

OTR

MARCH 2021

THE IRON ►►
HAND IN A
VELVET GLOVE

Pg 10

Special
**JIM MASON:
LIFE IS CIRCULAR**

Pg 16





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Cover: Randy Smith of BodySmith, and Ken Burrows of Stouffville Spirit. Most photographs by Dennis Hristovski.



▲ TIP OF THE MONTH ►

Besides making wine and experiences, Gallucci Winery has kept their chef busy making spectacular sauces and soups. Currently available - Roman, Arrabbiata, and Old Fashion Italian sauce, and Tuscan Bean Soup. It is a worthwhile stop. Also, a new dining deck amongst the vines has been built, opening Spring 2021! 13204 Ninth Line. gallucciwinery.com.

FROM THE EDITOR

On the Road in Whitchurch-Stouffville (OTR) is the Monthly magazine of the Town. The purpose is to communicate with residents, promote local businesses, support agriculture, develop tourism and, most importantly, **build community**.

This issue is circular. It started with Jim Mason recommending that I write a story about Sandy MacKenzie. Sandy in turn told me stories about Jim. I decided to interview Jim. Jim's life has circled back to his younger years. As it turned out, Sandy had circled back to Stouffville, because it reminded him of how his home in Thornhill used to be. As well, Pat at Mas & Paws circled back to her home of Ballantrae. Michelle finds a new home at the Stouffville Public Library, Josh finds a new home in Ballantrae, and Ohan hikes a forest from his childhood. Beyond good stories, I hope this issue brings to light (again), the virtues of living in a "small town".

This issue brings awareness to six businesses, and eight matters of community importance. Contact Bruce Stapley for limited advertising placements at bstapley@sympatico.ca. (1)

David Tuley, Editor & Designer
Economic Development Officer, david.tuley@townofws.ca

Water billing audit goes before Council
Review's recommendations include enhanced customer service, complaint resolution

Glenn Jackson, Contributor

This is a monthly column summarizing recent Whitchurch-Stouffville Council decisions. Subscribe to our eNewsletter for more detailed information: eepurl.com/cKPNgg

Water Billing Audit Report. Following an increase in resident inquires regarding water billing and the new water meter installation program, the Town undertook an external audit of its policies and procedures. BDO Canada LLP conducted the audit, and the findings were presented to Council on February 2.

Council received the Report, which contained several recommendations. Staff will now begin to analyze and implement the changes and report back to Council later.

Amongst the recommendations were a number pertaining to customer service, including the "enhancement of the approach, processes and systems for handling water billing inquiries and complaints" to increase call handling efficiency.

The Report recommended the Town consider billing one-third of its water customers each

month, which would catch billing anomalies quicker and more efficiently. It was suggested the Town should move customers to monthly billing only if they currently have automated electronic billing set up. Those customers who receive paper bills in the mail would remain on three-month billing cycles. This would help encourage customers to move to electronic billing through the Town's website *Virtual Town Hall*, the Report said.

Once customer service call volumes are analyzed, it was recommended that the Town determine the appropriate resource requirements needed in the Customer Service division, tax and water division and the Public Works Department to improve customer satisfaction.

It was also recommended that the Town review and update the existing customer complaint policy and approach. According to the Report, this could be achieved by "mapping key administrative processes, controls, roles and responsibilities for the Water Billing and Customer Complaint process."

The Report suggested that to achieve a better customer service approach, the Town should "work to define a shared organizational vision around public relations, policies, processes, and communications with respect to water billing."

To help achieve this, the Report suggested the Town develop a Water Billing Communication Strategy to "increase the public's confidence in water billing and (to) reduce the number of calls..." and a Customer Service Strategy, including complaint resolution training and setting customer service standards.

Upon Council's decision to accept these recommendations, it is now up to Town staff to analyze them and potentially implement them. Staff will report back to Council later with a progress update. (1)

COUNCIL MEETINGS:

Under the current COVID-19 situation, meetings are generally 1 p.m. every other Tuesday via teleconference. Detailed information at townofws.ca/COVID19
Listen live: townofws.ca/cmlivestream.
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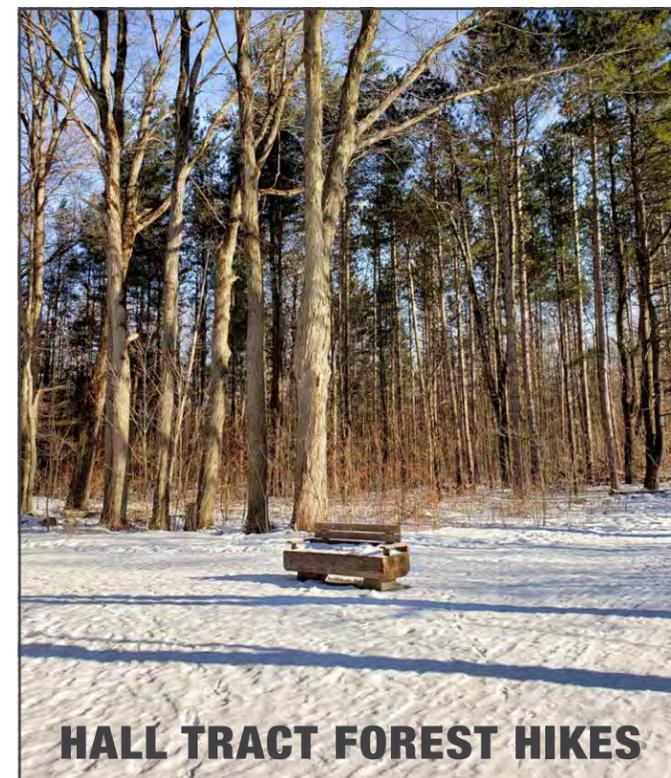
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MAYOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON

diversity & inclusion

Jake MacAndrew, OTR Journalism Student

Last year, Mayor Iain Lovatt formed the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Diversity & Inclusion. Recently, I interviewed Stouffville's mayor for an in-depth look at the new venture.

The purpose of the committee is "to help the town analyze decisions, programs, and services through a lens of diversity; making recommendations that promote inclusivity and equity." Although the committee was formed in June 2020, it was not scheduled to commence until this year. Mayor Lovatt said this is because, "when racial tensions started to escalate in the summer (referring to the death of George Floyd and Black Lives Matter Protests), I made the decision to fast-track a committee being formed in town... there was too much happening in the world not to respond."

The original plan was for the committee to form guidelines with staff in 2020 before becoming an official town committee in 2021. Mayor Lovatt added, "The easy thing to do would have been to wait, but the right thing to do was to start it early."

Mayor Lovatt remarked, "As our town continues to grow and diversify, we must ensure that the voices of all residents are heard."

In the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, there are seven subcommittees. The current subcommittees consist of Education, Language Inclusivity, Library, Planning, Pledge, Purpose and Website and Social Media.

Each subcommittee works in a different area of Diversity and Inclusion within the town. Atsushi Yasuda, chair of the Purpose subcommittee, states, "As a first generation Japanese-Canadian and a long time



[top to bottom, left to right]
 Camille Henry, Education Subcommittee Chair
 Remy Shath, Planning Subcommittee Chair
 Eleni Tsorova, Pledge Subcommittee Chair
 Steffan Watson, Website & Social Media Subcommittee Chair

Stouffville resident, I wanted to contribute to a vision that embraces the uniqueness that every resident brings to our community and to harness our differences to create a rewarding experience for everyone. And the Mayor's Diversity and Inclusion Committee was a great platform to support that vision and to spread the word!"

Currently, a pledge has been created by its respective subcommittee that the Mayor is hoping the town will adopt at a later date. In February, the education subcommittee spread awareness for Black History Month. Their initiative was a virtual calendar featuring people, movies, etc. from the Black community. Future plans for the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion include initiatives such as adapting the town website to use inclusive language. This will be completed when the site is redone later this year.

Although there are currently multiple subcommittees, "some have longevity and some are task-oriented," says Mayor Lovatt. The exact function of each subcommittee will morph over the coming months. As Mayor Lovatt "reads the tea leaves", he believes the committee will function more on the educational side in the future.

For a better understanding of the committee's function, here is a possible initiative. Mayor Lovatt brought up the idea of looking for ways to make the Stouffville Ribfest more inclusive to our community.

He remarked, "How do you make it more inclusive to those who don't eat pork or are Halal? We think 'everyone has a Ribfest' but we don't think what it means to the broader

community and how holding it excludes members of the community."

That's where the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion comes in. It will be up to the committee to make recommendations on how to make an event more inclusive.

