



Local Shopping BIG & SMALL

PHOTOGRAPHY TARA WEST

Support these local business owners and they'll support our community right back! Whether you're in the market for a whole home, a bathroom reno or something smaller, like a beautiful flower arrangement or luxurious carpet, we have the best sources right here in Waterloo Region.

JANICE JAMIESON, *Owner* Dutch Mill Flower Shop, Waterloo

What are your specialties? Dutch Mill Flower Shop specializes in exotic and tropical cut flowers that are imported from all over the world. We carry the largest selection of cut orchids brought in from Singapore and Thailand. We carry different varieties of Protea from South Africa, Bird of Paradise from Mexico, Ginger from Barbados and much more in the tropical selection. Every day you can also find hydrangea, spider mums, alstroemeria, bells of Ireland, freesia, Gerbera daisies and some roses in our shop. Pre-order and I will bring in what you want at bulk pricing.

What do you love most about working with exotic and tropical flowers? Each flower is so unique and long lasting and they tend to

be much larger than the more traditional flowers. In designing, you do not need as many flowers to create a striking wow arrangement. Similarly, there are so many beautiful, funky leaves to accent exotic and tropical flowers. After 30 years of flower shop experience, I much prefer working with tropical flowers.

After almost 20 years in business, I have learned... that owning your own business is hard work but very self-gratifying. Teach and train your customers about flowers and how to care for them and make them last as long as possible and they will come back for more. Nature is awesome and unbelievable. You can order 20 of something and they are not all the same. Bring your own vase and I will arrange new flowers in it for you in return.

MEGHAN BARBER *Eve Claxton Realty Inc. Brokerage* MIKE WELTON *Sunvale Homes*

Tell us about your business: Sunvale is my family business, started 25 years ago in Orangeville. Meghan's family business is Barber Glass, founded in 1883 in Guelph. Meghan now works for Eve Claxton Realty in Guelph as a real estate sales representative but has a passion for design – and glass!

What makes your modern home in Woolwich Estates stand out? Meghan and I designed our home in Waterloo with the idea of using unique modern designs but keeping costs low. Our home is a living model and Sunvale offers it starting in the mid-600s. So what makes it stand out is that the design has never been offered in a subdivision; before now it has been exclusive to multi-million-dollar custom homes.

No home is complete without... a story; whether it be about the previous owners, purchasing the home, special furnishings, or how it was built. In my case the story is always about the build and custom touches. I love sharing stories on the triumphs and troubles of each build. *Continued on page 54*





RUDI SCHWEITZER, Owner
Schweitzer's Plumbing Centre, St. Agatha

You've been a family business for over 40 years. What has been the key to your long-term success? It's a pretty simple philosophy, which most successful family business owners also adhere to. Work hard to treat your clients fairly and do as good of a job as you possibly can. The area we live and work in is too small for the unprofessional contractors to survive, as horror stories of jobs gone wrong get around fast.

What can people expect from a bathroom reno with Schweitzer's Plumbing Centre? We are a full design-build organization that

handles the entire project from start to finish. Our designers will help you select the product and finishes, and our tradespeople will professionally complete the project with the greatest attention to detail. Your bathroom will be truly beautiful.

Tell us about your new showroom: Our new showroom is actually an expansion of our existing showroom. We've decided to display some amazing new tile, shower systems, cabinetry and countertop materials that aren't being shown or even available anywhere else in the region. We are very excited about implementing all of these in future bathroom projects with stunning results!

SABER FERMAND, Owner
Silk Road Persian Rugs & Interiors, Kitchener

Where do you find the beautiful rugs you sell? I travel to all the carpet-producing regions of the world to find these beautiful handmade works of art that beautify homes and offices. That ensures quality, best price and making sure that the rugs I sell are made by adult weavers and they are fairly paid!

Why is it worth investing in a quality rug or carpet? First, it's healthy: handmade carpets are made of wool, cotton and silk (or a combination) and they don't give off toxic fumes. They are easy to keep clean and fresh. In the past, handmade rugs were expensive and didn't match every décor style. Now they're made in a wide variety of styles to suit every taste at affordable prices. We can also custom weave for customers who have specific design, colour or size needs.

Tell us about your Afghan Project: It started as a U.S. government project to revitalize the Afghan carpet industry and create jobs. I was the Product Development and International Marketing consultant. The focus was to train and introduce producers to the current demands for new colours, designs and sizes. We also emphasized producers' social responsibility toward their employees. We also connected producers and buyers. **OH**

