



# THE CHAMBERS VOICE

SPRING 2021

**THE BRIDGEWATER AND AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE** welcomes businesses of all sizes and type. We are committed to engaging our members in ways that inspire a progressive business climate and contribute to the steady economic growth of the South Shore. We're here to support you and help you face the future with confidence.

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Last March, none of us could have anticipated that we'd be acknowledging a 'one year anniversary'... but here we are. The good news is, we have fared rather well in Nova Scotia. By keeping our numbers low, we've had more freedoms than most places in Canada, and now as more vaccines happen, we move closer to a 'post-pandemic' world. Let's all continue to work together, stay vigilante, and keep taking care of ourselves and our neighbours.

In February we launched our new website. If you haven't had a chance to check it out, please do so – this is your main source of information about what's happening at the Chamber. You will find out about the courses we are currently offering in partnership with the NS Department of Labour and Advanced Education, upcoming Lunch & Learn opportunities, and downloadable resources.

You can also stay up-to-date with Chamber happenings by following us on Facebook:

[Bridgewater Area Chamber of Commerce](#)

[Chamber's member-to-member Facebook group](#)

This is your opportunity to engage directly with fellow members, offer incentives and promote your business.

Please take the time to read the inspiring stories of three members showcased in this issue, who share what the last year has been like and how they managed to pivot as needed, think creatively and continue to keep their businesses going.

The AGM will be held virtually this year – please see page 10 for more details. Let's continue to support our local businesses and if you are able to, plan a staycation – we have so much available to us on the South Shore and in the Atlantic bubble that is opening again in April.

Thanks to everyone who continues to work each and every day to provide us with what we need to keep safe and help our communities continue to rise above the challenges that we face. Let's continue to get through this, together.

Jim Brown,  
*President*



**Bridgewater and Area**  
Chamber of Commerce

## SHOP. DINE. PLAY.

Think local first! We have so much available to us right here on the South Shore. Let's continue to support our local businesses.

Plan a staycation today:

[visitsouthshore.ca](https://visitsouthshore.ca)

[coastalresortcollection.ca](https://coastalresortcollection.ca)

[capelahaveadventures.ca](https://capelahaveadventures.ca)

[oakhillpines.com](https://oakhillpines.com)

More business resources on page 4

**HAVE  
YOU SEEN  
OUR NEW  
WEBSITE?**

[Click here to  
check it out!](#)

## IN THIS ISSUE:

**Stories** from member business owners reflecting on the last year and what 2021 looks like, plus a list of helpful resources

An overview of **FREE on-line courses** and expertise available to help your business

New **member engagement opportunities** and what your Chamber has planned for **2021**

**IN EACH ISSUE OF THE CHAMBERS VOICE, we showcase 3 members** and ask about their businesses. Our intent is to tell their stories, give them some exposure to other members and ask how the Chamber and the business community can help. In this quarter, we talked to a builder, a shop owner and a restaurant owner – all in sectors that have been greatly impacted by the pandemic.

Last March no one would have believed that we would still be in this a year later, but here we are. Yes, it’s been challenging – everyone agrees with that – but it’s also encouraging to hear their positive attitude, their ability to pivot and the amazing support of the community. Here are their stories.

# “We had to stay as agile as possible”



[tiliabuilders.com](http://tiliabuilders.com)

Liam Finney  
902.329.5505

- NEW CONSTRUCTION
- RENOVATIONS
- RESTORATIONS
- OUTDOOR STRUCTURES



**“To say that 2020 was challenging would be an understatement,” says Liam Finney, co-owner of Tilia Builders Inc.** When the restrictions came into play, Liam and partner Michael Mandale had a tough time squaring the realities of a construction site with the government mandate. First of all, most of their employees carpool, so immediately, that could not continue.

They had open contracts with hard finish dates to meet with customers, and with the bank. Liam knew that if the deadlines weren’t met, there would be implications with relationships. They had some tough decisions to make fast.

