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SPRING ISSUE 2011

**Scrivens**  
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# FAMILY MATTERS

NEWSLETTER

## THE SCRIVENS PERSPECTIVE

BY PETER SCRIVENS, PRESIDENT



A little over two years ago, we embarked on a brainstorming session here at the *Scrivens Family of Companies*. We were eager to come up with new ways of

making connections with you, our valued clients—connections that would deepen and strengthen the relationship. At the same time, we wanted to make sure that you were fully aware of the many planning opportunities—and the products to support those opportunities—available to you at Scrivens.

One result of that brainstorming session has been our highly successful Lunch & Learn lecture series. Introduced in March of 2009, these expert speaker presentations have become some of our most anticipated events—both by you and by us. If you have yet to attend a session, I encourage you to read our feature story on this page. I'm sure it will whet your appetite.

On another note, spring is renovation season, and according to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2011 will be the 13th consecutive year in which home renovation spending in Canada has increased from the previous year.

This is just a reminder that, if done right, a successful renovation increases the enjoyment and financial value of your home or recreational property. For some great advice before you begin, visit the CMHC website at [cmhc-schl.gc.ca](http://cmhc-schl.gc.ca) and click the "Renovating a Home" link in the Consumers section. **S**

## Lunch & Learn program a learning experience for all of us

At Scrivens, we're always looking for ways to serve you better. Over the past few years, we've opened an office in Ottawa's west end and totally revamped our website. We continue to adopt the latest technology, not to make our jobs easier, but to make your life simpler.

All that said, it turns out one of the most effective measures we've adopted is our Lunch & Learn lecture series—which came about, at least in part, because we had a boardroom that was going largely unused.

Over the past two years of regular Lunch & Learn sessions, a significant number of you have taken the opportunity to learn more about important topics like mutual funds, retirement options, withdrawal benefit plans, investment accumulation and long-term care insurance. You've heard from experts in the field and you've been able to get answers to most, if not all, of your questions. And you've made short work of the sandwiches and cookies.

Longtime Scrivens client Lida Malinowski is typical of those who choose to attend Lunch & Learn sessions. Lida says that her financial advisor, Ken Brownness, told her he felt attending the sessions might enrich her understanding of various topics related to financial planning—and she heartily agrees that they have.

"I retired in May 2010 and knew that I would need to plan for current priorities, while considering longer-term horizons and realities such as long-term care," Lida says. "I've attended six sessions since I retired and they've all been very

interesting, useful and informative. They have certainly contributed to my overall financial education."

Lida says the sessions have motivated her to think more seriously about longer term planning issues. "The product-focused presentations were all very professional, engaging and interactive," she says. "The presenters were well versed in their specialty areas, and the case examples they incorporated in their presentation helped me to decide on the best strategies for my particular situation."

Ken, who has been instrumental in organizing the Lunch & Learn program, says that the staff at Scrivens have also found the sessions an important learning experience. In the future, he says, the company may even develop some of its own presentations. If it does, he can count on clients like Lida to be there.

"I would highly and enthusiastically recommend these seminars," Lida concludes. "For those of us, myself included, who have not had any formal financial education, these sessions contribute greatly to a better understanding of financial planning." **S**



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## CLIENT PROFILE

### Local emphasis produces national results

It might appear odd that Nutri-Lawn Ottawa—a company that emphasizes local service and local dedication—has become one of the largest franchises in North America. Not so, says owner and general manager Thom Bourne: “In fact, it’s largely because of our focus on local service that we’ve succeeded so well.”

Nutri-Lawn Ottawa began as a one-man company in 1990. That one man was Thom, who, 21 years later, continues to oversee day-to-day operations. Only now that one-man company has grown to become the largest Nutri-Lawn franchise in North America, with annual sales exceeding \$4 million. “And I’m certainly no longer alone,” says Thom, “not with a staff that ranges from 30 people in the winter to more than 90 people in the spring, our peak season.”

Thom says Nutri-Lawn Ottawa succeeds because the company consistently puts the customer first. “Everything we do is designed to make life easy for our customers, from contacting us when

they have something they need to discuss, to renewing their contracts with us at the end of every season,” he says. In addition, the company emphasizes marketing, pays for referrals and offers discounts to existing customers when they renew their contracts. Not surprisingly, Nutri-Lawn’s renewal rate far exceeds industry standards.

The services available to customers have expanded as the company has grown, says Thom. With its fleet of 35 vehicles, Nutri-Lawn offers unparalleled service and expertise in lawn care and irrigation, landscape lighting, even Christmas décor. “By diversifying, we’ve expanded our customer base,” says Thom. “That, in turn, has allowed us to keep many of our employees working full-time. Their experience is available to us—and to our clients—at all times.”

