

The Uxbridge COSMOS

Volume 17 No. 16

YOUR UNIVERSE

Thursday, April 22, 2021



RESPECTING A LIFE OF SERVICE - Peter Brown, a member of the Uxbridge Legion Pipes and Drums, plays outside St. Paul's Anglican Church on Saturday morning, while Rev. Mark Kinghan looks on. The church wanted to honour the life of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, with the bagpipes and ringing the church bell 99 times, once for each year of the prince's life. The bell pull unfortunately broke after only a few rings. Prince Philip passed away April 9; his funeral was held on Saturday and commemorated around the world.

Photo by John Cavers

New community kitchen to support healthy food, healthy planet

by *Lisha Van Nieuwenhove*
Exclusive to the *Uxbridge Cosmos*

Earth Day, which is today, April 22, is being celebrated in a special way in Uxbridge with the announcement of a new project that will bring the community together, promote healthy living and help the planet, all at the same time.

The Earth Roots Community Food Centre (ERCFC) will be a government-approved commercial kitchen and bakery that will provide a space for local farmers and food producers to create and sell their own culinary products. Local caterers, farmers, food truck kitchens, meal kit producers, and other community groups or individual entrepreneurs will all be

invited to rent this state-of-the-art kitchen facility, all with the hopes of contributing to a larger movement that focuses on growing healthy food, which leads to a healthy planet.

Aptly called "The Uxbridge Healthy Food Healthy Planet Campaign," this innovative project aims to have the community kitchen help build "a socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable and resilient community that nurtures and heals the part of the planet for which we are responsible." This new style of community would have food as its integrating force; area farmers as the healthy food producers; community as its strength; watersheds as its geographical boundaries, and Indigenous roots as its inspiration.

"It begins right here," explains June Davies,

one half of the duo who came up with the idea of a co-operative food hub in Uxbridge. She and Cesar Caneo from the Social Enterprise Rural Alliance (SERA) in Cannington, both believe that "we need to build a bottom-up economy and work together as a whole community – economic development, food security, environmental healing, and include the Indigenous people, on whose land we live – it's all separated right now, and we need to pull ourselves together as a whole to address the challenges we face when healing this planet."

The Healthy Food Healthy Planet Campaign revolves around the following tenets: healthy food requires clean air, clean water, clean earth,

...continued on page 8

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PROJECTED JACKPOT FOR THE NEXT DRAW IS \$5,600

DUE TO PANDEMIC-RELATED RETAIL SALES RESTRICTIONS, THE LOTTERY IS CURRENTLY ON HOLD. WATCH THIS SPACE FOR UPDATES!

Tickets available at **PharmaSave Uxbridge**, **Vince's Market Uxbridge**, **Canadian Tire Uxbridge**, **Uxbridge Legion Br. 170 & Stouffville IDA Pharmacy**

Ontario Problem Gambling Hotline 1-888-230-3505.
Lottery rules at www.uxbridgerotary.com/catchtheace.
No one under 18 may purchase a ticket or win the lottery.

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Council & Committee Meetings

Meeting Schedule for April 2021

Monday, April 26, 10:00 a.m.
COUNCIL MEETING

Meeting Schedule for May 2021

Monday, May 3, 10:00 a.m.
COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, May 6, 7:00 p.m.
CANADA DAY COMMITTEE

Monday, May 10, 10:00 a.m.
COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, May 11, 7:00 p.m.
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE MEETING

Proclamations for the month of May

International Day Against Homophobia,
Transphobia and Biphobia - May 17, 2021

Street Sweeping

Street sweeping will begin shortly - weather permitting - and will take 6 - 8 weeks to complete. Please try not to park on the streets during this time. Please leave the sand on the road as there will not be any special pick up of sand left in piles or in pails. It is acceptable to rake any sand that has accumulated on the boulevard into the curb and gutter prior to the sweeping of the street. Any areas that are missed due to parked cars will be redone after all sweeping is complete.

Below is the schedule for sweeping:

1. Rural subdivisions and hamlets
2. N/W corner of town
3. S/W corner of town
4. S/E corner of town
5. N/E corner of town
6. Town parking lots

(The town portion is divided into 4 areas with Brock & Main Streets as the centre point.)

What Remains Open

The following closures are now in effect for the duration of April:

- Water samples may continue to be dropped off - please ring bell for assistance.
- Parks, trails, playgrounds and the Off-leash dog park remain open - users are expected to maintain a 2m distance from others not in their household. No gatherings of groups larger than 5.
- Pump Park and Skate Park, tennis, soccer and baseball facilities are closed

FROM THE TAX OFFICE

Property Tax due date is April 28, 2021

Tax Payments Options:

- Due to COVID-19 emergency measures, the Municipal Office is not open to receive payments in person.
- In an after-hours Drop Box located in the Municipal Office front parking lot - DO NOT DEPOSIT CASH. Post-dated cheques are accepted.
- By Mail - Payments must reach the Municipal Office by the due date.
- Through Internet or Telephone Banking.
- At most Financial Institutions.
- Credit cards and e-transfers are not accepted for tax payments.