The first step was a shift to operate from home and look for opportunities to save money right off the top; bringing overhead expenses down to be as agile as possible. They struggled to keep work environments safe and clean with proper social distancing in place, and it proved to be much too challenging, so they laid everyone off to take advantage of CERB. For a couple of months things were really up in the air. To meet their commitments, Michael and Liam each took a project to work on alone and they are proud to say that they finished them both.

The cost of raw materials has been hugely disruptive as supply was cut back and demand went through the roof. People were suddenly at home, wanting to get projects done. There has been a huge surge in demand for renovations and new builds. It’s more expensive to build a home now and the bidding is more challenging for companies like Tilia Builders – there are more out-of-province buyers and a high demand for the housing stock that exists. People are snapping up what they can get with the hopes of renovating, and in some cases, even moving a building to a new location.

Liam and Michael feel very fortunate to have a stable network of tradespeople – people who wanted to work! Protocols are in place for everyone to work safely and sensibly and they are busier than usual. They came back with half the employees for now and closed their office space; slimmed down the size of the company and cut back on expenses. They are leaner and know that the drastic measures they took helped protect their company. Liam, Michael and their office manager are still working from home offices and plan to do so for the foreseeable future.

**Tilia Builders Inc.** anticipates 2021 to continue to be very busy; demand is really high and it will take some time to get the supply up to the same level.

Liam shared with us that he really appreciated the regular reliable communication from the Chamber to their members on Facebook. It was a quick and easy way for him to get up-to-date information and access links to government resources. He looks forward to the day when we can have networking events and business engagement. Oh the stories we’ll have to tell!



# “Facebook was my saviour”



**Treasured Friends Gift Shop** owner, Janet Barrie, sums up last years’ event in one word. Scary. When she closed the store in March of 2020, she really had no idea what would happen. Her lovely 2-storey shop with original tin ceiling is somewhat of an institution on King Street in Bridgewater, with the first floor dedicated to women’s wear and gift items and the second floor to consignment. Over the years she has established a loyal clientele who follow her daily posts on Facebook, watching for deals and asking for items to be put on hold. It’s the shop in town that was known for open house events with home baked treats, Easter egg events, wine & cheese nights and celebrating the holidays.

On the main floor, there is a whole new section of products that weren’t here last year: face masks. And lots of them. You will also find a selection of items made from Nova Scotia tartan – placemats, aprons, scarves, and yes, face masks. There was a surge in Nova Scotia pride last year as everyone sheltered in place and supported fellow Nova Scotians when disaster struck. In fact, when Janet realized that people were purchasing the tartan scarves and cutting them up to wrap around trees, she brought in as much of the fabric as she could find and sold pieces at a much lower price so the scarves could remain intact.



When the shop first closed, people were dropping consignment items off at her house. Deliveries of new product were also being made to her house. All the while, Janet was busy keeping her 3000+ Facebook followers engaged – taking photos in a makeshift studio in her home and posting most evenings. Regulars are keen for new consignment items as the fun is in the hunt for a great bargain. Facebook was Janet’s only source of marketing and she’s really not sure what it would have been like without it.

There were very few days when she was closed to the public that she wasn’t working on her business. She wasn’t forced to close but if no one was out and about, there was no point in keeping the store open. Everyone was at home, so she tested the demand for jigsaw puzzles and found success. More puzzles were ordered. She arranged to meet people at the store, sometimes 2-3 times a day, and even delivered directly to customers’ homes. Her single focus goal was to be able to pay the necessary utilities and keep the store going.

At the end of April, she was able to reopen for a few days a week with limited hours, and by the end of June, she was able to bring back 2 part-time employees and keep the store open 6 days a week.

With all of Janet’s efforts and loyal customer base, the last year has actually been a good year. It seems that the community and Nova Scotians in general have really embraced ‘supporting local’. And the trend is continuing, as she welcomes new customers and returning customers from years ago, who are visiting the store again. When the masks come off, she’ll have to relearn who they all are. Janet has seen many people coming from further away – Liverpool, Shelburne, Halifax – not being allowed to leave the province, a drive to the South Shore is a good day trip!