One of the first moves Thom made when starting the company was to hire the *Scrivens Family of Companies* for his insurance needs. Over two decades



later, the relationship remains strong—and neither sees it changing any time soon. “Scrivens reflects our approach to service,” says Thom. “Knowing they’re behind us allows us to look ahead.”

What the future entails is anybody’s guess, but Thom is sure of one thing: that Nutri-Lawn Ottawa’s future, and its success, will continue to be based on meeting and exceeding the needs of its clients. And that’s something they’ve done exceedingly well over the past two decades. **S**

## SPRING IS THE PERFECT TIME TO STEP OUT

For years, we’ve devoted much of our summer edition of *Family Matters* to describing family-friendly events in and around the Ottawa area. Unfortunately, because of our deadlines, we’ve had to overlook some of the better spring events in the past. Here are two you won’t want to miss.

### CANADIAN TULIP FESTIVAL

May 6–23, 2011 / [tulipfestival.ca](http://tulipfestival.ca)

Now the largest festival of its kind in the world, the Canadian Tulip Festival began with a gift of 100,000 tulip bulbs from Princess Juliana of the Netherlands some six decades ago. It’s the gift that keeps on giving for Ottawa residents and visitors alike. The gardens are free to view at Commissioners Park from May 6–23, and Major’s Hill Park from May 13–23.

### WESTFEST

June 10–12 / [info@westfest.ca](mailto:info@westfest.ca)

Join the crowd—and what a crowd it will be! Organizers expect more than 100,000 to attend this outdoor, three-day celebration of Canadian music, art and culture. Westfest is dedicated to showcasing Canadian artists and their work in an accessible and inclusive setting. The festivities all happen in wonderful Westboro Village on Richmond Road.



## PERSONAL INSURANCE

### A GUIDE TO PROPERTY INSURANCE TERMS




Your property insurance policy tells you how much your insurer is obligated to pay you for property damage or loss. Generally, that coverage is defined in three ways: actual cash value, replacement cost and guaranteed replacement cost. It's important to know what each term means:

- Designed primarily for rental and commercial properties, actual cash value (ACV) refers to the cost of repairing or replacing damaged property using similar materials. Depreciation is obviously factored in, as are the age and condition of the property.
- As the name suggests, replacement cost (RC) refers to the cost of replacing a damaged structure using today's materials, labour and building techniques. The construction and design would be comparable to the original up to the limit of coverage on the policy, but would not necessarily match the original's characteristics and materials.
- Guaranteed replacement cost (GRC) refers to the cost of constructing a

replacement with exactly the same characteristics as the original. Since the use of original methods and materials is sometimes unpractical, many policies allow near-exact reproduction, regardless of cost.

In practical terms, ACV coverage is most often applied to a seasonal cottage or rental property. Often, log construction and vacant and outdated buildings qualify only for ACV coverage. Many such properties will have only basic fire, wind, hail and lightning coverage. If your property is remote, expect to pay a higher premium.

If you have a secondary home, RC coverage is probably preferable. GRC coverage is the best option for your primary home, and would be part of a package including liability and personal property. Maintaining GRC coverage for an owner-occupied home requires a review every five years or so to incorporate updated costs for materials and to record any changes or improvements made to the structure.

*For more information, call Jennifer Falconer at 236-9101. *

## PERSONAL ASSET MANAGEMENT

### HELP FOR THOSE WHO LOSE THEIR GROUP BENEFITS




For many, a group healthcare plan, often offered by their employer, provides coverage for services not covered by provincial health insurance, such as prescription drugs, dental services, prescription eyewear and chiropractic visits. Losing those benefits—whatever the reason—can be financially painful.

Fortunately for those about to lose their group benefits, Manulife Financial offers the *Follow Me* conversion plan. It doesn't matter if your existing group plan is from Manulife—you're eligible as long as you subscribe within 60 days of your group coverage ending. The *Follow Me* plan can cover prescription drugs, extended health and dental costs up to specified limits. While these limits will typically be lower than your previous plan, they do provide

a solid foundation of coverage. This is particularly important for those who would otherwise be uninsurable.

Age is important factor in selecting a conversion plan since OHIP covers prescription drugs (although only the generic equivalent, if there is one) after you turn 65. Coverage is provided for drugs that are part of the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary. It would still be attractive at that point to have a plan that would cover issues apart from prescription drugs, such as professional services (e.g., physiotherapy), dental and hospital, since these are unlikely to have provincial coverage.

The bottom line is that when you lose your group coverage, you'll have to make important decisions quickly.

*For more information, call Ken or David at 613-236-9101. *

## RISK MANAGEMENT / COMMERCIAL INSURANCE

### EMPLOYERS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROTECTING EMPLOYEES' BENEFITS



Most businesses are required to ensure that all employee benefit programs are in good order. If they fail to do so, they can be held financially responsible.

