

*A Message From*

**Sylvia Jones, MPP  
Dufferin - Caledon**



## **Business Support Grants**

**NEW IN JANUARY**

### **BUSINESSES: 3 Supports for COVID-19**

#### **1 Ontario Small Business Support Grant**

This is a grant, up-to **\$20,000** to help small businesses that must close or significantly restrict services due to the recent Province-wide Shutdown.

#### **2 Property Tax and Energy Bill rebates**

This is a grant that will cover the **entire length of time** that public health restrictions are in place, for:

- municipal and education property taxes
- energy costs, including electricity and natural gas

(or where natural gas is not available, propane and heating oil).



#### **3 Main Street Relief Grant: PPE Support**

This is a one-time grant of up to **\$1,000** for eligible businesses with 2 to 9 employees.

Sectors include retail, accommodation and food services, repair and maintenance, personal and laundry services, and gyms and yoga studios.



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**Sylvia Jones, MPP  
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## Ontario Small Business Support Grant

Applications are open for the new Ontario Small Business Support Grant, which helps small businesses that are required to close or significantly restrict services under the Provincewide Shutdown effective December 26, 2020.

### What you'll get

Starting at \$10,000 for all eligible businesses, the grant provides businesses with funding to a maximum of \$20,000 to help cover decreased revenue expected as a result of the Provincewide Shutdown.

The business must demonstrate they experienced a revenue decline of at least 20 per cent when comparing monthly revenue in April 2019 and April 2020. This time period was selected because it reflects the impact of the public health measures in spring 2020, and as such provides a representation of the possible impact of these latest measures on small businesses.

New businesses established since April 2019 are also eligible provided they meet the other eligibility criteria.

Businesses will be able to use the support in whatever way makes the most sense for them. For example, some businesses could use the support to pay employee wages, while others may need support maintaining their inventory.

## Ontario's Main Street Relief Grant: PPE Support

We are helping small businesses with the unexpected costs of PPE.

### What you'll get

Eligible small businesses will get one-time grants of up to \$1,000.

## Property tax and energy cost rebates

Businesses that are, or were, required to shut down or significantly restrict services due to provincial public health measures can apply for rebates, provided in the form of grants, to help with their fixed costs.

Businesses struggling to pay their energy bills as a result of COVID-19 may also be eligible for the COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program for Small Business (CEAP-SB), which you can apply to through your utility provider.

### What you'll get

Eligible businesses could get rebates for:  
municipal and education property taxes  
energy costs, including electricity and natural gas (or where natural gas is not available, propane and heating oil)  
Funding will cover the entire length of time that regionally targeted public health restrictions are in place.

Most businesses can expect to receive their rebate payments within a few weeks of submitting a complete application.

## What you'll need to apply

### Business and banking information

You will need your business and banking information to apply, including:  
general business information (for example, CRA business number)  
banking information (for example, banking institution, account number, branch code)

### Receipts for PPE

You will need to submit receipts or proof of costs for PPE purchased since March 17, 2020.

This includes:

gloves, gowns, face shields, eye protection, masks, sanitizer, sanitizing wipes  
thermometers, temperature monitors or cameras  
physical changes, including the installation of hand sanitizer stations and plexiglass dividers  
signs to guide or inform customers and employees

### Bills and/or invoices

To apply, you will have to submit proof of costs.

For property tax rebates, this includes your property tax bills (or proof of costs associated with property taxes).

For energy cost rebates, this includes a digital copy of the first energy bill (including electricity, natural gas, propane or other) you received on or after the day modified Stage 2, Control, Lockdown or Provincewide Shutdown restrictions were put in place in your region. You can also submit other energy bills if your business is heated by propane or heating oil.

## Apply online

Fill out an online application to apply for PPE support, property tax rebates, energy cost rebates or the Ontario Small Business Support Grant.

You will be able to complete a single form to apply for any – or all – of these programs.

*To see if you are eligible please visit [covid19.ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca/covid19)*





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PAULA BROWN PHOTO

**RECOGNIZING BLACK HISTORY:** Shelburne Deputy Mayor Steve Anderson and Dufferin County Canadian Black Association President Alethia O'Hara Stephenson commemorated the beginning of Black History Month on Monday (Feb. 1) with the raising of the Pan-African Flag at Town Hall.

## Black History Month kicks off in Shelburne

Written By Paula Brown  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Municipal councillors and community leaders in Dufferin County marked the beginning of Black History Month with the raising of the Pan-African flag.

Shelburne Deputy Mayor Steve Anderson and Dufferin County Canadian Black Association (DCCBA) founder and president Alethia O'Hara Stephenson gathered at Shelburne's Town Hall on Monday (Feb. 1) to mark the raising of the flag.

"It never gets old," said Deputy Mayor Anderson to the Free Press about the flag raising. "This continues to demonstrate that Shelburne is a very inclusive, diverse, and welcoming community and it's important that we celebrate and acknowledge the achievements of not only Black Canadians, but Black history as Canadian history."

"It's a very proud moment for me to be able to see the Pan-African flag being raised for the second time in the Town of Shelburne.

For us to be able to raise the Pan-African flag, it talks about the significant contributions of Black Canadians, not just right here in Dufferin County, but all across Canada," said O'Hara Stephenson. "It's also a moment where I look at it as unity, it's a sense of pride where all of the Black community can come together, but not just the Black community it's unity for all of Canada and Dufferin County."

The Pan-African flag was first raised in Shelburne and Dufferin County last February.

The proclamations of Black History Month and the raising of the Pan-African flag was spearheaded by O'Hara Stephenson and students from Centre Dufferin District High School (CDDHS) in 2020, who gave a presentation to both the town and the county. The Pan-African flag represents people of African Diaspora and symbolizes Black liberation and freedom.

"What it symbolizes is the people who have paved the way before us, it's honouring their sacrifice, their service, their contributions,"

said Anderson. "Being raised again today, is just a reminder of that and it's a message of hope and inspiration.

Shelburne Mayor Wade Mills at town council's last meeting on Jan. 26 proclaimed February in Shelburne Black History Month.

The Pan-African flag was also raised on Monday at the Museum of Dufferin (MOD). In attendance for the flag raising was Dufferin County Warden Darren White, Shelburne Mayor Wade Mills, Deputy Mayor Steve Anderson, Alethia O'Hara Stephenson and staff members from the MOD.

