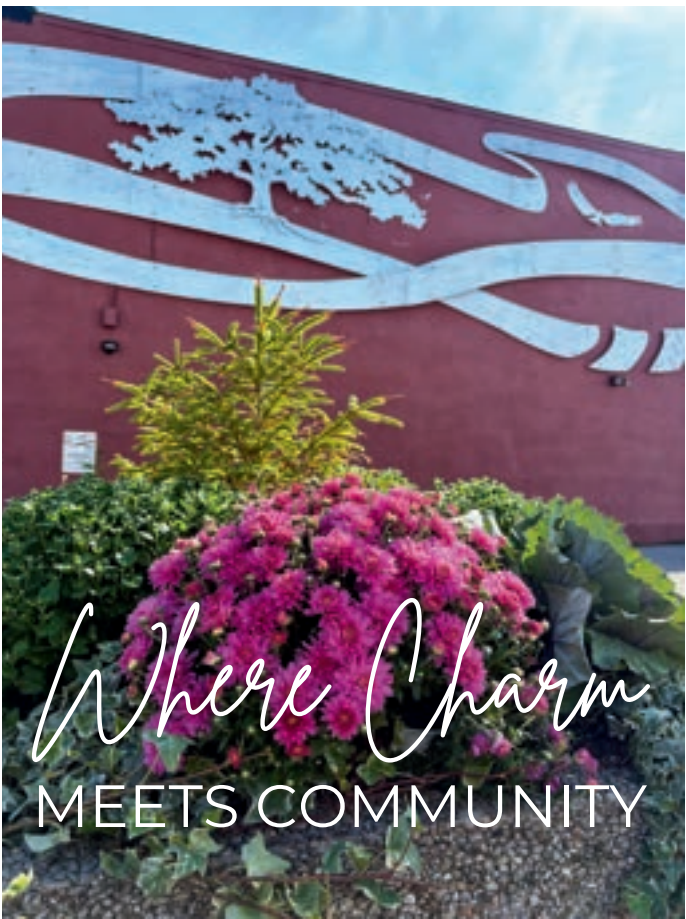
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www.kawarthalakes.ca/en/business-growth/small-business-centre.aspx



Where Charm
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We Love Our

Downtowns

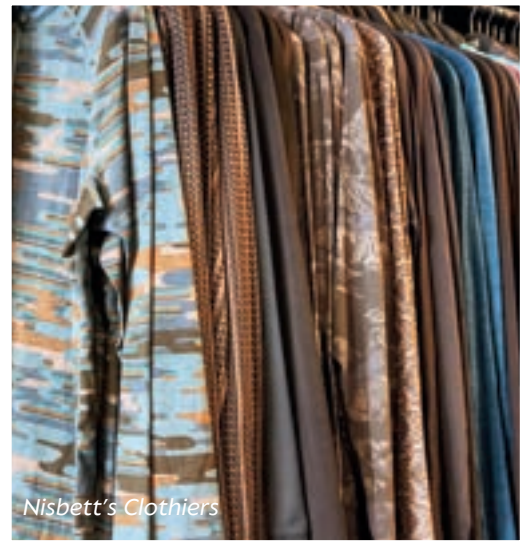




Brittany N' Bros



Homethreads Boutique



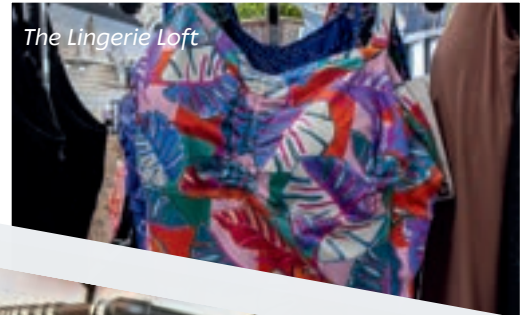
Nisbett's Clothiers



Bonita Clothing Co



Sweet Annies



The Lingerie Loft



Hollowbrooks

FASHION

Lindsay isn't New York City, and it isn't Milan - but it is the location of some of the best fashion boutiques in Ontario. Why shop online when you can make the short trip downtown where you can see and feel all the latest fashions? Try on something unexpected today.



