

tiny beautiful things

Based on the book by
Cheryl Strayed

Adapted for the stage by
Nia Vardalos

Co-Conceived by **Marshall Heyman, Thomas Kail, and Nia Vardalos**



PRAIRIE
THEATRE
EXCHANGE

APR 7 – 19, 2026

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CLASSIC 107

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welcome

TO PRAIRIE THEATRE EXCHANGE!

“Always remember that the letters are real”

This is the final advice from Nia in the play’s introduction.

When Cheryl Strayed agreed to write an anonymous advice column, she had no idea how rich an experience it would be to share real stories with strangers from all over.

Some of the letters amused her, some probably made her wince. But she embraced every one of the letters with open arms — because they were real. And, through that act of radical empathy, she discovered the grace of healing.

Some of the stories you’ll see today aren’t easy to witness. As you watch, I hope you can hold gently the idea that they come from real experiences—and that someone sitting near you might recognize a piece of their reality in them.

Over the past season, people have come through the doors of PTE from many different paths, carrying many different stories. It’s been such a gift to gather together in this space—to be entertained, yes, but also to share in something deeper: the humour, the beauty, the love, and the heartbreak that are all part of being human.

There’s something quietly powerful about sitting side by side and experiencing a story together. Thank you for joining us at PTE this season, and we look forward to seeing you next season — for more stories shared together.

Warmest regards,



Ann Hodges
Artistic Director



PRAIRIE THEATRE EXCHANGE IS PROUD TO PRESENT

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FEATURING:

LAURA OLAFSON	<i>Sugar</i>
ARNE MACPHERSON	<i>Letter Writer #1</i>
GISLINA PATTERSON	<i>Letter Writer #3</i>
HONEY PHAM	<i>Letter Writer #2</i>
ANN HODGES	<i>Director</i>
AVA DARRACH-GAGNON	<i>Assistant Director</i>
ANAHITA DEHBONEHIE	<i>Set & Costume Designer</i>
SIOBHÁN SLEATH*	<i>Lighting Designer</i>
DASHA PLETT*	<i>Sound Designer</i>
MARGARET BROOK	<i>Stage Manager</i>
TIA MORANN	<i>Assistant Stage Manager</i>

RUNNING TIME: 95 MINUTES, NO INTERMISSION

* Indicated designers on this production are represented by the
Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659.

“Tiny Beautiful Things” is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals
on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

Prairie Theatre Exchange is a not-for-profit theatre and an active member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT), and engages, under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association.

Meet the Playwright

NIA VARDALOS



“ Reading the words of Cheryl Strayed, I immediately experienced a catharsis, a vulnerability that left me raw and with a newfound clarity. ‘*The letters are real,*’ I marveled. Writing the play was challenging and terrifying, and its ride around the globe with multiple productions has been exhilarating. I was home in February and got to visit with Ann and all at beautiful PTE; a perfect creative team and space for this cathartic and gentle play. It’s truly wonderful that *Tiny Beautiful Things* has now come to my hometown. ”

Winnipegger Nia Vardalos is the Academy Award, WGA, SAG, Critics Choice and Golden Globe nominated screenwriter and actor of *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* and its sequels, and the only woman who has solo-written an original film franchise. Nia is thrilled to have *Tiny Beautiful Things* have its first-ever production in her hometown at PTE. *Tiny Beautiful Things* received the New York Times Critic's Pick and with over 200 licenses has been seen around the globe in the Philippines, Korea, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Australia and Greece. Nia is the New York Times Bestselling author of her memoir *Instant Mom* and donates all proceeds to adoption charities. To date, the information from the book has placed over 2000 children in permanent homes.

We create and gather on Treaty 1 Territory, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabeg (Ojibway), Ininewuk (Swampy Cree), Anishininewuk (Oji-cree), Dakota Oyate, and Dene peoples, and the homeland of the Red River Métis. As we gather to tell stories today, we so appreciate the original storytellers and stewards of this land.