"As the Warden of Dufferin County I am very honoured to be here for the second year now, to proclaim Black History Month in the County of Dufferin. It's very important that we acknowledge and remember, all those in the Black community who have added to the tapestry that is Dufferin County," said White.

The Pan-African flag will remain raised in Shelburne and at the Museum of Dufferin throughout Black History Month.

## Shelburne students returning to class on Feb. 8

Written By Paula Brown  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Students, and parents of students, the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph region won't have to wait very much longer for in-person learning.

Yesterday (Feb. 3) the provincial government announced that in-person learning will return for students in the WDG Public Health region on Feb. 8.

The only schools boards not returning on Feb. 8 is Toronto, Peel, and York Region, who will instead return to in-person learning on Feb. 18.

The announcement comes after Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education, announced last Thursday (Jan. 28) that nine schools boards from four health units would be making the return to in-class learning starting Feb. 1. The reopening of nine boards will see 280,000 students back in the classroom.

Students in northern Ontario made the return to school in early January, while seven health units in southern Ontario, including Grey Bruce, returned on Jan. 25.

Lecce, in his announcement, said the government's decision was made, "on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, with the support of the local Medical Officers of Health."

Continued on Page 2

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Continued from Page 1

## Shelburne students returning to class Feb. 8

A press release from the Ontario government said the province's schools are safe places now, according to medical experts, including the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

With the announcement from the Ontario government, the UGDSB released a notice on their website clarifying they were not included in the list of boards permitted to return to in-class learning.

"This means that all UGDSB schools will continue with our current measures for online learning until further notice," said the UGDSB.

The UGDSB previously said in a notice they did not expect a return to in-person learning until at least Feb. 11 – the end of the emergency declaration.

Dr. Nicola Mercer, CEO and medical officer of health for WDG Public Health, released a statement on the extension of online learning.

"Since these closures are directed by the Province, I do not have the ability to open

individual schools, or schools within a particular part of the region, without the Province's direction," said Mercer. "We will wait for further instruction from the Province on when in-person instruction may resume in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph."

During the lockdown of schools specialized classes for students with developmental disabilities (DD) in elementary and secondary schools have remained open for in-person learning. Emergency child care for non-school aged children and school-aged children of frontline workers has also continued.

Public Health units allowed to return to in-person learning include Eastern Ontario Health Unit, Middlesex-London Health Unit, Southwestern Public Health, and Ottawa Public Health. The total number of students across the province permitted for in-person learning is now 520,000.

The expected return to in-person learning for UGDSB students is Feb. 11.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

**BIG FLAMES:** Fire Departments in the region were called to a fire at the home of an elderly couple on the 5th Line in Melancthon this past Sunday (Jan. 31).

## Fire Departments responded to local structure fire over weekend

Written By Paula Brown  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Fire Departments in the region were called to a fire at the home of an elderly couple in Melancthon this past Sunday (Jan. 31).

The fire, which broke out at a home located on 5th Line in Melancthon, was first noticed by neighbours and friends who saw the smoke and rushed to assist the elderly couple out of the house before the fire spread.

Shelburne Fire Chief Ralph Snyder commended the actions of the neighbours.

Snyder said the cause of the fire is undetermined at this time, but is suspect to have started in the area of the chimney from a wood stove.

Damage to the house was extensive.

There were working smoke alarms.

Fire officials are reminding community members to have all chimneys cleaned

and inspected as well as clearing the fire hydrant nearest to your home so firefighters can get access to water fast.

A GoFund Me has now been set up by the elderly couple's granddaughter, Jamie Pate.

Pate said the home has been burnt beyond repair and will need to be torn down and rebuilt.

"Any money raised would be going toward expenses caused by the fire, clothing, gas to make it to appointments and money toward rebuilding the house or finding a new home that works best for their situation," said Pate. "We appreciate everything, in a tough time for everyone."

At the time of print, the GoFundMe raised just over \$2,000 with the goal of raising \$10,000.

To donate, visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-my-grandparents-after-a-devastating-fire>

## Public Health cancelling scheduled vaccinations

Written By Paula Brown  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) has cancelled all COVID-19 vaccinations as delays in vaccine shipments continue.

WDG Public Health in a notice to media on Sunday (Jan. 31) said all scheduled COVID-19 vaccinations in the region except those in long-term care and retirement homes have been cancelled due to the delay in shipments recently announced by both Moderna and Pfizer.

Most individuals with a scheduled appointment have been contacted, but Public Health say they are trying to ensure the information reaches everyone with an appointment.

"We are aware of the need and desire to vaccinate as many residents of Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph as fast as possible," said WDGPH spokesperson Danny Williamson. "As soon as global shipments of the vaccine resume, Public Health will work quickly to reschedule cancelled appointments and begin new and second dose bookings."

## COVID-19 numbers in the region this week

### Feb. 1 (Monday)

WDG Region: 98 (New cases), 386 (Active cases), 13 (Hospital)  
Dufferin County: 8 (New cases), 21 (Active cases), 3 (Hospital)  
Shelburne: 2 (Active cases)

### Feb. 2 (Tuesday)

WDG Region: 21 (New cases), 362 (Active cases), 13 (Hospital)

Dufferin County: 1 (New cases), 21 (Active cases), 3 (Hospital)  
Shelburne: 2 (Active cases)

### Feb. 3 (Wednesday)

WDG Region: 15 (New cases), 317 (Active cases), 12 (Hospital)  
Dufferin County: 4 (New cases), 22 (Active cases), 3 (Hospital)  
Shelburne: 2 (Active cases)

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# Take care of your mental health

The pandemic can affect people in different ways. If you or someone you know needs support there are resources available.

**Ways to help your mental health and well-being while the stay-at-home order is in effect:**

- Try to stay active.
- Find a new indoor hobby like a puzzle or cooking.
- Attend a virtual event or online course.
- Call a loved one.

Let's support ourselves and each other by taking the steps we need.

Find local resources:  
[wdgpublichealth.ca/mental-health](http://wdgpublichealth.ca/mental-health)

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# WDG Chief MOH “cautiously optimistic” about state of pandemic

Written By Paula Brown  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Positive case numbers of COVID-19 in the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (WDG) Public Health region have been moving in a downward trend, and the region's top doctor says she's cautiously optimistic as long as residents continue with public health measures.

"I can see that our community cases have come way down so that tells me that people are listening and they've got it," said Dr. Nicola Mercer, WDG Public Health CEO and Chief Medical Officer. "I recognize it's a hard thing to do, but if our community does what's hard then I'm optimistic we can get to our vaccination time and work our way out of COVID."

