

Prime Time



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BUSINESS, ENTERTAINMENT, HEALTH AND BEAUTY FOR BOOMERS

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YOUR LEGACY

Will you?

When keeping it green is close to your heart, consider leaving an "ecogift"

BY VIVIANE KERTÉSZ

Do you own land that's ecologically sensitive and you'd like to keep it that way—even after you're no longer on this earth? The "ecogift" could well be your best option. Donating your beloved property as an ecological gift will ensure that it remains one with nature and you'd be leaving future generations with a legacy that will keep contributing to our country's rich biodiversity.

Through the Ecological Gifts Program

(EGP), administered by Environment Canada, you can donate ecologically sensitive land to environmental charities approved by the Minister of the Environment or to federal, provincial, territorial or municipal governments. The qualified recipient charities—of which there are 190 in the country, including land trusts and conservation groups—earn eligibility after meeting specific criteria, which includes an appropriate dissolution clause ensuring the ongoing

see **Will you?** on page 3



Donating land in your will leaves a precious legacy to the environment.

ARTFUL JOURNEY



Exploring the charming villages and farmland southwest of the GTA is within easy reach. Jill Yuzwa, above, turned her family's hardware store in Ayr into a gallery, engaging local artists and community enterprise.

Picture this

The village of Ayr and surrounding area offers idyllic scenery, farm-fresh food and pockets of culture

BY MAUREEN LITTLEJOHN

Venture no farther than GTA's own backyard and you'll encounter the picturesque hamlets and villages of southern Ontario. An hour's drive, 117 km west of downtown Toronto, idyllic communities such as Ayr and New Dundee offer an escape from the concrete jungle to a slower life pace, food straight from farmers' fields, and local residents happy to engage in a leisurely chat with visitors.

One such resident is Jill Yuzwa, 51, who owns AyrSpace, an arts and cultural hub in the area. Pets in tow—fluffy ragdoll cats Zoe and Frisco, along with boisterous puppy Haida, an Australian cattle dog—Yuzwa warmly greets gallery visitors wandering in

to look at the sculptures and paintings.

A landscape architect who used to live in California, Yuzwa returned to Ayr in the mid-1990s to take care of her elderly parents. When they passed away, she stayed in the family home, which is in the centre of town. It had housed her father's hardware store and had living quarters upstairs.

Having just completed a master's degree in local economic development at the University of Waterloo, Yuzwa decided to use her property to revitalize Ayr. "From my studies, I knew that arts and culture could be economic generators," says Yuzwa. "I wanted to create a reason for people to want to come downtown."

And so she opened AyrSpace two years

ago, enlisting the guidance of her mentor artists—Marguerite Larmand, 71, Robert Creighton, 61, and Brian Musson, 51—and help from Brantford resident Debbie Billard, 57, who used to run her own business in Halifax, selling arts and crafts supplies. The gallery's mandate is to engage local artists and connect them with an audience—and market. "We educate people about owning original works and we are mindful of market price points," explains Yuzwa. She pegs the price range for the original visual works offered at her gallery "from a couple or few hundred dollars to a few thousand."

People also come to AyrSpace to browse its wide range of artworks for sale, from

see **Journey** on page 2

FLEXITARIAN

Get to the root

Try veggie mains and meat on the side for better health

BY CYNTHIA DAVID

Thanks to our record-breaking warm weather this growing season, farmers' markets are piled higher than ever with fresh fruits and vegetables, and back gardens are delivering enough bounty to feed the entire neighbourhood. Home canners have been busy stirring up jams and pickles all summer, but there's still time to freeze those corn niblets, tomatoes, peppers and other vegetables for the winter. Or you could build a root cellar with help from *The Complete Root Cellar Book: Building Plans, Uses and 100 Recipes* (Robert Rose, 2010), co-written by home-renovation expert Steve Maxwell and cookbook author Jennifer MacKenzie.

For years, scientific studies have been pointing out the benefits of eating more fruits and vegetables. "If you're eating plant-based foods, you're getting more fibre and more disease-fighting compounds, which could mean a longer and healthier life," explains Rosie Schwartz, author of *The Enlightened Eater's Whole Foods Guide: Harvest the Power of Phyto Foods* (Viking Canada, 2004). And there's no need to give up meat, she adds. "Adopting a 'flexitarian'—or part-time vegetarian approach—is a terrific way to eat."

