

Message from Chris



Hi everyone! It's been another impressive year and I'm pleased to share my latest vlog update—scan the QR code or click the play button to watch. In this issue, you'll find highlights from Founders Cafe, new custom embroidery, creative residence programming and much more. Enjoy reading and remember to complete the hidden word challenge at the end.

INSIDE

- 3 Hospitality – Fall in Review
- 4 Growing Residence Pride Through Apparel: A Pilot Collaboration
- 6 2026 Long-Service Awards Honour Roll
- 7 Stress Less, Love More — lululemon // Western
- 8 Pop-Ups That Stirred Up Residence Dining
- 9 Crafting Community: Programming Designed to Connect Students During Academic Breaks
- 10 Founders Cafe: Where Innovation Meets Its Match(a)
- 12 Made For You: Custom Embroidery Arrives at the Bookstore
- 13 Welcoming the Year of the Horse
- 14 Twinkling Lights & Big Ideas: Inside the Inaugural Holiday Market
- 16 Blue Monday: Supporting Student Wellness Through Connection and Collaboration
- 17 Winter Gatherings at a Glance
- 18 Books to Look For
- 19 Hidden Word Challenge

CALENDAR

- April 9 Winter term classes end
- April 12–30 Final exam period
- May 1 Residences close at 12 p.m.
- May 7–Aug 22 Western Summer Accommodations

IN-HAS NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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Hospitality – Fall in Review

Derek Worden

Senior Advisor, Strategic Initiatives

Fall 2025 was a remarkable term for Hospitality Services—one defined by scale, service and an unwavering commitment to our campus community. Whether it was accelerating service at our busiest locations, introducing new and popular food concepts, extending residence dining hours, or delivering seamless catering for thousands of guests, Hospitality Services played a vital role in shaping the campus experience.

Shout out to the Hospitality team for an outstanding term! Your work keeps our campus energized and thriving. Here's a sneak peak at what the team has accomplished:

Campus Eateries



13,000+
patties were
smashed at
Angry Goose



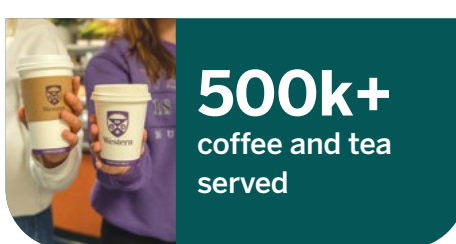
5,172
bowls built in
Food Hub



13,000
artisan
sandwiches made

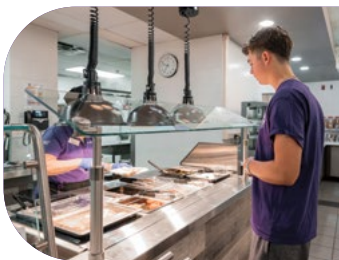


16,572
pizza slices
served



500k+
coffee and tea
served

Residence Dining



635k
meals served



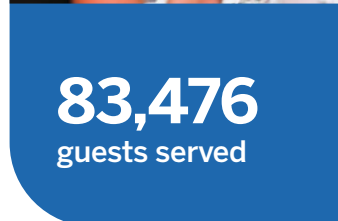
145k lbs
of chicken served



Catering



11,000
guests attended
events at the new
Entrepreneurship
building



83,476
guests served



GROWING RESIDENCE PRIDE THROUGH APPAREL

A PILOT COLLABORATION

Tegan Pfaff

General Merchandise Buyer, Dellelce Family Bookstore

Samantha Ryder

Administrative Coordinator, Residence Life & Education Team

This winter, the Housing team partnered with the Dellelce Family Bookstore on an exciting pilot initiative that brought custom residence apparel directly into each building by featuring in-residence displays and convenient online pre-ordering. The idea, introduced by Samantha Ryder (Housing), focused on making it easier for students, staff and student leaders to access building branded clothing while using a pre-order model to manage inventory efficiently.