As the committee launched many months earlier than planned, it is not established as an official town committee. When it becomes official later this year, a resubmission process will be initiated.

"Serving on this committee is important to me because as a first-generation Caribbean-Canadian parent and educator,

I want to do the work that will support Stouffville being a community where all residents feel safe, welcome, represented, and celebrated," said Camille Henry

If interested in joining the committee, the application process will commence once the committee is transferred from the Mayor's office to the town. Mayor Lovatt estimates this will happen in the first or second quarter of 2021. The newly formed group will focus on diversity and inclusion in town events and communications in partnership with town staff representatives. [1]



[left to right]
 Atsushi Yasuda, Purpose Subcommittee Chair
 Julianne Walker, Inclusive Language & Admin Subcommittee Chair



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[above] Sandy MacKenzie at the Downtown Stouffville agency - 35 years in business. [right] Sandy with team mascot Rosco, and Heather, Pam and Gerrie.

meet sandy mackenzie

by David Tuley

Sandy began his career as a claims representative for State Farm Insurance in Sarnia in 1978. He and his wife Michelle moved back to Thornhill the (once upon a time) small town he grew up in to become an agent in Scarborough in 1981.

Fortuitously Michelle was in Stouffville one day visiting a chiropractor and called Sandy on the phone to say, “We’ve always loved Stouffville, why don’t we look for a house.” Finding a house, he asked his real estate agent if there were ever office locations for rent. The next day she returned his call to say that she had spoken with Bunny Burton who had bought and was renovating a house on the Main Street and was looking for

a tenant upstairs. Seventeen years later he bought the building. He has been extremely lucky and fortunate to move to Stouffville and to surround myself with the best team and clients that I could ever hope for.

Sandy speaks frequently about how lucky he has been. His small office which started with one part time team member has now grown to four. Heather, the office manager has been with Sandy for 17 years. “Heather delivers on her promises to clients,” said Sandy. “I could not do it without her.” Pam specializes in Life, Health and Disability insurance, and Gerrie’s focus is on Commercial insurance. Marina (not pictured) has recently joined the team as

well. Sandy’s team alone has over 100 years of insurance experience.

Sandy has been fully immersed in Stouffville for the past 35 years, volunteering in different organizations, coaching and playing hockey, soccer and baseball and is a very proud Stouffvillite.

Heather suggested Gerrie would be a perfect fit for us. We had both known Gerrie for over 20 years and knew her expertise and knowledge of Commercial Insurance. Marina started in September and is currently learning our system however was off during the COVID lockdown.

What makes his office so successful? “Integrity is all or nothing. We are

committed to our clients and take care of them as we would want to be taken care of.” Sandy describes the daily interactions with clients, friends and neighbours as having fun. “We work hard, every message is returned the same day and we have fun at the same time.” Fun is obvious with this

team. Pictures are proudly displayed of Christmas parties and summer gatherings held at local establishments.

Jim Mason had suggested that I write an OTR story about Sandy. Sandy was very excited. “Who would want to write about a local insurance agent,” he said shyly. Sandy

told me stories about Jim and how Jim challenged a Toronto radio station to friendly matches. As with many events, Sandy has circled back to his roots, which he found in Stouffville. [\[1\]](#)



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Ryder McIntyre, Stouffville resident drafted in 2020 by the Sarnia Sting of the OHL, pictured with Mitchell, Personal Trainer at BodySmith.

Ontario Hockey League teams harvested a bumper crop of Stouffville residents during its annual Priority Selection last April. The five Stouffville teens picked in the draft of 2004-born players were:

- Michael Buchinger, (2nd round, Guelph Storm)
- Ryder McIntyre, (3rd, Sarnia Sting)
- Coulson Pitre, (4th, Windsor Spitfires)
- Ryan O'Dell, (10th, Oshawa Generals)
- Christian Holden, (15th, Erie Otters)

McIntyre, O'Dell and Holden were members of the 2013 Stouffville Clippers Novice team that won the Whitchurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association's first-ever OMHA championship at the AA level.

However, the OHL season was put on hold by COVID-19. League officials have maintained hope that a partial schedule will still be salvaged, with the approval of the Ontario government and local health agencies.

THE IRON HAND IN A VELVET GLOVE by David Tuley

You may not have known that Randy Smith is here, but he has been all around you. BodySmith International has been located in Gormley for the past 10 years, just behind Greenhawk Equestrian on Gormley Industrial Boulevard, near-by Famous Sam's Diner. Randy has been the Strength and Conditioning Coach for the Stouffville Spirit since 2003. He also is regularly conducting conditioning training in Soccer City with clients.

With BodySmith's Sports Performance Training, Randy and team have trained a list of professional athletes as long as your arm, including NHL hockey players such as Steven Stamkos, Michael Del Zotto, and Cameron Gaunce, in addition to skiers, cyclists, and gymnasts. Professional athletes are not the only clients at BodySmith, but these have formed Randy's bread and butter during COVID-19, as they are the only athletes allowed training during lockdown. However, BodySmith trains many youth, high school, and collegiate level athletes.

Randy is affectionately known as the 'Iron Hand in a Velvet Glove'. "I help people get into the best shape of their lives, perform at their peak

potential athletically, and live healthy and fulfilling lifestyles. We approach the science of eating and exercising from first principles, looking at how the body works, how it interacts with food and stimulus, and then how to rewire and teach new habits and integrate them into healthier lifestyles," said Randy.

Tampa Bay Lightning's Steven Stamkos wrote, "I started with Randy when I was 13 years old and he got me started on the right track. As many people know, lifting weights at a young age can stunt your progress as an athlete, so I was lucky to have worked with a professional like Randy to get me started on the right path... I went on to work with Randy for 6 years, and I owe a lot of my successes as a hockey player to him."

Canadian Snowboarder Lyndsay McAlpine once wrote that Randy's "No-nonsense attitude and continuous encouragement motivated me to reach new levels in my sport and with my training - both physically and mentally. I have never worked out so hard in my life! The training was intense, but the results were profound! Not only was I in the best shape of my life, but my performance during competitions went from mid-ranking to consistently ranking in the top 10."

The most prolific athlete currently at BodySmith is McKinley Hunt, she is on

the Canadian National Women's 15s Rugby Team. "She is in her first year of pro, playing for the Exeter Chiefs in the premier-ship league in the south of England," says Randy. "She will be home at the end of April, at which time we will begin to get ready for the Rugby world cup in New Zealand in November. She is a pretty big deal with all the athletes at the gym. She has been with me since she was 15 years old." added Randy.

Just recently, BodySmith won "Best Sports Performance Centre" in the GTA for 2020; the Global Health & Pharma Awards are based out of the United Kingdom. They also won the Innovation and Excellence Award for 2021 Corporate Livewire, in the Sports performance Training centre category, as Sports Performance Centre of the Year. The majority of Randy's business is referral based – word of mouth and parental references. He has been involved in the fitness industry since 1980 and opened BodySmith International in 1994. Randy's family originally moved to Canada from Jamaica in 1971. He was raised in Newmarket.

Starting this month – March 2021 – BodySmith launched an online training program for Ages 9-12. All that is needed to participate is a small area in the basement. For more information see: bodysmithinternational.com. (1)

MY HOME AWAY FROM HOME

by Michelle Larocque, Freelance Writer

"I went to the library and cried in the bookshelves today knowing I wouldn't be back for a long time. Did I tell you the library is one of my happy places?" I wrote these words to my new email pen-pal – emailing being the only way to make new friends during a provincial shutdown amidst a global pandemic. It was mid-December and the province had just announced a new set of restrictions which included closing libraries and community centres.

That day I frantically perused the shelves for anything I might enjoy reading – murder mysteries, a dark humorous story about a dysfunctional family, a coming-of-age story - it would be harder to choose books after the library closed and reverted back to curbside pickup. What am I going to do? I thought to myself as I walked out of my happy place hugging my bag full of books knowing there was nothing else left open anymore...

I moved to Stouffville March 15, 2020 and in the first few weeks of the first provincial shutdown I was busy unpacking boxes and eager to explore my new community. I was excited to venture through all the nature trails and to walk around the streets of the old town. The novelty of my new community kept things exciting – for a while.

Weeks went by and there was no good news coming from the province. What was happening? I tried my best to keep myself and my kids busy. I ordered books online and sighed at the amount of money I'd be spending. I waited and waited for weeks and weeks as my packages didn't arrive. Things were getting grim.

We need books! I thought in desperation as my kids got more and more bored; tired of going out for walks and playing Monopoly.

