the north dundas TIMES
Reaching by direct mail to over 5,500 homes and businesses in Winchester and area
Vol 2, No 11 | The Voice of North Dundas | March 24, 2021

Carefor Meals on Wheels hightlights importance of food security for seniors

[picture: Eric Duncan's delivery for March for Meals. Delivering Meals to a resident George Oschmann. L to R: John Barnes, George Oschmann, Eric Duncan.

by Joselyn Morley

This week March 22- 26 is the March for Meals annual event in our community. The event is intended to increase the awareness about the Meals on Wheels program.

Caroline Rooney, Supervisor at Carefor NorDun Community Support Centre, and Michele Morgan, Supervisor of Carefor North-Stor Community Support Centre, see the increased need in the community on a daily basis. The March for Meals is an event marked throughout North America that helps raise awareness in the community about the issue of food security for seniors.The last year has seen a considerable increase in the need for the meals delivery service. The service provides a nutritious hot meal delivered to the client's home by an army of dedicated volunteers. All deliveries have been contactless since the beginning of the pandemic. The meals improve the quality of life and promote health for at-risk seniors.

The March for Meals Week is very important as dignitaries, local business people, celebrities, local members of government throughout North America all come together to raise awareness surrounding the issue of food security for an increasing senior population. Meals delivered to at-risk seniors are not just meals. They allow for a security check by a dedicated volunteer. This can offer peace of mind to loved ones who live some distance away, especially during this last year. The delivery provides the senior with regular person-to-person contact. Important relationships are developed.

Eric Duncan, MP for Stormont, Dundas, and South Glengarry, joined in helping deliver meals last week. He pitched in to help a week early.

The last year has seen a tenfold increase in the need for food security for seniors. Seniors and the disabled are susceptible to poor health through lack of nutrition, and can have trouble access-

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ing balanced meals. Isolation was a reality for seniors and the disabled before the pandemic, and that has only increased since March 2020. Carefor maintained a meal delivery programme prior to the pandemic, as well as in-person dinners. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Carefor Meal Delivery programme has increased its capacity by 88%. The need is still growing.

If you, or someone you know in North Dundas would benefit from the Meal Delivery Programme you can reach them at 613-774-6109. For those in North Stormont, call 613-984-2436. Check out the entire Carefor programme at carefor.ca.

Gardening: What's growing in March?

by Joselyn Morley

Those who start seeds indoors with lights and heat mats start pepper seeds anytime from the beginning of February onwards. Onions, celery, and things like celeriac want to be started at the same time. Gardeners have strong opinions about when to start tomatoes! Some start them at the beginning of March, some the beginning of April, and the rest of us somewhere in between. Eggplants also usually fall somewhere alongside peppers or tomatoes.

Those who plant early insist that their plants are big, strong, and healthy by the time they are planted out at the end of May, which is most certainly the case. The trouble with planting them early is that they can get too big before you can safely plant them out. Once you've transplanted the plants once or twice, you're kind of tired of them, and just want them outside! If they get too big, they're cumbersome to care for, and the tiny tray of seedlings you initially were so excited about are now taking over your living room! They can break when you're carrying them in and out for hardening off. If you have cats or other critters, you have probably been playing keep-away since you first hauled the seed starting mix out in February!

When you plant tomatoes out in May, you can take bottom leaves off the plant, and bury a good portion of the stem. Roots will grow quickly, giving you a very strong plant. A tall plant is good for that, but also very unmanageable as we all count down to the end of May. Remember that plants started indoors have to be carried outside for increasingly long periods of time prior to planting them out, in order to harden them off. It is very easy to forget what a pain the hardening off process is in February when we're excited about starting seeds.

Tomato seeds like heat, but don't necessarily need it in the same way that peppers do. Germination will be faster with a heat mat, and if you live in an old, cold, and draughty house like I do, a heat mat is essential. Tomato seedlings are pretty durable, like peppers. Most of them don't mind being transplanted. Because I have cats, dogs, and kids, I tend to plant a lot of one type of seed in a container, then transplant them into their own individual containers when they have grown their first set of true leaves. The first two leaves a seedling grows are called cotyledons. The next two are the first set of true leaves. Starting many seeds in one container saves space in your house, but also means you don't need as many heat mats, or lights. Only do this with plants you know do well with transplanting.

Many people direct sow cool crops such as kale, cabbage, spinach, or peas as soon as the ground can be worked in the spring. Some of these cool crops don't like to be transplanted, such as peas, so that's really your only option. Some of them are fine being transplanted, so if you want to get a jump on the season, you can start some of the cool crops such as cabbage or broccoli. This would be a good time for individual planting cells or pots. They don't mind being transplanted into the garden, but they are not as forgiving as tomatoes, so you don't want to be up potting them unless necessary. It is really not necessary to start cool hardy, fast-growing greens such as lettuce or spinach inside. You can direct sow them as soon as you can work the soil.

When you are starting your seeds, and planning your garden, don't forget flowers!! Some of them are edible, and all of them attract pollinators and help the bees. Many flowers also deter specific pests. Marigolds for example are easy to grow, they repel some nasty pests, and also attract beneficial insects. Many flowers are annuals, such as Zinnias and Calendula, and can be sown directly in the garden in the spring. You can start them early in the house if you wish, and they'll be ready to go. Some flowers are perennials, and require cold stratification. Many of them benefit from sowing in the fall, or from being Winter Sown; planted in jugs outside. We covered Winter Sowing a couple of weeks ago.

What are you growing? Joselyn@ndtimes.ca

In my Opinion.....

Housing in North Dundas & North Grenville

by Joselyn Morley

There is a dearth of affordable housing in both North Dundas and North Grenville. A few months into the pandemic, I began to notice a lot more posts on social media asking if anyone knew of an apartment or house for rent in the area. People would share information about where they had seen a "House for Rent" sign while they were out for a walk, or share the name of a friend who knew about a vacant apartment. More and more people were looking for housing, and there was very little available.

House prices have increased alarmingly everywhere, including in North Dundas and North Grenville. Interest rates are low, and have been for a long time. The pandemic has increased the gap between those who have, and those who have not. Many jobs were lost due to Covid-19. Many of those job losses were in the service industry, and many were women, often with children. The people with full-time, permanent, salaried jobs who have kept their jobs through the pandemic, have fueled a housing demand. People who could work remotely began to look at homes outside the city. This has happened all over the country. The population of our area has increased but added stress on the need for housing.

The number of apartments and houses available for rent in our area have declined sharply. There are more people looking for accommodation, but there are also fewer places for rent. With skyrocketing housing prices, some landlords have sold to take advantage of record high prices. Buyers aren't renting the properties out. They often want to live there themselves. There are also people taking advantage of the housing market to purchase houses in need of repair, and either flipping them for sale, or renovating them and renting them out at a much higher rate. In all these instances, tenants are losing their housing. There are many legal ways to buy a house with a couple of apartments in it, remove the tenants in order to renovate it, then sell it or rent it out.

I asked people who were experiencing the housing shortage to message or email me. I was overwhelmed by the responses. Experiences run the gamut, but overwhelmingly I heard that there is a shortage of housing, especially affordable housing. Landlords are inundated with applications if they do have a place for rent. Owners who may be on a fixed income are worried that property taxes will go up higher than they can afford because of increased property values. When accommodations are available, rent is too high for many. Owning a home is no longer even a dream for many. People being given 60 days notice to move after being in the area for the majority of their lives, with nowhere to go. Parents and children staying with friends or family, with no end in sight. Parents with precarious housing worry about social service agencies getting involved, and judging them as parents. There are few options for smaller families, groups, or individuals. Houses are overwhelmingly designed with an outdated idea of a nuclear family in mind. A four bedroom house is simply too-much house for a single parent and a child. We need to explore smaller houses. If someone needs social housing, they are most often forced to leave their community, go to Cornwall from North Dundas, or Brockville from North Grenville. Our housing should reflect our society, providing something for everyone.

North Grenville Mayor and Council set up a Mayor's Task Force on Affordable Housing in January 2019 to examine the issue of affordable housing in North Grenville and make recommendations for strategies and opportunities to expand access for residents. The final report of the Task Force was delivered to Council in March of 2020 and contained 18 recommendations, including the need to look at municipal lands that could be “surplused” for affordable housing; and creating an affordable housing advisory committee to assist Council with affordable housing related matters

In North Dundas, there is a community supported Housing Initiative, headed by three local women: Nanda Wubs, Cathy Ashby from House of Lazarus, and Rebecca Van Noppen from More Than Enough. This community driven initiative could be a signal to the Township of North Dundas that it needs to start a discussion on affordable housing. We need something similar to the North Grenville Mayor's Task Force on Affordable Housing in North Dundas. We need public, secular initiatives.