Penalty/Interest Charges:

For non-payment of a tax levy on or before the respective due dates of each installment, a penalty of 1.25% shall be imposed on the first day of each calendar month and thereafter in which the default continues. Failure to receive a Tax Bill does not excuse the taxpayer from responsibility for payment of taxes nor liability of any penalty or interest due to late payments.

The penalty/interest charges cannot be waived or reduced by the Tax Department or Council for any reason.

If a reprinted tax bill, receipt or Statement of Account is required for any year's taxes, a fee of \$15.00 will apply.

If you did not receive your 2021 Interim Tax Bill, please call the Tax Department at 905-852-9181.

Earth Day Trails Clean-up!

Saturday, April 24, 2021

Due to COVID restrictions we cannot organize a trail clean up BUT you can still take action!

Grab a bag, gloves and people in your household (keeping the group under 5) and head out onto your street or your favourite trail!

Challenge a friend or a neighbour! Please ensure you remain 2 m apart, groups are no larger than 5, and a separation of 4 m is maintained between groups at all times.

Let's make Uxbridge the Clean Trail Capital on Earth Day!

Pharmacy Vaccine Locations

Pharmacies across Durham Region are now providing COVID-19 vaccinations for those 40+. Visit covid-19.ontario.ca/vaccine-locations and enter your postal code to view a list of local pharmacies servicing Uxbridge and the surrounding area. Contact the participating pharmacy directly to book your appointment.

Bids & Tenders

All current bid opportunities are posted to
Uxbridge.ca/bids_and_tenders

- U21-16 Sidewalk Installation and Repairs
Closes April 27 at 2:00 p.m.
- U21-17 Tree Planting
Closes April 27 at 2:00 p.m.
- U21-18 Parking Stall Line Painting
Closes April 27 at 2:00 p.m.
- U21-19 Traffic Control Markings
Closes April 27 at 2:00 p.m.
- U21-15 Catch Basin Cleaning
Closes May 4 at 2:00 p.m.

All bids must be received by the Township by the deadline stated, either electronically via the Township's website or in-person (by appointment only) at the Township Office located at 51 Toronto St. South. Public tender openings are not happening currently however bid results will be posted at Uxbridge.ca/bids_and_tenders in a timely manner.

Township of Uxbridge Summer Employment Opportunities

Full details of all current positions are available at www.uxbridge.ca/careers

Uxbridge Historical Centre
COLLECTIONS ASSOCIATE

Closing Date: Friday, April 30, 2021

Uxbridge Historical Centre
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT &
PROGRAMMING ASSOCIATE

Closing Date: Friday, April 30, 2021

Uxpool - SUMMER SWIMMING
INSTRUCTORS / LIFEGUARDS

Closing Date: Friday, April 30, 2021

We are an equal opportunity employer in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC). The Township of Uxbridge will provide accommodations throughout the recruitment and selection and/or assessment process to applicants with disabilities and/or needs related to the OHRC. Personal information provided is collected under the authority of The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

COVID vaccination registration NOW OPEN in Uxbridge for residents 60+ and those turning 60 in 2021.

To book your appointment call 1-888-444-5113
or click www.durhamvaccinebooking.ca



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

TOWN HALL

by Roger Varley
Notes from the April 19
Council Meeting

Jumpstart park takes a step forward: Uxbridge took another step towards a Jumpstart multi-use, fully accessible sports court on Monday when council approved awarding a contract for the facility to Real Landscaping Plus Ltd.

In a report to council, director of community services Amanda Ferraro said the \$660,000 project will be financed by \$451,000 from Jumpstart, which will go directly to the contractor, plus another \$49,000 cash contribution from Jumpstart to the township to partially fund its costs related to this project. In addition, the township will provide a total of \$160,000 from various reserves and tax levies.

Ferraro noted that the site of the planned multi-use court, to be located at the Bonner Fields on Reach St., has some "deficiencies," including a gravel parking lot and washrooms that are not accessible. She said there is an opportunity to apply for a grant to address those shortcomings.

The multi-use court, which will ac-

commodate volleyball, pickleball, basketball and other activities, comes as a gift from Pat Higgins and Canadian Tire and the Jumpstart program. Councillor Bruce Garrod noted that the facility will be the first of its kind in Canada.

"We're cutting a new trail here," he said.

Better access to Elgin Park?: David Richardson, chair of the Age Friendly Committee, asked council to improve accessibility into Elgin Park, noting that every point of entry presents problems for those on foot, especially seniors with mobility issues.

Among the problems he noted were that pedestrians must share access with vehicles at two of the entrances, sidewalks are lacking at some points and a paved pathway leading into the park from Joseph St. ends abruptly without connecting to another pathway.

In a letter and report, Richardson said "to realize the full potential of the park, it must be made more accessible for pedestrians with mobility limitations." To that end, he asked that the township construct a paved walkway, acceptable to the Accessibility Committee, from Joseph St. to the main walking path in the park; that the township look into creating a separate pedestrian walkway beside the main entrance to the Elgin Park parking lot; and that it consider up-

grading the entrance to the park from Water St.

Ferraro said there is some money available for some projects in the park and staff is working on putting in wheelchair seating at the grandstand and paving the area in front of the red barn concession area.

Garrod said he was in "complete support" of Richardson's proposals and moved that staff look into the possibility of bringing them about, although he noted such improvements would have to be discussed in the next round of budget talks.

