

The Uxbridge COSMOS



Volume 16 No. 40

YOUR UNIVERSE

Thursday, October 15, 2020



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GIVING THANKS EN PLEIN AIR - A group of residents along First Avenue brought tables and turkeys (and rock Cornish hen, beef tenderloin and roast chicken) outdoors on Monday afternoon to celebrate Thanksgiving with both family and friends while remaining socially distant and COVID-safe. Participants said it was a "happy and somehow enlivening event" and that, if necessary, they may try it again at Christmas!

Photo by John Cavers

Inside Your Cosmos

Poppy masks - no pins involved page 6

Xena part 2page 8

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No one under 18 may purchase a ticket or win the lottery.

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Jumpstart



Operation Warm Hearts not warming this season

by Lisha Van Nieuwenhove

For the first time in over 20 years, Operation Warm Hearts won't be gathering and selling gently used winter coats and accessories this November.

Caitlin Van Den Hurk and her husband, Ian, announced Tuesday that, because of the COVID-19 pandemic and all the logistical problems it presents, the annual donation/charity sale and fundraiser cannot happen safely.

"After much discussion between us and Maggie McCreath [former lead for the event], we have unfortunately decided to hold off on the event this year because of COVID," said Caitlin Van Den Hurk.

The Van Den Hurks took over leadership of the annual charity sale last year from McCreath after learning that 2019 would be the final year. This season was to be their first, but the pandemic put a stop to their plans.

"It's incredibly frustrating and heart-breaking for us to make this hard decision, and we know

that many will be very disappointed, as are we," said Van Den Hurk. "But we feel that, with the current health risk, rising numbers, and keeping in mind related township decisions such as holding off on the hockey season at the arena, we feel this is the safest choice at this time."

She also pointed out the various factors that make this type of event higher risk than necessary. For example, the donated clothing would be handled multiple times without the possibility of sanitizing it before sale. Also, the event is cash only, which, Van Den Hurk says, is "not ideal."

The current provincially-set limit of 10 people indoors means that only a very small number of customers could enter the event at any one time, as volunteers would already occupy the venue, and would be counted as part of the 10 allowed. This, in turn, would see many people lined up outside waiting to enter in potentially inclement weather.

Van Den Hurk also said that the volunteer demographic would be made up of individuals

who are higher risk.

"We have had some suggestions to attempt to hold the event online, and if the pandemic/social restrictions remain in place next year, this is something we will strongly consider and plan for well ahead," said Van Den Hurk.

All proceeds from the event, which was to take place on Sat., Nov. 7, were to go to the Loaves & Fishes Food Bank, and people are encouraged to provide either a cash or food donation directly to the food bank. Van Den Hurk also wants to remind people that there are other places in town where winter clothing items can be obtained for lower than retail costs, such as Chances Are (which benefits the Uxbridge hospital).

The Van Den Hurks are already planning for next year's Operation Warm Hearts.

"We have an incredible team of supporters and volunteers ready and waiting for the event to be held again, and we fully intend to return next year. We hope that by then we are all experiencing something closer to 'normal' life."

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Council & Committee Meetings

Meeting Schedule for October 2020

Monday, October 19
10:00 a.m.

COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, October 21
7:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT
MEETING

Monday, October 26
10:00 a.m.

COUNCIL MEETING

Friday, October 30
9:00 a.m.

MUSIC HALL ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING

Proclamations for the month of Oct.
Saturday, October 24
World Polio Day

**Elgin Park Washrooms are
now closed for the season**

Register for Swimming Lessons!

Swimming lessons at Uxpool will start October 26. All lessons are offered in a modified format to ensure COVID-19 health precautions. Learn more at www.uxbridge.ca/uxpool
Registration opens October 15.

Missing

In the afternoon of September 25, 2020, the crossing guard's chair and sign went missing from the Colborne St. and Victoria Dr. crossing. If found, please return to Town Hall.



Uxbridge at a Glance

The Corporation of The Township of Uxbridge
51 Toronto Street South, P.O. Box 190
Uxbridge L9P 1T1
905-852-9181 info@uxbridge.ca

From The Tax Department

Now is the time to enroll in our Monthly or Installment Pre-Authorized Payment Plan for the 2021 taxation year.

What are the Benefits?

Taxpayers will no longer have to worry about missed due dates or late payment charges. Monthly payments allow for easier budgeting. Once you enroll, you do not have to reapply unless you have a new property within the Township.