From the beginning, the goal was to strengthen students' sense of belonging and residence pride while offering comfortable, winter-ready pieces at accessible price points. Our work negotiating pricing with vendors helped ensure affordability while maintaining quality. As the pilot launch of this program, we sought out to collect as much insights as possible. Early feedback from Residence Life Coordinators and students has been encouraging.

Clean, simple designs displayed in high-traffic areas helped spark interest, conversation and excitement within the communities. We also received positive feedback on the soft, non-irritating fabric, a big plus for staff who are particular about what they wear. Inclusive sizing from XS to 4XL meant there was something for everyone.

Looking ahead, we are exploring expanded design options, enhanced signage and displays, and marketing timed with key moments such as residence selection and move-in periods. Additional personalization features, including embroidery options, are also being considered. This collaboration is a great example of divisional partnership in action, bringing creativity, operational efficiency and student engagement together to build stronger residence communities. •



2026 Long-Service Awards Honour Roll

This winter, we took a moment to honour and recognize those that reached milestone years of service; including a few staff with an impressive 40+ years with Western. Your loyalty and hard work have helped shape the culture of our Division. Congratulations on reaching these remarkable milestones and thank you for your unwavering dedication!

5 Years

Ashley Singh
 Gregory Bartlett
 Jennifer Cavanagh
 Julie Konidas
 Julie Pigeon
 Karin DeCaluwe
 Kelly Chan
 Ken Rath
 Laura Langford
 Preetha Soman
 Ryan McLarty
 Sookeun (Lucy) Jo
 Stephanie Livingstone
 Taryn Cherman

10 Years

Elaheh Ghajar-Afshari
 Gentjana Sadiku
 Kristian Crossen
 Leslee Lefteruk
 Melissa Hawkins
 Tina Smith
 Will Uhl

15 Years

Christos Giannacopoulos
 Kirsten Lamanna
 Lucie Sideris
 Matthew Kendrick
 Tonya Whiteside
 Victoria Kehn

20 Years

Alicja Mucha
 Aliz Auchana
 Amala Youssef
 Ben Walters
 Brandon Fisher
 Cam Le
 Daniel Bergeron
 David Calderone
 Heather Innes
 Jess Walzak
 Lisa Bayliss
 Luke McCabe
 Nausheen Fatima
 Ross Beatty
 Stephen Cribar
 Victoria Feasey

25 Years

Alex Shilyuk
 Assadang Langsub
 Catrona Graham
 George Tsiropoulos
 Hinda Wagad
 Julie Pustay
 Lenuta Piele
 Matthew Anderson
 Nada Saade
 Ryan Phillips
 Steven Byers
 Uriel Amador

35 Years

Marina Sterner

40 Years

Jane Baynham

45 Years

Janice McEwen



Stress Less, Love More — lululemon // Western

Jessie Karn
Sales Floor Manager, Dellelce Family Bookstore

In February, the Bookstore partnered with lululemon Masonville to bring students an exclusive on-campus wellness experience. The event brought together campus partners including Western Athletics, Hospitality and Student Wellness & Well-being for a yoga class led by lululemon ambassador Joshuelle, a Western alumna. Attendees were treated to a curated goodie bag featuring a lululemon belt bag, an &asanas yoga pass, a Western-branded yoga strap and an Iced Ube Matcha from Founders Cafe, recently opened on campus.

With a well-planned and executed marketing campaign, the event drew over 700 sign-ups for just 40 spots, reflecting incredible student enthusiasm for wellness programming on campus. Attendees received 20% off their lululemon purchases and the activation drove over \$2,500 in combined sales across the event and in-store. A feel-good day all around!

This is just the beginning. Next up, we're partnering with Western Alumni for another wellness event this summer. And, we have our sights set on a staff event down the road too. •



Pop-Ups That Stirred Up Residence Dining

Ryan Wishak

Unit Manager, Residence Dining

Residence Dining has been serving up more than just great meals—pop-ups were on the menu too! Throughout the school year, students and staff have looked forward to a variety of themed dining experiences designed to bring flavour, fun and community to campus.

