

# The Uxbridge COSMOS



Volume 16 No. 27

YOUR UNIVERSE

Thursday, July 16, 2020

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**SUMMER HIGH TEA** - Jay Stewart, left, of the Uxbridge Legion Pipes and Drums, provided some entertainment during York-Durham Heritage Railway's "Heritage Summer High Tea," held at the Uxbridge train station last Saturday. Attending the tea were Monique Roumy, Dahlia Naguib, and Eleonore Edwards. *Photo by John Cavers*

## Holding out hope for lost, blind golden retriever

by Lynn Campbell, special to the Cosmos

Hundreds of volunteers have been searching for a lost Golden Retriever named Shep who disappeared in the woods on the Thistledown Pet Memorial property in Uxbridge over two weeks ago.

The Team Chelsea Facebook page has had 1,700 comments and 9,100 shares since the first post at 11:17 p.m. on June 30, says Janet Gixti, a volunteer with the organization.

Searchers have set out on foot, on ATVs, and even on horseback, day and night, looking for clues as to the dog's whereabouts. Colette Brown, Shep's owner, has ripped up her bed-sheets to tie onto trees, in hopes that Shep will follow the scent. His bed, chewed tennis balls

and dog cookies are all there, in hopes of luring him in.

Shep disappeared during a walk with family members and other dogs at 12:30 p.m. on June 30. The search began immediately. Despite his glaucoma, 11-year-old Shep is able to see shapes and distinguish between dark and light. His senses of smell and hearing are reportedly fine.

Shep was trained as a service dog for Brown's husband Jim, a first responder who broke his back in the line of duty and spent the last years of his life as a paraplegic until his passing in 2014. Their cat, Ginger, refused to eat and passed away five days later, recalls Brown, who chose Thistledown for the cat's cremation. That's how Brown met the owners, Nancy and

Colin Graham.

"We became great friends," says Nancy. According to Nancy, Brown and Shep's visits to Thistledown have been "almost a daily occurrence for six years."

The Grahams have welcomed searchers 24/7, offering washroom facilities, cold water, coffee and sandwiches.

Gixti explains that volunteers are looking for paw prints near water sources, freshly dug holes or bits of fur. There have been two unconfirmed sightings: one at the Uxbridge dog park and one near Wagg Road.

"It's nice to see the community come together to help," says Gixti. "We remain hopeful."

Shep wears a collar and tags with his phone

...continued on page 6

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## Brock Street Sidewalk Closure

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## PUBLIC NOTICE – PESTICIDE USE WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF UXBRIDGE

The Township of Uxbridge intends to control noxious weeds along the following rural concession roadsides north of Davis Drive:



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Commencing on July 23, 2020, weather permitting and ending August 14, 2020.

We are controlling Noxious Weeds under the Public Works Exemption of the Cosmetic Pesticides Ban to promote public health and safety.

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The Splash Pad is now open. Users must self-regulate in a manner that reduces the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Users must sanitize prior to entering the splash pad and maintain a 6 foot (2 m) distance between users. Children must be supervised. Please limit your time to allow other users the chance to enjoy the water. Washrooms are not available. Please bring your own sanitizer and stay at home if you are not feeling well.



Township of Uxbridge documents are available in alternate formats upon request. Please fill out the Request for Alternate Formats Form at [uxbridge.ca/accessibility](http://uxbridge.ca/accessibility)

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# Award went to facilities that 'knew a virus was present'

by Justyne Edgell,  
Local Journalism Initiative  
Reporter

On Canada Day, the town of Uxbridge presented a "Citizens of Distinction" award to three long term care facilities that were affected by COVID-19 outbreaks. ReachView Village, Douglas Crossing and the Uxbridge Cottage Hospital were all commended for their

efforts in facing the COVID battle head-on. All three facilities were affected by the outbreaks at different times, and both management and staff of all three facilities continued to work, despite increased risk, supporting and caring for the residents and patients. The township presented framed certificates to each facility to mark the hard work of all staff and team members during these outbreaks.