About

CHERYL STRAYED



Cheryl Strayed is the author of the #1 New York Times Bestseller *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail*, which was made into an Oscar-nominated film. Her bestselling collection of Dear Sugar columns, *Tiny Beautiful Things*, was adapted for a Hulu television show and as a play that continues to be staged in theaters nationwide. Strayed's other books are the critically acclaimed novel, *Torch*, and the bestselling collection *Brave Enough*, which brings together more than one hundred of her inspiring quotes. Her books have sold more than 5 million copies around the world and have been translated into forty languages. Her award-winning essays and short stories have been published in *The Best American Essays*, *the New York Times*, *the Washington Post Magazine*, *Vogue*, and elsewhere. Strayed is also a popular podcaster, having hosted the shows *Sugar Calling* and *Dear Sugars*, which she made with Steve Almond for the New York Times. She's now the host of the weekly podcast *Mind Over Mountain* for the iHeart Women's Sports network. She lives in Portland, Oregon.

Tiny Beautiful Things

Taylor McCaffrey proudly supports Prairie Theatre Exchange and gratefully acknowledges the rich contribution made by Manitoba's Arts Community to our province.

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Meet the Artists



Laura Olafson

Sugar

Dear Reader: I've has been a professional actor for 17 years. I'm grateful to live and work on Treaty One Territory. Like you, I've struggled with some personal issues. For me, that includes (in no particular order): body dysmorphia, substance abuse issues, the gift of recovery and subsequent relapses, depression, surviving SA (among other things). Cheryl writes "*when we dare to tell the truth about who we are, that's when transformation is possible*". I am so grateful to Ann, the creative team, PTE's staff and volunteers and my fellow castmates for this healing experience. The gift of Sugar will stay with me forever and I hope she stays with you too.

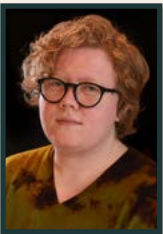
Yours, Laura



Arne MacPherson

Letter Writer #1

Arne's history with PTE goes back to his first gig in Winnipeg, in 1990, acting in a Robert Munsch tour, and then he went on to direct a whole buncha Munsch shows. More recently, he acted in *Post-Democracy* by Hannah Moscovitch, and in *Feast* by Guillermo Verdecchia. Last season he directed *Ponderosa Pine* by Andraea Sartison. He was a founding member of Shakespeare in the Ruins and did many shows there, including *Waiting For Godot* last summer, which will be revived next season at the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre. He lives in Winnipeg and Beaver Creek with Deb Patterson.



Gislina Patterson

Letter Writer #3

Gislina Patterson's work has been presented and developed at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, SummerWorks, OFFTA, Hold On Let Go, the London Ontario Media Arts Association, Theatre Catapulte, Prairie Theatre Exchange, Theatre Projects Manitoba, the Stratford Festival Lab, Sick + Twisted Theatre, Young Lungs Dance Exchange, The Mariachi Ghost, Sawa Theatre, Manitoba Association of Playwrights, and Playwright's Workshop Montreal, among others. He is one half of the touring performance collective We Quit Theatre with Dasha Plett, and a member of VIEW, which provides audio description for live arts events.

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Meet the Artists



Honey Pham

Letter Writer #2

Honey Pham is a performer from Winnipeg, Manitoba. Previous credits include: *The Play That Goes Wrong* (The Citadel/Theatre Calgary/The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre/The Grand), *Carried By The River* (Red Snow Collective), *Kitchen Potluck* (fuGEN Theatre), *A Perfect Bowl of Pho* (Toronto Fringe), *Narnia* (Badhats/Theatre Sheridan), *Nobody Asked To Be Here* (Musical Stage Co./Sheridan College & Potassium Theatre). Upcoming: *As You Like It* (Shakespeare In The Ruins). Training: Sheridan College Honours Bachelors of Music Theatre Performance, the Royal Manitoba Theatre Center's National Mentorship Program and JM-MS Apprenticeship.



Ann Hodges

Director

Ann directs theatre, musicals and operas across Canada. Her work has been seen on every professional stage in Winnipeg, and she recently made her international debut in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Ann is also a sought-after dramaturg, guiding new works for The Blyth Festival, Charlottetown Festival, Musical Stage Company, and others. She has instructed at many universities and colleges, including teaching Directing at Sheridan College for five years. Ann was appointed Artistic Director of Prairie Theatre Exchange in November 2024. Her history with PTE spans three decades, including serving as Artistic Associate, teacher, marketing assistant and student. She has directed 17 shows for the company. A graduate of the National Theatre School and the University of Winnipeg, Ann proudly calls Winnipeg home.

