

# Opinion

## MUSKOKA MOSAIC

### Introducing Cheryl Perry

BY PAULA BOON

Cheryl Perry loves her job. "There's a lot of diversity in what I do," says the executive assistant at the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital Foundation.

At the foundation, Perry's responsibilities range from administrative tasks like reporting, event management and donor relations to graphic design for letterhead, brochures, the foundation website and touchscreen.

Best of all, there are many opportunities to try out new ideas. "Our goal is to have one new idea per day. You have to think outside of the box in this career," she says.

"And there's no typical day. That's the beauty of it," continues Perry, who is three-quarters of the way through the program to receive a her post-graduate certificate in Fundraising from Georgian College. "The only typical thing is smiling faces coming in, sometimes to give and sometimes just to chat. Our donors are just incredible."

Since she began working at the foundation in 2003, Perry has been amazed by people's generosity.

"It's humbling," she says. "People come out of the blue and help because they love their hospital and love their community. We couldn't do it without them."

Some people contribute their time as well as money, she notes, coming in to stuff envelopes and get other jobs done in the foundation office.

Right now, the foundation is in the planning stages of a campaign to help fund the renovation of the hospital's diagnostic imaging department.

"It's going digital," Perry explains. "That will cut down on time for patients to get immediate care, and it also provides convenience for patients. The imaging machine is less invasive and reduces discomfort."

She describes what a difference the upgrade will make to both patients and staff. "It's so exciting. All of us make dreams come true here at the foundation," she says. "It's the best job I've ever had."

Perry and her husband first moved here from southern Ontario in 1989, a year after marrying. Perry's parents had semi-retired here and she joined the family business, Lindal Cedar Homes. The couple stayed until 1992 and then moved for her husband's employment.

"It takes about two years to get Huntsville in your blood," she says. "As soon as we went away we knew Huntsville was where we wanted to be. It took us seven years to make it back."

The mother of two boys, Ryan, 11 and Scott,

8, lives for summers on the water. "I'm not a winter person," she says. "It's pretty, but it's long."

In the summer, the family is out on their boat as much as possible. "It's a good way to be with family, building memories for the kids," Perry says.

They use the public access points at Avery Beach or Brunel, then either visit friends, ski or just float.

"We have such a good, simple summer," she says.

Her sons are in the alternate school year program at Huntsville Public School, which Perry says is a perfect fit.

"The children get a break every nine weeks," she explains. "They need the opportunity to refresh themselves. There's a real focus on learning and refreshing, and it's much easier for families in terms of daycare issues."

After mentioning the problems with declining enrolment being experienced across the Trillium Lakelands District School Board, Perry comments, "The children would be very disappointed if they lost it."

Perry is kept busy running around for her kids to activities such as hockey, swimming and basketball.

"My enjoyment is them, to see what they're

doing," she says. "When I was young I wished for a beautiful house. Now, I want health and happiness for my family. It sounds corny, but as you get older it just connects somehow. You discover what really matters."



Is there someone you'd like to see profiled in this space? Please call Paula at 789-5541 or e-mail pboon@metrolandnorth-media.com.

## LETTERS

### Water and sewer proposal 'unbelievable'

While reading the paper last Wednesday I found it unbelievable that the district would even consider downloading the cost of water and sewer to rural households.

This district government has gone from taxation, and then added on user

pays, and now wants to add cost to non-users of services. Where will this end?

All levels of government seem content to build a bigger beurocracy instead of infrastructure. They have no desire to reduce their spending, just downloading more cost to all taxpayers.

Our local mayors support this idea. Could it be that they also live in homes with town water and sewer services?

Maybe it's time all taxpayers bear the cost of rural well and septic systems.

D. Wilson  
Huntsville

### District plan makes sense — if rural residents are reimbursed for well and septic expenses

As rural residents of the Huntsville area, who have just invested \$10,000 in a well and an additional \$10,000 investment in a septic system, not to mention all other costs paid to the town in building permits, etc., we are very disappointed that Mayor Doughty feels that we and all other rural residents should subsidize the sewer and water costs for himself and others living in town.

Considering the current connection charges range from \$3,700 to \$7,500, which represents a percentage of the costs to the district that we are already subsi-

dizing the connection fee to the residents.

Areas like Riverglen that are to be connected to town services should be done all at the same time, not one here and there and six months to years later when they feel like it. They should not have a choice.

People on the waterfront properties are already paying dearly thanks to MPAC.

Mayor Doughty's reason is that we use town services from time to time. Yes, we do. But we are already paying for that among many other hidden costs in

everything we purchase from every retailer in town.

We think the district should reimburse us for our wells and pay to fill them when they go dry, and replace our septic systems when they need to be upgraded. Only then will Mayor Doughty's proposal make sense.

We thank you for taking the time to read this and hopefully it will get to the person in charge and hopefully other rural residents will stand up with us.