While the numbers have continued to decline, Mercer said now is the time to stay vigilant as new variants of the novel virus are emerging in Ontario.

"It is more important than ever that people be vigilant, these variants are extremely infectious and very concerning," said Mercer who noted that while there are no confirmed cases of the new variants within the region, residents should assume that there is.

"It's been confirmed in lots of other places in the province and remember people work in and move in the province so we have to assume that it's just a matter of time."

Prior to the emergency declaration and stay-at-home order implemented by the Ontario government, WDG Public Health was seeing increasing daily numbers and active cases numbers reach over 400.

Since the emergency declaration on Jan. 12,

"I think there is very good reason to be optimistic that when we get to spring, that it's going to be a one way ticket this time, we're going to open and stay open, as long as we can get our community vaccinated."

—Dr. Nicola Mercer, WDG Chief Medical Officer

Mercer said that Public Health has seen a "large" drop in cases caused by community spread and they're starting to see an increasing number of outbreak driven cases.

"That tells me that people have gotten the message and they're staying home," said Mercer. "So why are we seeing outbreaks in larger work-places? Because that's where the people are now."

"If we can start to decrease our outbreak related cases, I think you will see that as a community, as our rate comes down, we will be able to reopen with much lower numbers, and as we begin to

vaccinate we'll continue to stay open," she added.

WDG Public Health, along with public health units across with province, have been experience a shortage of vaccines.

Danny Williamson, spokesperson for WDG Public Health, informed media on Sunday (Jan.31) that all vaccinations had been cancelled in the region due to delays in shipments from both Moderna and Pfizer.

Despite this, Mercer says that all residents in long-term care homes have received their first dose of the vaccine and will begin receiving their second dose this week.

Mercer also said that later in February Public Health should be seeing vaccine supplies coming into the areas.

Speaking to when the region might see a rebound from the second wave Mercer estimated that Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph could be back to a similar state at the beginning of November, in anywhere from two to four weeks – in line within arrivals of new vaccine supplies.

"I think there is very good reason to be optimistic that when we get to spring, that it's going to be a one way ticket this time, we're going to open and stay open, as long as we can get our community vaccinated."

# Headwaters staff members frustrated following alleged vaccination of casual worker

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

Concerns over who's receiving the COVID-19 vaccine first among Headwaters Health Care Centre staff was raised for a second time last week, spurring an internal investigation.

The local hospital's president and CEO, Kim Delahunt, told the Citizen on Tuesday that there was no wrong doing in the alleged vaccination of a casual screener/runner hospital worker against COVID-19 at a Brampton Clinic.

CityNews reported late last week that it received several news tips from staff members at Headwaters, sharing their frustration that a casual employee of the hospital who hasn't worked there since August, returned from school in Ottawa to receive a shot.

"A concern regarding his vaccination status was raised and it was immediately investigated. As he is a casual employee of the hospital, he is eligible to receive the vaccine. The investigation was completed last week. We are confident in this circumstance, there was no wrong doing," said Delahunt.

She noted that it is entirely up to staff whether they disclose their vaccination status against COVID-19 and because of this, they cannot confirm if the casual worker in question was vaccinated. However, he was eligible.

The casual worker's mother manages the Emergency Department and COVID-19 Assessment Centre at Headwaters.

The recent investigation into misconduct with the vaccination of Headwaters staff follows news that broke last week regarding a senior staff member vaccinating their relative who doesn't work at the hospital and had no appointment.

"We experienced an unfortunate situation

recently with the January 14 vaccination clinic on site held by Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. We discovered that a staff Director at our hospital had an elderly family member vaccinated the same day the clinic ran after a staff member raised it with their union steward. The elderly family member was not pre-scheduled. They were at the hospital for other tests at the time the clinic ran," explained Delahunt.

"It was subsequently identified to our human resources department and an investigation was initiated. The investigation did involve Public Health and the facts and details cannot be shared publicly."

The staff director involved in the breach of protocol went on paid leaving during the investigation. Five days later, on Jan. 19, the senior staff member retired.

"This was a failure in sound decision making by one individual, for which they and the hospital are deeply sorry," said Delahunt.

The provincial government determines the priority groups for COVID-19 vaccinations and as their direction evolves, so do the practices at vaccine clinics.

At the beginning of the vaccine program rollout, priority was given to patient-facing healthcare workers at Headwaters before expanding to include all hospital staff.

Currently the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, which was distributed to Headwaters staff, is being delayed for frontline workers. The interval for the next dose as increased from 21 to 35 days, impacting staff and physicians at Headwaters who were slated to receive their second dose two weeks sooner.

"We recognize that the vaccination process has been a challenge with information changing rapidly. We remain committed to supporting everyone who wishes to be vaccinated," said Delahunt.

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# Burning money

Some weeks the story is already written for you – you just have to put it into words.

Two weeks ago I wrote about a doctor who was fired from a regional health care centre network. That in itself is not a big deal, people get fired all the time.

However it was the \$1 million that was handed to him on the way out the door that was the story.

That is \$1 million of your tax dollars given to a guy for being booted from a job after doing something unbelievably stupid.

According to government and business sources, the current average annual salary in Canada is between \$52,000 and \$55,000. It would take the average person around 20 years to make the same money this guy got for being fired.

Well, the story continues – not about this guy, but another unbelievable payout that you will be providing for another individual who will be living in luxury on your tax dollars.

Back in August, I wrote in this column about the nightmare that was taking place for people employed in the Governor General's office.

These weren't petty complaints from whiny office people who were disgruntled because someone had a bigger desk than them.

These were serious allegations from long-term employees in the office regarding Governor General Julie Payette's behaviour.

People around the GG complained of being belittled in front of other staff members, being bullied, and employees being publicly humiliated.

At the time, one insider said, "This has gone from being one of the most collegial and enjoyable work environments for many of the staff to being a house of horrors. It's bullying and harassment at its worst."

The situation was even addressed by her security detail who couldn't keep up with her disregard for her RCMP protection and cost the taxpayer even more money by requiring them to scramble for last minute requests resulting in even more spending on overtime, hotel, and plane tickets.

Even worse, as a diplomat, her treatment of foreign security teams was so poor, the RCMP had to apologize to them after the fact for her bad behaviour.

Everything came to a head a couple of weeks ago when GG Julie Payette submitted her resignation.

This happened following the conclusion of a workplace review by the Privy Council Office

investigating the accusations against her.

