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# GEORGINA Post

April 24, 2020  
VOLUME 16 | ISSUE 08  
GEORGINAPOST.COM

**FREE ISSUE**

## Resident with COVID-19 walks out of group home amid outbreaks

By MIKE ANDERSON

Earlier this week a male resident walked out of his group home in Queensville to visit his mother in Toronto. The problem is he has COVID-19.

The resident, in his early 30s, lives at Stan Smith's Farm in Queensville, a group home operated by New Leaf for people with intellectual disabilities.

York Region Public Health was notified immediately, and public health investigators are tracing the resident's close contacts.

New Leaf Executive Director Ron McCauley would not confirm or deny the incident occurred due to privacy concerns but said that the group home cannot enforce a quarantine. "We do not have a legal right to confine people. We operate a residential setting, not a penal setting," he said.

"The people we support have an intellectual disability, but they are not criminals. Having said this, we do recognize that we have a duty of care toward the people we support."

"If a person leaves our care and we believe that they may be at risk to themselves or the community we act so that the person is safely dealt with by staff and safely returned to our residence," he added.

"If we do not immediately know where the person is we conduct searches and notify the



MOBILE SIGN AT WOODBINE AVE

## Georgina wants day-trippers to stay home

By MIKE ANDERSON

With the May long-weekend fast approaching, the Town of Georgina would normally be promoting its beaches and parks to day-trippers from the GTA.

But these are not normal times. And, day-trippers are decidedly not welcome.

The Town has placed a series of large mobile signs, 17 in total, at key entrance points, advertising that its public beaches,

parks, playgrounds, and boat launches are closed due to COVID-19.

The underlying message is blunt: "Georgina is closed. Stay home!"

The Town is also hoping that its website and social media channels get the message across, as well as ads placed in local newspapers.

But, just in case that doesn't work, it's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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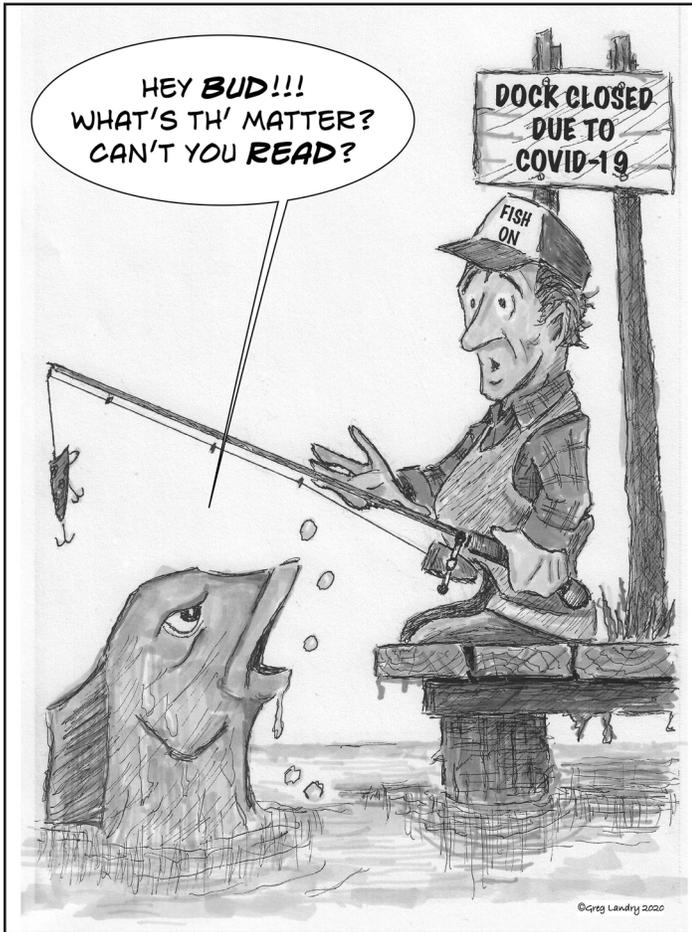
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COVID CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

police who assist in locating the missing person.”

Mr. McCauley said that duty of care also extends to the community.

“If a person who is COVID-19 positive were to leave one of our residences, we would immediately contact the police regarding his/her status, and we would follow up with a report to the York Region Health Unit.”

