

The Uxbridge Cosmos

Vol. 20 No. 12

TheCosmos.ca

Thursday, March 28, 2024

Choir ready to hit final note • What a downtown spot could look like • A regional update



HARBINGERS OF SPRING - A garden on Reach St. features crocuses and daffodils that are determined to bloom, despite the snow, sleet and rain that the end of March has delivered. Happy Easter!

Photo by Lisha Van Nieuwenhove

Councillor loses vote on library funding

Roger Varley

Councillor Zed Pickering found himself all alone on Monday when he introduced a motion to support the Township of Brock in its call for additional provincial funding for libraries.

Brock passed a resolution asking for additional funding and sought support from other municipalities. Pickering's motion called for that show of support and also for the Township of Uxbridge to write its own letter to the province requesting additional funding.

However, Mayor Dave Barton pointed out that with a new hospital and long-term care facility on the horizon, along with a new urban provincial park and the need for development land, it was better for the township to go after funding for those major projects rather than the library.

...continued on page 3

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The 'beautiful game', FIFA want Uxbridge

Lisha Van Nieuwenhove

Even though it's still two years away, talk out of Toronto is swirling around the FIFA World Cup, which is set to partially take place in the Six in June 2026. Talk is about to swirl in Uxbridge, too, as FIFA organizers have revealed that the Fields of Uxbridge will be a practice field for the visiting teams.

"We're thrilled to announce that Uxbridge, with its amazing football pitch at the Fields of Uxbridge, will be a perfect spot for us to bring at least 10 or 12 of the teams up here to practice," said FIFA practice pitch organizer Goh Lee during an exclusive interview with the *Uxbridge Cosmos*.

(Note: 'football' here references soccer, for Canadian and American fans of the beautiful game.)

The City of Toronto will host six matches in the FIFA World Cup 26, kicking off on June

12, 2026, with the first-ever men's FIFA World Cup match on Canadian soil and featuring Canada's Men's National Team. Toronto is also hosting a round of 32 matches on July 2, 2026. The entire Toronto schedule is as follows:

- June 12, 2026, Group Stage, Canadian Men's National Team opener
- June 17, Group Stage
- June 20, Group Stage
- June 23, Group Stage
- June 26, Group Stage
- July 2, 2026, Round of 32

Lee said that he wants exclusive use of the Fields of Uxbridge, which are located just north of town on Reg. Rd. 8 (Main St. N.), from June 1, 2026, through to July 15, 2026. The extra time is needed, he said, to facilitate set-up and take down of the infrastructure required for the practices to take place.

"We're going to need a lot of bleachers set up, because fans are going to want to watch their

teams and their players practice. We're going to have to talk to a few farmers who have fields nearby, see if we can use their fields for parking. We're going to need a lot of food trucks on site, because those fans are going to want to eat a lot. We're going to need executive transportable toilets, and all those trucks will need electricity, and we might need extra lighting, so there'll be generators and such...."

Lee said that initial costs for installing the infrastructure noted above could run around \$15-\$20 million, but noted that, like in Toronto, which is currently looking at a \$380 million price tag for hosting the six matches, the costs could still climb. It is unclear right now what costs the Township of Uxbridge may have to bear. Lee's aide, Wynn Gerr, told the *Cosmos* that the price tag the township would have to pay was nothing compared to the benefits of having the practice pitches here.

...continued on page 3

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MORE INFO www.uxbridge.ca

Council & Committees

Meeting Schedule for April, 2024

- Monday, April 1**
NO MEETING – EASTER MONDAY
- Wednesday, April 3**
TRAILS COMMITTEE @ 9:00 a.m.
- Friday, April 5**
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE @ 8:30 a.m.
- Monday, April 8**
COUNCIL @ 10:00 A.M.
MUSEUM ADVISORY COMMITTEE @ 6:30 p.m.
HERITAGE COMMITTEE @ 7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, April 11**
TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE @ 10:00 a.m.
- Monday, April 15**
GENERAL PURPOSE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE @ 10:00 a.m.
ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMM. @ 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, April 17**
COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT @ 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, April 18**
LIBRARY BOARD @ 7:00 p.m.
- Monday, April 22**
COUNCIL @ 10:00 a.m.
- Thursday, April 25**
BIA BOARD @ 7:00 p.m.
- Monday, April 29**
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION @ 3:00 p.m.
- Proclamations for April**
 - April 1 Royal Canadian Air Force 100th Anniversary
 - April 2 Autism Awareness Day
 - April 6 National Tartan Day
 - April 10 International Day of Pink
 - April 14-20 International Volunteer Week



Employment Opportunities

Complete details of all open positions are available at <https://www.uxbridge.ca/careers>

- Community Services - Uxpool Swimming Instructors / Lifeguards - Summer**
Closes March 29, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
- Community Services - Arena Attendant Assistant, summer student (15+), part-time, contract**
Closes March 29, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.
- Clerks Department - Clerks Jr. Assistant, contract**
Closes March 29, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.
- Community Services - Assistant Summer Camp Counsellor (Age 15+), contract**
Closes March 29, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.
- Community Services - Summer Camp Counsellor (Age 16+), contract**
Closes March 29, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.
- Uxbridge Historical Centre - Museum Assistant, contract**
Closes April 5, 2024
- Uxbridge Historical Centre - Collections Assistant, contract**
Closes April 5, 2024
- Uxbridge Public Library – Summer Program Coordinator, summer student**
Closes April 12, 2024
- Community Services - Assistant Tourism Development Coordinator, contract**
Closes April 19, 2024
- Uxbridge Historical Centre - Museum Educators, contract**
Closes April 19, 2024
- Uxbridge Historical Centre - Museum Preparator, contract**
Closes April 19, 2024
- Lucy Maud Montgomery Society Of Ontario – Project Assistant, summer student**
Closes April 19, 2024
- Public Works and Operations – Operations and Capital Project Manager**
Closes April 24, 2024

From the Tax Office

Second Property Tax Installment is due April 26, 2024.

