

Minding your Business in **CARDINAL**

By Joanne Rennie

Most people in the area know of Cardinal, Ontario because it is situated on the beautiful St Lawrence River along Hwy #2 and because of its main employer, Ingredion Canada Inc. (formerly known as Casco or Canada Starch). Unless you live here however, what else do you know? Well, I'm here to say: There is much more to Cardinal than meets the eye! The old saying: "You should never judge a book by its cover" certainly rings true where Cardinal is concerned. This is a quaint and quiet town thriving with life that has a strong business community.

My question on this subject was: Because there are so many businesses in Cardinal, where do I start and how do I include everyone, so I don't leave anyone out? The answer is: It's not possible. So I compiled a small list of businesses in town to visit and started from there.

First I met with Predator Automotive, owned by Roger (fully licensed for 20 yrs) and Kailey (working to get her mechanics license) who opened their business in 2012. Their inspiration for opening the business was not only for their passion of auto mechanics but also to be self-sufficient and set an example to their children that hard work provides for your family. When you first walk in, you will be greeted by their two very friendly dogs. You just can't help spending a bit of time with them before you turn your attention back to what you actually went there for. Roger and Kailey firmly believe: "It's all about family and your customers are family". They also believe in strong customer service, honesty, integrity as well as educating the customer.

A couple of blocks away, on main street, you'll find the General Dollar and Party "Sense" store owned by Marj, who found her niche 20 years ago with 1 helium tank and a dozen balloons. Through hard work and dedication, Marj is gaining recognition as the party store in the area for design and decorating. (I personally find it amazing that someone started out having fun with a dozen balloons and turned it into such a cheerful business!). Meanwhile, back at the

store, Marj and her dedicated staff offer a multitude of discount items in retail, ranging from household items to greeting cards and decorations. Marj thinks of her staff as "family and could not do without them!"

If its art and culture you're looking for, stop in and visit the Galop Gallery located on Hwy 2 (across from the old canal). Christine, Tammy and Karie decided to join their talents of art, crafting and business skills together and opened the gallery in 2013. Their inspiration is to promote and support local artists, as well as inspire up and coming artists. They want to offer the community a place to find nice art without the higher prices you would normally pay in the city. They feel bringing an artistic culture to Cardinal would help generate tourism, which would put both the artists and Cardinal on the map.

If you are looking for family dining in a relaxed atmosphere, The Scorpion Restaurant (owned by Karen and Gerry for 16 years) offers a wide range of food from pizza to full course meals and is well known for their Greek Souvlaki. Karen and Gerry have developed a special relationship with their customers. They know what their customers like from the very young to their senior customers and are especially pleased when the children who have grown up and moved away, come back to the restaurant while in town.

While on the topic of restaurants, I must mention The 730 Truck Stop. Ken and Balbir purchased the restaurant in 2013 as they saw potential for growth and development. They recognize and greatly appreciate their loyal customers and acknowledge that without them, there wouldn't be a 730 Truck Stop. A quote from Ken and Balbir: "We appreciate the loyalty the local people have given to 730 Truck Stop and it's nice to see the people have accepted us as they did Bob (the previous owner)."

What you won't find here are box stores, you will find affordable prices from a home renovation store, a furniture store, a flower shop, a deli and a convenience store. There are builders and trades people, auto/metal



Top: Marj Kempffer of Party Sense
Middle: Kailey & Roger of Predator Auto
Bottom: Christine of Galop Gallery



recycling (The Bone Yard) and there are so many more businesses. This apparent "quiet town" offers a wide range of activities from historic sites to check out shipwrecks, organizations such as the Legion or Flowers in Bloom, recreational facilities for swimming and skating, as well as parks, where you can enjoy the river or for children to play. There are churches for worship, a library and a school for your child's learning growth.

"I would like to acknowledge the spirit and dedication of the business people in Cardinal."

So in conclusion: There is more to Cardinal than meets the eye! Cardinal is growing, ready to welcome new businesses and you can't beat the prices here for real estate or retail. Now that's good old hometown value!

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