Who is eligible?

To be eligible, your property must be fully assessed, and your tax account must be up to date (no arrears).

How to apply

Pre-Authorized Payment Forms (pdf) are available on the Township website at www.uxbridge.ca/en/living-here/property-taxes.aspx or at the Tax Department (51 Toronto St S).

Return the completed PAP Form and Void Cheque or Bank form to the Township of Uxbridge Tax Department:

- In person at the Municipal Office (51 Toronto Street South) during regular business hours of 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday or use the after-hours drop-box in the front parking lot or
- By Mail to the Township of Uxbridge PO Box 190, 51 Toronto St S. Uxbridge ON L9P 1T1 or
- By Email to tax@uxbridge.ca

The deadline to submit your Application is NOVEMBER 30, 2020.

Please direct phone inquiries to the Tax Department at 905-852-9181 Ext. 211 or 216.

Get Ready for Some HALLOWEEN FUN

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UXBRIDGE BIA

3 Ways To Enter...

Kids & Teens Colouring Contest
Visit the uxbridgebia.com/creativehalloween and choose the picture for your age range. Once you have completed your picture, snap a photo of it, and send an email to biacreativecontest@gmail.com. Be sure to include your name, age, photo of completed picture, and the best way to contact you/your parents. Entries must be received by 11:59 pm on October 26th, 2020. *Unlimited entries, and any age can enter!

Home Owners Put some Spook on your Stoop!
We're looking for the greatest front yard cemeteries, webbed windows, and pumpkin-filled porches to start creeping into our local neighbourhoods! Pack the tricks and treats into your designs for your chance at being 1 of 3 winners. Be sure to fill out your "Resident Contest Entry Form"

Calling all BIA Business Owners!
Let's Celebrate Halloween this year by getting creative and seeing who can use their tricks and treats to create the spookiest Halloween-themed window display in their storefront window. Get busy for your chance to Win \$300.00 in Advertising with the Uxbridge Times-Journal.

Deadline to Enter October 26th

Selecting a Winner:
The winners will be contacted by the BIA by October 27th, 4:30 pm. Prizes will be administered or available for pick-up by October 29th, 4:30 pm. E-mail all entry forms to: biacreativecontest@gmail.com. Full Contest information available at uxbridgebia.com/creativehalloween. Any questions? Email: businessfacilitator@uxbridgebia.com

The Uxbridge BIA reserves the right to change the rules and regulations and/or end the contest at their discretion as needed without prior notice given. No Purchase Necessary.

Thank You to this years Sponsors:





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

email: accessibility@uxbridge.ca
phone: 905-852-9181 ext.209

Flu shots now available for seniors and high-risk individuals

by Justyne Edgell, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

While it may feel as though we have been in a nightmare-like flu season for the past seven months, Canadians are just entering the regular influenza season, which we face each year. Doctors and other healthcare professionals say that getting a flu shot this year is more important than ever.

All people over six months of age are being encouraged to get the flu vaccine this year. For high risk patients or seniors, vaccines are now available at pharmacies and select doctors' offices. Publicly funded flu vaccines will be available for everyone else after November 1, at both at doctors offices and pharmacies. Additionally, for those 65 and older, the high-dose vaccine will be available at pharmacies along with the regular strength dose this season. The high dose flu shot is only available for seniors. All those younger than 65 will receive the regular flu vaccine.

The Uxbridge Health Centre is currently running flu shot clinics by appointment only. Until November 1, they will be focussing on

those individuals who are 65 years or older, as well as those who are considered to be high risk.

The Toronto Street Medical Centre says they are still awaiting serum from Public Health, and that they are, at the moment, "unsure how they will be administering their flu shots this year."

To estimate the upcoming flu season, Canada usually looks to Australia, which experiences its flu season from June through to August, which are Canada's summer months. This year, Australia reported administering 18 million flu vaccines, and saw a huge decline in influenza cases compared to previous years.

As of August 23, 2020, Australia reported just over 21,000 confirmed cases of influenza, which can be compared to 247,000 in the same time period from the previous year. It is estimated that, along with the high amount of administered vaccines, the fact that people are already being careful and conscious of viral transmission, thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that this has helped with the milder influenza season.