"Elgin Park is a great facility to get into," he said, "(but) some people just need some help getting into it."

Farmers' market gets go-ahead: The award-winning Uxbridge Farmers' Market has received approval to begin its 2021 season on May 2.

Council gave the market permission to close off Victoria St. every Sunday until Oct. 31 to allow for a traffic-free venue beside The Second Wedge Brewing Co. Councillor Todd Snooks said there should be no problem as long as the market observes all COVID-19 protocols and provides an updated site map for the fire department.

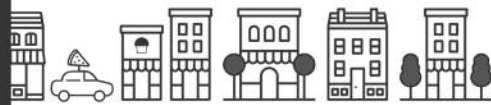
Extensive opposition to apartment building: Council received a total of 52 letters from 51 residents regarding the proposed six-storey condo-

minium apartment building at Brock and Herrema. Of those 52 letters, two were in favour of the project and two were non-committal. The other 48 were strongly opposed to the proposal.

Although council was only required to receive the letters "for information," Garrod made note of the fact that the letters were not of the "cut and paste" variety, but each writer had listed their concerns in their own words.



Council gave the 2021 Uxbridge Farmers' Market the go-head Monday, providing it complies with COVID-19 protocols. The market will open May 2. *Cosmos file photo/Stuart Blower*



LOCAL MATTERS.



Remember that time when **Amazon** sponsored your church fundraiser?



Remember when **Facebook** bought a case of Girl Guide cookies to support your daughter?



Remember when **Google** provided free pizza to your child's soccer team when they won the championship?

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They need our support, now more than ever.

Our two cents

A celebration of accountability

The world breathed a sigh of relief late Tuesday afternoon. The world knew what it *wanted* to happen, but it wasn't sure if the universe would comply. But sometime between 4 and p.m. on Tuesday, it got what it wanted. Derek Chauvin, the white former Minneapolis police officer charged with the death of George Floyd, a Black man, was convicted of murder and manslaughter. The jury deliberated for 10 hours over two days.

Floyd's death last May sparked a worldwide reaction, much of it violent, and the Black Lives Matter movement got pushed to the fore of people's consciousness, putting a growing deadly pandemic on the back burner. On Tuesday, it was likely that anything *other* than a guilty verdict on all counts would have sparked reactions that would have made last spring's riots, protests and demonstrations look like a dance around a Maypole. If Chauvin had been acquitted for *anything*, there would have been hell to pay.

It's absurd how the notion that he might be acquitted was even entertained. Yet earlier this week, in Minneapolis (and several other locations), buildings sported boarded up windows. The National Guard was brought in. There were tanks on the streets, for heaven's sake. All this done just in case the jury lost its collective mind and let Chauvin walk.

Thankfully, that's not how things turned out. But the fact that acquittal was such a real possibility points to the fact that so many *expected* the white man who murdered a Black man to be let off the hook.

Leaders everywhere made statements just moments after the verdict was announced. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said that the verdict, although "good news ... underlines that there is still an awful lot of work to do" with regards to systemic racism and discrimination. A statement came from Durham Regional Chair John Henry, saying in part: "We need to continue the momentum of this day to keep pushing forward to disrupt anti-Black racism, against social injustice and strive for equity for all; even though this is yet another painful reminder of the bias and racism that still exists in our society."

This is a huge moment for not only Black Americans, but hopefully Black people everywhere. They, and their supporters, were so worried that, yet again, they would suffer at the hands of the system. Their celebration following the verdict was a long, long time coming. And while Tuesday's verdict doesn't necessarily deliver justice, in that it won't bring George Floyd back to his family, it *does* deliver accountability. Let's hope the events of Tuesday mark the first of many such accountability celebrations.

When one of these disappears, A LOT disappears.



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The Uxbridge COSMOS

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Letters to the Editor

I sure hate being a pessimist, but I really don't find many reasons to be hopeful about the future. Everywhere, I see evidence that environmental needs are being sacrificed to greed. Addiction to constant economic growth, or "development," is truly a pandemic, and the only vaccine, common sense, is in very short supply. Planet Earth is already staggering under more development than it can withstand, and, as Roger Varley correctly points out ("Am I Wrong," April 8 edition), the all-too-profitable sale of land to greedy developers ensures that the bulldozing of trees and farms goes on and on.

Our town council, mirroring the Ford government's mindless obsession with growth, enables all sorts of new housing projects, thereby rendering more and more Uxbridge acres forever useless as sources of food, clean air, animal habitat, climate control, recreation, and simple landscape relief. Tree massacres on Reach St., Elgin Park Dr., Toronto St., and North St., bear shameful witness to ignorance and wilful disregard for the future.

Recent letters to the *Cosmos* - kudos to Theresa Pilniuk (April 1 edition) and Dave Miller (April 15 edition) - have deplored this, but voices of environmental common sense cannot, it appears, compete with skyrocketing land sale profits and the lure of new property tax revenues.

Farmlands between Uxbridge and

Toronto now sprout development signs instead of crops; condo towers march relentlessly north from Toronto. Nobody seems to have the will and/or the power to stop it.

