

Beaches

Winter — February/March 2016

life

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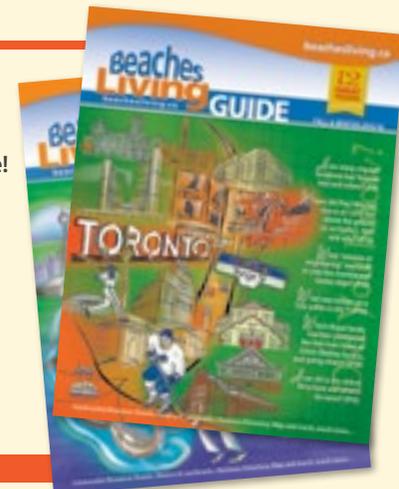
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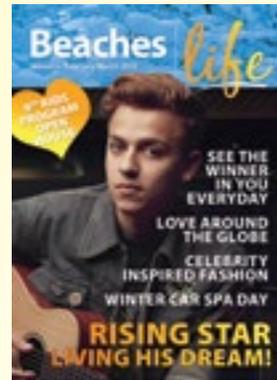
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Beaches|life magazine is the sister publication of **Beaches Living Guide** (established 2004). Beaches|life magazine, with a circulation of 20,000, is delivered six times a year, free of charge, to the majority of households and businesses in the Greater Beaches Area.



Your comments and suggestions are welcome.

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DISCLAIMER: Beaches|life made every attempt to verify all information published in this magazine, however, we assume no responsibility for any incorrect or out-of-date information.



A Rising Star is Living the Dream – Scott Helman

A Canadian rising pop music star Scott Helman, singer-songwriter, released his debut EP, *Augusta* with Warner Music Canada at age 19. Scott's single, "That Sweater", hit Number 5 on CBC Radio 2's Top 20 highest-voted fan favourites of 2015. His video debut single "Bungalow" was nominated for a Much Music Video Award and in January 2016, earned gold record status for selling more than 500,000 copies. Today, the 20 year old is pursuing a full-time professional music career. Beaches|life caught up with Scott in L.A. for this interview.

Scott Helman will always remember the telephone call that changed his life. He was just 15, living in Toronto and attending Earl Haig Secondary School. While hanging out one afternoon, playing video games in the basement of a friend's house, his friend, Terry Moshenberg, called him to say, "Hey Scott, Warner Brothers Canada wants to see you!"

Thanks to Terry's intervention, the demo tapes Scott had uploaded to MyFace and YouTube had been brought to the attention of a music executive at Warner.

"That phone call was one of the craziest things that could ever happen," recalls Scott. "It was the moment when I

was given a real opportunity to make music my life."

The dream of being a full time musician wasn't new to Scott. But like many kids, it seemed more a fantasy than reality, particularly when he was a 6-year-old playing with his karaoke machine. But one thing was different with Scott; he paid attention to what he really wanted and never let go of the dream.

He recalls, for example, that even as a young child he loved music, and although he didn't have any musical instruments to play at the time, he still imagined that he was a performer and set his sights high.

He started with piano lessons, but never felt connected to it. So he "nagged" his mother for a guitar until she gave in, presenting him with an instrument when he turned 10. When looking for a teacher, he knew he wanted someone who would let him learn the music he liked. "It was then," he says, "that I truly became invigorated with a passion." After that, there was no stopping the young teen; he just continued to push towards his dream of being a singer-songwriter. "As you grow, your perception changes," he says, "music becomes the place you go to where things are permanent. I now knew I needed to stay in it."

...continues on page 7



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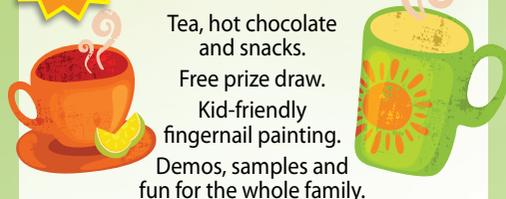
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...continued from page 5

Scott attended Toronto art schools (first Claude Watson starting at grade 6 and then Earl Haig Secondary). The experience good for keeping him in touch with other artists and learning in a creative environment, while he pursued his music on his own time. He practiced the guitar and wrote his own music and lyrics whenever he had a free moment. He then took a big step – making his first public appearance at a school concert. “It was a terrifying yet pivotal event” he says, “But afterwards, I knew I wanted to do more.”

Part of the Warner Brother’s deal allowed Scott to finish school in Toronto. This helped him develop further as an artist and collaborate with other writers before he was expected to create his first EP (a shorter musical recording than full studio album or LP). His time, apart from being a high school student, now meant attending song writing sessions with a variety of collaborators, and fulfilling requests such as “write a song a day for a week” during his free time.

Now that he’s finished high school, Scott is devoting his time to actually living his dream, full-time, as a singer-songwriter. The next “big thing” for Scott is a full length album.