“Every month last year we had to hold our breath wondering what would happen,” says Janet. She is hopeful that with the Atlantic Bubble set to reopen in April, more people will travel to the South Shore – we have so much to offer, not only great shopping and dining but beautiful beaches and recreational activities too.

**Treasured Friends Gift Shop**  
**505 King St., Bridgewater**  
**Janet Barrie**  
**902.527.1789**





# “The community has been amazing”



In December of 2019, **Osprey's Nest Public House**, an intimate year-round pub nestled in the beautiful beachside community of Petite Rivière, opened their doors. They were very busy right from the start and had big plans for events, take out service by the summer and establishing their reputation as a ‘go-to favourite’ on the South Shore. As it turned out, they were open for less than 4 months before everything changed. We spoke with co-owner Tanya Shaw about what it was like for her and her partners when faced with this challenge.

They were already starting to build a reputation in the short time they had been open, so what could they do to keep the momentum going? They immediately pivoted to offer take out earlier than planned, and the community came to their rescue, knowing that if they didn't support this great new restaurant, it would close. ‘The community was amazing,’ says Tanya, ‘they were so supportive and really kept us alive.’

When they were able to reopen the dining room in June, they did so cautiously by operating from Thursday to Sunday. It was a challenge with fewer tables and fewer guests, but thankfully, the weather co-operated and they were able to extend their seating on the large outdoor patio. In addition, they converted the lower patio – originally intended as a waiting area – into a full service area.



It was a real balancing act as they downsized the hours for take out – not wanting to drop it completely since some people were nervous about dining in and wanted to continue to support them – but they didn't want to overload the demands on the kitchen and jeopardize quality either. Keeping a high level of food service was of utmost importance.

With the power of word-of-mouth and guests posting on social media, people were coming from all over the South Shore, even from Halifax – just for dinner! This team was proving they would not be outdone by this pandemic and managed to think creatively to not only keep the business alive but to provide a great experience for their guests.

They started to wonder how else they could generate income and provide value to the community. With many restaurants closed or operating at a limited capacity, food suppliers were looking for ways to innovate as well. They collaborated with one supplier to offer reduced prices on high quality foods in the form of ‘truckload’ sales. Osprey's Nest offered a 10-day period to place your order and a contact-free window for pick up. It's been so successful, that they plan to have one every few months.

When the weather started to cool, they wanted to make sure they could accommodate as many guests as possible and seat everyone who arrived. A bit of a challenge, since they don't take reservations and their location is a destination spot for most people. What to do? Extend the season with a covered, heated patio.

They got onboard with Kickstarter\* to raise the money they needed to close in the patio with removable panels, heat lamps and an electric fireplace. Cozy! The online promotion helped get the word out that they had this additional space, and once again the community got behind them and they exceeded their goal!

The plan these days is to stay nimble and responsive. They are sticking to 4 days a week for now and are ready to re-evaluate at any time to open for an additional day or two, if things get busy. They never want to turn anyone away, but the #1 priority is always to provide an unforgettable experience.

Their original vision was to create a living room atmosphere; comfortable and welcoming, and despite everything, they have been able to maintain that. While other restaurants have reduced their menu, they chose to expand theirs – all in the interest of providing a great experience and more food options, especially for returning guests. Chef Nicole has been with them since the launch and sous chef Andrew arrived last August. The kitchen is a joyful place, and it shows in the wonderful dishes they create.

**Osprey's Nest Public House** chose to be a member of the Chamber with hopes of getting to know other business owners. It is possible to arrange smaller events right now, and as we come out of this pandemic, they would love to create more opportunities for networking and private events like staff Christmas parties, meeting space/off-site events and even weddings.

If you haven't been to Osprey's Nest Public House, do yourself a favour and go!