A FITTING TRIBUTE: Friends and teammates from the North Durham Warriors form a Guard of Honour for the Showers family as they leave Low & Low Funeral Home Tuesday afternoon following a service for their 16-year old son, Nolan Showers. Showers died last week after being hit by a vehicle while rollerblading on Hwy. 12.

Hundreds of people wearing various sports jerseys also lined Main Street after the service, paying tribute to the young hockey player and student from Uxbridge Secondary School.

Photo by John Cavers

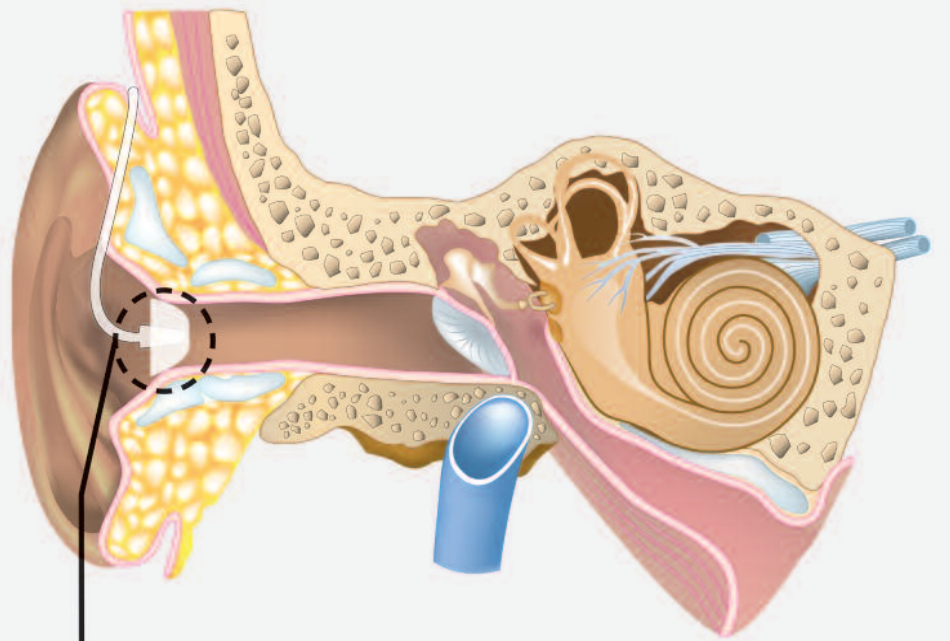
NOTICE:

Oct. 15, 2020

The By-Laws for the Foster Memorial Cemetery north of Uxbridge, are in the process of being revised. The Bereavement Authority of Ontario has been notified and anyone that would like to have a copy of the revised By-Laws are to contact the cemetery superintendent Don Kennedy at 647 467 7557 or email to donkenedy467@gmail.com.

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Our two cents

Grateful for mixed emotions

We were having a wee think on what to write this week's 'two cents' about, and had the idea of writing a postmortem, of sorts, on Thanksgiving and what it impact it may or may not have had in COVID-filled 2020. Not 10 minutes after we had this idea, an e-newsletter from Cam's Kids* showed up in our inbox. The mental health newsletter, which is actually directed towards teens and youth, was talking about *exactly* what we had just decided to write about.

