

The Uxbridge Cosmos

Vol. 17 No. 47

TheCosmos.ca

Thursday, December 2, 2021

A sneak peek at budget-time prep • Country singer a rising star • The low down on sewage capacity



IMAGES OF CHRISTMAS PAST - Stephen Wright, of Uxbridge, has recreated the Christmas display that his parents set up each year in front of their house in the 1960s, and is sharing it during the Optimist Club of Uxbridge's Fantasy of Lights at Elgin Park. The Fantasy of Lights will throw the switch this Saturday at 6 p.m., and be open every evening from Dec. 4 to Jan. 2, 2022, from 6 - 9:30 p.m. Drive-through only, donations gratefully accepted at the exit. *Photo by John Cavers*

New hospital one step closer to reality with medical centre opening

by Justyne Edgell

Dreams of the new hospital that will replace Uxbridge's beloved but ageing 'cottage' hospital became slightly more real last Friday as Uxbridge Health Centre formally opened its new location, and announced that plans for the new hospital, which will be in the same location, are moving ahead.

The new Oak Tree Medical Centre welcomed MPP Peter Bethlenfalvy, Regional Chair John Henry, Mayor Dave Barton, the senior leadership team from Oak Valley Health, and several other guests were on hand for a ribbon cutting for the new building. Following that, Markham Stouffville CEO Jo-Anne Marr, and Elena Pacheco, vice president of planning and transformation, applauded the new building, saying that it is one that has been long awaited and will be "a game changer for healthcare in the community."

Through Marr, Oak Valley Health, the parent corporation of both Markham Stouffville Hos-

pital and Uxbridge Hospital, shared the news that the new Uxbridge hospital build is now in Stage 2 of the capital planning process. The proposed new hospital will be on the same grounds as the current hospital, and will be connected to the Oak Tree Medical Centre building.

Dr. Jennifer Wilson, an Uxbridge physician and part owner of Oak Tree Medical Centre, says that the building was built with the new hospital plans in mind.

"It was March of 2018, when we, the somewhat nervous physicians of Uxbridge Health Centre, brought our vision to Elena, who holds the title VP of planning and transformation for good reason!" laughed Wilson while addressing the small gathering. "She listened to our vision for a bigger, brighter, greener clinic for our patients and trainees and quickly recognized that our vision integrated perfectly with the hospital's vision of 'Care Beyond our Walls.'"

The 37,000 square foot building houses the physicians of Uxbridge Health Centre, who

were formerly located in the Rexall plaza, south of town. Units in the new building are being prepared for other services and businesses to enter in the new year, including Annina's Bakeshop, Oak Tree Medical Pharmacy (owned by Uxbridge Pharmasave's Sameer Remtulla), and Alpha Laboratories.

Marr said that the new building, which is owned and operated by the physicians, will be "closely integrated with the hospital" and will help create a "one stop shop for medical and healthcare needs."

The physicians say they took the environmental impact of the building into consideration while planning their new space. All lights in their second floor unit are on motion sensors, they implemented bio-swails into the parking lot to filter water run off, and are using specially designed eco garbage bins. There are also plans to implement solar energy to run the emergency lights for the helipad, and in the future, "hopefully all emergency lighting in the building," said clinic administrator Debbie Edgell.

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Council & Committee Meetings

Meeting Schedule for December, 2021

Thursday, December 2
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE, 8:30 a.m.

TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING
9:00 a.m.

Monday, December 6
COMMITTEE MEETING, 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, December 7
BUDGET MEETING
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 9
BUDGET MEETING
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Monday, December 13
COUNCIL MEETING, 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, December 14
BUDGET MEETING
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 14
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE, 7:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT
MEETING, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 16
BUDGET MEETING
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 21
BIA BOARD, 7:00 p.m.
CANCELLED

Closure

Brock Rd. south from Hwy. 47 to Taunton Rd.
will experience periodic lane restrictions to
facilitate installation of a fibre optic network to
February 25, 2022.

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



SHOP AND DINE IN DOWNTOWN
UXBRIDGE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Dec 4th, 10th, 11th, 17th, 18th

6:00-8:00pm

Festive Windows tell a Holiday Story

Tastings & Treats for a Toonie

Sounds of the Season

Holiday Dining Specials

Santa and Mrs. Claus

WWW.DISCOVERUXBRIDGE.CA/HOLIDAYTRAIL



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2022 Virtual Budget Meetings

Virtual budget review meetings are
open to public. Meetings take place

Dec. 7th, 9th, 14th from 1 pm-5pm

Visit <https://bit.ly/3rakZ7m> to join a session

Permit Parking Now In Effect

for Skate Park and Pump Track

The Township of Uxbridge has implemented permit
parking in the new parking lot adjacent to the Skate
and Pump parks at the Fields of Uxbridge.

