

The Uxbridge Cosmos

Vol. 19 No. 49

TheCosmos.ca

Thursday, December 14, 2023

Looking for hamlet correspondents • Singing a new tune in Europe • Bruins are on the up

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AN ACCIDENT WAITING TO HAPPEN? - Trees leaning against propane tanks that have been left out in the open, and electrical cords draped across the tanks and coiled on the grounds of the train station are a few of the safety hazards that have been brought by the Township to the attention of the York-Durham Heritage Railway (YDHR), which is currently operating holiday-themed events out of the station. If these issues, along with several others, are not rectified by the end of this month, YDHR's lease on the station will not be renewed. Read more below. *Photo used with permission from the Township of Uxbridge*

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YDHR may be facing final derailment

Roger Varley

Uxbridge Township council has served the York-Durham Heritage Railway with notice that its lease on the township-owned railway station will be terminated on Dec. 31 unless a set of conditions are met.

Following an *in camera* session at the end of

its regular session Monday, at which it received a confidential report from Chief Administrative Officer Kristi Honey, council unanimously approved a motion put forward by Deputy Mayor Willie Popp. The motion stated "that report CAO 15/23 be received for information and that council direct staff not to engage in any lease extension discussions or terms and condi-

tions regarding a new lease with York-Durham Heritage Railway until the following outstanding matters are resolved: full compliance with all township orders; no funds in arrears; removal of all four identified rail cars, including any contaminated substances; site cleanup to

...continued on page 3

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Council & Committee Meetings

Meeting Schedule for January, 2024

Monday, January 8, 10:00 a.m.
COUNCIL MEETING

HERITAGE COMMITTEE, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 9, 1:00 p.m.
DEPARTMENT BUDGET
PRESENTATIONS

Wednesday, January 10, 9:00 a.m.
TRAILS COMMITTEE

Employment Opportunities

Complete details of all open positions are available at

<https://www.uxbridge.ca/careers>

Building Inspector/Plans Examiner

Closing date: Friday, January 5, 2024
at 4:30 p.m.

Road Closures

- Uxbridge-East Gwillimbury Townline from north of Durham Reg. Rd. 39/Queensville Sideroad to south of Holborn Road, East Gwillimbury - closed for bridge repairs to 2024
- Uxbridge East Gwillimbury Townline from York St. 500m south of Ravenshoe Road to Zephyr Road - closed for bridge repairs to January 2024

Arena Programs

Visit

<https://www.uxbridge.ca/arena>

to view current and holiday public skating programs.



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

Winter Parking Reminder

No overnight parking on Township streets or in Municipal Lots from 2am -7am



November 1st to April 1st

Uxpool's Winter Break Hours

Closed
Dec. 25, 26 & Jan. 1

Find the Uxpool holiday schedule at www.uxbridge.ca/uxpool



Uxbridge Public Library Closed

December 24th-January 3rd
Reopening January 4th

Happy Holidays

Township Office closed

Dec. 22nd at 12:00p.m. - Jan. 1st
Reopening Jan. 2nd at 8:30am.

Arena Holiday Hours

Arena closed
Dec. 24-26th
& Dec. 31-Jan. 1st

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No ice is safe ice. Red flags at Elgin Pond mean ice is unsafe for use. Yellow flags mean use ice with caution.

YDHR must comply by end of year, from page 1

the satisfaction of building services, community services department, by-law department and fire department. Failure to fulfill conditions as per this recommendation, York-Durham Heritage Railway is to deliver vacant possession of the premises effective Dec. 31."

Council said that, should YDHR comply with all the conditions, they

tario Ministry of Transportation have been notified of the current situation. She said the MOT is the body which issues the licence for YDHR to operate a rail service, and that it could decide to pull the licence for safety reasons or lack of compliance.

Honey said that compliance includes immediate action to address many safety concerns. The four rail cars mentioned in Popp's motion have been found to contain asbestos

YDHR's Facebook page. It indicates the railway intends to continue operations. The statement says, in part: "YDHR does not comment on pending potential litigation or legal processes, but we do want to reassure the public that after 25 years of faithfully bringing hundreds of thousands of tourists to the community, including last weekend with almost 5,000 visitors to Uxbridge over three days, we remain open for business and for future events."