Payette is only the second Governor General to resign. The first was Romeo LeBlanc, who resigned due to health issues.

She resigned due to scandal – something that should never have happened in a high office that is a ceremonial position that represents the nation.

Most Canadians do not have a company sponsored pension plan. In the private sector, only around 30 per cent are part of a company pension plan.

Those that do pay into a plan typically work 30 to 35 years, sometimes longer before receiving a pension that is based on their previous earnings.

Payette will receive an annual pension on \$149,484 for life, after being on the job for just over three years.

On top of that, she will be eligible to have a six figure, up to \$206,000 'expense account' to pay for expenses supposedly associated with being a former Governor General.

The Prime Minister has been very quiet during this affair.

Obviously the PM's office and who-

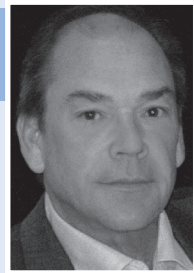
ever was responsible for the usual vetting process that is undertaken for someone considered for an appointment was not followed through.

Apparently they did not speak to people who had worked with Payette and volunteered that fact that she was 'difficult to work with.'

They were also apparently unaware that she was arrested in 2011, in the United States, on an assault charge – that was later dropped – for assaulting her husband. Nor were they aware that she had struck and killed a pedestrian with her car in Maryland in 2011. That case was closed without charges in 2012.

So, in the end Payette will leave the office with a payout that most of us could only wish for, after being on the job for three years, and resigning amid a scandal that should never have happened, from a position that is ceremonial and includes waiving at crowds and signing the occasional document.

Yup, that's your tax dollars hard at work.



**BRIAN LOCKHART**  
FROM THE SECOND ROW

# Vaccine Nationalism

My wife and I had our first shots of a Covid-19 vaccine this weekend (Astra-Zeneca, since you ask), and none of our children are old enough to be particularly vulnerable. I therefore no longer have a dog in this fight, and can write with godlike impartiality about who else should get the vaccine.

We can all (or almost all) agree that the most vulnerable should come first: care-home residents, health workers, over-70's, and people with serious underlying diseases. Among adults under 50 who catch Covid-19, only 200 out of a million die; among those over 70, 54,000 do. So everybody else can afford to wait another month or so, and let the vulnerable go first.

But who is 'we'? Almost always it means people in our own country, not the whole world. Not even the country next-door, in most cases: there is now a most unedifying row between the United Kingdom and the European Union over vaccine supply, although they are among the richest countries in the world.

The EU's 27 nations have 960 million doses of five different vaccines on order, with options for several hundred million more. The UK has 250 million doses on order from the same five companies (Mod-

erna, Pfizer/BioNTech, Oxford/Astra/Zeneca, Novavax and Johnson & Johnson).

That's enough for everybody in the EU with plenty left over, and more than twice as much as the UK could possibly use. And still they fight over who gets it first.

The UK signed a key contract with Astra/Zeneca in June, while the EU wasted three more months on internal politics before signing with the same company – which is now facing production difficulties in its main EU-based factories.

London says it signed first, so it should get its doses first. Brussels, panicked by rising public anger at the slowness of the roll-out – the EU has given only two doses per 100 residents, while the UK has delivered twelve per 100 – demands a share of what the same company is producing in Britain. There will be tears before bedtime.

If this is how rich neighbours behave towards each other, is there any hope that they will support vaccination in poor countries far away? As it turns out, yes.

'Vaccine nationalism' is not an all-or-none thing. If the whole street is on fire, I will save my children first, but I'll go back to save the neighbours' kids too, and even their cats if there's time. It's not children at risk in this case, but the principle is the

same.

Nobody can criticize Britain, for example, for putting its own most vulnerable people first – but it is on schedule to have them all done by the middle of this month.

As soon as that is accomplished, it should share some of its supply from Astra/Zeneca to save the lives of elderly French and Danes and Greeks rather than devoting it all to its own relatively safe middle-aged people. And as other supplies come online, it should share more widely too.

Within a few months, as more vaccines are approved and production ramps up, more doses will be produced each day than can be injected into the citizens of rich countries in the same day. This will happen because those countries pre-bought large quantities of many different vaccines in order to be sure of having some winners.

The vaccines almost all worked, so we are in the happy situation of looming over-supply – and there's no need to wait until the rich countries have vaccinated everybody at home. Once their own vulnerable people are safe, they can spare some for the vulnerable elsewhere.

Canada, for example, has bought 214 million doses of vaccine, with options on 200 million more. There are 38 million

Canadians, so say 30 million recipients – many of whom will be getting one-shot vaccines. Canada will have at least 150 million doses left over – or 350 million, if it exercises its options.

"Absolutely we will be sharing with the world," said Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and the UK, which will end up with around 200 million spare doses, should be saying the same thing.

The United States has orders with six companies for 800 million doses, with options on another 1.6 billion. There are more than 800 million spare doses bought and paid for worldwide. Start sharing them now, not after everybody has been inoculated at home.

This is not charity; it's self-interest. So long as the virus is circulating widely in poorer countries, it constitutes an enormous reservoir in which new mutations will occur frequently – and some of those mutations might render existing vaccines ineffective. The vaccines can be tweaked to deal with new variants, but we don't want to be playing catch-up for the next five years.



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# Shelburne resident stuck in limbo over mailbox issues

Written By Paula Brown  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Morley Brown has lived in his family's farmhouse along Hwy. 89, outside of Shelburne for his entire life, and for over 60 years Canada Post has delivered to the family home's rural mailbox.

While the mailbox has remained in the same location, on the south side of Hwy. 89, Canada Post is no longer delivering his and his wife's mail to the rural box, after conducting a review on health and safety.

"The mailbox has been there all this time, and probably for 30 or 40 years before that," explained Brown to the Free Press.

On Jan. 19, the Browns received a letter from Canada Post notifying them that the location of their mailbox had failed a Traffic Safety Assessment Tool (TSAT) due to health and safety regulations. The Traffic Safety Assessment Tool (TSAT) sets criteria for assessing rural mailboxes and measures factors such as volume on the road, type of traffic, speed and how close passing cars will get before they can see the mail-carrier vehicle stopped at the mailbox.

The letter from Canada Post gave the Browns two options; to either receive their mail at a community mail box at the Shelburne Canada Post location, or to cluster with their neighbour further down the road.