Rhonda and Dean Boland  
Utterson

### Let your voice be heard on park green space

I attended last week's River Mill Park meeting at the Centennial Centre. Another consultant, MMM Group has been hired by the town to develop a new set of plans for the park. This is the second set of plans presented by this council in less than a year.

There were a few changes from the plans presented last March. The five story condo (four storeys of units and one for parking) is no longer shown in the plans. In its place is an area identified as green space. The area is made up of the southeast corner lot on Queen and West Streets. Some of it is the old MB Auto property; but the larger piece is a portion of the former Planing Mills property.

No one from the MMM Group, town council or town staff could explain the intended use for this parcel of land. Councillor Coleman, who was standing in for the mayor, stated that this area is being held back for some yet-to-be identified future development. Whether it is planned for an eventual five storey condo development or a 'high end' seniors' center, apparently proposed by Councillor

Greaves at a recent visioning session, the fact is that until that use is decided it's very difficult to comment on the park layout.

A number of citizens at the meeting asked that a large proposed parking lot, located near the center of the overall land area, be moved adjacent to West St. This would connect the two green spaces, and increase the size of the central green space, something the citizens have specifically asked for during the past numerous surveys and questionnaires concerning the park.

This would mean that there would be no income generated by the sale of this parcel to private developers, nor would there be annual income from ongoing property taxes. How much will that impact the project? No one knows as the proposed plan is incomplete. There was no budget or cost estimate for the plan presented at the meeting. In their defence the MMM Group presented themselves as facilitators, looking for opinions and answers to help them come up with the winning design. If this is the case I believe they would have received

a clear signal to enlarge and maximize the public space while balancing the needs of local businesses. Make no mistake, this is not a large area. A number of those in attendance referred to the area as a parkette and there was no contradiction from the designers. It is critical that every available potential green space is preserved. As more than one said, "We have one shot to get this right."

To proceed we need to know the costs of the plan, monies spent to date and the final budget. We need to know the 'costs' of alternative design initiatives, like abandoning the further sell-off of land. More importantly if the West St. parcel is going to be sold to developers, we need to know this and see a plan. Can you imagine sitting in our waterfront park in the shadow cast by a newly built residential or commercial property? If you, like many at the meeting, want this park to maximize green space I would suggest you send a note to the mayor or come out and participate in the next meeting.

John Crockett  
Huntsville

### More volunteers are needed at the hospital

BY ARVINA BENNETT

#### Huntsville Hospital Auxiliary

A dedicated group of retired men and women act as porters, transporting patients from their rooms for treatment or tests within the hospital. They often deliver supplies, papers, fill the pop machine and do other errands as needed. Some are on duty once or twice a week, while others work only one day a month.

This winter there has been a severe shortage of porters due to illness and surgery, while some are on well-deserved vacations in the sunny south. Have you considered being part of this wonderful crew who does so much good work in the halls of our hospital? If you are willing to become involved or interested in learning more about this auxiliary program, please leave a message for Lorrie Lamb, director of volunteers at 789-0022 ext. 297 and she will return your call.

A charity car wash held at Bay Car Wash last spring, organized by Lyle Payne and the Silver Ambassadors of Huntsville, raised more than \$4,300, enough to purchase a blanket/fluid pack warmer. This week Lyle joined chemo unit team leader Jody MacPherson, volunteer coordinator Diane Litchfield, and president Jean Wagner to check out the installation of the unit located just outside the chemotherapy clinic. Diane reported the warm blankets and packs, kept at exactly the correct temperature, were used and greatly appreciated by patients at this week's clinic.

Earlier this month Wal-Mart store manager Karl Frechette and several members of his staff presented president Jean Wagner with a cheque for \$610. The money was raised through Wal-

Mart's employee fundraising events, including a summer barbecue. This money will be put to good use at our hospital for patient services. The auxiliary would like to thank all Wal-Mart employees who worked to make this donation possible.

Thirty-one years ago, Diane Litchfield accepted an invitation from the late Betty Mitchell to attend a meeting of the hospital auxiliary at the old hospital where Fairvern now stands. The Red Cross hospital was built on land that had been owned by her grandfather. Diane's family commitment and her interest in becoming a hospital volunteer started many years ago since her father, Andrew Kellock Jr., was the first treasurer of the hospital board.

Through the years, Diane served as president and has chaired or co-chaired many events such as tag day, blood donor clinic, house tour, plant sale, card party, ski jamboree, televisions, and many more. Currently her main interest is convening volunteers for the chemo clinic, buying for the gift shop and serving on the steering committee of the Dragonboat Races.

On her scheduled day in the gift shop she greets visitors with a welcoming smile and always helps wherever and whenever she is needed. In addition to the auxiliary, Diane served 10 years on the hospital board as well as several years with the Fairvern board. In recognition of her dedicated service, Diane was presented with a provincial life membership from the Hospital Auxiliaries Association of Ontario in 2000.

Diane finds her time spent volunteering very rewarding, especially when she sees the benefits patients receive and how grateful they are for the work of the auxiliary. She reminds readers that more volunteers are always needed.

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