The post added that, "if you are a current ticket holder for our 2023 Christmas Experience, nothing will change . . . except that the township will not allow you to view the 100-year-old station as a part of your visit."

In the interview, Honey noted that the township has had "a long-standing relationship with YDHR" and recognizes the tourism and economic benefits to Uxbridge, but added "safety comes first." She said the township has been discussing the removal of the four rail cars "for years."

In September of this year, with the rail cars still on site, the township ad-

vised YDHR that lease negotiations would be on hold until the matter was resolved. There was a meeting with YDHR on Dec. 6, in another attempt to come to an agreement.

"The township may engage with YDHR regarding a new lease upon complete resolution of all outstanding matters," she said, but reiterated that the lease will expire Dec. 31, if they don't comply. If the lease is terminated, YDHR will still be responsible for an addi-

tional five years for any environmental issues. As well, if the equipment is not removed "in a timely manner," the township will put out a contract to "remediate and revitalize the property."



Extension cords tangle together outside a train station door on the platform.

Photo used with permission from the Township of Uxbridge

can enter negotiations for a new lease. Until that time, however, YDHR will not be permitted on the premises.

No YDHR representatives attended the *in camera* session.

In an interview on Tuesday, Honey said the arrears have now been paid, but she would not say when they were paid or how much was owing. However, at a special council meeting held on July 31, council asked YDHR CEO John Perks to pay \$10,000 towards its arrears.

YDHR leases the train station and its platform from the township. The rail lines and the railyard are owned by Metrolinx, which leases them to the township. In turn, the township subleases those properties to YDHR in a separate lease.

Honey said Metrolinx and the On-

and lead. She said there are also issues with the storage of propane tanks on site, and noted the fire department was scheduled to visit the site again on Tuesday.

She said various structures on the railyard were erected without the proper or required permits, adding that a stage used in YDHR's most recent event was built without a permit and did not meet codes.

When contacted by the *Cosmos* about the township's decision to put YDHR on notice, Perks agreed to an interview. He later sent the *Cosmos* an "official statement" from the YDHR board, and said he would know more on Thursday of this week.

The same statement that was sent to the *Cosmos* also appeared on



This stage, erected on the grounds of the train station, was erected without a permit and, according to the Township, was not built to code. *Photo used with permission from the Township of Uxbridge*

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Our two cents

Calling on hamlet writers

The editor is fully aware at this moment that she is taking advantage of being able to read and edit the Letters to the Editor section before having to write this week's editorial. She is aware that this is, normally, not really proper journalistic practice, but then again, the Letters department and the editor's job do not, in larger establishments, cross paths too often, whereas here at the *Cosmos*, they are both taken care of at the same desk, on the same computer, and by the same person.

Job descriptions and workflow are not what we're wanting to mention here, though. We'd like to talk to Eleanor Todd's letter regarding the "good old days" of hamlet correspondents.

We couldn't agree with her more.

The *Cosmos* did have, for a few years, some correspondents writing from Sandford, Leaskdale, and Goodwood. Sandford's writer switched to another newspaper, Helen Harrison in Leaskdale sadly passed away, and Goodwood got too busy. We had a columnist from Udora who took a neat perspective on things, but he just stopped submitting.

The *Standard*, another independent newspaper distributed here in town, has some great hamlet correspondents who fill the pages with the kind of news Ms Todd years for.

We'd like that sort of thing, too. It's important we remember that Zephyr, Sandford, Udora, Leaskdale, and Goodwood are all part of our fabulous little township, and, try as we may, we can't stay on top of everything that's going on.

So, if you're intrigued about occasionally being in the newspaper, can spell, know where to place a comma and a period, live in one of the aforementioned hamlets and have the pulse on what is happening in your hamlet (Hamlet Happenings - good name for a column...noted, says the editor), then by all means, drop us a line! Send an email to Lvann@thecosmos.ca with a sample of what you might be able to do for the *Cosmos*, and we'll talk!

Ms Todd, we don't suppose you'd be interested...??

When one of these disappears, A LOT disappears.

Support our local businesses so they can support The Cosmos.

