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# CK outdoorliving

SPRING 2011

Highlighting services and products that help you  
enjoy outdoor living in Chatham-Kent



Rudbeckia  
C-K's Flower of 2011

**Build your own Spiral Herb Garden**  
pg. 7 - 8

**C-K Communities in Bloom Champs!**  
pg. 11 - 12

**Sherry's Corner**  
pg. 13

**Grow your own Salsa Garden**  
pg. 17





We are excited to welcome you to our second issue of "CK Outdoor Living." This publication continues to focus on some of the many wonderful local businesses and the products and services they have to offer, along with some personal views on gardening and outdoor living.

It seems to me that we have endured the winter that just kept giving this year, and if you were one of the lucky ones that made it down south for a break you couldn't have picked a better year. For those of us that didn't get away we sure were happy to finally greet that first Robin denying those "winter will never end this year" thoughts by marking the presence of spring and knowing at last that we can finally move back to outdoor living!

As we venture outdoors and start our spring cleanup, we once again witness the many miracles of new growth on all of our trees and plants. There is nothing more relaxing than sitting in a lawn chair or lying in a hammock, and, while enjoying your favourite beverage, being serenaded by the

music of nature. We begin to think again about the beautiful area we live in and all the wonderful advantages that surround us, such as our parks, many walking trails, lakes, and, of course, the beautiful, unpredictable Thames River. Chatham-Kent truly is an outdoor living haven with so much to be explored - so put on your sunglasses, lace up your running shoes, jump on your bike, or grab the keys and discover the great outdoors in Chatham-Kent.

We hope you enjoy this publication as much as we enjoyed putting it together for you and we wish all our readers a safe and enjoyable summer season!

Thank you to all our local Advertisers for coming on board with us for this publication as, once again, we couldn't have done it without you.



Sincerely,

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Nancy Schlereth, *VP Sales*  
Lisa Taylor, *Graphic Designer*  
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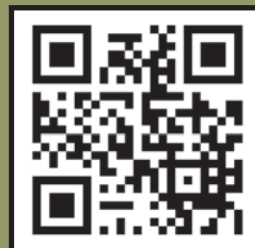
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## What's in your Garden Shed?

The following are some of the basic gardening tools for the "Home Gardener!"

- **Shears or Scissors** - Handy for cutting flowers for vases and for removing deadheads
- **Pruners** - Perfect for giving your garden a good trim to avoid overgrowth
- **Wheelbarrow or Garden Cart** - Helps you to avoid heavy lifting of topsoil, mulch, etc.
- **Watering Can** - Great for fertilizing and watering containers
- **Trowel** - Essential for planting your annuals and perennials
- **Spade** - Its long handle makes it a perfect tool when trying to get into tight spots of your garden
- **Edger** - Gives your garden a finished look
- **Waste Bags** - A must to discard your weeds and the paper ones available are also a good choice for the environment
- **Soaker Hose** - An inexpensive way to irrigate your garden
- **Fork** - Critical tool for moving/splitting established plants
- **Metal Rake** - Great for breaking up soil clumps and smoothing out your garden beds





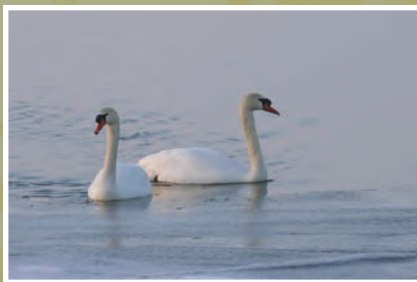
A family of  
Canadian geese  
~ Thames River, 2010

Yellow butterfly  
~ Blenheim, 2010



Wheat field  
~ Chatham-Kent, 2010

Peony flower  
~ Riverview Line, 2010



Swans  
~ Lake St. Clair, 2010

Have an image you would like to see in next year's CK Outdoor Living Magazine? E-Mail your image with the details of where and when it was taken to [info@athielmarketing.com](mailto:info@athielmarketing.com) or drop off the file at 159 King Street West, Chatham ON N7M 1E4

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Custom Window's Sunrooms are built by Canada's largest Sunroom manufacturer "Lifestyle Sunrooms". You can choose the Sunroom that suits you best from the outstanding products they have available:

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- A **patented roof system** featuring tongue and groove panels joined by a standing seam which insures unbelievable strength and resistance to leakage.
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There are many, many other features of Custom Window's Lifestyle Sunrooms, so please give us a call or visit us to find out more about these products.

