

EDITORIAL

with Jane Dougan

A season to reflect

After what was for us all a long, cold winter, we're more than ready to welcome Spring. It's the season of new life. The signs are all around us, from the honk of flocks of returning geese overhead to the first snowdrops peeping through the snow-drenched soil or, more practically, the lines of colourful wheelbarrows at the ready outside the local hardware store.

It's a time of anticipation and change, but perhaps especially it's a time to see the world with fresh eyes. The consistent base of winter snow we grumbled about was a boon to many species of wildflowers, wood frogs and other creatures taking cover under the leaf litter. The consistent cold was an escape from an energy-draining onslaught of thawing and freezing.

While we anticipate spring, our families in the Southern hemisphere await the coming of fall. To Christians, Easter is a time of joy in the resurrection of Christ but it is foreshadowed by a long period of reflection and sacrifice, culminating in the remembrance of a cruel and tortuous death. One article in this week's *The New Tanner* highlights the Ukrainian traditions around Easter.

Increased multiculturalism brings awareness of many ways to celebrate and learn about one another this season, from Christian Easter to Jewish Passover to Persian New Year and the Buddhist ceremonies of Ohigan, a time Japanese people honour their ancestors and their passage to enlightenment.

For the Anishabe First Nations people who once lived here, Spring was Sigwan, whose warm breath melted the snow and ice. Many longhouse cultures were celebrating the first harvest of the year – the maple syrup harvest. The return of Sweetwater season was a time of great celebration, especially as food reserves were getting low.

It's a season to reflect on the spiritual side of ourselves, to regain our sense of wonder, and — especially perhaps in rural communities like ours — to remember our agricultural history and our ties to the natural world. The Canadian Stock Market will be closed on Good Friday, perhaps a reminder that our true security arguably lies outside of the money economy: it depends on the health of our soils and the strength and compassion of our communities.

In the latter especially we have much to celebrate, living in and around Acton and Rockwood. We have a wealth of natural areas to treasure and enjoy, from Acton's Fairy Lake to Rockwood Conservation Area. Most importantly, we have one another — our families, our friends — and our communities. Let's get out there and celebrate!



CANCER CAMPAIGN: The Acton Branch of the Canadian Cancer Society met last Wednesday evening to discuss the beginning of the April Campaign. Canvassers will soon be visiting local neighbourhoods. Liz Bailey (left), Pat Kentner, Cathy Gerrow and Karen Turner displayed the Daffodil pin boxes that will be available throughout town. - Ted Tyler photo

Mailboxes going the way of the dodo bird

By 2019, a few four short years down the road, Canada Post will have ceased urban door-to-door mail deliveries. In 2014 over 100,000 homes had this fate delivered upon them. It's sort of an oxy-moron - delivery of mail and then ceasing of this was delivering the fate of the postal plan.

In the end, it is a necessary evil as they say. If, even with postal rate increases, Canada Post continued on the path of home delivery, a service that historically commenced in the 1600's, it would be bankrupt. It's choice was to revamp and during this bring in what was already being utilized in new housing developments, the community mail box. The rather ugly looking metal structure about 5' high with row upon row of doors that resemble the traditional post office boxes that used to adorn our post office at its entrance. It is self-serve mail pick up. Insert key, open lock and door then get mail. Instead of knowing your "mail man" you will now know your neighbourhood peeps as you'll be seeing them there as well while they get their mail.

In 39 seconds an internet search of residential mailboxes shows over 330,000 options



By
Angela Tyler

for links to different sites and manufacturers. This doesn't even include the ones you can buy at craft shows or perhaps the one your grandfather made you. Choosing a mailbox was a very personal thing. It had to match the decor of the house exterior along with your own personal likes. Brass, wood, old school metal...the choices are endless or were endless. I never really thought about it however, with 'community mailboxes' one doesn't necessarily need a mailbox. I suppose it's still handy for newspapers that get delivered there or if you want to hide your front door key, yet, what do we really need them for?

Last week while I was looking through the paper and the flyers, I was stopped, as they say, 'dead in my tracks'. At the top was a very noticeable ad. It was colourful, well laid out, showing a multiple of uses for the item with a big 25% off. It did what it was supposed to... it caught my eye. The problem was the description didn't

match the product.

The product was a mailbox. The description was of a cubby storage organizer. It had a nice picture of a mailbox holding barbeque utensils. There was another picture of it holding beach or sandbox toys. Then there was another one painted bright, ocean blue. They were all very clever ideas, however, call it what you want, it was still a mailbox.

I never really thought about it until then that the mailbox is going by way of the dodo bird. The mailbox manufacturers are soon going to be put out of business after all, how many cubby storage organizers does one need? Probably about as many as they did mailboxes.

So if you are one of those who had home delivery and it has stopped, take down that mailbox and it is time to repurpose it. You can use it for holding gardening tools or maybe your clothes pins or maybe lost socks from your dryer the ones that you can never find their pair. Then one day, when your grandchild asks you where you got it, you can tell them all about how back in the day we used to have a 'mailman', just like my grandparents would talk about the 'milkman'.



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