As spring slowly shifted to summer, we received our first piece of good news. The Stouffville library was offering curbside pickup! Hooray! I hurried online to set up an account and immediately placed some books on hold. Books! Books! We have books! The world already seemed like a better place and I felt a great love for all the people who made the Whitchurch-Stouffville library curbside pickup a reality.



Michelle Larocque at her "happy place" - the W-S Public Library

I checked the website for the library in my old neighbourhood. Perhaps they too offered curbside pickup? But they did not. Having a much larger network to accommodate it wasn't until well into the summer before they were able to coordinate that sort of service. I was grateful for my new community – a community that was intimate and able to give me what I craved most. Books.

My kids and I often walked down to the library in those early days of curbside pickup – the librarian at the door to the community centre would recognise us when we gave her our name – "Oh, yes, you've been here a few times." she'd said pleasantly. I smiled behind my mask.

In January, as my kids and I slogged our way through a second provincial shutdown and virtual school we were comforted by our regular walks to the library as a new book became available. "Is anything ready for pickup today?" my son would ask looking forward to the excitement of another installment from the Wings of Fire series.

Walking to the library has become part of our routine. If we're not picking up

books, we're bring some back attempting to avoid more late fees (but I don't even mind the late fees; they're giving me somewhere to go). I've learned that one of my former neighbours works at the library and I look forward to catching up with her whenever she happens to be minding the door watching for eager curbside picker-uppers such as myself.

"What is it about the library that gives you that happy feeling?" my pen-pal asked in response to my email. Why do I love the library so much, I wondered? Is it the calm and peace of browsing through books? The anticipation of finding my next great read? The knowledge gained from new ideas? Maybe it's all those things.

As the province begins its vaccine rollout I look forward to the day where I can wander, mask free, through community events that up to now seem mythical in nature. Until that day, I will continue to look forward to the visits with my new and old librarian friends. Standing on the sidewalk, or in the bookshelves, I'm still at my home away from home. (1)

The Return Home to Ballantrae

by David Tuley



Plunging down the path to a beloved Dog Park, one of five outdoor areas at Mas & Paws Pet Resort

After almost thirty years away, Janet Prince-Sidor has proudly returned home. She was raised on Iroquois Drive in Ballantrae. “We were one of the first residents on the street,” Janet recalls. Janet’s roots run deep in Ballantrae. She attended Ballantrae Public School and Stouffville High School. Her first job at age fourteen was at the Ballantrae Fruit Market. “Sandy and George were very customer service oriented. I’ve always given them credit for my business sense today,” she said. She thoroughly enjoyed servicing the Ballantrae community for many years and getting to know all of the families.

For the last few decades, Janet lived in Newmarket and during that time, while home on a maternity leave from a corporate job in 2005, Janet had an idea to start a dog walking business to supplement her income and she and a friend launched a small walking service for exercise and something to do. They named it Mas & Paws since two Mom’s were walking dogs and the business name reflected that well. Unfortunately, they returned to work, but Janet remembered the event with much fondness. Janet left her corporate opportunities in 2015 and resumed her passion for dogs and relaunched a successful dog walking business in Aurora and Newmarket for several years.

In the summer of 2019, when a property

called Rosewood Pet Resort near Ballantrae became available, remarkably zoned for a kennel, a rare and hard-to-come-by designation, she jumped on it. This property had been in operation for well over thirty or more years with several owners, including Rosewood Pet Resort and Happy Tails. They operated mainly as a “traditional kennel”, with few outdoor amenities and catered primarily to boarding and training. Janet’s mission was to transform it from a “kennel” to a “Resort”. Shortly after Janet took over ownership, Covid-19 came into the mix and people stopped travelling, and the need for boarding dogs became zero. Janet did not see Covid-19 as an obstacle in her path, and promptly changed their business model to doggy daycare. Her perseverance has paid off and hopes it will expand further in the future.

Janet says with a big smile “We are not a kennel, we are a Resort...there’s a big difference! We are crate free and proud of that.” Each dog has access to interior suites for rest and eating times and each suite has their own water and food bowls, dog beds and blankets in an immaculate, spotless environment.

“I took ownership of this beautiful property and Resort just before winter of 2019,” recounts Janet, “I had a vision for the outdoors to be expanded into a fully fenced

two-acre dog park on the ten-acre property and arranged for installers to start it immediately upon possession.” Janet had her dream dog park installed and fenced fully from their Resort before the winter weather was in effect. In addition to the dog park, there are four large backyards to use as well as outdoor runs for the dog suites to enjoy during their rest/sleep times.

Mas & Paws is truly a family endeavor and their home is attached to the Resort. Janet’s husband, Jack and youngest of two children, Rachel contributes daily. Their employees are Leslie (Manager), Sam (Pet Care Specialist) and Sandra (certified Groomer) and altogether they make it a daily team effort to exceed the expectations of their clients. Their eldest daughter, Megan is currently away at University and comes home and helps when she can.

Janet says that excellent customer service and customer trust is critical. “It is truly an honour to be trusted to care for our client’s dog(s)” said Janet. “Dog owners are just as important as the dogs. We communicate, send them regular photos, and our dog guests are always supervised 24/7.”

For more information and some enjoyable video clips, see [masandpawspetresort.com](https://www.masandpawspetresort.com).

Rachel Sidor, the 'Dog Whisperer', with her mother - Mas & Paws owner Janet Prince-Sidor





a new home in Ballantrae

FIRST CHOICE FOR PETS by David Tuley

Josh Louie hails from Brooklin, descending from a family of entrepreneurs. “I studied entrepreneurship at university, and I have always loved pets,” he said, “So I combined my interests. This is my passion – creating long term relationships with customers by providing high quality pet food, which gives their pets a longer, happier life.”

Josh developed a business plan and began to seek a location for his first pet store. He found Ballantrae and loved it. “The new plaza is beautiful, it has the only Tim’s in town and the community is so welcoming. Soon there will be a boutique grocer, restaurants, nail salon, pharmacy and a variety of medical offices. This will be the hottest location in Ballantrae,” he said.

“I had a soft opening in January 2021, but then the second lockdown came.” Right away, Josh had to revise his business plan around curbside pick-up and free local delivery of pet food and supplies. However, new customers are finding him every day.

First Choice for Pets has a franchise look and feel to it, but Josh reassures me that this

is an independent business. “An independent has the advantage of bringing in what people want and need. We are more flexible, and like to specialize in locally made holistic and natural remedies,” said Josh.

Josh has a friendly demeanor and exudes a lot of passion for his pet store. “One day, maybe this will become a chain of pet stores that remain in underserved, rural area,” he said. “I love this environment and the people.”

Our photographer Dennis Hristovski recounted that during the photo session at First Choice For Pets a customer came in. “I was impressed with Josh’s customer service and knowledge of his products. He’s definitely big on products made or sourced locally. The customer has a 15-year old dog who developed skin irritations. Vet bills have been climbing with steroids prescriptions and specialty food. Josh suggested a small bag of all-natural dog food, along with a spray. She was blown away how inexpensive it was and felt very confident leaving the store to have her dog try out these

products,” said Dennis.

“Our focus is to carry local, Canadian brands as much as possible that have limited ingredients, fillers or additives. I want the community to build the store, by bringing in what they request so that we are a one-stop shop. I’m taking special requests all the time,” said Josh.

For now, First Choice for Pets delivers for free in a 10km radius around Ballantrae. He is considering expanding free delivery to all of the L4A postal code. Also, make note that the store offers a frequent buyer program with many brands of pet food, a Seniors Day the last Tuesday of every where the majority of the items in store will be 15% off, and monthly draws on their instagram page - [@firstchoiceforpets](https://www.instagram.com/firstchoiceforpets) where contestants can win free toys/food/treats etc.

For more information, visit Josh at 15301 Highway 48 Unit 5, or go to their web page at [firstchoiceforpets.ca](https://www.firstchoiceforpets.ca).



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MARKET EVALUATION



Jim Mason out for a hike at Drysdale Woods.

JIM MASON by David Tuley LIFE IS CIRCULAR

Jim Mason bought his first snowblower since childhood this winter. “Up in Thunder Bay we always had one,” he recollected. Jim was raised in Fort William, which was later renamed Thunder Bay after amalgamation. “I always liked sports,” said Jim. He played basketball and was invited to try out for his hometown university team but an ankle injury sidelined that dream. But it led to another opportunity.

Jim always enjoyed reading non-fiction. He liked journalism but didn’t have a career in mind. He attended university

at Lakehead. “A classmate, the incoming editor of the school paper, spotted my cast, asked how the injury occurred ... and if I wanted to be the sports editor of The Argus next year.” That led to writing for Thunder Bay’s community weekly. From 1978-1981, he worked for Lakehead Living, starting as a part-time sportswriter and, after graduation, advancing quickly to editor at quite a young age.

