



#PPEforHCP

Students collecting equipment for medical workers

Sue Nielsen
Speaker Reporter

DISTRICT — Medical student Emma Goddard is volunteering her time to a campaign aimed at collecting personal protective equipment (PPE) for health care workers across Northern Ontario.

"Many of our frontline health care professionals do not have adequate access to personal protective equipment such as face masks, gowns, gloves and N95 respirators," said Goddard, a second year student at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) in Sudbury.

"The current shortage is placing our healthcare providers at a greater risk of contracting COVID-19 and spreading it amongst themselves and to patients," she said in an email interview with The Speaker.

Goddard said healthcare students from across the north have banded together to organize Northern Ontario #PPEforHCP, a campaign asking organizations and individuals to donate PPE items.

Since she is from Temiskaming Shores, and is the daughter of local physician Steve Goddard, she is collaborating PPE equipment donations from the Temiskaming region.

"I am joined by several other NOSM students and community volunteers in the coordination of the campaign in Temiskaming."

The members of the Temiskaming Shores and Area team include NOSM students Megan Harvey, Lindsay Leduc, Dominique Lachapelle and Lasha Gorecki, along with community volunteers Madison Brunke and Jordan Sutton.

She said donations big and small are critical for frontline healthcare workers.

The idea is to divert existing PPE within a community.

Continued on 2a



READY, SET...SWAB

Nurse Sandi Lajoie, centre, was ready April 15 to test the first drive-through patient at Temiskaming Hospital's COVID-19 assessment centre. Also on hand were Erin Montgomery, left, the hospital's chief nursing executive and director of patient services, and hospital CEO Mike Baker. Assessment centres are also located at the Englehart and District Family Health Team clinic and Heritage North in Kirkland Lake. But the tests are by appointment only and must be booked through the Temiskaming Health Unit. (Staff photo by Diane Johnston)

DID YOU GET The Speaker THIS WEEK?

Here are some of the stories in our April 15 edition...



- A man was fatally shot by police at a New Liskeard residence last week.
- Canada's Chief Medical Officers of Health endorsed the wearing of homemade masks as a tool in preventing the spread of COVID-19.
- COVID-19 drive-through testing (by appointment only) commenced this week at three area hospital locations.
- The purchase of a welcome mat can help the Latchford Legion pay its monthly bills.
- The Haileybury landfill location is now closed to the general public, but open to contractors.
- The Temiskaming Track Club has donated some registration fees to area food banks.
- The Municipality of Charlton Dack has closed its playgrounds and ballfields due to COVID-19 safety concerns.
- The Town of Englehart is assessing its summer operations in light of COVID-19.
- Area businesses have gone online, reduced hours and services as they struggle to remain viable during the coronavirus pandemic.
- Temiskaming Shores council will look at the municipality's spending plans and cash flow as they consider deferring upcoming property tax installments.
- As the first week of the new Learning at Home program rolled out, connectivity – in many forms – was a priority at the region's English Catholic schools.

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#PPEforHCP

Students collecting equipment for medical workers

Continued from A Front

nity to the healthcare institutions like hospitals and clinics operating across the north.

"The campaign is operating in more than 30 communities in Northern Ontario, we are focusing on redistribution of existing PPE for non-essential services to healthcare centers as well as accepting monetary donations in order to fund these PPE initiatives. The donations made by the community are reassigned to local healthcare centers in need," explained Goddard.

What's needed are surgical and procedure masks, N95 respirator masks, face shields, visor attachments, goggles, disposable gloves, isolation gowns, sanitizer and cleaning supplies.

Goddard thanked the following individuals and groups for donating to PPE for HCP: Luxe Day Spa by Melissa, Ripple Software Consulting, KL Gold, Marshall Auto, Peter's Garage Ltd., Unique Home Centre, MCK Temiskamingh Shores, Pedersen Construction, Agricultural Farm Supplies, Indulge Esthetics and Wellness, Phillips Farm, Jac G Tattoos, Poised by Jolene, Dr. Matt Kutalowski Dentistry, Fermes Sancouscy Ltd. and Lor-



NOSM student Emma Goddard holds items that are needed for front-line health care workers. (Supplied photo)

anger Enterprise.

If any businesses or individuals in South Temiskaming would like to help make a contribution to the Northern On-

tario #PPEforHCP campaign they can email northerontarioppeforhcp@gmail.com or email Emma Goddard at egoddard@nosm.ca.



From frontline workers to delivery drivers to our dedicated employees at Englehart OSB, you are the true heroes! All of your hard work and dedication is keeping our supply chain open allowing us to continue to manufacture quality products, on time, at competitive costs, with ZERO significant incidents.