Monthly or Installment Pre-Authorized Payment Plan Deadline to Enroll for the 2024 Final property taxes is April 30, 2024.

To find out if you are eligible to enroll, visit our website www.uxbridge.ca/en/living-here/property-taxes.aspx or call the tax office at 905-852-9181 for more information.

Change of Address

If you need to change or update your mailing address, please notify our office in writing or by emailing tax@uxbridge.ca

Bids & Tenders

All current bid opportunities are posted to https://www.uxbridge.ca/bids_and_tenders/
 U24-11 - Double Surface Treatment and Slurry Seal
 Closes March 28 at 2:00 p.m. (EST)

All bids must be received by the Township by the deadline stated, either electronically via the Township's website or in-person at the Township Office located at 51 Toronto St. South. Public tender bid results are posted at https://www.uxbridge.ca/bids_and_tenders/



Township of Uxbridge documents are available in alternate formats upon request. Please fill out the Request for Alternate Formats Form at uxbridge.ca/accessibility | email: accessibility@uxbridge.ca | phone: 905-852-9181 ext.209

Town square might be a grant closer to reality

Roger Varley

Museum curator and tourism coordinator Katlyn Jones joined forces with Amanda Ferraro, director of community services, to offer a report to council on Monday, seeking approval to apply for a grant to develop a town square.

The report said that while permanent downtown revitalization redevelopment will take time, a successful grant application would allow the development of a Town Square in the parkette and parking lot next to the Coffee Time location. Such a square would allow for festivals and events to take place and offer "a much-

needed area for families and children to meet and play, particularly those who live in apartments above the downtown commercial buildings."

Council supported the report's recommendation that the township apply for a \$250,000 grant from the provincial "My Main Street Community Activator" program.

FIFA fun, from page 1

Gerr also said that, in the event of inclement weather, organizers may want to reserve the Uxbridge Arena for use as an indoor practice space.

"Nice high roofs, two pads – they're a lot smaller than a football pitch, but we're doing exercises, practicing. They're not full-on games, here."

Both Lee and Gerr noted that players visiting the Fields of Uxbridge might enjoy using both the skate park and the pump park to wind down a little during lead up to the official matches. They also noted that, due to the expected popularity of the practice sessions, several roads in the area adjacent to the Fields of Uxbridge may need to be closed for the duration of the Fields' use.

According to the official FIFA website, "FIFA World Cup 26 is expected to generate significant economic, cultural and community benefits for Toronto by creating thousands of jobs, welcoming visitors from across the globe and generating hundreds of millions of dollars in local gross domestic product." Some of that money will now be flowing into Uxbridge.

Lee explained how the Fields of Uxbridge were chosen to be a practice spot for the world-famous tournament.

"My scouts were in Toronto last

summer sometime, at the same time as the folks who were telling Toronto what it would have to do to have the games there – you know, like cover up construction sites and make things look really nice around BMO Fields, and my scouts were driving around looking for places where the teams could practice. They didn't like anything too close to the city, 'cuz

matches are played on artificial turf, and that's what the athletes are used to. Field said that funds will be allocated to have the natural grass replaced once the games leave town.

Practice pitches are often as much a highlight of the games as the official matches. Fans flock to watch the pros work on technique and game plans, and often try to get as close as they can to their football heroes.

Pen Altyarea is football enthusiast from England who follows the FIFA World Cup around the globe (the prestigious tournament is held every four years) but only goes to see the practices, as she says she can't afford actual match tickets.

"It's ridiculous, yeah, the prices y've got to pay to see the gents play in the World Cup. I mean, I want so bad to see them play, I want to be there, yeah, but it's just, I mean, I work at Marks and Sparks, yeah, I can't afford to go to the matches. So I watch the gents play at practice. It's smashing, that. You see the real people then, their raw talent."

Altyarea is already looking to book someplace to stay in Uxbridge for June 2026.

Practice pitch organizer Lee said that FIFA may also look for a spot in downtown Uxbridge to sell FIFA-related merchandise and souvenirs, so he's already looking into using the Masonic Lodge on Spruce St.



they don't want pollution or anything, and they just Googled 'soccer fields' and Uxbridge came up. So they took a little drive, and loved what they saw."

Thique Header, one of the scouts, reportedly said that he had never seen natural grass look so pristine, almost identical to artificial turf. He and his scouting partner, Senta Field, immediately put a request in for higher up organizers to come and see the Fields and recommend that they be put on the roster as a practice pitch location. Header did note, however, that the natural turf would have to come up, as world cup

Library funding, from page 1

"I'm happy to continue funding the library as we always have done," Barton said.

A couple of councillors appear to be sympathetic to Pickering's motion, but regional councillor Bruce Garrod, siding with Barton, noted the advice former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney gave to his daughter, Caroline Mulroney: "Don't waste your political capital on the small things."

"We know that some railway here in town had the (Masonic) Lodge and used it to set up and sell some train stuff, and Thomas the Tank Engine, stuff like that, so it's obviously a good space to do that. Might be just the thing for us," said Lee.

Sixteen cities throughout Canada, the United States and Mexico are hosting the FIFA World Cup in 2026, are 48 teams are expected to play.

