



# The Palette

North Perth Arts and Cultural Council Newsletter



September 2011

## Our Vision:

to increase awareness,  
appreciation and support of  
arts and culture in the  
community of North Perth

## Our Mission:

North Perth Arts and Culture  
Council promotes and supports  
arts and culture opportunities by:

- creating experiences for  
the community to  
appreciate  
arts and culture
- providing educational  
opportunities to further  
assist the artist

## Our Values:

Artistic expression,  
Creativity, Individuality  
Respect, Inspiration  
Integrity, Collaboration,  
Mentoring

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## North Perth, unplugged....but still connected

### Culture Days in North Perth

**September 30<sup>th</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup>** you can explore, discover, appreciate, create, celebrate and participate in the arts and culture North Perth has to offer as part of the nation-wide Culture Days Celebration.

### At the Listowel branch of North Perth Public Library, 260 Main Street West

#### • Photo Competition Viewing:

Drop in and see the talent of local photographers of all ages. All photos will be displayed Friday from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm and Saturday from 10:30 am to 3:00 pm. Prizes will be awarded at 1:00 pm on Saturday. Presented by North Perth Library, Friends of the Library and North Perth Arts and Culture Council.

#### • Culture Days Scavenger Hunt:

Take part in the ongoing scavenger hunt over the course of the two days! Search the library for hidden pictures of local artists' works. Every completed scavenger hunt entry earns a chance to win a gift certificate to the Capital Twin Theatre. All ages are invited to participate.

### At the Listowel branch of Stratford-Perth Archives, 260 Main Street West

Saturday, 1 pm - 3 pm

Archives clerks, Sonia and Kathy, will host the Perth Branch Ontario Genealogical Society. The public is invited to learn about the unique genealogical resources at the Listowel Archives. The event will begin with a half hour presentation, followed by free time for those wishing to do research. "Beginners kits" will be provided and refreshments served. Call the Listowel Branch Archives at 519-291-1598 with questions.

### Events presented by North Perth Arts and Culture Council:

#### Choral Music Showcase

Christ Anglican Church across from Library and Archives building

Saturday, 2 pm to 4 pm

- Come and listen to music presented by school, church, community and family choirs
- At 3:30 pm interested audience members can participate join with the choir singers in learning *With A Voice of Singing*, by Tom Shaw and partake in the mass choir presentation at 4:00 pm.

### NPACC artist members, unplugged... but connected and interactive

Christ Anglican Church Hall, across from Library and Archives building

Friday, noon to 6 pm; Saturday, 10 am to 4 pm.

**Visual artists** will be displaying their art work, demonstrating their technique and talking about 'how they do it.'

**Musical artists** are invited to bring their instruments (acoustic preferred) and participate in a music jamming circle. Learn a new tune or technique - it's up to what the participants would like to do. All skill levels welcome.

For more information contact Gary Moon at 291-2583 or visit

[www.NorthPerthArts.ca](http://www.NorthPerthArts.ca), or [www.culturedays.ca](http://www.culturedays.ca)



**CELEBRATING ARTS + CULTURE  
FROM COAST TO COAST TO COAST**

## ***Linda Bester Watercolour workshop***

Filled to capacity, the common room at Perth Adult Meadows Seniors' Apartments provided the perfect creative space for NPACC's art workshop on April 30th and May 1st. Linda Bester, a well known watercolour artist, and instructor from Shallow Lake, provided sessions which offered positive critique, demonstrations and an opportunity for attendees to learn Linda's loose style, big brush and colour creation techniques.

## ***Hi Sook Barker slated for 2012***

Hi Sook endeared herself to our artists when she presented a workshop in Listowel in 2010. In response to requests for a return of Hi Sook, NPACC has her booked for May 28th and 29th next year at Perth Meadows. Her teaching style guarantees several projects will be completed by the participants during the two days.

A native of South Korea, Hi Sook is a professional watercolour painter, who paints and teaches in her home in Pickering. She is an elected member of the Canadian Society Of Painters in Watercolour. Her original artwork, depicting florals and landscapes in a free and loose style, can be found in private and corporate collections throughout the world. She has completed over 7,000 paintings in the course of her career.

Registration forms will be on our web site, [www.NorthPerthArts.ca](http://www.NorthPerthArts.ca) in the new year. Call Sue Knowlton at 519-291-4133 to reserve your place before that time.



Sally Coxon benefits from the advice of artist/instructor, Linda Bester

## ***First Annual NPACC Members' Entertainment and Art Sale***

On July 6,7,8 as part of North Perth's Summer Sidewalk Sale Days, twelve NPACC artist members gathered in the Rotary Park in front of the library. Work by visual and literary artists were available for purchase. Our musicians added to the atmosphere with their array of instrumental and vocal numbers. Participating members were able to network with one another and expressed interest in repeating the event next year.