Jim met Charlene up there. She was from Toronto but working for the provincial government in Thunder Bay. Charlene moved

back to Toronto and Jim followed. Jim got a job with Metroland in Toronto but was laid off during the recession of 1982. “I was filling in at The Hockey News in Toronto, thanks to new editor Bob McKenzie (now of TSN), and got to cover the Maple Leafs during training camp,” he said. Another opportunity would arise.

During that temp job, Jim read an advertisement for an editor position with a “new newspaper northeast of Toronto”. It ended up being the Stouffville job, with the new Sun, that he would retain until retirement in 2016. He’d never been here. The population sign read 12,500. “Charlene and I drove to Stouffville, met some residents and merchants and soon realized this was a very good place. My end goal was in sports writing, but this was an undeniable opportunity to be involved in a start-up,” said Jim. “People were very inviting in Stouffville. Growing up in Northern Ontario, small towns were very small, but here, since growth was gradual, newcomers had a chance to be welcomed.”

Jim and Charlene bought the only new house that was for sale in Stouffville. It was located on Spring Street, just off Main, on the former Brierbush Hospital site. They were married in 1983 and celebrated their reception at the new house.

At the helm of a new job, Jim had less than two weeks to get the first edition of the newspaper out. “I phoned people from every community organization. People were so kind, open and welcoming. One of the first stories we did was about how Stouffville had been named for one of the friendliest towns in Ontario, and it was true,” said Jim.

Over the years in Jim’s long career, there were many memorable moments. Valentine’s Day weekend, 1987: the “Stouffville Royals” were in a friendly match against the CFTR Radio (now 680 News) team. Tom Rivers the morning host of CFTR liked to insult Stouffville, reported Bruce Stapley, with things like:

“The groundhog came out and saw his shadow today. That means six or more weeks of 1963 for Stouffville.”

Stouffville Royals had handily beaten the radio team the past year, while this year if CFTR wins, Rivers becomes Mayor for a day, but if Stouffville wins – Mason will take over the radio show for a day.

“Those were great times,” said Jim. “We won. I did take over the radio show. They

were the biggest top 40 radio station in Toronto... We had so much fun and got lots of publicity for Stouffville. Everyone was talking about it.” Pre-Internet, Rivers always knew what the local newspaper was up to. It turned out that there was a “mole” that would deliver our paper to Rivers’ office whenever he was written about – it was a food delivery man, Mark Fockler. “I saw Rivers at the Markham Fairgrounds 10 years later. His wife said that Tom had saved all the clippings from these stories and had relished the rivalry, as well,” recounted Jim.

Small-town newspaper editors were often asked to act as a moderator for local debates and to emcee events. In 1988, Master of Ceremonies Jim Mason presided over a special banquet at the old Ninth Line Legion hall to honour Keith Acton’s return from Edmonton from a momentous Stanley Cup win. Keith was the second Stouffvillian to have his name inscribed on the cup.

“A friend of mine, Dave Wood, who owned a local restaurant (The Greens) in Stouffville cooked up the idea for the event. Keith’s former coach from the Peterborough Petes came back as the keynote speaker; Roger Neilson was fantastic. Roger kept calling me with many questions about Stouffville – I couldn’t answer many of them,” said Jim. “So, Roger started his speech with ‘Jim Mason is the most boring guy in Canada – he doesn’t know where the local pool hall, hotel or anything is located.’ After the event, they searched for Roger for a photo, but he had already left. “I found him on the side of the road across the street with his dog, changing clothes back to jeans. But he quickly changed back and did a great front-page photo shoot with Keith. What a guy.”

Municipal memories? There were two farewell roasts for Mayor Wayne Emmerson “who retired from the same job twice.”

“The roasters thought - hadn’t we already done this? It was like Groundhog Day,” said Jim.

A landfill site on Hwy. 48 south of Ballantrae, and the chemicals deposited in it, were province-wide news in the 1980s. Ironically, the Bob Rae government proposed a landfill site for locations across Stouffville and Markham 10 years later. After loud protests, the plan was dumped.

In 1989, one of Canada’s cutest babies was found in Stouffville. Jaelyn Mason, the 2.5-year-old daughter of Jim and Charlene

Mason, was selected as one of 12 babies out of 18,000 by Johnson & Johnson in the 3rd annual photo contest. The 12 winners were featured in the annual J & J calendar and received a \$10,000 post-secondary scholarship. The winning photo was taken by Jim in the Eldred King Woodlands near Ballantrae. “Charlene came up with the catchy title - the sky is falling,” Jim recalled.

Jaelyn was the firstborn of three kids. A chip off the old block, in 1997, Jaelyn won a Provincial Young Authors Award. In Grade 4 at St. Mark’s School, she had been hand-picked by her teacher to submit a 3,000-word story and won. She later graduated from OCAD University and then Seneca in interior design and has moved back here. Jaelyn and husband Tyler have a son, Finnegan, who turns two next month. “We go back to the spot of the baby photoshoot every Thanksgiving.”

As for Jim and Charlene’s other children, Ryan also graduated from OCAD and Centennial College. He works in the design department at GM, and Jenny their youngest lives in Calgary. Jenny works for Environics Analytics. She went to Ryerson for her B.A. in Geographic Analysis and her Masters in Spatial Analysis. “We’re really proud of all three of them,” said Jim.

One comical event occurred when Jim was covering a Town Council meeting in 1990. Council held a Planning meeting in the Stouffville Arena lounge in order to improve accessibility. However, the acoustics were so bad that no one could hear the garbled words of a speaker. Councillor Ron Robb asked to make a motion - and was passed hand lotion. ‘No,’ he said, ‘a motion that meetings are not held here anymore.’ Council turned to the press and asked if they can hear anything. Jim Mason and Tracy Kibble look at each other and shrugged, not having heard a thing.

In 2000, Metroland bought the former Uxbridge Group. Three years later, the Stouffville Sun and Stouffville Tribune officially merged to become the Sun-Tribune. -- From 2000-06, Jim was editor of both Stouffville papers and the Markham Economist & Sun. “Those made for long days,” he said. “Another adventure.”

The Stouffville papers won a wall full of plaques and trophies in provincial, national and North American competitions. Mason received the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee medal, business person of the year award from the local chamber of commerce and a Melvin Jones Fellowship from the Stouffville

Lions Club.

But it’s friends that are most cherished. “It is very cool to walk down Main Street and see so many people you know,” said Mason, who was honoured at a sold-out roast at the Legion hall when he retired.

“Journalists see people on their best days and worst days,” he said.

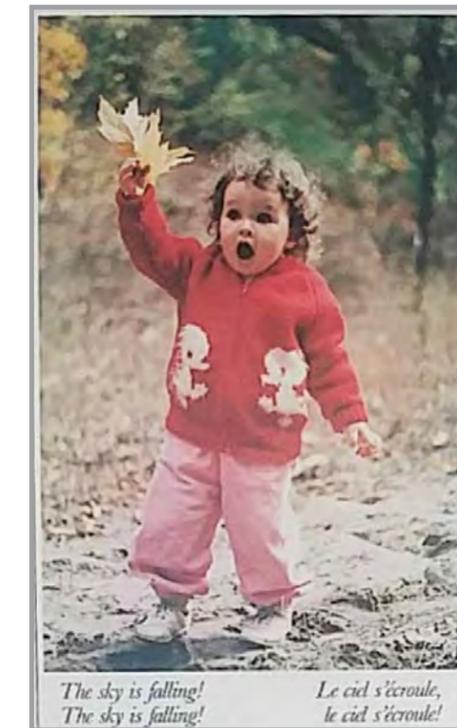
Election nights, festivals and sports championships are tops for Mason. Tragedies, death and criminal cases are the flipside.

For the past three-plus years, Mason has worked as communications director of the 22-team Ontario Junior Hockey League and tour manager for the Jason Wilson Band – highlighted by a 13-night Maritime trek in 2017.

His community involvement includes the Terry Fox Run, Spirit Jr. A Hockey Club, Emergency Care Fund, Stouffville Cares refugee support group and St. James Presbyterian Church.

Thirty-eight years later, Jim writes a sports column for OTR – just like he did when he started out in the business during the 1970s. Much like his recent purchase of a snowblower, things have circled back to his youth. (U)

One of Canada’s cutest babies was found in Stouffville. Jaelyn Mason, the 2.5-year-old daughter of Jim and Charlene Mason





[left] A nice single-track section in Drysdale Woods, [right] A typical avenue through overgrown Christmas trees.