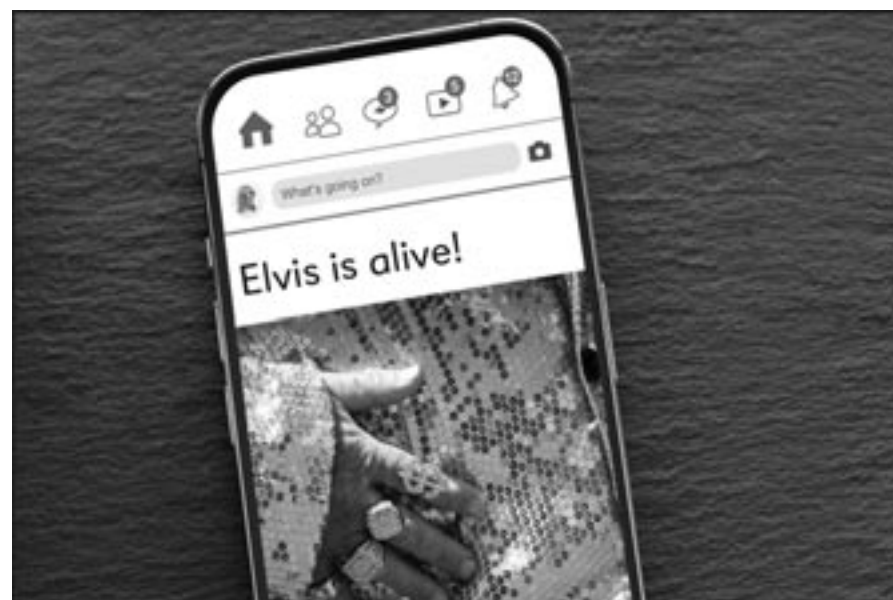
The FIFA World Cup 26 final is scheduled for Sunday, July 19, 2026, in New Jersey, New York. A final agenda for the practices at the Fields of Uxbridge should be available by Monday, April 1, 2024, in time for April Fool's Day.

Garrod then called for a recorded vote. When the vote was taken, Pickering was the lone supporter of the motion. Even Councillor Todd Snooks, who originally seconded the motion, voted against it.

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Our two cents

A day for fun, frivolity and legit fake news

April Fool's Day has likely been around since the Middle Ages, when there was a feast day known as the Feast of Fools. Some speculate that setting aside a day to play harmless jokes on one's friends and neighbours actually began earlier than the Middle Ages, in ancient Rome, with a festival called Hilaria. April Fool's pranks and hoaxes are especially popular in Canada, Europe, the United States, Australia and Brazil, it would seem. Funnily enough, our April Fool's Day research found that newspapers in Scandinavian countries "celebrate" April 1 by publishing one false story, often on the front page (we don't think it's only in Scandinavia...). Some people love searching out the hoax, others are simply annoyed that their time has been taken up by such foolishness. Humour is, after all, such an individual thing. Some people find this sort of humour spot on, while others can't see it for a row of trees. There are those who love the humour of, say, the British, with their dry wit and penchant for farce. Others simply don't get it, and find their funny in the slapstick humour of The Three Stooges, or television shows like "Jackass." Funny how different things tickle different funny bones.

If you get "had" on April 1, which also happens to be a bank holiday, you can look at as a great opportunity to have a good laugh, which, heaven knows, we all need right now. You can also stretch your creative side coming up with fun and innovative ways to play the trickster on others (just be safe about it). It's all in good fun, and the intent is just to put a smile on someone's face.

As for the *Cosmos* and its illustrious history of publishing an April Fool's article every year, well... We've convinced people of cows who give chocolate milk, of tunnels that run under the town to Quaker Hill, and of fire halls being turned into truck stops, to name but a few. As long as the *Cosmos* exists, there will be a story on or around April 1 that doesn't quite seem to be right. We love getting the reactions of readers, and hope that this year's fun doesn't raise - then dash - any footballers' hopes of seeing FIFA action in Uxbridge. Heckuva way to kick off a month, don't you think?



Letters to the Editor

Re: "Don't count your chickens,"
March 21 edition

Gone are the days of Uxbridge mayors Bob Shepherd or Gerri-Lynn O'Connor, the lonely one by-law officer in town, and good common sense-thinking councillors who worked for the Uxbridge people.

Now we have an army of by-law officials that sit in their office and think of ever more and new problems to create to look busy and then go out, trying to fix them. The best example is the chicken permit we read about.

In the rest of the world, chickens are birds like any others that walk around and give us eggs. In many places they run totally free all over towns, protected by law from humans who may kill them for food.

In Uxbridge, chickens are a danger to the public and need a permit. Of course, when the Asian flu sees that permit, it will not attack these chickens. Even rodents and other wildlife will have respect and by-pass them, seeing a chicken permit.

Of course, vaccinating all chickens or making them wear a mask may also help. Otherwise they might die much faster like some of our friends did after their vaccination.

Personally, I think the greatest danger to our town at the moment is our mayor, town councillors and so called by-law officers. They have proven that in the last few years by wasting tax payers' money and creating the traffic sign forest at many

places, making driving more dangerous, especially on Centre Rd. One sign on entering town would have been totally sufficient, with a speed limit in town of 40km/h.

Our town designation of Trail Capital of Canada was also killed off by the mayor and councillors. Hundreds of people every week, from all over the GTA, came to Uxbridge for a hike, and afterwards went for a meal in one of our restaurants, spending money in other stores.

All that was stopped by our town officials and mayor when they started to charge parking fees at the trail heads. For a few years now, the small parking places are totally empty. No more groups of hikers every day from as far away as Kitchener or Hamilton. Of course, by-law officers check the licence plates to lay charges if they ever spot a car parked.

There is nothing nicer and more soothing than the crow of a rooster in the morning or the healing sound of church bells. Sadly our children may never hear that anymore.

Soon we may hear about West Nile mosquitos again or virus X. Last year we erected a chain link fence to keep them out.

Luise Mueller
Uxbridge

Re: Intersection at Conc. 6 and Sandford Rd.