*\* Kickstarter is a company that manages ‘crowd funding’ – they look after all details and as people pledge money, you have the option to offer rewards. It gives the participants a real sense of contributing to their community; and in the case of Osprey's Nest, something they get to enjoy.*



[ospreysnest.pub](https://ospreysnest.pub)

902.693.6378 (NEST)  
39 John Rieser Drive,  
Petite Riviere NS







# SHOP LOCAL, BUY LOCAL, VACATION LOCAL

With the Atlantic Bubble in place again, let's support the businesses in the Atlantic provinces, starting with the South Shore! We are so fortunate to have amazing shopping, dining, recreation and vacation opportunities so close to home that the rest of the world would love to have the freedom to enjoy!

If you are looking for business resources and/or are about to reopen for the season, here are a few available resources:

<https://tourismns.ca/>

All business and customers must continue to follow the public health measures around physical distancing and gathering limits. A full list of COVID-19 restriction updates can be found here: <https://tourismns.ca/covid-19-updates-and-resources>

and here

<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>

Business Tools and Resources:

<https://tourismns.ca/business-tools-resources>

<https://www.novascotiabusiness.com/business>

**Sector-specific** re-opening plans can be found here: <https://novascotia.ca/reopening-nova-scotia/prevention-plans/#sector-plans>

## BRIDGEWATER AND AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IS ON BOARD!



The *Capturing Freshwater Contaminants at the Source: Reducing Microplastic Release from Laundry Machines in Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia* project led by Coastal Action will reduce the amount of harmful microfibres released from laundering into freshwater ecosystems and increase awareness by engaging local citizens, small businesses and municipalities from July 2021 to April 2023.

This will be accomplished by installing 25 microfibre capturing devices on the laundry machines of local residents and small businesses, assessing materials captured and conducting an effective environmental awareness campaign through workshops, citizen science and a variety of digital communication tools.

The Bridgewater and Area Chamber of Commerce will be partnering with Coastal Action on the project by collaborating on the following:

1. Provide consultation on participant selection, particularly small businesses;
2. Encourage community and small business participation by sharing outreach and participant recruitment events/material with network;
3. Coastal Action hosting a workshop for Bridgewater and Area Chamber of commerce board of directors and members on the project and microfibre capture technologies/methods.
4. Assist In the coordination of workshops/focus group sessions, marketing and promotion
5. Participate In regular strategy meetings with project team/Chamber

## Caring about our planet

Becoming a sustainability leader requires changes in core business practices but the effort to do so is worth it: in environmental, social and economic terms. Putting sustainability first not only enables business to drive the transition to a better and more just world, it makes plain business sense.



# REPORT FROM



## TALK BRIDGEWATER: BUDGET EDITION

Members of Bridgewater Town Council will be out on the town on **Friday, March 26**, for the final Talk Bridgewater: Budget Edition public engagement session before moving ahead with 2021-22 budget approval.

Town Councilors will be on site from **12 noon to 4 p.m.** at both the Margaret Hennigar Branch of the South Shore Public Libraries and South Shore Centre to hear from you!

Have a question about the upcoming investments in infrastructure, including Highway 103's Exit 12A? Want to know what's being done to keep our river clean? Curious about why Council is considering a residential tax rate increase and why now is the time to make key investments in the future of business in our community?

Make plans to stop by and #TalkBridgewater!

## BUILDING REPORT

The final January 2021 numbers are in from the Town of Bridgewater's Building Inspectors. The year began on a strong note with eight total building permits (five single-family, two apartments, and one commercial) issued during the month of January. The total construction value of the permits issued is just over \$370,000.

During the same period last year, three permits with a total value of \$70,000 were issued.

## EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUND FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

We all know that COVID-19 has kept many local groups and organizations from providing the community with programs and activities. For such groups, this has caused significant financial hardship.

Bridgewater's Emergency Assistance Fund will help organizations impacted by canceled events and activities, altered program delivery, and increased costs related to equipment, leadership, coaches, facilities, and cleaning supplies. The maximum grant value is \$1,000. **Deadline is March 31, 2021.**

Applicants must be a non-profit (or not-for-profit) community, charitable, fraternal, educational, recreational, religious, cultural, or sporting organization. Do you volunteer with an organization that could potentially benefit from this funding? If so, for more details visit [www.bridgewater.ca/help](http://www.bridgewater.ca/help).