Sadly, it's a problem our children and grandchildren will inherit, or at least those of our youth who, like Greta Thunberg, have common sense and altruism enough to know that brakes must be applied to the runaway development threatening the future.

John Tomlinson
Uxbridge

This is in response to Roger Varley's "Am I Wrong?" column in last week's *Cosmos* where he criticizes the Uxbridge Bruins organization about a response to a tweet on a Twitter account.

Roger, in your article you quoted only part of a tweet that someone had posted regarding not wanting to take a certain pandemic vaccine. You then went on to question the integrity of the Bruins organization for someone in our group marking it with a "like."

Unfortunately, and for whatever reason you had, Roger, you took this out of context and did not include the rest of this same tweet and take into consideration that the entire tweet was satirical in nature. It was not offensive, and the satire was the only reason it was marked as a "like."

You also stated that it was written by

a foul-mouthed person. There is absolutely no profanity in this entire tweet.

I want to state very clearly and unequivocally that all members of the Bruins organization strongly recommend that every person should receive a vaccination needle as soon as possible from whatever manufacturer source is available to them. Several of us who are eligible have already done so.

I am extremely disappointed and upset that you chose to publicly blindside our Bruins organization with your perceived view of this matter. If you were so concerned about this issue, a simple phone call or email to one of our executive members, whom you know and named them in your article, could have clarified this situation for you and prevented such unwarranted negative publicity to the Uxbridge Bruins Jr. Hockey Club.

Cam Stewart
President, Uxbridge Bruins

*Editor's note: The tweet referred to in the aforementioned letter reads in its entirety, as posted by Active Stick @TheOakLeafs: "Sorry but theres no way I'm exposing myself to bloodclots. Call me when your so-called miracle vaccine is safe. *eats 2 baconators, drinks a large triple-triple and smokes a bag of putters", sic.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Ten Tweetable Truths

The pandemic has made it clear that newspapers are an essential service.

For more Tweetable Truths visit championthetruth.ca



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Totum Research, Canadians 18+, 2020



Am I Wrong?

column by Roger Varley

Confused? You're not alone

In my column published on Aug. 20, 2020, I wrote the following: "Up to now, in my opinion, the Ontario government has done a reasonably good job in its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic." As the saying goes, that was then, this is now.

Since that time, and especially in the last couple of weeks, Premier Doug Ford has amply demonstrated his complete incompetence when it comes to handling the COVID-19 pandemic and the current "third wave." His statements and directives have left just about everyone in the province confused, upset and angry. So much so that almost every police force in the province told him just what he could do with his proclamation that police will be able to stop anyone on the road to find out if they have a legitimate reason for being outside their home. When even the police tell him that he's gone too far, it might be time for him to give serious thought to a new line of work.

At the same time, he ordered all playgrounds and skate parks to be closed, despite the fact his medical advisers told him that was a bad idea. Apparently, he relented on the playgrounds but at this writing I really am not too sure whether kids can use playground equipment or not. I suspect I am not alone. And despite the fact that Uxbridge township has erected fencing around the skate park that is quite similar to the heavy-duty fencing used to keep the bison penned in just up the road, I'm really not sure whether the skate park is closed.*

On top of that, he closed the province's borders to all but essential travel. How are police manning the blockades supposed to determine what is essential and what is not?

As I said above, at one time Ford was doing a reasonably good job, but that was before the COVID-19 numbers in the province reached the staggering levels we see now. Of course, I am not an expert, but it seems to me that Ford's strategy of constant opening-closing-opening-closing has contributed immensely to the third wave surge. Where he once appeared to be listening to his health experts and advisers, we now see many in the medical profession slamming him for his poor decisions. Indeed, one of his senior medical advisers admitted a couple of days

ago that he considered resigning last week-end because Ford wasn't listening to the experts.

The confusion continues on another, related, front. Ford's government this week voted against bringing in paid sick-leave legislation. This would have spared people from having to choose between staying home while sick or going to work so that they didn't miss a wage payment. The day after voting against it, government minister Christine Elliott came out and said the government is contemplating sick pay.

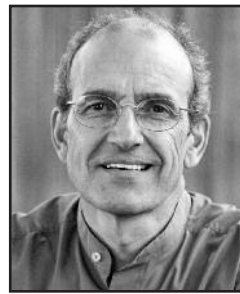
How in the name of Frederick Banting are people supposed to be law-abiding, responsible citizens if the government keeps changing its mind from one day to the next? How are businesses supposed to operate if they are told to open one day and close the next? How are parents supposed to organize their lives when they are told one day that schools will be open and then told the next day they will be closed? And just how many people are allowed to gather together? Five? Ten? Who knows?

The latest figures I can find from Johns Hopkins University show more than 140 million cases of COVID-19 world-wide, with more than three million deaths. By anybody's standards, this obviously is a serious threat to us all and deserves well thought out and scientifically based decisions to try and bring it under control. Instead, we have a premier who campaigned on a "Beer for a Buck" platform who bumbles along from day to day making the situation worse. Indeed, apart from the Atlantic provinces, I would suggest every provincial government and the federal government has utterly fumbled the ball.