Seaway Surge Baseball announces intent to run local house league in 2021

With the decision by Kemptville and Upper Canada Little Leagues to cease providing baseball programs at any age level, The Seaway Surge Baseball Club is pleased to announce our intent on coordinating house league baseball in North Grenville, North Dundas, and South Dundas for the spring/summer 2021 season.

Since 2015 the Seaway Surge have been providing competitive baseball for players ages 8 to 22 in eastern Ontario. The Surge is committed to ensuring local, affordable, recreational house league baseball continues to be organized and available to children of all ages in our communities.

The Seaway Surge Baseball Club is looking to organize house league operations under Baseball Ontario for age groups 7U, 9U, 11U, 13U, 15U, and 18U for the upcoming 2021 season. It is our intention to provide a safe, fun, and developmental environment where players can practice and play home games at their local diamonds from May to August.

In order to ensure players in these communities can enjoy house league baseball in 2021, we are seeking interested coaches and volunteers to come forward and make this inaugural season a memorable one. We can’t make this season happen without you!

No baseball experience? No problem. We require several dedicated individuals interested in working as a team to organize and administer the upcoming season.

Interested parents, and players, are asked to express their interest online by following the link:

https://go.teamsnap.com/forms/262255/signups/new Potential volunteers are asked to click the following link to express their interest: https://go.teamsnap.com/forms/262254/signups/new

Have questions? Email us at: info@seawaysurge.com.

Stay tuned to our website at www.seawaysurge.com and our Facebook page for further updates!

The Ultimate Decluttering Solution

Spring is in the air – and that means spring cleaning! If you have an old or unwanted car or truck sitting in your driveway or garage, we can help! Donate your vehicle to the Winchester District Memorial Hospital Foundation (WDMH) and receive an official income tax receipt. Your donation will go to supporting local health care.

The WDMH Foundation partners with HospitalCars.ca. It accepts vehicle donations on the Foundation’s behalf. The vehicles are recycled or sold at auction. Donors receive a tax receipt, and the Foundation receives a donation.

“Since the program started, the Foundation has received close to $9,000 from this unique program,” says Kristen Casselman, Managing Director, WDMH Foundation. “The process is simple and it’s a win-win for everyone. Thank you to everyone who has cleaned out their garage for us!”

HospitalCars.ca will pick up your vehicle free of charge.

For more information or to request a quote for the value of your vehicle, call 613-706-0482 or visit https://hospitalcars.ca/winchester to access the online form.

OPP seeking public’s help -fail to remain at site of collision

On March 15, 2021 shortly before 11 pm, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (SD&G) OPP responded to a report of a single motor vehicle collision on County Road 31 at Spruit Road, North of the Town of Winchester, North Dundas Township.

Sometime shortly before the call to police a blue 2016 Chevrolet Cruze left the roadway and entered the ditch, all air bags were deployed within the vehicle. The driver of the vehicle left the location prior to police arrival and has yet to be located.

The SD&G OPP received video footage from the location and observed several vehicles had stopped at the scene of the crash. The SD&G OPP would like to speak to those witnesses.

Anyone having information is asked to call 1-888-310-1122, or to remain anonymous call Crime Stoppers 1-800-222-8477.

Anyone having information on the above incidents or any other crime is asked to call SD&G OPP at 1-888-310-1122 or Seaway Valley Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS(8477) or you can submit a TIP online at www.seawayvalleycrimestoppers.ca

If you need an event covered contact joselyn@ndtimes.ca

Why not?

by Lorraine Rekman

If you are like me, you get annoyed whenever you are on a zoom meeting and your screen freezes, or you are on a call that gets dropped and the person is only a few farm fields away from you. It's at moments like these when you really wish your highspeed internet was really high speed, and not just an itemized thing on your internet bill.

Bell Canada has plans for expanding telecommunications in rural areas and is eyeing up the government's $1.75 billion Universal Broadband Fund to finance costs that Bell might incur while building new infrastructure. Bell has been on the hunt securing the support of municipalities for its application to access these dollars, which rightfully belong to Canadian taxpayers. Of course, everyone wants highspeed internet right? But, the question is begged here, about who owns it and who is going to pay for it. It seems to me, if Bell gets this grant, we are going to have to pay for this infrastructure twice, once to build it, and then again when we use it.

Now, this isn't the first time that Bell has gone cap in hand looking for money from the Canadian government. Remember the most recent debacle of Bell securing $122 million to pay its employees with the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, after earning only $23.96 billion in revenue last year?

Bell Canada is planning to spend between $1 billion to $1.2 billion on its broadband network over the next 2 years. They made this announcement at the same time they released the news of a 28% increase in net revenue for the first quarter last year ($932 million). The CEO of Bell has stated, "These initiatives reflect our commitment to lead the buildout of Canada's next-generation digital infrastructure while also delivering increased dividend returns to the shareholders who have invested in Bell's strategy of broadband innovation and growth." After all, that is exactly the purpose of a corporation, which is to generate a profit for its shareholders.

We all understand government's efforts to support infrastructure and bail out failing industries, especially when jobs are at risk. We watched a $13.7-billion injection of Canadian taxpayer money into the auto sector after the 2009 global financial meltdown. In 2018, GM surprised us all when they announced they were closing their Oshawa plant, leaving 2500 people out of work, and an unpaid loan behind. CBC news reported that the Finance Minister, Bill Morneau, quietly authorized a loan write-off which may have been related to the 2009 bailout of GM and Chrysler.

We are watching a growing trend in public investment and a growing trend in declining private sector investment in Canada. We know generally that there is a ton of capital out there in the private sector, and we are challenged with ways on how to shake it loose.

When Bank of Canada Governor Mark Carney left the building, he told us that corporate Canada was sitting on mountains of dead money that could be feeding economic growth. It's estimated that this capital is worth about $600 billion, or 32% of Canada's GDP.

So, with all this "dead" money sitting out there, we have to wonder why the public purse is the only option to finance corporate infrastructure. In this case, the infrastructure will belong to Bell, and they will be charging us to use it. Essentially, we are contributing public money to privatize assets.

This is one of those private public partnerships (P3s) that magnifies some of the big societal questions for us. Internet access is essential. Is it the responsibility of the state to ensure citizens have essential services, or is it the responsibility of the private sector? Do Canadians support state run utilities, or should this be left in the hands of the corporate world? If we support state-run utilities, are we prepared to fully finance them? Would it be a better option for us to build our own infrastructure, rather than buy assets for a private corporation? As we grapple with these questions, we continue to prop up a capitalist system with our social dollars.

The Canadian Council for Public Private Partnerships conducted an analyses of various P3s and concluded a few important things; one is that when the public sector and the private sector get together, they have conflicting goals and objectives. The public sector wants affordable services paid for with their tax dollars, and the private sector wants profits and revenue from user fees. The second major conclusion was that any benefits of P3s are overshadowed by higher costs. These projects result in added user fees that extend far beyond any tax burden.

In summary, Bell wants to use our money to build its broadband network, and then charge us again to use it. Why not? That is what P3s are all about

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Where Ontario Began: A Response to "Council Meeting: Development" (ND Times, March 17, 2021) and "Sustainability: Sustainable Development" (ND Times (March 17, 2021)

It's been nice to see some discourse on sustainability and sustainable developments within the local news. When we hear what council has been asked to focus on - town developments - it is not a surprise considering our proximity to The City. However, as a young mother who has lived and breathed North Dundas my entire life, and whose family chose to settle here for the rural and natural community, I want council to truly consider what it really means to live here in North Dundas, SD&G: Where Ontario Began.

"Ontario" existed long before we showed up. There are still Indigenous communities that live here. Indigenous communities that are not separate from the air, water, soil and energy that flows through the land. Natural communities composed of all the living things: the trees, the plants, the fungi, the bugs, the critters, the birds, the creatures… Ontario may have "began" here, and so perhaps the Ontario that we have built, the one that is causing harm, needs to start passing on here too.

We have an opportunity to truly model rehabilitation and reconciliation. Something that our Federal and Provincial governments have clearly struggled to grasp as we witness them continuing to inflict harm upon established communities. Communities who want to sustain themselves. Communities who have shown such strength and commitment to supporting each other as they navigate this pandemic and as they try to look forward to what life will hold once we reach greener pastures. We will survive this, but our community may not survive urban sprawl and capital-colonialism if we don't start critically thinking about how we will preserve our community's spirit going forwards.