Along with vegetables, fruits and grains, add fish, soy, eggs, nuts and dairy—from the milk in your latte to a dollop of yogurt on fresh fruit—to your diet. You won't even miss the meat!

Meat does remain an excellent protein source, however, Schwartz cautions. And we see **Flexitarian** on page 7



Being a part-time vegetarian is easy with this fall's bumper crops.

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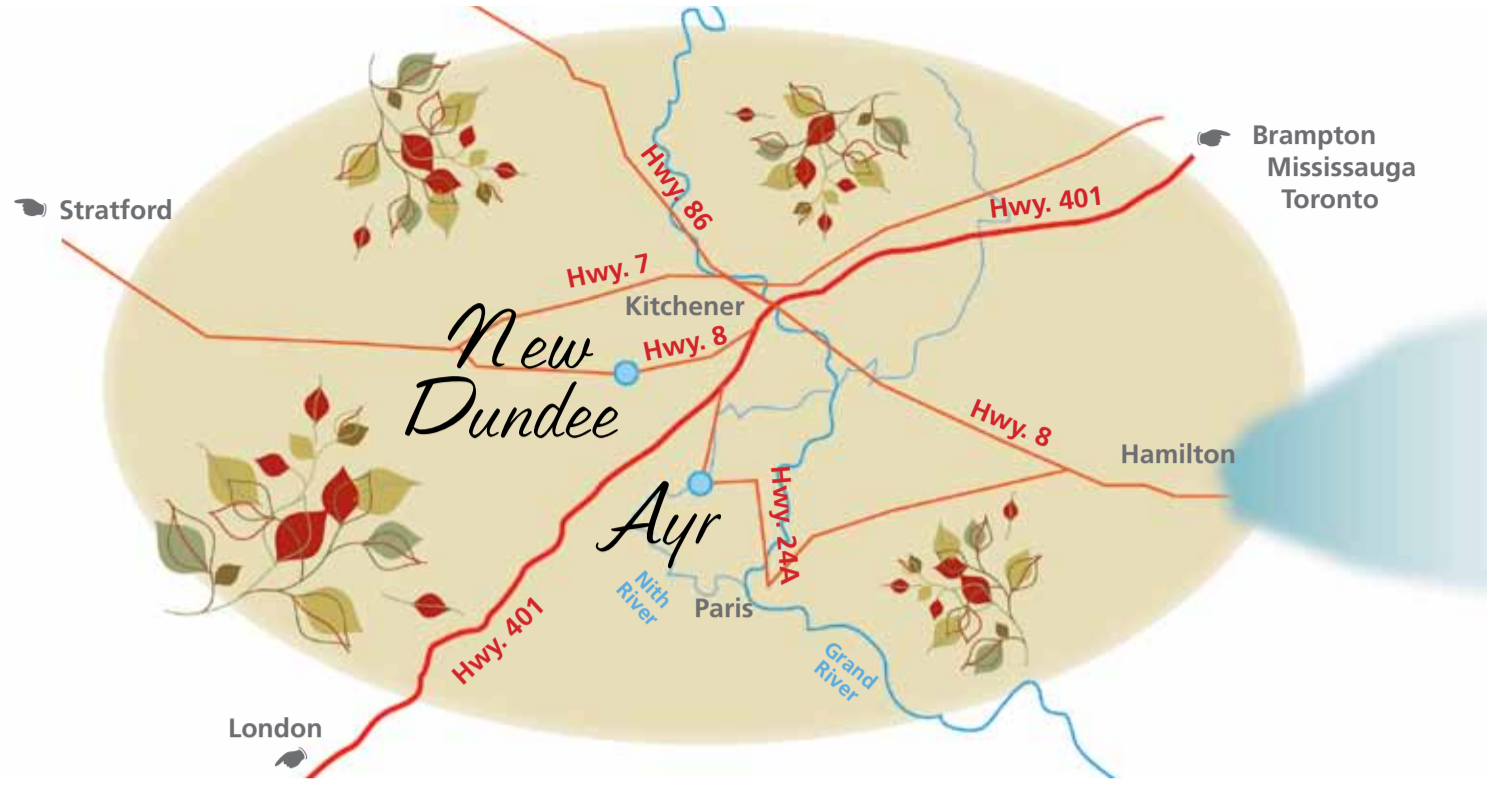
PHOTOS (FROM TOP): CBC STILL PHOTO COLLECTION/ROBERT RAGSDALE; ISTOCK; GREG PACEK; ISTOCK