Artists who displayed their work: Sally Coxon, Carol Mason, Brenda Kaufman, John Weber, Emily Campbell and Maddy Campbell. Missing from the photo, Craig James, Pete Daize and Gary Moon.



Fred Haight and Patrick Main provided musical entertainment.



## ***NPACC's 2011 Concert Series:***

### **New Cumberland and John Allen**



John Allen was a crowd pleaser

Over 70 folks gathered in the Knox Presbyterian Church Hall on June 15 for the second in our three-part annual concert series. New Cumberland, a band from the London area, presented a lively program of bluegrass music. The audience was well entertained by the bands' trademark vocal harmonies and tight instrumental accompaniment. Special guest was, John Allen, a recipient of six Juno awards, three-times Fiddle Player of the Year as named by the Canadian Country Music Association, and a member of the Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame with his group, *Prairie Oyster*.



Tom Rutledge, string bass; Blair Heddle, vocals, mandolin, and dobro; Tom Burns, vocals and guitar; Paul Hurdle, vocals and banjo; and John Allen, guest fiddler.

### ***Upcoming Concert:***

### ***LDSS Chamber Choir and Renaissance Singers***



On November 16, The Renaissance Singers, from the K-W area, under the direction of Gord Burnett, will present *A Celtic Legacy*, featuring songs from Ireland, Scotland and Canadian Maritime Provinces. They have a lively program planned, including a sing along. To date, The Renaissance Singers have conducted four international tours.

Opening the concert with choral selections in the Celtic vein will be the Listowel District Secondary School Chamber Choir, along with the LDSS Triple Trio, both directed by Ruth Claessens.

This is the final concert in this year's series which has been exploring and celebrating the rich heritage of our musical roots in North Perth.

The concert will be held in Knox Presbyterian Hall, in Listowel, at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, November 16. Tickets are available, in Listowel, at The Bookery, Chocolates on Main, and Selinger's Music. \$20 advance, \$25 at the door.



Amy Gangl, Recreation Programs Co-ordinator for North Perth, needs some input. She's looking for ideas for uses or programs for our bandshell on Wallace Avenue, north of Inkerman Street. If you have some thoughts, e-mail her at [AGangl@northperth.ca](mailto:AGangl@northperth.ca) or phone 519-292-2056.



### ***North Perth Arts and Culture Council Membership***

Artists, and members of the public interested in arts and culture in our community, are welcome to register as members of NPACC on our website

[www.NorthPerthArts.ca](http://www.NorthPerthArts.ca)

Membership is free and ensures you receive information by receiving this newsletter, as well as monthly coming events, by email.

*Members are entitled to submit information about arts and cultural events for the website, our e-mails to our members, and our newsletter in accordance with NPACC guidelines listed on our website.*

To submit for newsletter or website send info to: [info@NorthPerthArts.ca](mailto:info@NorthPerthArts.ca)

# Artist Spotlight

By Wendy vanLeeuwen



Photo from Wilfrid Laurier Alumni Magazine

Stefanie and Justin Webster are well known to the North Perth community as the owners of Theatre 311 on Main Street in Listowel. Stefanie is a local girl who grew up just outside of Listowel. Justin grew up in the small town of Florence, near Chatham. The two met while in the theatre program at Wilfrid Laurier University.

The idea of the theatre started during a conversation between the two when they were living and working in Toronto. Both had studied theatre at the graduate level and were working in jobs that allowed them to pay the bills during the day but were not in the theatre field. The day jobs, however, did allow them to do small acting or directing projects at night. In brainstorming how to make a successful career out of a theatre degree on their own terms, the idea of opening their own theatre came about. While both enjoyed the fast-paced lifestyle in Toronto, deep down their hearts were in small town Southwestern Ontario. They explored spaces in both Listowel and Florence and the surrounding areas before deciding on the perfect space in Listowel - the former Baptist Church.

There were many challenges when starting the theatre. It took a lot of research and business planning before a bank would look seriously at funding the idea. The Baptist Church was an ideal set up, but some members were a little uneasy with the thought of their sacred building becoming something other than a place of worship. The town of Listowel was on board from the beginning, but there were interior structural issues, parking issues and zoning issues that kept the couple running around and jumping through hoops, while at the same time trying to transform the inside from church to theatre and choosing and rehearsing the plays.

Justin and Stefanie's current challenges are the continuing struggle of balancing the theatre with full time careers in teaching and raising their two young daughters. They celebrated 10 years of operating the Theatre on June 13, 2011. In 2007, Theatre 311 received the Outstanding Business Under 20 Employees Award from the Chamber of Commerce. They were very pleased and honoured to receive this unexpected recognition.