Being in his 70s, Brown has tried to limit the number of times he goes into town due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I don't go into town every day and that was one of the things that you liked about the rural boxes, you didn't have to go to town," said Brown. "I won't go into the post office with COVID going on, they're trying their best I know but these buildings weren't meant for social distancing."

Brown also notes that the location, sug-



**MAIL ISSUES:** Morley Brown has received his mail at his rural mailbox, located on Hwy. 89, by Canada Post for over 60 years. After repaving construction was done on the road last year, Morley was told his mail would no longer be delivered due to safety concerns.

gested by Canada Post, is about 1000 feet down the road from his house, and located on the same side of the road.

"If it's unsafe to deliver the mail there, why would it be safe for me to walk down 1000 feet, on this unsafe road," said Brown.

In the summer of last year, the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) started a road project, resurfacing the strip of Hwy. 89 outside of Brown's home. During that time he said access to their mail box was limited, and it was then that they started having issues with mail delivery.

"There were days that the mail person could not stop at the post or get to the mail-

box so she would drive in, give me my mail, and drive out," said Brown. Sometime after that, mail delivery to their home stopped all together.

On October 29, 2020, the Browns were notified that the mailbox had not passed the Canada Post TSAT. When the construction on the roadway wrapped, their mailbox was removed by the construction com-

pany, but later replaced in the same spot by the MTO just before Christmas.

"The mailperson saw the mailbox was there and started delivering the mail again," said Brown.

For two weeks after Christmas their mail was delivered at the rural box, until they were notified again on Jan. 19.

While mailboxes can be seen on the same side of the road until Violet Hill, Brown said he doesn't know if his neighbours are also being told to make the change.

"I'm the only one they don't like," he remarked.

Valerie Chartrand, a spokesperson from Canada Post in an email to the Free Press said, "After applying our Traffic Safety Assessment Tool (TSAT) for mail delivery to this address, it was determined that the road guardrail installed near this rural mail box constituted a safety hazard for our delivery employee as they could no longer stop their vehicle off the road."

Brown has looked into moving the box to the north side of the road, at the end of his driveway, but Canada Post's rural mailbox rules require the box to be on the right hand side of the road in the direction the carrier travels, and cannot be placed in lane-ways of driveways.

While he understands the need for safety and says he wouldn't want to see a driver hurt, he would like to be able to receive his mail at his home.

For now Brown's wife continues to make the trip into town to collect their mail.

## Headwaters launches raffle

Written By Sam Odrowski

Local healthcare services are calling on the community to support their latest fundraiser.

Headwaters Health Care Foundation (HHCF) launched the first ever, community-wide 50/50 raffle on Monday (Feb. 1), which helps to purchase new and replacement equipment for the hospital.

"We hope the community can virtually come together in a fun and exciting way to raise funds for critically needed equipment to ensure that members of our community who are experiencing health challenges have the quality health care they need, close to home," said Kendra Goss, Headwaters community engagement coordinator.

The raffle is reoccurring and takes place this month, June, August, and October.

Tickets will be available online at [www.hhcf5050.ca](http://www.hhcf5050.ca).

HHCF says it hopes that the 50/50 raffle will be a fun way for the community to come together virtually, while assisting in closing the financial gap for purchasing urgently needed equipment, which isn't funded by the government.

Since the onset of COVID-19, HHCF has been finding new ways to fill its fundraising

gap, caused by the cancellation of events, which raise critical funds for the Hospital.

Headwaters asks that those who buy raffle tickets set a limit and play within it. If anyone is looking for help with gambling addiction, they can visit [www.ConnexOntario.ca](http://www.ConnexOntario.ca)



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### PUZZLE 430

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91								92				93			

- 11. "\_\_\_ Na Na"
- 12. Steaming
- 13. "Bells \_\_\_ Ringing"
- 15. From birth
- 16. Cut reminder
- 23. Humpback's kin
- 25. Vinegar bottle
- 26. Fishing net
- 29. Flit about
- 30. Athenian letter
- 31. Coming-out gal
- 32. Broadway bomb
- 33. Molten rock
- 34. Polish copy
- 36. Get ready
- 38. Satisfy
- 40. "No," e.g.
- 42. Door to ore
- 43. Windmill part
- 46. Evil plan
- 47. Chest sound
- 51. Dough
- 52. Double curve
- 53. Wash out
- 54. Difficult journey
- 56. Sailing craft
- 58. Health farm
- 59. Your and my
- 60. Diminutive
- 62. Control
- 64. Latin quarter
- 66. Lectern
- 67. Ooze
- 71. Erode
- 72. Voting-machine component
- 74. Stick-on design
- 76. Internet surfer
- 78. Equivalent
- 79. Hearing-related
- 80. Essence
- 81. Bounder
- 82. Last letter
- 83. Circle segment
- 85. Egg cells
- 87. Work by Keats

### ACROSS

- 1. TV and newspapers, e.g.
- 6. "The \_\_\_ Seed"
- 9. Turkish title
- 14. Gush
- 15. Nose parts
- 17. Hate
- 18. Flavor
- 19. Caper
- 20. Babble
- 21. Porter or stout
- 22. Bit
- 24. Chocolate bean
- 26. Wrapping film
- 27. Make a misstep
- 28. Venerable
- 32. Skedaddle
- 35. Thunder sound
- 37. Modernize
- 39. Pretentious
- 41. Fray

### DOWN

- 44. Tiny amount
- 45. Like sheep
- 46. Come before in time
- 48. Church plate
- 49. Rabbit fur
- 50. Overhead
- 55. Put apart
- 57. Term of endearment
- 58. Female swine
- 61. Take in or let out
- 62. Withdraw
- 63. Southwestern Indian dwelling
- 65. Fencing implement
- 68. Terrible smell
- 69. Geographical belt
- 70. Night hooter
- 73. Zinc \_\_\_
- 75. Indian money
- 77. Desert or beach hill
- 78. Drench

### ACROSS

- 81. Despots
- 84. Shun
- 86. Raccoon's kin
- 88. Lofty abode
- 89. Musical show
- 90. Fess up
- 91. Furnishings
- 92. Battering \_\_\_
- 93. Sponger

### DOWN

- 1. Butte's kin
- 2. Of a time
- 3. Hoodwink
- 4. Wall St. event
- 5. Skylit courtyards
- 6. Monkey's fruit
- 7. Rembrandt's specialty
- 8. Thaw
- 9. "\_\_\_ Don't Preach"
- 10. In a foreign country

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# Dufferin OPP receive \$120,000 in funding from provincial government

Written By Paula Brown  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



The Dufferin OPP detachment has received funding from the provincial government to help combat human trafficking in the region. Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones announced last Thursday (Jan. 28) in a press release that the Dufferin OPP detachment would be receiving approximately \$120,000 over the next two years through the Community Safety and Policing Grant (CSP) Program.