Tell your fellow Chamber members about your business!  
Share your **successes, special offers** and **good news** here:

[Bridgewater Area Chamber of Commerce Facebook page](#)

[Chamber's member-to-member Facebook group](#)

We want to hear  
from you!

# MODL2040



## Share your Vision for the Future of MODL

The Municipality has launched a multi-year campaign to amend strategic planning documents and regulations, called MODL2040. With your input, we are looking to reshape the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB) over the course of the next two years through public consultation. Together we will determine a shared vision and help define a path for the Municipality to 2040.

To kick off MODL2040, we've created a video to introduce some of the main planning concepts and developed a survey to help us begin to understand your community priorities, both available at [engage.modl.ca/MODL2040](https://engage.modl.ca/MODL2040).

## What is a Municipal Planning Strategy?

Municipalities in Nova Scotia create Municipal Planning Strategies to provide a big-picture vision based on the anticipated challenges and opportunities for the community, as well as a policy framework for land use and development control. The Municipal Government Act provides Council with the power to make policy statements with respect to a broad range of activities including future development, land use, public lands, transportation, municipal services, municipal development, coordination of public programs, and any other matters related to the physical, social or economic development of the Municipality.

## What is a Land Use By-law?

The Land Use By-law establishes legal development standards through a set of regulations to implement the direction and vision of the MPS. It will divide the Municipality into a variety of zones. Each zone has standards that may include such items as building sizes, lot sizes, and building setbacks. Zoning also permits and prohibits different land uses to minimize land use conflicts. Clear regulations provide the necessary direction to property owners on how they will be permitted to develop their land while protecting critical natural resources.

## Next Steps

The video and the first survey are now available at [engage.modl.ca/MODL2040](https://engage.modl.ca/MODL2040). This survey is meant to be the conversation starter - further opportunities for feedback and discussion will follow. Your community knowledge will be a valuable contribution in creating a clear and complete vision for the MODL2040 plan. Please get involved!

## FULLY FUNDED ONLINE PROGRAM

## SKILLS FOR GROWING YOUR BUSINESS WORKPLACE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

We want your business to have all the tools for success. The Bridgewater and Area Chamber of Commerce has partnered with the **NS Department of Labour and Advanced Education** to bring you a wide range of exciting fully funded training opportunities.

We are currently in the middle of several on-line courses.

Go to the [Upcoming Events page on our website](#) to see what's on the go – the most popular courses do tend to be offered again, so watch for news by email or on the Facebook page.

Each training session has a **CAPACITY OF 12 ATTENDEES**  
More courses will be on offer soon and you will have a chance to RSVP for them.





# LUNCH & LEARN ONLINE

Don't miss the next Lunch & Learn session:

**March 25, 2021 from noon-1PM**

To register please contact us at  
[info@bridgewaterchamber.com](mailto:info@bridgewaterchamber.com)

The link for the online session will be provided.

## Virtual Selling Best Practices

COVID-19 has changed business forever. Most importantly, it has forced the acceleration of trends that were underway before the virus emerged. One of those trends is selling online.

The program will describe best practices for attending and hosting online meetings, conferences, and sales presentations. And it will describe the new kit you will need to be at the top of your game.

The speakers will be **Royce Winsten, Regional Business Development Advisor at Nova Scotia Business Inc.**, and his guest speaker, **Larry Burke of Burke & Burke**, the original creative marketing boutique in Halifax.

Come join us and learn how to excel in the new world of sales and marketing.

## Would you like to do a Lunch & Learn?

If you have something of value to present to Chamber members, please reach out to us at [info@bridgewaterchamber.com](mailto:info@bridgewaterchamber.com)

There are currently lots of spots open for 2021, but they won't be for long! There is one Lunch & Learn scheduled each month and runs from 12 -1 pm.

## MEMBER RESOURCES



[Click here to join the Chamber's private Facebook group](#)

*Chamber Network* is a place where members can communicate with fellow members, hear about **'members only' offers** and **promote their business and products**



[Bridgewater Area Chamber of Commerce Facebook page](#)

for all the latest local and provincial updates on Covid-19 and other government notices and general news from the Chamber.