From Essex' Greek Night which featured colourful décor and mouthwatering moussaka to Ontario's decorate your own cookie and donut wall, these events offered a fresh twist on everyday dining. Sydenham offered students a chance to create their perfect charcuterie board while Delaware got creative with a festive mocktail night.

One pop-up that I was especially proud of was the "pasta in a parm wheel" event at Saugeen. Students were lined up all day to get their pasta tossed in a creamy parmesan cheese sauce right inside an 80lb wheel of parmesan. We paired it with a Caesar salad bar on the side to top it all off.

These events were a great opportunity for students to try something new, engage with staff and keep things interesting from their regular 4-week rotating menu cycle. The units are already anxiously looking forward to planning next year's events—so stay tuned and stay hungry! •

Crafting Community

Programming Designed to Connect Students During Academic Breaks

Tristyn Snow

Programming Coordinator, Residence Life and Education Team

Last semester, we ran several programs to facilitate connections among international students, out-of-province students and varsity athletes staying in residence during academic breaks. "Cupcakes, Crafts and Connections" occurred at the start of fall reading week and allowed students to bond while decorating cupcakes or completing crafts like bracelet making and paint-by-numbers activities.

A raffle was integrated into this event to further help students stay busy and connected during the break; all the prizes were activities they could do around London. The raffle was set up so that students could sign up with friends or individually and request to be paired with somebody else. This was a big success. We saw some students signing up for raffle prizes with new friends they

had met at the event and the prizes allowed them to continue socializing throughout reading week (including two students who attended a London Knights game and four students who participated in an escape room)!

On the last day before the University's winter closure, We ran an icebreaker game that started with small groups. They then competed in two rounds of trivia for prizes such as Starbucks gift cards. At the end of the event, we watched as the students exchanged contact information and then went to the dining hall together. It was exciting to see that these programs contributed to a positive experience for students staying in residence during academic breaks. •



Founders CAFE



Founders Cafe

Where Innovation Meets Its Match(a)



Brady Parr

Operations Manager, Campus Eateries

A vibrant new gathering space dedicated to innovation, connection and campus life has opened at Western this past February. Founders Cafe, located inside the Ronald D. Schmeichel Building for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, is designed to serve as both a premium food destination and a welcoming hub for students, faculty and visitors.

The cafe offers a diverse menu centered on fresh, high-quality options suited to busy schedules including artisan sandwiches, freshly baked items and convenient To-Go packaged meals ideal for classes, meetings or study sessions. A full espresso bar serves expertly crafted coffee beverages, along with a lineup of signature cold drinks, including specialty iced beverages and a dedicated matcha menu which is creating quite the buzz around campus!