The funding is part of a \$2.8 million investment over two years from the Ontario government to provide police services across the province with additional resources and tools to combat crime.

“Our police services and their partners play a key role in maintaining public safety. They know what it takes to combat crime and hold offenders accountable,” said Jones in the news release. “This important investment will help ensure our frontline heroes continue to take action, where and when it’s needed to keep us all safe.”

In Dufferin County the funding from the province will primarily be used towards training for officers.

“This funding will be used to provide valuable training and equipment to the Dufferin officers in order for us to be proactive against human trafficking, while supporting victims,” said Dufferin OPP Inspector Terry Ward.

Mary-Lou Archer, a former sergeant with the Orangeville Police Services (OPS) who now works with the Town of Orangeville said that all Dufferin officers will receive an Introduction to Human Trafficking Course and six Criminal Investigation Officers will receive a Human Trafficking Investigator Course at the Canadian Police College in Ottawa.

Caledon Dufferin Victim Services (CDVS) from April 2018 to May 2019 reported 14 female victims (7 were under 18 years) and 1 male victim of human trafficking. CDVS also reported a total of 41 new clients with experiences related to Human Trafficking which resulted in 139 follow-up contacts and 197 safety concerns addressed.

Stats on human trafficking in Dufferin from 2019 to 2020 include:

- Direct new victims: 12 adult females and 3 youth
- Immediate family: 3 adult males, 9 adult females
- Witnesses: 1 adult female
- Follow-up contacts: 85
- In-person contacts: 19
- Addressed safety concerns 153 times.

# Pet groomers speak out against being non-essential

Written By FATIMA BAIG

Pet groomers were able to operate throughout the COVID-19 pandemic without any issues, up until Dec. 26 of last year, when it was deemed non-essential by the provincial government.

While the Province now considers the service to no longer be indispensable, for many, including Tess Maclean, owner of the Posh Puppy Salon in Orangeville, the service is badly needed.

“We are essential for the well-being of all dogs, nail clipping and of course matted hair on the dogs,” said Maclean.

Before the shutdown, Posh Puppy took precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as a no-contact drop-off, disinfecting in between clients and paying through a window or over the phone.

“We have less contact here than even before. The clients would come in the front, they would put the dog in a cage and we’d stay in the back and watch them leave then come and get the dog,” said Maclean.

She told the Citizen the maintenance of a dog’s coat is essential to their health.

“A lot of dogs come in every six weeks, not for cosmetic purposes but to keep their hair and coats in check. I think it’s essential for the health of the dog,” Maclean said.

Gemini Cane has been a client at Posh Puppy for over three years. She didn’t realize how much her dog needed regular grooming until the shutdown.

As a result of lack of trimming, Cane’s dog is having a hard time with his vision. “He’s got crazy long hair and he can’t even see



**BEFORE & AFTER:** Pictured above is a before and after photo of one of the pets Tess Maclean would regularly groom but hasn’t been able to go in for an appointment since Dec. 26, when it was deemed non-essential by the provincial government.

right now he’s getting eye infections because his hair is too long around his eyes,” she said.

For almost all pet owners, trimming their own dog’s hair can be dangerous since they’re not properly trained.

“It’s all very well for you to say you can just brush your dog but a lot of dogs don’t like it and it can be dangerous when a dog’s coat gets to a certain length, it goes out of control,

then you have serious matting by the skin” Maclean said.

Many dog owners might cause damage to the dog if they don’t have the proper grooming equipment.

“You can cut them, you can give them razor burn. Unless you are well versed in where the hair ends and the skin starts there is a lot of danger in that,” Maclean warned.

Cane says she isn’t comfortable trimming her dog’s hair herself due to the fear of hurting him.

“I’ve only done it once when I first got him and I don’t really know how to do it,” she said. “I hurt his eye and I am terrified to

do it again.”

Many animal owners don’t have the means to groom their pets by themselves and rely on grooming services because of disabilities.

“I have an elderly friend who isn’t able to get her dog in the bathtub and give the dog a bath herself. So, there are also people who need to have their dogs cleaned by somebody else,” said Cane.

Pet grooming services will be closed unless required for the health and welfare of an animal, such as a grooming service provided by a vet, noted Miriam Mohamadi, communication project manager of the Ministry of Health.

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## Pool access for people with disabilities needed

Provincial restrictions must immediately allow exemptions for people with disabilities wishing to use indoor municipal facilities for physical therapy or rehabilitation, says the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Ontario.

“More than ever, people with disabilities have been treated like an after thought,” said Peter Stapper, Chair of CUPE Ontario’s Workers with Disabilities committee. “How can anyone justify not allowing people with neuromuscular disabilities, for instance, access to pools and to the aquatherapy they desperately need?”

CUPE Ontario is calling on the province’s Ministry of Health to immediately institute an exemption for access to municipal pools for people with disabilities who, without it, could experience detrimental and potentially irreversible health impacts.

“The second lockdown didn’t sneak up on us,” said Fred Hahn, President of CUPE

Ontario. “The province had months to consult with people, to come up with a plan that would include and support everyone through a lockdown, and to clearly communicate the plan. It’s time for Ford to listen: open up the pools and other indoor municipal facilities for people with disabilities who rely on them.”

“This just goes to show how important municipal services and the workers who provide them are to people in our communities,” said David Petten, Chair of CUPE Ontario’s municipal sector. “I know that municipal workers are prepared and proud to provide these kinds of supports. We just need to know that there are procedures and protocols in place, mandated by the province and followed by the municipality, that makes sure members have the protective equipment we need to provide these services safely, for us and for those who rely on them.”

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# Community matches donations for mammography machine at Headwaters

Written By Paula Brown  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



The Dufferin-Caledon community has answered the call for donations from Headwaters Health Care Foundation (HHCF) to help bring updated equipment to the region's hospital – raising more than \$200,000.

HHCF started raising donations for their annual holiday campaign at the beginning of November and collected donations up until December 31. As part of the 2020 holiday campaign, donations to Headwaters Health Care Foundation were matched dollar-for-dollar by the Morningview Foundation up to \$200,000.

With the gift and community donations HHCF raised a combined \$400,000 to go towards the purchase of a new mammogra-

phy machine with tomosynthesis (3D imaging) at the local hospital.