Because without them, we can't continue to deliver the news you want and need.



The Uxbridge Cosmos

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9,800 copies of The Cosmos are published each Thursday in the Township of Uxbridge and delivered by Canada Post.



Letters to the Editor

Re: "Connecting with the Region: Police services in Durham," Oct. 26, 2023, edition

Mr. Bruce Garrod, I believe there are a few flaws in your column.

The total number of officers employed by the DRPS (Durham Region Police Service) does not help those of us living in Uxbridge Township. I was informed by one officer that there are only two officers available to patrol the 200 sq. miles of the township.

The town proper may have a visible police presence, but the hamlets do not! There are times when I have not seen an officer for three months.

North Division officers do not conduct appropriate enforcement and are not responsive to community complaints.

(DRPS) Supervisor Mike Brown took my complaint about speeding in Goodwood in the spring of 2023, and stated that he would take action - nothing happened.

One traffic officer stated that he would have radar on Front Street - nothing happened. A second traffic officer stated that he would have the DRPS recording speed sign on Front Street - nothing happened.

Your traffic survey in June 2023, showed that a huge number of vehicles are speeding. Over 100 speeders in one 24-hour period alone.

There are at least a dozen solutions to this problem that the town could carry out, but won't take action. The town is spending tons of taxpayers' money on the town proper but ignoring the hamlets.

The regional councillor should be

advocating more strongly at the Region for better police presence. The hamlet residents should be receiving a 30 per cent reduction in their taxes for the one percent of police service that they receive.

R. Robertson
Goodwood

Re: "A missed opportunity," Am I wrong?, Nov. 30, 2023, edition

I agree with you on this, Roger, you are not wrong. You are right with what you said in the *Cosmos* newspaper. To quote:

"It was a perfect opportunity for our local council to talk about Uxbridge residents who are going through hard times who are turning to food banks and sleeping in vehicles.

I agree with you.

Kathy Nicholson
Uxbridge

Re: "No news is good news," Am I wrong?, Dec. 7, 2023, edition

Whether or not we have no news, good news, hard news, fake news or slow news periods, the local newspaper must get to press on time.

The colorful ads for various events and businesses are all well and good and, may I say, necessary, not just for the financial survival of the paper, but also to keep readers informed as to whatever is available locally.

But, how I long for the days when our local newspapers regularly published news of a different sort! Each little hamlet or community in the surrounding area had a contributing

correspondent and we were all able to keep up with the events that were preoccupying our neighbors.

We learned about stuff, like the fact that Mr. and Mrs. Bert Jones had arrived home safely from their vacation in Costa Rica, and that Susie Green had won a sports scholarship to attend a university in New Hampshire. We learned that a record number of people had enjoyed a meal at the annual church supper, and that Bill Baker had gained permission to use the school bus to take the kids skating at the arena every Saturday. We finally got the news that Mrs. J.H. Brown was successfully delivered of a baby girl last week, and that Bobby White fell out of a tree and broke his arm. All of his friends have now signed his cast. Without the diligence of the local correspondent, we might never have known in time that the couples club was planning to stage a play to entertain the children at the church Christmas concert, and that they were looking for more entertainers to add to the program. I could go on and on, but you get the idea.

Since COVID, some of us are feeling rather isolated these days, spending far too much time with only the TV or (Heaven forbid) Facebook to tell us what is going on.

I'm here to say that it was better in the "good old days" when we had our local contributing correspondents making us feel that we were still part of a thriving community.

Eleanor Todd
Goodwood



Am I wrong?

column by Roger Varley

Forget school work - go play outside

That might be the advice many parents are considering delivering to their offspring in light of the recent announcement that Shohei Ohtani, a baseball player, has been given a contract which will see him paid \$700 million over 10 years. If my calculations are correct, that means he will be paid more than \$190,000 a day for the next 10 years!

What kind of world are we living in when we see such outrageous paychecks being given to someone just because he plays baseball? He doesn't hold another person's life in his hands as a surgeon does, or a firefighter. He doesn't hold the fate of a nation in his hands like a president or prime minister does. He doesn't contribute to the betterment of humanity as a scientist does. He doesn't feed people as a farmer or fisherman does. He just plays baseball, for Pete's sake!