Kemptville, though slightly beyond our borders, is not separate from us. The Province is trying to build a prison where the Kemptville College Farm once stood to teach animal husbandry, crop management and practical knowledge that held such value for our rural farms and families. The Province has chosen to replace those positive memories with one of enforcement and fear. The overlooming shadow of incarceration and detention should one not comply with the rules and regulations enforced by, dare I say it, an increasingly undiplomatic government. There was no consultation to the communities and families and individuals who have made their homes within Kemptville. Those people whose lives revolve around that land. The Province told them that it was a done deal and the Municipal council echoed that. There will be a special council meeting held on March 23 to address the increasing concerns from community members about this top-down attitude. Democracy isn't top-down. People are the foundation. People are the change makers.

North Dundas hasn't experienced what that threat to community feels like. Yet.

North Dundas, South Dundas, and the counties and communities that comprise SD&G have an opportunity to pivot. Where Ontario began to stop perpetuating colonialism and harm. Where Ontario began to divest from harmful governing practices and turned back to the people to listen. Where Ontario began to observe the natural communities that we are not separate from. Where Ontario began to decolonize and reinvest into the blood of our communities.

For a farmer, water is blood.
For a farmer, water is life.
For a farmer, water is sacred.
For a farmer, water is rain.

For each and every member of this community, touched or involved in farming somehow, observing how that water needs to flow through the soil, through our bodies, through our crops so that we can not only make a living, but simply live.

Water is life. Water is sacred.

The council is talking about water too, but to contain water in an unnatural system isn't sustainable. It's expensive. Instead of looking to expand an unsustainable town water and sewer infrastructure, I believe council needs to take a step back from the development push and re-evaluate. There is an election coming. We have a huge opportunity to pivot as a community from exponential and unsustainable growth to conservation and preservation. Let's aim for the green zone, shall we.

How will we do that? Step one is to not further develop the town. Not right now. No more expansions. We need to nip unsustainable housing developments in the bud. That is not to say that there won't be housing developments, but they need to reflect what it means to live here within our rural community. I hear many folks talk about how they don't want to ever have to go to Kemptville again, or to Ottawa, and how they detest the developments that have happened there in a relatively short time. Those corporate industrial copy & pastes will consume Winchester in the blink of an eye if we let them.

Agriculture is how Ontario began. Agriculture will be how Ontario returns. We learned from the Indigenous communities, whether you like it or not; the foundational knowledge surrounding the ability to sustain a population here. We took that knowledge and tried to create industry. That industry - industrial agriculture - is not sustainable, and we see it continuing to destroy our environments by clear cutting, tile draining, dredging and displacing entire ecosystems. When we talk about sustainable developments, we need to not just be looking at the town. If we were wise, we would be spreading out our resources across the plenitude of small communities who have previously been drained in order to construct the town. You're welcome, townies. But the majority of people who live here, choose to do so because

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The North Dundas Times is published weekly by North Grenville Times Inc.

the north dundas TIMES

ISSN 2291-0301
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Group applauds Ontario Private Member's Bill against negative stereotypes

Harvey Valiquette-Thompson

March 21 marked Down Syndrome Day both Internationally as well as in Ontario. In 2016, the Ontario legislature passed the Down Syndrome Day Act recognizing the need to advocate for those with Down syndrome and making this an official day to celebrate those with Down syndrome. This is a day to draw attention to the fact that your number of chromosomes doesn't impact your value.

MPP Sara Singh (NDP-Bramptom Centre) understands this, and recently introduced a private member's bill in Ontario seeking to end the discrimination those with Down syndrome face.

Singh's bill, Harvey and Gurvir's Law, focuses on how a prenatal diagnosis is given, ensuring that parents are given up-to-date information about Down syndrome. It also ensures that parents would be given time to process a Down syndrome prenatal diagnosis, seek out additional resources, and make connections with other families.

"I am so thankful to see the Ontario government focusing on ending discrimination against those with Down syndrome. When it gets debated in May, I am confident we will see MPPs from all parties supporting this," says Sarah Valiquette-Thompson. Valiquette-Thompson is mom to Harvey, a young boy with Down syndrome and one of the namesakes for this bill. "Sara Singh has been incredibly supportive and willing to advocate because she understands – having a sister with Down syndrome, she comes from a family where loving someone with Down syndrome is part of everyday life." Singh's sister, Gurvir, is the other namesake for the bill.

Valiquette-Thompson became a Down syndrome advocate after being overwhelmed by the negativity that came with a prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome for her son. Her efforts led to the formation of Perfectly Me, an organization with the slogan "Advocate, educate, legislate for Down syndrome." They seek to ensure that parents receiving a prenatal Down syndrome diagnosis are not pressured to make quick decisions and are quickly put in contact with the Down syndrome community.

"Hearing from families lucky enough to have a child with Down syndrome is so different than sitting in a doctor's office listening to a list of risk factors and outcome predictions," says Valiquette-Thompson. "We heard from doctors that our son was going to be a burden. We were questioned on why we would continue the pregnancy. Nobody told us the joy Harvey would bring to our life. There was so much pressure and outdated information, and that needs to change."

"We have an incredible Down syndrome community in Ontario and across the country," continued Valiquette-Thompson, "and this is the resource people need first – real people who understand the unique beauty of these wonderful children. We have worked in unison with the Down Syndrome Association of Ontario for the past two years, the Chair Domenic Gentilini, continues to hear from families across the Province that the information some families receive is extremely outdated, and difficult to locate. We are supporters of inclusion and we believe that each and every one of us is who they are meant to be. Harvey and Gurvir's law would be a great step to advance that recognition and inclusion for those with Down syndrome."

Eastern Ontario Health Unit notice on Vaccine Roll Out Plan

Vaccinations to roll out the COVID-19 vaccine in the Eastern Ontario Health Unit (EOHU) are underway. On March 15, Ontario's vaccine booking system launched and began to accept vaccine bookings for individuals who will be turning 80 or older in 2021 (born in 1941 or earlier). Booking is available at www.Ontario.ca/bookvaccine. Individuals who require assistance with booking can call the Provincial Vaccine Information Line at 1-888-999-6488.

Vaccine clinics are available across the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry; the United Counties of Prescott-Russell; and the City of Cornwall. Locations will be confirmed upon booking an appointment. Alternate arrangements can be made for individuals who face barriers preventing them from physically going to a clinic.

Phase One of the EOHU vaccine rollout plan is well underway. More information regarding the EOHU vaccine rollout plan can be found on our website at www.EOHU.ca/vaccines.

At this point, all long-term care residents have received their two doses of the vaccine and residents of retirement homes have all received their first dose. Staff and essential caregivers of long-term care and retirement homes, and health care workers of the highest, very high and high priority levels are currently being administered their first dose.

Vaccine supply continues to impact both the local and provincial vaccine rollout. As a result, EOHU will adjust plans to align with Ministry-identified priority populations.

Send in your letters, stories, events to editor@ndtimes.ca

Looking for help from the community. The Chesterville Historical Society is looking for pictures from the Chesterville Farmers Market, in both locations at the Fair Grounds and on the waterfront. I lost all my pictures when the computer crashed a few years ago. If you can help please contact Carol Goddard or the Chesterville and District Historical Society. Sincere thank you, Cheryl.

Letter cont'd

"here" is still connected to the natural environment. The number of small farms that have sprung up should be an indicator of where we hold the potential to truly grow. The age of the thousand acre field is coming to a close. Regenerating the natural communities, of which we are not separate from, and returning life to the land may be the only thing that will protect us now.

SD&G: Where Ontario Began to heal.

Mannie Giles

New Player Assist Program to help hockey families financially impacted by Covid-19

The Ontario Minor Hockey Association (OMHA) has announced a new Player Assist Program to help hockey players under the age of 7 by providing equipment, including skates, shin pads, pants, shoulder pads, elbow pads, neck guards and helmets. This new pilot project is to help families who may be feeling the pinch because of COVID-19. The program will eliminate the cost of equipment for 350 hockey families across 10 minor hockey associations. This program is a partnership with OMHA and the Egg Farmers of Ontario (EFO)

Local minor hockey associations will apply to be one of the 10 associations for the pilot project based on meeting a number of criteria. The associations will retain the 350 sets of equipment at the conclusion of the hockey season to loan to players in following years, similar to loaning out a library book.

"Cost is sometimes identified as a barrier for some families to get involved in our great game. We thank our partner the Egg Farmers of Ontario for launching this initiative to help hundreds of families for years to come," says OMHA Executive Director Ian Taylor.

Since 2018-19, the EFO has supported the OMHA's Playdowns where more than 31,000 minor hockey players compete on 6750 teams from January through March. With Playdowns unable to take place this year because of the pandemic, the EFO wanted to support OMHA participants in a new way.

"The pandemic has taken a toll on Canadian families and hit them in the pocketbook. Families are going to have to make some difficult choices in terms of how they spend their money going forward. We want to help hundreds of young people around the province enter the game without the barrier of having to purchase equipment," says Scott Helps, Chair of EFO.