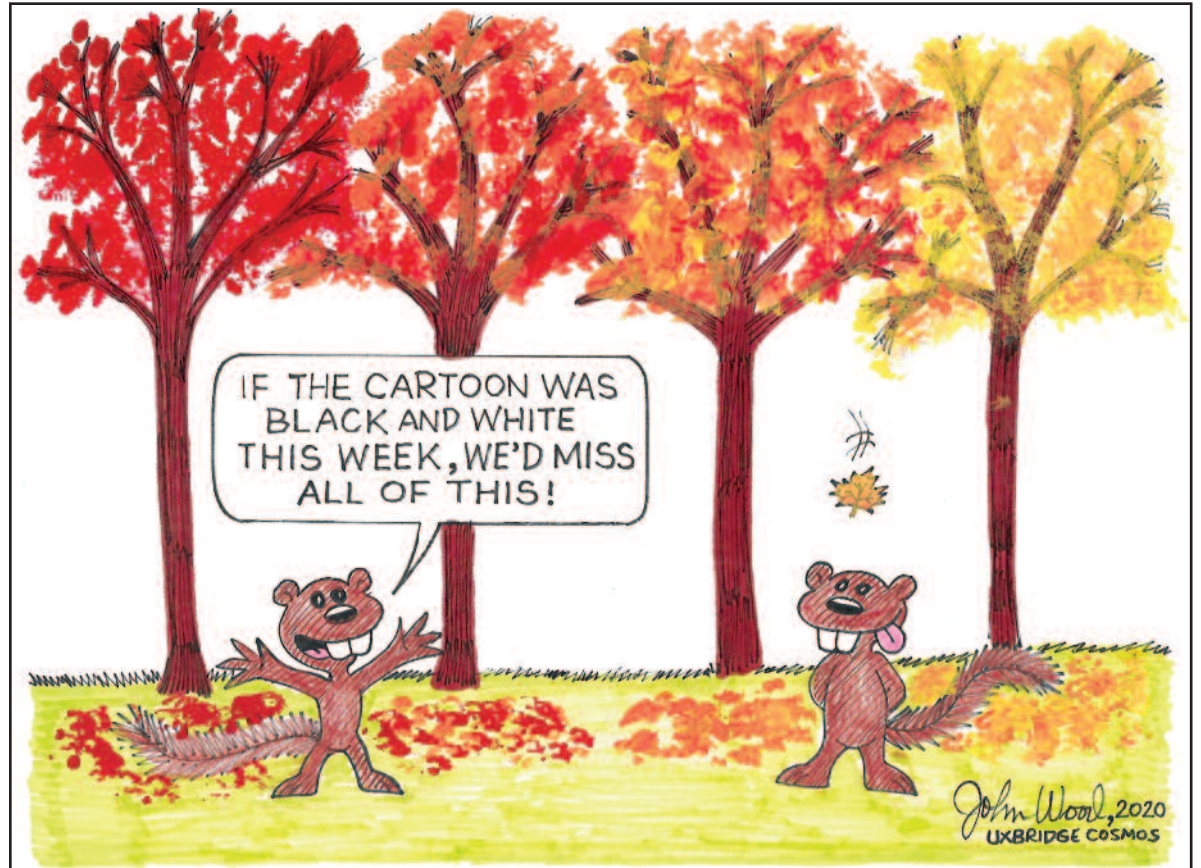
"This past weekend was Canadian Thanksgiving - the holiday that reminds us to find and show gratitude for the things in our life."

Those were literally the first lines of the newsletter. We went to the Cam's Kids website, where we read an article by Joelle Anderson that made it obvious someone had beaten us to our idea. And we couldn't have said it any better. Ms Anderson writes "Between a global pandemic; hugely important, but heavy realizations about privilege and power; and no longer even being able to see the smile on the face of our friendly, neighbourhood grocery store clerk... is it any wonder we might not be feeling all that grateful lately?"

We are all super weary of COVID and all it demands of us. The world seems to be going to h*** in a handbasket, and we're supposed to give thanks? We may have taken a moment this weekend to be grateful for those we were able to spend time with, or grateful for the food on our table, but did that gratefulness make our fears disappear? Likely not. But let Ms Anderson explain: "We often grow up hearing gratitude tied to invalidating statements such as, 'you have no reason to be upset, you so much to be grateful for,' or, 'there are people in the world suffering more than you, you should be more grateful!'" Statements like these essentially suggest that any of the challenging feelings we are experiencing are somehow flawed. Feeling like we "should be grateful" because we are still working or have our health (read: "others in the world are suffering more") can make us feel like we are supposed to feel OK and so something must be wrong with us if we are down."

These words explain the conflict that we felt all weekend and couldn't quite put a finger on. And we were glad to find we weren't alone; we bet you're glad too. Read the whole article at <https://www.camskids.com/tipsandtools/not-feeling-so-grateful-lately/> It's good to know that we can be grateful and really pissed off all at the same time. Gives us one less thing to worry about.

*Cam's Kids is a Uxbridge-based foundation that is committed to "Supporting Young People Struggling with Anxiety".



Letters to the Editor

Response to Letter re: outdoor cat issue, Oct. 8 edition

Thank you, Chris Clark, for describing the plight of birds and other wildlife attacked by cats in your yard. This is a topic many of us bird lovers are concerned about.

In 2013, the *Journal of Avian Conservation and Ecology* suggested 269 million birds are killed every year in Canada by cats. See <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ACE-00581-080211> for more.

Millions more mammals and amphibians and reptiles are also killed. Globally these numbers increase to several billion.