When asked why Butternut Manor, a long term care facility that has managed to stay completely COVID free since the pandemic was declared, was not awarded this distinction, Mayor Dave Barton said that "this should not shadow their great efforts."

"With respect to long term care homes, fortunately, 54 per cent in Ontario have made it through this pandemic outbreak free and have

done an incredible job of keeping their residents safe and healthy. The remaining 46 per cent of homes had workers that went to work while their co-workers and their families were getting sick from a virus whose long term effects remain unknown. We decided to recognize the staff at the three organizations in our community that went to work knowing that a virus was present," explained Bar-

ton.

All but four of Uxbridge's 105 COVID-19 cases were linked to outbreaks in these facilities.

All long term care facilities and the hospital are currently outbreak free.

Municipal and provincial guidelines still encourage everyone to follow precautions in order to keep the community safe and healthy.



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# Our two cents

## Can you hear me now?

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 shutdown, Uxbridge council has been holding what we have come to know as virtual meetings.

Every member of council, various staff members, the local media, deputants and occasional members of the public tune into the meetings on their own computers at home or, in the case of Mayor Dave Barton, at his office. Usually, all members of council are seen in split-screen format and join in the discussions when their in-computer microphones are turned on.

This has been going on since March and one would think the bugs had been worked out by now. However, this Monday's video conference was so full of blank screen and muted sound that it is debateable whether the meeting could be termed legitimate.

Somehow, the councillors appeared to forge ahead with the agenda, but for some onlookers the gaps were not filled in and we were left wondering at times whether the feed would come back: do we continue staring at a blank screen or switch it off and perhaps miss something should the troubles be resolved?

We acknowledge that most of the virtual meetings held so far have been successful, but there have been glitches along the way. Monday's problems were by far the most serious. Nevertheless, council meetings - except those held in camera - must be fully accessible to the public and when the video stream - or the sound - is interrupted, that accessibility is diminished. And if the media is unable to fully follow the discussions, that also leads to incomplete reporting of the meeting.

We understand that these are troubling times and everyone has to put up with some inconveniences here and there. But whatever difficulties we face, there are some areas that must remain as unaffected by the pandemic as possible and the running of a government is at the top of that list. The public has a right to know what their governments are doing. Any Uxbridge resident tuning in to Monday's video feed would have had great difficulty knowing what their municipal government was doing on that day.

We are not blaming anyone for Monday's technical difficulties. However, someone in authority could have determined that the feed was not going well and delayed or rescheduled the meeting until the blips were worked out.

The next regular meeting of council is scheduled for next month. It is quite possible that by that time, the GTA will be included in Stage 3 of the loosening of restrictions and council may choose to move back to the council chambers. But if not, let's hope the township uses that time to iron out the kinks in its virtual meetings, because they're virtually impossible to follow.

When one of these disappears, A LOT disappears.

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**The Uxbridge COSMOS**

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Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Friday to 4 p.m.

