



INTouch

with the Georgian Triangle

The Tale of Two Ski seasons in one Winter

Who can forget the first ski season of this winter? Blue Mountain opened on Dec. 8th after a furious week of natural and man made snow. Everyone was anticipating a great season ahead given the targeted opening of Dec. 15th. Friday the 8th was a beautiful sunny day and then the rest as they say, was downhill. After just over a week of mild temperatures, the base was melting and it was too warm to make snow. The unheard of happened. For the first time ever, Blue Mountain had to close after it officially opened for the season. The prayers from here to Toronto started in hopes there would be a recovery for the all important Holiday season. Our green Christmas came and operators were desperately trying to make snow. With some luck, Blue was able to reopen 2 and a 1/2 runs before New Years. The season pass holders returned to the mountain but the crucial day skiers stayed home and cancelled their hotel

rooms. Praying wasn't enough. Unfortunately on January 5, for an unprecedented second time, Blue and all the private clubs had to announce they were shutting down. Worse, they had to lay off 1300 seasonal workers. This was a big blow to not only the employees but all the businesses that depend on the ski industry.

I think the news must have sent a chill down everyone's spine including Mother Natures. She must have woken up because within a week the temperatures started to turn cold. The snow guns blew and everyone crossed their fingers. Luck had turned, the bases were building, there was natural snow and everyone was cautiously optimistic. By Friday January 19 everyone was reopening for the 2nd season of the winter. More runs were opening by the day. Then from the middle of January through to the middle of February it was bone chilling cold. Natural snow

fell for almost 12 straight days. The locals were saying it might be the best conditions in years. It was **VERY COLD, -20, -30** and the **wind, that nasty wind,** was **biting.**



Blowing snow in January to ensure the base will take us through the end of March

The odd thing was, no one was complaining about the cold for fear they would jinx the season. They remembered the rain, the sad faces and the unemployed. Everyone thought, let's just be quiet despite the cold, after all Virginia, there really is a ski season!

Photo of the Month



Every month there will be a photo contest with the winner's photo being displayed here. The winner will receive a \$50 gift certificate from Gabriele Photography. The photo will be showcased for the month at Gabriele's store in Collingwood. For details on how to enter go to intouchwithgt.com or simply

send your photo to photo@intouchwithgt.com. The photos should be in JPEG format and not exceed 1 MB in size. Please include a brief description of what the photo is about. Good luck and happy snapping!



This is a photograph of the steeple at Lighthouse Pt. It was taken after the first snowfall in November.

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Special points of interest:

- The Dam Pub
- Where your dog can stay
- Mad and Noisy Gallery
- Nordic Triangle



Political Pot Pourri

All of our local politicians have three months of their four year term behind them. I would say that most of the noise has come from our rookie Mayor, Chris Carrier, in Collingwood. You may remember a number of them ran together (they deny this) in order to bring in new blood and stop losing all important issues by one vote, implying that the old administration was excluding them from important decisions. Mr. Carrier ran on a platform of more accountability and openness. Well, it didn't take him long. He had a meeting with the Shipyard developers that he made public. He gave them notice that no matter what had gone on with the old admini-

stration and the Collingwood terminals was not going to happen on his watch. Not much was written about this meeting, but the next bomb was about to drop. Mr. Carrier brought a motion forward that basically sent the controversial downtown 6 storey Admiral's developers packing, revoking any agreements with the previous council. Yes, Mr. Carrier was putting his stamp on the Town and quickly. Well, what happened next was probably a result of his inexperience that we haven't heard the last of. He decided to have an audit done of his fellow councilors emails that were sent during council meetings. It turns out he had no au-

thority to do so and once he was advised he called all of them to apologize. What was once a quiet undercurrent of dissention between the councilors from the previous administration, that were not on Mr. Carrier's team, are now public squabbles. They are in the news, in the hall ways, and being discussed by people in town. The rift has lots of history and with the old guard now on the losing side of the votes, the concern is that they will not rise above this and we will be back to where we were before the recent election, which was having a dysfunctional council. This is a critical time for Mr. Carrier and Council to move forward. Stay **INtouch !**

..... Just had time for Lunch



53 Bruce Street
Thornbury, Ontario
519-599-2110

The Dam Pub, one of Thornbury's newest additions, is officially my new favourite lunch stop. Located in Thornbury's landmark building "White House on the Hill," it breathes of charm from the outside and carries throughout the inside of the restaurant, as if you were dining in someone's home. The owners, Gord and Sandy Price, meticulously chose this location as it had to be local within the community to make it tradition-

ally Scottish. Their grand opening was December 2005.