We recognize the tremendous sacrifices you make every day which help place Englehart OSB on the map for all the right reasons. We are forever grateful. Together we will continue to prevail. #InThisTogether



The Library may be closed but we encourage you to make use of the great selection of online library resources for adults and children! These resources may be used from home for free with your library card. There are links to our eBooks, eAudiobooks, emagazines and a great range of hobby and learning platforms such as Hobbies and Crafts Reference Centre and Mango Languages on our website. We can make sure that your card is up to date and help you navigate our digital collection by phone at 705-647-4215 between the hours of 9:00 am and 3:00 pm. Find out more about our digital resources on our website at www.temisklibrary.com.

Some resources of interest are:

PebbleGo Animals, Science and Dinosaurs

The award-winning PebbleGo Animals, Science and Dinosaurs databases from Capstone Digital Publishers offers information on hundreds of animals, science subjects and dinosaurs. Designed specifically for K-3 emergent readers, PebbleGo databases include activities, videos, pictures, lesson plans and articles on each subject. To access, click the E-Resources tab on the library's website and scroll down to the PebbleGo logo. Have your 14 digit library card ready to log in and enjoy this fun resource for kids!

TumbleBookLibrary Online

TumbleBookLibrary is an online collection of ebooks for children in grades K-6. Existing children's books are animated using the existing illustrations and adding audio narration. The collection includes old time favorites such as The Paper Bag Princess by Robert Munsch, Diary of a Worm, How I Became a Pirate, Miss Malarkey Doesn't Live in Room 10, One Duck Stuck, as well as favourite fairy tales such as Jack and the Beanstalk and Old Mother Hubbard. To access, click the E-Resources tab on the library's website and scroll down to the TumbleBookLibrary information. Have your 14 digit library card ready to log in and enjoy this fun resource for kids!

RB Digital Magazines

RB Digital Magazines gives you access to current issues of popular magazines to read on your computer, tablet, or smartphone. RB Digital at the Temiskaming Shores Public Library provides free, full-text digital access to over 50 titles of magazines, including such popular titles as Canadian Living, Cosmopolitan, Elle Canada, GQ, Men's Health, National Geographic, OK Magazine, Our Canada, Reader's Digest Canada, Quilting Arts, Zoomer and many more. Try it today at <https://www.rbdigital.com/canada50on/service/magazines/> or on the library's website! Have your 14 digit library card ready to log in and enjoy this great resource!

Hobbies and Crafts Reference Centre

This database offers detailed "how-to" instructions and creative ideas to meet the interests of virtually every hobby enthusiast. Full text is provided from leading hobby and craft magazines. Content Includes: Full text for nearly 2,000 magazines and books, More than 720 videos, More than 180 hobby profiles, More than 11,000 recipes, A unique, dedicated user interface.

Subjects Include: Arts and crafts, Collecting, Home and garden, Indoor recreation and Kids' crafts. To access, go to the e-Resources tab on the library's webpage at www.temisklibrary.com. Have your 14 digit library card number ready to log in and start crafting!

NovelList Plus

The secret to finding great books! NovelList is a premiere database for reading recommendations - a comprehensive source of information about books that includes expert recommendations, reviews, articles, lists and more. NovelList Plus has reading recommendations for both fiction and nonfiction, for all ages. NovelList's expertise in books and reading means that you'll always get the best help for finding just the right books.

Features:

- **Read-alike recommendations**--Recommendations for titles, authors, and series.
- **Listen-alike recommendations for audiobooks**
- **Series information**--A common challenge for readers. NovelList Plus has full series information.
- **A single place for reviews**--NovelList includes reviews from professionals (Booklist, Kirkus, Library Journal, Publishers Weekly, School Library Journal), as well as from readers (via Goodreads).
- **Lists!**--Top ten, best of, favorites...hundreds of reading lists that make it really easy to quickly find great books to read.
- **Award winners, all in one place**--NovelList offers one place to find them all -- such as Caldecott Medal, Pulitzer, Man Booker, etc.

To access, go to the e-Resources tab on the library's webpage at www.temisklibrary.com. Have your 14 digit library card number ready to log in and enhance your reading experience!

Mango Languages Online

Mango Languages is an FREE online language-learning system that teaches actual conversation skills for over 50 different languages. With helpful feedback, you can learn at your pace, wherever you are. A smartphone, tablet, or home computer all make a great platform for Mango Languages. Check it out at <http://connect.mangolanguages.com/temisklibrary/start> or on the library's website. Have your 14 digit library card ready to log in and enjoy this great resource!