TRAVEL IN STYLE: YOUR GUIDE TO GETAWAYS & DOWNTOWN FINDS

*Down to Earth
Photo by Katelyn Rose Media*

BY SANDRA PATRICK, OWNER OF DOWN TO EARTH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KATELYN ROSE MEDIA

Lindsay and the City of Kawartha Lakes is a beautiful place to be all year long; but I can't deny that in a couple months when the days get short and I've scraped the ice off my windshield for the 11th day in a row, my thoughts will wander to warm sunny vistas and ocean breezes.

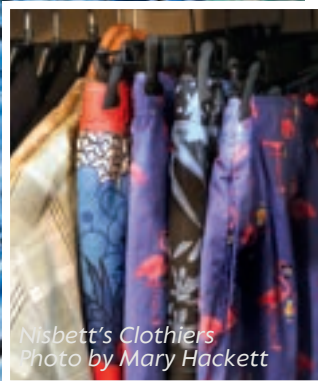
Travel is more popular than ever and each of us has a favourite version of travel. Is it a carefree cruise to exotic destinations with warm sun by the pool in the day and an unbelievable view of the stars at night? Perhaps you yearn for a family vacation where your kids can play on the beach while you relax with your toes in the sand. Maybe it's a city-break to an exciting urban centre with nightlife, entertainment and amazing dining. For some of us, its an adventure in a foreign land where our step-count breaks some personal records and the challenge is to be as immersed as possible in a new culture.



*Cathy Allan Ladieswear
Photo by Katelyn Rose Media*



The Lingerie Loft
Photo by Katelyn Rose Media



Nisbett's Clothiers
Photo by Mary Hackett

Cruising is more popular than ever and the options are incredible. Having only been on one cruise before in my life, I checked in with the knowledgeable people at Trent Travel and Wings & Waves, both in Downtown Lindsay, for some information on the variety of cruises available. There really is a cruise for almost every budget and every destination. One huge benefit of a cruise is a chance to see multiple destinations while your hotel room and baggage remains in one place. This trip allows you to be a little more extravagant in your packing - maybe you take the bigger suitcase and that extra pair of shoes.

Perhaps you include a couple of bathing suits for all that beach and pool time. Lingerie Loft in Downtown Lindsay always has a huge selection of swimwear and cover-ups. Cruise wear is a style unto itself and is often identifiable by gorgeous colours and prints on light breezy fabrics that look like a vacation in an outfit! Gorgeous sandals to show off the pre-cruise pedicure and stylish hats that protect you from the sun. (A little birdie at Cathy Allan Ladieswear told me that new cruise wear arrives at their shop in January.) If you don't see what you're looking for in any of the shops downtown, don't hesitate to ask - shoe stores like Brittany & Bros keep sandals close at hand in the winter and will be happy to find them for you; and most clothing shops have a sale area or room that just might have the perfect item from a previous season.

Headed on a more adventurous holiday? According to the experts at Down to Earth, popular destinations for hiking and biking holidays are Ireland, Portugal, Japan - and for the first time on the list - Albania. These holidays often require a lot of movement and flexibility in your luggage which will be carried, kicked and thrown onto various forms of transit; and unlike a pure sun destination - the weather can fluctuate wildly and the savvy traveller will learn how to pack layers for all possibilities in a small carry-on bag - don't forget the rainwear! Travelling with only a carry-on has a few extra benefits, like getting out of the airport in record time after arriving at your destination! The compromise? All your travel selfies will look very similar! {winky face?}

TOP 5 THINGS you can find Downtown Lindsay that you need on that dream vacation.



- 1 - Sunscreen and travel size products
- 2 - UPF protectant sun-safe clothing
- 3 - Light, breathable and stylish outfits
- 4 - Waterproof jacket to keep you dry on the walk - you don't want to miss anything because of a little rain!
- 5 - The right bag



Sandra Patrick is co-owner of Down to Earth, a bike and outdoors shop on Kent St. where she and her partner Ian Reid have been providing bikes and bike repair in Lindsay for over 25 years. As well as keeping you on two wheels, she is also thrilled to help you prepare for your next travel adventure with advice and quality apparel.

*For more info call 705-328-0230
www.downtoearthlindsay.com*

Shop Local in LINDSAY DOWNTOWN!

Downtown Lindsay is home to over 100 unique local businesses.