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Sunroom Dreams

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So let us handle it for you; let us create the ideal outdoor living solution that's perfect for you and your family!

"Our clients are No. 1 and we thank them for our success. It truly is a team effort which allows us to build a special relationship with our clients along the way. We provide them with our very best and stand behind all we do; that's what we are truly all about."

Sincerely,

**Wayne Michaud**

*President, Nature's Pride Landscape Group Inc.*

## Top Ten Tips To Make Your Landscaping Project A Success

1. Provide your landscaping with year-round interest.
2. Layer your flower beds when planting.
3. Use evergreens & other foliage plants for continuity.
4. Use annuals to supplement perennial colour.
5. Incorporate hardscape into your landscape design.
6. Install water features.
7. Use form and texture to your advantage.
8. Make your life easier with a low-maintenance yard.
9. Use drought-tolerant plants.
10. Include specialized garden carpentry from simple to spectacular structures.

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# How to build your own *Spiral Herb Garden*

Herb Spirals, a decorative and practical addition to your landscape  
By Lance Meredith

*H*erb spirals were developed by the father of permaculture, Bill Mollison. They are a method of creating a decorative and practical herb garden in only 2 metres of space. The name derives from their three-dimensional nature, spiralling upwards from the ground level on the outside to the centre height of half a metre to a full metre in height.

Herb spirals compact a nine-metre garden into just two metres and provide a multitude of herbs in their ideal growing conditions within easy reach. This gardening project is about 3 to 4 hours in length so it can easily be completed over the course of a weekend afternoon.

Creating a herb spiral begins with its placement. Herb spirals attempt to provide the ideal microclimates for the herbs planted in it and make it easy for the gardener to maintain and use. Location and orientation are the first and second considerations in herb spiral creation.

In locating your herb spiral, ideally it should be close to your back door or side door to allow you to quickly snip off what you need to cook with and be back in the kitchen quickly. Second, it should be oriented with its lowest start point due north where it is most shaded and therefore, coolest and dampest. This will assist in providing your herbs with the conditions they need to grow and thrive.

Once you have your location, cut the grass, lay down a layer of compost, dried leaves, or manure, and water thoroughly. Atop this, place a single layer of cardboard (like a bicycle or large appliance box) or 7 layers thick of newsprint in an approximate square 2 metres across. This strategy helps ensure that the underlying grass is killed while providing some long term soil fertility. On your sheets of cardboard or newsprint, you may wish to draw a rough spiral beginning at the outer edge and spiralling inward. Once your template is complete, begin the construction of the spiral using bricks or rocks that fit well together; there is no need for mortar, just stack them carefully on your pattern in continuously rising spiral with the tallest aspect in the centre.





Inside the spiral begin a layering effect of soil building materials. Begin with a layer of wheat straw (not alfalfa hay,) or dried leaves, followed by well-aged compost of manure, then a second layer of straw or dried leaves, followed by a layer of well-aged compost or top soil. Be sure to water each layer, beginning with your cardboard layer, before adding the next layer. When your spiral is filled so that your soil/mulch layer is close to the tops of the bricks, it is time to place the herbs.

Herbs have different needs in terms of sun, moisture, and temperature and each herb should have about 20 to 30 centimetres from its neighbour. Herbs that do better in the cooler and damper conditions on the north and lowest slope of the spiral include: mint, marigolds and parsley. The sun lovers that prefer warmer, dryer conditions include: rosemary, sage, oregano, thyme and lavender; these should be at the section top of your spiral. Others that can fill up your spiral moving higher from the shade lovers include: chamomile, violets, chives, parsley, cilantro (coriander). If there is an herb that you particularly enjoy, do a bit of research to learn its growing conditions and place it in the spiral accordingly.

When planting your herbs, if you used compost as your top layer, be sure to open a space and place top soil in the hole about twice the size of the herb's root base (about two large handfuls of soil). Water your herbs and then you may wish to place a layer of decorative mulch over the soil to trap the moisture in and lessen your maintenance. The structure of the herb spiral traps and holds the warmth of the sun in the bricks and the moisture of the rains in the layers of the compost, mulch and soil. This is one technique from permaculture that the homeowner can easily include in their landscape, even in a small space.