The new Player Assist Program is similar to the OMHA's Goalie Assist Program, which the OMHA has also announced will continue for its 10th year. That program loans out CCM goalie equipment to associations, which allows 5-7-year-old players to try out the position without the burden of making a full financial commitment.

In the past decade, the program has provided 480 full sets of goalie equipment with associations retaining the equipment at the end of the season to loan to players in the following years. This season, there were 156 applications received from OMHA member associations, with 80 sets distributed across the province.

"The Goalie Assist program has given hundreds of young players a chance to get between the pipes and to see what it's like to be a goalie without their families having to make a big financial commitment. We have heard stories about how many of them have fallen in love with the position," says Taylor.

Each goalie kit is equipped with a set of CCM youth pads, catcher/blocker, stick, chest protector and bag. Catching hands and sticks are available with common left/right combinations.

The Ontario Minor Hockey Association, founded in 1935, is a leader in community sport and oversees a participant base of more than 300,000, consisting of players, coaches, trainers, officials, hockey volunteers and parents across the province. The OMHA works with its 225 local minor hockey associations and annually coordinates 28 leagues to create the best minor hockey experience in Canada.

For more information, visit http://www.omha.net.

Solar Geoengineering is like pulling the goalie

by Ralph C. Martin

During the financial crisis of 2008, I first heard about the possibility of solar geoengineering i.e. planes spraying sulphate particles high in the atmosphere to reflect sunlight back to space. I had invited Gwynne Dyer, an author and historian, to speak in Truro, NS. He stunned many of us by saying that politicians would delay addressing climate change until solar geoengineering was the only option left.

When I contemplate too long about what we might have done from 2008 until now to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), contrasted with the paucity of political action in that time, I have to slap my forehead and utter "Ugh." It's like a highly rated hockey team frittering away their final series until they are down a goal in the last minute, of the last period, in the last game, and then pulling their goalie, to gain more offence. The desperate effort could backfire and seal their demise.

Carbon dioxide (CO2) levels were 385 parts per million (ppm) in 2008, but are now beyond 415 ppm, too far north of the 350 ppm needed to restore climate stability. We're nearing the end of the third period.

Policies are urgently needed to reduce GHGs by at least 7% each year from now to 2030 and beyond. In 2020, it appeared that a 7% reduction could be attributed to COVID-19. Now that we know it is possible, we need political will to decrease GHGs another 7% in 2021 and another 7% in 2022 and so on.

Regardless of lower emissions in 2020, it was the hottest year on record, along with 2016 (https://bit.ly/3sqJ0Fz). Think of GHGs going into an almost full bathtub. If the inflow (GHG emissions) declines by 7%, there are still too many GHGs in the bathtub that is too slowly draining (e.g. sequestration of carbon by trees and forage crops). That is why more incentives are needed for farmers and foresters to sequester more carbon, and for industries and citizens to emit fewer GHGs every year.

Our habit of pouring CO2 into the atmosphere means that oceans will absorb some of that CO2, and keep acidifying. Reflecting light back into space from sulfur dioxide would still allow CO2 build-up and thus put marine life under stress. Sulfur dioxide also might delay ozone regeneration in the stratosphere.

"Blocking the sun could come with a host of other issues from negative impacts on crop productivity and shifts in rainfall" (https://bit.ly/3bE3DYZ). Furthermore, having started solar geoengineering, we may be committed, because to stop would be to allow too much solar radiation through, too abruptly.

"Sulphate particles would not stay aloft for more than a couple of years …The Asian monsoon, on which 2 billion people depend for their food crops, might shut down" (https://bit.ly/39zEUCu). How will soils, crops, forests and water bodies respond to continuously descending sulphate?

Will this research tempt politicians to dither about reducing GHGs even more than they already are? Who should decide, and on what authority, if and when to start solar geoengineering, with given specifications?

Recent research is suggesting solar geoengineering may not have substantial negative consequences (http://dx.doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/ab76de). The researchers suggest lower levels of solar geoengineering than originally proposed, might work.

We only have one planet. Models, while helpful, are inexact. Do we want to risk this one planet, with a potentially dangerous ongoing global intervention, based on models? A well-known philosopher, Yogi Berra, said "In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice there is." In practice, our planet experiences increasing intensities of hurricanes, floods, droughts and fires. We also still have the practical option to reduce GHGs every year. Let's get on with it, before the end of the third period.

Ralph C. Martin, Ph.D., Professor (retired), University of Guelph. Author of Food Security: From Excess to Enough at www.ralphmartin.ca

Send in your letters, stories, events to editor@ndtimes.ca

Cities push Ontario government to phase out gas-fired plants by 2030

by Lorraine Rekman

Toronto City Council has joined a list of 21 Ontario municipalities by passing a resolution calling on the Government of Ontario to phase-out Ontario's gas-fired power plants. Municipalities who have made the same call include, County of Peterborough, Mississauga, Brampton, Niagara Falls, Temiskaming Shores, Ajax, Orangeville, Kingston, Waterloo, Guelph, Cobourg, St. Catharines, King, Woolwich, Selwyn, Windsor, Burlington, Hamilton, Halton Hills and Kitchener.

Toronto's resolution is welcomed by the Ontario Clean Air Alliance (OCAA) which is a

Toronto based environmental group that is currently chaired by Jack Gibbons who was a Former Toronto Hydro Commissioner. They are focused on building a low-carbon, high-efficiency economy by lobbying governments to move towards renewable energy options to combat climate change and improve air quality in Ontario.

OCCA has stated that the province's current energy policies will result in a 300% increase in pollution from gas-fired generating stations by 2030 and by 500% or more by 2040, making it impossible for Ontario to meet its climate change targets. The organization has prepared a report (Phasing-Out Ontario's Gas-Fired Power Plants: A Road Map) analyzing current gas-fired power plants.

The report states that Ontario must shift to more affordable energy alternatives including solar, wind and water-power from Quebec. OCCA hopes that if the Ontario government agrees to phase out gas-fired plants, it will add to other climate change initiatives, including Ontario's commitment to end coal-fired electricity in the province. OCCA has also raised concerns that Ontario will be importing fracked gas from the United States to fuel the gas-fired plants.

The Government of Ontario has promised to reduce Ontario's greenhouse gas pollution by 30% by 2030 relative to the 2005 levels.

Conservative Party of Canada hosts first virtual convention

by Lorraine Rekman

The Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) hosted its first virtual policy convention from March 18-20. The CPC touted this convention as the largest ever in its 18-year history, with the first convention being held in 2005. There were more than 5000 delegates registered for this convention.

Party members were to debate more than 34 policy proposals and 29 constitutional amendments. Dr. Leslyn Lewis, who was a candidate for the party leadership, coming in third, co-hosted the convention with Quebec radio-host Archy Beaudry.

This convention was the first for Erin O'Toole, as the leader of the party. The convention was originally scheduled for April 2020, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was moved to 2021 and was held virtually.

A preliminary online vote was held to finalize the policy proposals that would be voted on at the convention. There were over 6,400 combined votes cast in the policy process, with 196 policies to vote on. The popularity among policies ranged between 124 votes for the most popular, to 88 for the 34th most popular. Any policy with fewer than 88 votes didn't make it to the convention. In the constitutional policy process, more than 4,400 combined votes were cast, with 63 items to vote on. The popularity among those ranged between 138 votes for the most popular, to 80 for the 30th most popular. Any proposed constitutional amendment with fewer than 80 votes did not make it to convention.

Among some of the items debated were commitments to develop a national strategy to fight against organized crime, with increased financial resources to the RCMP, a focus on curtailing the distribution of contraband firearms, empowering the Ethics Commissioner with the ability to punish parliamentarians who violate the Conflict of Interest Act, reducing government funding for CBC, promoting nuclear energy, and support for the private development of alternative energy sources including, wind, solar and geothermal, and supporting interprovincial harmonization of professional and trade certificates.

CDSBEO Elementary Race Car Challenge

St. Matthew Catholic Secondary School student Lucas Mayer, assembling his car kit.

This year, to help support student engagement in the skilled trades, the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario (CDSBEO) launched the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program - Elementary Race Car Challenge.

Twenty CDSBEO schools received over 1,300 car building kits. The process has helped to teach and inspire students to embrace trades and apprenticeship training, while also gaining a better understanding of the importance of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).

CDSBEO OYAP Coordinator Dan Lortie noted that the program is always looking for innovative ways to engage students and promote the apprenticeship pathway. "Unfortunately, COVID has resulted in the cancellation of plans to host an Automotive Expo and other racing related promotions, which included the raffling off of two school built Enduro cars."