DRYSDALE WOODS YRF by David Tutley

In 2013 York Regional Forest acquired an additional 136 acres of land. The land came through to York Region by a donation from the Drysdale family who owned and managed it for 62 years. It became known as the Drysdale Woods Tract.

The Drysdale's acquired the property around 1950 and began to grow Christmas trees on it. Early on they supplied the American grocery chain Kroger's with Christmas trees. In the 1960s, they started offering a cut-your-own tree to the public. By the 1980s, the operation had become a full-time endeavor.

Drysdale Woods is a pleasant forest tract. It features a mix of overgrown Christmas trees and a naturalizing deciduous forest. The trails

are generally wide, but there are some nice tight areas in the back.

On this day it was lightly travelled. York Region Forest published a map back in 2013, but it seems to be intentionally missing from any trail guides since. A parking lot was built along York-Durham Line within the last year or so – it doesn't even show up on Google Maps, but can be seen on Bing Maps. From the west side of Drysdale Woods, one can cross Ninth Line and walk into the east side of Hollidge Tract; for that matter, you could make your way through connected forests to McCowan and beyond.

While walking on the trail I admit to miss-navigating twice, missing a small loop in

the southwest, and then missing an alternate return to the parking lot. A section of trail on the south side passes a picturesque horse pasture and some beautiful views (please, leave the horses alone – this isn't a petting zoo and keep your dog on a leash). Generally, the trails are very gentle, with exception to one slippery hill.

A bonus was finding a signed record-sized "Ironwood" tree (*ostrya* - 'Hop-hornbeam'), supposedly the biggest in Ontario, not to be confused with the Musclewood or American Hornbeam, also known as Ironwood (*carpinus*). This forest is a good choice if you are trying to avoid some of the more crowded forest tracts. (U)

STOUFFVILLE RESERVOIR

by Ohan Stamboulian

Approaching the dam from its Millard Street entrance, the Stouffville Reservoir is more than a simple line of trees surrounding a pond and has three trail options for hikers of all abilities to choose from. What is typically a muddier walk spent dodging surfaced roots in the summer is a smooth hike in the winter, with the winding trails consisting of hard-packed snow over well-loved soil.

For 10:00am on a brisk Wednesday morning in February, the trail traffic was very light as I had almost the entire conservation area to myself. Hiking all three loops took approximately two hours total, allowing time to stop and enjoy the sights of laughing children playing pond puck, a stream of running water under my feet at several bridges, and a nice (distanced) chat with two lovely jacket-wearing dogs and their humans. I encountered only one other walker on my hike, but we had plenty of space to pass each other, twice. There were no cars along the road when I arrived and only one when I left, though the hockey players were likely either parked in the adjacent subdivision or came by foot like I did.

This trail system is very simple to follow and would be difficult to become lost, but I did use a trails app to track my analytics. Starting at the reservoir dam, walkers can take the shortest route which does not enter the forest (1.0km), the middle trail (1.9km), or the longest trail (2.4km) which is always my preference. If you're looking to get your heart rate going with altitude you may want to consider another featured tract, as the highest elevation gain you'll get here is an intangible 12-meters. Trail routes within the forest are narrower but stepping aside to let others pass is an easy accommodation.

Wildlife during the winter months here is a little tougher to spot, but there are many visible tracks along the way. You may also be lucky enough, should you choose the medium trail, to come across the forest's resident barred owl at the northern section. She isn't shy, but you may need to call back and forth with her until you get her attention.

The Reservoir is the perfect lunchtime outing for those working from home, as these trails are within walking distance for those living within Stouffville and either loop can be completed within the hour. It is also ideal for those looking to spend more time outdoors before or after work and school, or for the outdoors enthusiast who isn't bound by any particular time constraints, as having explored this forest for the entirety of my 26 years, I'm still finding new corners of it. (U)

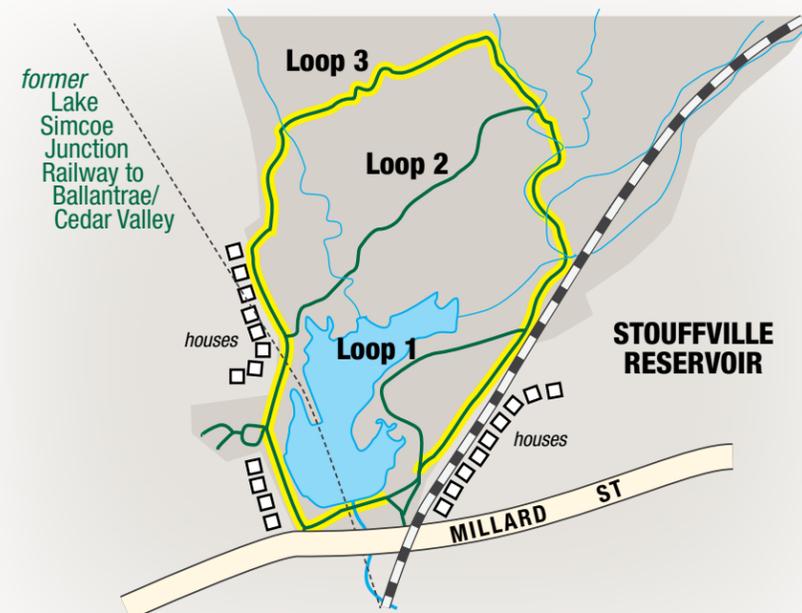
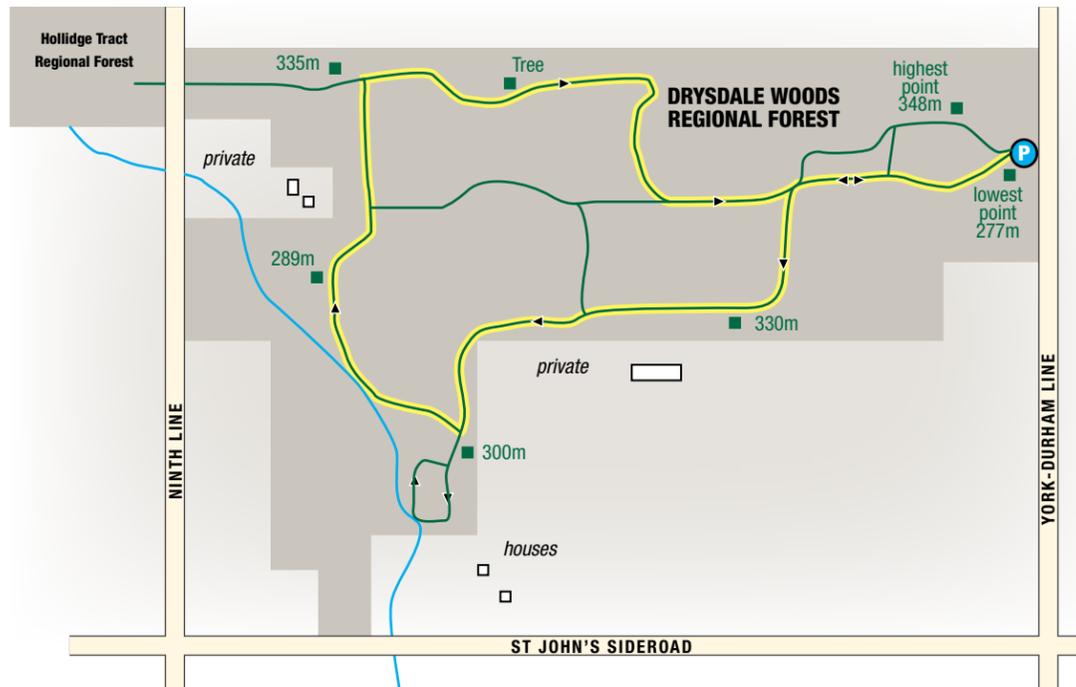


[above and right] Ohan walks the marsh and visits the lake.

Trail: Stouffville Reservoir
Time: 40 minutes
Distance: 2.4 km
Difficulty: Easy
Starting Elevation: 271m
Elevation Gain: 12m
Forest: Mixed
Highlight: Bridge over creek and tree forts
Traffic: Light this day



Trail: Drysdale Woods
Time: 41 minutes
Distance: 2.7 km
Difficulty: Easy
Starting Elevation: 280m
Elevation Gain: 120m
Forest: Mixed
Highlight: A record tree
Traffic: Light this day



STOUFFVILLE SENIOR OF THE MONTH GRAYDON CARD

AGE: Graydon is 81 years old

A STOUFFVILLE RESIDENT SINCE: He arrived here from Edmonton, Alberta, 53 years ago.