OverDrive Ebooks and Audiobooks

The Library has access to e-books and downloadable audiobooks through the provincial consortia with OverDrive. Books and audiobooks can be downloaded to many types of tablets, ipads or your laptop at home. Items expire automatically after two weeks--no fines to pay, ever! To access, click the E-Resources tab on the library's website and scroll down to the OverDrive link or navigate to this link: <https://odmc.overdrive.com/>. Have your 14 digit library card ready to log in and enjoy this great resource for e-books! For more information, call the Library.

CITY BULLETIN



MUNICIPAL PLAYGROUNDS, TRAILS AND PATHS CLOSED

All outdoor recreational amenities, including municipal playground structures, park shelters, tennis courts, basketball courts, sports fields and skate parks within the City of Temiskaming Shores are closed.

Also closed are trails at Pete's Dam Park and Devils Rock and walkways at the New Liskeard Waterfront and Haileybury Waterfront.

The STATO trail is closed between Wellington St. South and Beach Blvd. in New Liskeard and Browning St and City Hall in Haileybury. All other portions of the STATO trail are open to use at your own risk.

NOTICE TO PUBLIC

Provincial Offences Court closed effective March 23, 2020.

Should you require assistance call our office at 705-672-3221, or email poa@temiskamingshores.ca. Our staff is available to assist you.

If you wish to pay your fines, you can email your payment information to poa@temiskamingshores.ca indicating your credit card information and expiry date and a note giving us authorization to process your payment. Payments can also be faxed to 705-672-3200. To further assist there is a drop box at City Hall, 325 Farr Drive (front entrance).

If you have a suspended driver's license, your fine can be paid at Service Ontario located at 280 Armstrong Street (New Liskeard) or pay online at serviceontario.ca

Extension of Time to Pay forms or Reopening documents can be placed in drop box at City Hall. There is an Order made by the Chief Justice pursuant to s. 85 extending timelines for applying for re-openings (s.11), when a fine is due (s. 66) and when a fine goes into default (s. 69). The extension is granted until April 23, 2020. Unless your matters went into default prior to March 16, 2020, the applications are not considered urgent.

Courts are cancelled until further notice.

TEMISKAMING TRANSIT UPDATE

The Temiskaming Transit Committee is committed to keeping Transit Service operational for as long as possible. Many essential service workers use public transit to get to work and many families need public transit for grocery shopping and medical appointments. Public safety and trust in the transit system is paramount. We all need to work together to ensure we continue to have a safe and reliable transit service.

- FREE Transit will continue for the month of April. Monthly bus passes will not be issued.
- Continue to use the rear entrance of the bus. Those with accessibility requirements will still be allowed to use the front entrance and ramp.
- Please do not use the Transit system for "JOY-RIDING" or because you "need" something to do. You should only be riding the transit because it is necessary! Every effort needs to be taken to ensure physical distancing. If the public does not cooperate with minimizing transit use for essential purposes we will have no choice but to limit ridership.
- The Transit Committee and Stock Transportation have increased cleaning protocol for the transit, but everyone has a role to play. Remember to wash your hands, maintain physical distancing and if you are sick – STAY HOME!

NEED TO MAKE A PAYMENT?

Payments by cheque for taxes and other items can be dropped off in the drop box located to the left of the front doors at City Hall (325 Farr Drive) or at the Pool & Fitness Centre (77 Wellington Street).

Tax Payments can be made utilizing interac banking. Your property tax roll number is your account number. The account number will be 15 digits starting with 010, 020 or 030 depending on where your property is located, example 010009123450000, do not include any spaces or decimals. Pre-authorized payment plans, monthly or installment, are also available. Please email finance@temiskamingshores.ca for more information. If you any other questions regarding payments, please email finance@temiskamingshores.ca.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

In support of the Provincial Government's Stay at Home recommendation, effective Tuesday, April 14, 2020 the Haileybury Landfill will be closed to the general public until further notice. Only contractors who continue to work on essential construction projects as outlined in the Government of Ontario's directive will be allowed to deposit waste. Contractors must have a City approved account to charge prior to disposal as no cash payment will be accepted.

In addition, effective Tuesday, April 14, 2020, the hours of operation to accept contractor waste will be adjusted to Tuesday to Friday, Noon until 4:30pm.

The City understands the inconvenience that this closure may cause and is reviewing options associated with the Landfill Amnesty program. Please stay tuned for further updates.

Curbside collection of garbage and recycling will continue as normal.