Now living and working most of the time in Los Angeles, what does a singer/songwriter do? According

to Scott, it depends on the recording cycle. When he was on tour last year, his time was taken up playing shows, then travelling to the next venue. When it’s time for a press tour, his time involves countless visits to radio stations and performances.

Right now, he’s in “writing mode”, where he spends a morning and evening session writing each day, and trying to catch up with everything else in between. “The struggle,” he explains, “is getting time alone and not being interrupted, which is difficult with Twitter and the Internet. There’s always someone you should get back to!”

Finding time for “normal” life is also crucial for a writer. Scott will always be grateful for the opportunity he had to remain at a regular high school, “it’s the normal experiences of life you need as a writer,” he says.

He also likes to spend time listening to his favourite musicians: the “old stuff”, like Bob Dylan, Neil Young; mavericks like Tom Waits, or British alternative rock band “The 1975”. Recently, he just sat and listened to the first album he’d ever purchased – *David Bowie’s Greatest Hits*. “When I heard Bowie died I was so taken aback, I just had to listen to that album again,” he says.

Perhaps he was also listening to Bowie’s lyrics, “When I live my dream...”



Seeing Success Everyday, in Every Step of Your Journey

What is Your Success? What's Your Success today? Do you consider yourself a successful person? Personal success comes in many different forms, and it is defined by ourselves.

What you might think of as being successful may not be the same as what someone else believes. It's easy to think that a sign of success is having a lot of money, top position in a large corporation, big house and fancy cars... But most people are not in any of those positions, though still see themselves a successful. Each of us has our own goals, childhood dreams and wishes, when we reach that point, we ought to believe we are successful within our own definition. Success is being defined much more broadly than just financial.

At the beginning of this year, the recently released "Success Survey Project" revealed that 90 percent of North Americans believe that success is more about happiness than power, possessions, or prestige. Other highlights of the survey:

- 67% associated success with achieving personal goals
- 66% cited "good relationships with friends and family"
- 60% said that success was "loving what you do for a living."

Ready to take the first steps toward success in 2016? Take some quiet time or moment to think about exactly what "success" means to you.

It's best to write down your personal definition in various categories: relationships, health and fitness,

career, financial management, and knowledge. Looking for the accomplishment, or a step forward to your goals in your daily, weekly or monthly activities. Then when you look at what you've written, in a few months time, you will have the satisfaction of knowing where you've been most successful.

By clearly defining what success means to you personally, and by taking the time to write it down, you start to move your life in the direction of your own success. This helps shift you thinking into believing you are a successful person. The main reason that some people don't feel successful is because they are living with someone else's definition of success. The only definition of success that matters is yours. Make sure you know what it is, otherwise, you'll never feel successful no matter how hard you try.

It's okay to make success smaller, everyday accomplishments. Perhaps you just want to have more good days, get a few more tasks completed each week, or complete a fitness challenge, or making sure that a disability doesn't hold you back.

Finally, when you've reached some level of success, take some time to enjoy it, celebrate, talk about it, especially the journey that got you there. Success isn't just what happens at the end—it's everything in between as well. Acknowledging our success not only helps to make us more successful, it helps teach others how to be successful as well.

"Doing the best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment." – Oprah Winfrey

The main reason that some people don't feel successful is because they are living with someone else's definition of success.

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Spring Fashion Forward

With Hollywood award season starting in January, we are interested not only in who just won, but also what our favourite celebrities are wearing. The red carpet picks of the famous and glamorous may not be the “looks” for everyone, but watch for what is trending – you’ll soon see these styles, accessories and colours in your local stores!

Backless with Thigh High Slit: Sexy, glamorous and usually in a shimmering fabric or delicate lace, backless dresses are still a hot favourite.

Jumpsuits: A blast from the past, these one-piece comfy looking jumpsuits are back in style. Kate Hudson wore a stunning white version to the People’s Choice, first award-show of the New Year.

Navy is Back! For the first time in many years, dark blue replaces black. This was apparent at the Golden Globes where several A-list stars wore navy, including Kate Winslet, Viola Davis and Julianne Moore!

Not Just Black (for Women): Colours abound this year, with gowns in pinks, greens, blues, purple, red as well as pure white. Men, not so much. Black and white, thin ties and classic, simple tuxes.

Lace: Lots of lace, in long dresses, short dresses, pants, even showing up in men’s shirts!



Bare Midriff and Cut-outs: There’s certainly no shortage of skin this year. If you’ve got celeb abs and beautiful smooth skin, go for the bare middle, or the more demure cut outs, showing bits of skin front, side, back and/or shoulders.

Mini Formals: Yes, formal dresses don’t have to be long! Many celebs are choosing short and very short (mini) formal dresses.

Leather and Suede: Men’s jackets, formal as well as motor cycle jacket styled, in both leather and suede. Jackets are often paired with skinny black pants and (surprise) sneakers.