All vehicles parked in this lot require a valid
parking pass each time they park to avoid parking
fines. The cost for non-residents is \$6.00 per day.

Residents of the Township of Uxbridge can register
for a free permit. This permit allows them to
register their vehicle on-site and park for no
charge.

Attention Uxbridge Residents!

Get a head start and register at home for your
FREE parking permit before your next visit. You
can register in 3 easy steps. To learn more visit
uxbridge.ca/permitparking

Mobile WALK-IN COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic

Open to all Durham residents

Uxbridge Arena

291 Brock Street West, Uxbridge (parking lot)

No appointment necessary. Proof of age required.

1st, 2nd & 3rd dose - Pfizer vaccine available for 12+.
1st dose Pfizer vaccine for children 5-11 also available.

December 16 | 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Hosted by the provincial GO-VAXX program. For a list of
GO-VAXX clinics visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/go-vaxx-bus-schedule>



Vaccine strong Durham

durham.ca/vaccineappointment

[f](#) [t](#) [YouTube](#) [i](#)

Roll Up Your Sleeves
Durham...



Do you notice anything different about this cat? His name is Remi, he has no eyes and is completely blind.

This cat was brought to the Uxbridge-Scugog Animal Shelter in very rough shape. He required surgery to both eyes
to relieve his pain. He is now thriving! Your donations and designer Uxbridge Township dog license purchases make
such a difference to shelter animals like Remi.

For more information on donations :

Uxbridge-Scugog Animal Shelter • 1360 Reach Street, Port Perry • (905) - 985- 9547 •
pound@uxbridge-scugog-animal-shelter.ca

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www.discoveruxbridge.ca/dedication-program/



PERMIT PARKING Registration Event

Get assistance signing up and registering for a free Resident parking
permit at one of our live, drop-in workshops:

Fri., Dec. 10th between 8:30am - 10:30am

Mon. Dec. 13th between 4pm-6pm

Town Hall Council Chambers, 51 Toronto St., Uxbridge



Pull the Plug on Electrical Fires

Avoid overloading a circuit with "octopus outlets".

Have a **licensed electrician** install additional outlets
if needed.



Uxbridge Fire Department
301 Brock St. W
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Our two cents

Cheers to a health care hot spot

We had the opportunity to take part in the official opening/ribbon-cutting of the new Oak Tree Medical Centre (formerly the Uxbridge Health Centre, which was located beside the Rexall on Elgin Park Dr.) last week. For those unfamiliar, the new health centre is located in the large building that has risen next to the Uxbridge Hospital. (See? We refrained from putting 'cottage' in there - we're so proud of ourselves!)

Anyway, we were pretty blown away by all the thought and work that went into that building. It has nothing to do with the fact that Annina's Bakeshop is opening in the large, airy foyer (okay, so it does a little bit - we don't have to drive to Goodwood all the time now!). It has more to do with the sensible layout, the huge windows, the ample seating, and the fact that, as Uxbridge's Dr. Jennifer Wilson explained, the building is as green as it can possibly be. Lights are on motion sensors, solar panels will generate power for back-up generators (eventually) - they're even looking into being able to compost the hundreds of paper towels that the doctors and staff go through each day. Very cool.

Seeing the very walls that will one day be removed to provide access to a long-term care residence and a new, modern hospital was also pretty cool. Once those open up (don't get super excited, it won't be for a bit yet), specialists set up offices, and Pharmasave and Astra Labs move in, that little piece of land on Campbell Dr. is going to be a one-stop health shop. Not bad, considering it wasn't that long ago that the future of a hospital in Uxbridge was very precarious. Even Mayor Dave Barton mentioned this during his remarks at last Friday's opening ceremony:

"There was a lot of uncertainty surrounding health care in Uxbridge at one time," he said," but I think Peter (Bethlenfalvy) seeing that boiler room really helped!" He was referring to a visit that Pickering-Uxbridge MPP Bethlenfalvy made to the ageing hospital not too long after he was elected, where he was escorted to the boiler room of the hospital and found it in less than stellar condition.

It was obviously noted by the powers-that-be that having Uxbridge as a health care hub is a savvy move, and we're no longer in danger of losing our hospital - three cheers for that! Now what we need to prepare for are the next few stages of the hospital's redevelopment, and you can be sure raising funds will play a big role.

Congratulations to Oak Tree Medical on the new digs. We are very much looking forward to seeing what comes next! And Annina's.