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LINDSAY

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HOME

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Midtown Mattress & Home Furnishings
Photo by Katelyn Rose Media

HOME TRENDS & FAMILY TIES

Inside Kennedy's Appliances & Electronics, where three generations have kept pace with how we live.

BY MELISSA MCFARLAND, PHOTOGRAPHS PROVIDED BY ZACK KENNEDY



In 1932, very little of Downtown Lindsay looked the way it does now. Some identifiable landmarks have stood the test of time, many of the brick buildings can be recognized by their upper stories and windows; even though the businesses on the first floor have changed, some perhaps dozens of times in the almost 100 years since.

However, on William Street South in 1932, a gentleman by the name of Earl Kennedy opened a radio repair store, under the name 'Earl Kennedy Electric'. Unbelievably, the business still stands, with his grandson at the helm, and even though the inventory looks very different, and probably couldn't have been imagined by the original Mr. Kennedy at the time of its opening, the values and reputation of the original store remain.

Today, the sign reads Kennedy's Appliances & Electronics, the name Zack Kennedy adopted to clear up a persistent misconception. "Electric had people thinking we did wiring," he says, "so we updated the name to better reflect what we actually do." Zack, Earl's grandson, began stepping into leadership in 2013 when his father, Dale Kennedy, and uncle, Garry Kennedy, were looking towards retirement after both having been part of the business since their teens. Zack became sole owner in 2018, carrying forward a family enterprise that has watched Downtown Lindsay reinvent itself more than once.



The inventory has reinvented itself, too. What began as radio repair became a hub for televisions and home entertainment; now, roughly 90 percent of the inventory is home appliances. “The tech, and knowledge of that tech has evolved of course,” Zack notes. “But it always has, even between my grandfather’s time and my dad and uncle’s time. The basic structure of the business hasn’t changed. If it’s not broken, don’t fix it.”

“We’ll even still take personal cheques for payment from local customers we know,” he laughs. Familiar faces, remembered kitchens, and a service desk that calls you back—those are the quiet differentiators you can’t drop into an online cart.



That structure is anchored in a simple, old-fashioned idea: customer service. When asked what values haven’t changed through three generations, Zack doesn’t hesitate. “Customer service. It can be a difficult path to navigate, being able to stay competitive in pricing with box stores who don’t always have that same mentality. We think our customers recognize the reward of the level of knowledge and service we provide, getting that extra value.” It helps that Lindsay is a town where many customers are known by name.

As the world has shifted online in the past couple of decades, Kennedy’s is deliberately not an e-commerce operation. “Customers want to be educated,” Zack says. “They want to come into the store and use us to help them make the best choice, and we want those interactions too.” The website serves as a storefront window, but the buying conversation happens across a showroom floor, next to a cooktop you can actually see and a dishwasher you can open and close.

If it sounds traditional, that’s by design. The realities around that showroom are very much current-day. Appliances turn over faster now; the era of a thirty-year fridge is mostly gone, driven by features, efficiencies, and the complexity of modern designs. That shift changes how households budget and how retailers service what they sell. “Products no longer last decades,” Zack acknowledges. “It means people are replacing more often, and it means our service matters even more.”



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External forces apply pressure, too. The housing market is a major driver: when buying and selling slows, so does the cascade of appliance purchases that comes with renovations, staging, and move-ins. Tariffs add another layer of unpredictability to pricing and availability. It's a reminder that even a well-loved local business is tethered to global supply and policy.

On the trend front, Zack sees the pendulum swing but notes a steady center. Stainless steel remains the safe, enduring choice. Shiny bells and whistles come and go; people reliably return to clean lines and basic features that work. Induction cooking has moved from curiosity to real consideration, even if some shoppers hesitate over compatible cookware. And those showy exterior ice-and-water dispensers on refrigerators? Many customers are choosing simpler, internal ice makers instead, reclaiming shelf space and sidestepping another potential repair point.

What Kennedy's staff will recommend on the showroom floor is a mix of brand reputation, hands-on experience, and long-term satisfaction. While vendor relationships sometimes come with minimum display requirements, the final say belongs to Zack and his team.