They draw their inspiration from all kinds of theatre. "We've come to realize that even though bells and whistles and special effects add lots of sparkle and dazzle to productions, what we think really good theatre comes down to is good material and acting that can hold you throughout," says Stefanie. "Some of the best productions we've seen have been two or three actors on a bare stage. We like all kinds of plays, but we tend to look for small cast shows due to the size of our space. Also, we tend to put on productions that are excellent material, but perhaps a bit bold or risky for a small community. Part of these choices are due to the fact that we truly believe in the writing, but also because we want to be a little different from the material you will find at the theatres that surround us."

They bring to their productions a range of experiences. Before the theatre, Stefanie acted, directed and stage managed various smaller theatre productions in Waterloo, Toronto, and Guelph. Justin acted and stage managed in New York (where he studied theatre) and Toronto. Since the theatre has been opened, both have acted, directed, written, stage managed, operated lights and sound, bar tended and collected ticket money for the 40 + productions.

Justin and Stefanie also have a passion for supporting the wider artistic community in North Perth. The theatre has the works of local visual artists permanently on display in the licensed lounge and in the lower level of the building. North Perth artists like Gary Moon and Mark Robinson come in and change up the art every few months so that a variety of artists can be displayed. They are also ardent supporters of student art and student training. Many high school students have worked with them in the capacity of Front of House, operating the technical equipment, co-directing and acting. They feel it is a great way to give them some experience outside of a school environment. They have also mentored a number of amateur actors. They've had people on their stage with lots of experience and some come up for the very first time. It's a great way to explore new talent and mix it with more seasoned artists. It also is a nice way to bring out the members of the community - sometimes, if they know someone who is in a production, they will bring more people out to the shows.

For the past four years, actors that have been in Theatre 311's company have run a successful drama camp for young people. Stefanie and Justin hope this tradition continues. As far as making plans for the future, Stefanie and Justin spend their summers reading plays and selecting the shows they will produce. Their hobbies are all related to spending time at the theatre doing what they love doing, in spite of the exhaustion it can produce. In the future they would like to try to find and stage smaller caliber musical productions - in an effort to attract more local actors and audiences.

At the end of September, Theatre 311 will present its first production geared entirely towards children. 'A Bunch of Munch' is a collection of beloved Robert Munsch stories that will be read and performed by the acting company.

The Christmas show this year is a remount of a past favourite, 'Office Hours' by Canadian playwright, Norm Foster. This show is a witty comedy about life in six different offices on six different afternoons. Audiences are introduced to a plethora of quirky characters who find themselves in extreme and hilarious situations while trying to complete their 8 hours at the daily grind. This production will feature the original cast from the 2002 run. In a new venture this year, the Christmas shows can be accompanied by a catered meal for groups.

For those who would like to find out more about Theatre 311, their soon to be revamped website is found at [www.theatre311.com](http://www.theatre311.com). Calling the theatre at 519-291-2033 will also inform you of what is up and coming.



# NPACC Summer Art Experience 2011

Fifteen talented young artists attended the fourth annual Summer Art Experience held in the auditorium of Christ Anglican church during the week of August 15 to 19. Both morning and afternoon classes were offered for children aged 7-10 and 11-15 respectively.



The junior group. First row: Brooklyn Werth, Lindsey Conners, Jolene Horn, and Amy Bartja. Back row: Kathleen Skinner, Dayna Beirnes, Lucas Baggio, Seth Johnson, Halle Horn and Donna Hirtle



Brooklyn Werth, Jolene Horn, Halle Horn, and Lindsey Conners

Instructor, Donna Hirtle, and her helper Kathleen Skinner, directed the students in an artistic expression of their interpretation of The Underwater World. Students completed five projects applying techniques involved with tie-dyeing t-shirts, sculpting mobiles, cartooning and creating pictures with watercolour and pastels.



Exhibiting their creative works: Dayna Beirnes, Halle Horn, Lucas Baggio and Seth Johnson.



The senior group. Front row: Jonah Mann, Blair Immink, Ashley Ritter and Jessie Seili. Back row: Donna Hirtle, Morgan Cassidy and Morgan Sheppard, Sami and program assistant Kathleen Skinner.

Thanks to BftArtsVest and our corporate Emerging Arts Supporters for their commitment to ensuring that arts and culture remain a vibrant aspect of our community.

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# Who's Doing What Now?

Sarah Pratt, a member of the New York City Opera Orchestra, and a private violin teacher, credits serious discipline, willpower to burn, a positive attitude, and a love of music as key qualities that helped her stay the course as she pursued her dream of becoming a professional violinist. Her parents, Doug and Cathy Pratt from Listowel, helped hone that interest, providing a home filled with music, chauffeuring her to concerts in Toronto and Kitchener-Waterloo, and driving her long distances to lessons.