Letters to the Editor

Re: 'Am I Wrong?' Nov. 18 edition

Well, Roger, your sulk over a smoking ban at your residence, and your reprehensibly careless solution, have set a new standard for being **WRONG**. While I frequently share your insightful views, this issue separates us. I will do my best to fulfil your prediction of **ZERO** sympathy. We are not on the same page, or even the same book. I hope you were being deliberately provocative, but if you really believe what you wrote, then I am very disappointed in you.

It's not that I object to you smoking. So long as you never cause a fire, and your smoke never invades my space, or that of others, you are at perfect liberty to risk a shorter life. In fact, the reduced lifespan of smokers probably assists global well being. Departed smokers don't drive, cruise, fly, create garbage, or consume resources. This perhaps compensates Planet Earth for the smoke and butt pollution they create. So carry on, brave heart, the planet needs your smoky self-sacrifice. I will, however, should those 65 years of puffing eventually catch up with you, miss your smoking-hot prose in the *Cosmos*.

What is not at all acceptable, is downright damnable in fact, is the entirely selfish, unrepentant, and misguided use of your vehicle as a heated smoking den, its toxic exhaust spewing into the Uxbridge air as you mindlessly indulge yourself. While I will grant you a right to self-destruction, I do not grant you the right to enjoy yourself at the cost of degrading either the lives of others or the well being of Earth, our common home. If, in 2016, Uxbridge had not rejected a very sensibly proposed anti-idling bylaw, I'd be reporting you as a violator, hoping for both a hefty fine and a

severe lecture. As it is, all I can do is deliver the lecture.

You have joined the ranks of the climate careless: those who use remote starters to idle cars at length, just to avoid the brief chill before heater heaven kicks in; those who prefer pumping out exhaust in drive-thru lineups, rather than going inside; those who sit in vehicles, engines running, awaiting pickup or delivery. We must all surrender such small conveniences in order to control our warming world.

Roger, it is not overly dramatic to say that **YOU** are responsible for heat and flood disasters in B.C., for tornadoes in Barrie, for forest fires in Ontario and the West. Sure, your part in this is small, but that's the way climate change works - each of us disregarding small acts of negligence, unaware, or even uncaring that it all adds up.

There is no more room for your outraged rights, for your immature sulk at having your smoky toys taken away. Remarks such as those made in your column are fuel for fires of rebellion in the young, fuel for ignorant climate change deniers, and fuel for the dangerous ideas of climate conspiracy theorists. Stop sulking like a child sent to his room, or in your case, his car. Stop whining about your supposed ill-treatment as if it were somehow more severe than the censure we accord to drinking and driving - totally untrue, and also irrelevant. Don't dishonour our veterans by dragging them, again irrelevantly, into your personal rant. Accept your responsibility to help solve a severe global problem.

John Tomlinson, Uxbridge

At a recent (virtual) public meeting, the Downtown Revitalization Committee presented its draft vision for

the shape of Uxbridge in the future. Overall, the committee is doing valuable work in proposing a long-term vision for the direction of our downtown as it evolves.

There is one aspect where the vision fails to respond to the expressed wishes of the community. There is almost universal agreement that a town square is needed as a focal feature of the downtown. The need for a town square has featured prominently in the official plans endorsed by council over the past dozen years. It was high on the wish list of the last Downtown Revitalization Committee a decade ago. The need for a town square was strongly voiced by the community in the surveys and interviews conducted by the current Revitalization Committee, where it ranked second in importance (first was "more places to live") out of 10 or so factors.

Despite this overwhelming support for a town square, the most recently presented plans displayed what can only be viewed as a token town square - little more than a widened corridor in the area where the abandoned Coffee Time sits on Brock St. It falls far short of the common vision of a town square - a significant space in the centre of town that gives character to the community and offers a space large enough to accommodate numerous events, markets, fairs, performances, etc.

One has only to look at small towns in Europe to understand the importance of the town square. The presentation last week suggested that a redesigned Centennial Park could serve part of the "town square" requirement. A redesigned Centennial Park could serve a number of functions - but not part of a town square function as long as

...continued on page 11

When one of these disappears, A LOT disappears.

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Am I Wrong?

column by Roger Varley

How much can we take?

In two days (Dec. 4), the annual Optimist Club of Uxbridge's Fantasy of Lights returns to Elgin Park. The snowfall of the last couple of days will add a glow to the hundreds of thousands of lights that will illuminate the park, making it a true winter wonderland.

Coming just two weeks after the Santa Claus parade, the Fantasy will be another much-needed respite from what has developed into a tsunami of bad news. I've been in the news business all my life, but I cannot remember a time when the news was as unrelentingly gloomy and downright scary as it is today.

Of course, COVID-19 continues to be-devil us and it is nearing close to two years since that bad news hit us. But, having already been scared by something called the Delta variant, we now have the Omicron variant, which is said to be even more worrisome than all the other mutations. On top of that, Ontario has now reached the 10,000-deaths level due to the coronavirus.