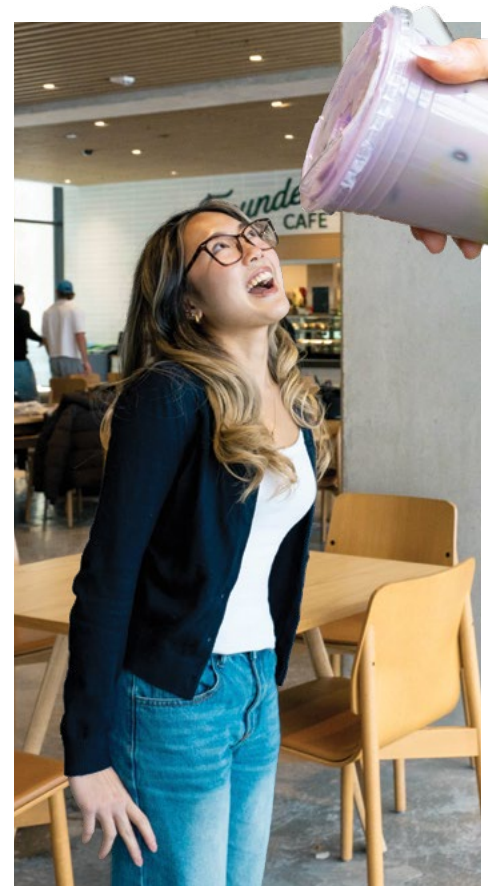
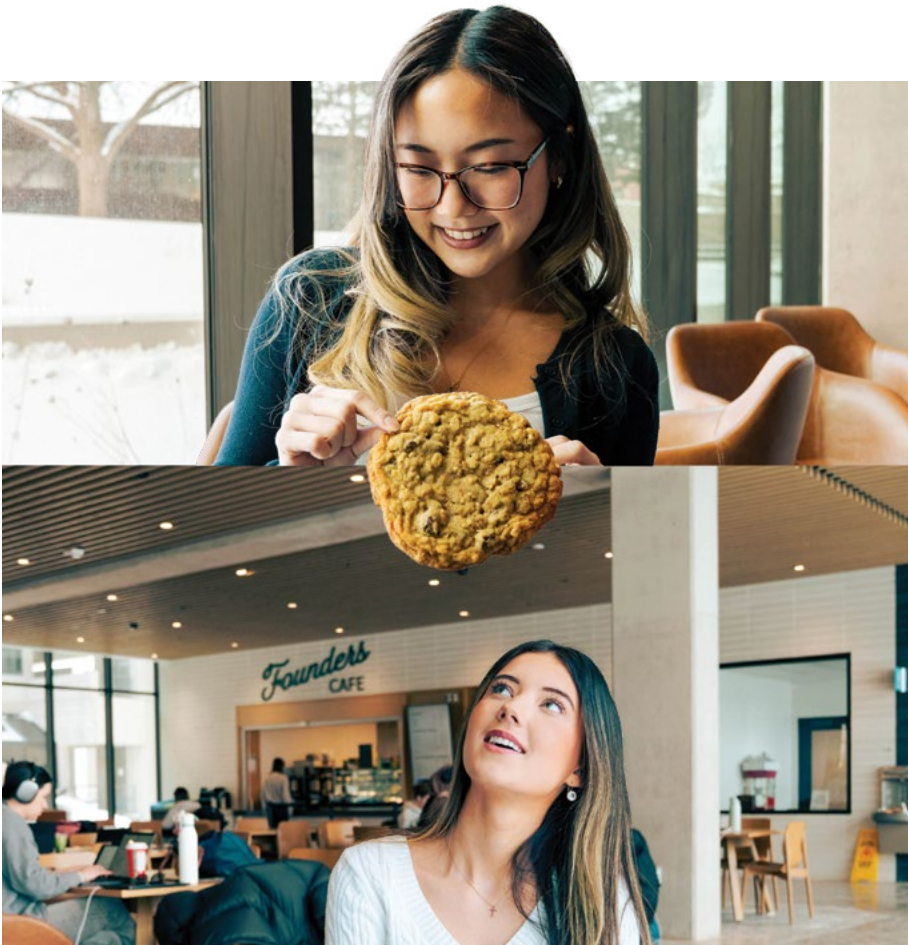
Many of the product offerings at Founders Cafe come from alumni connected to Western and the Richard Ivey School of Business community. The focus of this cafe is on delivering fresh ingredients, local flavours and consistent quality. The cafe emphasizes quick service without sacrificing craftsmanship, making it a practical stop for morning commuters and an inviting space for afternoon breaks.