Until his contract announcement, I hadn't even heard of Shohei Ohtani. That's really not surprising, since I stopped following major league baseball more than a decade ago when another player (I think it was Alex Rodriguez) was awarded a \$250 million contract. I remember thinking how ridiculous it was to pay a ballplayer a quarter-of-a-billion dollars.

Now we have one who will get close to three-quarters of a billion dollars.

What makes this even worse (if that's possible) is that Los Angeles, home of the Dodger team that awarded the contract, has, at latest estimate, 60,000 homeless people living on the streets. I hope Ohtani and the Dodger executives can sleep well after driving past all these homeless people on their way to the stadium. I'm sure they will, because they know it's the fans who will ultimately be paying Ohtani's salary.

Just as horrifying is the fact that the Toronto Blue Jays were hoping to sign this player to their roster. Obviously, they weren't able to match the final \$700 million price tag, but they must have been willing to pay out a substantial amount to

acquire his services. Which just goes to show how out of touch the sports world is with the real world.

I now have a confession to make. I watch NFL football. I know many of the players in the NFL are pulling down huge paycheques and they are not shy about showing it. Watch any NFL game and see how many players are wearing their diamond earstuds or heavy gold chains while they are playing. It's almost as though they are, to turn a phrase, rubbing our noses in it. The only defence I have for watching the NFL is the absolutely staggering, awesome plays we see in just about every game. Players making seemingly impossible catches, runners shaking off tacklers to gain an extra five yards, field goals from 60 yards. And while I don't particularly like them, the Patrick Mahomes-Travis Kelce combination with the Kansas City Chiefs is something to behold.

When it comes to sport, it will surprise few of you to know that I prefer to watch the Uxbridge Bruins play at the arena. These kids (young men) play for the love of the game. Most of them know their competitive hockey days are over when they reach the age limit, but that doesn't stop them from giving it their all. They wear their uniforms with pride. For Ohtani, his uniform will simply be a reminder of how much money he is being paid, even when he has days off.

Maybe the parents of the Bruins players should have told their sons to work on their hockey skills instead of concentrating on school work. That way, the lads might be better positioned to make big bucks in the NHL.

It seems to me that unless and until we start paying nurses, firefighters, first responders, etc., a decent living wage instead of doling out what are basically lottery wins to people who can hit a ball or shoot a puck, we might just as well pull the kids out of school.

Tell me, am I wrong?



The Barris Beat

column by Ted Barris

Social skill without a cellphone

This week I've visited the Music Hall a lot. Over the weekend, we moved staging, lights, props and actors into the facility for performances of *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, through Saturday night. On Monday, as director Conrad Boyce and I opened the front door of the Hall to move a piece of furniture onto the stage, Benny, the custodian, greeted us with a big smile and handshakes.

"Isn't it great? We don't have to do *this* anymore," and he mimicked avoiding somebody on the sidewalk the way we did during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It is great," I agreed. "But we almost have to learn how to deal with people face-to-face all over again."

I'm sure I don't have to elaborate, but aside from the horrific totals – 56,534 COVID-19 deaths and nearly five million cases in Canada – perhaps the worst damage the pandemic has wrought is disconnection. For three years we didn't touch each other, we didn't talk to each other face-to-face, we didn't gather indoors at arenas, theatres, gyms or house parties. The impact on our mental health has been crippling.

Statistics Canada has even surveyed us to prove it. The demographers at Stats Can say, during the pandemic, population growth fell to levels we haven't seen since the Great War. Life expectancy went down by 0.6 years, the worst since 1921. And if you think it's been tough on adults, it's worse for young people. The *Guardian* newspaper spoke to a clinical scientist about our inability to communicate in person because of the pandemic.

"We acquire most of our social skills between the ages of zero and seven," Linda Blair said, and she added that the absence of those social skills means they'll be harder for us – especially for young people – to learn or re-learn them.