PTE/MAP Playwrights Unit: Philip Geller, Kinsey Hollis, Tanner Manson, Jordan McPeck, Gislina Patterson, Ryan Osodo, Ana Toumine, and Cory Wojcik.

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Meet the Artists



Ava Darrach-Gagnon

Assistant Director

Ava Darrach-Gagnon is a bilingual artist and graduate of the University of Winnipeg's Acting: Honours program. She has worked professionally in Manitoba for over a decade, with appearances in theatre, commercials, television, and film. Theatre performance credits include *Serving Elizabeth* (Prairie Theatre Exchange); *Little Women, Sense & Sensibility*, and *Unnecessary Farce* (Royal Manitoba Theatre Center); *The Winter's Tale / Conte d'hiver* (Shakespeare in the Ruins / Cercle Molière); and *Joe Job* (Imaginary Productions). Ava has worked as an assistant director for *Blue Beads & Blueberries* (Manitoba Theatre for Young People) and *Murder on the Orient Express* (RMTC) and is thrilled for the opportunity to assist on this piece with such a lovely group of artists.



Anahita Dehbonehie

Set & Costume Designer

Anahita Dehbonehie is an Iranian artist currently based in Tkaronto, on treaty 13 territory. Her work in live performance interrogates the idea that truths are communicated most powerfully through evocative sensory experiences. Nationally, designs on both stage and screen have been recognized with multiple nominations and awards. In theatre: she has received Dora Awards, Toronto Theatre Critics awards, an Ontario Stage award and a Sterling Haynes Award. She is a resident artist with Outside the March.



Siobhán Sleath

Lighting Designer

Selected Credits: *Othello* (Stratford Festival); *Mary Poppins* (Thousand Island Playhouse); *Job* (Winnipeg Jewish Theatre); *The Rising World* (Seoul Arts Centre), *Witness for the Prosecution*, *Wilde Tales* (Shaw Festival); *Heist* (Citadel/ Grand); *In Seven Days, Charlie and The Chocolate Factory* (Grand Theatre); *The Bright Divide, The Garden of Vanished Pleasures* (Soundstreams); *Canoe* (Unsettled Scores/Native Earth); *Come From Away: The Concert* (Marquis Productions); *Ring of Fire* (Theatre Aquarius); *The Hobbit* (Adirondack Theater Festival); *Ann* (Arkansas Rep Theatre); *Shrek* and *The Addams Family* (Neptune Theatre) Siobhán is a member of ADC659. More info on her website www.siobhansleathdesign.com.

Meet the Artists



Dasha Plett

Sound Designer

Dasha Plett is a Winnipeg-based sound designer and composer. She has worked with Buddies in Bad Times, Stratford Festival, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Prairie Theatre Exchange, Cercle Molière, Theatre Projects Manitoba, Mammalian Diving Reflex, Zaiba Baig, Frances Koncan, Waawaate Fobister, and Debbie Patterson. Her work has been nominated for the Dora Awards, Siminovitch Protégé Prize, and Louis Applebaum Composers Award. Dasha is also half of We Quit Theatre, a nationally touring performance collective with Gisлина Patterson. Visit Dasha online at www.princessdasha.com.



Margaret Brook

Stage Manager

Margaret is delighted to be back at PTE as part of the team bringing *Tiny Beautiful Things* to life on the stage.



Tia Morann

Assistant Stage Manager

Tia is a 2023 graduate of the University of Winnipeg and is thrilled to join PTE as an ASM for the first time. Recent credits include, as Assistant Stage Manager: *Sleeping Beauty* (Royal Winnipeg Ballet). As Apprentice Stage Manager: *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Life of Pi*, *Indecent* (Royal Manitoba Theatre Center); *Rock of Ages* (Rainbow Stage); *A Year with Frog and Toad* (Manitoba Theatre for Young People); *Così fan Tutte*, *Li Keur*, *Carmen* (Manitoba Opera Association). As Stage Manager: *Countess Ory*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *Rocking Horse Winner* (Manitoba Underground Opera). Much love to the family for all the support!