FAMILY: Graydon and his wife Norma have two great children and three wonderful granddaughters. Both children have worked in the local business as have all three granddaughters, the latter on a part time basis. Graydon's daughter Ainsley works with him full time as the store manager.

CAREER: After graduating from Ryerson in 1962 he joined the Marketing Department of Imperial Oil in Toronto. Following that Graydon was transferred to positions in Winnipeg and Edmonton. In 1968 he joined with his father and brother Neil to purchase a hardware store on Main Street in Stouffville. The business eventually outgrew its original location and, in 1984, it moved to a plaza that they had built in the west end of town. In 2010 the business moved to its current location in the old Firehall on Main Street where it has continued to flourish.

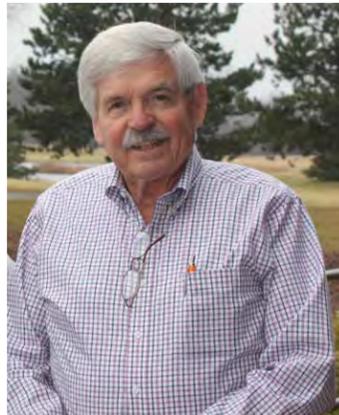
LIFE'S HIGHLIGHTS: The best highlights of Graydon's life were his marriage to Norma and the birth of their children and grandchildren.

Others include extensive travel and the opportunity to raise a family and meet so many true friends in the great Town of Stouffville.

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*Learning During COVID-19, November 2020 - NWEA Research; How Kids Are Performing, Fall 2020 - Renaissance Learning



Susan's TIP-OFF

with SUSAN TUCKER



A HUMBLE BEE The Art of Candle Making

What do you do when you're in a high stress job, need some time to clear your head to get back on track? Well, you take a vacation, wander the surrounding artisanal community and stumble across a new and fresh pursuit. That's exactly what Natalie Tin did when she discovered the art of candle making. The more she saw, the more her eyes widened at the possibilities, so she jumped in with both feet and began researching methods, raw materials and suppliers, then started experimenting.

Once she got her formula down pat, the manufacturing, marketing, advertising, selling, shipping, and the myriad of other duties fell squarely on her shoulders and Humble Bee Candles was born! She started selling her candles as a vendor at our amazing Strawberry Festival, and she continues to expand her horizons to other markets in Ontario and soon to be (fingers crossed) across Canada. Natalie is 100% behind sustainable eco friendly resources, and provides her candles in a reusable glass container, with a wooden lid snuffer (thereby not requiring you to blow out the candle, spreading wax on your table and setting your smoke alarms off!).

They are then packaged in a reusable wooden box which can afterward be used for whatever your heart desires... storage, jewelry box, secret snack stash, lots of options, she also includes instructions on using it as a planter. And you won't find her using any plastic bags, you'll get a reusable fabric bag to carry all your goods.

In addition to working full time, making candles as her relaxation therapy after work, she also does candle making workshops and

classes at various community centres and libraries in the GTA, and of course because of you-know-what, for the time being, they are all done virtually. She has a lot on her plate and is excited to recognize the amazing support from family and friends in helping to make her dream a reality.

The product line is beginning to expand into reed diffusers and lip balm and she is excited to partner with other local artisans to offer personalized packages for gift giving, but we won't tell if you love them so much you keep them for yourself. Through various networking channels she has connected with and is currently working with a select few local creators to provide jewellery, silk flowers, bees wax wraps and a few other goodies to create unique, local, handmade gift packages...she calls it 'friends helping friends'.

Mark your calendar for December when you'll see her Advent calendar called 12 Days of Local Love, a new surprise for each day. She also offers laser engraving for the personalized touch

Natalie's first and favourite candle fragrance was discovered on a trip to Thailand where she found local vendors making various oils, she started with Japanese Cherry Blossom which continues to be one of her best sellers. She has approximately 40 different scents varying from tea to ice cream to floral (and lots in between) that she uses to create her masterpieces, so you're pretty much guaranteed to find something to your liking. Need a small-ish candle? Humble Bee creates candles in small tins with an approximate burn time of 20 hours, and the aforementioned glass containers burn for about 35 hours. You can find the candles locally at Reesor's Market on Main St., and also online at www.humblebeecandles.com

This quote from the website describes the Natalie I met...kind, humble, hopeful, passionate and enthusiastic. "Humble Bee is a Canadian local business that's passionate on creating candles, lip balms, bath salts and fizzy with only natural ingredients. We hope to sprinkle kindness, humbleness and joy to those whom receive our products. We believe everyone can make a difference, a little bit at a time. Never give up on Hope. Choose Kindness and laugh often"

Natalie, I wish you every success in this exciting venture. (U)



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THE GOODNESS AROUND US

So, all these months I have been writing about giving back and how people can give back. Whether it be volunteering your time or donating in one way or another. Well, I thought this would be a good time to spread some of the goodness that is going on all around us and hopefully spread some sunshine along the way.

For months now people have been doing drive-by birthdays, anniversaries or just a drive-by to cheer someone up. I have participated in several of these and I have to say it was fun, now that may be because my social calendar consists of making sourdough bread and re-arranging the utensil drawer, but it is such a great thing to see all the people out for one unified reason, to make someone smile. I know a couple of friends that had a couple of birthday drive-bys on the same day and then a third at the last minute, so they got creative and made a birthday sign that they could change out the name, so creative!

Someone told me about a "pay it forward" at Starbucks that went on for over an hour, now that might be a slight embellishment but the sentiment is there, and when the first person who had their order paid for decided to continue the gesture little did they know it would go on for well after they finished their coffee.

As most of you know I wrote about the Open Cupboards at Stouffville United Church and St. James Church in a previous story. I was speaking with Jo Parry about the Stouffville United Church Open Cupboard the other day and asked how it was going. Jo said she was very happy to say that every time she goes by to check it is always full of new items, people are using it and people are restocking it.

I was talking to Debbie Powell from The Powell and Gallop Real Estate Team who started Hearts for Heroes. The idea was to place a heart in one of three locations in town with your hero's name on it. Whether it be a loved one, health care provider or teacher, or whoever your hero is. You could write their name and or a message to honour them and place it at one of the following locations, on the front porch tree at 6173 Main St., on the lit town tree at 6240 Main St., or on the lit gazebo downtown. Debbie also told me about her and her team bringing Valentine's cookies to Buckingham Manor for all the residences and staff. They not only brought cookies but had individual cards for everyone as well. Such a great idea, can you just imagine the smiles and joy it brought to those on the receiving end.

My family had a little sunshine sent our way recently. It was a cold day in January, and I noticed someone at the front door, no knock or anything, just my dog letting out a half effort bark. As I got to the door I noticed a beautiful basket on the porch, a beautiful yellow wrapped basket. There were all kinds of goodies in it that were also all yellow. The card read "This is a Basket of Sunshine" it went on to say, "We hope it brings you a little warmth, joy and fun". It was from a neighbour, you know who you are and thank you again! It was so nice, kind and thoughtful of them and it definitely added a much-needed lift and sunshine to our family.

See, all we need is to prop each other up a little, give each other a virtual pat on the back or hug. Kind gestures go a long way and can really make a positive difference to someone. It could mean turning their day around for the better. Do it, it will make you feel good too.

So, as I said I have been focusing on "Giving Back" and highlight how people can give back in so many ways. There are so many initiatives out there trying to spread a little happiness and joy. Well, I am changing things up a bit and will be writing stories periodically about just



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that in hopes that in the process I can spread a little sunshine along the way. So, if you have an uplifting put-a-smile-on-your-face story about someone spreading joy or someone that was on the receiving end please reach out to me, I would love to hear from you. Just a little disclaimer here... Sorry in advance but I will not be able to include everyone who sends in. (U)

Lenore Ramer's pop-up 90th birthday party; see page 24 for more.



From WHERE I LIVE

with BRUCE STAPLEY



BIRTHDAY ON ICE COVID-19, Winter Chill No Match for Lenore Ramer's Big Day

Rochelle D'Souza is a woman of her word. When a long time promise to acknowledge her friend Lenore Ramer's milestone 90th birthday with a grand celebration looked like it might be out of the question due to the pandemic, Rochelle got to work on Plan B.

She emailed Lenore's friends and family members, inviting them to gather in front of Lenore's home in the Northern Gate Retirement Community at noon on February 8 for a socially distanced surprise birthday bash. Lenore's daughters Sandy and Melody were to get her out the front door by suggesting they go for a walk, at which time she would be regaled with a rousing rendition of Happy Birthday to You from those assembled.