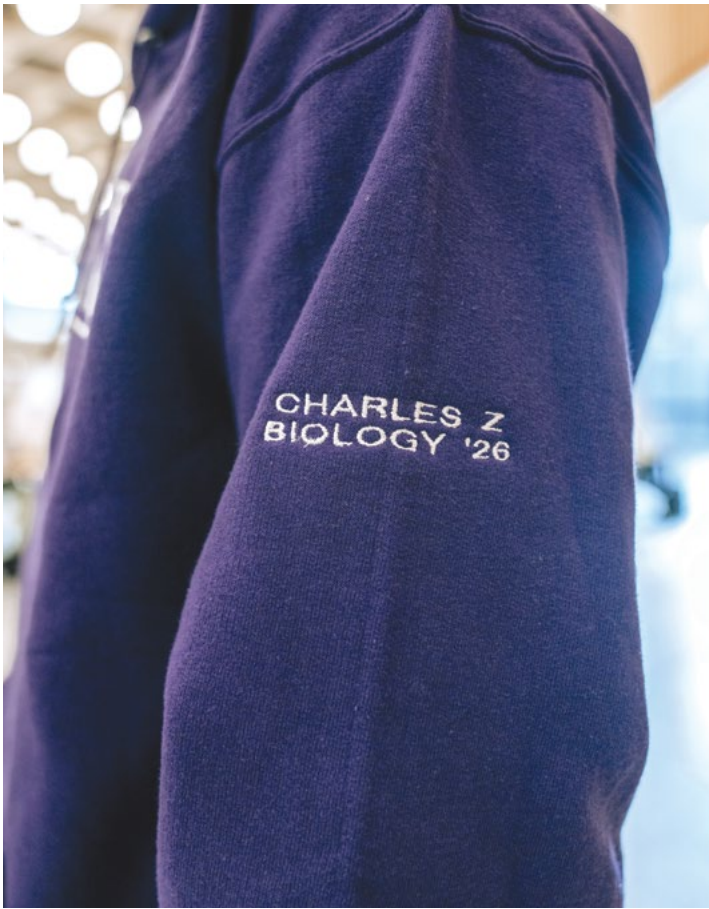
The cafe reflects the mission of the entrepreneurship building itself, bringing people together to exchange ideas in a modern, collaborative environment. Comfortable seating, natural light and an open layout encourage informal meetings, group work and spontaneous conversations among members of the campus community.

Since opening, students have already adopted Founders Cafe as a go-to location between classes, while faculty and staff are using it as a convenient meeting spot. Its central location within the innovation complex positions it as a natural crossroads for activity on campus.

Campus leaders envision the cafe becoming a cornerstone destination—a place where great coffee, fresh food and creative energy come together to support both productivity and connection.

Hours of operation are Monday–Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The unit is not open in the summer. •





Made For You

Custom Embroidery Arrives at the Bookstore

Alex Corbitt

General Merchandise Buyer, Dellelce Family Bookstore

We know everyone loves the great clothing options currently on offer at the Bookstore, but wouldn't it be nice if you could add your name, department or graduation year to a garment of your choice? Well, now it's an option thanks to the Bookstore's new embroidery machine!

Facing increased decorating costs for custom clothing and uniforms from third party decorators, the decision was made to move some of our decoration in house. While a single embroidery machine is not enough to decorate all of the garments and uniforms we sell each year, it does give us more flexibility when adding personalization.

For example, customers will soon be able to select a hoodie or other in-stock fleece garment and add their own personalized text! Furthermore, third-party decorators often have minimum order requirements and will charge high fees for small custom orders.

Smaller orders can now be moved in-house, allowing us to handle more custom orders than we could in the past.

The new embroidery machine came with several challenges, such as patiently and painstakingly threading several very small needles—then threading them again when the thread inevitably breaks—but the benefits far outweigh the challenges! We are very excited to launch our new embroidery program and we look forward to finding new ways to serve the Western community.

Next time you visit the Bookstore, be sure to ask about our new custom embroidery options at the customer service desk. We're now offering personalization options on classic apparel, including custom text on sweatshirt sleeves, the chest and sweatpants. You can personalize pieces for yourself or your team or even as a thoughtful gift. See you there! •

Welcoming the Year of the Horse

On Thursday, February 26, around 400 students gathered at the Great Hall in Somerville House to celebrate Lunar New Year and welcome the Year of the Horse. The evening featured a specially curated menu by the Catering and Conferences team with festive dishes symbolizing prosperity and togetherness.