Managing residents who become infected is just one of the many challenges facing group homes during this pandemic.

Group homes no longer allow their staff to work at multiple sites, this has caused staffing shortages at some locations and existing staff are working longer hours, in some cases more than 60 hours a week.

Another is the alarming shortage of PPE, with some local group homes reporting that they have less than seven-days supply, forcing them to make appeals to the community.

As of publishing, four group homes in Georgina are now reporting COVID-19 outbreaks, according to York Region Public Health.

One of the first outbreaks occurred at a Pefferlaw group home operated by Kerry's Place Autism Service.

Located near Old Homestead Rd and Park Rd, the group home has a total of 11 COVID-19 cases; two residents, and nine staff members are infected.

“The two residents are currently in isolation, with no symptoms, and are under the care and support of our dedicated staff,” said Susan VanDeVelde-Coke, CEO and President of Kerry's Place Autism Services.

“Our staff members are also in isolation in their own homes. We are following the protocols for positive cases, as informed by York Region Public Health, which we expect will be ongoing for another two weeks.”

New Leaf's Sycamore House, located in Egypt, has also experienced a significant outbreak, with four residents and seven staff members testing positive for COVID-19.

In Upper Keswick, the Christian Horizon's group home has one staff member infected.

And, in Jackson's Point, Halsey Lodge is reporting one resident tested positive for the virus.

Georgina's group homes now account for 24 cases, most of the active COVID-19 cases in the municipality, according to York Region Public Health.

As of publication, none of Georgina's long-term homes have reported a positive case.

As to why group homes have been particularly affected, Dr. Karim Kurji, York Region's Medical Officer of Health, offered this explanation in his video update on April 20.

“Group homes do not have the same culture of infection prevention and control that long-term care and retirement homes have,” Dr. Kurji said.

“So we have been asking them to screen their visitors and staff at entry, and we have been asking them to monitor the residents twice daily. We have also been asking their staff to be wearing masks at all times.”

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## Letters to the editor

The world we now live in has changed forever. We have all come to a realization of this, and are learning to deal with new issues called “social-distancing” and no one, not even the WHO (World Health Organization), WTO (World Trade Organization), CDC (Centre For Disease Control) or any local, provincial, or federal government can make any assumptions on how this is going to affect us as a community, let alone as a society.

I am asking council to take a strong look at the planned expenses of the new Civic Centre, and the MURC – and place one of these (the MURC) on HOLD for a minimum of one year.

Forgive me for not knowing – but what has East Gwillimbury decided to do? Why are we not re-looking at a partnership? Why not re-look at the YMCA. Things ARE VERY DIFFERENT today than 8 months ago. Is the increase in the residential base on track with projections, I don't think they were last I reviewed.

Recently, the Town offered a program to match any donations made to the food bank out of major need and necessity, and a lot of money was raised – let me tell you if you don't know – other charities are in need of that support; and the need is on the rise – meaning we need to think MORE about our people here, food, and shelter and the

general welfare of our residents before building something in the range of \$40 million dollars.

In short, the MURC needs to be SHELVED for a minimum of ONE-YEAR; and I'm asking my councillor and all of you to consider this because of the uncertainty of this terrible virus that is dramatically impacting every walk of life, and disrupting the way we used to live. Let us error (or LEAD) on the side of caution with our expenditures. Now is NOT the time to be building the MURC.

*Forrest Jones, Keswick*

Our parents and grandparents lived through a lot of difficult times. WWI, lasting from 1914 to 1918, was the beginning of a series of challenges.

The only way to keep in touch with loved ones and friends on the frontlines was by letter, sometimes waiting months for a reply.

They dealt with material shortages and rationing and suffered the loss of family members and friends. Four long years the war lasted.

Through this they remained optimistic and retained their faith, learning perseverance, ingenuity and resilience.

Before the war ended the Influenza Epidemic of 1918-1920

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

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DAY-TRIPPERS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

DAY-TRIPPERS AT SHEPPARD WHARF

also running ads on several radio stations that reach GTA audiences.

“We want to ensure that everyone entering the Town is aware of current closures to avoid disappointment when arriving at their final destination,” Mayor Margaret Quirk said in an email to the Post.