"I had always told Lenore I would throw her a big party on her 90th birthday," said Rochelle, who in her role as Stouffville Legion Seniors Chair has made a name for herself connecting people with community. "But with the pandemic I realized I couldn't do that. So I thought if we could all get together on her front lawn that would make her so happy."

Rochelle took the necessary pandemic-related precautions, telling everyone to wear a mask and bundle up as the temperature would be hovering around -10 C. She even went so far as to get the okay from representatives of the regional health department to go ahead with the event.

When the big day came, Rochelle provided the cake, gifts were lined up on the front porch, and an assortment of balloons and other birthday paraphernalia were scattered across the porch. Capping the festivities, Jason Goodis

from Smash Kitchen in Unionville donated 30 meals to the seniors gathered for the celebration, with the food dropped off to their residences later in the afternoon.

"They caught me unawares," said Lenore. "For years Rochelle had been telling me she was going to get me but with the pandemic I figured I was off the hook."

The day before her actual birthday had seen Lenore's sons Ron and Steven drop by for champagne on the front porch, with a family Zoom gathering held in the afternoon including her two grandchildren.

Lenore was also honoured on the occasion of her 90th birthday with certificates from Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Lain Lovatt, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Markham-Stouffville MP Helena Jaczek, and Markham-Stouffville MPP Paul Calandra.



Lenore Ramer waves to her friends after they sang Happy Birthday to You to mark her 90th birthday.

For Lenore, life has always been about packing as much activity as she could into a 24 hour day. Born in Markham, she has resided in Stouffville since 1951. Her career path was long and varied. She was employed by Imperial Lift, Dinnies Grocery Store and the Peek Frea cookie company before a 25 year stint at the CIBC in Stouffville, working simultaneously at a dress shop in Markville Mall and selling cosmetics part time.

Upon her retirement in 1993 Lenore, who had dreamed of being a nurse when she was younger, volunteered at Markham Stouffville Hospital doing tours for school children. She eventually indulged her love of travel by spending 20 years as an escort for a seniors travel agency in North York. "I had itchy feet since public school, and this opportunity came to me when I left the bank," said Lenore. According to Rochelle, Lenore became known

CONTACT Bruce Stapley, bstapley@sympatico.ca

for her ability to source unique destinations. "She knew how to choose a spot and her choice of restaurants was always superb. She did cruises to Greece and the Caribbean and made trips to Italy, Amsterdam, Portugal and England, as well as trips to the Canadian East and West coasts. She extended her love of travel to all of us."

Lenore has been a Strawberry Festival volunteer, performed in Music Mania, and has been on the Northern Gate social committee. She loves music and can always be found at Rochelle's dinner dances at the Legion. An avid curler, bowler, softball player and skater in her day, Lenore remains an advocate for keeping active. "I keep busy. I can't wait till the pandemic is over so I can get back in the pool," she said.

In recent years she has become a whiz at

technology. "At the age of 86 Lenore bought an iPad and learned to operate it efficiently," said Rochelle. "She can face time with her children wherever they happen to be in the world."

Lenore keeps her mind sharp by doing 1,000 piece jig saw puzzles, completing crosswords, playing various card games and reading. According to Rochelle she is an expert cook and baker. "She is famous for her home made ice cream."

As for the special place in her heart given the surprise celebration to mark 90 years of passionate, non-stop living, Lenore was gushing with gratitude.

"I thank my friends, family and acquaintances for the best wishes and shout outs. There are not enough words to express the joy you brought to me on my 90th birthday. I will never forget it! Thank you Rochelle for organizing such a memorable moment." [1]

HOMEGROWN LEAFS' ASSISTANT GM LIVING HIS DREAM Stouffville's Brandon Pridham parlayed college internship into 22-year NHL career

We watch a hockey game and identify players by their names and numbers. Not Stouffville's Brandon Pridham. "I wouldn't be telling the truth if I didn't see some dollar signs flashing on the back of jerseys, both our team and others," he said during an interview last month.

Officially, he's an assistant general manager of the Toronto Maple Leafs. He's also a man of unofficial titles: "cap guy," "CBA wizard"... Then Leafs head coach Mike Babcock just called him "Prids" in media scrums.

"You're always thinking that there might be a comparative player on another team..." Pridham said of his viewing habits, "or if there's an injury situation... I guess I'm always seeing cap hits."

Pridham grew up in Stouffville and played his first hockey at the old Stouffville Arena, on what's now greenspace across Park Drive from Latcham Hall. "The chicken wire (instead of glass) behind the one end, I remember that," the now 46-year-old said with a chuckle. His rep team, the Stouffville Polar Bears, had a stuffed bear for a mascot, which would often get stuck to the fresh, wet ice on the centre dot at the Park Drive barn.

The Stouffville teams all became the Clippers in the early 1980s. Pridham played two years of peewee for the Stouffville squad that won a championship at the prestigious Quebec International Pee-Wee Hockey Tournament in 1986, shortly after moving into the new Stouffville Arena.

Many of his elementary school and youth hockey friends remain his golf buddies today. He met a girl back then, too, elementary school classmate Sue Baston. They'd

STOUFFVILLE'S PRIDHAMS: Brandon, Jack, Olivia and Sue.



reconnect following university, get married, have two children and settle back into their home town of Stouffville.

The Pridhams are now "the proud hockey parents" themselves. Daughter Olivia, 17, recently committed to the U SPORTS team at McGill University in Montreal. Son Jack, 15, was to play AAA bantam this year for the York-Simcoe Express, before COVID-19 derailed the youth hockey season in this part of Ontario.

Brandon's route to the Maple Leafs was indirect but paved with solid advice and superb timing. He severely damaged a shoulder sliding into the end boards while playing Jr. A in Collingwood. So much so that the surgeon told him he'd "better hit the books". He wore a brace when he returned to the team more than a year later but realized "any scholarship hopes were basically done".

After studying kinesiology and marketing at York University, he enrolled in a one-year, post-graduate course in sports marketing at George Brown College, largely for the internships it offered.

Brandon's placement was with the NHL offices near Pearson International, a "dream" gig in the league's retail licensing and marketing department. He'd stay on with the NHL for 15 years, moving through Central Scouting and the league's central registry where he's credited with helping draft the collective bargaining agreement that came out of the 2012 lockout. At team president Brendan Shanahan's urging, he joined the Leafs in 2014 as assistant to the general manager.

There was no conversion ceremony

SportsTown with JIM MASON



CONTACT Jim Mason, jimmason905@gmail.com

necessary for the kid who grew up in Stouffville wearing blue and white while worshipping Doug Gilmour and Wendel Clark. "I remember going to Leaf games, walking up from the subway on College Street, the streetcars, the murals on the wall, the whole thing ... that scene out in front of Maple Leaf Gardens," he said. "And the Leafs were on every Saturday night in the house, for sure."

Pridham was elevated to assistant general manager in 2018. Player contracts and the application of the CBA and salary cap – for the Leafs and their competitors – are his major roles. "Especially this season, it's been very busy, with taxi squads and different anomalies brought on in the NHL these days," he said. "It's constant contact with (GM) Kyle (Dubas), as far as setting daily rosters, with players going back and forth, and getting ready for games pretty much every other day. But it's nice to be busy again. That's been the uniqueness of this season."

Pridham deals directly with player agents, a switch from Lou Lamoriello's more hands-on time as GM in Toronto. Pridham enjoys the negotiations while crediting the mentor Lamoriello, now the GM of the New York Islanders, with sharing his wealth of knowledge.

Like many of us, Pridham is largely working from home these days, rather than the Leafs' offices at the Ford Performance Centre in Etobicoke. He's one of the few in attendance at home games at the Scotiabank Arena, where social distancing is strictly enforced. Working in the sport he loves, at its highest level.

"No different than for any of our minor hockey players, that's your dream," Brandon said. "To work in it for 22 years now, I've been phenomenally fortunate." [1]

March 2021 COMMUNITY NEWS

THE TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

Notice of Council Meetings

Agendas for Council and Public meetings will be available for review at the Municipal Offices, Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library and on our website at 12 p.m. (noon) the Thursday prior to the meeting.

Upcoming Council Meetings:

- Tues., March 2, 2021 - 1:00 p.m.
- Tues., March 23, 2021 - 1:00 p.m.
- Tues., April 6, 2021 - 1:00 p.m.
- Tues., April 20, 2021 - 1:00 p.m.

Upcoming Public Meetings (if required):

- Tues., March 23, 2021 - 7:00 p.m.
- Tues., March 30, 2021 - 7:00 p.m.
- Tues., April 20, 2021 - 7:00 p.m.

As the Municipal Offices (111 Sandiford Dr.) are now closed to the public, residents may listen to the meeting live online at townofws.ca/cmlivestream.