Guests also enjoyed vibrant performances by student groups, showcasing dance, storytelling and cultural artistry. Two standout moments stole the show—a thrilling lion dance brought by the Wushu Club, and a

mesmerizing face-changing performance by Eason Huang from Toronto that wowed the crowd and had everyone talking.

The Year of the Horse is associated with energy, independence, intelligence and steady progress—a time many see as one of confidence and forward movement.

Wishing everyone a joyful and successful Year of the Horse! •





Twinkling Lights & Big Ideas

Inside the Inaugural Holiday Market

Rich Caccamo

Senior Advisor, HAS Strategic Priorities

The inaugural Holiday Market arrived on campus this past December, immediately complicating everyone's plans to go straight home.

For two crisp evenings, Graduate Square, Kent Walk and the IGAB Atrium transformed into a twinkling village of festive huts, cheerful music and carefully curated photo stations. What began as a bold idea that was once thought of as a dream scenario, finally became a full-scale production involving dozens of site plans before the right layout was finally determined.

We often say, "it takes a village" and the Holiday Market was a shining example of that. The retail huts, operated by the Dellelce Family Bookstore, were thoughtfully styled, each one with its own cozy aesthetic. From "Silver and Gold" elegance to "Gum Drops & Candy Cane" whimsy, each hut featured exquisitely merchandised tables, wicker baskets, pillars, window panes and shelving units.

The food huts, operated by Hospitality Services, delivered creature comforts with impressive efficiency. Visitors warmed their hands around cups of free cocoa, complete with whipped marshmallow cream and candy cane sprinkles, while others opted for warm pretzels or mini bratwursts. The sweet-toothers made swift work of Beaver Tails and mini cinnamon donuts.

For two crisp evenings, Graduate Square, Kent Walk and the IGAB Atrium transformed into a twinkling village of festive huts, cheerful music and carefully curated photo stations.

One of my favourite moments was when the Western Marching Band descended onto Graduate Square with Santa leading the way. The entrance felt like absolute cinema. After wishing everyone a good night, Santa slipped inside his workshop to start his 5-hour photo shoot, while the band stayed behind to play all the holiday classics.

If the Marching Band didn't set the mood, I bet the 15-foot tree in the middle of Graduate Square did! Adorned with hundreds of white lights and freshly fallen snowflakes, it made for a magical centerpiece that stood bravely, beautifully...until it didn't. One particularly ragey gust of wind decided it had other plans and down it went on night two! For a split second, you could feel the collective gasp. We just lost our pièce de resistance – talk about a buzz kill. But what began as a problem, quickly became an opportunity.

It just so happens that roaming the Market was the Grinch herself – portrayed by a certain someone who never not commits to the bit. All night the Grinch was seen poking fun at students, photobombing selfies and campaigning against holiday cheer. So, when the tree tipped over, I did what any desperate person would do: I blamed the Grinch. Publicly. Proudly. What could have been a soggy setback instantly became a storyline. The fallen tree transformed into a claimed victory for our resident mischief-maker. It was a Grinchmas miracle.

The debut Holiday Market came at exactly the right moment. Just before exam season, it interrupted students' routines in a way that felt nourishing and nostalgic. A well-timed shift in atmosphere that reminded everyone campus can be more than a place to pass through.

If you liked what you saw, you're in luck because the Holiday Market will return in 2026 with plans already underway for attractions that promise to be even bigger and brighter. •





Blue Monday

Supporting Student Wellness Through Connection and Collaboration

Leanne Ford

Manager,
Residence Student Support

Erica Fearnall

Residence Area Manager,
Residence Life and Education Team

Samantha Ryder

Administrative Coordinator,
Residence Life and Education Team

As winter settles in and the daylight dwindles, students often experience increased emotional and academic strain. While the idea of “Blue Monday” has been widely debunked as a scientific concept, we recognized that the winter months bring genuine challenges for many students, including low mood, isolation, academic stress and anxiety.