The planned events were to be done in partnership with St. Joseph's Catholic Secondary graduate, Corey Wheeler, who is currently a service manager with the Seaway Automotive Group. In addition, Wheeler is a well-known track champion who has risen through the ranks from Pro-Stock to Sportsman and Modified divisions. Wheeler was registered as an Automotive Service Technician apprentice through the CDSBEO OYAP program, after completing several cooperative education placements in grade 11 and 12.

"I'm a huge fan of OYAP," explained Wheeler. "Over the years, our dealership has hired apprentices directly through cooperative education, and these students have developed into some of our best technicians."

Through the established partnership with Wheeler Racing, the elementary school which creates the largest social media footprint through their Race Car Challenge, will host the Fat Les's Chip Stand at the school in June. Plans are also underway to offer students free passes to an upcoming race at Cornwall Speedway. "This initiative will be a lot of fun," noted Wheeler. "Hopefully COVID will not interfere with our plans, or with the upcoming racing season."

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario operates 39 elementary and 10 secondary schools across eight counties. The CDSBEO offers excellence in Catholic education through provincial-leading programs to approximately 13,000 students.

Send in your letters, stories, events to editor@ndtimes.ca

"Beeting" Yourself to Increase Good Health

Would you like to improve your physical endurance? An exercise routine is the answer. Being physically and mentally active leads to a longer life. But diet can help too. You can start "beeting" yourself to improved health simply by adding beets to your menu. You should also know that nitrates in beets can treat more than one medical problem.

Atherosclerosis, thickening of the inside lining of arteries, decreases the flow of oxygenated blood to coronary arteries. This results in anginal pain or heart attack.

For years researchers have known that nitroglycerine eases angina. But they had no idea why it dilated coronary arteries and increased blood flow to the heart.

Then, three U.S researchers received the Nobel Prize for proving it was nitric oxide (N0) that caused arteries to dilate. Early in life the inner lining of arteries processes large amounts of NO. But as we age the amount of NO decreases, often with disastrous consequences.

In 2009, a research team at the University of Exeter in England reported a surprising discovery. They showed that athletes who drank beet juice for six days improved their physical endurance by 16 percent while cycling. Equally amazing, beet juice was even more effective than physical training!

The active ingredient in beets is nitrate. This becomes converted into nitrite and finally to nitric oxide which is continuously synthesized in the endothelium (the inside lining of arteries). Lay this exceedingly thin layer of endothelial cells on a flat surface and they would occupy an entire soccer field!

Nitric oxide has been labelled the "miracle molecule" as it helps so many diverse medical problems. For instance, since it dilates coronary arteries it can help to decrease the pain of angina and lower blood pressure.

Experiments show that NO also adds lubrication to the circulatory system. After all, it impossible to eat beets and direct them only to coronary arteries. Rather, NO travels to all organs and in the process prevents blood platelets, part of the clotting process, from sticking together causing a heart attack. It also decreases chronic inflammation, another factor associated with coronary attack.

Other research shows that NO lowers blood cholesterol, triglycerides, increases good cholesterol and lowers bad cholesterol. It also prevents bone destruction by osteoclasts.

Today, millions of North Americans suffer from asthma due to inflamed, constricted, mucous clogged airways. Part of the problem is pollution and allergies. Experts at Hammersmith Hospital in London, England, report that NO helps to maintain a biochemical balance in the air passages, decreasing inflamed airways.

Another major problem worldwide is the epidemic of Type 2 diabetes. This disease causes insulin resistance, making it hard for glucose to enter cells. High blood sugar gradually destroys the circulatory system triggering a series of problems, the big one atherosclerosis. Decreasing the amount of blood to organs results in blindness, kidney failure, leg amputations and heart attack. NO helps to control these problems.

What can you do to increase NO? Losing weight and exercising boost NO levels. But people with unhealthy endothelial cells may have diminished nitric oxide bioactivity as compared to those in good health.

So why not improve the diet with foods rich in nitrate? Adding more beets is good advice. Other foods with a high content of NO include leafy green vegetables such as spinach, wild radish, kale and swiss chard.

You don't like any of these vegetables? Try dark chocolate and wine. Both increase NO. But remember moderation.

If you are interested in a safe, natural supplement, then NEO40 is yet another option.

Sign-up at www.docgiff.com to receive our weekly e-newsletter. For comments, contact-us@docgiff.com. Follow us Instagram @docgiff and @diana_gifford_jo

Tid bit Musings

by Elva Patterson Rutters RSSW

We speak of our well-being but exactly what are we referencing? Well-being is a combination of a balance of several components. We need to learn a balance between our physical needs of nutrition, sleep and exercise, our spiritual needs, our work needs, our general health and our social needs. Those have variants within each of our beings. Spiritual scares many for negative relations with organized religion. Embrace your fears/objections to discover what you truly believe in terms of your individual, community and cosmic spirituality. Covid changed the opportunities for each one of us but nevertheless, a balance can be achieved by adaptation. Adaptation to financial and physical opportunities often overwhelms or discourages the individual.

The ability to adjust can be done alone or with the guidance of a professional, or even a good friend. A good friend is not one who just agrees with you but will challenge you to consider other options. Bask in the familiar but also rise to the possibility of other options. Change is hard but so valuable in terms of survival and personal growth. You are worth the effort, so go for it.

Beth Donovan Hospice offers support for those who grieve

Dr Alan Wolfelt, a renowned grief counsellor from the, offers a heartfelt perspective on the emotional experience of loss and its connection to love. This offers a lens through which to consider the complex and intrinsic nature of grief in the healing journey. He writes "Grief is not something we choose or don't choose. Rather, it is in our wiring. It is the normal and necessary journey we embark on after something we have valued no longer exists…...You see, love and grief are two sides of the same precious coin. One does not-and cannot-exist without the other. They are the yin and yang of our lives. People sometimes say that grief is the price we pay for the joy of having loved. If we allow ourselves the grace of love, we must also allow ourselves the grace of grief and mourning".

We are often reluctant to give ourselves permission to grieve because we're afraid of what might happen when we let our guard down. Grief is a dark, unknown abyss and the secret fear is that if we allow ourselves to sink into it we'll never find our way back out. It takes courage to just let ourselves grieve without censure or judgment, in order to finally get to a place where we can say goodbye to how things were and move forward with our changed circumstances as they are. The Grief Support Network at the Beth Donovan Hospice offers a variety of resources and programming to individuals navigating grief due to loss. These include individual, family and couples' bereavement counselling, monthly bereavement support groups, peer support groups, biannual support groups catering to specific losses, remembrance events and community building activities such as yoga, book club and journaling workshops.

At the Beth Donovan Hospice, we understand that processing a loss can be a very isolating experience. It is our mission to create a safe, supportive community where grief and all that it entails is embraced as a normal and innate part of the human experience. We believe that grief is the very thing that allows for healing to take place. If you or someone you know is experiencing a loss, we warmly invite you to reach out to us and allow us the opportunity to be part of the network of support in the healing journey.

For more information, please call 613-258-9611.

South Mountain Pavilion

Spring has brought with it a new pavilion for the park in South Mountain. It is a four-season pavilion, available to anyone using the park. The park in South Mountain has recently seen the tennis courts resurfaced, and a new utility shed built. Although improvements to this outdoor space have been planned for a while, it does seem a bit of good luck to see them completed this year of pandemic protocols and social distancing.

OFA engages on federal priorities with provincial counterparts

Mark Reusser,
Vice President, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Each year, farm leaders, industry stakeholders and government officials gather together to discuss key issues and priorities impacting Canadian agriculture at the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) Annual General Meeting. This year's event, although virtual, offered the chance to highlight Canada's agri-food sector, its contributions to the national economy and opportunities for economic growth.

As a Director for both the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) and CFA, I am always astounded by the similarities farmers across the nation share. CFA's virtual AGM created a wonderful medium for farmers with geological and political differences to come together to learn that many of us face similar hardships. The AGM provides an opportunity to highlight these key issues and the chance to understand the unique needs and differences of each province. This understanding allows us to work together as a united front to evoke positive change for Canada's agri-food sector.

OFA is proud to be an active member of CFA, and work collaboratively to enhance the business of farming and produce prosperity for farmers nationwide. Annually, OFA board representatives participate in the meeting as delegates to engage in conversations on key priorities and vote on resolutions affecting the Canadian agri-food sector.

This year, OFA took the opportunity to bring six young farmers and local leaders from across the province to join the organization at the annual meeting. It was a fantastic opportunity, not only for OFA, but also for the young farmers involved as they had the chance to observe, engage and get a better understanding of OFA's involvement on issues at the federal level. Identifying young leaders in the agriculture community is extremely important, and I believe that it's our responsibility to cultivate potential leadership when it is present.