Council and Committee MEETINGS

Regular Council Meeting

Tuesday April 21, 2020 @ 6 pm – Virtual meeting

Regular Council Meeting

Tuesday May 5, 2020 @ 6 pm – Virtual meeting

Regular Council Meeting

Tuesday May 19, 2020 @ 6 pm – Virtual meeting

For further information contact David Treen
705-672-3363 Ext. 4136
or dtreen@temiskamingshores.ca

PROCLAMATION

The City of Temiskaming Shores proclaims April 28, 2020 as **National Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job** in the City of Temiskaming Shores.

AGE FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

Social phone calls: To assist with socialization during this time of physical distancing, a calling tree is being set up. If you would like to receive or give a phone call to talk to someone to help brighten their day, please register with Yvonne by phone call or email. You will need to provide your phone number and agree to call and receive a phone call from a someone local.

Yvonne 705-647-5709 ext 4227 or 705 672-3363 ext 4227
ywalford@temiskamingshores.ca

Seniors' Centre Without Walls

What is it?

- FREE telephone-based seniors' activity program
 - Fun activities, educational and health and wellness programs
 - Learning opportunities and more!
 - Scheduled activities INCLUDING Christmas and New Years
 - A community-creating, loneliness-busting program for isolated seniors
- Who can participate?
- Seniors 55+ and adults with physical disabilities who find it difficult to leave home
 - All Temiskaming district and area residents

What are the benefits?

- Just need a telephone...NO computer or internet required
- Creates community and friendships... from the comfort of home
- Removes barriers – relieves isolation and loneliness
- Enhances existing seniors' programs
- Listen and interact with speakers sharing interesting information

For Information or to Register Call:

Seniors' Centre Without Walls Coordinator
705-672-2254 | 1-800-361-5820
scww@homesupportservices.ca

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- ONresources ONressources



NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Application to Acquire Municipal Land

Notice is hereby given in accordance with By-law No. 2015-160 in respect to an application to purchase municipally owned land;

This public notice is being given to advise the public that Council is considering the disposition of the subject land as described below and shown in the key map.

Any person may attend the public meeting or provide written comments prior to the public meeting.

The Public Meeting will be held: Further info or written submissions

Date: April 21, 2020 David B. Treen, Municipal Clerk

Time: 6:00 p.m. email: dtreen@temiskamingshores.ca or

Location: Virtual Meeting phone: 705-672-3363 Ext. 4136

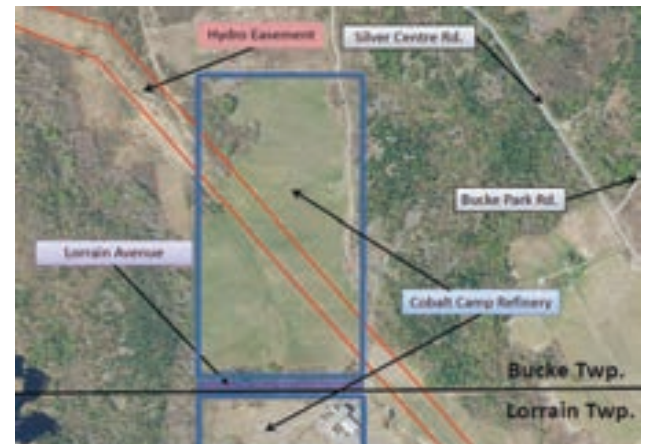
You are encouraged to provide comments in advance to the Municipal Clerk; in order to provide comments on the date of the meeting please go to the following link to register:

<http://www.temiskamingshores.ca/public-meeting/>

Description of Land: Portion of Lorrain Avenue

Proponent / Purpose: The proponent Cobalt Camp Refinery Limited owns property on either side of Lorrain Avenue and is interested in acquiring that portion of Lorrain Avenue abutting their property in order to have contiguous property ownership.

Key Map



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Location: Virtual Meeting phone: 705-672-3363 Ext. 4136

You are encouraged to provide comments in advance to the Municipal Clerk; in order to provide comments on the date of the meeting please go to the following link to register:

<http://www.temiskamingshores.ca/public-meeting/>

Description of Land: Portion of Paget Street

Proponent / Purpose: The owners of 130 Paget Street are looking to acquire a portion of Paget Street for the purposes of installing landscaping features to reduce the effects of shoreline slippage.

Key Map



SPEAKER WEEKENDER



General Manager - Lois Perry
Editor - Steven Larocque



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Austerity?

*“Kiss a baby and give the world a smile.
And if you take an inch always
give back a mile.”*

John Prine.