Permaculture is a contraction of the words permanent agriculture or culture. It was formulated and created by Australians Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in the 1970s. Permaculture is an applied design science that mimics nature in its practices and is holistic in its approach. The science contains an ethical philosophy that guides its practitioners. Permaculture projects can range in size from apartment balconies and edible landscapes for suburban homes to farms, neighbourhoods, schools and whole municipalities.

## *For this project you will need:*

---



- A Wheelbarrow
- Straw or dried leaves
- Well aged compost or cattle/sheep manure
- Topsoil
- Bricks, paving stones or small stackable landscape stones
- A Shovel
- A Trowel
- A Garden hose
- Cardboard or Newspaper
- Herbs

Time to Complete: 3 to 4 hours

Lance Meredith is a gardener, farmer and permaculture designer in Chatham-Kent.

He can be reached at [ckpermaculture@yahoo.ca](mailto:ckpermaculture@yahoo.ca)

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## Sun safety is the same in all seasons!

- Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before you go out into the sun.
- Apply liberally and evenly over all your exposed skin to ensure complete coverage.
- Remember to apply to your ears and scalp, especially if you have thin or thinning hair.
- Use a sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher whenever you are outdoors.
- Children should use waterproof sunscreens with SPF 30 or higher.
- Reapply, as needed - and be sure to reapply after swimming, perspiring, vigorous activity or toweling off.
- Stay in the shade whenever possible.
- Wear tightly woven clothing, along with a wide-brimmed hat.
- Wear both UV-A and UV-B protection sunglasses.
- Avoid exposure to the sun when its rays are strongest, between 11am & 4pm, or when the UV index is 3 or higher.

### Did you know?

The sun can burn your skin even when  
it's cloudy.

**Winter, Spring, Summer or Fall.**

## Too busy to take care of your pool ?

Opening your pool in the spring is both an exciting time for pool owners and a dreaded task for many not knowing what has been lurking beneath the protection of your winter cover. Some pool owners prefer to hire a company like Sun-Rays Pools to open their pool, leaving all the work to us, while others choose to open it themselves. Owning a pool should not be expensive or time-consuming if you provide regular maintenance and keep your water chemistry balanced correctly. Sun-Rays Pools, your local pool professionals, can assist you with the knowledge and tools needed to achieve pristine waters for summer fun and relaxation.

If you are the do-it-yourself type and you have a winter cover, your first step would be to pump or drain off existing water from the top of your cover. While you are removing the water, skim off the leaves and debris. Before removing the cover, use a long handled brush to scrub the cover clean. After the cover is cleaned and folded, if your cover is Vinyl lock in style, it is a good idea to store it in large container with a solution of algaecide added for the summer. Your next step would be to remove excess debris from the pool. Now remove all winter plugs from the skimmer and water inlets. Ensure your leaf basket, drain, filter and pump are clean and functioning properly. Top up your water and use a cleaner or vacuum to assist you in cleaning the water. Purchase an Opening Chemical Kit from Sun-Rays Pools and follow the directions. Shock the pool to wake up the chemical residual still existing in the pool water. After a given time, an algaecide may be needed depending on the content in the pool water. Once you have waited an appropriate time, check your pool levels including pH, alkalinity, calcium hardness & chlorine (or other sanitizers) levels and add if necessary. A professional water test analysis is highly recommended at this time. Proper water chemistry all summer is the key to clear water with little cost and little work.