About a month and a half ago, I came from town on the 6th (Concession), as I often do, and there

was an accident at the corner of the 6th and Sandford Rd. One car was deep in the north west ditch while another was parked on the 6th going north. There were two police cars on the scene.

Exactly one week later, another accident happened at that corner, this time resulting in the death of a woman and the serious injury of five other people. I see that now someone has placed a memorial in the corner of Ball's field, but there has not been any information about who was involved (other than the death) or their status.

This past Thursday, another accident happened at the same corner. Since two tow trucks were needed, it would seem that both vehicles were either in ditches or badly damaged. Whether there were injuries we don't know, but there was at least a good shaking up no doubt!

Why this is happening I don't understand. There is good signage and the corner is wide open in all directions, no trees or shrubs in the way. It would seem that, before more - or more serious - accidents occur, something need to be done; perhaps a flashing light as there is at the corner of Sandford and the 7th (Concession), but this one would be on the 6th coming from the south. Now would be a good time to install, before the summer traffic really gets bad, as it does on Sandford Rd.

Pat Asling
Sandford

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The Uxbridge Cosmos

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Am I wrong?

column by Roger Varley

If you build it, they will come

That quote in the headline is not exactly what was said in the movie *Field of Dreams*. The actual movie quote was "if you build it, he will come." But for the intent of this column, I'll go with the altered version.

When I came to Uxbridge 35 years ago, it was a sleepy little town. There were no Barton Farms or Coral Creek or Quaker Village subdivisions. There was no cinema and there was only one theatre company in town: the Uxbridge Players. A walk along Brock Street (or even a drive) usually included stopping to chat with neighbours and friends. As I recall, town council meetings were held in what is now Chances Are.

In the time since, there have been changes, but apart from the various subdivisions and moving the township offices to what was once St. Joseph Catholic school, not much has occurred in the way of redrawing or re-designing the downtown area.

However, in the past couple of weeks, there have been suggestions put forward that, if adopted, could radically change the face of Uxbridge. The Downtown Revitalization Committee, set up a couple of years ago, came up with some design concepts for downtown that could, conceivably, be taken up by developers now that the downtown flood plain has been drastically reduced by installation of the Brock Street culvert. As I said, those concepts have been added to in recent weeks. Most of the concepts (artists' drawings) can be seen on the township web page.

Many of the concept drawings call for buildings at least four or five storeys high and, naturally, there are those who oppose such an idea. But if we stick to the two-storey streetscape that we now have, any redevelopment of the area is sure to be nothing more than cookie-cutter architecture, devoid of any redeeming characteristics.

The township hopes to begin working on a town square on Lower Brock, a place to entice residents downtown for festivals and other events, before any major development

of that particular part of town happens. It will likely be a set of temporary installations and features, given that such a square would eventually have to be integrated into whatever major project takes place there. But it's a start.

One of the overriding demands of council and the revitalization committee is that development in the downtown area must include residential units. An increased population downtown can only lead to a more successful retail sector (instead of the numerous empty stores that now blot the street) and a more vibrant community. And that, in turn, could lead to more companies and retailers wanting to locate here.

I have no doubt change will come, but it will not be without a battle. A number of people have already objected to Trinity United Church's plan to redevelop the site where the church sat on First Avenue before it was demolished by the tornado. The main argument appears to be that the planned redevelopment will change the nature of the street. But nothing stays the same forever.

However, no grand plan ever comes without problems. The township insists that any redevelopment should reflect the heritage of the town. But just what does that look like when it comes to buildings? The buildings along Brock Street are a potpourri of styles, from the magnificent Uxbridge library to the quonset hut that houses the Roxy Cinemas to the utilitarian design of the post office. I believe that any development that is proposed should be judged solely on its merits, not on whether it fits into some long-forgotten Quaker past.

And, of course, there are no guarantees. The new office building at the corner of Victoria and Brock has been finished for some time, but as far as I can tell there is yet to be a single occupant moving in.

However, it seems to me that if we are going to dream, we should dream big and keep our fingers crossed that they will come.

Tell me, am I wrong?



The Barris Beat

column by Ted Barris

Fabric of the nation's navy

About an hour into the tour, I discovered one of the secrets to Canada's military capability at sea. The tour aboard HMCS *Vancouver*, a Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) frigate currently in a short-work period at the base just outside Victoria, had taken me through the operations room. I'd sat in the commander's chair on the bridge. Then I'd seen the ship's massive rudder system. I happened to pause at a rack of fire extinguishers, helmets and gas masks. In the event of a major fire at sea, I asked, were the people assigned to fight fires on board the ship former civilian firefighters? "No," explained Lieutenant (Navy) Konnor Brett. "Every member of the crew is a trained firefighter."

And I realized immediately that teaching all RCN sailors to fight fires had nothing to do with personnel limitations and everything to do with practicality. If a warship couldn't depend on every man and woman in her crew to quell fires, keep the sea from swamping the ship in gales or combat, and deliver basic first aid or rescue tasks, its effectiveness would be severely diminished at sea. "It's a matter of the ship's survival," Brett said.

On a recent business and pleasure trip to B.C., I contacted Konnor Brett (we'd met last May during Battle of the Atlantic observances at CFB Halifax). He gave me, some family members and friends a tour of HMCS *Vancouver*. The son of a Second World War vet, Brett grew up in B.C., joined the Navy League Cadets while at school, and served as both an army and navy reservist while working as a B.C. correctional officer. Then, in 2006, he joined the navy's regular force full-time. Aboard RCN frigates he's now qualified to instruct as a naval warfare officer, navy diver, and boarding party supervisor. Perhaps more important than all his official capacities, Lt Brett is an extraordinary ambassador for the Canadian Navy.