The Dam Pub is very easy to recommend as their menu has an exceptional variety of delicious items that is sure to please all taste buds. If you have a true love for Scottish dishes, the Haggis, Neeps, Tatties and Roasted Vegetables will more than delight even the toughest of critics! Combine the Sheppard's

Pie or Fish Pie with one of their 300 selections of Scottish Malts (200 single malt) and you will feel like you are in Scotland. There is an impressive range of Beers and Ales on tap to pair with your Tuna Melt, Smoked Salmon Salad, Pasta of the day or even a burger. The appetizers are of equal variety and everyone will leave with no compromise to their palette. Every dish is very generous with the portion and perfectly prepared.

Become a Patron of the Dam Pub

Join an exclusive fraternity of premium Scotch whisky devotees.

As a Patron of the Pub, you can

- Showcase your exquisite taste.
- Display your private bottle in the Patron's cabinet.
- ID your bottle with your name/company name.
- Serve friends and clients from your private stock.

The food is made very exciting by Chef Allan Rogalsky, a top chef trained in Niagara, Ontario.

What a great Dam Pub!

Be sure to visit them for lunch, dinner, a pint or a single malt scotch that can come from your own personalized bottles stored on site!

View their website www.thedampub.ca to read more about the owners & chefs and to view their entire menu and calendar of events.



Say it with Cheese—Gruyere Style Cheeses

By Kelly Siskind and Steven Epstein, owners of Dags and Willow

One of the most popular winter cheeses is Gruyere. Whether it is melted or just eaten as a table cheese, just thinking about gruyere makes my mouth water. Real Gruyere comes from the mountain pastures northeast of Lake Geneva and is made with raw cow's milk. Most cheeses are aged for eight to ten months and weigh anywhere from 44 to 99 pounds. If you can find a cave aged Gruyere you are in for a treat! These cheeses are aged for approximately one and a half years and develop a stronger,

sweeter and nuttier flavour with a lingering aftertaste.

If you want to further explore the world of gruyere style cheese, there are many cheeses from the French Alps that are not to be missed. Beaufort is often called the 'King of Gruyere' with its pronounced grassy and nutty flavour and hints of honey. Comte is another similar cheese with a smooth, creamy consistency that leaves your mouth salivating for more. When

in doubt, just go to your nearest cheese shop and ask to sample any of these amazing cheeses! They would all work well grated on top of soup, mixed into your next fondue, sliced on a sandwich or simply served on a cheese board with some fresh fruit or cured meats.

Dags & Willow
FINE CHEESE AND GOURMET SHOP

60 Pine Street
Collingwood, Ontario
www.dagsandwillow.ca

Poop Scoop

Why not bring Fido or Fifi on your next vacation in the Georgian Triangle? Our beloved pooches need some time off too; it's exhausting fetching slippers in the morning and begging for treats all day long!

Unless you are staying at your Aunt Kate's house where all pets are welcome, it's important to do your research on pet-friendly hotels/inns/chalets. Some do accept dogs as guests but with restrictions. Here are a few choices in our area.

Irish Mountain B&B, located in Meaford. It's only an extra

\$10.00 per night for your dog to stay at one of the most stunning Inns, overlooking Georgian Bay and Blue Mountain.

www.irishmountain.net

Tyrolean Village Resorts, located in Blue Mountain.