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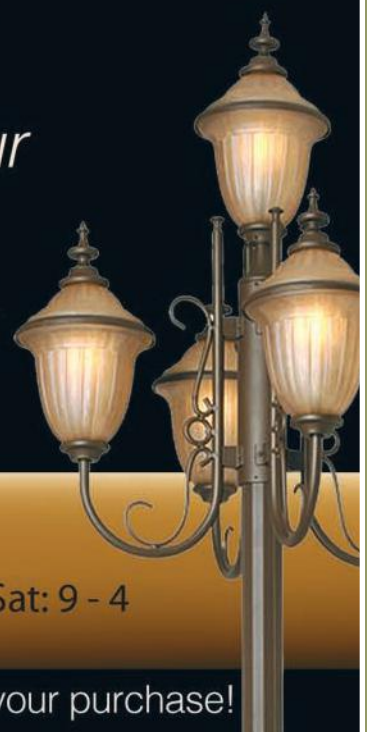
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# C-K National Communities in Bloom Champions

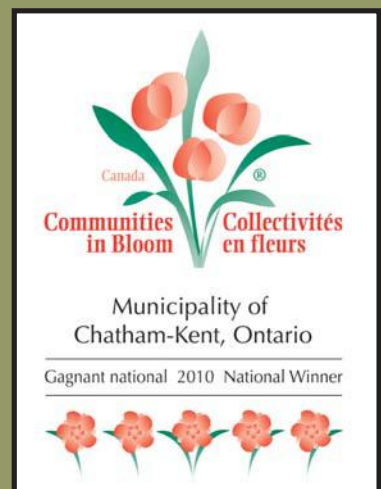
Congratulations! We won! Chatham-Kent (CK) was declared the national winner of our population category in the Communities in Bloom (CiB) competition this past season. Winning a national title in CiB is a really big deal and is not come by easily! The CiB program is nationally and internationally recognized as a quality of life indicator for communities and CK has now earned the right to use this as a means to boost our tourism, economic development and community pride! It takes obvious wide-spread participation in all of the competition's criteria including the exceptional involvement of citizens of all ages, municipal staff, elected officials, schools, service groups, industry and businesses alike to succeed.

It has been a steady climb toward the top for CK. Our first milestone was earning the highest attainable rating of 5 BLOOMS at the national level and we have continued to maintain this standing since 2005. We also have 2 prestigious International Criteria Awards under our belt. In 2006, CK received the Scott's Best Community of Gardeners Award and in 2009 we won CiB's overall Tidiness Award. Both these awards take outperforming over 100 communities of all population categories across Canada, Britain, Ireland, Scotland & Japan to win.

In their winning evaluation of CK, national judges Stephen King and Mario Fournier, were quick to note "the overall community benefits could be seen everywhere, not only through physical and landscape enhancements but through community involvement and pride." It is important to keep in mind that the CiB competition is far more all encompassing than just flowers, as the name misleadingly implies. Though there are four horticulturally oriented criteria: Floral Displays, Landscape (including Turf & Ground Covers), and Urban Forestry; however, we are also marked on efforts in our Heritage Conservation, Environmental Action, and Tidiness, as well as the Community Involvement in each of these sections.

CK's CiB success substantiates us as a most desirable community to visit, invest in, or to relocate to, and it should also remind us of how lucky we are to already live here! Our ongoing CiB participation will give direction and inspiration to the Municipality's continual pursuit of excellence and it will ensure that CK will flourish and blossom to its full potential.

For more details on Chatham-Kent Communities in Bloom, please phone 519.360.1998, e-mail; [ckpch@chatham-kent.ca](mailto:ckpch@chatham-kent.ca) or visit [www.chatham-kent.ca](http://www.chatham-kent.ca)







Delighted with how well last year's Flower of the Year, annual Rudbeckia Tiger Eye Gold did, it has been chosen again for 2011! This resilient annual with its masses of long lasting deep gold blooms will be featured in many public display gardens and community entrances. To enhance this unifying effect, CK CiB would love everyone to add a splash of them in their front yards as well.



National Judges Stephen King and Mario Fournier were made to feel welcome throughout Chatham-Kent, but they were especially delighted with Ridgetown's Community Garden Hostess.



Annually, CiB competitors are acknowledged for an area or project that particularly impresses the judges. CK received special recognition in 2010 for our "Heritage Conservation" which includes both natural and cultural aspects. Under Natural Heritage Conservation, Wallaceburg's Heritage Tree Trail received special commendations.



Tilbury's Post Office is a prominent downtown landmark representative of CK's many fabulous heritage buildings for whose preservation and/or restoration we are always especially commended as a part of our ongoing Heritage Conservation efforts.



This pristine floral display of white alyssum, red and blue salvia was showcased at Blenheim's Memorial Park.