Once my tour group had cleared the security gates at CFB Esquimalt, Brett led us on a bow-to-stern tour of the frigate before she re-deploys for operations in waters around the Pacific Rim. Moving about the ship meant stepping carefully along narrow gangways, through hatches and down steep ladders. (It helps to be shorter than six feet tall as a sailor.) We civilians climbed down those steps facing the ladder and holding onto its railings securely. "In a call to action stations, we've all

got a mental roadmap and muscle memory to get us where we need to be quickly," Brett said. "I can get from my officer's cabin to the bridge (about 100 yards) in 20 seconds."

On the bridge, Lt Brett explained the chain of command, who sat where, and the way orders were passed. Somebody asked where the ship's helm was located (we all imagined since the ship was 400 feet long, the helm would be a huge wheel of some sort). Brett pointed to a computer screen representing the ship's propulsion systems and a joystick on a console. Also, where there once stood a large circular dial on the bridge, called a Pelorus (or engine order telegraph) ringing out "full ahead," "slow" and "all stop," there was instead a row of plastic buttons that could instantly accelerate the ship to top speed. And what's top speed we asked?

"That's top-secret," Brett said, "but unofficially, more than 29 knots."

Not a secret was the increased presence of female crew. Along the frigate's corridors, we spotted signs that identified female living quarters. Each was marked with a sign, telling all men entering to shout out, "Man on deck!" (The signs said "Woman on deck" in the opposite situation.) We learned that women made up about a 10th of the ship's company. Not because of restrictions against their entry, but largely because recruiters still haven't characterized careers in the navy as rewarding enough for women.

When I asked Lt Brett what he enjoyed most about navy life aboard a frigate, I figured that he'd say serving in the operations room or on the bridge. "I enjoy going over the side in my diving gear to check and clean her props." And the least? He pointed to a coil of rope hanging close to a railing on the open ship deck. "In a man-overboard situation, I'm attached to that rope and in diving gear I jump over the railing down (about 30 feet) to the surface to conduct a rescue."

While he's practised the manoeuvre repeatedly, so far Lt (Navy) Konnor Brett has never had to conduct a man-overboard rescue for real. Like everything else in the Royal Canadian Navy, having command of preventive skills is just as important as dispensing the lethal ones.

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AFTER 42 YEARS . . . A FINAL BOW

After four decades of bringing the world's greatest choral music to the Uxbridge area . . . a "Grand Finale Concert" will take place **Sunday, April 7 at 3 p.m.**

Choir members past and present have reassembled to present a program of "greatest hits" - with beloved favourites by Mozart • Vivaldi • Willan • Fauré Barber • Duruflé • Rachmaninoff & others

The concert
 Thomas Baker, director & co-founder of the choir
 Ian Sadler, guest organist

St. Paul's Anglican Church, 59 Toronto St. South, Uxbridge
 Tickets - \$25 at the door

Uxbridge Chamber Choir

Report reveals what town council cost last year

Roger Varley

Ontario released the so-called Sunshine List last week, detailing which public servants earned more than \$100,000 in 2023.

Leading the pack in Uxbridge was the township's chief administrative officer, Kristi Honey, with a reported income of \$175,000 in the year. However, the list appeared to be incomplete, as several names that made the list the year previously could not be found. One name that did appear was township clerk Debbie Leroux, with a reported income of \$137,600.

The list only covers public employees, not elected representatives. But treasurer Tobi Lee gave council a report on Monday that showed how much each member of council

earned during 2023.

As was expected, Mayor Dave Barton had the highest income. His salary as mayor was \$49,224, but with benefits, car allowance and other payments, his total municipal remuneration was \$74,000. All other members of council were paid between \$32,000 and \$33,000, but with benefits and expenses, they all earned between \$49,000 and \$51,000.

Adding in severance payments to former council members Gord Hight (\$44,000) and Gary Ruona (\$12,600), the total cost of council in terms of salaries and benefits for 2023 was \$434,000.

Maud Squad reveals plans for celebrating famous author's 150th birthday

Roger Varley

In February, Uxbridge council declared 2024 to be the year of Lucy Maud Montgomery 150. On Monday, Melanie Whitfield, president of the Lucy Maud Montgomery Society of Ontario (LMMSO), gave a deputation to council in which she listed a slew of events planned to mark the occasion.

Whitfield explained that "This celebration is a big deal! It is being acknowledged around the world by academics, universities, authors, and celebrities. Documentaries are being filmed, new books are being published, podcasts, theater, and new songs are being written and performed."

The events begin May 29, when Blue Heron Books' The Book Drunkard Festival presents Carley Fortune with Mary Berg at the Music Hall, followed the next day with a performance of "Maud of Leaskdale," starring Jennifer Carroll at the historic Leaskdale church.

Maud will also be featured in the Canada Day celebrations, and later that month there will be a "Downtown Summer Social" in the Coffee Time area, with activities for all ages. Maud (and Anne, of *Anne of Green Gables* fame) will also have a presence at the fall fair, the Santa Claus parade and the annual Holiday Trail event.

Maud and Anne will get a jump on all the planned activities when they appear this weekend during the BIA's Easter Eggstravaganza. To learn more, visit LMMSO's website at lucymaudmontgomery.ca

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2024 is the year the Uxbridge Cosmos decides if it lives or dies.

The Uxbridge Cosmos recently shared with you that its existence is in peril. Advertising dollars, the primary income source for most newspapers, have been gobbled up by digital giants like Meta (Facebook and Instagram) and Google, and additional support is needed to keep this newspaper alive.

The Cosmos is not **our** community newspaper, it's **your** community newspaper, and we feel it's important to be as honest as possible with you about what's happening.

We believe with our whole hearts that Uxbridge needs this community newspaper. Now, perhaps more than ever, a free, independent press is vital to the way of life we hold dear. It may be a cliché, but it's the truth. And truth is everything to us.