They boast no extra fee for your pet (just any extra cleaning requirements).

www.tyrolean.com

If you just want to drop off Her Majesty for the day, below are some daycare facilities for dogs in the Georgian Triangle:

Home Away From Home

Doggie Daycare, located in Clearview. They have 600 square feet of heated enclosed area, along with 9,000 square feet of fenced outdoor facilities. www.homeawayfromhomedoggedaycare.ca

Blue Mountain Doggy Kennel Country Inn, located in Nottawa. Drop off your dog for short or long visits. Daily walks provided with both indoor and outdoor runs.

www.collingwoodnow.com/bluemountaindoggykennels/index.htm



Why not bring your dog up for the weekend?

Did you know?

Every skier over 40 should get some kind of medal for learning to ski. Why you ask? The main reason is that we went up the hill burning our hands on a rope toe, getting stabbed in the back by a T-Bar or getting banged on the back of the head by a two seater chairlift that you had to jump on to. Our parents would say, ready 1—2—3, jump junior. If you were lucky to come aboard you now only had to dread what it would be like getting off at the top. Chairlift tech-

nology has progressed over the years. These flashbacks come to me at the top of Blue where they have put on display the original double South Chair.

The PLAQUE in the attached picture highlights some amazing facts.

- Built in 1959, replaced in 2001 with high speed 6 person detachable chair
- 1959 cost was \$81,000

- 2001 cost \$3.1 million
- Double 936 people/hour
- 6 Person 3600 people/hour

Jozo Weider and Ken Skelton had the eleven towers built at the Weider farmhouse and dragged them up the mountain by tractors and sleds. They mounted them in holes dug by pick and shovel and wrestled into place. Thank you Jozo and Ken. We can't imagine teaching our children on anything else.





Ski Tip of the Month



Brought to you by



Collingwood

The alpine ski boot provides an important link in the whole picture, therefore, it is imperative that the business of boots and boot fitting is a process of communication between the fitter, the customer and the on-hill experience. The task at hand becomes easier if these simple steps are taken:

Step 1 - Determine what is important to you.
Comfort... Warmth... and Performance...

Everyone will have a different response to this question and when talking about their own ski boots these three interrelated topics will vary for each individual.

Step 2 - Have a look at the foot.

There are several ways to try and do this and develop the best picture possible. This job is difficult with your socks on, so remove them.

Step 3 - Try to improve the foot stability.

An un-weighted foot versus a weighted foot can change its length, arch height and width as well as its core temperature. A footbed is integral to this process.

Step 4 - Now ... Shell size.

This involves removing the inner liner and placing the foot into the empty shell. This should be done with and without the foot-

bed.

Step 5 - Now ... Liner size.

Still without the sock on and using just the footbed and liner, put the liner on and review the fit. The liner should fit snug as it will always pack out and get larger. Another area to check is the fit of the tongue.

Step 6 - What is a good fit??

For most boot fitters the ideal fit closely resembles a good snug handshake.

Step 7 - Go skiing!!

Only so much can be done indoors-you need to do the 'real thing' before you know how the boot is going to fit and react.

Interior Decorator or Interior Designer

"Making the right choice before you begin will help ensure a positive outcome and years of enjoying your new space."

It has been a long and cold winter but the promise of spring will soon be in the air. If you are like many others at this time of year, you are viewing your surroundings, thinking about things that need to be or should be done to update your home, and wondering where to begin. This can be a daunting task and one which a designer or decorator can certainly help you with.

This begs the question, what is the difference between an inte-

rior decorator and an interior designer. Both are specially trained to help you create an environment that shows your unique personality but there are distinct differences.

An interior decorator specializes in understanding the elements and principles of design and colour. They are educated on choosing the best treatments for floors, walls and windows and can pull it all together with furnishings and lighting to create your look.

A professional designer is trained in the elements and principles of design and colour as well. In addition they can help with space planning, lighting design, kitchen layouts or bathroom designs and they understand interior construction and detailing, safety and building codes. If your plans include remodeling, including moving walls, demolition or minor construction you should seek the assistance of a professional designer.

Area Artists – Mad and Noisy Gallery in Creemore



154 Mill Street

Creemore, Ontario

www.madandnoisy.com

The Georgian Triangle is home to hundreds of talented artists and galleries that feature their work.