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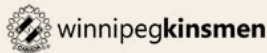
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Val & Blair Bingeman
Mr. Dmitri Bondarenko
Steve & Jackie Broda-Milan
Mrs. Doneta Brotchie
Mr. John Burrows
Mike Chapin
Dr. & Mrs. Thor Choptiany
Nicole Chychota
Ms. Amanda Ciavarelli
Rossana Cogorno

David & Katheen Connor
Joyce Copp
Alanna Courtney
Ted Cunningham
Dr. Sowmya Dakshinamurti
Loise DeGurse
Sally Dick
Tasha Dirr
Carla Divinsky
Ian & Leslie Donnelly
Terence Douglas
Mr. Dmitri Dovgoselets
Katherine Drewniak
Beverly Emes-MacKlin
& Diane Emes
Peter Engbrecht
Mrs. Edna Erickson
Mary & Craig Fardoe
Carrie Ferguson
Mr. Conrado Foglio Bonda
Ms. Colleen P. Foster
The Frecker-Chius
Janice Freeman
Matt Frehner
Dianne Frost
Mr. Damien Jade Goodridge
Ms. Beth Goran
Ms. Bonnie Greschuk
Ms. Ava Gruener
Barry Hammond &
Mary Mathias
Hans & Sandra Hasenack
Kimberly Heintz
John & Beth Helliard
Scott Henderson
Jason Herzog
Shirley & Michael Hill
Darlene Hnatyshyn
Linda Hogue
Richard & Karen Howell
Susan Husband
Jean Hyrich
C. Jantz
Kim Johnston
Kathy Kalinowsky
Brenda Kennedy
Christine Kennedy
& Mike Sharpe
Ms. Cathy A. Kozak
Dan Kraayeveld
Lorraine Kraichy
Shannon Larkins

Ken & Faye Lawson
Anne La Tour
Rochelle Ledoux Molgat
Ken & Charlotte Lazaruk
Mr. Bob Ludwick
Allison MacHutchon
Kristina McFadden
Geri McGrath & Anne Bolton
Jacqueline Marques
Dr. Shelley Mahoney
Heidi Malazdrewich
Dale & Gina Marciski
Katherine McLennan
Lynette Miller
Penny & Bob Miller
Dave Miller
Valerie Mollison
Thomas Morgan Jones
Carson Natrass &
Sharon Bajer
Ms. Lisa Neron
Tom & Sharon Nesmith
Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler
Reta Owens
Beverly Phillips
Ms. Nalini Reddy
Heather Redfern
Bill & Pat Reid
Carol Reynolds
Mr. & Mrs. Morgan
Robinson
Kevin Rollason
Suzanne Rutledge
Robert Sales
Karn Sandy
Andraea Sartison
Rose Schellenberg
Marilyn & Jon Seguire
Laura Sevenhuysen
Lynn & Bill Shead
Ruth Shead
Diane Silverthorne
Christine Skene
J. Snyder
Inga Skundberg
Val Snyder & Bill Rossington
Wilma Sotas
Irmis Stach
Helena Station-Smelsky
Loretta & Murray Steinbart
Patricia & Flecher Stewart
Susie Strachan & Bob Martin

Mr. Eugene Szach
Marie Taplin
Mandi Taylor
Mrs. Danielle Tetrault
Patricia Thille
Anita Turcotte
Shannon Vickers
Ms. Elaine Walker
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Wardrop
Melanie Whyte & Paul Gehrs
Teresa & Les Wiens
Ms. Jill Wilson
Amanda Wolfe
Mr. & Ms. Kevin &
Anita Welles
Catriona & Bill Younger
Julia Zacharias
Lillian Zentner
Anonymous (10)

Associate Level – \$60-\$84

Barry & Lorraine Abbott
Ms. Melodie Agbayani
Georgi Aremu
Carlos Betonio
Paul Betts
Ms. Diane Bewell
Mrs. Candace Blair
Ms. Lisa Bruce
Karen Buss
Ms. Ruth Campbell
Glynis Corkal
Janet & Murray Corneillie
T. Dercola
Rita & Rex Deverell
Cheryl Durnin
David Evans
Gayle Fischer
Kathy & Stephen Gadiant
Yvette Hawkes
Ms. Elizabeth Heimbecker
Megan Heke
Mrs. Odette Heyn
Mrs. Elizabeth Higgins
Ms. Linda Hogue
Sylvia In
Ursula Kelemen
Greg Klassen
Ms. Catherine Kloepfer