We'll do everything in our power to keep **your** independent community newspaper alive.

We hope you'll join us!

With heartfelt gratitude,
 Liisa Van Nieuwenhove
 Publisher/Editor

Uxbridge Cosmos

What we're doing about it
 We're looking hard for someone to sell print and digital advertising. We are asking for your help to save your community newspaper.

What you can do
Become a Voluntary Subscriber
 Right now, we're in crisis mode, but our long-term plan is to blend advertising revenue with voluntary subscription revenue. The Cosmos will continue to be delivered via Canada Post for free to the entire Township, but voluntary subscriptions ensure that the Cosmos can continue to provide the news, information, and stories that matter most to readers.

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 If you're chatting with a local business owner, remind them that advertising in the Cosmos is the only way to reach 9,800 households in the township. Social media can't guarantee those kinds of numbers.



The Nature Nut

column by Nancy Melcher

DON'T look at the sun!

Why have school boards rescheduled a PA Day to April 8, 2024? There's been some press about the switch due to a solar eclipse, but nothing specific to explain this very unusual move. What is the big deal anyway?

A solar eclipse happens when the path of the moon makes it pass in front of the sun. This happens every month, but due to slight differences in the orbits of Earth and the moon, it is rarely seen. However, in April the shadow that the moon will cast on the surface of the Earth will pass across much of North America, and directly over Durham Region.

We can't look directly at the sun for more than very brief snippets of time because it's bright – SO bright that it hurts. When the moon blocks some (or all) of the sun, we could look directly at it and not wince in pain. DON'T! That's a very dangerous thing to do because that little bit of sun is still extremely

strong. It can burn your retina, the part in your eye that sends messages to your brain. This damage can be permanent, resulting in blindness.

It's easy to see why schools want to



How a solar eclipse happens.

Graphic from NASA's Goddard Space Flight Centre

keep students safe during a solar eclipse. The simplest thing is to keep students indoors, away from windows with the blinds closed. Sadly, the April 8 eclipse happens

right at afternoon dismissal time. It's impossible for teachers and school staff to monitor every child, so out of an abundance of caution, boards have rescheduled a PA Day to happen on Monday, April 8. This will let parents be responsible for their children's health.

Ontario will experience the total solar eclipse between 2 and 4:30 p.m., on the 8th. This means daylight will be affected during this time. The experience varies significantly depending on location within Ontario; coverage will range from

less than 50 per cent to 100 per cent. In Durham Region, areas east of Clarington will be in the path of totality. Other areas in Durham Re-

gion along the Lake Ontario shoreline will experience a partial eclipse, where obscuration of the sun will not be 100 per cent. There doesn't appear to be anywhere in Uxbridge where one can find certified eclipse glasses - if you're looking for a pair, online shopping might be your best bet, if you act quickly!

There's lots of information on the

internet about how to watch the eclipse. NASA will be live-streaming it – that's the safest way to watch it! Check it out here and have a fun day!

www.science.nasa.gov/eclipses/future-eclipses/eclipse-2024/

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

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Getting to know Roots Osteopathy

ROOTS OSTEOPATHY

Kimberly Alcock is the Owner and Osteopathic Manual Practitioner at Roots Osteopathy in Uxbridge. With a passion for helping others and looking to serve the people of Uxbridge and surrounding areas, she opened her doors in September of 2023 on Main St. N., in Uxbridge. Kimberly belongs to the Ontario Osteopathic Association (OSTCAN). She holds a Master's in practice of Osteopathic Manipulative Sciences (M.OMSc). Kimberly also holds an honours diploma in physiotherapy and occupational therapy assistant, is a certified k-tape specialist and an animal manual therapist.

Technology Square, 278 Main St. N., Unit 1B, Uxbridge 905-767-6030 rootsosteopathy@gmail.com

WHAT IS OSTEOPATHY?	Osteopathy is a safe, non-invasive, holistic approach to Manual Therapy. Osteopathy views the body as one unit working together, emphasizing the relationship between structure and function. This therapy follows the inherent ability of the body to self-heal and self-regulate.		
Osteopathy is for everyone of all ages.	Osteopathic Manual Practitioners work to maintain and enhance function by restoring balance and aligning the biomechanics of the body.		
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AM I COVERED?	Osteopathy may be covered by insurance, depending on the specific policy you have. Patients should check with their insurance provider for more information.		

Chamber Choir preparing to sing its final notes

The curtain is about to fall on the longest-running musical program in Uxbridge. After 42 years, the

Uxbridge Chamber Choir will take its final bow on April 7, at a "Grande Finale" concert.

The concert, at St. Paul's Anglican Church, will feature "greatest hits" from past concerts over the years.

For the final concert, all past and present members of the Chamber Choir were invited to take part.

"The response has been amazing," said Marg Cunningham, a co-president of the choir. "We have past choir members from years ago and far afield who just wanted to celebrate the achievements of the Chamber Choir and sing together one last time."

The choir was founded 42 years ago by Tom Baker and his wife Anne Mizen, herself a prominent figure in the musical world of Uxbridge, and for many years the accompanist for the choir. Tom Baker has directed the choir since the beginning, and has led the choir in more than 100 concerts.

"The very last piece we'll sing at this concert will be a repeat of the very first piece we sang at the first concert 42 years ago," said Baker. "If you want to know what it is - come to the concert."

the classical choral repertoire, but also included contemporary works, and particularly works by Canadian composers."

The program for the final concert reflects this philosophy, with excerpts from choral masterpieces by Mozart, Fauré and Rachmaninoff, and also more modern works by Samuel Barber, Healey Willan and others. Eminent concert organist Ian Sadler, who has accompanied the choir many times, will again be the accompanist.