# Sherry's CORNER

According to the calendar, Spring has finally arrived. Mother Nature on the other hand has a different idea... Never the less, there is a lot of hard work to be done...from pulling and removing all of the dead leaves and debris from your perennials and flowering shrubs, to pruning all of your evergreens into a healthy shape. Remember, pruning shrubs is like cutting your hair, if you don't do it, your hair will get thinner and then...oh well, let's keep our mind on our garden!! Pruning DOES keep your plants healthy and in better shape, and followed with a good application of fertilizer, it will give them a jump start!! When should you start? Anytime now...yes even with the cooler weather your plants are beginning to bud for this season. You want to prune BEFORE this starts, so cooler weather is the best time. If you're not sure how to prune, call a professional - don't make a serious and irreversible mistake.

After pruning, follow with a food application of fertilizer; it will give your plants a jump start...you can use 100% natural or organic, like sheep or cattle manure, or specific tree and shrub food. Flowering shrubs and perennials should have a high number in the middle - for example 15-30-15, and evergreens should have the high number in the front - like 18-4-6. Also look for a product that is time-released for Spring time; a liquid fertilizer can be used during growing season. Keeping your plants healthy by feeding helps plant survival especially under stressful conditions like drought, root disease and transplant shock.

Your flowering wonders require more food to push out those fabulous blooms and bright colours, so be consistent with fertilization.

Now, it's lawn time...rake your lawn and remove all leafy and stick debris. You may then thatch or aerate if necessary. If you had crabgrass last year, apply a fertilizer and crabgrass preventer as soon as possible. This will prevent those nasty seeds from germinating this year - remember for every 10 seeds sown last fall, up to 10,000 seeds could germinate - a very scary thought.

If your lawn is thin and you want to reseed, you will have to make a decision - either apply the above now and reseed in mid-May or seed now and apply just a fertilizer product. Crabgrass preventer all stops grass seed from germinating - so pay attention.

When you're sitting in your backyard mid-summer enjoying all of the green grass and flowering shrubs and evergreens, you will realize that all of this hard work did pay off.



~ Sherry Molema



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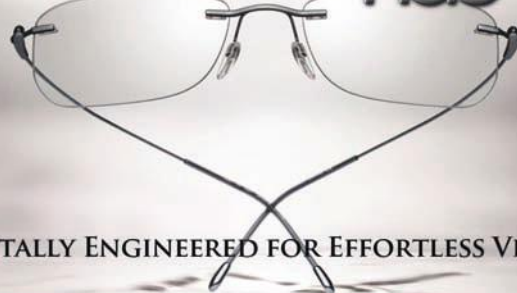
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# Grow Your Own **SALSA GARDEN**

Make sure you start out with good soil. Plant your plants once there is no more danger of frost. Place them in an area that will get six to eight hours of sun each day. Water & feed ! Don't let your space limit what you grow; with some imagination you can grow your own Salsa!

**Growing your peppers:** Add some compost to a well tilled bed or container (any kind of container is fine to use as long as it has a drain hole), but keep in mind the container size will determine the end size of your plant, so a five gallon or larger really works best. Peppers favour full sun and warm soil.

**Growing your tomatoes:** Even if you have a good garden area for growing tomatoes, container planting works well too. Again start with a well tilled bed or container. You will need a fairly good sized container (with good drainage) and with that, you can grow some full sized tomato plants on your patio. Adding a companion plant to your tomato garden is a good idea to ward off some diseases, and one to consider is the marigold. Also parsley can be grown with your tomato plants; in fact it will help your tomato plants to grow more vigorously.

**Growing your onions:** Growing onions in a container is much like growing them in the ground. You need good soil, adequate drainage, good fertilizer and plenty of light. If you choose to grow onions in containers then choose one that is at least 10" deep and should be several feet wide. In order to yield a worthwhile crop, many people have success growing them in large plastic tubs.

**Growing your garlic:** Actually, garlic loves to be grown in containers, and again you need adequate drainage. It may not be the most attractive plant but is simple to grow and also has medicinal values as well.

**Growing your herbs:** The most important thing to remember when growing herbs in a patio container is to water every day. Always pinch back from the middle, harvest on a regular basis from the sides and don't let your herbs bloom; try to keep them clipped back.