Tone on Tone: Especially for men, look for shirts, jackets, even ties all the same colour: a grey shirt with a grey jacket, dark blue shirt with blue tie, or black shirt/black jacket/black tie.

Gunmetal, Shimmering Glitz: The metallic look is still hot, showing up in all styles. The winner so far this season is Claire Danes fabulous dress she wore to the People’s Choice. It had all the trends discussed above: backless, slits, cut-out, sparkly, and metallic. Clean, simple hair and make up, shiny black pumps.

Shoes? Lots of Strappy Sandals for Women: Black wing-tips, tassels, suede as well as sneakers for men.



DON'T FORGET TO SHAMPOO & LOTION YOUR CAR IN THE

WINTER

We have snow! The Canadian winter has arrived! It doesn't please everyone but we accept it, after all we are in Canada, and the snowy winter is what we are known for. This is the time our car gets dirty, salted, covered by snow and ice. Most of the time we don't even bother to clean it since it will be dirty again in no time.

However, keeping your car clean inside, outside and underneath, is never more important than at this time of the year. Not only does it keep the vehicle looking great, it protects against unsightly corrosion, damage to exterior paint and interior fabrics and finishes.

This time of year Canadian road conditions are frozen, salty and just plain harsh. We've all seen dark cars covered in salt, caked in frozen slush and chunks of ice. The interiors also get dirty, with slush, snow, dirt and salt, all carried in by our boots, packages, shovels and brushes.



Cars are a major investment these days, they do a lot for us, take us wherever we want to go in good weather and bad. In respect give it a VIP service regularly, it will be happier to serving us.

Check out these tips for protecting your car through our tough winter months:

WASH AND WAX: Road salt is great for preventing skidding but it also promotes rust and damage to your vehicle's paint. Make sure the exterior and undercarriage of your vehicle is washed regularly to

remove salt, slush and mud. This is easily done at a car wash with power washers and strong detergents. A good coat of wax also helps protects the finish between washes – well worth the additional cost.

WINDSHIELD WIPERS: Winter debris (salt, dirt, grit, etc.) can also damage your windshield wipers, which are very important for visibility (especially in dark, snowy winter months). According to CAA, the life of a wipe blade is typically 6-12 months. If your wipers are leaving behind streaks or making squealing noises, it's time to replace them.

WIPER FLUID: Keep wiper fluid topped up to help break up snow and ice on your windshield and make sure the fluid is formulated for lower temperatures.

INTERIOR: It's worth having good winter floor mats where melting snow and salt can collect and not soak into the carpets. Drain the mats when you can and brush off dirt and debris. Salt stains on leather or vinyl can be removed with a cloth soaked in white vinegar.

EMERGENCY: Keep a blanket in the back seat and have your car equipped with an emergency winter kit – just in case you get stranded.

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or

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MAIN COURSE

Agnolotti (veg)

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Pasta with portabella and porcini mushrooms, grilled chicken in a garlic olive oil sauce. Drizzled with truffle oil.

or

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Foodtalk Comfy, Shepherd's Pie

An old favourite from the United Kingdom is cottage or shepherd's pie. It's a tasty ground meat dish topped with mashed potatoes that most of us remember from our school days. Shepherd's pie should actually be made with ground lamb; "cottage pie" is what the dish is called when it is made with beef. But these days, most people just call it shepherd's pie (although made with beef).

It began as a food that peasants prepared in England because it was inexpensive and potatoes were plentiful. Today shepherd's pie is known world-wide. In fact, Indian cooks once considered shepherd's pie to be a perfect dish for tiffin (a word used to mean a light snack in British India).

There are many variations depending on where the dish is made.

In Scotland, pastry is used instead of potatoes. In northern England, the potato topping is covered in breadcrumbs; which turns the dish into a "Cumberland pie". In Quebec, it is known as Pâté Chinois (Chinese pie), so called because it was first prepared by Chinese railway workers in Quebec. Pâté Chinois usually calls for a layer of creamed corn under the potato topping.

Basic Shepherd's Pie

The meat part of the dish is made by cooking ground meat (beef or lamb) together with onions, vegetables, broth, spices and often some tomato paste.

Mashed potatoes are prepared separately and spread on top, then the entire dish is baked in the oven until steaming hot.

Shepherd's Pie (with beef)

INGREDIENTS

- 1½ to 2 pounds potatoes (about 3 large potatoes), peeled and quartered, and butter for mashing
- Oil for frying
- 1 medium onion, chopped (about 1½ cups)
- 1-2 cups vegetables – diced carrots, corn, peas
- 1½ lbs ground round beef
- ½ cup beef broth
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- Salt, pepper, other seasonings of choice
- 2-3 tablespoons of tomato paste (optional)

METHOD

- Boil the potatoes, mash with butter, salt and pepper. Set aside.
- Heat oil, cook beef until pink disappears. Add onions and cook until tender, then add vegetables, beef broth and seasonings.
- Spread meat into an oblong pan (doesn't have to be pie shaped!) and top with mashed potatoes. Cook until sauce bubbles up from the bottom!
- Serve with a green salad and crusty bread.