"But to keep things interesting, we've sometimes wandered into very different kinds of music," said Baker. "For instance, we had a great bluegrass concert in a local barn, and we did a couple of concerts featuring only music by the Beatles." After all, he added, those are classics in their own right.

Over the years, the choir has commissioned works by a number of prominent Canadian composers, and also had choir exchanges with choirs in France and England.

"The impact of this choir has been quite unique, for both singers and audiences," said Ian Hilton, co-president. "Normally, the only opportunity for singers to sing and audiences to hear the great choral masterworks is in big cities. But here we have a small town choir with big city aspirations and big city quality."

Hilton attributes the Chamber Choir's success to "the prodigious musical talent" of its director, Tom Baker.

The "Grande Finale" concert will be at 3 p.m., Sunday, April 7, at St. Paul's Anglican Church. Tickets are \$25 at the door.



Tom Baker, who has directed the Uxbridge Chamber Choir for the past 42 years, rehearses the choir for its final performance on April 7.

Submitted photo

"When we formed the choir, we were about the only game in town for choral singing, apart from some church choirs," said Baker. "But I'm happy to see there are now other community choirs to give singers an opportunity and to bring good choral music to the area."

Baker explains that the Chamber Choir has defied its name somewhat, performing a variety of genres.

"Over the years, we've focussed heavily on the great masterworks of

Jess Dempster's
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New vision for old Shell station land revealed

Council last week received a report from Kyle Rainbow, director of development services, that included concept drawings showing what the intersection of Brock Street West and Spruce Street *could* look.

Rainbow's report said township staff worked with H.Bee Architecture to produce renderings which would "seamlessly blend the historical

charm of Uxbridge with contemporary design."

The drawings show the possibility of five-storey buildings at the intersection, containing retail and residential units. Rainbow stressed the visualizations are a way to let potential developers know what Uxbridge is looking for as it proceeds with its downtown revitalization.



Conceptual rendering of the intersection of Brock St. W. and Spruce St., facing northwest.



Conceptual rendering of the intersection of Brock St. W. and Spruce St., facing northeast.

Popular PROBUS opening new North Durham club

The Uxbridge PROBUS Club is a social club of seniors that has been active for almost six years. It has a membership of 275 and a waitlist of almost 80. In an effort to not exclude anyone and meet popular demand, a new PROBUS Club will be formed.

Uxbridge PROBUS Club and Port Perry PROBUS Club, with over 600 members between them, are jointly sponsoring another PROBUS club in North Durham to meet the rapidly increasing demand for club memberships. PROBUS clubs are non-profit social clubs for retirees and semi-retirees who want to get connected and enjoy the best that life offers.

Clubs have monthly meetings with speakers and social time, plus there are many interest groups and a wide array of social events and travel, providing opportunities for the enjoyment of friendships, social activities, lifelong learning and staying active in the community.

To learn about this opportunity, an information meeting, open to the public, will be held on Wednesday, April 11, at 10 a.m., at Hope Church, Port Perry (14480 Old Simcoe Rd.). Contact northdurhamprobus@gmail.com for more information.

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| 4. Lock site | 2. Drive |
| 9. Step follower | 3. Some contests |
| 12. It's found in banks | 4. Relative |
| 13. "La Bohème," e.g. | 5. Appropriate |
| 14. Solitary | 6. Mosquito protection or profit? |
| 15. Woman's secret | 7. "Who ___ we kidding?" |
| 16. Express | 8. The "L" of XXL |
| 17. Hardly numerous | 9. Davenport |
| 18. Takes a break | 10. Singles |
| 20. Wine holder | 11. CNN output |
| 22. Dorothy Parker quality | 19. Blink |
| 24. It may be high in the afternoon | 21. Type of light |
| 25. Clear-cut | 23. Fearful |
| 29. Kind of bean | 24. Stretched tight |
| 33. Monopoly piece | 25. Accomplished |
| 34. Guys | 26. Detergent brand |
| 35. Arborist's concern | 27. On behalf of |
| 36. Dismal | 28. Highest rating score, often |
| 37. Looks into | 30. Line made with a compass |
| 39. ___ Zeppelin (rock group) | 31. Dog lover |
| 41. Place for a ring, of a sort.... | 32. I will |
| 42. No longer dirt | 38. Bakery fare |
| 45. Comes (to) | 40. Barely beats |
| 49. ___ Ta Be my girl | 42. Encouragement |
| 50. Genies ___ wishes | 43. Largest of seven |
| 54. Jazzman | 44. Utter |
| 55. Isaac Newton prefix | 46. Battery corrosive |
| 56. Like a beaver | 47. Athlete's concern |
| 57. Frozen dessert | 48. Cook by slow boil |
| 58. Stable diet | 51. Moved fast |
| 59. White | 52. Of yore |
| 60. Morning moisture | 53. Recent |

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EVENTS

NEW NORTH DURHAM PROBUS CLUB INFORMATION MEETING Thursday, April 11, 10 a.m., at Hope Church, 14480 Old Simcoe Rd., Port Perry. Come and meet new friends. uxbridgeprobus.com

LOCAL MATTERS.

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Connecting with the Region

with Regional Councillor Bruce Garrod

An update on regional projects

It's surprising that this is already the sixth "Connecting with the Region." The goal continues to be to communicate Durham Regional initiatives and how Uxbridge Township is impacted. With Q1 complete, the following information updates important regional projects.

Homelessness support Forty-five additional shelter-beds, located in Whitby, were made available in March. These rooms are located in a former long-term care home purchased by the region, and bring much needed additional capacity. The Beaverton Supportive Housing complex is expected to also activate within 90 days. Uxbridge residents needing accommodation are welcomed at both locations.