“Not everyone is online or reads the newspaper, so we wanted to make sure this important messaging was clearly visible to both visitors and residents by using multiple communication methods. Keeping our residents and visitors safe is our priority, and we look forward to re-opening these popular areas when it is safe to do so.”

The Town is backing up its messaging with a big stick.

The Town’s bylaw officers and York Regional Police are authorized to enforce park closures and provincial orders.

Fines start at \$125 for a bylaw infraction and \$750 for a provincial offence. However, higher penalties could be assessed depending on the

severity of the offence.

Since the Town closed its parks, beaches and trails, bylaw officers have interacted with more than 700 people in those areas, however, no charges were laid, according to a spokesperson from the Town.

But that might change, especially if these areas are inundated with long-weekend visitors seeking to escape the city.

Residents have been asked to report anyone violating the closures by calling the Municipal Law Enforcement Division at 905-476-4301, ext. 2279; for after hours and weekends, call ext. 2281.

“If your call goes to voicemail, leave a detailed message including the date, time and location of the violation, and an officer will investigate,” reads the Town’s website.

While there were a large number of calls when closures were initially announced, calls have dropped off, in part because the Town says its education campaign is working.



## Scot DAVIDSON

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SUTTON BUSINESS SHUTTERED

## Council approves emergency grants for struggling businesses

By MIKE ANDERSON

On April 22, Georgina Council unanimously approved an emergency grant program for local businesses struggling to stay afloat during the COVID-19 crisis.

The program, called The Georgina Emergency Relief Benefit, will provide a maximum of \$7,500 in grants to eligible businesses in monthly installments of \$2,500.

The program will be administered by the South Lake Community Futures Development Corporation (SLCFDC), a not-for-profit organization based in Keswick, but funded by the Town to the tune of \$250,000.

South Lake Futures hopes to launch the program as early as next week, and applications can be obtained by contacting the organization directly.

The goal is to help local businesses pay their rent and utilities, as many are shuttered by the provincial emergency orders and have no revenue coming in.

"We understand the closures of non-essential businesses are creating extreme hardships," said Karyn Stone, Manager of Economic Development and Tourism, who is a key member of the Town's task force, which is exploring ways to help the community get through the pandemic.

"We've been looking at a number of options, and this

is just one of the options; to provide a grant program or emergency relief benefit to those that are most in need."

Ms. Stone said the Town's response is largely based on what other municipalities are doing, including Bradford West Gwillimbury and the County of Wellington, which have worked with a similar community futures program to provide grants to their local businesses.

According to Ms. Stone, local businesses will be eligible for the grant if they are a registered business and can provide financials, including tax returns, that demonstrate a 30 per cent loss of revenue during the pandemic.

"I think it's the right thing to do. I think it provides some funding to those businesses that maybe fall through the cracks with regards to federal programs," said Ward 4 Councillor Frank Sebo, who's own business in Sutton has been impacted. "Times are really tough right now. My store, for instance, has been closed since the second week of March. So, in terms of revenue, there hasn't been any, but there are still bills to pay."

To obtain an application for the Georgina Emergency Relief Benefit, contact Amir Doo, Community Economic Development Officer, at [adoo@soutlakefutures.ca](mailto:adoo@soutlakefutures.ca)

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JACK AND EMMA ENJOY ONLINE LEARNING

## Families adjust to distance learning as schools stay closed

By MICHELLE POIRIER

After three weeks of teacher-led distance learning, parents, students and teachers are giving it mixed reviews.

While overall student engagement is better than expected, there are nagging problems surrounding access to technology, and, for some students, especially those with learning disabilities, not enough one-on-one guidance from teachers.

Chloe St. Aman, a student in grade nine at Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Academy, is in the advanced placement program and is taking several subjects this semester, including science, math and English.

She signs in to Google Meet every day at 1 p.m. to meet her teacher for an hour and then works on the assignments posted on Google Classroom, spending approximately three hours a day completing work online.

Chloe's mother, Heather St. Aman-Salvati, said so far, she likes it. But there is a considerable amount of planning required.

"We had to create a whiteboard schedule on the wall to make it a bit easier to know when to log on each day," she said.

Ms. St. Aman-Salvati believes teachers are doing a good job and are available for questions. "But with math and science, it's hard without the one-on-one with a teacher," she said.

Julie Balmer and her children, Emma and Jack who attend R. L. Graham Public School, are also enjoying online learning.