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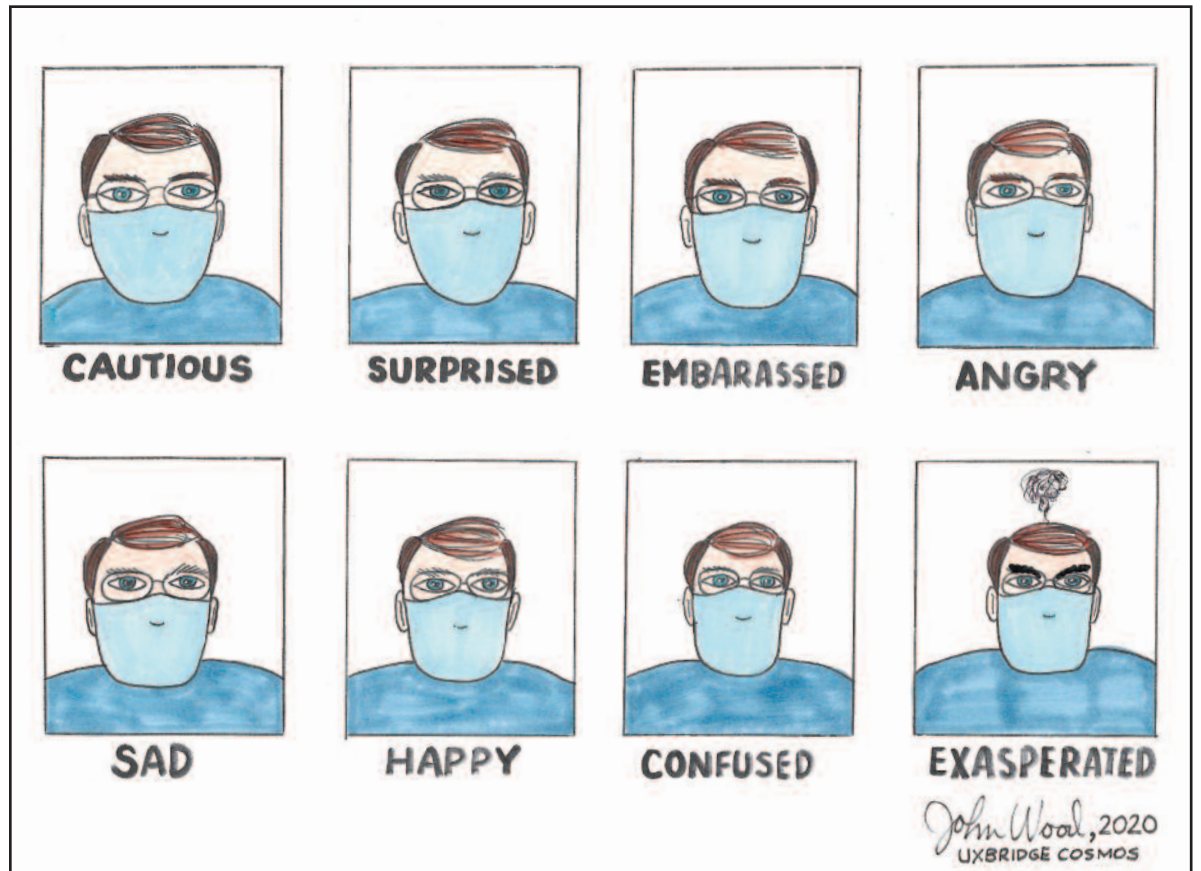
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## Letters to the Editor

I missed the July 2 edition of the *Cosmos*, so I eagerly sat with my tea and the July 9 edition. By the time I got to the Letters to the Editor, I was sad and confused. Quotes like "micro-managed," "humiliate a subordinate," "back room dealings," and "cowardly manoeuvring," were from just a small sampling of irate readers.

What is going on in council meetings? Moreover, what is going on with Mayor Barton? He made "an angry phone call" to a reader and another reader suggests "it is Mayor Barton who needs to be removed from his position." "We elected a mayor, not a king or dictator," says another.

Residents of Uxbridge appear to be unhinged over how all council members behaved, including the Mayor, regarding Gary Ruona's removal [from three committees]. I hope this doesn't just go away or is shoved under the proverbial rug. I would like to see accountability from our councillors and mayor. An explanation is needed and said in front of a camera/video, then posted on the mayor's Facebook page. We need this in order to have faith in our elected members going forward.

I also agree with Susan Elsworth's statement regarding the Uxpool. I too need exercise in the winter, and as a person in my 60s, swimming is the only way for me to get it. Uxbridge offers very little in affordable senior exercise programs. I do hope the pool is open soon, at least for lane swimming time slots.

Finally, I love the idea of a "cairn for the community," Roger Varley. I hope it happens.

**Theresa Pilniuk**  
Uxbridge

*Editor's note: the Cosmos did not publish a July 2 edition.*

I would just like to say a heartfelt thank you to Nancy Emo, who wrote the message last week about Butternut staff deserving first prize.

I am very grateful to her for acknowledging our efforts against COVID-19. We have all fought long and hard to maintain a clean and healthy home for our residents.

Quite disheartening that the mayor can't acknowledge Butternut for our efforts in this fight but can acknowledge the others.