However, that's not all we have to worry about. Now we're hearing on a daily basis about supply chain problems. Who had ever worried about supply chains before? Today we talk about the problem as freely as we talk about the Toronto Maple Leafs. And because of the supply chain problems, we are being told that Christmas trees are going to be scarce, as are Christmas turkeys. If you do happen to find a tree or a turkey, we are being told to expect to pay through the nose. But that is the same with all things now as inflation reaches a 20-year high and gas prices hit record levels. Food prices are rising and, in some areas, stocks are dwindling. A report Tuesday noted there was a 10-per-cent increase in the number of people using food banks last year.

While you are shovelling the snow off your driveway, think of the people in British Columbia, a place where a popular sentiment was: "yes, it rains a lot, but you don't have to shovel it." The west coasters probably wish all that precipitation was snow. Instead, homes, farms and

highways have been washed away, lives have been lost and there's more on the way. Meanwhile, on the other side of the country, flooding from torrential downpours has isolated some villages on Cape Breton and also washed out some highways there and in Newfoundland.

Parliament has finally resumed and what do we see? Instead of addressing the major issues facing the entire country, the MPs are fighting over whether members should be vaccinated and who gets to decide that rule. A few quick jabs in the arm would end that discussion extremely quickly, but, after all, it is MPs we are talking about.

On the international scene, the Biden administration has just whopped Canada with soft-wood lumber duties and Russia's Putin continues a massive armed forces buildup on the border with Ukraine. Should that hot spot develop even into skirmishes, Canadian forces are likely to be involved.

It all sounds too much to bear. Think of this, though. The forest fires that devastated B.C. earlier this year, including wiping out the town of Lytton, the fires in northwestern Ontario, the discovery of residential school graves, the Black Lives Matter movement, all have been pushed to the background of our memory by more recent events. The climate change debate drags on, with no sign of any meaningful action being taken by anyone, gun violence and stabbings seem to be on the rise and the anti-vaxxers continue to be more than just a nuisance.

So, how do we deal with all this bad news that seems to be coming at us with no let-up? I'm tempted to say that we should just hunker down and wait it all out, but we've been doing that with COVID-19 and that isn't going away any time soon.

It seems to me that Councillor Bruce Garrod has the best advice, given while discussing the upcoming budget: "We have to take what we know today and work with it." Makes sense to me.

Tell me, am I wrong?



The Barris Beat

column by Ted Barris

The Invisibles

We rarely saw her. But we always saw her handiwork. She came to work at the college where I taught after we'd all left for the day. And when we arrived the next day to resume our tutorials, labs or classroom sessions with students, all those rooms were spick-and-span. Then, one evening when I happened to be working late, I met her – a member of Centennial College's custodial staff – and I stopped to chat.

"Thanks for all the cleaning you do in our classrooms," I said.

"You're welcome," she said. "Just part of the job."

"But we never see you. It's nice to acknowledge what you do."

"Yes, well, we're kind of invisible," she said.

I thought about this very dedicated custodial worker several times this past week. As I mentioned in last week's Barris Beat, I visited the Toronto Street Medical Centre for a doctor's appointment last Thursday. As I checked in at the reception desk, I chatted with Hazel, who has worked with the doctors in that clinic for many years. I happened to mention that I'd wanted to make an appointment for my annual flu shot. Hazel said she'd just picked up their latest supply that morning, so I could get my shot right away. Much like the custodial worker I'd known at the college, Hazel and her co-workers at the doctor's office don't make a fuss about helping patients; they just do it – almost imperceptibly – because they are professionals and believe totally in the objectives of public service.

In a *Maclean's* magazine story from a few years ago, I remember reading about people who worked in skilled jobs sharing a kind of inverse relationship between work and recognition. The story quotes David Zweig, a former fact-checker for *Vogue* magazine in New York. After years and years of correcting other writers' mistakes so that the final *Vogue* stories read accurately and flawlessly, Zweig realized how invisible he was.

"You never read a magazine article and say, 'Man, that was fact-checked beautifully,'" Zweig told a *Maclean's* writer. "I realized that the better I did my job, the more I disappeared."

Strange, to feel lost and forgotten by doing one's job well. Particularly so, in a time when many medical professionals and health-care civil servants have worked so hard over the past two years fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. They must feel the same way. By serving inside hospital ICUs or inside locked-down elder-care facilities – where

quarantine has limited the flow of information – thousands of doctors, nurses, orderlies, community support workers and military personnel have worked in virtual isolation, almost invisibly saving lives.