"Bosch is an incredible brand—they're building a very, very high-quality product. The price tag is certainly there. But the reliability is quite high," he says. "Samsung has come a long way from their earlier years. We do a lot of Samsung. They're not overly expensive. Their parts are accessible if it does need repair, but we're finding their reliability significantly better than they were 10 years ago. Frigidaire is also a great brand we recommend a lot. At the end of the day, I don't want customers upset that Kennedy's sold them a bad product, even though that's on the manufacturer, not the dealer—but that's still a big thing for us."

That desire to stand behind the sale shows up again when the conversation turns to warranties. "Buy the extended warranty," Zack says without apology. "We hold the warranties here, we typically service them ourselves, or if we do have to outsource it, we facilitate. This has bailed so many of our customers out of some situations that would have been seriously expensive. They have help and support."



If you want to know what a retailer truly believes, ask what they use at home. With a young family, Zack doesn't hesitate: "A quality dishwasher. I just can't stand washing dishes," he laughs. And the worth-it-splurge? OLED. "OLED TVs are night and day versus everything else."

It's hard not to marvel at how much—and how little—has changed behind the Kennedy nameplate. The showroom might be lined with stainless steel and innovative features instead of vacuum tubes and rabbit ears, but the promise is the same: know your customer, stand behind what you sell, and make the buying process feel human. Zack is the third generation of the Kennedy family to shepherd the business through a shifting marketplace, and he's enthusiastic about the next chapter. Behind the scenes, there are expansion plans taking shape—suggesting that with almost 100 years of retail and service experience in our community, the future may look and operate a little differently than it has since 1932. What won't change is the center of gravity: a local, family-led business that treats service as its signature.



For more than a decade, Melissa McFarland has served as the Executive Director of the Lindsay Downtown BIA, bringing passion, energy, and vision to the heart of the community. Dedicated to supporting local businesses and fostering connections, she plays a key role in driving growth and vibrancy throughout downtown Lindsay. Melissa values the variety her role offers and appreciates the collaboration of a strong board of directors, which makes the work especially rewarding. Her leadership and commitment continue to shape the future of Lindsay's thriving downtown.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

STEVE PODOLSKY: ON THE GROUND & BEHIND THE SCENES

How a modern approach to a century-old family business helps our downtown thrive.

BY MELISSA MCFARLAND, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE LINDSAY DOWNTOWN BIA

Downtown Lindsay likes to tell its story block by block. Family histories ripple through storefronts that have seen fashions rise and fall, and businesses reinvent themselves for new eras. If you've walked Kent Street, chances are you've crossed paths with one of those through-lines: the Albert family, and today, the steady, unassuming presence of Steve Podolsky.

The Albert roots here go back nearly a century. Steve's grandparents, Phil and Faye, arrived in the 1930s and opened The Artistic, a ladieswear shop that quickly became part of downtown's daily rhythm. You can still stand on the spot—today it's home to Bistro 93—and imagine the window displays his grandmother loved to curate. While she poured herself into the store, Steve's grandfather shifted toward property ownership, gradually acquiring buildings across the downtown core. Their three children, including Steve's mother, Rosalind, were born in Lindsay, and lived in their house on Bond Street. In the 1950s, seeking a stronger Jewish community than Lindsay could offer at the time, the family moved to Toronto's Forest Hill. Yet the ties to Lindsay never loosened. Phil and Faye commuted back to manage the store and their properties; The Artistic thrived into the 1970s, and the downtown property portfolio remained under Phil's strong hand through the early 1990s.

As with many long tenures in property, memories are mixed. Some who recall the earlier years also remember a landlord reputation that wasn't universally warm. It's part of the record, but it isn't the story's ending—because the next chapter looks and feels very different. When the workload of day-to-day management began to outpace an aging patriarch in the early 1990s, the family looked to the next generation for a reset.

In 1994, with Phil, now in his 90s, and one grandson, helping, but already stretched by a full-time career, Steve—then just a couple years out of university and living in the Buffalo area where he was born and raised—got the call. He moved to Toronto, stepped into the family business, and began commuting to Lindsay to work alongside his grandfather and cousin on Kent Street.



It was not an easy moment to take the reins. Downtown was struggling, vacancies were common, and legal disputes with extended family over ownership complicated the administrative picture. But it was also a moment ripe for new energy, and Steve brought exactly that.