**Kelly Mason**  
Butternut Manor

We've stopped caring. And we've taught our children to stop caring, too.

There was an accident on Webb Rd. (Uxbridge township) last week; a young person died. The parents must be devastated, and I think to myself "Why, why, and why?"

We have lost touch, it seems to me, with the importance of ensuring everyone has the tools to survive in this crazy world. Some might say that the schools will teach our children, that's what we pay taxes for.

People also don't listen to their elders anymore. Our most valued resources are our children and our elders. And our most needy are the ones that can't help themselves. Yet we just don't care anymore. We would rather complain, "Why doesn't Justin do something about this or that ... ?" I'm no different - didn't he promise WiFi to us rural people when he was running for election?

This is how we 'care' - we say we care, because we have an opinion, but really, we don't care anymore. It makes me sad.

My Native friends say "Let it go, Frank, Creator will sort them out in the end."

**Frank Mroz**  
Uxbridge

I read with interest the Roger Varley's article from the June 25 edition of the paper entitled "Councillor cut from key committees." I didn't know that Mayor Barton was responsible for determining the workload of each councillor in his/her ward. It would seem to me that the voters in each ward are responsible for how well their councillor is performing and if they are not satisfied, will make a change at the next election.

If I read the article correctly, the mayor feels that Councillor Ruona has such a heavy workload just taking care of his ward that he is unable to fulfill his role on certain committees. One might assume from this rationale that Mayor Barton and Councillors Garrod and Popp have a lot of extra time on their hands and need these extra responsibilities to keep themselves busy.

On the other hand, if Councillor Ruona's interpretation of the situation is correct - "He [Barton] doesn't like me," then perhaps it's time for the mayor to get his act together. We did not elect the mayor and councillors to be best friends, but we do expect them to work together, share the load and provide the town with solid, bipartisan oversight, administration and decision making. And yes, sometimes someone may even have a different view or opinion. Personal vendettas, if they exist, are certainly not included in this mandate.

I hope we will hear a much better explanation from Mayor Barton in the near future and hopefully, councillors who were too timid to say anything when a colleague was being put on display in public, will learn to speak up. Everyone deserves better.

**Bob Pugh**  
Ward 4, Uxbridge





## ...I'm just sayin'

column by Justyne Edgell

### A different kind of connection

I know I've mentioned this before, but I think it's pretty amazing how well we've actually been able to adapt to all the changes in this COVID world we are living in. While some of us may have been hit very hard (and we have all faced some forms of challenges), I find it quite inspiring to see how business owners, schools, community programs, etc., have all been able to alter the way they function to try to continue and serve the community during this pandemic. I know it hasn't been easy, but it has forced people to be creative and critical thinkers, and I think we're all coming out of this more prepared and equipped for different challenges in our future.

For people like myself, who haven't personally been sick, I think it's the social changes that have had the biggest impacts on our lives. The required social distancing is not normal or comfortable. When I was suddenly given this restriction, all I wanted to do was spend time with my friends. I actually think that, in some way, I'm coming out of this period of isolation as a more social person! Partly, I think it's because I've realized how much I really took for granted my social interactions. But I've also discovered ways to modify connecting with others.

Early on in the pandemic, I remember hearing about the importance of not giving into social distancing (wait for it) but rather that we must *physically* distance, as social distance/isolation could be detrimental to our mental health and general well-being. As a young person who, prior to the pandemic, was at school with friends, at work, doing an internship, and spending time with my boyfriend, I was so used to being around people every day. The sudden isolation was almost eerie. However, as our world started to adapt, it became clear that we needed each other more than ever and we found many ways to keep social and connected remotely.