I am writing yet another column on COVID-19.

I'd like to write about other things, but this pandemic is so huge and imposing with serious health implications for us all that it warrants commentary.

I won't give you the latest death tolls from COVID-19.

I am personally not keeping track of that stuff.

Things are changing so rapidly with this virus it's hard to keep up with the latest statistics.

Instead, I concentrate on what I need to do on a daily basis to keep my sanity and get through this.

I stood in line at the grocery store this past weekend maintaining a six-foot distance from the person in front of me. Then someone came up behind me in the line and touched my shoulder wanting to talk.

I was not about to begin chatting and I wasn't interested in waiting until I could enter the store.

I simply walked away.

My tolerance fuse is short these days and I think we are all feeling the anxiety of this pandemic.

Desperate times call for desperate measures, but let's not get too desperate that we forget about civility and compassion.

I'd like to kiss a baby and smile like the legendary John Prine said, but that would be dangerous to the infant. I take comfort in knowing my neighbours brought a beautiful baby boy into the world about a



Sue Nielsen

month ago.

It's really the infants, the elderly and the immune compromised folks that we need to be mindful about isn't it?

I was horrified at what happened at the Quebec nursing home where some staff walked out and 31 people died, some stained with their own feces.

That could have been my mother or father, or relative.

If there's one takeaway for me during this pandemic it's the word "austerity."

Before any of us considers voting for a party that promises austerity and cuts to health care, let's remember post-pandemic what that looks like. Let's haul up those death toll numbers shall we?

Our hospitals, nursing homes, health care workers and publicly funded social service organizations have seen their budgets sliced to the bare bones.

All in the name of saving a buck.

Across the northeast region there are plans to amalgamate all public health units into one huge entity.

That's a mistake any way you look at it.

This COVID crisis should serve as a wake-up call to everyone who values profit above people and public safety.



BERRY PICKING 101

The cheery, energetic robins are back in South Temiskaming and they're busy feasting on mountain ash berries. (Staff photo by Sue Nielsen)

EDITORIAL

Tragedy all the way around

The Easter weekend in South Temiskaming began in a terrible, tragic way.

A young man lost his life in an incident last Thursday in Temiskaming Shores when he was shot by two attending police officers.

Our hearts go out to the police officers attending the incident that night.

They and their family members likely never imagined when they left for work that morning what would befall them.

And equally our hearts go out to the young man's family and friends, who never imagined their loved one would lose his life at the start of the holiest week in the Christian calendar.

People come into police work with a shared goal of public service and they are facing enormous challenges keeping the public safe these days.

Contrary to public opinion, police work is not routine. It often involves traumatic, dan-

gerous and stressful situations.

With little or no warning, police officers can find themselves dealing with guns, domestic violence incidents, natural disasters and assaults.

Police officers pay a high price for their work in terms of the physical and mental toll placed on them and their families.

The Special Investigations Unit of the Ontario Provincial Police has been called in to investigate the shooting.

Thanks to the front-line workers

At this time, in our communities, hundreds of front-line workers are putting themselves and their families at risk every day to provide us with groceries, take out food, gas and other items deemed essential.

These people are working in confined spaces, often at minimum wage.

Those workers need to be recognized for the valuable services they are providing all of us during this COVID-19 pandemic.

We've heard of customers acting in

less than courteous fashion to these workers.

Now is not the time to express your frustrations on helpless people who are doing us all a favour by working during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yes, a certain amount of anxiety and fear is allowable during this pandemic, but your actions say more about you than you think.

Let's all take a step back and appreciate what we have and let's be part of the solution and not the problem.

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New Liskeard

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MAKING A GREENER SPRING

One of the early signs of spring is the community-minded people who volunteer their time to clean the roadsides after the snow recedes. Phil Latour of Haileybury was out doing just that on Highway 11B between Haileybury and Cobalt Sunday, April 5. He was finding numerous cans, plastic bags, and even bits of siding. As well as undertaking the roadside cleanup in the spring, he also often does the same thing in the fall. (Staff photo by Darlene Wroe)

Coleman enacts COVID-19 measures

COLEMAN (Special/Staff) – Essential services in Coleman will run as usual as the township takes additional steps to prevent potential spread of the COVID-19 virus.

In a press release, the township said its municipal emergency control group has been activated and essential services related to road safety, fire response, waste collection, and water treatment and distribution “will continue to operate as normal.”

Its office, however, is closed to the public and may be reached by phone or email. It has requested that payments be made by internet banking through the individual’s financial institution or by mailing cheques.

The municipality has made no changes in interim tax instalment due dates.