The agriculture industry thrives on strong leadership and OFA continues to prioritize succession planning and recruitment. We actively recruit individuals that showcase those skills and qualities to participate in meetings, campaigns or advocacy activities at the local, provincial and federal levels.

Resolutions are a vital way for delegates to advocate for sector improvements and vocalize needs. This year, OFA brought forward three resolutions pertaining to Private Grade Crossings, the Fisheries Act and the need for incentive programs for soil health and sequestration.

We were very happy with the outcomes of our resolutions, as it was a big win for our organizations. CFA delegates voted to have OFA's Private Grade Crossing resolution referred to a committee; OFA's Fisheries Act exemption resolution was carried with 98.51% in favour; and OFA's resolution on soil and sequestration incentive programs also carried with an amendment to reflect both the current and successor policy framework. We received positive outcomes with respect to our resolutions and believe their future implementation will greatly benefit our farm families and their businesses.

Another main priority for our organization is farmer mental health. Annually, CFA awards a recipient with the Brigid Revoire Mental Health Award. We were pleased to see that Deb Vanberkel, OFA's nominee, had been awarded this honour and recognized for her tremendous work on mental health. Vanberkel has been a champion for farmer mental health and is one of the founders of the Farmer Wellness Program, which is promoted in multiple eastern counties. The Farmer Wellness Program, which launched in February of 2019, was created to support the mental well-being of farmers by providing access to initial counselling sessions free of charge.

Another highlight of the meeting was seeing OFA's former President, Keith Currie, re-elected as 1st Vice President of CFA. Currie is a proven leader and has been a critical contributor federally and provincially. We know that he will continue to excel in his role and look forward to his future contributions to Canadian agriculture.

As always, OFA appreciates the opportunity to represent the best interests of our membership at the federal level. We will continue to advocate on behalf of our 38,000 farm families and look forward to another year of creating a stronger, united industry that will benefit Ontario farmers.

For more information, contact: Tyler Brooks Director of Communications and Stakeholder Relations Ontario Federation of Agriculture tyler.brooks@ofa.on.ca

Ontario Agriculture to study the impact of carbon tax

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) has engaged Agri-Food Economic Systems to conduct a financial assessment and analysis of what impact the federal carbon tax is having on Ontario's agriculture industry. Agri-Food Economic Systems is an independent economic research organization dedicated to agriculture and food based in Guelph.

The Understanding the Cost Burden of the Federal Carbon Tax on Ontario Agriculture study is currently underway with a targeted completion date of late April 2021. OFA will receive a final report following the completed assessment.

"This analysis will help to raise awareness of the significant financial impact the carbon tax will have on our farm businesses," said Peggy Brekveld, OFA President. "The federal government needs to understand and work to lessen the negative impacts of the carbon tax. It is negatively impacting the ability for farmers in Ontario to compete in both domestic and international markets."

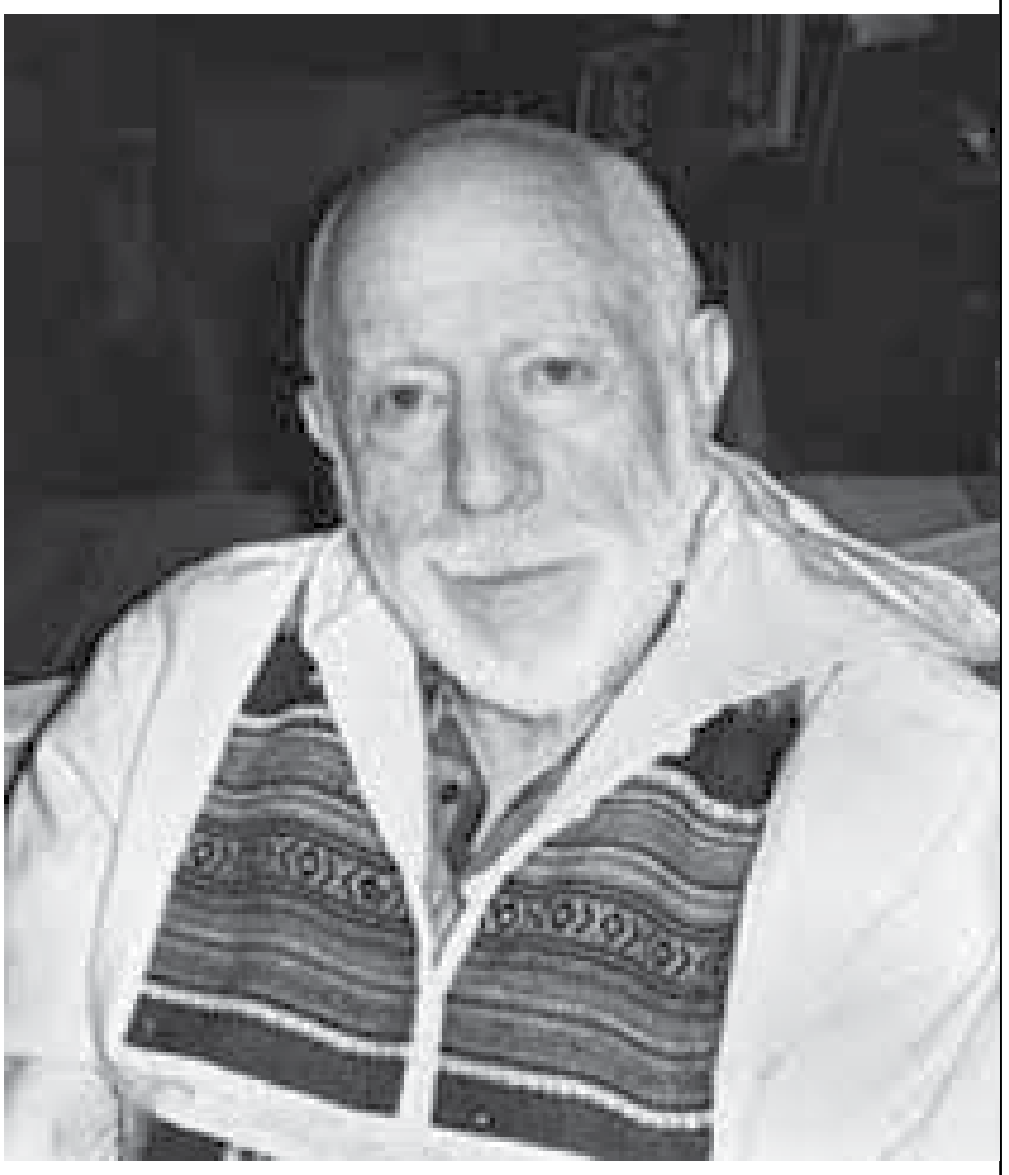
OFA continues to advocate for the federal government to broaden the agriculture exemption under the carbon tax by including natural gas and propane in the list of qualifying farming fuels under the federal Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act. OFA has advocated to revise the definition of eligible farming machinery to include "machinery used for the purpose of providing heating or cooling to a building or similar structure" to ensure that agricultural activities of grain drying and the heating of livestock barns can be exempted from the fuel charge.

OFA states there is an urgent need for a broader agricultural exemption given the federal government has pledged to more than triple the price of carbon by 2030 under the proposed Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy Plan.

"Mandated pricing of carbon is a significant development impacting Ontario agriculture, potentially requiring a broad range of adjustments," said Dr. Al Mussell, Founder and Research Lead of Agri-Food Economic Systems. "This study will estimate the explicit costs of the tax on energy use for which agriculture has no exemptions and will also estimate the burden of implicit costs embedded in the prices paid by farmers for various inputs. This study will also include an assessment of the costs of mitigation in response to carbon taxes."

OFA will share the results of the final report as part of the organization's advocacy efforts to reduce the carbon tax burden on farm businesses. OFA is the largest general farm organization in Ontario, representing 38,000 farm families across the province. The farmer-led organization is based in Guelph, and champions the interests of Ontario farmers through government relations, farm policy recommendations, research, lobby efforts, community representation, and media relations.