By coincidence, another dimension of invisible work came up during a Royal Canadian Air Force Association banquet I attended last Saturday night in Trenton. For the first time since the pandemic began, RCAF No. 413 Squadron staged its annual awards night at the Wing facility just outside Canadian Forces Base Trenton. I was the keynote speaker and as proceedings began I met the Air Force NCO who was being recognized that evening as "Air Force Person of the Year." Sgt. Ashleigh Tucesku serves in finance at the Trenton base, or as she described it, "working pretty much under the radar."

However, one of her jobs (we learned) was co-ordinating Operation Boxtop, the resupply of Canada's most northerly base of operations at Alert, on Ellesmere Island, just 800 kilometres from the North Pole. For two years, Sgt. Tucesku had organized the twice annual flights of Hercules and Globemaster transport aircraft bringing fuel and thousands of pounds of dry goods each spring and fall to Alert.

"We have never seen such a high level of co-ordination ... of Boxtop," the task force commander reported in the citation. All thanks to Sgt. Tucesku working under the radar.

By coincidence – as the subject of the evening's keynote – I'd chosen to speak about the 30 Canadians who'd participated in the famous Dam Busters raid in May 1943. As part of the nighttime bombing attack against the hydroelectric dams (used by Germany to power weapons production on the River Ruhr during the Second World War) the No. 617 Squadron Lancaster bombers had used an unheard-of low-level bombing run. They'd flown from their British base in Lincolnshire all the way to the heart of Nazi Germany and back at treetop level, or as I suggested "flying under the radar," to accomplish their mission. As I got to that point in my talk, I noted that like her predecessors, Sgt. Tucesku had worked the same way – invisibly but effectively – to get the job done.

I felt remarkably privileged to witness recognition of a servicewoman who, until last Saturday night, had gone above and beyond the call largely unnoticed. We need to recognize more deserving Invisibles.

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



Friday, December 3

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HOLIDAY TRAIL

Fridays & Saturdays

December 4, 10, 11, 17, 18

6 - 8 p.m.



1 Sugar FX reveals “What Christmas would be...under the Sea” Have you ever wondered how merpeople celebrate the holidays? Find out on your visit to SugarFX and enjoy some sweet treasure for a toonie!

2 M.T. Hangers presents “A White Christmas” No need to dream of a White Christmas, you can see one through the beautiful window at M.T. Hangers. Bring a toonie to pick out some lovely jewelry!

3 Holistic Salt Therapy and Cave presents “A Gingerbread House & Man” Run, run as fast as you can to catch the Gingerbread Man at Holistic Salt Therapy and Cave!

4 The Lemonade Stand Presents “T’was the Night Before Christmas” The stockings are hung with care and Old St. Nicholas is already there! Visit the Lemonade Stand to pick up a holiday ornament for a toonie.



5 Presents Presents Presents highlights “A Canadian Family Christmas” Find out what makes a typical Canadian family Christmas as you peer through the window at Presents Presents Presents.

6 Blue Heron Books brings “A Canadian Woodland Christmas” to the Holiday Trail! Featuring the stories of Helaine Becker & Werner Zimmerman, see woodland animal dancers from the Uxbridge Dance Academy Dec. 17 & 18) and pick up a mini holiday story for a toonie (while quantities last).



7 The Bridge Social tells the classic story of “The Nutcracker” The Nutcracker comes to life with dancers from the Uxbridge Dance Academy (Dec. 17 & 18)! Warm up with an organic fair trade coffee or tempt your tastebuds with a delicious sugar cookie, all for a toonie!

8 Jillian’s brings high quality fashion to Brock St. This new boutique offers a personal shopping experience, perfect for outfitting you with something special for the holidays. Open until 4 p.m., Thursday to Saturday.

9 Passionate Cook’s Essentials unveils “A Few of My Favourite Things” with

great finds from the shop owner’s favourite things list, this is a destination for foodies or those with foodies on their shopping list.

10 Woods Clothing presents “Narnia- Age of Winter” When entering Narnia, you may find “something soft and powdery and extremely cold!” Check it out in the window at Woods Clothing and bring a toonie to purchase one-of-a-kind handmade gift tags.

11 Low’s Furniture and Castool are filling the street with “Sounds of the Season at Home” In a lovely holiday living room setting, enjoy live music





provided by incredible local Uxbridge talent, brought to you with the generous sponsorship of Castool Tooling Systems.

12 "Windows of 'Red and Silver' and a Festive Selfie Spot by Rutledge Jewellers" Create your own holiday story at Rutledge Jewellers. With a giant 30' Christmas tree light display, beautifully appointed windows in 'Red and Silver' and an arbor nestled amongst the greenery, it's an ideal spot to capture a holiday selfie!

13 "The Hockey Sweater" presented by Preston Gallery The story of the Hockey Sweater is perfect for this

window, as Preston Gallery is, after all, named after the Stanley Cup (Sir Stanley of Preston)! For a toonie, take a lovely holiday ornament home to design.