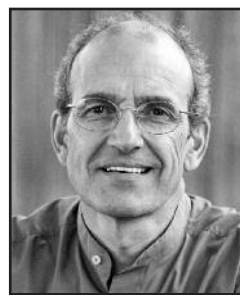
At first, I think the world was fixated on the fact that we couldn't be together physically, and we were just desperately trying to hang onto normal life. But when we saw how our schools and jobs could adapt to functioning remotely, we began to adopt those tools for our social lives as well. It was kind of surprising that even our regular "Gen Z" social media habits didn't seem enough for us anymore! My friends and I started thinking of ways that we could get together safely, so we set up Zoom parties for virtual gatherings. These remote parties got pretty creative - it wasn't just a group of people all

chatting on a video call. We found tons of games that could be played online in conjunction with our Zoom call. We've played things like Cards Against Humanity, trivia games and Psych. Our calls are full of laughter and I've actually caught up with some people that I haven't spoken to for months!

This definitely isn't the perfect replacement for in-person social interaction, but it sure is a heck of a lot better than going without any social connections at all. I can't imagine what it has been like for people living in long term care or those who needed to stay completely isolated. I have been so lucky that I live with my family, that I'm young and healthy, and that a trip out of the house just to go to the grocery store or the pharmacy doesn't leave me at a higher risk.

As we learned more about this virus and found out that the risk of contracting it outdoors is significantly lower, we were able to shake up our gatherings. Like many other people, my friends and I started doing bike rides. Being that on a bike, you are pretty much required to be at least two meters from the next person. Our first ride was on one of the early warm days of summer and our overly ambitious selves decided that, for the first ride since we were all roughly 13-years-old, we should ride the TransCanada Trail all the way to Sunderland. Safe to say, as well as giving us lots of time to catch up, we also got in a lot of good exercise and much-welcomed sunshine. We have kept up these rides, almost weekly, and have found a new hobby that we all really enjoy doing together!

Over the past few months, as being social and keeping connections became something we felt was important to work for, I think we've actually become better about scheduling "connecting time." I know before the pandemic I was so busy, driving here and there, working, doing school work and then just crashing in my downtime, that I didn't worry so much about seeing my friends and being social. This pandemic has actually given us some extra time and opportunity to connect with people and things that we love. It may be a bit different than the traditional ways we are used to connecting and socializing with others, but our desire to be connected is just as strong as our abilities to adapt, and in our crazy changing world I'm finding it fun to test my creative skills and find different ways of connecting and new things that I enjoy.



## The Barris Beat

column by Ted Barris

### State of statues

It stands about three feet tall. It looks like a stone pedestal, but it has no statue on it. It's not located in an obvious public square or along a busy thoroughfare. It's a war memorial, but it doesn't glorify a victory, nor mourn a defeat, even though for Canadians it signifies tremendous loss. When I've taken fellow Canadians there, I've always been struck by its simplicity, modesty and basic message. Its only identification is a brass plaque across one side of the pedestal with an inscription:

"Here, 8 May 1915, the 'Originals' of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, commanded by their founder Maj. A. Hamilton Gault, DSO, held firm and counted not the cost," is all it says.

The first time I went looking for this war memorial, eight years ago, I almost missed it. The battlefield bus tour I was leading through Belgium had PPCLI veterans along, and they'd mentioned they'd like to see this memorial. They said the "Originals" cairn was kind of a touchstone location for them, the place where PPCLI units suffered their first-ever casualties in the Great War. Suddenly, I spotted a sign directing us up a country road. At the end of it, I expected maybe an arrangement of flags or a marble sculpture, possibly a statue of a Canadian soldier or something. But no. It was just this modest circular stone with a written tribute to the Great War's very first PPCLI war dead.

I've thought a lot about that "Originals" monument lately, as demonstrators around the world have reacted to the murder of George Floyd and knocked down or defaced statues they believe signify oppression and racism. Protestors quite rightly are angry with edifices to men who (at the time) seemed great leaders, but who also kept others in bondage. Statues once raised to honour the life of Christopher Columbus have been toppled in Richmond, Virginia, and St. Paul, Minnesota – the one in Boston was beheaded – over Columbus's treatment of Indigenous people. In Britain, protestors have brought down statues commemorating Edward Colston and Robert Milligan, both former slavers. And in the U.S., the statues of former leaders of the Confederacy in the U.S. Civil War have fallen like ten pins – Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson in Richmond; Albert Pike in Washington; Dick Dowling in Houston; and Charles Linn in Birmingham. They stood and fought for the preservation of the Southern institution of slavery. Historical individuals once revered, have suddenly been revealed.