"My kids love the freedom to choose their work time and to work without distractions," she said.

"The teachers have stepped up incredibly, and they cannot be praised highly enough."

Emma, who is in grade five, said she is worried she won't reach her "full learning potential" this way, but is positive about the work.

And Jack, who is in grade seven with a learning disability, said there are fewer distractions from other students, and he likes choosing his schedule.

As students and parents get used to distance learning, teachers are also adjusting to the new normal.

"It's had its ups and downs," said one elementary teacher, who didn't want her name published. "Lesson planning has been challenging because we don't know how long we're going

to provide distance learning.”

She also said that students with learning disabilities are struggling.

“We’re having difficulty reaching them because we’re talking only in messages.

The student is receiving the information, but they’re being forced to process it instead of me being able to explain it to them,” she said. “I’m constrained; it’s a challenge for our special needs kids.”

Shelly Gray, the parent of two autistic children, is finding it difficult to get her children to do the online assignments. Ms. Gray did not want her children’s names or school name published.

“My son doesn’t like it, but he’s doing it with a lot of help and prompting,” she said.

“The Ministry hasn’t taken into consideration our special needs kids, so we are somehow expected to not only care for them, our homes, get groceries, but school them also, which is much more demanding than online schooling for typical kids of this age.”

Her two kids each need one-on-one help. Her son, 14, is taking four subjects that require three hours a week each and her daughter, 11, has five hours a week of schoolwork.

Ms. Gray said she is thankful her sister is staying with them to help.

“We are managing it, but I go from positive about it, to mad at the Ministry to expect so much of parents who already have extra on their plates due to (COVID-19),” she said.

Another problem facing some parents and their children is a lack of high-speed internet access and up-to-date technology.

Alison Ho has a child in grade five at Keswick Public School who has been assigned school work, but their slow internet connection has made it

challenging to get online.

“It’s frustrating sometimes. If they decide to go live stream, we will only have a five per cent chance to be able to do it,” she said.

Michelle Sedore-Goodman didn’t have computers for her three children; a son in grade ten and a daughter in grade nine at Keswick High School, and a daughter in grade two at a Jersey Public School.

She had to pick up three laptops from their schools, but they weren’t ready in time. Her younger daughter, for instance, was two weeks behind in her lessons before she got her laptop.

“I think this is running forward too fast for our schools to catch up. My hopes are high for my children and all the students to succeed at this, but I feel like no one is quite ready, schools, parents and students, to take on such a huge task of online learning when it is still in its baby steps,” she said.

Both YRDSB and YCDSB state on their websites that they are doing everything they can to make sure that students have access to a computer, tablet or some kind of technology that will allow them to complete their assigned school work.

On both websites (yrdsb.ca, ycdsb.ca), you can also find tips for parents and students adjusting to distance learning.



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# Captain Cernel makes movie night magic with home delivery

By MICHELLE POIRIER

After bringing movie magic to Georgina for 22 years through The Gem Theatre, RJ Gorman, a.k.a. Captain Cernel, is now on a mission to bring some of that magic to your home with RJ's Popcorn.

Mr. Gorman has partnered with Offsides Bar & Grill in Keswick to set up his industrial popper and is using his secret recipe to make popcorn that has 'straight from the movie theatre' taste.

He then dons his Captain Cernel superhero suit, and with help from his team members, delivers popcorn to families in Georgina.

"The motivation was just to put some smiles on some people's faces because God

knows we all could use a smile today," he said.

Mr. Gorman said the kids get super excited when they see his Captain Cernel costume.

"You show up with a bag of popcorn, you know, you're a hero," he said.

Brittney Kramer, resident of Keswick, ordered some of RJ's Popcorn for her family.

"We were all so excited. It made for a great family movie night and was so nice to taste that goodness we were all missing," she said.

Chrissy Maude, resident of Keswick, and her daughter Bella, ordered the Family Fun-sized bag of popcorn and decided to share.



ALLI, CHANTELE, RJ, EMMA

"My six year old was the most excited, and even more excited to split it up and make six goodie bags to drop off to our neighbor's porches," she said.

"I printed off a movie date night card and attached them to the birthday bags. Then we filled them with the popcorn, using gloves of course, and put enough little chocolate bars for each of their family members.