Over time, Steve moved into a lead role at A&L Investments. He remains business partners with his cousin, but he is unmistakably the man on the ground. All of the properties in his grandfather's original portfolio remain under his care, and he has steadily added to them—today managing 15 properties on Kent Street alone. Within those buildings are 28 commercial tenants who know him by his friendly face, hand him rent cheques in person, and call his cell when a problem can't wait. The portfolio is diverse, spanning storefronts and, in one notable case, the former York Tavern, now home to 5 commercial tenants along with 23 residential units. A&L has also acquired a handful of commercial properties in other Ontario communities, but none hold Steve's heart the way his Lindsay buildings do—partly because so much of his work lives within a four-block radius, and partly because of the family history under his feet. "It's also the people," he says. "Even though I don't live here, the people are what makes me want to spend so much time here. I've made so many great friendships over my time here."

“

I was the owner of The Grand in Downtown Lindsay from 2010 until the building sold in 2021. During much of that time, I had the privilege of serving as Chair of the Downtown BIA and working alongside Steve on the Board and countless committees. What started as a great working relationship has become a true friendship over the years. Now, from my seat on City Council, I see even more clearly how rare and valuable it is to have a property owner like Steve—someone who cares passionately about his buildings and contributes to the beauty of our downtown every single day. He doesn't like the spotlight, but the whole community should know how much he has given, and continues to give to make our downtown the beautiful and economically vibrant place that it is.

- City of Kawartha Lakes Deputy Mayor Charlie McDonald

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Where earlier decades were defined by acquisition, Steve's era has been marked by presence. Despite living in Toronto, he spends at least two days each week in Lindsay—walking properties, coordinating repairs and meeting with tenants. The result is visible in practical ways: a well-timed fix before it becomes a problem, a face-to-face conversation instead of an email chain, a lease that fits the business instead of the other way around. It's why prospective tenants often seek him out rather than the other way around.

His commitment extends beyond his own doorways. Early on, Steve was invited to join the Downtown Enchantment Committee, the volunteer group that focused on downtown beautification at a time when it operated separately from the Downtown BIA. When the DEC merged with the BIA in the 2000s, he didn't step back—he stepped up. Today he serves as the BIA's Vice-Chair, chairs the Beautification Committee, and sits on the Parking & Advocacy Committee. In meeting after meeting, when a project needs a lead or a task needs a finisher, the work has a way of finding him. He doesn't make a show of it. He simply shows up, and is most comfortable without displays of gratitude or credit.

The Century Theatre adds a chapter of its own. In 2016, when the movie theatre's owner passed away unexpectedly without family to take over, Steve, as landlord, stepped in to assume the business. He kept the management team in place and rolled up his own sleeves: acquiring film rights, stocking concessions, planning renovations, and managing maintenance.

Ask around and a consistent portrait emerges: Steve is down-to-earth, approachable and genuine. He answers the phone. He returns emails. He tries to say yes. In a field where relationships can be transactional, he builds them to last. That's part of why vacancies are now less a problem and more a puzzle—one he solves by matching the right business to the right space, not by filling square footage at any cost.

For Steve, the commitment to the family legacy is rooted not just in work but in belonging. Born in Buffalo and a permanent resident since he moved to Ontario in 1994, he chose to formalize the connection he has lived for decades, becoming a Canadian citizen in 2022.

In the years ahead, Lindsay's core will continue evolving—storefronts refreshed, spaces reimaged, new businesses setting down roots. If recent history is any guide, Steve will be there, sleeves rolled up, helping to shape what comes next.



Q & A

WITH STEVE PODOLSKY

Pulse: Best sandwich?

SP: Italian sub with all the fixings

P: Celebrity Autograph You'd Most Like to Have

SP: Josh Allen – as a dedicated and passionate Buffalo Bills fan.

P: Favourite smell?

SP: Popcorn at the Century

P: Exercise: worth it?

SP: Yes – always staying active playing lots of hockey & pickleball

P: Favourite Movie?

SP: A more difficult answer than you'd think from someone who owns a movie theatre – but The Godfather

P: Apples or oranges?

SP: Oranges

P: One song for the rest of your life?

SP: Summer Wind - Frank Sinatra

P: One thing you should really throw out?

SP: All the York Tavern memorabilia still sitting in the basement below Down to Earth.

P: Most used app on your phone?

SP: Weather – all that commuting!

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