Ongoing Support

Ms. Robin Kogan
Kenneth Kuchma
Cecile Antoinette Lafreniere
Ms. Faye Lambert
Jasnith Langhorne
Dr. Courtney Leary
Kevin Longfield
Ms. Ann McConkey
& Mr. Greg Wilson
Christine McInnes
Jacqueline Melnyk
Ms. Cressida Mills
Ms. Ruth Morrison
Andrea Paci
Betty Parton
Ed & Cheryl Rajfur
Joyce Riddell
Dolores Rintoul
Kat Rother
Giorgia Severini
Emily Shane
Harry A. Skene
Lorraine Lynn
Sommerhalder
Myleen Spence
James & Louise Townsend
Catherine Vriend
Catherine Waldie
Lori Wallace
Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Wiebe
Ms. Leanna Zamonsky
Kim Zeglinski
Polly Zelcer
Anonymous (3)

Member Level – \$30-\$59

Joseph Abetria
Patricia Adams
Iris Allen
Kathleen Allen
Elise Anderson
Raye Anderson
Max Babson
Else Barg
June Bari
Mary E. Barrett
Diane Beaven
Colette Belanger
Gunsell Berker
Bonnie Berry
Dolores Bischoff

Carmelle Boily-Le Dorze
Ardith Boxall
Diane Boyle
Diana Bradbury
Carrie Brown
Alyson Bulloch
Marjorie Cameron
Denise Campbell
Ms. Anita Caldwell
Kim Chambers
Cathie Clement
Janet Coppinger
Anna & Bob Coulter
Brian & Barbara Crow
Ms. Eveline Cruise
Dr. Susan Cuvelier
Mr. & Mrs. Dane
Kim de Waal
Karen DePape
T. Dercola
Darlene Doble
Richard Duval
Lois Erb
Carol Erickson
Eric & Kathy Fast
Laura Fedoruk
Dr. Steven Feldgaier
Ms. Margaret Flewin
Peter Flynn
Tom Foulis
Jill Fox
Mrs. Christine Freeman
Trevor Frost
Lise Gaboury-Diallo
Cathy Gamble
Marilyn Goldbert
Helen Halpin
Pat Hammell
Dean Harder
Don Hardy
Mrs. Benji Harvey
Jane Heyman
Norm Hiebert
James & Leona Hillier
Valerie Holden-Rushworth
Hank Hosanna
David Huband &
Christina Collins
Mr. & Mrs. Murray Hyman
Sonjia Iserloh
Sally Ito
Krista Jackson

Barb Janes
Dan Janssens
Lars Jansson
Haley Janze
Dolores Jardine
Dave & Lesia Johns
Jessica Johnson
April Kassum
Marco Katz Montiel
Fred Kisil & Dixie Mitchell
Marjorie Kolson
Monique LaDressay
Claude Lagace
Laurie Lam
Ms. Sharon R. Love
Lisa MacKenzie
Allison MacHutchon
Priya Mani
Alix & Don Mathieson
Catherine McGrath
Brendan McKeen
Maureen McLeod
Joel Mierau
Tani Miki
Glen Miller
Michelle Montsion
Ria & Andy Moreau
David Morrison
Mrs. Margret Morrison
Rob Moquin
Laurel Nielson
T. Norget
Melissa Novocosky
Sheri Oberman
Laurel Paetz
Claire Pankiw
Mrs. Marlene Parnell
Elizabeth Pate &
Ross Kilfoyle
Ms. Doreen Pendgracs
Brigitta Perkins
Dan Petrenko
Arlene Perry
Trish Perry
Joan Pilgrim
Evelyn Pitura
Ms. Sandra Popham
Denise Prazinak
Victoria Preston
Jillian Preston-Gren
Adam & Teresa Prokopanko
Kelvin Recksiedler