I think MP Jennifer O'Connell and MPP Peter Bethlenfalvy have served their constituents in Pickering-Uxbridge well. It seems a shame that they should be punished for their leaders' incompetence. But I can't see the governments of either Prime Minister Justin Trudeau or Premier Ford being re-elected when they next go to the polls.

Tell me, am I wrong?

*Playgrounds are open. The Rotary Skate Park and Optimist Pump Park are closed. See page 2 for details.



The Barris Beat

column by Ted Barris

Portrait of a war artist

Not a large man, he stood about as tall as the art easel he was about to unveil. But by the motion of his hands as he spoke and the animation in his face, we knew we had to listen. He wore a bright red and white shirt (I think I've always seen him in the colours of Canada). His commentary spoke of pride. His eyes sparkled telling a veteran's story. Then, he pulled away the easel's covering to reveal his latest portrait honouring Second World War veteran and friend Harry Watts. There was instant applause from the audience, there to honour Harry's 90th birthday in 2013. Then, portrait artist Dave Sopha and veteran Harry Watts hugged a genuine hug of appreciation and respect.

"Veterans like Harry Watts are larger than life," Dave said. "We owe them everything."

At that unveiling, artist Sopha told us of Harry's extraordinary service as a dispatch rider in the liberation of Italy, then the liberation of the Netherlands between 1943 and 1945. Clearly, the artist admired the veteran for stepping up when Canada needed him most, and for enduring wartime adversity. But what Dave Sopha didn't talk about on that occasion was the adversity in his *own* life – an automobile crash in 1970 that broke his back – that changed both his focus and his art. He moved to professional airbrush art. Then, in late 2008, he experienced another unexpected shift.

When news outlets in Canada published stories about three Canadian soldiers killed in the war in Afghanistan, artist Sopha responded. On Dec. 8, 2008, the detonation of an improvised explosive device took the lives of Canadians Cpl. Mark McLaren, W.O. Robert Wilson and Pre. Demetrios Diplaros. They were Canada's 98th, 99th and 100th deaths in Afghanistan. Sopha immediately expressed a need to capture the faces and to honour the sacrifices of all 100 Canadians killed in the war with oil-paint portraits. He gathered images of the fallen soldiers from Veterans Affairs, newspapers and their families and began a painstaking labour of love, painting portraits of them all. Nearly day and night – 16 hours a day, seven days a week – Sopha created a canvas mural 40 feet long and 10 feet tall.

"Portraits of Honour seemed the right title," he told me at a veterans banquet in Oshawa in 2011. But the mural took longer than Dave anticipated because by the time he'd completed the 100 portraits, Canada had lost another 58 servicemen and women. He added them to the mural too. Then, he painted an honour roll of their names in granite at each end of the mural.

"After 10,000 hours of work," his website said, "Dave still paints every day, adding poppy petals to the mural for all the Canadians who've fallen since the First World War."

But according to one of Dave Sopha's close Kinsmen Club buddies, Ron Orr, the work of creating portraits of the fallen didn't stop with the end of the Afghanistan mission. When the three RCMP officers were killed in Moncton, N.B., in 2014, artist Sopha widened his memorials in paint to honour first responders, such as police, firefighters and paramedics. And when Fire Chief Clayton Cassidy died near Cache Creek, during a flash flood in B.C., Dave honoured his memory with a portrait too.

"Dave seemed to feel none of these extraordinary people should be lost or forgotten," Orr said. "Just like the mural, it became Dave's personal crusade."

But Dave Sopha's portraits aren't as numerous these days, the brush strokes not as vigorous, Ron Orr told me. His sidekick for so many trips to deliver his portraits to families in mourning has slowed down in recent months. He's coping with another adversity – pancreatic cancer. Dave's daughter Terri has offered family and friends updates on her dad's radiation and chemotherapy treatments. Her latest Facebook update explained that Dave, at 73, is pretty much bedridden now and hasn't the energy to paint or converse much.

"He's slowly losing his battle with cancer," she said.

The dynamic mural that Dave Sopha created to acknowledge the sacrifice of 158 Canadian soldiers, sailors and aircrew during the war in Afghanistan resides in its own place of honour today. It adorns a wall at the Preston Kinsmen Club, where Dave and Ron have been members for 30 years. And while I'm sure Kinsmen members think the world of Dave Sopha's work, there are those who feel *Portraits of Honour* deserves a more national profile – given its scope and content.

While he's never campaigned for such recognition, Dave Sopha's portraiture tribute – like the works of Arthur Lismer in the Great War, Alex Colville in the Second World War, and Ted Zuber in the Korean War – deserves to be part of the national art collection in Ottawa and Dave Sopha deserves his own place among war artists.

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



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Celebrate books with the best booksellers around

by Justyne Edgell, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

This Saturday, April 24, is Canadian Independent Bookstore Day, and Uxbridge’s Blue Heron Books is joining in on the action to support independent bookstores across the country.

“At Blue Heron Books, we are celebrating the day by connecting with our customers through many intriguing on-line activities, as well as supporting our local purveyors of fine beverages - perfect to enjoy with your new book!” says Shelley Macbeth, owner of Blue Heron Books.

As in-store activity is not possible in many regions, including Ontario, the Canadian Independent Bookstore Association (CIBA) is hosting a contest to engage readers. Any book purchased from a local bookstore on April 24 or 25 will translate to one entry to win a range of prizes, including virtual experiences with Canadian authors.