The Ontario SPCA also recognizes the problem and encourages owners to keep cats indoors for their safety too. Ontariospca.ca/blog/

I too am a bird lover, own an indoor cat and share the same concern as do millions of other bird lovers across Canada - 25 per cent of Canadian households feed birds and have bird houses (Stats Canada 2013). We know the population of birds is declining and we know we are to blame.

In your letter you suggest we don't have a right to ask neighbours to keep their cat indoors but we do. Many municipalities have by-laws regulating pets off adjacent owner's property and/or outside of the home.

Uxbridge Animal Control Bylaw 2009-081 Section 3

3.1.1 "No person shall permit or allow an animal to be at large within the limits of the Municipality."

3.1.2 No owner of an animal shall permit such animal, whether leashed or unleashed, to enter pri-

vate property without the consent of the owner or occupant.

As you have already approached the neighbour a number of times, which is in itself a delicate and difficult conversation, your next step should be to use the existing laws regarding animals at large and the protection of your own property. If enough of us bird lovers support and follow your lead then by-law officers will enforce legislation passed by council. If we continue the process of trying to change the cat owners' ways, wildlife will benefit greatly.

Outdoor cat owners that don't control their pets and let them roam free should be charged. Perhaps instead of simply returning the cat to the owner, why not turn it in to the local animal shelter and then at least the owner would be forced to collect his own cat and pay whatever penalties apply?

Derek Connelly
Past President
North Durham Nature

Since the onset of COVID-19, it has been a fear that many small organizations who have served communities in many ways for many years would not survive. Not only do these groups benefit their areas, but they have benefitted their participants greatly.

It was with great regret that I read of the disbanding of the Pineridge Chorus, the Uxbridge Chapter of Sweet Adelines.

For more than 30 years the chorus has worked hard to present to Uxbridge audiences their *a capella* four-part harmony. Their sparkly costumes, spritely choreography and the fun they had amongst themselves thoroughly entertained

their audiences, too. They were so generous with their music, entertaining others, particularly seniors and shut-ins. Their music added another layer of talent to the multi-talented music scene in Uxbridge. Thanks for the memories. We will miss you.

Quickly, on another note, I hope everyone saw the CTV presentation of the Leasdale Manse in the "Heritage Homes of Ontario" segment last week. This is another small group who works very hard. Congratulations to the Lucy Maud Montgomery Society of Ontario. You have put Uxbridge on the map in a big way.

Corinne Croxall
Uxbridge

It is that wonderful time of year again when everyone pitches in to create Christmas morning for a family in need, and this year the need is even bigger.

Salvation Army will be setting up their kettle at Zehrs and the LCBO store starting Dec. 3 and running every Thursday, Friday and Saturday for three weeks, and we are looking for volunteers to assist us.

Christmas is magical, and creating that special day for the children in our community and their families takes those special people called volunteers who give of their time to make sure the magical day happens.

Please take a moment and call 905-640-3966 or email beverly-northeast@gmail.com and volunteer for our only fundraiser, the Salvation Army Kettle.

Bev Northeast
Chair of Salvation Army
Uxbridge Unit

When one of these disappears, A LOT disappears.



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The Uxbridge COSMOS

Publisher/Editor: Lisha Van Nieuwenhove 905-852-1900
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38 Toronto Street North, Unit One, Uxbridge Ontario L9P 1E6
E-mail: Lvann@thecosmos.ca Web site: Thecosmos.ca

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Am I Wrong?

column by Roger Varley

A song in my heart

My columns of late have been fairly dark and pessimistic and for that I am sorry, but sorry only in that the world that I see has itself become dark and pessimistic.

As a lifelong newsman, it has been my job to look almost daily at the worst aspects of our existence: murder, war, corruption, crime, disasters and so on. As they say, it gets to you. But of all the stories I've written over the years, the one that stands out in my mind was a story about love, although, sadly, the love story ended in murder.

A family in Vaughan wanted a small park named after a young man who had been killed at a nightclub the year before. He had been their daughter's fiancé. I wanted to find out a little bit more about him, so I visited the daughter and her parents for an interview. What unfolded was a love story worthy of a movie, a love story that began in - and centred around - that small park.

The young woman had never met me before, but for some reason she decided to open her heart to me about their love for each other, the funny little things they did that were special to them, the relationship her whole family had with her young man, the sadness she still felt and her wish to have the park named for him so that it would always be their special place.