But it will apply no penalty or interest to outstanding property tax balances, including utility accounts, for April, May and June.

Its landfill operator will also not handle cash. Invoices and receipts will be mailed.

In terms of recycling, its provider, Eco-Logix, has requested that all recyclables, with the exception of cardboard, be placed in clear bags.

While employees typically enter some buildings to pick up recyclables, it’s now requesting that the materials be placed curbside.

It stressed that it will not pick up non-recyclable materials such as tissue, toilet paper, napkins or paper towels.

Eco-Logix operator Belinda Beirsto also requested that anyone who is ill or at risk of exposure refrain from recycling for now.

“As a recycling company, we are in an oddly exposed position as we directly and indirectly handle a huge amount of material that has been exposed to people’s mouths. We are potentially exposed to the saliva of thousands of people every day.

“We feel that our service is essential for communities and intend to continue service as per usual.

“In the event that our staff is quarantined or we are mandated to discontinue services we will work with communities for alternate options at that time.”

Coleman is also a member of the Temiskaming Municipal Services Association, which provides building inspections.

The association’s services continue, but with changes.

No interior inspections of occupied premises will be done, and on-site inspections will be conducted only where physical distancing is possible.

Building permits will be accepted electronically, and approved permits will be emailed to applicants.

For information regarding signature requirements, contact the chief building officer.

IN MEMORIAM

Darlene

April 18, 2019

*One year has passed
Everyday we think of you
Always in our hearts
We miss you!*

*Love Paul and
the Rivard & Bolan families*





FAST, FIRM ESTIMATES

Our body shop can quickly give your insurance adjuster an accurate estimate of the cost to repair your vehicle. And once we get approval, we'll proceed as fast as possible to make your car like new again...using genuine GM parts.

Certified Service

The Collision Centre
 238 Armstrong Centre, P.O. Box 100, New Liskeard ON P0J 1P0
 Telephone: 1-705-647-2031 • Fax 1-705-647-9817
 Email: collisioncentre@personainternet.net

Temagami Family Health Team

Submitted by Ellen Ibey

Staying Busy During a Difficult Time

While you're isolating and practising physical distancing, here are some suggestions to keep busy:

Walk outside and enjoy all that nature has to offer

Walking can lower the risk of heart disease, benefit people with chronic conditions, improve physical ability/function, and reduce pain. But make sure to keep a safe distance from others you may encounter during your walk as part of precautionary measures against the virus. Wash your hands before you go and again when you return.

Try a new recipe and share it via social media with your friends and family

Showcase your cooking skills and knowledge. Food not only nourishes the body, but the soul as well.

Do something creative

Spring is the perfect time to wake the artist inside you. Dust off the camera, piano or pick up your paint brush.

Use this time as an opportunity to learn something new

Engaging with others in online courses can foster a sense of belonging to a group (albeit virtual), improve self-esteem, and help address isolation among older adults.

Pick up the phone or go virtual

While we might all be confined to our homes that doesn't stop us from talking to one another and hearing a friendly voice or seeing a friendly face on-screen. This could make a big difference to someone who's struggling. Choose the phone or video call over sending a text and see if there's a program running in your area to call isolated members of the community.

Read a book

If you've exhausted all the movies and TV you've been meaning to watch, why not pick up a book or download an audiobook, you could even set up a virtual book club with friends. Podcasts are an option too.

Whatever you do during this difficult time, please stay safe and healthy!

**The Temagami Medical Centre and Family Health Team...
committed to keeping you as healthy as possible!**



Temagami

Family Health Team

17 O'Connor Drive, P.O. Box 98, Temagami, ON P0H 2H0
Tel: 705.569.3244 Fax: 705.569.2610



MASKING THE MESSAGE

A small sign bearing the #staysafe hashtag was tucked amidst the greenery of an Englehart tree named Oscar. But thanks to an old sheet and Nancy Hack's creativity, Oscar's message in the COVID-19 era came through loud and clear. It's not the first time she's decorated the tree. This time, "I was worried it would offend people," she said. But after circulating her plans, "I kept getting messages saying, 'do it, do it.'" And Oscar has proven to be "very popular," she said. (Staff photo by Diane Johnston)

Latchford wants reduced payment demands

Darlene Wroe
Speaker Reporter

LATCHFORD - Latchford council is calling on area agencies to delay calling on municipalities for levy fees now due.

Municipalities pay levies to service organizations such as the District of Timiskaming Social Services Administration Board, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, the Timiskaming Health Unit and the Ontario Provincial Police, as well as the school boards.