[www.bridgewaterchamber.com](http://www.bridgewaterchamber.com)

We are pleased to announce that we have launched the **new website**. Find out everything you need to know about your Chamber including:

- easy-to-use directory of members
- calendar of events
- on-line registration for events
- [downloads page](#) - lots of great resources posted



# BUY LOCAL

## Why is it important to **STEP UP** and support local?

Small businesses  
employ  
**70%**  
of all Canadians. 👤

**45¢**  
spent at locally  
owned businesses  
stays in the local  
economy. 💰

Local businesses  
donate  
**2.5x**  
more  
to local nonprofits. 🤝

Money spent at locally  
owned businesses  
creates tax revenue  
**to fund**  
🏥 healthcare, 🎓 education,  
safer communities, 🚶 streets and sidewalks. 👤

Small businesses  
represent  
**99.8%**  
of business in  
Canada. 👍

Indie business adds  
**colour, taste,**  
character and  
**social**  
**capital**  
to their communities. 🌈

## @StepUpForLocal

**Shop | Eat | Give | Celebrate Local**

Stepping up for local is a mindset. It's about supporting our neighbours and our neighbourhoods. It's about celebrating the good in our communities. It's about the humanity behind our economy.

revolve We listen. untangle. create.

Visit [www.stepupforlocal.ca](http://www.stepupforlocal.ca) and get your **TOOLKIT** for local businesses to celebrate and promote buying local.

The TOOLKIT lets Chamber members show they are a local business, help celebrate local, and encourage others in Bridgewater to do the same. There are links to download logos and other artwork for use in their marketing and communications, both on-line and off-line. This is a great initiative that will assist business owners as we emerge from the COVID-19 business impact.



Supporting LOCAL  
means ALL of the  
Atlantic Provinces!



# MEMBER-TO-MEMBER LOYALTY PROGRAM

As a member of the Chamber, you have the unique opportunity to offer any type of gift, discount or incentive to your fellow members. Contact us with your idea and we will share it on our member-to-member Facebook page and the website.

***This community is committed to helping local businesses succeed!***

**SALTWIRE**  
NETWORK

Chamber members who market with SaltWire will be given a 15% discount on print and digital products. Furthermore, any Chamber members will be given a complimentary print ad with any content campaign. <https://www.saltwire.com/>



**staples**   
work. learn. grow.

Go to [www.bridgewaterchamber.com/downloads](http://www.bridgewaterchamber.com/downloads) to view this exclusive offer from Staples for Chamber members. Print out the loyalty card to use in-store or online for instant savings on eligible print & marketing products.

## 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### PRESIDENT

Jim Brown

### VICE PRESIDENT

Blair Lipsett

### SECRETARY

Shawn Patterson

### TREASURER

Lee Wallet

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dan Hennessey

### BOARD MEMBERS

Debra Porter

Leitha Haysom

Cheryl Fougere

Brooke Nodding

Bruce Anderson

Liam Finney

Stacey Mailman

Jayne Rhyno

Rae Ann Bonneville

Josh Healey

## SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 18

### DON'T MISS OUR VIRTUAL AGM with guest speaker, Tyler Hayden

Timing and RSVP  
information to come



## Livin' Life Large – Thriving in a Pivoted World

In this highly energetic and entertaining presentation, international speaker and best selling author, Tyler Hayden, will explore skills and techniques that will help you not just survive but thrive in the changed business landscape

## UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

We continue to meet monthly to work on how we can bring more value to our membership!

Friday, April 9 8:30 - 10 am

Friday, May 14 8:30 - 10 am

Friday, June 11 8:30 - 10 am

For information, please contact:

[info@bridgewaterchamber.com](mailto:info@bridgewaterchamber.com)



**Bridgewater and Area**  
Chamber of Commerce

[www.bridgewaterchamber.com](http://www.bridgewaterchamber.com)

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