Anyone wishing to submit comments, which will form part of the public record, may write to the Town Clerk at clerks@townofws.ca. Anyone wishing to provide verbal comments may be invited to attend the meeting electronically, please contact the Town Clerk at clerks@townofws.ca for more information.

Follow all council meetings on Whitchurch-Stouffville's official council Twitter account @ws_townhall.

Join our Council E-Newsletter at: eepurl.com/cKPNg9 and receive meeting agendas and summary reports straight in your inbox.



TALK OF THE TOWN PODCAST

News, events and happenings around town with host Glenn Jackson

New episode every Monday on:
Facebook - SoundCloud - townofws.ca

Please Clear Around Fire Hydrants



With the recent snowfall and more expected in the forecast, Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire & Emergency Services is reminding residents of the importance in keeping fire hydrants clear of ice and snow.

A fire has the potential of doubling in size every minute and can consume an entire room in as little as three minutes. A snow covered fire hydrant delays fire suppression efforts which could result in additional property damage, injuries, or even lives lost.

We are very appreciative to residents who continue to keep area fire hydrants clear. Let's continue to ensure that the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is a fire safe community.

Winter Parking Reminders

As a reminder, vehicles are not allowed to park on neighbourhood streets overnight between the hours of 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. Violators may be ticketed.

Residents that require parking for driveway repairs and overnight guests may obtain a free parking exemption from the Town for up to 12 times a year per license plate. Visit townofws.ca/parking for more information.

Purchase Your Dog Tag

Your municipal dog licence helps the Town facilitate the following:

- Issuing an identification tag for your pet
- Help us reunite you and your dog quickly when they are found. This reduces the stress a dog may experience from staying at a shelter for an extended period of time.
- When attending to your pet, licensing allows us to contact you in case of emergency so we can make vital decisions regarding the care of your pet.
- Licensed dogs receive a free ride home to reunite with their owners, should we or the public find a dog straying from their property wearing a tag.

Purchase and renew on our website at townofws.ca/doglicences

Call To Artists

Art in the Park
Saturday June 12, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Memorial Park

We are currently accepting artist applications and invite you to be one of the many fine artists at this show and sale. To request an application, please e-mail: ashley.chappell@townofws.ca

Call To Vendors - Farmer's Market

Now looking for vendors for our 2021 Stouffville Farmer's Market.

Saturdays from June 26 to October 2
9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at 19 Civic Avenue

For more information, please contact joan.crosbie@townofws.ca or call 905-640-1910 x2470

Movie in the Park Dates

June 18 & 25,
July 16 & 23, and
August 20 & 27

In Memorial Park. Bring your lawn chairs and blankets and enjoy family favourites under the stars!

Stormwater Pond Skating

Please do not skate on the Town's stormwater ponds. These ponds are not intended for skating on and the act of doing so can be very dangerous. Stay safe, everyone!

March 2021 COMMUNITY NEWS

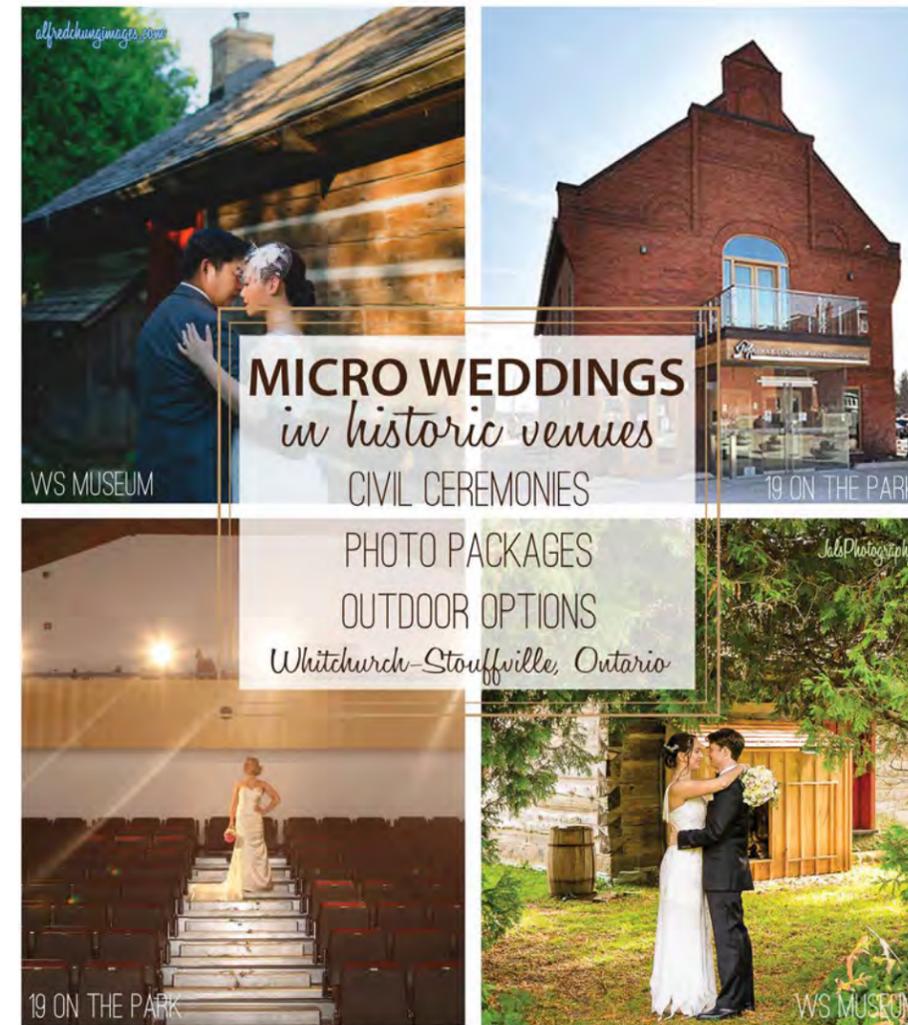
THE TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE



Whitchurch-Stouffville's COVID-19 recovery plan

- Up-to-date information
- Family fun ideas
- Service availability

StouffvilleReopens.ca



MICRO WEDDINGS

in historic venues

CIVIL CEREMONIES

PHOTO PACKAGES

OUTDOOR OPTIONS

Whitchurch-Stouffville, Ontario

Book with us now and let us help you safely host your wedding, family celebration or intimate gathering. Event dates from May onwards are available.

W 19 ON THE PARK 905-640-2322 19RENTALS@TOWNOFWS.CA
WS MUSEUM 905-727-8954 WSMUSEUM@TOWNOFWS.CA

While COVID-19 has temporarily interrupted the social routine many of us are used to, now is the perfect opportunity to get creative and continue to foster personal interactions. If you are missing your family and friends, here are some ideas to make your isolation a little less lonely.

- **Pick up the phone:** Sure, physical distancing means you can't sit side-by-side with your best friend and watch your favourite television show, but there is no reason you can't call them while in your pajamas and munching on a bowl of popcorn while you chill in separate houses.
- **Revive the pen pal trend:** Use the mailbox to send grandparents new fridge art, begin a story and ask the recipient to write the next chapter and return the letter, send a handmade card or a simple family update. Keep in mind not everyone has online access.
- **Host a virtual game night:** Tap into technology and invite all your family and friends to an online game night. There are plenty of online resources to play traditional board games or you can break out a board game you have at home and play via video chat.
- **Start a book club:** Traditional book clubs include sitting face-to-face with a group of people who have read the same book but think outside the box. Pick out a new eBook and send everyone you want to attend an invite to discuss characters, themes and plot twists in a conference call or group video chat.
- **Get active:** Don't despair that your local gym is closed and you are missing your workout buddy terribly. Pick an online workout you both want to try and video chat while you break a sweat.



JANUARY 2021 STATS FOR STOUFFVILLE

AVERAGE SALES PRICE
\$1,226,509



35

DAYS ON MARKET



57 NUMBER OF SALES



TOTAL ACTIVE LISTINGS

107



Thinking of Buying, Selling or Investing in Real Estate?
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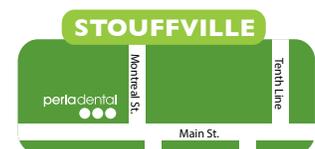
The Superhero Smile

How Do You Wear Your Smile?



Perla Dental is dedicated to the health and well-being of all our patients. Our dental office has been updated to meet all of the requirements to protect you and our staff. We will take every precaution to keep you as safe and protected as possible while keeping up with your dental regimen.

Perla Dental wants to help you keep your **Superhero** smile, no matter what mask you wear.



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