

Multicultural Day aiming to bring people together

By Mike Pickford

One of the fastest growing communities in all of Canada is set to celebrate its multi-culturalism this weekend with a brand new event designed to 'bring people together'.

Shelburne resident Althea Casamento has worked tirelessly over the past few months to bring Multicultural Day to the community. Taking place on Saturday (April 21) from noon until 3 p.m. at the Shelburne Public Library, Ms. Casamento has high hopes for an event she hopes will help to instill an even greater sense of community in the area.

'We are such a diverse community here in Shelburne and I feel this is a great way to celebrate all of our culture, as well as also showing our appreciation to everyone and welcoming new people who are still coming to town,' Ms. Casamento told the Free Press. 'I grew up with street festivals living in Toronto and I know a lot of towns and communities host something similar. It's time Shelburne got in on the party!'

Students from Centre Dufferin District High School, Glenbrook Elementary School, Centennial Hylands Elementary School and Hyland Heights Elementary School have been invited to participate in a special arts and crafts exhibit, which will be showcased at the library. Ms. Casamento revealed there would also be musical performances, story time for children and food on offer, with multiple dishes representing different cultures across the globe.

The event has already generated a significant buzz around town, with Ms. Casamento noting various residents, both young and old, have registered their interest in the international food tasting spectacle.

'I issued a challenge to the Town of Shelburne, the Shelburne Police Service, the Shelburne and District Fire Department, local businesses and local residents - the response has been phenomenal,' Ms. Casamento said. 'We have food coming from the Caribbean culture and the south Asian culture. We have people bringing some Polish, Ukrainian and Portuguese dishes. It's going to be a great spread.'

Since moving to the community more than five years ago, Althea has made herself at home in Shelburne. She runs a successful photography and event planning business and wants to share the uniqueness of the community with local residents - both new and old.

'Personally, I love meeting new people, learning about new cultures, new backgrounds. This event is a great way to get to know your neighbours, to get to know the people that help build this community. We all made a choice to live in this fantastic community, why not work together to build a great area where our children will have the foundations to grow,' Ms. Casamento said.

She concluded, 'This will be the first of many Multicultural Days in Shelburne. I think it's going to be a huge success.'

The event kicks off at the Shelburne Public Library at noon on Saturday, April 21. Prior to that, students at CDDHS will be hosting their 'One Community' event at the local high school, located at 150 Fourth Avenue. The event will serve as the kick-off to Multicultural Day and will run from 8:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. For more information, contact Ms. Casamento at altheacasamento@gmail.com.