

EDITORIAL

with Dawn Brown

Cancer Awareness Month

April is Cancer Awareness Month, or daffodil month, where monies raised through donations—by purchasing a daffodil pin or fresh flowers help support the Canadian Cancer Society. Certainly, a worthy cause, especially these days when one would be hard to pressed to find anyone whose family has not been touched by this terrible disease. Too many of us have been impacted by cancer. Too many of us have felt the affects of this terrible disease on our lives. And too many of us have watched a loved one battle this disease, fought it ourselves, or lost someone we cared about.

Cancer doesn't discriminate. It's a disease that can affect young, old, rich or poor. And according to Canadian Cancer Society, one in every two Canadians can expect to get cancer. 49 per cent of men can expect to get cancer in their lifetime and 45 per cent of women—rather a frightening statistic. In 2017, it was estimated that there would be 206,200 new case of cancer in Canada and 80,800 deaths as a result of cancer.

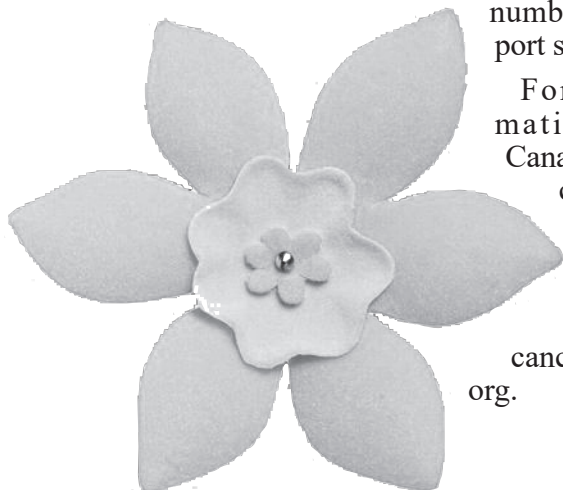
Though, it's not all bad news. In a 2017 statistics report from the Canadian Society, more than 60 per cent of individuals living with cancer were expected to live five years or more after being diagnosed, according to 2006 to 2008 estimates. The rate of survival increased from 53 per cent to 60 per cent for all cancers combined between 1992 to 1994 and 2006 to 2008.

While increased survival rates are good to hear, prevention is better. According to the Canadian Cancer Society website about half of all cancers can be prevented through healthy living. Don't smoke, protect your skin from the sun, eat well, maintain a healthy body weight, exercise, and reduce alcohol consumption all play factors in helping to prevent cancer.

Awareness also means supporting organizations like the Canadian Cancer Society. This organization does a tremendous amount of work towards research, prevention and supporting those battling the disease across the country.

If you prefer to support a more community focussed organization there's the Cancer Assistance Services Halton Hills (CASHh). This group does amazing work for people in Halton Hills living with cancer and their families, including: transportation to appointments, loaning practical items like hospital beds, wheel chairs, etc., and even providing some palliative assistance as well as a number of other support services.

For more information about the Canadian Cancer Society, visit www.cancer.ca, and to learn more about CASHh, visit: cancerassistance.org.



FOOD DRIVE: The Acton Scouts, Girl Guides and Bethel Youth Groups held their 27th Annual Food Drive on behalf of The Acton Foodshare at Bethel Church for their fourth year. As of Saturday, 8330 lbs of food had been donated, but late donations are still coming in. In a joint statement, Acton Foodshare Co-Chairs Norman and Arlene Humphreys said, "We're grateful for the generous donations from the community, the dedicated volunteers and, of course, the youth." - Alex Hilson photo

Humboldt is a lot like Acton

Let's face it, until last Friday, most of us had never heard of Humboldt, Saskatchewan let alone knew it had a junior hockey team. Humboldt is just over 100 kilometres east of Saskatoon. Founded in the mid 1800's it became an official town in the early 1990's, and it wasn't an actual incorporated city until 2000. Just under 6,000 people call Humboldt home. Until Friday though, it had probably gone pretty much unnoticed by the majority of Canadians.

I, like most, though, had gasped on Saturday morning when I saw the pictures of the horrific collision between a tractor trailer and a highway coach which had been carrying the hockey team to their Friday night game. Friday night and hockey games... it is quintessential Canadiana. Young men, ready to take on the world, who lived for the love of the game, bonded together as brothers with sticks in hand and ice running through every inch of their being. The love of our unofficial National sport brought them together and they became brothers not of blood but of ice and the power of the puck. In one moment, however, that brotherhood was literally ripped apart, along with their families, their community, and even commun-



By
Angela Tyler

ities from coast-to-coast. Lives lost for a reason still unknown at this time and their families left hanging on by a thread while trying to understand why.

Humboldt is a lot like Acton. It is a small community—about 2/3 the size of our community. It has several parks, a curling rink, an arena, an indoor pool, ball diamonds, skateboard park and soccer fields. The town hosts a few public schools and a Catholic school. They even have a splash pad, golf courses and a camp ground. It all sounds too familiar. Back in the day, we too had our hockey team, the Acton Sabres, and on any Friday night throughout the hockey season the old arena was the place to be cheering on our boys. They would travel to games via bus the same way Humboldt's team did. If we go back far enough in our sports history, Acton would recruit players for our hockey teams, luring them to town with offers of employment at Beardmore and a place to live. Humboldt had players that were billeted. It was our version of what some of the Humboldt

players had.

On Tuesday morning, throughout our fair community, front porches were adorned with hockey sticks as tribute to those from the team who were killed in the Friday night crash. For house after house, you could see hockey sticks for a team who was over 2,000 kilometres away. Some might wonder why, but the answer is simple, really. We too are a hockey town. We may no longer have our beloved Acton Sabres, but we have lots of hockey players. The heart of "hockey moms" and "hockey dads" who sit in the arena every Saturday and Sunday and drive their kids to rep hockey tournaments or to house league games broke at the news of Humboldt—maybe more than other parents because of the hockey community bond. We have that bond here with our hockey community, which really is a family.

Over the next while, there will be news coverage of funerals for the victims, tributes, press conferences, and at some point, we may even know the conclusion of how the collision happened. However, as parents, right now, the most important thing is that we need to stop and give our children a hug, tell them we love them, and remember how precious life truly is.



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HISTORICAL CONTRIBUTOR: Scott Brooks

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CONTACT US:

379 Queen Street East
Acton, Ontario L7J 2N2
Tel: 519-853-0051
Fax: 519-853-0052

E-MAIL:

General: thenewtanner@on.aibn.com
(including Advertising and Circulation)
Editorial: tannereditor@bellnet.ca

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