14 "Sparkle all the Way" is the story of the Sudz Bar at Community Cleaning Making your home sparkle is what the Sudz Bar at Community Cleanings does best. They also provide a wide selection of eco-friendly gifts, as well as soaps and cleaning products to make that happen!

15 H Bee Architecture has become a "A Cozy Winter Cabin" There's nothing like curling up by the fire at the cabin, and H Bee Architecture has invited Santa

and Mrs. Claus to do just that. Come and say hello through the glass and capture a selfie from 6-8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Dec. 4 to Dec. 18.

16 Festive Cheer at The Second Wedge Brewing Co. "All Trails Lead Here," including the Holiday Trail! Enjoy a big, natural indoor tree, view the lit-up beer garden, and enjoy a 5 oz Taster of any beer on tap for a

Toonie.* You can also order a full flight or pint of your favourites, or take-home some fun merch or cans to go. It's the perfect finale to the Holiday Trail. *restrictions apply.

Places to Dine

[Discoveruxbridge.ca/eat-drink](https://discoveruxbridge.ca/eat-drink)

Some eateries are offering specials for the Season.

Navarra's Eatery- Dine-in and enjoy special drinks such as "The Grinch" or "A Polar Bear Martini"

FIG Kitchen and Market - Enjoy a holiday lunch (Fridays & Saturdays) with festive drinks, pick-up a mini-cookie for a toonie.

Urban Pantry Restaurant - Book to dine-in, or order ahead for a dozen holiday cookies, a festive floral arrangement, or a basket filled with local products.

TIN Restaurant - Book ahead to enjoy a special festive meal.

Wixan's Bridge - Santa and the elves will be available Dec. 4-19 11a.m. - 3 p.m. for photos.

Other Holiday Events

Optimist Fantasy of Lights, Elgin Park Nightly from Dec. 4 - Jan. 2, 6-9:30 p.m. • uxlights.ca

Buskers on Brock by Uxbridge Secondary School, Dec. 16, 6 - 8 p.m.

Pefferlaw Creek Holiday Market, Dec. 11,12,18,19 11a.m. - 5 p.m. • leaskdaleloop.ca

Santa Express and North Pole Light-up Express Train Excursions Dec. 3 - 30 • ythr.ca for tickets



All photos by Tracy Walker

DiscoverUxbridge.ca/HolidayTrail

Budget affected by COVID-19 and the unexpected

by Roger Varley

For Councillor Bruce Garrod, chair of the finance committee, the upcoming budget discussions will be a

question of making hard decisions.

With revenues already affected drastically by the COVID-19 pandemic, Garrod now has to deal with an inflation rate close to a 20-year high,

uncertainty at the gas pumps, increasing insurance rates and supply chain problems. As well, the contract for unionized township employees comes up for renewal next year. This combination of factors will see property tax rates increase when the budget is finalized early next year, although Garrod could not say just how much that increase will be.

"We have to take what we know today and work with it," Garrod said on Tuesday, referring to inflation. As for gas prices, which were expected to rise again this week after a 10-cent-a-litre drop last week from record-setting levels, Garrod said it is the same as any householder planning a budget: "You still have to plan your life: you just have to keep your guard up."

Garrod and Mayor Dave Barton joined Chief Administrative Officer Kristi Honey last week to host a virtual budget open house. They presented an in-depth look at where the township's revenues come from,

where they go and where the dollars that stay in Uxbridge are spent. It also explained exactly how property taxes are calculated. The presentation can be viewed at youtube.com/watch?v=rH5enr-wYcQg&ab_channel=TownshipofUxbridge

As the presentation points out, revenue from township facilities such as the arena, community centres and Uxpool are still down considerably because of COVID-19 restrictions, although Garrod said those revenues should be returning to near normal in 2022. As well, money received from the province under the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund has dropped from \$1.2 million in 2012 to \$400,000 in 2019.

Garrod said there are no significant savings to be found in the township's operating budget, noting there are few, if any, additional cuts that can be made. As the presentation points out, the township is responsible for maintaining 329 kilometres of roads,

and in the winter that means 658 kilometres of plowing. On top of that, the township has facilities, parks, trails and programs to run and maintain.

To illustrate the challenges facing the township on the operating budget, Garrod said grass cutting in parks, which is usually contracted out, will see prices going up because the contractors are facing rising insurance costs. In fact, some contractors are not even bidding any more because of their increasing costs.

As for the capital budget, all those roads, infrastructure and facilities cannot be put on the back burner until better times. One major expenditure under the capital budget will be the acquisition of a new fire truck to replace a 22-year-old vehicle.