VARIATIONS

- Vegetarians substitute the meat with a soy meat substitute or brown lentils.
- Sweet potatoes can be used on top instead of potatoes (I've even used a layer of white rice).
- Cheese sprinkled on top of the mashed potatoes is popular. You can also add some chopped jalapenos to the cheese for a spicier version.
- Peas and carrots are traditionally used as the vegetables. Corn is a variation.

SHORT CUTS

- Use frozen vegetables (peas, carrots, corn).
- Add a cup of tomato or vegetable soup to the meat to make the sauce.
- Ground turkey or chicken instead of beef or lamb.
- Use instant mashed potatoes or hash browns for the top, and sprinkle with purchased grated cheese.

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Love, a truly global affair

As Valentine's Day is celebrated on February 14 in North America, this tradition has traveled around the world. Internationally the "Day of Love" is celebrated at different times, in different ways for different cultures. The celebration of romantic love as well as friendship and family is truly a global affair!

France "City of Love" February 14

It claims to have started the tradition of sending letters and cards when the Duke of Orleans, Charles, wrote the first Valentine's card and signed his poem as "Your Valentine". As its capital, Paris, is known as the "city of love", on February 14, couples from around the world flock to the city to celebrate.

China, "Qixi Festival" July 7 (lunar calendar)

It celebrates love on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month, it is usually around early August. It draws its roots from the tale of two stars in the night sky that fell in love, and when they got married, the Goddess of Heaven became so furious that she created the Milky Way just to separate them. Part of the celebration today still involves going outside at night to gaze at the stars.



Germany - Pig is the symbol of Valentine's Day February 14

It is focused on lovers who exchange not only chocolates, flowers, and heart shaped gifts, but gifts related to pigs! The pig represents luck and lust, and can be given in picture form, as a miniature statue, in chocolate, even jewelry.

Finland & Estonia, "Friend's Day" February 14

Valentine's day came to Finland and Estonia rather later. In 1980, it was combined with the traditional Finnish Friendship Day and therefore called "Ystävänpäivä", which means "Friend's Day". The day is celebrated by friends as well as lovers and it remains a very popular day to get engaged or married.

Argentina, "Sweetness Week" July 1-7

One day isn't enough to celebrate love in Argentina. They celebrate Sweetness Week the entire first week of July.

South Korea February 14, March 14 & April 14

There are 3 variations of Valentine's Day in South Korea, celebrated monthly from February through April. Gift-giving starts on February 14th with the women who woo their men with chocolates, candies and flowers. The tables turn on March 14th, a holiday known as White Day, when men become the gift givers and try to outdo the women. There also is a third holiday on April 14 when singles mourn their solitary status by eating dark bowls of black bean paste noodles.

Welsh, "Saint Dwynwen Day" January 25

Saint Dwynwen is the Welsh patron saint of lovers. One traditional romantic Welsh gift is a love spoon. Years ago, these intricately carved wooden spoons were worn by men as a tokens of affection for the women they loved.

England, "Valentine's Day" February 14

On the eve on Valentine's Day, women used to place five bay leaves on their pillows to bring dreams of their future husbands. Today, flowers, gifts and chocolates are more the customer. But Norfolk county (in the eastern region), there's an actual Jack Valentine (also known as Old Father Valentine or Old Mother Valentine), who acts as a kind of Santa for Valentine's Day! Children wait to hear Jack Valentine knock at their doors, who leaves small gifts for them!

These are just a few of the various ways love and friendship is celebrate around the world, and in many places, the celebrations vary according to the region. In our house, we used to decorate a "mail box for our valentines- with fancy paper, white doilies and cut out hearts. What are your memories of Valentine's Day?

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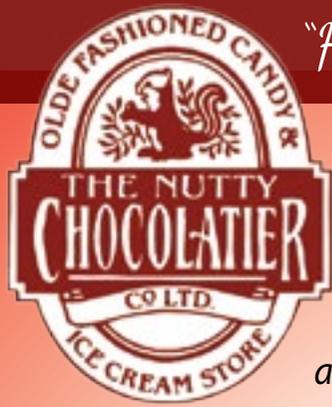
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Which are Your Winning Pics?



Participate in our annual Beaches|life Oscar® challenge for your chance to win a pair of movie passes to *Alliance Cinema in the Beach*.

How to play: Go through the following list of nominees and predict the winners. Follow the link to beachesliving.ca/oscar and fill in your picks by February 27. The winner will be the one with the most correct predictions. Good Luck!

