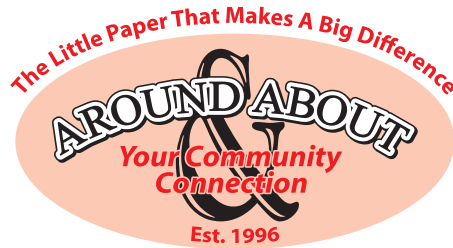


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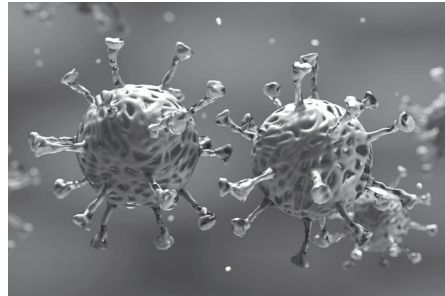
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Emergency Measures Put In Place In Ontario



By *Rosalind Russell* - Premier Doug Ford says the decision to issue a stay-at-home order is absolutely necessary, if we're to head off the spiraling number of COVID-19 cases in our province.

Effective last Thursday at 12:01 a.m., Ontarians must stay in their own homes, except for essential trips for groceries, medications, health appointments, exercise, or essential work.

Those employees who can work from home must do so.

Non-essential store hours are restricted from 7 am to 8 pm, and all but essential construction work will be halted.

Limits on gatherings are being limited to five people and schoolchildren in hard-hit areas like Toronto, York, Peel, Hamilton, and Windsor-Essex won't return to in-person learning until at least February 10th.

A decision is to be made about school in the rest of the southern part of the province Wednesday.

Ford says police, bylaw officers, and workplace inspectors will charge those found violating the order, which is to remain in effect for the next four weeks.

The penalties include fines and, in serious cases, up to one year in jail.



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Rainbow Board And Secondary Occasional Teachers Reach Tentative Deal

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation and the Rainbow District School Board have reached a tentative three-year deal representing over 100 secondary occasional teachers in Espanola, Massey, Manitoulin and Sudbury.

Board chair Doreen Dewar says the deal, if ratified, will be retroactive to September 1st, 2019 and expires August 31st,

2022.

Laurie Lamothe, the chief negotiator for the bargaining unit adds they are pleased to finally reach a deal after an extended period where they were not able to negotiate locally.

Lamothe says the federation team will be contacting members with the details as well as set a date for a ratification meeting and vote on the contract.

Time To Register For Kindergarten For New School

Parents wishing to register their child in a French language Kindergarten program are invited to come discover Conseil scolaire catholique Nouvelon's elementary schools during their Kindergarten Registration event in January.

Board communication director Paul de la Riva says registration is underway at Ecole St. Joseph in Espanola this month for the new Ecole Renaissance in September.

He adds due to the social distancing measures put in place to counter COVID-19 parents will

be able to schedule an appointment with their selected school.

Registration is also underway for kindergarten with Sacred Heart School, which will also be housed in the new facility.

De la Riva says the tentative date to open the new school is set for just after the March break so parents with children born in 2017 are encouraged to register this month.

All schools should be contacted directly for kindergarten registration.

Province Invests In Forestry Sector Businesses

EACOM's Nairn Centre sawmill and Espanola's Domtar Mill will be able to access funding for forestry operations to offset costs related to COVID-19.

The Ontario government is investing over five million dollars in the forestry sector for initiatives such as setting up sanitizing stations, providing enhanced cleaning, additional worker training, measures to increase physical distancing as well as

purchasing personal protective equipment.

Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry John Yakabuski says the government is committed to the ongoing economic recovery and growth of the forestry industry and the funding will help businesses in the sector overcome the challenges they face.

For information on program eligibility and timelines, please visit ontario.ca/forestsafetyfund

Recipe

This is a quick and easy meal loaded with vegetables, lean beef, diced tomatoes and potatoes. It's great made ahead of time, budget friendly, reheats and freezes well. The ultimate comfort food served during the winter with a crusty loaf of bread.



Hamburger Soup

- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
- 3 ½ cups beef broth
- 28 ounces diced tomatoes with juice
- 1 can condensed tomato soup
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 bay leaf
- salt and pepper to taste
- 3 cups mixed vegetables, fresh or frozen

Brown onion, ground beef and garlic until no pink remains. Drain any fat. Add potatoes, broth, tomatoes, tomato soup, Worcestershire sauce, seasoning and bay leaves. Simmer covered 10 minutes. Stir in vegetables. Simmer 15-20 minutes or until potatoes are tender.



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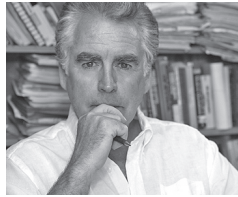
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All The World's A Circus

William Thomas

williamjthomas@gmail.com

This Column And This Newspaper — Now You See Us, Now You...

Please, humour me. At this moment you're holding up your local newspaper about to read this column. Now put the paper down but raise your hands to where they were a moment ago. What do you see? The other side of the room, right? Oh yeah, you're going to miss us when we're gone. In 2008, only one newspaper ceased publication in Ontario. In 2018, 68 daily and community newspapers closed up shop. All told, in the last 12 years more than 245 local newspapers have ceased to exist in this province alone.

As digital media giants like Google and Facebook continue to gut the advertising revenues of newspapers while at the same time ripping off our content with no compensation, COVID-19 may yet be the pallbearer that drops the lid on the coffin of print media. In this unfolding crime — a rape of resources and the theft of intellectual property — Prime Minister Trudeau is eagerly watching to see how long we can last. Not bad enough that Trudeau promised to help Canadian print media ten months ago and has done nothing, this morning's Toronto Star revealed the feds have spent \$15.8 million in advertising with Google and Facebook in 2018-19.