"Delays make problems worse, which ends up costing more," said Garrod.

As a case in point, Garrod said the new ball diamond at the Fields of Uxbridge could have been delayed, but that would have meant the township would miss out on government grants, meaning eventual higher costs for Uxbridge.

Property taxes paid on a house assessed by MPAC at \$600,000 amounted to \$6,218 in 2021. Of that, only \$1,719 stayed in Uxbridge: the rest went to the region and to the province for education. Garrod said that if the budget sees a 4.5 per cent increase, that would increase the homeowner's Uxbridge taxes by \$77.

Three budget meetings are scheduled for December, beginning Dec. 7, with another three in January if needed. All meetings begin at 1 p.m. and are accessible to the public in virtual format. Garrod, noting that only five residents tuned in to the budget presentation last week, said he would like to see more residents take an interest in the discussions.

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Saturday, December 11
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MONTHLY DRAW WINNERS

The Rotary Club of Uxbridge is pleased to announce the winners of the November monthly draw for the 2021 Trip of the Month Club

The 'Oasis in Antigua' trip was won by Arlene Lyon, ticket # 140, sold by Arlene Lyon

2nd place winner, \$150, won by Bob Ruffo, ticket # 216, sold by Chuck Taylor

3rd place winner, \$100, won by Johan and Bill Snowball, ticket # 248, sold by Deb Dee

Congratulations to our November draw winners, and best of luck to all our ticket holders for the 2021 Trip of the Month Club draw for December! 'Santa's Surprise' includes round trip airfare to a SURPRISE exotic destination, 7 nights accommodation at a 5-star resort, all meals, snacks, drinks and entertainment, all gratuities. As the destination is a 'SURPRISE', it would be appropriate to pack a bikini/speedo, bring sunscreen and sunglasses and get ready for R & R!

As restrictions are still in place for travel, a voucher for \$2,500 from Getaway Travel or cash option of \$2,250 is available instead of the trip.

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Uxbridge country gal wins first country music award

by Justyne Edgell

Uxbridge's own Robyn Ottolini won the Rising Star title at this year's Canadian Country Music Association (CCMA) Awards.

On Monday night, in London, Ont., Ottolini took to the stage alongside other big names in Canadian country music including The Reklaws, Dallas Smith and more.

Along with her award win, Ottolini performed her breakout song "F-150" on the CCMA stage. In a Facebook post on Tuesday morning, she wrote: "I'm still shaking...I've had an absolute blast in the nose bleeds over the years but the stage felt warm and cozy last night."

This has been a big month for Ottolini - she has released two singles, including her first holiday track, "Getting a Hangover For Christ-

mas." She has also been seen above Yonge and Dundas Square in Toronto, where she was featured on Spotify's New Music Friday billboard for her new single, "Boujee On A Budget."

Additionally, just last week Ottolini was announced as being one of the openers for Shania Twain at Boots and Hearts Music Festival in Oro-Medonte, Ont., next summer.

This is Ottolini's first CCMA Award win, and with a career that seems to have an upward trajectory, Uxbridge can likely expect to see this "celeb" taking on bigger stages and gaining even more fans.

"This took a village of people I love who are passionate about making the world a better place by being honest and speaking the truth," said Ottolini, "I couldn't be more lucky or more blessed."

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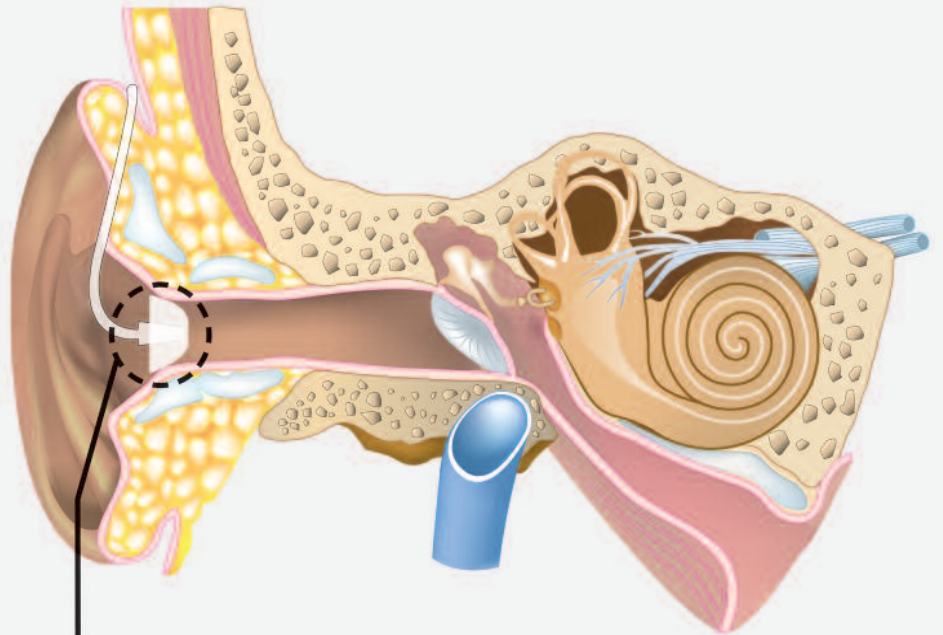
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Merchants end Bruins' mini-streak