I wrote my story and the day it was published I saw the office receptionist crying as she read it.

I don't think I had really understood until that day the power the printed word can have. I know some of my columns have moved some of my readers to anger from time to time, but to move someone to happy-sad tears, that's something else.

Writers, especially news writers, seldom have the opportunity to stir those kinds of emotions. We're not like singers. Singers can bring me to tears in seconds.

The first time I remember crying while listening to a singer was when I was 15 and hearing a recording of *What Is Life Without You* by the great English contralto Kathleen Ferrier. More recently, Uxbridge's own Christina Campsall brought me to tears every night as she sang to her dying husband in the Uxbridge Players' production of *Amadeus*. I was the stage manager for that show and each time she sang that song, I was a mere four feet away from her, in the wings, weeping.

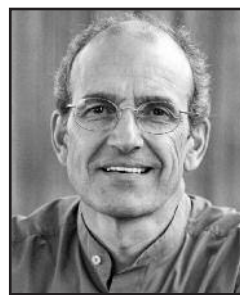
Also, k.d. lang's performance of *Hal-lelujah* at the 2010 Olympic opening ceremonies was one of the most breathtaking performances I've ever seen.

Obviously the words and music have a lot to do with it, but it takes a special kind of singer to perform them in a way that will bring people to tears. However, numerous singers have had that effect on me simply with the indescribable beauty of their performances.

I have thought about it many times over the years and if I was granted only one wish, I can't imagine asking for anything more than to have a wonderful singing voice. As it is, if I sang for you now, you would, indeed, be reduced to tears - either of pain or laughter. Yes, I've muddled my way through a few songs on stage, but no one could ever accuse me of singing.

For those of you who do sing, who can sing, thank whatever or whoever you need for having such a priceless gift and, please, never stop singing. Not many of you will become rich or famous by doing so, but the world needs your songs. I need your songs. Today, more than ever, the world needs singers and their songs to soothe us, to assure us, to make us think about the things that really matter. Like love in a park, for instance.

Tell me, am I wrong?



The Barris Beat

column by Ted Barris

Rights tested a half-century ago

It was a moment on live television - something considered rare then. The Prime Minister, Justin's father, moved up the steps to his office on Parliament Hill. Reporters converged and questioned, one of them, Tim Ralphe, more aggressively than the rest. He poked his microphone at Pierre Trudeau and pressed the concern of many in Canada at that moment.

"Sir, what is it with all these men with guns around?" he asked.

The day before, Oct. 12, Trudeau had called for the Canadian Armed Forces to deploy armed troops to protect high-profile locations and individuals in Ottawa and Quebec City.

"Well, there are a lot of bleeding hearts around who just don't like to see people in helmets and guns," Trudeau said. "But it is more important to keep law and order in society than to be worried about weak-kneed people."

Ralphe, later in the unique 10-minute exchange on the Hill, asked just how far the Prime Minister was prepared to go.

"Just watch me," he said.

It's 50 years ago this week that historic tête-à-tête occurred in Ottawa, 50 years since those soldiers took up positions in front of Parliament and the National Assembly, 50 years since the October Crisis in 1970.

That was the year members of the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ) kidnapped James Cross, a British trade commissioner, in Montreal. They then demanded money, safe passage to Cuba, the release of 23 detained FLQ members (some previously convicted of bombings, holdups, manslaughter or murder) and the broadcast of the group's manifesto in return for Cross's release. I remember the voice of Radio-Canada announcer Gaetan Montreuil reading the manifesto over the CBC.

"We will always be the assiduous servants and the boot-lickers of the (English-speaking) big shots," the document stated.

Minutes after the Quebec government of Robert Bourassa refused the rest of the Front's demands, on Oct. 10, another FLQ cell kidnapped Pierre Laporte, the vice-premier and labour minister in Quebec. Overnight, this distant and disorganized protest group seemed immediate and threatening. That's when the Prime Minister deployed the Army and positioned them on Parliament Hill and in front of the Quebec National Assembly.

I recall years later interviewing now retired Sen. Roméo Dallaire. I asked him about his most difficult assignment as a soldier. I expected him to offer his thoughts about his mission in Rwanda during the genocide in April 1994.

"It was the time of the October Crisis," he said. "My unit was guarding the Quebec National Assembly. I didn't know if one minute all would be calm, and the next I might be levelling my weapon at a neighbour or relative."