And you know what makes that worse? Being addicted to our cellphones. As evidence, look at the dilemma that the Toronto District School Board faces trying to eliminate the distraction of cellphones in classrooms. The TDSB banned them in 2007, and then lifted the ban in 2011. Now it's considering re-introducing it. Students went through two years of mind-numbing online learning, two years of staring at a computer screen instead of a teacher's engaging lessons in class and hands-on learning. Now, with the temptation of the phone in their back pocket,

kids are logging on to social media constantly, most annoyingly in class.

And you know what makes that worse? Helicopter parents who insist on hovering. I understand that moms and dads want to keep their children safe. But I also believe unless there are medical reasons for being instantaneously connected with parents at home or at work, any call at school can wait for between classes, recess or lunch period. In other words, let's not panic our children into thinking we have to know their whereabouts every minute at school. Schools are pretty efficient at keeping tabs on students, faculty and staff between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. And while we're at it, why not treat cellphone time out of school like time on their game computers? Why not have them earn that time as a reward, not treat it as a given? One high school student interviewed on CBC Radio this week said, "Too many of us are addicted to our phones. Phones don't really promote better education."

I coped with this problem when I taught journalism and broadcasting to undergraduate and graduate students alike at Centennial College just prior to the pandemic. Almost all my reporting students and the curriculum gurus insisted that cellphones played a pivotal role in modern journalism – chasing interview sources, acquiring research and delivering stories remotely. "Get with it, Ted," they told me. "It's a wireless world." I agreed with the predominance and pervasiveness of technology. But I knew my students better than the gurus did. Long before the pandemic, young people were petrified to make cold calls to interview sources. It was my job to help them overcome their mortal fear of leaving that cocoon at home, meeting someone they didn't know in person and conducting an interview face-to-face to get to the heart of a story.

"Sometimes, politicians in a scrum at Queen's Park or athletes post-game at Scotiabank Arena say more with facial expressions than they do with spoken words. And you can't get that from a cellphone," I insisted.

In other words, I forced the cellphones out of these young people's hands to teach them a profession. It may be time take away their phones to teach them how to be human again, and really put the pandemic behind us.

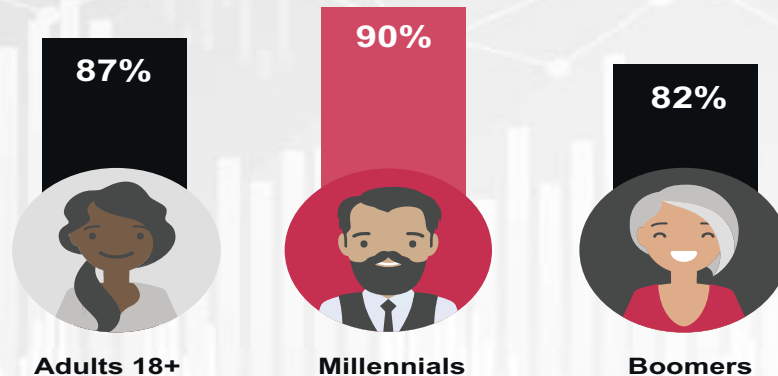
For more Barris Beat columns, go to www.tedbarris.com

NEED TO REACH MILLENNIALS?

New survey results show that **nine out of ten** Millennials read newspapers weekly in print or digital formats.

Results are sourced from a November 2020 national online research survey managed by Totum Research. Interviews were conducted with 855 English and French Canadians in every province, and results were weighted to be nationally representative.

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A Catch-up Conversation with Christina Campsall

Christina, it doesn't seem that long ago that you were singing in community theatre musicals at the Music Hall. Now you're performing spectacular music, wearing spectacular costumes in spectacular opera houses all over Europe. Tell us about the journey that brought you from there to here, and how the Uxbridge arts scene prepared you for it.

It is not as glamorous as it looks on social media, but I've been very fortunate and I'm so grateful to have made this my career. A huge part of that is due to the inspiration and encouragement from so many people within Uxbridge community theatre.

It took me a bit longer than most to discover opera as a career path - I didn't really know it existed until my early 20s. I always had a passion for the performing arts, but I never took singing lessons. I was a shy kid, didn't have many friends, and got bullied a lot. Theatre was a great outlet for me, it helped so much to boost my confidence. I won theatre arts awards and the

O n S t a g e Uxbridge scholarship at USS.