Best Picture:

- Bridge of Spies*
- Brooklyn*
- Mad Max Fury Road*
- Room*
- Spotlight*
- The Big Short*
- The Martian*
- The Revenant*

Best Director:

- Adam McKay, *The Big Short*
- George Miller, *Mad Max: Fury Road*
- Alejandro G. Iñárritu, *The Revenant*
- Lenny Abrahamson, *Room*
- Tom McCarthy, *Spotlight*

Best Foreign Language Film:

- Embrace of the Serpent* (Colombia)
- Mustang* (France)
- Son of Saul* (Hungary)
- Theeb* (Jordan)
- A War* (Denmark)

Best Animated Film:

- Anomalisa*
- Boy and the World*
- Inside Out*
- Shaun the Sheep*
- When Marnie Was There*

Best Actress:

- Cate Blanchett, *Carol*
- Brie Larson, *Room*
- Jennifer Lawrence, *Joy*
- Charlotte Rampling, *45 Years*
- Saoirse Ronan, *Brooklyn*

Best Actor:

- Bryan Cranston, *Trumbo*
- Eddie Redmayne, *The Danish Girl*
- Leonardo DiCaprio, *The Revenant*
- Matt Damon, *The Martian*
- Michael Fassbender, *Steve Jobs*

Best Sup. Actress:

- Jennifer Jason Leigh, *The Hateful Eight*
- Rooney Mara, *Carol*
- Rachel McAdams, *Spotlight*
- Alicia Vikander, *The Danish Girl*
- Kate Winslet, *Steve Jobs*

Best Sup. Actor:

- Christian Bale, *The Big Short*
- Tom Hardy, *The Revenant*
- Mark Ruffalo, *Spotlight*
- Mark Rylance, *Bridge of Spies*
- Sylvester Stallone, *Creed*

Share Your Personal Picks to WIN...

Tell us who you think should win if you were handing out the awards.

- BEST PICTURE
- BEST FOREIGN FILM
- BEST ACTOR
- BEST ACTRESS

Your choices are not limited to the official nominations.

All entries will be entered into a draw for a pair of movie passes to *Alliance Cinema in the Beach*.

Submit your predictions to beachesliving.ca/oscar for a chance to win! Contest closes February 27.



Time to Take Future Finances into your Own Hands

Every day we hear about interest rates going up or going down, and read reports about the US dollar in the news. Does the state of the Canadian and the world economy have an effect on our daily lives, or is it something we should just leave to the bankers to figure out?

Set your own financial goals and objectives to see you through regardless world economic conditions. The one thing you can control is how you manage your own financial life.

Whether we save, or spend, what we buy, even where we choose to shop is affected by the state of the economy. The wisest choice is to stay with your financial plan first, and remember the axiom, "pay yourself first," if you're able to put even a small amount away in savings. Know what is coming in (be realistic) and stick with your budget. Then you can spend more when more money comes in, or save more when there is less.

Uncertain about what is coming in? Then plan on what you know, with a "blue sky" list of what you'll add back in when circumstances change.

Know Your Numbers

This is RRSP, RESP and TFSA season. Now is the time to think and look at your financial big picture and take a few simple things to get it in order:

Know Your Books: Have the big picture – know your finance books: what do you currently own, and how much you owe on the house? Savings, investments, RRSPs, tax-free savings accounts, real estate, etc.

Know Your Lifestyle: you enjoy today and, in the future, you hope to enjoy when you are retired. Calculate the number of years before your retirement.

Know Your Cash Flow: Calculate your monthly expenses today and after retirement, add additional costs for travel or hobbies.

Know Your Future Needs: Now you know what you need to put away monthly and annually to stay on your game. Remember, even in a good or bad economy, "pay yourself first" by putting some away either as savings or to pay off debt.

Get Help: It is always best to get professional help with a reputable financial planner once you have gathered some initial numbers and thought about your financial goals. With their knowledge they can help you master your plan, such as payoff your mortgage faster, find proper investments, lower debt, better plan your savings. You may be surprised how much more they know than someone just trying to DIY(do it yourself). Most importantly, they hold you accountable by meeting at least once with you during the year to review progress, answer questions and adjust the plan as things in your life (and the economy) change.



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my Secret Beaches Spot
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Health talk

A Healthy Life with a Lasting Bright Smile



The health of your mouth is directly connected to the health in the rest of your body and vice versa.

There was a good reason that we were all told by our parents to brush our teeth. We knew it would give us a bright smile, prevent cavities and keep our breath smelling fresh. There is more, much more - by keeping our teeth (and mouth) clean and healthy, we actually keep our entire body healthier.

Healthy dental will also ensure we enjoy and appreciate the good food we eat, and digest it properly before passing it on to our body.

To understand how the mouth can affect the body, professionals tell us – “bacteria on our teeth makes our gums prone to infection. Our immune system moves in to attack the infection and the gums become inflamed. Eventually, inflammation spreads to the rest of the body, along with that nasty oral bacteria.”