We then just knocked on their doors and left them on their doorsteps and walked away. As

we walked away many of her little friends shouted a big giant "Thank You!" out their windows."

It's not just kids that can enjoy a popcorn movie night; he wants people to enjoy self-isolation movie dates.

"Send them over a date night bag and then watch the movie together on your phone," he said.

All safety precautions are taken, gloves and masks are being worn while making and delivering the popcorn, and social distance is kept during

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CAPTAIN CERNEL

pick up or delivery.

Mr. Gorman is offering a Date Night Bag for \$7 and a Family Fun Bag for \$19. The Family Fun Bag is approximately three feet high.

"I've had such a ride with the kids and the popcorn bag being bigger than them," he said.

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# COVID-19 Updates and information

**The following are closed:** Playgrounds/parks, dog park, basketball and tennis courts, skateboard parks, trails, sports fields, Town boat launches and fishing areas within Town parks.

## Council Meetings

The Town of Georgina has begun holding virtual Council meetings. These meetings will be broadcast as usual through the Town's live streaming tool. Visit [georgina.ca/CouncilMeetings](http://georgina.ca/CouncilMeetings).

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Wednesday, May 6  | 9 a.m. |
| Wednesday, May 27 | 9 a.m. |

If a member of the public wishes to participate, email the Town Clerk, [rdillabough@georgina.ca](mailto:rdillabough@georgina.ca). Comments must be received no later than noon the day before a scheduled meeting.



## See someone violating Town closures? Let us know

Georgina by-law officers can issue fines as high as \$750 for violation of the provincial orders during COVID-19. If you see non-compliance, call the Municipal Law Enforcement Division at 905-476-4301, ext. 2279 or 2272. For after hours and weekends, call ext. 2281. If your call goes to voicemail, leave a message and an officer will investigate. Learn more at [georgina.ca/COVID-19](http://georgina.ca/COVID-19).

For all the latest information on COVID-19 follow us on social media and visit [georgina.ca/COVID-19](http://georgina.ca/COVID-19).

Customer Service: 905-476-4301  
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# MEET POTATO! CLEARWATER FARM'S "WORLD-FAMOUS" CHICKEN

**CLUCK-CLUCK!**

Which side of me has  
the most feathers?  
The outside!

## HER GOAL?

To help the planet by bringing you  
and your kids closer to nature.

Visit Potato at [clearwaterkids.org](http://clearwaterkids.org)  
for videos, games, and tips for  
outdoor adventures!



Partners:





SALLY SCHENRAUBE

## Routes offers phone call service for residents feeling isolated

By JAMES BURROWS

When you're anxious there's nothing better than hearing a friendly voice at the end of the phone.

That feeling of being connected to friends and a wider community is what Route's new service, Friendly Calls, is trying to provide for residents who are feeling isolated during the pandemic. Routes Connecting Communities is a not-for-profit based in Georgina that typically provides affordable transportation options – mostly through a network of volunteer drivers – for seniors and low-income residents who need to get to medical appointments, community events or grocery stores. But these aren't typical times.

"What we were noticing is that the people we normally help are not using us right now because so many things have been canceled," said Routes Executive Director Danielle Koren, who's recruiting some of her surplus volunteer drivers to do the phone calls.

According to Ms. Koren, the conversations between clients and their volunteer drivers often provide essential emotional support and a sense of connection to the community.

"Many of what we call 'caring conversations' along the way don't take place right now. So there must be people out there

who are isolated and lonely. So what we decided to do is take the caring conversation out of the car."

Friendly Calls is staffed by pre-screened volunteers, many of whom are volunteer drivers matched up with their previous clients, that provide confidential conversations over the phone for those who request their service.

The service matches participants with volunteers who have similar hobbies and shared interests to make a personal connection a little bit easier.

"I've been a driver for 15 years, and I listen to a lot of stories," said Sally Schentaube, 79, a volunteer driver for Routes.

"I know that there are people that are desperately lonely at the best of times. Some of my riders, the only time they get out is when they go for a medical appointment. People are used to a nice ride around the country, and that's not happening."

"So I think it's really important to hear a friendly voice at the end of the phone."

To receive a call, or if you'd like to volunteer, visit the Routes website at [www.routescc.org/friendlycalls](http://www.routescc.org/friendlycalls) or call (905) 722-4616. Their office hours are Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## Beautiful veggies. Vision. Commitment to Community.