I decided that I would major in theatre at university, but it wasn't a good fit. I switched to York University and signed up for a course called "Classical singing for non-majors." The professor running the course believed that my voice fit well in classical music, and he encouraged me to switch majors

...continued on page 8

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Campsall conversation, from page 6

He eventually become my first voice teacher.

I had so much self-doubt if I was

making the right decision, diving into something completely new like classical singing, not knowing anything about the genre, barely being able to read music notes on a page. I

felt like a fraud. It took a lot of encouragement from outside influences, friends and colleagues, to help convince me that I was on the right path.

One of those major influences was when you (Conrad Boyce) gave me the role of Edith in *Pirates of Penzance*. It was my first solo role. Another person who put me on this path was Uxbridge pianist Anthony Holt. He accompanied me at my audition for York University, he helped me apply for the Uxbridge Music Scholarship Trust, and he accompanied me in many concerts here in

Uxbridge. He taught me so much, and if it wasn't for him, I may not have been accepted into the music program.

How did the European adventure begin?

In 2016, in my second year of the artist diploma program at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, I was auditioning like crazy, both in North America and Europe. I dove right into finding work in the industry. I had an audition in Germany for an opera studio, and the intendant of one of the opera houses represented offered me a position for one year. It

was exactly what I needed to get my foot in the door. I moved to Germany that summer, studied German and worked the 2016/17 season at this opera house, while I continued auditioning throughout Europe. I've been working freelance ever since.

You have a home base in Basel, Switzerland. What makes that the ideal place to live for someone who lives a lot out of a suitcase?

I've been here since 2018. It's a beautiful city, with a fantastic arts and culture scene. It's also central to the rest of western Europe, so travelling to other countries is very easy and convenient. The main language here is German, which I now speak fairly fluently, and I've made a lovely little home for myself here. I have friends near and far, who are all from other parts of the world. I consider them my European family.

Can you paint us a picture of the life an itinerant mezzo-soprano? How do you get the contracts? What's it like, adjusting to different languages and cultures, rehearsing when everyone speaks a different mother tongue?

Every new project I'm a part of is new, unexplored territory. Often the common language is English, but not always. I have been a part of many productions now where I was the only foreigner, so I had to adjust

...continued on page 11

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Christina Campsall (in blue) as Flora in Verdi's *La Traviata*, in Tenerife, Canary Islands. Submitted photo

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Bruins ruin LumberJacks' win streak

Roger Varley

A goal in each period was enough for the Uxbridge Bruins to defeat the Port Perry LumberJacks 3-1 at the arena last Friday. The victory brought to an end the LumberJacks' four-game win streak.

Port Perry dominated the Bruins through much of the first period, scoring the first goal of the game late into the stanza with a shot from the blue line. However, the Bruins surged in the final two minutes and Ty Roberts evened the score with just 19 seconds left in the period. Assists went to Anthony Lamanna and Quinn Meek.

The Bruins missed a golden opportunity midway through the second period when Meek and Lamanna staged a two-on-one rush on the Port Perry goal, only to see Meek hit the goalpost. As the period wound down, Blake Peters showed great stay-with-it effort to put the Bruins ahead, assisted by Josh Czaliy and Luke El-Ayari.

With Matt Czaliy replacing Andrew Claughton in the net for the final 20 minutes, Roberts produced his second goal of the night midway through the period, assisted by Meek, after they stole the puck from

a LumberJacks defender.

The *Cosmos* selected Roberts as the Bruins' player of the game and gave the nod to Dale Faubert of the LumberJacks.

The game was a chippy affair, with both teams receiving four unsportsmanlike penalties and a couple of fighting penalties.

The LumberJacks wore special

pink-emblazoned uniforms for the game to promote breast cancer awareness and the Bruins wore their special event sweaters in support.

The Bruins were scheduled to meet the Chiefs in Lakefield on Tuesday night and return to the arena tomorrow (Friday) night at 7:45 p.m. for a re-match against Port Perry.