We speak today about palpable fear - fear brought on in our lifetimes by the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, the terrorist attacks in the U.S. on Sept. 11, 2001, and in 2020 by the rampant spread, lockdowns and now resurgence of COVID-19. But four days after Pierre Trudeau delivered his "Just watch me" response to Ralphe, the PM invoked the War Measures Act (WMA), suspending all public civil liberties. Then, on Oct. 17, Pierre Laporte was found murdered. Trudeau promised "unceasing pursuit of those responsible."

Throughout the tense days of the kidnapping and murder of Laporte, I went about my second-year studies at Ryerson. To gain a bit more experience (and a few extra dollars) I hosted an all-night music and talk show on Ryerson's broadcast outlet - CJRT-FM (later Jazz FM 91).

As the Friday and Saturday night show host, I had a pretty high opinion of myself as well as my music and interviewing skills. One night at a gathering, I met a man, one of some 497 who'd been arrested under the WMA. It seemed a natural reaction to invite him to my show and query him on-air live about Quebec under the WMA.

"Tonight, I have an exclusive," I remember telling my audience.

That audience included a number of friends and media colleagues who expressed tangible, visible panic over the events in Quebec in 1970. It turned out by exploring the kidnappings and arrests of civilians on the air, however, that I was in effect violating the WMA. It clearly stipulated that outside of newscasts, interviewing and commentary on the crisis was illegal. What I didn't realize was that the WMA effectively removed all civil rights - free speech, rights of assembly and the freedom of the media.

In the days that followed the climax of the crisis, arrests were made (Laporte's killers tried and imprisoned), James Cross was released unharmed (his captors exiled to Cuba), and the WMA lapsed on April 30, 1971. And the fear faded with memory. But I think I learned a vital lesson in the October Crisis 50 years ago - rights and privileges are only as strong as those who enshrine them, abide by them and protect them.

For more Barris Beat columns, go to www.tedbarris.com



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Poppy masks raising funds for Uxbridge Legion

by Lisha Van Nieuwenhove

Poppy boxes and local veterans canvassing for poppy donations won't be happening as usual this year, thanks to COVID-19, but that hasn't stopped the fundraising efforts at all. Face masks adorned with various poppy designs are being made as this is being written, and all proceeds go to the Uxbridge Legion.

Uxbridge Legion Poppy Chair Gloria Eng had arranged for an order of

poppy masks to be delivered to the Uxbridge Legion, but they are currently on backorder. So local sewer Laura Taylor offered to find whatever poppy fabric was available and sell the masks, with the money raised going towards veterans and the Legion.

"The Legion will need a hand - poppy boxes without our vets will be different this year," says Taylor on her Facebook page, which features the various designs and patterns of the

masks she is making.

As of Monday, Taylor announced that she had already raised over \$400, and that masks are still available. She also said that, starting next week, the masks and "all the extras" would be available at Preston Gallery for pick up or purchase. If buying on site, please pay with cash - \$10 each or three for \$25. Quantities are limited.

With regards to poppy donation boxes, Eng is still working with various local businesses to secure exact box locations and possible canvassing locations. Businesses interested in having a poppy box are invited to contact Eng through the Legion.

North Durham Nature explains the outdoors online

Submitted by Brenda Near

North Durham Nature (NDN) is in its seventh year of offering walks, talks and nature conservation events, and is used to sharing nature knowledge in person. But we've faced challenges offering our guided walks and educational talks this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, in order to ensure member safety, we have changed the format of our public talks to online webinars, and have made them available on a YouTube channel. Check it out at <https://youtube.com/watch?v=5YsLpQeeWs4>

The pandemic hasn't slowed the group down at all - participant numbers for our walks are limited and masks are required to be worn when physical distancing isn't possible, but we still get out there. And we're looking for new members! Our annual membership fee is now only \$10 for new members, and existing members get their membership extended through 2021. There are lots of great reasons for becoming an NDN member - our member's newsletter offers a number of great local nature

articles for members, and is emailed to members. Newsletter editor Geoff Carpentier just received an Ontario Nature award for his nature writing.

Our website and Facebook groups are current and active. Our Wildflowers of North Durham Facebook group has been particularly popular as members share their new native plant discoveries.