Alvin Schwartz – Creator of Superheroes



by Susan Peters
Dundas County Archives

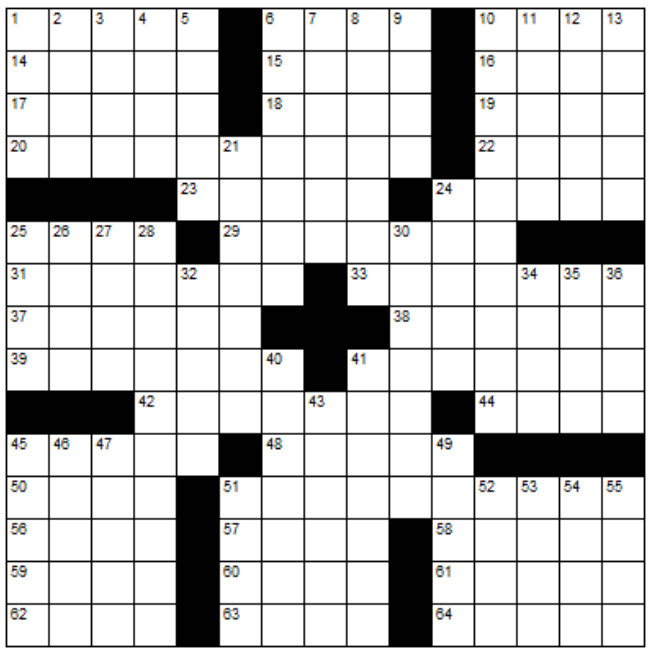
On October 28, 2011, Dundas County lost Alvin Schwartz, a novelist, essayist, and long-time comic book writer. He was a creator of Superheroes. While he was not born in Dundas County, he did live here from 1968 until his death in 2011. He was born in New York City in 1916. According to his son Orin, while he did many things in his long career, he first and foremost considered himself a novelist. However, he was also a writer for the National Film Board and for the Canadian Federal Government.

His early career was smack dab in the middle of what is termed the "Golden Age" of Comic books, in the 1940's. This is when characters such as Superman, Batman, Aqua man, The Flash, Green Lantern, Captain Marvel and Wonder Woman were all created. He wrote his first Batman story in 1942. This expanded into a newspaper comic strip in 1944. That was also the same year he expanded to write for the Superman comic strip as well. By 1952, he was writing most of the superhero comics. He also wrote for Fawcett Comics, with the character of Captain Marvel. The movie industry of late owes him a debt for helping to develop these characters which we have all come to know today. Where would we all be without our familiar superheroes? Certainly, there would be a lot of unemployed actors today. We would also be hard pressed to find Halloween costumes without them. He left DC comics in 1958, after a clash over creative differences with the new editor. Apparently, the clash was over whether Lois Lane could have Superman's powers passed to her. The editor said yes. He did not agree that this made any sense. He figured that this was a cue to move on.

At that point in his career, he changed directions. He used the skills developed in character development for marketing. He was then involved in marketing for the Institute for Motivational Research. This led to an appointment with the American Association of Advertising Agencies. He also continued to write. He crafted novels. SWORD OF DESIRE is a detective novel which was published in 1952 under the pseudonym Robert Tracey. THE BLOWTOP was published in 1948. Apparently, it had a cult following in France back in its day. Not one to retire, while in his 80's he wrote AN UNLIKELY PROPHET. This was published in 1997. This is a memoir of his years with Superman. A GATHERING OF SELVES, its sequel, was published in 2006. There are reports that there was interest in making these last two books into a film. They are part of the library collection of the Dundas County Archives.

In 1968, he moved to Canada. It is not certain how he ended up in Chesterville, but he was there for the rest of his life. He worked for 20 years writing documentaries for the National Film Board. He did also attend speaking engagements talking about his time with the world of superheroes. According to the Chesterville Record obituary from November 2011, he spoke for the Chesterville Historical Society in May 2010 and presented a well received account of his work. He also wrote studies for the Federal Government through this time. They would be a vastly different approach to writing, but it paid the bills. In 2011, he received the Bill Finger Award for comic book writers. Reporters had referred to him as humble, and approachable. He was also a mentor to those who sought his guidance. He certainly left his imprint in the world – from his base in Chesterville.

CROSSWORD



ACROSS
1. Cotton seed structures
6. Baby buggy
10. Jot
14. Nearly
15. Relating to aircraft
16. Moving within
17. Sesame seed
18. Back talk
19. Knights
20. Spectacles
22. Porn
23. Negatively charged particle
24. Considers
25. Nile bird
29. Any cone-bearing tree
31. Hold
33. Opinion poll
37. French for "Again"
38. A light skiff
39. Charring
41. Turmeric
42. Estrogenic hormone
44. Where the sun rises
45. Stockpile
48. Borders on
50. Protagonist
51. Everyplace
56. Brother of Jacob
57. Haughtiness
58. Pointed a weapon
59. Cuts off
60. Anagram of "Ties"
61. Overgrown with ivy
62. Church alcove
63. Nestling hawk
64. Geeky

DOWN
1. Baseball great, ____ Ruth
2. Comply with
3. Solitary
4. Breathing organ
5. Grave marker
6. A strong feeling
7. A rational motive
8. Insecticide
9. Nonvascular plant
10. A harmful act
11. Japanese cartoon art
12. Play a guitar
13. Legions
21. Archaic
24. Monetary unit of Macedonia
25. Frosts
26. Part of a skeleton
27. Ancient Peruvian
28. Warehouse
30. The body of teachers
32. Come up
34. Shade of blue
35. Totals
36. Chair 40. What holds us down
41. Parts of a meal
43. A European peninsula
45. Pincer
46. Writer
47. A dice game
49. Boyfriend (archaic)
51. Leisure
52. Apiary
53. Arab chieftain
54. Anagram of "Deer"
55. Countercurrent

Solutions to last week's Sudoku

6	7	1	9	4	2	3	5	8
2	5	3	1	6	8	4	7	9
8	9	4	3	5	7	1	2	6
4	3	9	2	1	6	5	8	7
7	6	8	4	3	5	9	1	2
5	1	2	7	8	9	6	3	4
1	4	6	8	7	3	2	9	5
9	8	5	6	2	1	7	4	3
3	2	7	5	9	4	8	6	1

2	8	1	7	9	5	3	4	6
3	6	7	4	8	1	5	2	9
4	5	9	2	3	6	7	8	1
6	7	2	9	1	4	8	3	5
8	1	3	5	2	7	9	6	4
5	9	4	3	6	8	1	7	2
7	2	6	8	5	9	4	1	3
9	3	8	1	4	2	6	5	7
1	4	5	6	7	3	2	9	8

2	4	6	9	5	1	3	7	8
9	7	8	4	6	3	1	5	2
1	3	5	7	2	8	6	9	4
3	6	9	5	7	2	4	8	1
4	8	7	3	1	6	9	2	5
5	1	2	8	9	4	7	6	3
7	9	4	1	8	5	2	3	6
6	5	1	2	3	7	8	4	9
8	2	3	6	4	9	5	1	7

Easy

1	3				2	6		
	4	6				3		
							7	
		9	4	6			8	
		1			8		4	
					3	5		6
							2	5
	1	3		7		9		4
8						7		

Medium

	7			8			9	3
	9				1			
1	2			5				
	5			1	3			
			4			2		7
	3			9			8	
2	6	8						
							6	8
							1	

Hard

				4			6	
5			9					7
3				6			1	
	9			5				4
	8	7			3			
			4		9			5
		3					7	
1			7			2		

Solution to last week's Crossword

S	O	L	D	■	A	S	K	S	■	■	S	P	O	T
O	L	E	O	■	C	O	U	L	D	■	A	L	A	E
A	I	D	S	■	T	U	D	O	R	■	D	A	T	A
P	O	E	S	Y	■	L	O	G	A	R	I	T	H	M
■	■	R	I	O	T	■	S	A	K	E	S	■	■	■
I	N	H	E	R	I	T	■	N	E	S	T	L	E	■
D	O	O	R	K	N	O	B	■	■	T	S	A	R	S
E	O	S	■	■	S	P	I	F	F	■	■	B	R	A
S	K	E	E	T	■	■	G	R	O	T	T	O	E	S
■	S	N	A	R	E	S	■	O	N	W	A	R	D	S
■	■	■	R	I	D	E	S	■	T	A	P	A	■	■
M	A	M	M	O	G	R	A	M	■	S	E	T	U	P
U	N	A	U	■	E	A	V	E	S	■	R	O	L	L
C	O	I	F	■	S	P	E	W	S	■	E	R	N	E
H	A	L	F	■	■	E	S	S	E	■	D	Y	A	D

Financial Forum 2021

Did you know:

You do not need to report certain non-taxable amounts as income, including the following:

- Most lottery winnings
- Most gifts and inheritances
- GST/HST credit and CCB payments, including those from related provincial programs
- Most amounts received from a life insurance policy following someone's death
- Most amounts received from a tax-free savings account (TFSA)

Note – Income earned on any of the above amounts is taxable (such as interest you earn when you invest lottery winnings)

If you are filing your income tax return electronically, keep your supporting documents for six years in case the CRA selects your return for review. You should always keep a copy of your return, the related notice of assessment and any notice of reassessment

Filing early will help ensure your benefit and credit payments are not delayed or stopped, for example:

- Guaranteed income supplement (GIS)
- GST/HST credit
- Canada child benefit (CCB)
- Related provincial programs

If you have a spouse or common-law partner, they also have to file a tax return

The CRA's goal is to send a notice of assessment, as well as any refund within:

- Two weeks if filed online
- Eight weeks if paper filed

Once received CRA usually processes the tax return and a notice of assessment is issued. However, each year CRA conducts a number of reviews to promote awareness and compliance with the laws that CRA administers. This means that your return may be selected for a more detailed review before or after assessing it. This review is not an audit, it is simply a routine check to ensure the information provided is accurate.