For complete season and player information go to
uxbridgebruins.pjhlon.hockeytech.com

Friday, December 15, 7:45 p.m.
 against Port Perry
 at the Uxbridge Arena

Saturday, December 16, 7:25 p.m.
 against North Kawartha
 at the North Kawartha Community Centre




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COSMOS CROSSWORD

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| Across | Down |
| 1. Hooters | 1. Aluminum source |
| 5. ... "Once and for ___!" | 2. Pack animal |
| 8. Air circulating device | 3. Get checkmated |
| 11. Cheer | 4. Beef cow |
| 12. Excel chart | 5. Rental unit, for short |
| 13. Past | 6. Whopper, e.g. |
| 14. Alternative | 7. Ballet move |
| 15. Drink with jam and bread? | 8. Buckles, as a seat belt |
| 16. Congeal | 9. Go gray |
| 17. Podiatrist's fetish | 10. That was a lie! |
| 19. Money that is battled for | 18. Connections |
| 21. Palatial | 20. It's next to nothing |
| 24. Nifty | 22. Iron, e.g. |
| 27. Adage | 23. Wish you were ___! |
| 30. Describing a crucial hour | 25. Gobbled up |
| 32. Lobby, say | 26. Everyday article |
| 34. Perceive with the eyes | 27. Agent |
| 35. Usher tune | 28. Lionel Richie's "You ___" |
| 36. "All ___ are off!" | 29. Rolling in dough |
| 38. Do-over | 31. Docs for dachshunds |
| 40. Prevent | 33. "Thar ___ blows!" |
| 43. So last year | 37. Personnel |
| 45. Bounce | 39. " ___ does it!" |
| 48. Part of U.A.E. | 41. Like some votes |
| 50. Residue from a stogie | 42. Clip |
| 51. Astonish | 43. Popular tree |
| 52. Confront | 44. Play for a sap |
| 53. E or G, e.g. | 46. Have chits out |
| 54. X rating? | 47. Write |
| 55. Vamoosed | 49. Resting place |

uxperience looking for non-profits/charities who want \$\$

Do you belong to an Uxbridge-based non-profit organization or charity that is in need of funding? Now is the time to apply and be considered as a candidate to receive proceeds from the May 2024 uxperience show.

The 2024 show will highlight the 30th anniversary of the show with great music, comedy and other fun! Matt Gunn returns as show director, with Eric Speers as co-director, and Christina Enns returns to assist Matt with music direction. Alannah Kemp as skit director and Alyssa Jeffrey as producer are welcome additions to the creative team!

Each year, uxperience members choose a group to receive the show's proceeds. To be considered, groups must be non-profit and complete an application.

Since uxperience began over 29 years ago, it has donated more than \$150,000 to local organizations. The amount donated each year depends on how much the show raises through sponsors, tickets sales and other fundraising events. Last year, uxperience was pleased to present a \$5,000 cheque to the Uxbridge Youth Group.

To have your organization considered as a possible recipient, email uxperience92@gmail.com to request an application. Deadline is Monday, Dec. 18.

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EVENTS

BLUE CHRISTMAS Saturday, Dec. 16, 6 pm. Hosted by St. Paul's Anglican Church & Trinity United. This contemplative time together is for everyone, but especially those who may find this season difficult. A time with like-minded people to reflect on the year past and being hopeful for the time to come. All are welcome.

CAROL SING Sunday, Dec. 17, 3 p.m. St. Paul's Anglican Church. Do you love singing Christmas carols? Please join us in singing a medley of traditional and contemporary Advent & Christmas Carols.

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The Nature Nut

column by Nancy Melcher

Don't eat the peppered snow!

See that pristine white snow? It's so beautiful: clean, crisp, and pure. But look closely on a lovely sunny day, particularly near tree trunks, and you may be surprised by what is there. It looks like pepper has been sprinkled all around. Wait, are those black specks MOVING?

What the heck is going on here?

You're looking at snow fleas, or springtails as they're also called. They're dark blue-black and are about 1.5 mm long, resembling tiny earwigs. About 40 of them would fit on your thumbnail.

In the summer these little crea-

tures live in the ground, feeding on organic matter, and helping to enrich the soil. Over the winter they live in leaf litter, coming out on sunny days to feed on algae and fungus that grows on the snow. Yikes, that's one good reason not to eat snow!