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Journey

miniature watercolours and whimsical glass sculptures to jewellery and prints, as well as to attend special events that the gallery hosts, such as the popular winter musical series, and even a rural-themed exhibit. Last year, a show titled "What's in Your Barn?" drew more than 700 people viewing historic farm implements gathered from four local farmers. The highlight, recalls Yuzwa, was a wooden bicycle that was more than 100 years old.

She also happily directs visitors to farm retail outlets selling locally raised meats and fresh produce, popular insider spots for a bite to eat, and nature trails for leisurely strolls amid colourful fall foliage. After all, Jill Yuzwa is a firm believer that sharing the bounty and beauty of her town strengthens her community.



A day in the country: nature trails, restaurants, local hangouts, farm retail outlets, galleries and other hidden gems

Where to go and what to do

- **AyrSpace Gallery** showcases local Ontario artists and hosts special events. Oil and watercolour paintings by Jeanette Obbink are on exhibit to Nov. 7, and a Christmas market is scheduled for Nov. 13 to Dec. 24. 44 Stanley St., Ayr; 519-632-9030; ayspace.ca
- **Pinehurst Lake Conservation Area** offers swimming, boating, camping, hiking and biking in a beautiful, still-little-known park run by the Grand River Conservation Authority. R.R. 75; 519-621-2761; grandriver.ca
- **Nature trails** include several scenic routes crisscrossing the area, such as the Rail Trail along the Grand River between Cambridge and Paris, and the Dryden Tract, accessible via Alps Rd. Refuel mid-trail for hearty sandwiches at the local gas station in the village of Glen Morris. For maps and more information, go online to grandriver.ca.
- **Kobler's Kitchen II**, a delightful dining nook in the centre of Ayr, close to the local cenotaph landmark, serves standard breakfast and lunch fare. Don't pass up on the pie, which, at \$2.99 a slice, is reason enough to visit the village. Memorabilia and kitsch share wall space and transport you back to an earlier, more relaxed era. 83 Stanley St., Ayr; 519-632-5550
- **Faul Farms** is a family retail operation that specializes in superb organic meats. Along with their own beef, the Fauls also sell naturally-fed, drug- and hormone-free chicken, turkey, pork and lamb from their neighbours' farms. Pack a cooler to take your purchases home. First-time customers are treated to half a pound of mincemeat. 1180 Wrigley Rd., R.R. 1; 519-632-7678; faulfarms.com
- **Oakridge Acres** is a producer of Black Angus beef and carries products from more than 40 local family farms. Stock up on fresh produce, elk, venison, cheeses, baked goods, honey and frozen entrées prepared on-site. 2132 Greenfield Rd., R.R. 1; 519-632-7653; oakridgeacres.ca
- **The New Dundee Emporium** has a restaurant with an eclectic menu of sophisticated entrées and comfort food, including homemade tourtière, onion tart and smoked salmon. Dine on the terrace of the heritage building, then browse the clothing boutique and scoop up a savoury potpie or a package of butter tarts from the take-away counter. Restaurant reservations required. 169 Front St., New Dundee Rd.; 519-696-2059; thenewdundeemporium.com
- **Dundee Pottery & Stained Glass** houses a small gallery and gift shop, and sells stained-glass works and pottery by local artisans, along with glass and pottery supplies. You can also pick from a range of workshops offering lessons on glass mosaic, stained glass and pottery. 181 Front St.; 519-696-2484; dundeepottery.ca
- **Barrie Bros. Local Food Company**, now run by the family's fourth generation, shares its farming knowledge and dedication to fresh seasonal produce and superior-quality local products. Besides candy sweet corn, Mapleton's organic yogurt and ice cream, and Bright cheese, Barrie Bros. proffers its own preserved soups and jams, pickles, meat pies and fruit pies. Located east of Roseville on 1236 Kings Rd., R.R. 2; 519-621-9409; barriebrothers.com

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