The Mad and Noisy Gallery in Creemore is one of the must see stops because they do a great job featuring a full range of talent. It is like a co-op run by Artists for Artists. They feature works of local painters, photographers, sculptures, glass and ceramics, wood and even jewelry created locally. They also host specialty workshops to enable

people to enrich their talents. Their exhibits feature various works that range from students (Stayner Collegiate was featured in January), up and coming professionals as well as established professionals.

It is a great place to drop in as you are exploring the Triangle. If your timing is right you can catch one or more of the concerts throughout the year featuring an array of two person bands.

Below is an example of March activity.

- Exhibit featuring [Tanya Zaryski](#) March 3 –22
- Workshop with [Liz Eakins](#) 'Make a Box' March 22
- Event featuring the Music by [Dala](#) March 17



People in our Community— Rick Sim

The Georgian Triangle is transforming itself into an Ontario, North American or larger than life destination for vacationers, retirees or people who want to enjoy life. Rick Sim is a person who figured this was the place to live a long time ago. Rick talks about riding the King street car in Toronto in 1971, while selling Insurance, and concluded that this was not a healthy way for him to live. He was familiar with the area as his family cottaged in Wasaga Beach when there were only 500 residences, of which 400 winter vacationed in Florida. With not much more than a plan to live in a better place, he sold

Rick reminds you that it's a trade that won't allow one to retire early. After all, the season is a short one with work in November being early and any skiing beyond March is a bonus. Of course, there are years like this one where the critical holiday & early January season was wiped out by unseasonably warm temperatures, thus, putting all profitability at risk. He remembers the summers where he used his crafty hands to make fishing poles, rifles, golf clubs or just plain old welding. No, not rich from a dollar perspective, but rich in other aspects. He enjoys

everything and headed North. In order to make a living, he decided to sell sewing machines. Perhaps there were already too many encyclopedia sales people in the area. It was a start and the best part about this job was he met his wife-to-be at the drug-store next door where she worked. Rather than waiting for a head hunter to call, he answered an ad for a 'Ski Mechanic' at the Georgian Peaks Ski Shop, Salomon Gate, only to be mentored by one of the best; Hans Wieland. With the Ski Shop being right on the hill, Rick had to learn to be a Service Generalist as customers skied in for

every minute of the 70-80 hour seasonal work weeks, the happy disposition of people who enjoy skiing & boarding and the faithful clientele that have stuck with him over the years. When Hans sold his ski shop at Georgian Peaks, Rick was fortunate enough to work with others in the industry. He has witnessed lots of change from an equipment and tuning perspective over the years. One of Rick's passions was always working with his hands and pride in his workmanship. Five years ago, Rick decided that with all the experience and training he

boot, binding, ski issues and maintenance. The demo programs and the proper wax for the day depending on the conditions kept him busy from first tracks to closing. After a quick break he then received an added training bonus because Hans let the serious skiers use the shop to tune their skis for the next day's race. Rick realized in a short period of time he was transitioning from a city world that valued his brain to a community that valued both his brain and his hands. He was becoming an expert at his craft of tuning skis and it was a trade he and his customers took very seriously.

gained, to open, what else, "Rick's Professional Ski Shop" which is located beside the north chair parking lot at Blue Mountain. When you enter, don't be surprised if Rick, unaware of your presence, may be bent over the ski bench fine tuning by hand one of his loyal customers skis. If he doesn't know your name he will soon as you develop your relationship. Rick, his wife, two children and grandchild are rich in life & spirit. They won't have to move anywhere when Rick retires, they've been in paradise for over 35 years!



Located at the base of the North chair at Blue Mountain beside the parking lot.



Rick getting ready to craft a Stockli Ski for an upcoming race.

Recipe of the Month - Not So Spicy Chili

This recipe is compliments of Betty Smith who has made this for many years for her family and has graciously chosen to share it with us.

2 – 19 fl oz can red kidney beans – drained and rinsed
 1 large onion
 1 green pepper
 1 lb lean ground beef

1 – 28 fl oz can -
 Diced tomatoes
 8 oz can tomato sauce
 2 tablespoons chili powder
 ¼ teaspoon salt
 2 bay leaves

Chop onion and green pepper and cook in skillet with ground beef until beef is brown and onion and peppers are soft. Combine all ingredients in crock pot and cook for 4 hours on high.