Hurray for that! Nowhere should those who would trample on the rights of others, or worse, murder them through a warped sense of superiority be honoured. But has it occurred to anybody, that in eliminating all trace of these figures, we're erasing that history? Have those eager to topple statues and dump them in the river considered how to explain what those fallen heroes and icons did wrong? Sure, wipe the slate clean of their celebrity and evil ways, but in their place we need to show next generations how they did what they did, and why they rose to fame in spite of it, and then how their infamy survived in a sculpted edifice. Erase the evil, but show the evidence.

Not so long ago, I tripped across an episode of the iconic BBC TV series, *World at War*. It told the wartime tale of Oradour-sur-Glane, a small village in central France that paid the supreme price for its resistance to Nazi occupation from 1940 to 1944. The excerpt was narrated by none other than Sir Laurence Olivier. The segment walks the viewer along a deserted street.

"Down this road, on a summer day in 1944," Olivier explains, "the soldiers came. They stayed only a few hours. When they had gone, the community which had lived for a thousand years, was dead."

He relates how the civilian men in Oradour were led to garages and barns and shot by the German troops, who then led the women and children to the Catholic church, where they too were killed. With the dignity and empathy that only Olivier could bestow on such a narration, he finishes by saying, "They never rebuilt Oradour. Its ruins remain as a memorial." Even today, the abandoned village stands as a tribute to the 642 killed on June 10, 1944, as a reprisal for the Allied landings in Normandy four days before. I'd venture to say that nobody who visits that town or views that segment of *World at War*, ever forgets what happened there. Or why.

It's the same as that simple marker in Belgium I've visited with battlefield travellers. The "Originals" monument to the fallen of PPCLI troops in 1915 offers a remembrance of what happened there. It acknowledges the senseless loss. It does what any historic monument should do – it describes the travesty, displays the context and inspires all who visit to draw the lesson for themselves.

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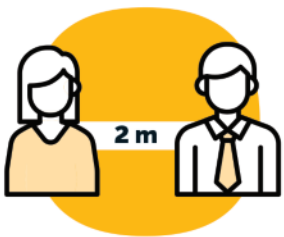
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## As more businesses and services reopen, and with social gatherings increased to 10 people, we all must continue our efforts to protect each other.



**Practice physical distancing,** stay two metres apart.



**Wear a face covering** when physical distancing is a challenge.



Continue to **wash hands frequently.**



**Get tested** if you are worried you may have COVID-19, or have been exposed to the virus.

**Inside or out, stay safe.  
Save lives.**

## Changes may be coming to seniors' centre

by Roger Varley

Ward 3 Councillor Bruce Garrod sought and received council support Monday to apply for grants from the federal and provincial governments to make some physical changes at the Uxbridge Seniors Centre.

Garrod said the number of programs offered at the centre continues to grow and membership in the Seniors Club has reached 150. At the same time, the Uxbridge Youth Centre has moved its quarters into the building. But he added that "it is acknowledged the Uxbridge Seniors Centre is not fully accessible."

He said the centre was built to the standards of the day (it opened in 1993), but the washrooms do not meet today's standards.

"This creates a roadblock that prevents the inclusion of some individuals from attending events," he said in a report.

Garrod said other changes are needed at the centre to address mobility concerns.

He said he wants to apply for a grant of around \$100,000 from the federal Enabling Accessibility Fund, and his application will include various letters of support, including letters from MP Jennifer O'Connell and MPP Peter Bethlenfalvy. In addition, he wants to request about \$50,000 from the provincial Seniors Community Grant (SCG) Program. The goal of that application is to repeat the benefits of the 2020 CommuniTea program for a second year, but in a way that allows seniors to engage, socialize and learn remotely, he said. Garrod noted that a federal grant would require a 25-per-cent contribution from the municipality, but the provincial grant would be in total, with no financial or in-kind top-up from the township.

