

## Symbol of hope

*I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.*

— William Wordsworth

The sunny yellow daffodil is the harbinger of spring. One of the first flowers to bloom after a long, cold winter, the mighty daffodil is always a reminder of better things ahead.

It is also the symbol of hope, strength and courage for the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS).

Throughout April, volunteers across the nation sell the blooms as part of its year-long fundraising strategy.

This is the first year, however, that the Ontario Division of the Cancer Society is not selling fresh bunches of the flowers across all of Ontario, including Halton. Instead, the sale of live blooms has been handed over to Loblaw Companies Ltd.'s grocery stores.

The division is focusing its energies on selling the plastic version of the daffodil to be worn proudly by supporters of the work carried out by the society. Ontario Division hopes the lapel daffodil will become as successful as the Royal Canadian Legion's poppy and the society's pink ribbon sold to raise awareness of breast cancer.

The society notes fresh daffodils were costly and not all sales were as successful as those in Halton Region.

For some three decades, local volunteers, often dressed in bright yellow smocks, had no problem fanning out across Halton selling both the fresh-cut daffodils and pins at grocery stores and other local outlets.

Buying bunches of daffodils from cancer society volunteers is, perhaps, a tradition that should not have been so casually dismissed. There is something special about buying stems of tightly-closed daffodils in honour of a loved one who is battling the disease or lost the fight. A plastic pin raises public awareness, but it does not replace seeing fresh daffodils in a vase or in a place of remembrance.

The exclusive deal with Loblaw will net the CCS \$400,000 and better allocate its resources for other initiatives while continuing to offer fresh flowers to those who want them, explained Martin Kabat, CCS Ontario Division CEO who visited the Halton unit last week.

"The problem was, we couldn't handle it," Kabat said, noting even though fresh daffodil sales were successful here, other areas experienced difficulties.

Kabat said he recognizes there are only a few Loblaw chain stores in Halton, however, the daffodils deal has room to grow in the future with Loblaw Companies Ltd. acquiring the Shoppers Drug Mart chain.

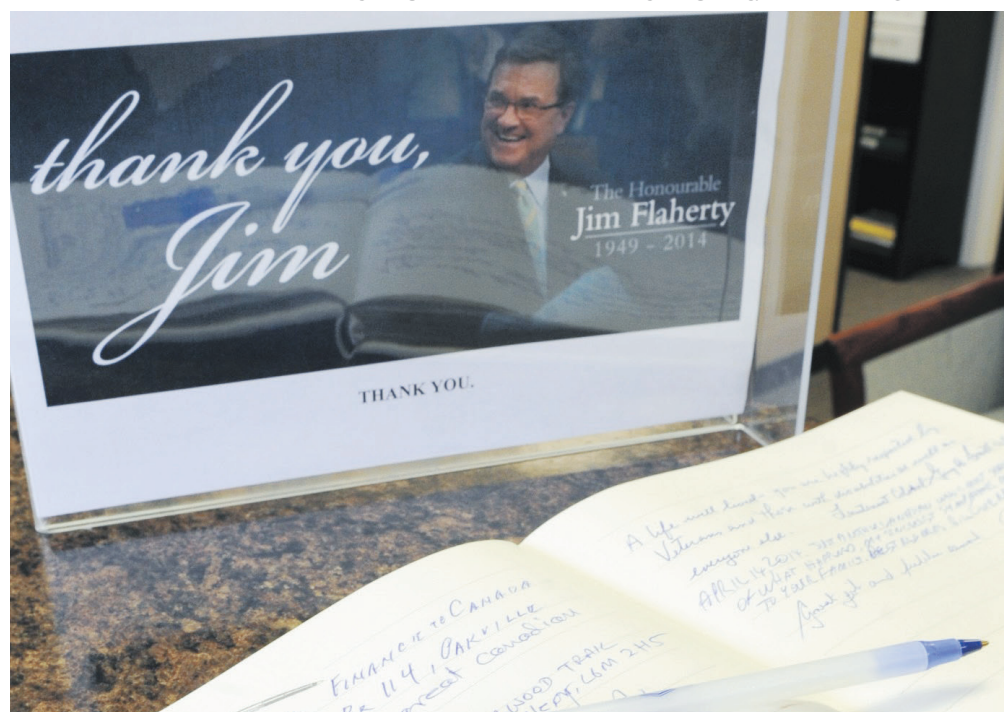
Joan Gibb, who has been a familiar CCS volunteer in both Québec and Ontario for more than 45 years, is among those disappointed by the society's decision.

