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**Tourism Profile**

**Elgin County Launches New Promotional Video**



Elgin County is excited to announce the launch of its new tourism promotional video “Life is Beautiful in Elgin County.”

Elgin is a place where kilometres of stunning shoreline meet soft sandy beaches, rolling country hills, lush green forest trails, and charming towns and villages. This video is an authentic visual snap shot of what life is like in Elgin County that showcases the area’s stunning landscapes, exciting recreational activities, and friendly people.

The ultimate goal of this piece is to promote increased tourism visits to the area and to show the world what

residents have proudly known all along – that life is beautiful in Elgin County.

The “Life is Beautiful in Elgin County” video was created in partnership with the Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporation. It will be used for several years to come to promote Elgin County and will be showcased on Elgin County’s tourism website, Youtube Channel, Facebook Page, and other social media outlets.

The video can be found online at [www.youtube.com/elgincounty](http://www.youtube.com/elgincounty) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/elgincounty](http://www.facebook.com/elgincounty).

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## Local Event

### Vibrant Colours Fill the Skies at the Strawberry Fields Kite Festival



Photo Courtesy of Relish Elgin

The next time someone tells you to “go fly a kite,” take their advice to heart! On May 28 and 29 vibrant colours will fill the skies at the corner of John Wise Line and Sunset Road, as the Strawberry Fields Kite Festival returns to Central Elgin for its 25th year.

Each year this event attracts hundreds of visitors each day to the south lawn of the former Regional Mental Health Care Centre just outside St. Thomas. Visitors include locals as well as kite enthusiasts from across Ontario, upper New York, and Michigan. This colourful dance of kites can be seen from a considerable distance with as many as 100 kites in the air at a time. Passers by often pull over to the side of the road to witness this unique visual spectacle that is unlike any other in the region.

The Strawberry Fields Kite Festival features a diverse selection of kites ranging in size from a few feet to several hundred square feet. A unique combination of lift, drag, and gravity are what allow each kite to remain in flight. The shape of a kite and how it uses its aerodynamic features will determine how well it will fly.

The public is encouraged not only to attend the festival but to participate in it themselves! No

prior kite experience is needed to have a good time. The event is interactive and people can participate simply by taking hold of a string.

This free event begins each day at noon with an opening ceremonies and the mass ascension of kites. A general “fun fly” is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Additional activities will be available on-site to entertain spectators including a children’s play area, bubble blowing, free kite making, and more! There will also be local art on display and booths providing information about local organizations.

A food booth will be on-site providing hot dogs and hamburgers but attendees are also encouraged to bring their own picnic baskets and lawn chairs and spend a delightful day on the grass watching the colourful kites float by.

The two-day event is one of the oldest kite festivals in the province and is run by a dedicated group of volunteers from the South Coast Kite Conspiracy (SCKC) and other community groups including the Shriners, the Early Education Centre, St. Joseph’s Volunteer Association, and Canvas & Quill Studios.

For more information about the Strawberry Fields Kite Festival on May 28 and 29, 2016 visit the [website](#) or call 519-775-2527.



Photo Courtesy of Relish Elgin

## Local Event

### The New New Age - Celebrating the Wild Abundance of Elgin County



Photo Courtesy of Katie Hotchkiss

Stephen Hotchkiss, owner of The New New Age, spent his youth in Elgin County but it was when he was living in Los Angeles that he met his wife and business partner Katie. Together the two started an herbal tea company and were in the process of opening a storefront location when they learned that Stephen's father was looking to retire from farming back in Canada. The opportunities to grow all their own ingredients and to be stewards of their own land were appealing to the pair who decided to move north of the border and settle on the family farm in Bayham.

After arriving back in Elgin, Stephen and Katie began to transform the farm into an oasis of biodiversity, restoring it to its original habitat, and encouraging the growth of native species. Many of the herbs that are featured in their organic tea line are now grown or wild foraged directly on the farm using sustainable practices that go beyond

just producing organically grown products. They focused on the restoration of the entire ecosystem of the farm including increasing the biodiversity of organisms, creating a wetland habitat on the property, planting native species on 40 acres, and planting 20,000 trees. The farm also became a sanctuary for pollinators of all sorts; especially bees who are kept using natural, minimally invasive methods.

Stephen and Katie sell their organic teas, honey, and other herbal products at The New New Age, their storefront location in Port Stanley. This unique artisan market expertly combines the atmosphere of a trendy Los Angeles boutique with the earthy, laid back vibe of the lakeshore. In addition to a complete line of herbal teas, The New New Age also offers homemade chocolate, spices, farm fresh cheese, Kombucha tea, and local artisan goods such as pottery, glassware, natural body products, and fine art.



Photo Courtesy of Katie Hotchkiss

The New New Age is also home to a bistro that specializes in dishes created using wild foraged, local, organic ingredients such as fiddle heads, Lake Erie fish, and sustainable Amish farm products. Approximately 90% of products on the menu come directly from Elgin County suppliers.

The newest edition to The New New Age is a brew pub, Last Castle Brewing Co. This partnership between Stephen and Brewmaster Aiden Norton specializes in small batches of herbal and farmhouse style ales inspired by the ingredients of the Elgin County countryside.

The New New Age also hosts a series of workshops and classes both on the farm and in-store. On-farm Yoga and permaculture workshops will be held on the farm throughout the summer and various beer and wine tastings, chocolate making demonstrations, and nutritional workshops will be held at the Port Stanley location.

For more information about The New New Age or to register for a class or workshop visit them [online](#), like them on [Facebook](#), or follow them on [Instagram](#).