Esther & Reynold Redekopp
Levi & Tena Reimer
J. Rocque
Pat Rothney
Christopher Runions
Cynthia Ryan
Lisa Sansregret
Laurel Sarginson
Katharine & John Schultz
Debra Schweyer &
Dave Plummer
Debra Shnider
Iris Shrimpton
Terry & Sharon Silcox
Rita Silver
Louise Smith
Rick & Cathy Sokolowski
Robert Stalker
Eleanor Steeg
Ms. Mary F. Steinhoff
Kevin & Gladys Stewart
Brenda Suderman
Carol Thompson
Donna & Wayne Tremblay
Mrs. Allie Turnock
Lucas Van Den Bosch
Gloria & Doug Waldron
Leslie & Sean Watson
Alissa Watson
Barbara Wells
Antoinette Wildman
Woelk Family
Diane Zack
Nikki Zloty
Anonymous (36)

\$10 to \$29

Robert & Marcy Adair
Pat Allen & Len Dueck
Greg Anderson
Kathryn Bartmanovich
Oslen Belle
Kelly Bernardin-Dvorak
Shane Black
Shelly Blanco
Linda Bloom
Ingrid A. Bolbecher
Michelle Boulet
Karla Braun
Lynda Brethauer &
Paul Venton
Marilyn Heather Bruce

Ongoing Support

Peter Bruckshaw
Raymond Burns
William Burton-Falk
Kate Byman
Angel Cahigas
F. Cahill
Robert Campbell
John Charrette
Eric Charron
Julie Choquet
Patty Christie
Emmet Collins
Tricia Cooper
Diane Coughlin
Kym Cuthill
Tracy Dahl
Richard Davey
Pamela Deol
Lorna Derkson
Erin Desjardine
Heather Dixon
Ted & Janice Dodd
Beverley Doern
Louie Doulias
Jessica Dunn
Laura Durling
Robert Dyck
Kathy Feader
Gail Fehr
Ben Ferraro
Evelyn Fletcher
Jenny Francisco

Joanna Frketich
Jesse & Casey Gavrailoff
Bohdi Heide
Susan Glendinning
Dean Pritchard &
Karen Goodridge
Eddie Gorber
Barbara Green
Jason Gren
Marion Guinn
Liisa Halstead-Hull
Paul Harack
T. Hartry
Mr. & Mrs. John Hawryluk
Sue & Frank Hechter
Margaret Hildebrand
Heather Hill
Carol & Ian Hughes
Linda Hull
Pam Hunter
Linda Hyde
Jenny Jeffers
David Johns
Dianne L. Johnson
Robert Johnston
Jodee Karlowsky
Leigh-Anne Kehler
Teresa Krasnowski
Ray Lapointe
Diane Leitold
Dr. Judith Littleford
Robert Lowe

Megan MacBride
Karen MacHutchon
Joanne Mackinnon-Hunt
David Macmartin
Mr. & Mrs. Magarrell
Andrii Makukha
Lynne Martin
Erin McGregor
Kevin McGregor
Christina McKay
Wayne McLeod
Michelle Meade
Allison Moore
Elaine Mordoch
Declan Moulden
Paula Parks
Denby Perez
Allison Perlov
Alinea Piche
Marjorie Poor
Beth Proven
Patricia Pruden
Rose Regier
Lisa Riley
Liz Robertson
Darlene Ronald
Heather Russell-Smith
Bridget Ryan
Lisa Samuelson
Elspeth Sangster
Gail Schnabl
Deborah Sequin

Vicky & Scot Sharman-
Finlayson
Karen Shibley
Tamelynn Silver
Aaron Simcoe
Robert & Margaret Smith
Neal Smith-Windsor
Richard Stecenko
Sheena Stemler
Gaetanne Sylvester
Mavis Taillieu
Helene Thys
Candice Tremblay
Brian Van de Mosselaer
Amber van den Broek
Stephanie Van Den Bosch
Karen Van Leusden
Connie Vanderhart
Poppy Veale
Jodie Voth
Carrie Wai
Veralyn Warkentin
Nancy Weedon
Leanne Westergard
Sarah Wilton
Benjamin Winestock
The Wojciks
Jeni Wykes
Elizabeth Yascheshyn
Anonymous (102)

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