Like most small retailers, the past year at Blue Heron Books has seen its trials and tribulations, and Macbeth says her store has had to adapt, but it has also proven just how vital independent bookstores are to the community.

“We have kept the town morale up with puzzles, games, virtual literary events and above all, a wealth of quality reading material for young and old alike,” says Macbeth.

For more information about Independent Bookstore day and its myriad contests, visit Blue Heron Books online at blueheron-books.com

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- **April 27, 2021**
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- **April 29, 2021**
 - From 12:00 to 14:00, and 18:00 to 20:00

For complete details and to view the presentation boards, visit DurhamRegionTransit.com/PICs. If you can't join one of the virtual discussions, but would still like to talk with staff, please call **1-866-247-0055**.

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[1] <https://www.oticon.ca/hearing-aid-users/hearing-aids/products/opn-s>

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Earth Roots Community Kitchen, from page 1

grass-fed livestock, non-genetically modified seeds, non-toxic herbicides/pesticides/fertilizers, committed citizens, and reconciliation with the Indigenous people of the area. Organizers of this community kitchen are confident that these can all be achieved through opening up a space for food producers to work closer to where they live.

Several people who either live or work (or both) in Uxbridge and are already on board with the ERCDC proposal include local realtor Ian Morrison, Castool general manager Paul Robbins, and Vince's Market partner Giancarlo Trimarchi.

Robbins sees the potential in the project, having been involved with a similar venture when he lived in the city.

"I lived in Riverdale years ago, and was one of the original investors in the Big Carrot [a worker-owned natural food market committed to local, organic, non-GMO and sustainable food systems in Toronto since 1983]. I had been an athlete and tried to live a very healthy life within our community in Riverdale, and the idea of another co-op in Uxbridge was exciting. There were many thoughts about how the co-op could serve the direct area, but the idea of a community kitchen interested me the most. I know so many talented people that love to cook and need extra income. The commu-

nity kitchen would allow these people to safely and legally prepare and sell their foods. It would also support the local farms and other suppliers."

Trimarchi also sees benefit to the community, explaining that "June reached out to me in the fall of 2020 to have a conversation around food security in Uxbridge, which evolved into the ERCFC project that we are now developing."

Trimarchi says that he is involved "because I truly do believe that, in order for a business to thrive, the community it serves must be strong, and there is a reciprocity between business leaders that can develop that community strength. The ERCFC has the potential to support so many different community members and interest groups, and it's inspiring to be a part of that development, to see that vision come to life one day."

The ERCDC plans on using all local resources to design, build and operate the kitchen, including local commercial designers and architects. Although still very much in the planning stages, the ERCDC team has visited a very centrally located potential site several times, and has built a solid plan on how to manage – and fund – the space. The team hopes to gain interest from other local businesses and industry, community organizations, conservation groups, and to apply for appropriate government grants and, if all falls into place, the team hopes to have the centre up and running in one to one and a half years. The ERCFC is looking to organize itself through a business model that best serves the community from this variety of perspectives.

The ERCFC plans to provide, for a fee comparable to the current market (but negotiable in specific cases), commercial kitchen space, office and meeting space for users who may not have any at their disposal, food storage space (dry, cold and frozen), an on-site retail store for sales of ERCFC-made products, and a wide range of educational programs that support the initiative.

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Watching Things Grow with Heather Hunter

Hellebores and more

The thing about Hellebores is their bloom time. A friend had lovely white flowers showing up beside her front verandah in Toronto in January this year. This was remarkable, but in any year, as soon as the snow is off the plant you see the fat Hellebore buds nestled into last year's leaves, ready to take off when the time is right - and that time comes very early. The early bloom is the reason they are called Lenten Rose, or Christmas Rose in England, where they just might be blooming at Christmas time.

John's Garden in Uxbridge, owned by John Statham, won Platinum in The 2020 *Toronto Star* Reader's Choice Awards for Garden Centres, coming second only to Sheridan Nurseries. John carries lots of Hellebores.

As a garden centre, John's Garden is unique. It's in a forest, at the end of a long, tortuous driveway (off Conc. 7, south of town). Laid out under the



Hellebore flowers bloom early - sometimes before the snow disappears - and as perennials, are guaranteed to be among the first flowers to come up in the spring.

trees is a vast array of plants that love shade - hostas, ferns, rhododendrons, azaleas, just to name a few. At the end of that trail through the woods you come to a sunny open meadow, where the sun-loving plants - grasses, perennials, ground covers, shrubs and young trees, reside. John specializes in grasses and in Hellebores.

Hellebores are perennials that originated in south and east Europe. Hellebore flowers not only come early, but last much longer than other spring bloomers such as daffodils, tulips and hyacinths. The Hellebore flowers, which can be white, cream,

pink, dark purple or even green, will sometimes last for weeks and months. And when the flowers are finished, the leathery dark green leaves are beautiful in their own right.

John suggests Hellebores do best with morning sun or dappled shade - orientalis types (with larger leaves, nodding flowers) like average to moist soil, but will do well in total shade on the drier side. It's good to grow these somewhere elevated if possible, so you can enjoy the gorgeous flowers that face downwards.