by Roger Varley

A streak of five wins and a tie came to an end for the Uxbridge Bruins on Friday when the visiting Little Britain Merchants defeated them 3-1 at the arena.

In a game that had more "ohs" and "oohs" than a box of Cheerios, the teams provided the fans with an entertaining game. Only two minor penalties - one per team - were called during the game as both sides opted for a free-wheeling style of play. Both teams were guilty of numerous errant passes, which led to just as many quick attacks on the opposing goal.

Little Britain opened the scoring in the first minute of the game when Cole Kimble tucked the puck under goalie Jack Randall's pads. Ten minutes later, Spencer Krabi evened the score, with assists

going to Trent Underwood and Daniel Giorgio.

Apart from the two penalties, the second period was simply 20 minutes of back and forth.

Midway through the third, Randall was unable to zero in on a bouncing puck that went over his head and dropped in the net behind him for what proved to be the winning goal. Kimble added his second of the night as the period wound down. In the dying moments of the game, Steven Bozios suffered an injured arm in a collision behind the Little Britain net which left him yelling in agony.

The *Cosmos* selected Declan Meek as the Bruins player of the game and picked Braydon Leeking for the Merchants.

The loss dropped the Bruins to just under the .500 mark and placed them three points behind

the fourth-place Lakefield Chiefs.

On Saturday night, with the fans already in their seats and the ice being flooded after the warm-up session, it was announced that the game against the Chiefs had been postponed because no referee or linesmen showed up to officiate. The game was supposed to make up for the opening game of the season, which was postponed because Lakefield failed to show due to a scheduling mix-up. Presumably, the teams will try another make-up game later in the season. At least the warm-up session gave the fans the chance to see the Chiefs in their "third" uniform, an impressive blue jersey that contrasted with their usual red. A Chiefs official said the team wears the third uniform about five times a year.

Letters, from page 4

it is cut off from downtown by a wall of buildings.

The Downtown Revitalization Committee has the proposed town square in the right area, but not nearly large enough. To make an impact, the town square needs to take over the entire space occupied by Coffee Time and the Circle K convenience store.

The committee may not be entirely responsible for its "token town square" proposal. If they were given a mandate to, for instance, balance economic development with open space and affordable housing, this is exactly what a professional planner might come up with. The fact remains, however, that the future of Uxbridge lies not with professional planners, but with our elected politicians, who must eventually approve any draft plans.

So the decision that will face our council is clear. There is an open space, in the perfect location, that provides a unique opportunity that will never present itself again. The Township already owns the lands and the buildings. They can either sell most of it to a developer, who will build more stores along Brock St. Or they can take a visionary approach and create a true town square that will define the character of Uxbridge for generations to come. The "default" plan of selling the land for development might produce short-term financial gain, but it would be a short-sighted move that would squander the possibility of ever achieving the declared vision for our downtown.

It should be an easy decision.

There is no immediate expenditure necessary; the work can be scheduled when financial conditions are right. And it would be a popular decision, fulfilling a long-standing vision and, more important, fulfilling the expressed wishes of the community. All

that's needed is a binding commitment to dedicate that space for the town square. It would be a lasting and positive legacy for those involved in the decision. If that vision is not realized now, it will never be. And this golden opportunity will be missed.

Wynn Walters, Uxbridge



Friday, December 3

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7:45 p.m.

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Uxbridge sewage capacity actually an unknown

by Roger Varley

With a number of development proposals on the books or already under way, the subject of township sewage treatment capacity has been under discussion for several years. The recent unveiling of a 588-unit development proposed for land to the north of Quaker Village saw several residents complaining that Uxbridge does not have the sewage capacity to handle it.

In an attempt to obtain some definitive numbers, the *Cosmos* reached out to township officials for some details. Township planning consultant Elizabeth Howson said those details

are not available at this time.

Howson pointed out that the region and the township both come up with different numbers when discussing capacity and with some of that capacity already allocated to such projects as the expanding Butternut retirement home and a new long-term care facility, it is difficult to crunch the numbers. She noted, however, that a new report on sewage capacity is expected early in the new year.

But, even though capacity is still under review, Howson said council has no choice but examine any new development proposals that come along.

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