This responsibility is not limited to benefits programs that an employer chooses to implement, such as group life insurance, group accident or health and dental plans, profit sharing plans, pension plans and stock subscription plans. It also applies to mandatory programs such as unemployment insurance, social security benefits and workers compensation. Should employers fail to administer these plans properly, and an employee is denied benefits to which he or she is entitled, they may be required to pay for any financial loss suffered by the employee.

Such failings can include:

- Improperly applying rules determining eligibility
- Making an error in calculating service and compensation benefits
- Failing to properly maintain a participant's service and employment record
- Improperly preparing reports required by government agencies
- Failing to properly orient new participants and advising them of their rights and options
- Failing to collect or apply contributions as required
- Improperly processing claims

Fortunately, specific insurance coverage is available at a very modest cost to protect businesses in the event such an oversight occurs. This kind of exposure should be reviewed by all employers—with a critical eye on their internal administrative process—to help avoid oversights and to determine that an insurance program is in place to protect should an error occur.

*For more information, call Ole Jensen at 613-236-9101. *



## The Scrivens Kitchen GARDEN FRESH FRITTATA

It's quick and easy, it's healthy, and it's from our very own Liliana Mikulic.

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 1/2 cups fresh sliced mushrooms
- 1 1/2 cups chopped broccoli
- 1 cup diced sweet red pepper
- 1 chopped onion
- 2/3 cup sour cream
- 1/3 cup Ranch dip
- 1 1/4 cups grated cheddar cheese
- 6 eggs
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp pepper



### DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350°F.
- Melt butter in an oven-proof pan.
- Sauté mushrooms, broccoli, pepper and onion in butter until tender-crisp (about 5 minutes).
- In a large bowl, whisk eggs, sour cream and dip until smooth. Stir in cheese and season with salt and pepper. Pour mixture over vegetables in pan.
- Place in oven and bake 30 to 35 minutes or until set and golden.
- Let stand 10 minutes before cutting.

Send us a favourite recipe and we'll share it through [The Scrivens Kitchen](#).

## UPCOMING LUNCH & LEARN PROGRAMS

### RETIREMENT AND REAL ESTATE ARE MORE LINKED THAN YOU MAY REALIZE.

To learn more about the connection, you'll want to hear from Andrew Savoia of Manulife Financial at the next Lunch & Learn session on April 20. On May 18, Janet Lavern from the Vision 2000 Travel Group will speak about trips you may want to put on your personal bucket list. And to make sure you enjoy any trip to the fullest, a Scrivens representative will offer some advice on the insurance protection you should have in place before you set out. You may be surprised to find that it's more than just travel insurance. To book a spot for either Lunch & Learn session, phone 236-9101 or email Ken Brownness at [kbrownness@scrivens.ca](mailto:kbrownness@scrivens.ca).

## Staff and Stuff

As part of our ongoing commitment to give back to the community, the *Scrivens Family of Companies* was a proud sponsor of the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation's Courage Campaign. Here, [MARY ANN MACINTOSH](#) receives our cheque for \$5,000 from President Peter Scrivens, *left*, and Peter Linkletter, Chair of the Board of Directors, Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation, *right*.



## WORTH READING



### OUTLIERS: THE STORY OF SUCCESS BY MALCOLM GLADWELL

Why are so many professional hockey players born in January, February and March? And why do the best pilots tend to come from the same area? In *Outliers*, cultural theorist Gladwell asks what makes the best and the brightest, the most famous and the most successful so different. He suggests that we pay too much attention to the personal qualities of successful people, but too little to their backgrounds. It's an incredible insight into the various factors that contribute to success in life.

*Read a good book lately? Let us know and we'll tell others about it in **Worth Reading**.*

#### Generic Disclaimer (mutual funds only)

Commissions, trailing commissions, management fees and expenses all may be associated with mutual fund investments. Please read the simplified prospectus before investing. Mutual funds are not guaranteed and are not covered by the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation or by any other government deposit insurer. There can be no assurances that the fund will be able to maintain its net asset value per security at a constant amount or that the full amount of your investment in the fund will be returned to you. Fund values change frequently and past performance may not be repeated. Labour Sponsored Funds have tax credits that are subject to certain conditions and are generally subject to recapture, if shares are redeemed within eight years.

#### Personal Opinions & Recommendations Disclaimer

The foregoing is for general information purposes only and is the opinion of the writer. This information is not intended to provide specific personalized advice including, without limitation, investment, financial, legal, accounting or tax advice. However, please call Scrivens Family of Companies to discuss your particular circumstances.

SCRIVENS THANKS THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES FOR THEIR SERVICES AND SUPPORT.



We welcome comments and suggestions about **FAMILY**MATTERS.

You can reach us at [triley@scrivens.ca](mailto:triley@scrivens.ca) or at:

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