It's a lot of fun to watch your plants grow up into **SALSA!**

## **FRESH HOMEMADE SALSA**

16 cups peeled chopped tomatoes	8 cloves of garlic
6 cups sweet peppers (2 green, 2 yellow, 2 red)	6 tbsp. sugar
4 cups chopped onions	2 small cans tomato paste
2 ½ cups white vinegar	2 tbsp. pickling salt
2 tbsp. lime juice	4 tsp. paprika
4 cups jalapeno peppers	2 tbsp. dry parsley
4 to 5 HOT Hungarian or cayenne peppers (be sure to wear rubber gloves when cutting up jalapeno, Hungarian or cayenne peppers)	2 tsp. dry oregano
	1 tsp. dry basil (ad this at the very end)

Combine all ingredients; bring to a boil, then simmer for a couple of hours.

Put into jars leaving about 1 cm, head space (makes approx. 6 pints) and add ¼ tsp. of citric acid to each jar just before canning. This helps salsa to last longer in your cupboard.

Boil jars for 20 min. on high in canner.





# Popular Herbs and their uses!

*Through the ages, gardeners have grown herbs. Reasons have varied ~ and still do. Man has used herbs to treat illnesses for thousands of years and some herbs were even thought to have magical powers. Try your hand this summer at growing herbs to add great flavour to your cooking, and your teas, make your own potpourri, or even design a homegrown arrangement of dried flowers.*

## Basil, Sweet

Add to tomato sandwiches, salads, and sauces or make your own pesto.

## Chives

Great topping for your baked potatoes and has a mild onion flavour. The chive is a natural pesticide because its onion scent will keep bugs away from your flowers.

## Lavender

Although some varieties are edible and can be used as a tea, it is grown mostly for its fragrance. Lavender attracts hummingbirds, butterflies, and bees and crushed leaves can be rubbed on the skin to repel mosquitoes.

## Marjoram, Sweet

It enhances many, many foods. One of the most fragrant and popular of all herbs.

## Oregano

With its wonderful sweetness and fragrance, this is the herb that gives Italian cooking its unique flavour.

## Parsley

It enhances any flavours and is used as a garnish. It also freshens your breath because it has a high concentration of chlorophyll - so remember to eat your garnish!

## Peppermint

The leaves can be used as flavouring in tea, ice, lemon water, and fruit drinks. Best if planted in a pot on its own as it grows vigorously and can spread quite rapidly in a garden.

## Rosemary

Is popular for meats and dressings. You can also soak rosemary stems in water and use them for vegetable skewers.

## Sage

This strong, aromatic herb is good for making stuffing for poultry, rabbit, pork, and baked fish. With pork or turkey, sage dressing is a traditional favourite.

## Thyme

Used mostly in gumbos, bouillabaisse, clam chowder, poultry stuffing, and slow-cooking beef dishes. Can be planted along a garden walk and will release its fragrance when stepped upon.



# Need A "Sun Hat?"

When the sun is out...then the outdoors is where we all want to be! However, while we are enjoying the outdoors, it is becoming increasingly more important that we protect ourselves from the sun's rays.

Did you know that sunstroke is a result of too much sun on an unprotected head? So the best way to avoid that is to "WEAR A SUN HAT."

A sun hat can shelter your skin from the sun's harmful UV Rays. The best choice in a sun hat will provide shade for not only your head but also for your neck, face, and ears.

To participate, drop off your ballot at The Gift Fairy, 137 King St. West, or A. Thiel Marketing. You can also submit your contact information to [info@athielmarketing.com](mailto:info@athielmarketing.com)

Sun Hat donated by "The Gift Fairy" and will be drawn on July 30th, 2011.

Last years Sun Hat winner was: *Colleen Warrener*



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Submit entry form at:

The Gift Fairy, 137 King Street West or A. Thiel Marketing  
159 King Street West, Downtown Chatham.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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You're formally invited to:

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[www.thegiftfairy.ca](http://www.thegiftfairy.ca)

Purchase a hat for the party by April 29th, 2011 and receive a free gift!

Return on April 29th for the wedding festivities including high tea and crumpets and grand prize draw of a Deluxe Shopping Package at The Gift Fairy!



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