Dora Boylen-Pabst, CEO of Headwaters Health Care Foundation, previously told the Free Press the 3D imaging aspect of the new mammography machine will help identify harder to diagnose cases.

“The new mammography machine at Headwaters will enable us to acquire high quality digital mammographic images efficiently while minimizing radiation exposure and maximizing our ability to detect breast

cancer as early as possible,” said Dr. Dan Mozeg at Headwaters Health Care Centre.

“With the introduction of the Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP) to Headwaters several years ago, the need for high quality breast imaging and diagnosis continues to increase and the acquisition of this new machine will help us to meet this need and care for our patients,” he added.

Headwaters Health Care Centre annually sees mammography volumes topping over 3,600.

The new machine purchased by the hospital is replacing Headwaters current one, which is over 10 years old and nearing the end of its usage. The cost of the mammography machine with tomosynthesis imaging sits around \$575,000.

Headwaters Health Care Foundation said with the \$400,000 raised through the campaign, plus a “top up” gift donated in early January by a long-time community member and Headwaters supporter, allowed the hospital was able to make the purchase.

“Thanks to our community, including the Morningview Foundation, for the difference your support will make in the lives of our patients and their families,” said Boylen-Pabst. “Thanks to you a new mammography machine is en route to Headwaters. We quite simply could not have done it without you.”

# Ontario government to ramp up pandemic safety inspections on farms

Written By Paula Brown  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Ontario government has announced the ramping up of province wide inspections for pandemic safety on farms in an effort to protect migrant workers, set to arrive for the growing season, from COVID-19.

The government made the announcement regarding the expansion of inspections last Wednesday (Jan. 27) detailing safety measures that would be focused on inspections and enforcement. The inspections will be looking at a number of safety protocols being implemented on the farms, in the hopes of preventing similar outbreaks of COVID-19 that happened last summer.

“We rely on these worker to ensure our grocery store shelves remain stocked and families have food on the table. These inspections will help stop the spread of COVID-19 on farm, and in our communities,” said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development.

Inspectors will be focusing on COVID-

19 safety measures such as hand hygiene, masking, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting and proper physical distancing between workers. Other measure include raising awareness of COVID-19 health and safety requirements, enhancing protection by ensuring employers are actively screening workers, and having a daily COVID-19 questionnaire.

Brian French is the owner of Lennox Farms in Melancthon and says the local farm has already had a health inspector out to inspect the farms COVID-19 protocols.

Lennox Farms each year hires 11 migrant workers at the farm, but with COVID-19 they've had to cut back down to nine. Due to the pandemic, four of his workers were unable to get home last year and have remained on the farm.

Following their inspection, French said there were problems with the spacing of beds in two rooms of the bungalow house, which is designated for the migrant workers on the farm.

“Last year it was if they slept kind of head

to toe away from each other, so their faces were two metre apart, now the beds have to be two meters apart.”

French also says spacing is one of the biggest issues farmers face with the protocols.

“The housing and spacing is the biggest issue for farms, because generally most people only have a trailer or something, and they put three or four guys in the trailers. Trailers aren't very big so you're not going to get as many workers in it.”

Speaking to his thoughts on the increased

inspections French said, “They're just doing their job trying to keep everyone safe, make sure everyone has enough space in the house and that they're following protocols like any business would.”

Enforcement of COVID-19 protocols, in response to any violation of OHSA, could range from inspectors issuing order or the laying of charges. The maximum penalty under OHSA, if convicted, is \$1.5 million for a corporation and \$100,000 for an individual. Individuals may also be imprisoned for up to 12 months.

# Province unveils support for small businesses impacted by pandemic

Written By JESSICA LAURENZA

On February 2, Ontario's Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries held a virtual seminar to debrief municipalities in Durham, York and Headwaters about available grants and support for local small businesses who have been affected by COVID-19.

The Honourable Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture, explains that her sectors “were first hit during the pandemic, they were hit the deepest, and they'll take the longest time to recover.”

Debby Jewell, Director of the Ministry's Investment and Development Office, summarized sector-specific supports implemented by the province. The Community Building Fund delivered by the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), is investing \$100 million over two years to support community tourism, cultural and sport organizations who are experiencing significant financial pressures due to the pandemic.

The first stream of this grant supports local tourism and heritage such as museums, theatres, fairs and cultural institutions to help them sustain short-term operations and develop new experiences for guests when these activities resume.

The second stream of the OTF grant is designated to not-for-profit sport and recreation organizations to invest in infrastructure renovation in order to meet community needs while adhering to public health and safety measures.

Jewell also presented the Emergency Support for Core Arts Organizations, delivered by the Ontario Arts Council; this is a

one-time emergency fund of \$25 million for Ontario's arts institutions to help cover operation losses incurred from COVID-19. This funding will help organizations prepare for a time when they can fully reopen facilities and resume full programming.

Assistant Deputy Minister of Finance, Tim Schuurman, explained the new small business grant available to any eligible small business who experienced a 20% revenue decline or more in the past year as a result of the government shutdown.

“The new grant is over and above other existing provincial programs like property tax and energy rebates or the other federal business supports,” Schuurman explains.

Ontario will offer one-time grants of a minimum of \$10,000 up to \$20,000 measured by comparing the monthly revenues of April 2020 with April 2019. If you have a seasonal business or April monthly comparisons are not possible, there are other revenue comparators used to determine eligibility.

The funding application launched February 2 and can be accessed on ontario.ca's homepage under ‘supports we're providing small businesses.’

Ontario's Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Michael Tibollo, notes that “well it may seem a little odd to have me on the call, we have to remember that mental health is an incredibly important aspect of recovery. We always say you can't have physical health without mental health but I don't think you can have financial health either.”

He advises those struggling with COVID-19 measures to look at the virtual resources provided at ontario.ca/mentalhealth.

# Smash and grabs reported at trails in Mulmur and Mono since Jan. 6

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are warning hikers who may be out enjoying the beautiful scenic trails in Dufferin County to be vigilant with what's left visible in their vehicles when they are hiking.

Police have received at least seven reports of vehicle being broken into at trailheads since Jan. 6.

In all cases, which have occurred in the Town of Mono and Mulmur Township, the vehicles have been locked and the back window has been broken, in order to gain access to items in the back area. Items such as purses, wallets and electronics have been taken.