Once a big bundle of news that barely fit into its plastic sleeve, today's skinny Star totalled 32 pages. It's much larger on weekends due to ten or more pages of obituaries.

Please note the bylines attached to the stories in the newspaper you're now holding. These are the journalists, always on call, who do the slogging and the digging of important events happening in your neighbourhood so you and I don't have to. How much do you think these enthusiastic messengers of community news earn? The names that are attached to stories about

high school sports, city council meetings, curbside library operations, fires, crimes and entrepreneurs — they make about \$38,000 a year.

If you're a local journalist trying to support a family with two kids as taxes and the cost of heat, hydro and groceries consistently rise, your spouse better be making twice as much as you. Why do they do it? I've asked a lot of them and the simple honest answer is — they love their job, they love writing about their towns, they never tire of trying to make the neighbourhoods better.

If this paper closes down do you really think the Star or the Globe or the Hamilton Spectator is not going to send reporters and photographers up here to cover your niece's soccer game or feature that guy who repairs bikes and gives them to needy kids? Special? Not only do you get the latest vital COVID-19 information from this paper, you get to read about how your neighbours are coping and how the local system is holding up.

Who then fills the news vacuum when local papers die? Well, if you have a mouth and a microphone you can be an online media source. Even those with good intentions do not have the resources, the experience or the credibility to cover local crimes, house fires, charities, fundraisers and school boards.

The United States has lost 1,800 newspapers since 2004 creating "new deserts" in which readers have no place to get their print news except from online outlets which are crawling with conspiracy theories.

Some online media sources have entirely evil agendas. Your Ward News in Toronto portrays Jews as pigs, glorifies Hitler and frequently uses the "n-word." Now hugely popular in America and spilling over into

Continued on page three...

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Continued from page two...

Canada. QAnon helped fuel and orchestrate last week's domestic terrorist attack on the Capitol in Washington.

Surveys both in the US and the UK have shown that when the local newspaper goes down, bad things in the community go up... like crime and corruption. In the States, media scholar Clay Shirky calls it "an explosion of endemic corruption as more newspapers die."

Ten years ago after 11 newspapers in the suburbs surrounding Los Angeles closed down, overnight the politicians of Bell City became pigs gorging at the public trough. Everything went up at once — the salaries of city officials, voter fraud to keep them in office and taxes to pay for their scandalous behaviour. By the time the L.A. Times and the law caught up to the crooks, the town administrator, Robert Rizzo was sentenced to 12 years in prison and ordered to pay \$9 million back to the city while his second-in-command, Angela Spaccia got 11 years and an order to pay back \$8 million. Originally hired at a salary of \$70,000, Rizzo lavishly compensated his councillors so they, in turn, would not question his annual

compensation package that had swelled to \$1.5 million or his million-dollar mansion at Huntington Beach or his stable of thoroughbred race horses which included a gelding named Depenserdel'argent, French for "Spend Money".

All this incredible nonsense in a small, impoverished town like Bell City would have been ruthlessly opposed by the local newspaper... had there been one. I'm not saying this could happen here but with a healthy local paper... I'm absolutely sure it won't. Those contemplating breaking the rules or the law fear the tough, independent scrutiny of your band of local reporters.

This newspaper is the best friend a caring and community-minded citizen can have. So please, respect reporters who are keeping your communities honestly informed, buy a subscription for you or a friend and put your advertising dollars where they do the most good, right here in your own home town.

Any of the ten books written by William Thomas are available at www.williamthomas.ca
Comments: williamjthomas@gmail.com

Espanola Latest Municipality Hit With Large Insurance Increase

Municipal Insurance Service will be the Town of Espanola's insurance provider for the next year, but Deputy Mayor Bill Foster says he wants to see if other quotes can be obtained for 2022.

At last Tuesday night's meeting, council voted in favour of accepting the insurance quote for municipal properties and services for 2021, but he also pointed out the total cost has increased to just over \$171,000, which includes the 49% increase over last year.

TownCAOCynthia Townsend says the town averages only around one or two claims a year, the most recent being \$75,000 involving playground equipment and the second around \$60,000 for an accident involving a dump truck.

Foster pointed out the town last tendered out the Request for Proposals in 2015 and he wants to see the process carried out once again this Spring in time for 2022. Council will discuss that process at a later meeting.

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THANK YOU

Once again, the community of Espanola has shown its generosity in donating and volunteering to the Community Christmas Dinner. 118 hot dinners were picked up and shared with families in the area. A very big thank you to the Espanola Legion, the generous donations from the community and the hard-working volunteers. Each one of you made this Christmas a little brighter in these unusual times.

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FOR RENT - One bedroom apartment for rent in Webbwood. Available Feb 1. Call 705-869-0511. 02/9

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COMMUNITY NOTES

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Al-Anon Support for families and friends - troubled by someone's drinking. Meetings every Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at St George's Anglican Church, Tudhope St. More information @ al-anon.org

Espanola Public Library Expanded Curbside Pick-Up Service - You can now call (705-869-2940) and pick-up library materials for Curbside Pick-Up on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 10:00am - 4:00pm.

Do you have a NOTE for the Community? We invite not-for-profit organizations to submit information on their upcoming events in writing no later than **Wednesdays at 3:00 p.m. 25 Word Limit.** E-mail: around@aroundandabout.ca

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