*More council news can be found at [thecosmos.ca](https://thecosmos.ca)*



### Lost dog, from page 1

number, so people can easily contact his owner.

People from miles around have joined the search. They have concentrated on the vast forested area between Concessions 6 and 7, and all the way south to Whitby.

Cindy and Bob Ouellette of Sunderland have donned their bug jackets and grabbed their walking sticks to scour the forests.

"As a service dog, Shep has done so much for others," says Cindy. "People love Shep's story and want to help. We can't just forget him. He deserves better."

"The search continues," says Brown. "We will never give up. But I will always believe in my heart if Shep is in the spirit world, he will be happy with my hubby, our turtles and bird and Ginger the cat."

Check out the Facebook page "Shep Is Lost" for updates, and report leads to Team Chelsea at 905-666-4676.

*Photos of Shep available at [thecosmos.ca](https://thecosmos.ca)*



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Classifieds are \$15/week up to 25 words; \$0.20 per additional word (plus HST). Payable in advance by cash, cheque, debit or credit card. Contact Lvann@thecosmos.ca or 905-852-1900 Deadline: Tuesday, 12 noon. Ask about online link possibilities, too.

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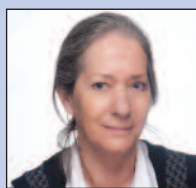




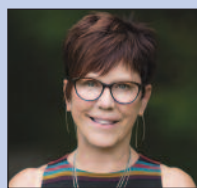
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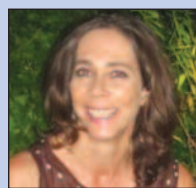
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## A note from Dave's desk

column by Mayor Dave Barton

### Uxbridge is outbreak-free

I'm very happy to start my column with the announcement that the COVID-19 outbreak at ReachView Village has officially been declared over, as of July 9. As I write this, we are down to one case of COVID-19 in our community. Let's continue to be vigilant and take preventative measures to keep our case count low so we can collectively move to Stage 3.

I'm also pleased to report that progress on the Brock St. Culvert project is moving along nicely, partly because we have not encountered any unexpected underground water. Crews have installed a shoring wall across Brock St. and will soon begin to excavate there.

The downtown merchants are really appreciative of and need your support. There is ample parking and access to these businesses, so we continue to encourage everyone to give our local friends a visit.

Two new temporary speed bumps have been installed on Mill St. which are intended to slow down traffic.

Mill St. is marked as "local traffic only" during the Brock St. construction. Motorists are directed to use Elgin Park Drive as the preferred route around the construction.

The mandatory water ban has been lifted by the region. A high-pressure pump malfunctioned on one of our municipal wells which threatened to destabilize our water pressure until repairs could be made.

Thank you to those who avoided unnecessary watering while the ban was on. Our splash pad has reopened so go and enjoy - in an appropriately physically distanced way.

Readers of this paper will be aware of a recent change to council representation on three advisory committees. I feel the process we followed was misrepresented.

I proposed changes to the council representative [Councillor Gary Ruona] on three committees in order to help those committees achieve their current project goals. This change was discussed with Councillor Ruona ahead of time, was men-

tioned at a previous council meeting and the resolution was published in the agenda four days prior to the council meeting so it wasn't a surprise to my fellow councillors, the majority of whom supported the proposed changes.

Councillor Ruona maintains his role on the Library Board and continues to serve his constituents across a very large geographic area. I appreciate that having to discuss this change publicly in a council meeting was disappointing for Councillor Ruona, but passing a resolution in council is required by the Municipal Act, so it had to be discussed in public.

Councillor Ruona is keen to serve the residents of the township. He and I will work together to find projects that are the best fit with his skill sets.

Finally, I was very proud of our local merchants for moving quickly to adopt the region's mask policy and work to make it accepted and seamless. I am very excited to see the township and the region move to Stage 3, as it will mean that our lives will be closer to normal and we will be able to eat in restaurants, see a movie or gather in appropriate groups to hear live music.

Please be safe and enjoy your summer.

*Editor's note: The Cosmos would like to note that Durham Region is remaining in Stage 2 until further notice from the provincial government.*