The major share of the taxes collected by northern municipalities are used for payments to these agencies. But this year, as a result of the shutdown of much of the Ontario economy to battle COVID-19, municipalities are receiving requests from ratepayers about deferring their taxes for the time being. However, municipalities continue to feel pressured to pay their levies to the agencies.

At Latchford council's meeting of Thursday, April 9, Mayor George Lefebvre expressed the opinion that those larger service organizations should look at ways to defer their payment requests to help offset the financial pressure on the municipalities.

Council agreed to remove interest from current tax accounts for its ratepayers. That will continue for the next three months.

The councillors expressed support for the mayor's viewpoint that boards and organizations should reduce their demands for payments from the municipalities.

"If we're all in this together, let's get together," said Lefebvre.

Clerk-treasurer Jaime Allen noted that the town had not yet received any direction from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs on the matter.

Lefebvre noted that the school boards experienced several strike days where the teachers were not being paid, and they should be able to reduce their demands on the municipalities which he said have now become the tax collectors for these boards and organizations.

"I don't think it's fair," he commented.

Councillor Mike Brooks stated in support, "There should certainly be some consideration for all the municipalities in that regard."

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More testing, patient transfers as district tackles COVID-19

Diane Johnston
Speaker Reporter

DISTRICT – Appointments had already been booked for the opening day of COVID-19 virus assessment centres in Temiskaming.

Three drive-through centres – located at the northern clinic entrance at Temiskaming Hospital, the Englehart and District Family Health Team clinic and Heritage North in Kirkland Lake – opened April 15.

They'll remain open until the end of April on an appointment-only basis, with referrals from the Timiskaming Health Unit.

Testing had been available in the district, but on a more limited basis.

The assessment centres are part of a regional initiative to better understand the status of COVID-19 in the region.

TEMISKAMING HOSPITAL

Temiskaming Hospital was approved for an assessment centre in March, but changes in recent days made the expanded local testing “a viable option,” said hospital CEO Mike Baker.

He said the original testing criteria had been very restrictive, and the hospital was receiving only “a trickle” of the swabs used for testing.

However, the list of potential COVID-19 symptoms has been expanded, and so too has the eligibility for testing.

He said more capacity to analyze tests is now available in the region through labs in Timmins and at Health Sciences North in Sudbury, and a bulk order of swabs arrived April 14.

He repeated the mantra that the hospital has adopted during the pandemic – “COVID-19, not in our house.”

To that end, he stressed the need for people to stay home, even if they're not sick; to practise physical distancing when around others; to wash their hands frequently; and to avoid touching their face.

IN ENGLEHART

In the northern half of the district, meanwhile, hospitals in Englehart and Kirkland Lake are realigning services and patients to cope with COVID-19.

At the Kirkland and District Hospital, the district's first and, to date, only hospitalized patient with COVID-19 is reported to be out of intensive care and improving.

Over the course of a week, about a dozen alternate-level-of-care (ALC) patients have

been transferred from Kirkland Lake to Englehart and District Hospital, explained Sean Conroy, interim president and CEO of the two hospitals.

The move increases the capacity of Kirkland Lake hospital to handle any surge of COVID-19 cases, said Conroy in an interview earlier this week.

Kirkland and District Hospital is equipped with ICU facilities, a CT scanner and support staff, he noted.

And by relocating ALC patients, he said the hospitals have created “basically a COVID-free in-patient area in Englehart.”

ALC patients, often long-term care patients, don't need a hospital's acute care services but don't have suitable accommodations elsewhere. They can also be among the most vulnerable to the virus.

Conroy said two Kirkland Lake staffers who typically work with that hospital's ALC patients have also made the move.

He said they'd be familiar faces for the transferred patients and a new resource for Englehart patients.

Within the Englehart hospital itself, he said ALC patients are separated from other acute care patients “as an extra precaution.”

Englehart's emergency department remains open 24-7, he said.

The district's Emergency Medical Services will continue to transport patients with serious conditions – a heart attack, stroke or serious bone breaks, for example – to Englehart.

But he said the hospitals

are working with the district's ambulance service and doctors to determine when patients with less urgent conditions can be diverted to Kirkland Lake.

Conroy said the hospitals are also trying to minimize any

cross-over of staff between the two facilities.

It's implementing personal protective equipment requirements to reduce the risk when staff must move between the two, he said.



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Pavilion's doors remain open

TEMISKAMING SHORES (Special/Staff) – As Canada tries to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus, people are being urged to stay home.

And yet home is the place where survivors of gender-based violence are most at risk of violence, say operators of a Haileybury women's centre.