To submit your favorite recipe, please send to recipe@intouchwithgt.com



Volunteer View - My Friend's House

By Alison FitzGerald, Executive Director, My Friend's House



If you would like more information about My Friend's House and how you can help, please contact us at anytime by calling 444-2586 or myfriendshouse@myfriendshouse.ca



"Stop the Violence." It's everybody's goal. Our goal is to eliminate domestic violence...not only in our region but country wide. In the meantime, our roof will continue to shelter a region.

Here at My Friend's House, we are a shelter for women and their children escaping abuse. We're in our 16th year of helping women within the Georgian Triangle rewrite their stories by giving them the safe refuge, support and resources necessary to triumph over a dangerous existence.

While our 12-bed shelter is located in Collingwood, our services support the entire region including Wasaga Beach, Creemore, Stayner, Thornbury and Meaford. In fact, as an active agency member of the Simcoe

My Friend's House Reaches Out

Along with providing emergency shelter for women escaping a violent situation, My Friend's House offers free counseling support services, educational information and outreach programs throughout the region.

If a woman can't get to My Friend's House on her own, our trained team will find a way to make sure she has the information and support she needs to live a life free from violence and abuse.

How Can You Help?

Your donations and active support of My Friend's House are crucial to reinforcing our efforts to end violence against women. There are so many ways that you can make a difference. You can donate goods, make a financial donation, become a volunteer for one of our fundraising events or create your own.

The Stone House Angels of Stayner are a great example of how people can have fun together and make a difference at the same time. For the last three years, four women have come together weekly to create beautiful Christmas crafts and goods, share stories, develop new talents and more importantly honour and enjoy their friendship. At the end of each year, they sell all of their creations to raise funds for My Friend's House and sponsor a family for Christmas at the same time. They have raised over \$11,000 and had great fun doing it!

County Violence Against Women Coordinating Committee, 50% of the hundreds of women who use our services each year come from outside our immediate community.

Over the years, demand for our services has unfortunately grown and although no woman has, or ever will be turned away, we need you – 100% support from all Georgian Triangle residents—to help eradicate domestic violence from our towns, and its devastating effect on our children, women and families.

In addition to our regular services, our Transition program brings together women and their children from around the region trying to establish a new life. This program gives women an opportunity to reconnect and build an ongoing support network.



P.O. Box 190
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E-Mail Bag

Write to us at editor@intouchwithgt.com

Please let us know your comments and opinions on our stories or features. Drop us a note if there's something special you would like to see in one of our issues and we will try our best! If you want to submit an article for consideration for publication send it to the editor.

E-mails should include your full name; they may be edited for clarity and space.

The Nordic Triangle

The Georgian Triangle is certainly well known for all the Ski Clubs and Resorts along the mountain, however there are three Nordic Centres in the area as well that offer an incredible assortment of trails for cross country skiers from beginners to experts.

Highlands Nordic located south of Collingwood near the small town of Duntroon offers exceptional trails and an excellent Nordic ski shop in its lodge. Highlands hosts a variety of programs for schools as well as some of the most challenging trails in the area.

On the East Side of Wasaga Beach, Ontario Parks runs Wa-

saga Nordic with 30 kilometres of trails. Equipment rentals, light refreshments and warm-up shelters are available for those cold winter days.

Scenic Caves, right at the top of Blue Mountain, has an excellent Nordic Centre for beginner to intermediate skiers. Or how about snowshoeing across the longest suspension bridge in Ontario? Scenic Caves also has equipment rentals and food available in its rustic chalet.

While getting your exercise out in the fresh air, enjoy the Georgian Triangle scenery including an abundance of winter birds, rabbits and white tailed deer. The three centres offer a "Ski

Three" Pass which allows you to ski all three Nordic Centres for just \$25. Just call any of them (see right) and enjoy Nordic Skiing at its finest!



705 446 0256



705 444 5017



Wasaga Nordic
705 429 0943