Upright flower types prefer to have some sun, and average to dry conditions. Their need for moisture depends on how much sun they are getting. They do need shelter from strong cold winds.

Hellebores are very effective when grown in groups in a shrub border, or in a woodland setting. They will self-seed, so one or two plants might become a grouping in couple of years.

Latest provincial COVID restrictions cause confusion

by Justyne Edgell, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

So can we go outside or no? Here's what you need to know about Ontario's updated COVID stay-at-home restrictions and what activities are now permitted, or not...

On Friday, the provincial government announced stricter restrictions to the stay-at-home order. Outdoor gatherings are only permitted by members of the same household to a maximum of five, and may include one other person if that person lives alone. All construction considered non-essential was shut down, and all parks and outdoor recreation centres were forced to close. Additionally, the province announced that police and municipal by-law officers were going to be able to start enforcing the rules, and that police would have the authority to stop drivers and ask them why they were not at home, where they were going, and charge a fine when necessary.

The provincial government received immediate backlash on these new regulations on two fronts. Firstly, healthcare professionals spoke out about the closure of outdoor spaces, noting that transmission outdoors is exceptionally low and that giving fines to people outdoors will only encourage them to hide indoors, which is significantly more dangerous in causing the spread of COVID-19.

Secondly, police forces all across the

province responded saying they would not be randomly checking their residents. Many people expressed concerns that giving this power to police would only further jeopardize minority groups.

Premier Doug Ford and his team quickly retracted the rules after hearing the feedback, reopening parks and playgrounds and pulling the random checking by police.

So what actually is allowed with the new restrictions? Many outdoor recreation areas will remain open to use, as long as a physical distance of two meters can be maintained. Locally, this includes facilities like parks, playgrounds, play structures and the off-leash dog park. Sites that are now closed are (including but not limited to) outdoor sports facilities, such as golf courses, tennis and basketball courts, the skate and pump park, baseball diamonds and soccer field, as well as picnic sites.

The stay-at-home order has also been extended by two weeks, until May 20.

The Township of Uxbridge currently has 41 active cases of COVID-19, all of which are in home isolation. No cases are reported to be in the hospital. Vaccinations are ongoing, with several local pharmacies offering appointments (check individual pharmacy websites for details), and the Durham Region vaccine clinics continue to rotate throughout North Durham. To book

an appointment, visit durhamvaccinebooking.ca

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Across

1 "Troy" actor, Brad
5 Idea of oneself
8 Not up
12 Light beige
13 Hasty escape
14 Humdinger
15 Base for sauces
16 Back again
17 Reverse
18 Prepare to be knighted
20 Canned meat
22 Watery film
24 Adherent of an Indian religion
27 80 year old
31 Fraternity letter
32 Daybook
33 Pen part
35 Tender
40 As a result of (2 words)
41 Street abbr.
42 Unpleasant guy
44 Birch family tree
48 Toward dawn
51 U.N. arm, for short
53 Fountain order
54 Dog pest
55 Not a thing
56 Bookie's quote
57 Greenish blue
58 Word on a quarter
59 Wyle of "ER"

Down

1 Benefit
2 Desktop symbol
3 Real
4 Promgoer's rental
5 Imp
6 Needlefishes
7 The eating of raw food
8 College graduates
9 Hair style
10 Vulcan's mind m____
11 Two singers
19 Part of a relay race
21 Balloon filler
23 Very cordial
25 ____ Point, California
26 Troop group
27 Connective word
28 Neighbor of Libya
29 Vegetarian staple
30 "____ so fast!"
34 To stay the same
36 Merry
37 Old verb ending
38 Fertility clinic stock
39 English admiral in history
43 Assortment
45 Unfashionably dressed person
46 Icelandic poem collection
47 Precipitate
48 Bank method of funds transfer, for short
49 Pub pint
50 Large quantity
52 Long used

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The Nature Nut

column by Nancy Melcher

Common wildflowers

As the days get longer and warmer, all sorts of spring wildflowers are starting to grow. With the stay-at-home order in effect, walking on some of the local trails is a great way to take a break, get fresh air, and enjoy some beautiful scenery. Please remember to look but don't touch. Forest wildflowers don't transplant well into a sunny flowerbed and it's illegal to pick some trilliums - they're protected by law!

Our provincial flower, the white trillium, has three green leaves that make a triangle with the white flower in the centre. There's also a red-flowered trillium. Cool facts: trillium seeds are spread by ants, and the white trillium is a favourite food of white-tailed deer!



White Trillium

Liverwort (*Hepatica* sp.) doesn't sound very pretty but the lavender blossoms are some of the very early blooms we may find. The hairy stems rise about 10 cm from three-lobed leathery leaves.

Another flower to look for is bloodroot. It has one deeply lobed leaf that curls around the emerging flower, which has 8-12 white petals. The root has red sap, but it's poisonous - don't touch!



Bloodroot

Trout lily (adder's tongue or dog-tooth violet) has six long yellow petals and is found in rich woods. Its pointy leaves are mottled like the skin of a trout, hence the

name.

Roadsides and gravelly places are often colonized by coltsfoot. Its yellow flowers are often confused with dandelions, but the scaly stalk, absence of leaves, or emerging round heart-shaped leaves, help clear up any confusion.