Just last week, we joined with FLAP's (Fatal Light Awareness Program) Global Bird Rescue week (Oct. 5 - 11) to monitor window bird collisions and to promote making windows safer for our migratory birds. Visit birdsafeca.ca and flap.org to find out more about window treatments you can easily apply to reduce bird deaths.

And coming up at the end of this month, on Tues., Oct. 27, we will feature a webinar on "Tracing the Roots of Native Plants" with Paul LaPorte. LaPorte is the owner of Ephemeral Ark Nursery, a consultant on ecological gardening, and chair of the Ontario Native Plant Growers Association. Contact northdurham-nature@gmail.com to register for this webinar.

North Durham Nature is a proud non-profit member of Ontario Nature. For more information on the group and its activities, visit northdurhamnature.com or e-mail northdurhamnature@gmail.com



UXBRIDGE MINOR LACROSSE ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, October 21, 2020

Please join us for the Uxbridge Minor Lacrosse Association Annual General Meeting taking place via Zoom on October 21, 2020 at 7 pm. For login details, please visit uxbridgelacrosse.com closer to this date. All community members are encouraged and welcome to join.

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Call 905-852-1244 or email susan.catherwood@edwardjones.com or donna.aziz@edwardjones.com to RSVP and receive webinar details.

September 26, 2020
10AM-11AM

This seminar is being presented as a webinar. We hope you will join us. Feel free to invite friends and family.



Tammy Scurall
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CLASSIFIED

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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Mission Xena by Claire Miller

The following is the second installment of the winning submission to the Uxbridge Youth Centre's Pick-a-Prompt writing contest.

I use my commlink to contact my team: "Leah, Landon, Kirsten, Cyrus, Mika meet me in hangar bay three in 15 minutes."

As I make my way to the hangar bay, I make a quick stop to change out of my training gear and into a more appropriate outfit. I then walk into the hangar bay and find all my friends standing around an intel table, dressed in their battle gear, a determined look on their faces, arrows, shields and swords at the ready. I tilt my head down, a small smile creeping across my face. I laugh a little, and my friends start laughing at me for laughing at the sight of them.

I walk towards them, putting on a serious face and getting them onto a



more serious note. I tell them what the mission is, and that's when we get down to business. We plan out the entire mission. We are going to split into teams of two and place 12 charges strategically on Xena's surface. We have exclusive watches to help locate each other and to indicate where we need to plant the charges.

We then decide on the groups - Leah will go with Kirsten, Cyrus with Mika, and Landon's with me.

We walk into the airlock and board the ship. I walk over to the computer and type in the coordinates of planet Xena; at that moment, the aircraft starts to float away from the airlock. I look out the window, seeing for the very first time the whole moon - our home and I start feeling weird. It's odd, seeing our home get smaller and smaller.

In a couple of minutes, planet Xena comes into view, showing vibrant colours of green and blue. On the horizon, there is a mix of orange, red and yellow, colours that I have only read about in books.

As we get closer and closer to the planet, an ominous feeling creeps into my heart. Something is wrong about this planet, very wrong. Landon walks up behind me unnoticed and lowers his head right next to mine and whispers, "Don't worry, we'll be fine."

I turn my head and look at him in disbelief, but his eyes are full of confidence. Before I can speak, the ship

starts to shake, and then red lights start flashing - the words "SYSTEM FAILING" flow across the screen in big, bold letters. Leah runs to the cockpit, taking the controls, trying anything to keep us from crashing.

When we reach the planet's atmosphere and see there is nothing to be done to save the ship, I decide to abandon ship. We all grab emergency parachutes and head to the loading bay. We look to each other, each of us wearing a different expression on our faces. Leah opens the loading bay door. Strong winds take us by surprise and force us further back into the ship. I yell, barely able to hear myself, "WE JUMP ON THREE! ONE, TWO, THREE!"

We all jump out of the airship and into a bright blue sky. Blinded by the light, we all instinctively grab for our parachute rip cords. We're jolted from our free fall, and we all look around at the land below. We are able to look at our watches and position ourselves to land at our designated drop points. I remind them, "We only have six hours before this planet crashes with the moon, so work fast but safely." They all nod in agreement.

Landon and I head northeast, leaving the rest of my team to do their jobs. We soon land and ditch our parachutes and space gear, leaving us with just our swords and our fighting gear.

Scanning the area, I notice plants but no animals. I look at my watch - we are 20km off our mark. Now with only four hours left before the destruction of our home, we start running.



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