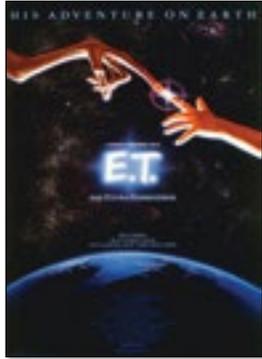
It is now believed that oral bacterial from the inflammation may be linked to cardiovascular disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, even Alzheimer's disease.

The good news is that we can all do something about this. To protect your oral health, practice good oral hygiene every day (just like your mother told you to!) and visit a dentist regularly.

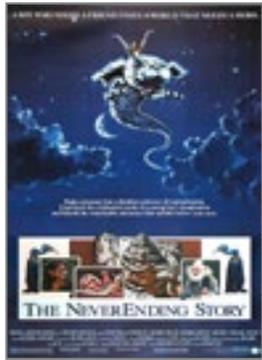
Healthy Smile Tips

- ✓ Brush your teeth at least twice a day.
- ✓ If you can't brush, at least rinse with water or munch on celery – great for cleaning teeth.
- ✓ Sugar is the worse culprit. If you do eat or drink a sugary treat, try to brush or at least rinse afterwards.
- ✓ Floss daily, dental picks are also recommended.
- ✓ Eat a healthy diet with foods rich in calcium (e.g. almonds) and limit between-meal snacks.
- ✓ Replace your toothbrush every three to four months or sooner if bristles are frayed.
- ✓ Use dental products that contain fluoride, including toothpaste.
- ✓ Schedule regular dental checkups.
- ✓ Make sure your dentist checks your gums as well as your teeth.

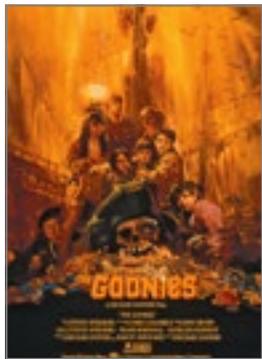
Mega Movies & Series for the Young in Mind



Some movies that are made for adults bring out the kid in all of us, whereas others are made for audiences of kids and teens. These ten movie/series, although made for or about kids and teens, they by no means are meant for the younger audience. Enjoy these adventures (not only for those under 20)!



E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial (1982); Dir. Steven Spielberg; Henry Thomas, Peter Coyote, Drew Barrymore



The NeverEnding Story (1984/1990/1994); Dir. Various; Noah Hathaway, Barret Oliver, Tami Stronach

The Goonies (1985); Dir. Richard Donner; Sean Astin, Josh Brolin, Jeff Cohen



Jumanji (1995) Dir. Joe Johnston; Robin Williams, Kirsten Dunst, Bonnie Hunt

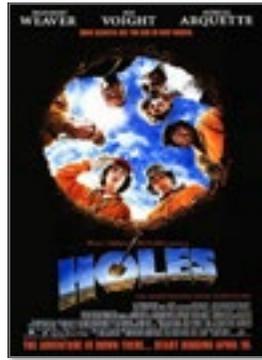
Percy Jackson & the Olympians (2010/2013) Dir. Various; Logan Lerman, Kevin McKidd, Alexandra Daddario, Brandon T. Jackson



Harry Potter (2001/02/04/05/07/09/10/11) Dir. Various; Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson, Alan Rickman



Holes (2003); Dir. Andrew Davis; Shia LaBeouf, Sigourney Weaver, Jon Voight



The Chronicles of Narnia (2005/08/10/) Dir. Various; Tilda Swinton, Ben Barnes, Skandar Keynes, Georgie Henley



The Hunger Games (2012/13/14/15); Dir. Various; Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Liam Hemsworth

Divergent (2014) Dir. Neil Burger; Shailene Woodley, Theo James, Kate Winslet



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Being smart about keeping up with technology

How to stay up-to-date and not be overwhelmed



More and more, gadgets, digital devices and smart technology have become integrated into our life as good additions, for the most part of it. But keeping up with the newest, latest, smartest and coolest can be overwhelming, as most of us have experienced.

Now, smart consumers no longer feel the need for everything latest and newest. Regardless of brand or version of the operating system, the ones we got, just two years ago such as our computers, smart phones and tablets are all, more or less, equally usable these days. People are using devices of every make and vintage – without feeling the need to upgrade.

So are your gadgets or apps “good enough”? Try these suggestions to decide if you’ve got what you need, and make sure you aren’t overwhelmed by the technology tools that already work for you every day.

1. Upgrade or Not? Does the technology you use (your phone, your computer, tablet, etc.) still do what you need it to do? Many times, the upgraded versions offer improvements, but many times, they are just gimmicky features, or not upgrades that you need.

2. Chose You Options Carefully Technology gives us unlimited choices through options and preferences. But you don’t have to use them all! Decide what you care about (easy access to your Internet browser) and what you can live without (email notifications that constantly pop-up on your screen.)