- OPP want those using the trails to ensure:
- All personal belongings are completely out of site (locked in trunk or better yet left at home)
  - Be aware of surroundings, pay attention to suspicious people and activities
  - Contact the OPP to report suspicious activities

The Dufferin OPP are committed to working together with our communities to ensure safety for all, but we need your help to accomplish this goal. Please contact the OPP if you know anything about these incidents or any other incident at 1-888-310-1122.

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THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

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Our hope is not in the new year, BUT in the One who makes all things new.  
~ Unknown

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OBITUARIES

**SPIRES, BILL**



Bill Spires died suddenly on January 29, 2021 at age 78. He was much loved by his wife of 55 years Sue and his children: Denise (Michel) Dubé and Kristine (Stanford) Brown. He was so proud of his family and will be very missed by his grandchildren Shannelle (Steve) Rozema, Nathan (Emma) Brown, Gabriel, Alexandre and Marika Dubé and by the next generation, Kai Rozema. Bill was a loving brother to Dave, Brenda (Corrie) Holmes and Margaret (Dick) Arnold and predeceased by Bob (Aline) Spires. He will be remembered by nieces and nephews, especially Sharon and Emilie.

Bill had a lifelong love of learning. He and Sue loved to travel, visiting 32 countries by motorcycle, camper van, RV and Model A. They were tour directors for the Model A Club and enjoyed each adventure greatly. If you wish to honour Bill's love of travel and children, please consider a donation to Mercy Ships Canada (mercyships.ca) in lieu of flowers. Online condolences and donations may be placed at [www.jackandthompsonfuneralhome.com](http://www.jackandthompsonfuneralhome.com)

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# Shelburne Public Library shares latest news, new books

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Our objective is to provide you with the service you need during these times.

**Community Readers:** Due to the current Lockdown, we have had to put our video taping of our Community Readers on hold for the time being. We will resume as soon as we are able.

**Teen Scene:**

The winner of the Teen #WinterReads2021 is Anna C.! Anna has won a \$25 gift card to BookLore. Keep your eyes on our social pages for upcoming reading challenges.

**Celebrate Black Authors Challenge!**

For the month of February, Teens can participate in the Celebrate Black Authors Challenge! If you check out a book by a Black author, you will receive 1 ballot into the draw for a signed copy of Angie Thomas' Concrete Rose. If you send in a review of the books you've been reading to jwyse@shel-

burnelibrary.ca, you can earn 2 extra ballots per book! To coincide with this challenge, YOUR Library will be highlighting books by Black authors weekly on our YouTube channel. This week's video featured a book talk on Angie Thomas' Concrete Rose. Head over to our YouTube channel or get in touch with YOUR Library if you're looking for recommendations!

**Children's Programs:**

Please contact us and we can put together a specially curated bag of books for your child. Email the ages and interests of your child to children@shelburnelibrary.ca and we will happily pick out a selection of books for you.

The Children's Library has also purchased a copy of every Forest of Reading book for 2020-2021. If you need assistance to find out which books are in your child's Forest of Reading age bracket, we can help you determine that as well.

We are live on Facebook every Thursday evening at 7:00 pm for Sleepy Story Time! Please join us this week for a bedtime story so that we can connect virtually say hello.

**Story Time**—Each month we send home the month's worth of crafts and activities that accompany our pre-recorded Story Time videos. These videos are released once a week on Fridays, but are always available on YouTube for your family to enjoy when your schedule allows.

**NEW BOOKS**

You can browse all our new books if you login to our catalogue! [www.shelburnelibrary.ca](http://www.shelburnelibrary.ca).

Each week, Jade and Rose post a new video on our YouTube channel and review new books they have read. Check it out!

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**Non fiction:**  
ADHD 2.0 by Edward M. Hallowell  
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Ancient remedies by Dr. Josh Axe

## BioPharma's CEO explains how social shaming is a bi-product of the pandemic

Written By JESSICA LAURENZA

Renzo DiCarlo is a C3 triathlete member, an avid runner on the Bruce Trail and the CEO of BioPharma, a global pharmaceutical company specializing in human clinical trials, including assisting with the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines.

Rather than explain the scientific innovations of our healthcare system, he details the importance of showing compassion and having empathy during the pandemic.

Having been on-site at his Toronto location since March, DiCarlo has seen the social and psychological ramifications of COVID-19 further impede on people's lives.

He notes that if you're asymptomatic, the rapid tests are 73 per cent accurate and if you do show symptoms, the test is 93 per cent accurate. "But even that 7 per cent margin of error is high," DiCarlo explains. Infections are being passed through asymptomatic children to their parents and consequently, to their grandparents who are the ones showing up at the hospital.

People with underlying health conditions or secondary issues stemming from the pandemic are suffering from the extensive measures applied to hospitals to combat COVID. DiCarlo lost his uncle this past summer to heart disease because he was too afraid to go to the hospital.

If you go to the ER, unless it's a critical issue, most doctors try to maintain physical distance from patients "which is sad because a lot of people are suffering from other diseases and issues besides COVID right now," DiCarlo explains.

He shared his discontent with the amount of social shaming and ignorance surrounding COVID-19. Have you ever thought about why people are driving alone in their car with their mask on?

"Maybe the person is an Uber driver and

they're constantly picking people up; maybe they're a courier and they're always in and out of their car; maybe they're wearing a mask as a reminder not to touch their face," DiCarlo noted.

It's important to be empathetic towards people you don't know. You have no idea what someone is dealing with, he said.

DiCarlo worries about the small, local businesses who are the backbone of our economy.

"What's going to happen in a couple of years when these businesses don't exist anymore?" he asks.


DiCarlo has done his best to play his part in the community by supporting local businesses and offering people advice. He has explained to local business owners and residents that it's okay if you're not worried about COVID but he questions why they aren't worried about others.

He gives the example: "think about your 60-year-old mother or 80-year-old grandmother. Do they have underlying health issues? Do you care if they get COVID? How do you know you're not a carrier? How do you know you're not asymptomatic? How come you're not worried about me transmitting the virus to you?"

Although the virus has resulted in lockdowns and quarantines, it's important to think about the ones you love and how you would feel if they got sick. That's why masks are important, DiCarlo noted.

Masks are ultimately to protect you from me. DiCarlo says that "if I'm infected and I have a mask on, I'm reducing my risk of infection towards you. If we're both wearing masks, the risk is reduced even more so."

It's important that each citizen does their part in wearing a mask to protect others, showing compassion and non-judgement, and supporting the local community in any way possible.



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