Sarah's talent was recognized at four and a half, when she attended a two week Summer Suzuki violin group course in Toronto. This led to several years of studying with a private teacher in the Kitchener Suzuki program. She also took piano lessons with Agnes Marie Henderson, completing her Grade 8 when she was 16. Adding an extra component, Sarah joined the Guelph Youth Orchestra, when she was 11, where she eventually worked her way up to concertmaster, the lead violin position.



*Sarah Pratt, Violin*

A successful audition for the Guelph Summer Suzuki Festival masterclass, at 13, helped add direction to Sarah's musical career. She undertook a week of intensive lessons with masterclass teacher, David Zafer, a professor from the University of Toronto, who would later become her personal teacher and close friend. At this point, she made the decision to go professional. "He was a tough teacher, but he woke me up and made me realize I could be that good. So I chose to drop ballet and horseback lessons and practise for two hours a day. By the time I was in high school, I was practising violin three to four hours a day, with half an hour on piano. Thirteen was late to start applying myself, so it was good in a way. I had a regular childhood until then. I had a good social life at school, but nights and weekends were music. I don't regret it at all. That's the sacrifice I had to make."

At 14, an extraordinary opportunity arose when Sarah won the concerto competition with the Guelph Youth Orchestra. Her prize was a solo debut in a concert performed at the Guelph Spring Festival, with the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra and the Guelph Youth Orchestra. "It was something else - a great day!"

When she was 15, Sarah switched to a teacher with the Toronto Symphony, joined the young artists program at the conservatory, and the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra, and remained there until she was 19. She worked her way up to concertmaster in a couple of years. During this time, special concerts were performed at Massey and Roy Thompson Halls. "Weekends I stayed with my grandparents in Toronto and attended Friday night masterclasses, Saturday morning whatever classes, and afternoon youth orchestra practises from 2 to 5." Winning the University of Toronto Youth Orchestra Symphony Competition earned her another memorable accomplishment - a week of playing soloist with the Toronto Symphony. "It was the best week of my life - other than when I gave birth to my son!"

Half way through Grade 11, David Zafer took her on as a full time student. "He's the one that got me in shape to be professional. He really pushed me, telling me, 'You play well, you have talent, but you have to work this hard'."

Sarah's post secondary school education began at the University of Toronto where she earned her Bachelor of Music Performance degree at the School of Music. She went on to the Yale School of Music where she got her Master of Music Performance degree and Artist Diploma. Her Doctor of Musical Arts degree was attained at Stony Brook University in New York.

Sarah has several competitive wins to her credit. She discussed her experience in 2003 when, at the age of 25, when she won the CBC Galaxy Rising Star prize at the Jeunesses Musicales International Violin Competition in Montreal. She was required to play a full recital program in the semi-final, including a 25 minute sonata by Bela Bartok, from memory. "The best of the best were in that competition. I could see what the best could do. I love being exposed to that. It's motivating, even if I don't place first."

With fifteen auditions under her belt, Sarah described the audition process as arduous, having to fly wherever the orchestra is, put herself up in a hotel, learning three hours worth of music to play a five minute audition, at the end of which she is told whether she will advance to the next round or go home. "Every note counts. 300 people are trying for one spot." She won three auditions, eventually accepting her current position with the New York City Opera Orchestra. When performing in a professional orchestra, "You have to be fast on your toes, keep up, learn the music really fast as it changes every couple of days. We don't rehearse for months like we did with the youth orchestra."

Sarah met Kevork Parsamian, at Yale, and they were married in August 2007. A cellist, Kevork teaches at the Manhattan School of Music. Their son, Ari, born a year and a half ago, has been exposed to music, particularly Mozart, since before his birth. He now loves any music but perks up for Mozart. Since Ari's birth, Sarah finds less time to practise but doesn't need to invest the hours she did in the past. Her new role suits her: "Being a Mom feels natural and I love it."

Sarah's future aspirations include starting a series of concerts in the area surrounding North Perth and get a chamber music group going in New York. The potential of becoming part of a bigger orchestra has her continuing to take auditions.

Sarah believes music has tremendous value in our society. "It's a learning tool for kids. It's the only activity that uses every part of the brain - not listening to music, but playing music. People in stressful economic times turn to arts. It relaxes them."

She feels music has given her discipline and creativity in other areas of her life, and has made her a playful, mellow person. "I like who I am and music is a huge part of who I am. It's not just what I do. It overtakes me, which is a good thing."

Sarah's advice to anyone wanting to turn their musical talent into a career: "Devote your life to it - all of your time. Do your research, find instructors that will help you achieve what you want to achieve. Be willing to fork over lots of money. Be willing to make sacrifices. You can get scholarships but you have to have the discipline, you have to love it. If you force yourself it won't happen, and you'll make yourself miserable. If it's meant to be you'll live a joyous life indeed!"