Our January counselling trends reinforce this reality. According to our annual report (June 2025), referrals typically spike in September/October and again in January, with top concerns including anxiety (11%), relationship difficulties (10%), depression (9%) and suicidal ideation (14%). Residence Counselling staff also reported increases in roommate conflicts, difficulty making friends, isolation and GBSV-related concerns, with “low mood” being especially common in January.

In response, we launched the Blue Monday Wellness Initiative, a supportive, research-informed program designed to promote positivity, connection and present-moment grounding. Booths across seven dining halls were facilitated by 20 Residence Life student staff and featured resources such as HappyLights (therapy lamps), weighted sensory animals, positivity-tea bags, conversation starters and smile cookies. Each element was selected to help students regulate energy, find comfort and reconnect with themselves and others. Beyond offering simple moments of joy, these initiatives

play a crucial role in shifting residence culture around mental health. By creating student-centered spaces that feel welcoming and low-pressure, our team helped normalize conversations about emotional wellbeing. When students see their peers engaging with wellness resources, it sends a strong message that caring for one’s mental health is both common and encouraged.

These informal touchpoints often open the door to deeper conversations. Our staff are trained to engage students in supportive dialogue, helping to reduce the stigma that can prevent individuals from seeking counselling or academic supports. As students learn that others share similar struggles, the perception that they are “alone” in their experience diminishes. This early awareness and connection often make the difference between someone silently coping and someone who reaches out for help.

Our collaboration with Hospitality Services and Residence Life ensured each booth felt welcoming, well-supplied and intentionally designed. Blue Monday demonstrates how targeted, positive initiatives can increase awareness, reduce stigma and strengthen early pathways to care. •

Winter Gatherings at a Glance

This winter brought a few great moments for our Housing and Ancillary Services community. Staff enjoyed a special night out at Frozen at the Grand Theatre, followed by the festive HAS Holiday Party. In February, families came together for our annual Family Skate, a fun way to brighten the colder months. Check out some of the photo highlights! •





Books to Look For

Son of Nobody

By Yann Martel

The first book in a decade from *Life of Pi* author Yann Martel follows a classics professor who discovers a lost account of the Trojan War. Presented as a translation with sprawling footnotes, the novel blends myth and scholarship with the narrator's reflections on his failing marriage and his struggle to connect with his daughter.

Dogs, Boys, and Other Things I've Cried About

By Isabel Klee

In this heartfelt memoir, *SimonSits* creator Isabel Klee shares stories of love, loss and the rescue dogs who shaped her life. Centered on Simon—the puppy who kept her grounded through the ups and downs of her twenties—the book blends tales of fostering dogs with navigating relationships, friendships and finding purpose in New York City.

The Midnight Train

By Matt Haig

When life flashes before your eyes, where would you return? In Matt Haig's magical time-travelling love story, Wilbur boards the Midnight Train to revisit the moments that mattered most—especially his honeymoon in Venice with Maggie, the love of his life. As he relives the past, he must face who he was and who he wants to become.

David Suzuki: Lessons from a Lifetime

By David Suzuki

Lessons From a Lifetime celebrates the remarkable life and legacy of environmental icon David Suzuki through stories and photographs. Reflecting on 90 years of activism, Suzuki shares wisdom and lessons for future generations, alongside personal tributes and reflections from notable voices including Margaret Atwood, Neil Young, Jane Fonda, Elizabeth May and Justin Trudeau.



Your place to stay in London this *Summer*

From weekend visits to full-summer stays, Western Summer Accommodations offers comfortable and affordable options right on campus.



Open May 7 to August 22, 2026

Book Your Stay
stayatwestern.uwo.ca

Hidden Word Challenge

There's a word hiding in plain sight! As you read through this newsletter, keep an eye out for letters in a different colour. Write them down, then rearrange the letters to uncover the word.

Hint: It's a new initiative from Hospitality Services

Once you've solved the puzzle, email it to hasmarketing@uwo.ca by Friday, April 17 at 5:00 p.m. Three winners will be randomly selected from the correct entries and will each receive one of the prizes shown in the photo.



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