*I am grateful to be part of providing the basics for life, and to have that sense of purpose every morning. I hope you are able to find things to be grateful for in this new world we are living in. - Alex Powell*

Dear Georgina Residents,

These words by one of ClearWater Farm's Young Agripreneurs express how all of us are feeling right now. We are helping to renew this lakeside educational farm and are trying to expand our capacity in the community.

**We are employing more people** - our small market farm using regenerative principles will have 14 people working with us.

**We are growing more food** - our weekly food baskets are in demand, and we are creating a Share Your Food program to get fresh vegetables to neighbours in need.

**We are supporting neighbouring small farms** - and the local economy by purchasing their products for our food basket program.

**We have just launched an interactive website for kids** - although we can't deliver children's programs at the farm, we hope kids at home will enjoy our farm virtually: [ClearWaterKids.org](http://ClearWaterKids.org)

Inspired by nature, we hope that ClearWater Farm will soon be able to help write Covid's NEXT chapter - recovery - as we wonder exactly how we will be living differently. To find out more and see how you can get involved, please visit [clearwaterfarm.ca](http://clearwaterfarm.ca).

Yours sincerely,

Annabel Slaight,  
Founding Chair

ClearWater Farm is the flagship project of the Ontario Water Centre (OWC), an educational charity whose mission is to (re)connect young people with the natural environment to support a sustainable future.

LETTERS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

known as the Spanish Flu struck, killing over 50,000 Canadians. Throughout this struggle they cared for family, friends, and neighbours without thought to their own well being.

Care for your fellow mankind and treat others as you would like to be treated, lessons learned and passed down to their children.

Less than a decade later they had to deal with the Great Depression and a struggle to economically survive throughout the thirties. A shortage of money, food, jobs and economical opportunities for almost a decade.

The lessons learned, the importance of a hard earned dollar, careful monitoring of finances and the importance of family and friends.

Then came WW2, 1939 to 1945. Loss of sons, daughters, husbands, wives, friends and neighbours. Separations of up to

four years as spouses served overseas. Rationing, material shortages and more economic sacrifices to endure. Again the importance of family and friends, and the need to work together for world peace, important lessons learned and remembered.

It is hard to imagine the struggles and challenges endured by the generations before us. The lessons they learned from their life's obstacles were past down to us. Let us remember them.

All we can do is follow the guidelines set down by, the various levels of government be patience, stay safe, and continue to look out for our family, friends and neighbours.

And Remember: We Are A Fortunate Generation!

*Tom Glover, Georgina Historical Society*

OBITUARY

**Roland Peacock 1940-2020** Roland Peacock's passing on March 27th has left us without our "Georgina Environmental Ambassador", our conscientious objector to all environmental damages and threats to our natural landscape.

His talent in wood carving became an outlet for expression of his passion and sympathy for abuses he witnessed in the natural environment within the Town of Georgina.

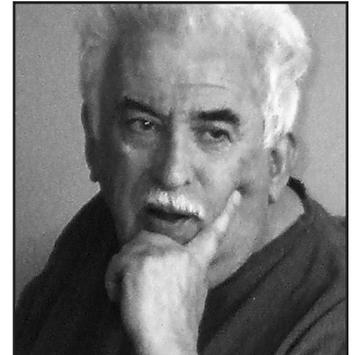
Many of his splendid carvings mirrored the agony he felt that nature suffered from either pollution, overuse, or disrespect. Among the issues he tackled were the Georgina Thane Smelter (a long battle), the pollution and water loss in Maskinonge River, and the never-ending misuse of pesticides in agriculture (resulting in bee decline and loss of wildlife habitats).

I was always aware of how well he understood scientific issues, when he often called me to discuss impending threats to the landscapes of Georgina or further to the world. He was unique in his capability to express as much as he could in his magnificent carvings, always armed with a new carving project to symbolize a new

threat, expressly aimed at nurturing sympathy for nature.

I will miss his regular calls to announce situations that developed as will other members of our small circle of people who joined him in his quest for environmental care. He was a modern-day Aldo Leopold or John Muir, in his cause for the environment, and will be missed.

*John Hicks*



CLASSIFIED

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