3. Can You Afford the Time & Money?

Is outdated technology costing you time? It depends how you use it. If you are paid by the hour for work you do on your computer and your computer is very slow, the time it takes to start up, load a website, or reboot after a crash could be affecting your bottom line.

4. Are You Making It Work for You?

If you’re spending too much time trying to figure out how to use your technology rather than actually making it work for you, you may want to consider what you download. There are millions of apps now available, but after trying out different apps, decide which ones are worth it and which ones are more trouble than they are worth. A “to do list” app isn’t worth it if you can just as easily write down a list with pen and paper.

5. Take Regularly Tech Breaks

Give yourself a technology break; perhaps at lunch hour or over a weekend. Being able to step away for a period reduces the stress of making it all work and keeping ahead of the curve!

6. Treat Yourself

Treat yourself with a new, cool gadget on special occasions, e.g. birthday, holidays, or a reward for an accomplishment. It will spread out the enjoyment of something new and give you time to think about what you’d really like.

A Season of Celebrations

It's the season of events, celebrations and festivities.
Look at what's ahead in the next few weeks!

Super Bowl 50 – February 7, 2016
Half-time show includes Beyonce and Coldplay.

St. Valentine's Day – Sunday, February 14
Celebrate in many countries around the world as a time to remember those we love, Valentine's Day is a welcomed bright spot in a grey February!

Family Day – Monday, February 15
Observed in Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba, and British Columbia, Family Day was originally created to give people time to spend with their families. Common Family Day activities include skating, playing hockey, snowboarding/skiing and going to various winter festivals.

Grammy Awards – Monday, February 15
The recording industry's most prestigious award, this year, Kendrick Lamar earned 11 nominations for the 2016 Grammys, both Taylor Swift and The Weeknd tie for second with 7 nominations apiece.

The Oscars –
Sunday, February 28
Hosted by Chris Rock.
See page 21 for our annual contest.

March Break – March 14-18
Be prepared, parents, the kids at Toronto public and Catholic schools are on vacation.

St. Patrick's Day – Thursday, March 17
A cultural and religious celebration held on 17 March, the traditional death date of Saint Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. In Irish communities around the world (including Toronto), the beer is dyed green and you're guaranteed a good time at one of our numerous Irish pubs. Toronto's St. Patrick's Day Parade takes place on Sunday, February 13, beginning at 12 noon at Bloor and St. George.

Easter – Sunday, March 27





A “Chill” Salon Experience for Looking Great

Making everyone feel like they’ve come to the right place is in every stylist’s mind at Parlour Salon East, which operates hair salons in both the Beaches and on Ossington Avenue since 2009.

“We aren’t a pompous, ‘too cool for school’ salon,” explains owner Tyler Moore. “We want everyone to come in and feel relaxed, be treated warmly and get great service. We’re totally inclusive and we listen.”

These days, services in a hair salon means a broad range of styles and treatments. Colour choices are broad (pinks, purple, blue, red, etc.) and can be applied so the effect is bright or intentionally faded. Creativity abounds, especially at a Parlour East. “The most recent creative colour we did is very ‘my little pony’”, says Tyler.

Tyler notes that length is coming back in hair styles, which means a lot of people are growing their hair out. “Balayage” is still popular but “colour melting” is becoming the newest trend. (Balayage is applying highlights on the surface of the hair for a “sun kissed” look. Colour melting involves two colours, where the darker starts at the roots. It looks a bit like a “grow out” but it’s also very natural looking and therefore, appealing to many).

Another part of their secret is to treat their stylists as artists and encourage them to express and be themselves. With a single goal of “making their clients look good” each stylist takes the time to consult with them to get the best outcome.

“Parlour Salon keeps good care of our team and the

team in turn keeps good care of their clients,” adds Tyler, “It’s a vibe I believe everyone feels when they come in”. The stylists range from those just starting their career to very seasoned veterans who have been in the industry for many years. The salon offers a level system with different price levels, which benefits both the client and the stylists.

Compared to salons of a generation ago, Parlour East has strong presence on social media. Here clients share everything from the comments about their new hair style to their wedding or the party they attended.

Their active social media visitors also brought visitors from outside of Toronto as well as Canada to the salon. It’s all good “word of mouth” experiences from customers. “Our client range is extremely broad,” says owner Tyler, “From two years old to 80 years young! They come because they’re looking for a chill experience with some of the most talented artist in the city. And we don’t disappoint!”

So what does Tyler like best about his job? “That smile on client’s face, when they look at themselves in the mirror after the service and they feel beautiful.”

The salon also carries professional products such as Kevin Murphy, the Australian brand known around the hairdressing world as being earth conscious and cruelty free – even the containers are biodegradable. This year they are adding Living Proof.

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Jim Caruk

Biz talk

Be part of the "Next Big Thing"



By now, you've thought about or already made plans for growing your business in 2016. Growth doesn't have to mean a big step but it's an indicator for moving forward. Sometimes a series of smaller, careful steps move your business forward in a way where you can track your progress, reflect on what is working and adjust as you go along.