Photo Courtesy of Katie Hotchkiss

## Business Resource

### Elgincentives A Continued Success!



Elgin's ground breaking County-wide Community Improvement Plan (CIP) continues to be a success with 34 applications for projects approved to-date. The Elgincentives CIP offers financial incentives to private businesses that cover up to 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$15,000 per project. Businesses will qualify for Elgincentives provided that they meet certain criteria and are located in one of the following areas: Downtowns; agricultural areas; and, ports and lakeshore areas.

For more information about the Elgincentives Community Improvement Plan or to download an application visit [www.elgincentives.ca](http://www.elgincentives.ca), e-mail [jdias@elgin.ca](mailto:jdias@elgin.ca) or call 519-631-1460 ext. 168.

### Recent Elgincentives Grant Approvals

#### Solo on Main

**Location:** The Municipality of Central Elgin

**Grant Type (s):** Building Improvement, Signage, Savour Elgin Supplemental Grants

**Grant Amount:** \$13,253

**Project:** Structural repairs to walls and floors, restaurant re-design, signage.

#### Shebaz Inc.

**Location:** The Municipality of Central Elgin

**Grant Type (s):** Signage, Savour Elgin, Building Improvement, Outdoor Art Grants

**Grant Amount:** \$8,821

**Project:** Interior renovation and improvements to allow the building to serve as a takeout restaurant. New signage and mural on the exterior of building.

#### Windjammer Inn

**Location:** The Municipality of Central Elgin

**Grant Type (s):** Building Improvement, Savour Elgin Supplemental Grants

**Grant Amount:** \$11,500

**Project:** Rebuild of outside wrap-around patio.

**In The Hunt Trailer****Location:** The Municipality of West Elgin**Grant Type (s):** Signage, Property Improvement, Building Improvement Grants**Grant Amount:** \$15,000**Project:** A new concrete pad at entranceway to trailer sales centre, new signage, retrofitting existing building with insulation and metal strapping to allow for greater customer comfort.**Simply Scoops Ice Cream****Location:** The Municipality Bayham**Grant Type (s):** Signage, Property Improvement, Building Improvement/Restoration, and Savour Elgin Supplemental Grants**Grant Amount:** \$9,965**Project:** A new illuminated sign, a new concrete pad for the outdoor patio, and the installation of air conditioning.

*“The Elgincentives projects will improve the quality of Simply Scoops’ appearance, create more awareness of the business location and provide a comfortable work place for staff and patrons to enjoy. The result will be business sustainability and economic growth within the village of Port Burwell.”*

-Terri Vansenant, Owner

**Silverthorn Landscaping****Location:** The Municipality of Central Elgin**Grant Type (s):** Signage, Building Improvement Grants**Grant Amount:** \$11,619.43**Project:** new business signage, new roof on barn that serves as store for landscape supplies.**The Breakfast Place****Name: Location:** The Municipality of Central Elgin**Grant Type (s):** Façade, Signage, Building Improvement Grants**Grant Amount:** \$3,997**Project:** New awnings, painting of building railings, interior improvements and signage.

### **Bluegroves**

**Location:** The Municipality of West Elgin

**Grant Type (s):** Building Improvement Grant

**Grant Amount:** \$740

**Project:** Modifying and making the storefront of the blueberry farm's farmgate stand to allow it to also sell ice cream.

### **Dan Salhani (Owner of Former Wharf Building)**

**Location:** The Municipality of Central Elgin

**Grant Type (s):** Façade Grant

**Grant Amount:** \$10,000

**Project:** Repairs to the wood siding and the complete painting of the harbour front building's façade.

### **The Bluffs Golf Club**

**Location:** The Township of Southwold

**Grant Type (s):** Signage Grant

**Grant Amount:** \$1,189

**Project:** Business signage at the road to help passing customers know that the golf course is there and open for business.

### **The Village Crier Gallery**

**Location:** The Municipality of Dutton-Dunwich

**Grant Type (s):** Building Improvement and Façade Grants

**Grant Amount:** \$9,876

**Project:** Replacement of upper façade windows and leaking building roof.

### **The Kettle Creek Inn**

**Location:** The Municipality of Central Elgin

**Grant Type (s):** Building Improvement Grant, Property Improvement and Energy Efficiency Grants

**Grant Amount:** \$15,000

**Project:** Repaving a portion of their crumbling laneway. Installation of new air conditioning and heating unit to improve customer comfort. Replacement of rotting railings with new aluminum on guest houses.

### **Periscope Playhouse**

**Location:** The Municipality of Bayham

**Grant Type (s):** Building Improvement Grant, and Property Improvement Grants

**Grant Amount:** \$12,641

**Project:** Installation of new washrooms, HVAC system and upgrades to the parking lot and a paved entrance ramp for accessibility.

ELGIN COUNTY CONFERENCE SERIES PRESENTS . . .

# Selling Elgin

REAL ESTATE AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS AND OPPORTUNITIES



## Gregory Klump

Canadian Association of Realtors

CHIEF ECONOMIST

Join us to learn about the real estate and development climate in Elgin County. Gregory Klump, Chief Economist of the Canadian Real Estate Association, will provide an engaging presentation about the market trends in Canada. Come hear why Elgin County is poised for development!

For more information and to RSVP please email [jdebackere@elgin.ca](mailto:jdebackere@elgin.ca) or register online @ <http://sellingelgin.eventbrite.ca>

Please pre-register is required by June 1st, in order to confirm numbers for the free breakfast.

Wednesday, June 8th, 2016

Registration 8:45am  
9:00 am - 11:30 am

Kettle Creek Golf Club,  
Port Stanley



Free Breakfast  
Provided