Snow fleas are hexapods, a kind of arthropod, and so are cousins of lobsters, insects, and spiders. They're called "fleas" due to the way they jump, like those pesky insects that are found on pets. Snow fleas have a stiff, hinged appendage, called a furcula, on their undersides. This is the "spring" of the



springtail. When it's released it launches them up to 18 cm! That's the equivalent of a 1.75m tall human jumping over 200 metres! That's impressive!

However, there's no need to fear snow fleas. They don't bite, don't carry disease, and won't hurt pets or wild animals. They're beneficial creatures that make gardens grow better by breaking down organic matter. Their ability to survive freezing temperatures is interesting to researchers at Queen's University and may be used to make better ice cream. Now that's a frozen treat that IS good to eat!

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

Campsall conversation, from page 8

to rehearsing and communicating in different languages. I've had to learn Italian and Spanish on the job, and thankfully I already speak French and German.

Take my last production for example. I was working in Tenerife, Spain (on the Canary Islands) in the French opera *Manon*, by Jules Massenet. The cast and artistic team were from Spain, France, Italy, Korea, Armenia and the US. There were days when I had to switch between all five languages that I know!

Getting contracts is never an easy task. I work freelance, so I am constantly searching for jobs that can come from anyone, anywhere at any time. I work with multiple agencies, but I've also found work through my own research, through friends and colleagues and even through a Swiss singers WhatsApp group. Being a freelancer, the work is not always consistent. Sometimes there's nothing, and then all of the sudden, too much falls on my plate all at once.

As your reputation builds, how have your career options expanded? What are your dreams for the next 10 years?

Certainly the more I work and the more contacts I make, the better my chances are for more work. I don't have to do as many auditions as I used to, because I have people vouching for me.

My work has changed a lot since the pandemic. I work a lot more now within Switzerland, and I'm very

grateful to have been so welcomed into the singing community here. Things are better here, there are certainly more opportunities than in Canada, but it is still a constant uphill battle for work. The pandemic only exacerbated an already threatened industry. We aren't seeing the numbers for audiences returning. More and more opera houses and orchestras are shutting down, yet schools are still churning out new music students. Competition for work has never been higher, and pay is becoming less sustainable.

I've started to teach singing in Zurich, while getting my masters in vocal pedagogy at the Zurich Univer-

sity of Arts. I'm still singing, traveling and performing, but teaching has also been tremendously useful for my own practice and technique.

When will Uxbridgers get a chance to see and hear you close to home in the near future? Or do we have to fly across the pond to Bologna or Tenerife?

There might be something coming up, but I can't talk about it yet until the ink is dry. It's best to follow me on Instagram "@christina.campsall" or on Facebook for updates on all upcoming performances!

This interview was edited for length. Read the entire interview at thecosmos.ca

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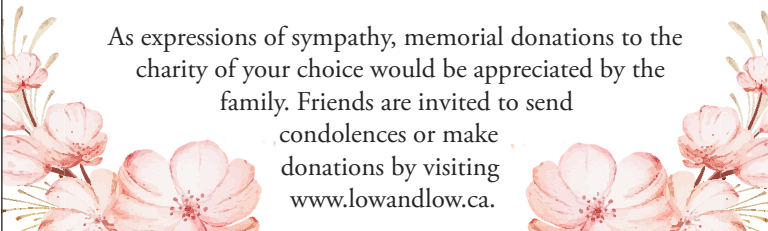
August 1, 1935 - December 7, 2023

Peacefully at Victoria Manor in Lindsay, on Thursday, December 7, 2023, in her 89th year. Lois, predeceased by Clifford, her husband of 61 years. Loving mother to her four daughters: Karen Millman (Warren Dexter), Judy Sanders (Perry), Janice Holland (Steve), Debbie Kea (Morgan Gerrish). Grandmother to nine and great-grandmother to nine.

Lois lived in Leaskdale for 62 years.

At her request, no funeral service was held. A private family graveside service was held at Foster Memorial Cemetery. Arrangements entrusted to Low and Low Funeral Home, 23 Main Street South, Uxbridge, 905-852-3073.

As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations to the charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family. Friends are invited to send condolences or make donations by visiting www.lowandlow.ca.



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