The Oakville resident, who mobilized the local community to start selling the flowers some 30 years ago, said it's been a successful campaign here and one that everyone looks forward to, especially after a long winter.

"The fresh flowers are so iconic," she said. "It's the flower of hope."

We agree with Gibb. The CCS should give special consideration to the Halton Unit and its volunteers who sold fresh daffodils to raise critical funds and shine a spotlight on how far we've come in beating this awful disease.

P E N Y O U R T H O U G H T S



Oakville MP Terence Young has a book of condolence (above) available for signing for anyone who wishes to pay tribute to Canada's former finance minister Jim Flaherty, who died Thursday, April 10, in Ottawa after suffering an apparent heart attack. The book is at Young's 165 Cross Ave., Ste. 104, constituency office until tomorrow (Thursday) at 3 p.m. A memory book is also available until April 30 at Halton MP Lisa Raitt's constituency office at 86 Main St. E., Milton. They will then be presented to Flaherty's family. | **photo by Graham Paine - Oakville Beaver** (Follow on Twitter @halton\_photog or facebook.com/HaltonPhotog)

## Letter to the Editor

### Register to Beadonor this month

Because someone made the decision to be an organ donor, registered and shared that decision with his family, my husband Keith Childerhose received a life-saving, double-lung transplant last January. We will be forever grateful for this gift.

April is Beadonor Month in Ontario, providing an opportunity for advocates and volunteers, like myself, from across Oakville and the province to show their support for organ and tissue donation and transplantation. This month, supporters will come together to raise awareness at local events, in schools, churches, workplaces, through community leader support and, through personal stories covered in the media.

This month also provides a wonderful opportunity to encourage Ontarians to register their consent to organ and tissue donation at beadonor.ca.

Anyone 16 or older with a valid Ontario health card is eligible to register. Provincially, 24 per cent of those eligible have registered their consent. We are making strides in Ontario, but there is still much work to be done.

Here in Oakville, we're doing better than the

provincial average with 31 per cent of people registered. This is great, but we can do better. Let's aim to be one of the top communities in Ontario.

We have a pretty simple ask during Beadonor month — register your consent and talk to your friends, family members or co-workers and encourage one additional person to register consent this month.

On behalf of Oakville Be A Donor (Twitter @oakbeadonor and Facebook — www.facebook.com/OakvilleBeADonor), thank you to those many donor families who have helped save nearly 10,000 Ontarians and to those who have registered as organ and tissue donors, who will help to save many more. Your registration gives hope to the 1,500 Ontarians waiting for the gift of life.

Registered organ donors save lives. You can register or check your status at www.beadonor.ca, at a ServiceOntario Centre or through the mail by completing a Gift of Life consent form. A signed donor card does not mean you are registered.

**Sarah Taylor, Oakville**

The **Oakville Beaver** welcomes letters from its readers. Letters will be edited for clarity, length, legal considerations and grammar. In order to be published all letters must contain the name, address and phone number of the author. Letters should be addressed to: **The Editor, Oakville Beaver**, 5040 Mainway, Burlington ON L7L 7G5 or via e-mail to: **ablackburn@oakvillebeaver.com**. The *Beaver* reserves the right to refuse to publish a letter.

## Oakville Beaver

447 Speers Road, Oakville ON, L6K 3S4  
General Inquiries: (905) 845-3824  
Editorial Department: (905) 632-0588

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