What's new for tax filing in 2021?

(NC) The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the way some of us file our income tax and benefit return this year. But with a bit of planning and know-how, filing season can go smoothly.

To avoid delays and minimize any potential impact on your refunds, benefits or credit payments, it's important to file your returns on time to avoid delays to your refunds, benefits, or credit payments.?Here's what you need to know about what's new this year:

COVID-19 benefits

The federal government introduced several taxable support and recovery benefits last year, the most well-known being the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB).

Some recipients may now owe tax on these benefits depending on personal circumstances, the type of COVID-19 benefits received, and other sources of income or credits.

COVID-19 benefit recipients will receive a T4A or T4E tax information slip in the mail, and they can also be found on the CRA's online portal.

New benefits and credits

A new support for families with young children was announced in the government's fall economic statement, providing four tax-free payments per child under the age of six in 2021 to families entitled to the Canada child benefit (CCB). Support would be between $150 and $300 per child for each payment, depending on a family's net income.

The first two payments would be based on 2019 family net income, and the last two based on 2020 income.?Parents must have filed tax returns for these years to receive all four payments.

The Canada Training Credit is another new credit you may be able to claim. Individuals older than 26 may be eligible to claim tuition and other fees paid to eligible educational institutions or occupational, trade or professional bodies for courses or examinations taken in 2020.

Also new for this year is the non-refundable digital news subscription tax credit, which can be claimed for a digital news subscription with a qualified Canadian journalism organization.

Working from home

It's now easier for employees who worked remotely due to the pandemic to claim home office expenses with a new temporary flat-rate method.

Employees who worked from home more than half the time for at least four consecutive weeks may be eligible to claim this deduction, which is $2 a day for each day worked at home in 2020 up to $400.

Employees with larger claims can complete the T2200S and T777 forms instead of the simplified method. Home office expense claims for salaried employees are limited to utilities, rent, maintenance and supplies.

Find more information at canada.ca/taxes.

Baldwin's Birds

Hello Readers,

I hope this finds you all fit and well and also a little more relaxed with life, especially if you have already received the Anti-Covid Vaccine jab. If you haven't, just hang on, we are almost there!

Now that the clocks have jumped ahead and the promise of warmer weather and brighter skies are here, things will be a bit brighter for us all.

Already some of our Spring birds have made their appearance and the sounds of honking Canada Geese are already becoming a familiar sound, as they stage through on their long journey North.

On this sunny, but still coldish, day around the garden and immediate neighbourhood, we have seen some newly arrived Red Wing Blackbirds, and our first Robin. The latter was in our back garden, on the first patches of grass, where the sun is fairly quickly disposing of the snow. Joining it, back there, was a Cardinal, at first, singing in a Maple tree and then, later, perched in our Globe bush. Grey Juncos flitted about and a Mourning Dove perched in our Catalpa tree, for a short while, before flying off. Our front garden feeders are still being well used by the Redpolls, who are still here, despite some of them having already departed for more northern habitats. There are quite a few of them ground feeding at present, now that the snow is disappearing, and they are joined by the Juncos, who are primarily ground feeders, regardless of the ground coverage. Our resident flock of Rock Pigeons, now in their Spring plumage, still come daily, and the males are colorfully puffing themselves up, as they vie for a female partner! Of course, our feeders are still attracting our four legged friends, the Red, Black and Grey Squirrels, but as long as they don't gnaw on the feeders we can tolerate them, even though they eat a lot and, at times, put the birds off, from feeding. Live and let live!

Stay safe and well,
Cheers,
John Baldwin

5 Tips for First Time Homebuyers

by Daren Givoque, O'Farrell Financial Services

1. Understand Income Qualifiers

Gross Debt Service (GDS) ratio and Total Debt Service (TDS) ratio are two numbers that lenders will use to qualify you for a mortgage.

Your GDS ratio is the percentage of your income needed to pay your monthly housing costs. Typically, your GDS ratio needs to be below 39% to secure a mortgage for a new home.

Your TDS ratio is the percentage of your income needed to cover all your debts. Most lenders will consider you for a mortgage if your TDS ratio is 44% or lower.

Assess your financial situation before you go to a bank or private lender. Paying down debts and having good credit will improve your chances of qualifying for the mortgage you need.

2. Mortgage Default Insurance

The down payment needed to buy a house in Ontario is 20%. This can be a challenge for even the most fiscally responsible. You have the option of decreasing the down payment to 5% if you insure the other 15%.

The Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation sell products that allows you To acquire insurance for the portion of the down payment that you don't have. Premiums are around 3.%. Some believe in waiting until you can afford the entire down payment before buying to eliminate added interest payments. By waiting you may end paying more in the long run, as housing prices tend to rise. Becoming a homeowner sooner helps grow your net worth and improves your financial security into the future.

3. Budget

Budgeting for all the costs associated with buying and maintaining a home, plus other living expenses like food and entertainment, is extremely important. The more accurately you can project your expenses in your new home the better. Plan to have $5,000 to $10,000 set aside for extras, to avoid unforeseen costs.

4. Accept Help

Ontario housing costs are at an all time high with the average home costing $600,000. Housing costs have skyrocketed while average incomes have increased at a slower rate. This makes it particularly hard for young people to buy their first home and some turn to their parents for help. Buying a house is an investment in your future, so do not shy away from help if it is available to you.

5. Think Long-Term

Plan ahead when purchasing your first home. Ensuring that the house you buy will fit your needs down the road prevents you from repeating the homebuying process too soon. Buy a home that you can grow into.

Buying a house is a great investment and one that contributes to your financial security. Research shows that people that get into the housing market early typically retire more comfortably. Surround yourself with the proper experts - real estate agent, financial advisor, mortgage broker, - to ensure you are well-equipped for the journey into home ownership.

Attend our free First Time Home Buyers Webinar happening March 30th! Visit the O'Farrell Financial Facebook page for more information.

South Nation Conservation Elects New Executive

(L-R) Osgoode Ward Councillor George Darouze, SNC Chair, Mayor Pierre Leroux of Russell, SNC Vice-Chair, Bill Smirle, Past SNC Chair, Angela Coleman, General Manager and Secretary-Treasurer SNC

Board Members appointed by South Nation Conservation Authority's (SNC) 16 member municipalities were confirmed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Thursday, March 18, 2021.

The 2020-2021 Board Executive was unanimously re-elected to serve for the 2021-2022 term: George Darouze, Councillor for Osgoode Ward in the City of Ottawa, was re-elected as Chair; Pierre Leroux, Mayor of Russell Township, was re-elected as Vice-Chair; and Bill Smirle of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry was again confirmed as Past-Chair.

Composed of 12 members, SNC's Board of Directors oversees the Authority's budget, programs, and services, and works alongside staff to champion local conservation initiatives. The members of the SNC Board are; Michael Brown, Public Representative, Gerrie Kautz, Public Representative and Catherine Kitts Councillor, representing the City of Ottawa; Mayor Guy Desjardins of Clarence Rockland, Mayor François St. Amour, of La Nation representing the United Counties of Prescott and Russell; Councillor Steve Densham, North Stormont, Councillor Archie Mellan, South Dundas, representing the United Counties of Stormont Dundas and Glengarry; and Dana Farcasiu, North Grenville Public Representative, Councillor John Hunter of Edwardsburgh Cardinal representing the United Counties of Leeds Grenville

"On behalf of the Executive, I thank all members and staff for putting your trust in us as the Conservation Authority faces new challenges and opportunities to protect and enhance our local environment," said SNC Chairman George Darouze.

The Board also approved SNC's 2020 Annual Report at the AGM, which showcases program highlights from the preceding year, including community projects, development review, tree planting statistics, Conservation Area upgrades and visitation, and forestry and environmental stewardship initiatives.

"We adapted to the needs of our member municipalities and area residents to deliver a record-breaking year in development reviews, environmental protection, and providing outdoor natural spaces, and we are proud to highlight some of this great work in our Annual Report." said Angela Coleman, SNC's General Manager and Secretary-Treasurer.

The AGM was live streamed online and is available to watch on the Conservation Authority's public YouTube channel.