"In the face of the changing and evolving crisis in Temiskaming, Pavilion Women's Centre wants to let everyone know that the doors remain open to women and children at a time when staying at home can significantly impact the safety of women and their children," said Melanie Ducharme, the Pavilion's executive director, last week.

Ducharme said the Pavilion is being told that women are finding it more difficult to reach out for support because they are isolated with their abuser.

In a media release, she said it's important for women to know that support is available 24 hours a day.

The centre is working on adapting services to address the

needs of women self-isolating with their partner.

Counsellors are offering non-traditional appointment times and alternative options for communication.

Anyone worried about their safety can reach out at any time of day so that the Pavilion can help put a safety plan in place.

"If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, please call 911," it said.

To talk with someone immediately about safety needs and safety planning, call the Pavilion's crisis line at 1-888-871-9090.

The Pavilion offers services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and to women in crisis.

It offers crisis support 24 hours a day through its toll-free crisis line as well as short-term shelter for women and children and counselling services for women and children who have experienced physical, sexual and emotional violence or abuse.

To learn more, visit pavilion-wc.com.



EMERGENCY MESSAGE

In what may well have been Latchford's first Easter parade, first responders Trent Matton and Deandra Baskey offered a simple message on an emergency response vehicle – "Happy Easter, Be Kind and Safe." Response to the Sunday afternoon parade was so positive it may become an annual event, said Sharon Gadoury-East, town councillor and chair of the parks and rec committee (Staff photo by Diane Johnston)

Province deferring Provincial Land Tax

TORONTO (Staff/Special) - Property owners in unincorporated townships will see some well-timed relief during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The provincial government has announced it is deferring \$15 million in property taxes for people and businesses in parts of Northern Ontario located outside of municipal boundaries.

Through these measures, Ontario is giving taxpayers in unincorporated areas more time to pay each of the four 2020 Provincial Land Tax installments. Taxpayers will have 90 extra days to pay without incurring interest or penalties.

This action is complementary to new support for muni-

icipalities that were announced in Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19. In this plan, the Province announced it is deferring the upcoming quarterly (June 30) remittance of education property tax to school boards by 90 days. This will provide municipalities with the flexibility to, in turn, provide property tax deferrals of over \$1.8 billion to local residents and businesses.

"Additional cash flow during these tough times can help keep food on the table for people in every corner of the province," said Ontario Minister of Finance Rod Phillips in making the announcement Monday, April 6.

The Provincial Land Tax is the

property tax paid in unincorporated areas of Northern Ontario outside municipal boundaries. The province directly collects this tax to help fund community services, such as policing, land ambulance, public health and social services in unincorporated areas.

To ensure this deferral does not have a financial impact on Local Roads and Services Boards, which provide additional services in these remote communities, the province will continue to make payments to these partners, as scheduled. In addition, to ensure this does not have a financial impact on school boards, the province will adjust payments to boards to offset the deferral.



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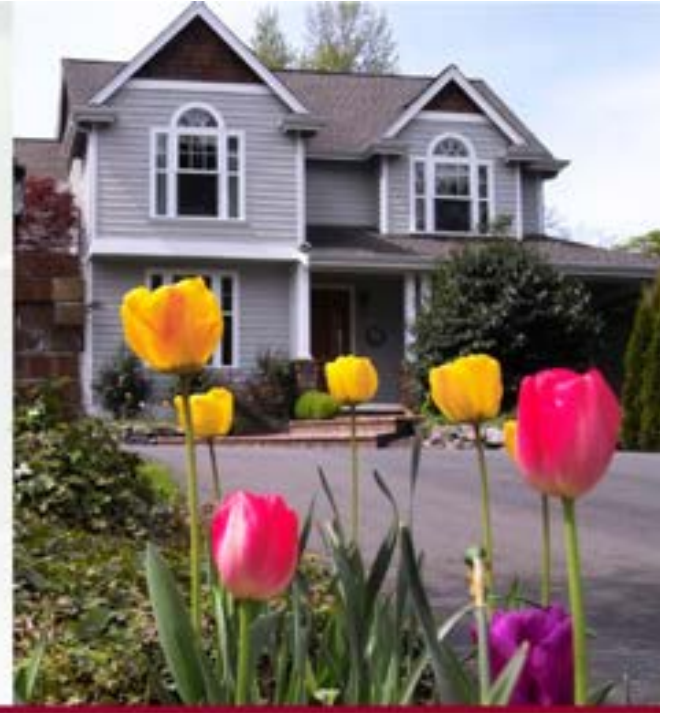


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