Road construction The long-awaited repairs to Durham 1 toward Leaskdale will proceed this summer. Other infrastructure investments include:

- Hwy. 47 east of Reg. Rd. 30 to west of Reg. Rd. 21
- Brock Rd. from north of the Uxbridge/Pickering Townline Rd. to Reg. Rd. 5
- Reg. Rd. 13, Zephyr Rd. from Conc. 3 (Reg. Rd. 39) to Conc. 4

Although outside of Uxbridge Township, it's worth noting that Reg. Rd. 13 east of Lake Ridge to west of Sideroad 17 is being considered for rebuild this summer as well.

Transit Based on ridership data and public input, the new Route 605 is now active and connects riders to common shopping destinations in the south end of town. This scheduled service has reduced demand for on-demand vehicles. Pending regional council budget approval, additional on-demand vehicles will be activated in 2024 to better serve all areas of the township.

DRPS The new superintendent has assumed command of North Division and new recruits have joined North Division. DRPS leadership is aware of Uxbridge's desire for in-

creased visibility of officers.

To debunk a myth, there are *not* only two active officers in North Durham at any given time. Typically there are two *in each* of Uxbridge, Scugog and Brock. Officers overlap and support each other as needed. In the event of an emergency, immediate assistance is also provided from southern divisions.

Planning, economic development & tourism The transition of the regional responsibility for land division functions to area municipalities is complete. This change has improved response times on applications and allowed Uxbridge staff to increase involvement in local projects.

Regional economic development and tourism continues to develop the Uxbridge economy by strengthening partnerships with Durham Farm Fresh. These efforts support our agricultural sector, and promote culinary and tourism industries.

The region's Family Physician Attraction and Recruitment Program will be critical to supporting Uxbridge's new hospital and LTC home.

Health and Social Services A local initiative has begun to review the social services being provided in Uxbridge. This includes both those offered directly by Durham Region as well as regionally funded agencies. The intent is to diagnose what is currently offered and then recommend potential adjustments to ensure maximum benefits are received

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from the regional investments. This initiative will dovetail with a broader regional initiative that involves developing a Durham Region Poverty Prevention Strategy.

Kindred Works While not specifically a regional project, the building of 104 units on the Trinity United Church property on Main St. does involve a grant request from Durham Region. The region is involved to support the inclusion of 30 per cent of the units being deemed affordable. Pre-construction will begin in June; full construction starts later in the summer.

Blue Box Program Effective July 1, Durham Region will no longer manage the Blue Box program. In response to a provincial mandate, the Blue Box program will transition to Circular Materials, a not-for-profit that represents the producers and importers of the products and packaging collected in the blue box. No changes are planned to the collection schedule or the materials being recycled. Customer service and bin replacement will be handled by the recycling contractor.

Compostable Waste Management (green bins). An expanded program, which takes effect July 1, will permit items such as diapers, pet waste/litter and other items to be discarded in green bins.

Approximately 58 per cent of residential property taxes are collected on behalf of Durham Region. A key responsibility of the regional coun-

cillor and mayor is to communicate where that money is spent, and to advocate for maximum return on those dollars.



KENNEDY, Rae

Passed away peacefully on Sunday, March 24, 2024, at age 96. Beloved husband of the late Dorothy Parish. Dear father to Donna (Steve) Den Ouden, and Wayne (Sandra) Kennedy. Loving grandfather to Suzanne, Scott, Wendy, and Mike, and great-grandfather to Abby, Orion, Lauren, Payton, Kent, Aidan, Colby, and Elle.

The family wishes to thank the staff of Butternut Manor for their kind support over the past 12 years.

A service to celebrate Rae's life will be held on Thursday, March 28, 2024, at 2 p.m., in the chapel at Low & Low Funeral Home (23 Main Street South, Uxbridge). Visitation to begin one hour prior. Interment to follow at Foster Memorial Cemetery, Uxbridge.

In Rae's memory, please consider a donation to either the Uxbridge Hospital Foundation, the Canadian Cancer Society, or the Lucy Maud Montgomery Society of Ontario.



TROWSE, Dennis O.

August 1, 1932 - March 21, 2024

Dennis Ormonde Trowse of Uxbridge, Ontario, passed away peacefully at the age of 91, on Thursday, March 21, 2024, at Kenny's Pond Retirement Community in St. John's, NL.

Born in Beckenham Kent, England on August 1, 1932, he was the son of Albert and Muriel Trowse. Dennis married Jean Padgham, the love of his life, on

February 14, 1957, before immigrating to Ontario, Canada, where he worked in finance. After retirement and moving to Uxbridge, Dennis was an avid community member and volunteer with the MS Society, Meals on Wheels, and several other organizations. He was passionate about traveling the world, gardening, and taking care of their section of the Oak Ridges Moraine trail system with the ORTA and with Jean. He also loved bird watching, canoeing, camping, and being outdoors. Dennis will be remembered for his generosity, love, and his smile, which he showed to everyone in his life.

Dennis is survived by his daughter, Christine Trowse of Sandford, ON; grandchildren Alex Webb (Victoria Burden) of Fredericton, NB, and Melissa Rogers (Adam Rogers) of Paradise, NL; his four great-grandchildren Dominic and Malachy Webb and Eli and Amelia Rogers. Dennis was predeceased by his loving wife of 58 years, Jean Trowse, daughter Susan McDonald, parents Albert and Muriel Trowse, and siblings Madeline Trowse, Valerie Trowse, and Leslie Trowse.

A memorial service will be held at the Low and Low Funeral Home (23 Main Street South, Uxbridge, 905-852-3073, on Thursday, April 4, 2024, at 3 p.m., with visitation one hour prior. Reception to follow. In memory of Dennis, donations to the Oak Ridges Trail Association would be greatly appreciated.



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