Here are some ideas that help businesses look successful, stay successful, and by doing so, ensure that they grow.

BE INNOVATIVE – Canadian business owners, large and small, are known world-wide for their ability to innovate. It's all about thinking beyond what you've always done and asking yourself what you might add or do differently over the next 12 months.

What's new in your area of business? What new product or service might you introduce? Is there a technology that you could provide to make your customers' lives easier? Maybe a new app or a new tool on your website.

BOAST ABOUT THE NEW! – Let your customers know what your business is doing that is new, no matter how large or small the change. Maybe you added an espresso coffee machine to your customer service waiting area, updated your website, hired new staff, added a new product line, did some renovations or redecorating. By announcing the change you send the message that you are doing well, looking ahead, that you're business isn't just the same old routine.

BE ON TOP OF THE TREND AND TALK ABOUT THEM – Particularly in professional services, keeping your customers informed of the latest trends, treatments, research, etc. helps establish you as current, up-to-date, and ready for the next "big thing".

For health professionals, what's the latest on nutrition and exercise, for financial planners, what are today's tax-saving tips. For restaurant owners, are there new food trends to try, or different products available for chefs?

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- 4th Earth Hour LIGHTS OUT! (Mar 19)

PROMOTIONS

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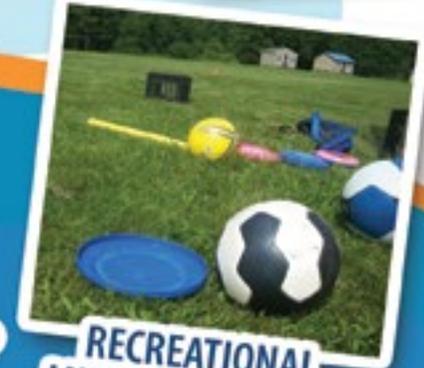
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Buying in “Urban” Bulk

Local entrepreneur follows a three-generation tradition

Aziza Popat, owner of Urban Bulk Emporium, Queen Street’s new bulk food store (since 2015), is no stranger to the bulk food business. Both her grandparents and parents ran bulk food stores. Growing up, she spent much of her spare time helping in the back room. “But when I was studying business entrepreneurship at Ryerson University,” she says, “my father thoroughly taught me the business side.”

How many different items would you think are in a bulk food store? Would you have guessed over 300? The items range from the expected array of grains, spices and baking ingredients to specialty items like free-range chicken eggs, organic spices and herbs, and products that are gluten, nut and/or dairy free.

“We even sell vegan marshmallows,” laughs Aziza. She tells the story of a mother looking for an item on her 6-year-old’s Santa list last December, “He had asked for our organic mango slices – imagine a kid asking for that!”

Although she “never thought she’d end up in the bulk food business herself,” there were no bulk food stores nearby in the Leslieville area where she and her husband Cory live. “I always wanted to open my own business,” she adds, “it seemed like a perfect fit, plus I didn’t want to end up in a corporate job working in a cubical!”

An avid cook, Aziza has a good sense of what to order, bringing in food from all over the world, but giving local producers a chance whenever possible. Customers are encouraged to bring their own containers so they only buy exactly what they want, in the quantity they intend to use (and therefore avoid wasting food).

Aziza is always in the store on weekdays, advising and talking with visitors. Because it’s the beginning of the year, many are stocking up on healthy items. “We’re selling a lot of our super foods these days,” she says, (items such as wheat grass powder, hemp and flax seeds). Two other very popular items are the toasted coconut chips and the granola.

After a year in operation, the couple has made many friends. Last year ahead of their wedding, various customers showed up with flowers and good wishes. Now expecting their first child, Aziza already has received a bag of gently used baby items from a customer, “It is just so sweet of everyone,” says Aziza, “we’re not just building a business here, we’re building wonderful relationships.”

Urban Bulk Emporium
1380 Queen St. E., 647-344-8075
urbanbulkemporium.com

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coming, going and on the move

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Amy's Place – 155 Main St.
No Bones About It – 2186 Queen St. E.
Stark Fitness – 2209 Gerrard St. E.
Torq Ride – 978 Queen St. E. (opening Spring 2016)
Zoltzz Renfrew – 1936 Queen St. E.

On the Move (new location):

Yoga Yoga East – 1400 Kingston Rd.

Thank you and best wishes:

Bella Lite – 1989 Danforth Ave.
Gongton Design – 2116-C Queen St. E.
Lakeshore Links Indoor Golf – 750 Lake Shore Blvd. E.
Le Papillon on the Park – 1001 Eastern Ave.
Menchie's Frozen Yogourt – 1985 Queen St. E.
Moo Milk Bar – 1918A Queen St. E.

CORRECTION: Mumbai House – 1698 Queen St. E. reopened after renovations.

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let us know. We will add you to the list in our next Beaches|life magazine.
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