Coltsfoot

Another pretty yellow flower, also with round leaves, is marsh marigold. Found in wet places, it has five petals, several waxy heart-shaped leaves on the flower stem and grows in clumps.

With three leaves forming a triangle much like a trillium, Jack-in-the-pulpit sometimes gives a moment of confusion. However, the flower is completely different. It's a striped purple-green tube and canopy surrounding the green club-shaped "Jack".



Jack-in-the-pulpit

All of these lovely blooms emerge before the trees leaf out, taking advantage of the bright sun before shade takes over. They are fragile beauties, each and every one. Please stay on the trails and paths, take nothing but photos and memories, and leave only your footprints.

All photos by Nancy Melcher.

Nancy Melcher is The Nature Nut. Send details of your sightings or questions about the natural world to: general@melcher.cx

'Joyful Yogini' makes connections on local television

by Justyne Edgell, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Did you know that Uxbridge is now on the small screen? Uxbridge Scugog Life is a new addition to RogersTV! A lifestyle show all about the town, the people, local businesses and events.

Jacque Hermans, an Uxbridge resident and local business owner who previously worked for RogersTV, was presented with the opportunity to host a show in this area, and she says she jumped at the chance.

"I am a very social person and I love being able to meet more people in my community and help other people to learn about what everyone is doing, and about the amazing resources we have right here in our own community," says Hermans. "It was really exciting to have the opportunity to get involved."

Hermans says Uxbridge Scugog Life is all about the community. She interviews people who have local programs, services, products or events, to share the word with other residents. During the half hour program, Hermans also shares information about local resources, like the trails. This week alone, the show features Sabrina Leeder, owner of Preston Gallery, Alexa McCarthy of Woods Clothing, and Mayor Dave Barton.

Uxbridge Scugog Life is cur-



Jacque Hermans, pictured here with her dogs Chewie and Gracie, hosts Uxbridge Scugog Life, a new lifestyle show on RogersTV.

Photo by May Cowan Photography

rently being filmed over Zoom, and with the help of a Rogers producer, the Zoom call gets spliced together into the show that is ultimately shared with its audience.

Along with airing four times a day on RogersTV (9 a.m., 2 p.m., 5 p.m., and 9 p.m.), the show is also available on YouTube, on the RogersTV account and on Hermans's channel

"The Joyful Yogini."

"I would love to let everyone know, whether it's online or a physical store, if they have products or services or events, I would love for them to connect with me so I can help them get the word out," says Hermans. "Or even if they just have some really cool skills and they'd like to share their skills with people. Let's teach the community about the cool things that people do around here and share the knowledge."

Hermans says that every week she will be sharing the YouTube link through the Connecting in Uxbridge Facebook group.

Anyone who wishes to contact her about being on the show can find her on her website thejoyfultyogini.ca or on social media @the.joyful.yogini



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Butt Blitz 2021 wants one million cigarette butts in one month

by Justyne Edgell, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Uxbridge resident Eilish Neilly has had a love for Planet Earth from a young age, and she is now heading a cigarette butt cleanup team here in our town.

This winter, Neilly found herself out of work, and when a volunteer opportunity with A Greener Future (an organization that works with local communities to promote environmental preservation) came up, she jumped at the chance to join the team.

“I love doing work with nonprofits and charities,” says Neilly, “and I was excited to get the role as a communications assistant with A Greener Fu-

ture.”

Neilly studied environmental management at the University of Guelph and has always found volunteering for the environment to be a rewarding activity.

When the Butt Blitz project came up, Neilly signed on as a coordinator and based her team out of her hometown of Uxbridge.

A Greener Future started the Butt Blitz in 2015, and in its six years running, volunteers have picked up over a million cigarette butts. The collected butts are all sent to an organization called TerraCycle, where they can be properly recycled and used to create industrial items such as park benches and plastic pallets.

This year, the organization is taking



Eilish Neilly collects cigarette butts as part of the Butt Blitz project, a month-long initiative of A Greener Future.
Photo submitted by Eilish Neilly

on its biggest goal yet - to pick up one million butts in the month of April alone. Currently, it has reached a little over a third of its goal, and it’s looking for a strong finish to the month-long cleanup project.

Neilly has a team of about 11 volunteers, and so far they have already collected around 30,000 cigarette butts in Uxbridge alone.

“Once you start looking for them, you really can’t ever unsee it,” says Neilly. “Although it sometimes feels like your impact is really small, I know that if a lot of people get on it we can make a difference.”

The project is usually run as a single day blitz along the shore of Lake Ontario, but as a result of the COVID pandemic, the project was modified

this year to a month-long community-based project. With the success of this project, Neilly suspects it might continue in a similar fashion next year.

“There’s often a lot of shame that goes along with litter, but with cigarette butts it just seems to be perceived as more normal,” says Neilly. “I think that’s because people don’t really know what’s in the butts. There is actually plastic inside the filter, people often think it’s cotton or a natural fiber. With that plastic comes a lot of other issues over time when it’s left in our environment.”

To learn more about A Greener Future and to stay up to date on its projects, visit agreenerfuture.ca and follow on social media.



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