

Opinion

MUSKOKA MOSAIC

Introducing Nancy Waxl

BY PAULA BOON

Nancy Waxl enjoys caring for others. "It was instilled in me by my upbringing," says the retired Huntsville woman. "You don't expect anything in return. It's just the satisfaction. You're happy doing these things."

When she was growing up in southern Ontario, community involvement was one of the cornerstones of Waxl's Irish immigrant family. She was strongly influenced by her father, a Presbyterian minister, her mother, a teacher, and an uncle who was a United minister in the east end of Toronto.

When the last of her four children left home about 20 years ago, Waxl began volunteering. "That's what I like to do," she says. "I didn't have time until the kids were out on their own."

A past member of Trinity United Church's fellowship committee, she would visit senior members of the congregation, which she loves. "I'm the sort of person who likes having people around," she explains.

As well, Waxl and two friends were the creators of Trinity's Souper Sandwich Lunch fundraiser, which has been running on the second Friday of each month for 13 years. There are now nine conveners and a whole crew of volunteers who cook soups, prepare sandwiches and donate desserts for an average of 90 lunches each month. "It's nice to see people come, then stay and talk," she says. "Lots of business people come. It's quick and under \$5."

Waxl is just finishing a three-year stint as president of Trinity's United Church Women (UCW) and is been

chair of the Muskoka advisory board for UCWs, representing the area on Toronto Conference UCW executive.

As a life member of the Huntsville Hospital Auxiliary, Waxl also helps raise funds for hospital services and equipment. "It's a great group to belong to," she says.

Waxl's volunteer efforts have taken her far from home as well. In 2001, she went to Latvia, where she cooked for a crew that was rebuilding a church soup kitchen. Next month, she and her husband Hermann will head to Louisiana to help build houses for people whose homes have been devastated by hurricanes.

Recently, Waxl has become more concerned and vocal about environmental issues. "My sister is very proactive," she says. "She used to march in the 50s and 60s and we all thought she was crazy, but we're there too now. Why not fight for what bothers you?"

For example, Waxl hates to see groundwater being depleted by large water-bottling companies and is concerned about the environmental impact of the plastic bottles used to package the water. She also worries about the government's lack of a water policy and the possibility that Canadian water could be sold to the United States.

Locally, Waxl would like to see sporting events such as triathlons move away from the use of bottled water.



Waxl and her husband lived on an area farm for 20 years. "That was a wonderful time – the haying and the animals," she says, recalling with a laugh the year she bought Hermann a pregnant cow for his birthday. They built their herd up to 12 head. "My husband was knowledgeable about farm life because he used to work on a farm in Germany during the summer months. We also had chickens, turkeys and our own pigs."

Waxl worked as a receptionist for five doctors in Huntsville, something she enjoyed very much. "It's another way of helping others," she says. "Sometimes I wonder if I should have become a nurse."

The couple moved into town two years ago, and while Waxl says her neighbours on the farm were wonderful, she enjoys living in a neighbourhood with more people nearby.

Waxl says she is trying to say 'no' more often and take more time out to relax. However, she remains committed to her volunteer work. "What you give you get back, in more ways than one," she says. "Caring makes you more aware of your own life, too – how to look after yourself."

Thanks to Pat Allan for suggesting that Nancy Waxl be profiled.

LETTERS

Accident victims made some very irresponsible decisions

I have followed and continue to follow the media reports concerning the July 3 tragedy. In my opinion, two separate, but no less influential situations combined, the result being tragic.

The Lake Joseph Club's part has been extensively reported. Less discussed are the irresponsible decisions made by the driver and his passengers. Given their alleged condition and presumably their own specific knowledge of their condition, four young people chose, one to drive and three to be passengers, rather

than to make the obvious and more responsible choice. Their choices led to a tragedy on a road travelled by many. Fortunately, no innocent people became collateral damage.

Hopefully others who find themselves in similar circumstances will make the proper and more responsible decision.

**John Hope
Bracebridge and
seasonal Lake Joseph Club employee**

Marjorie will be missed

We are writing with sadness regarding the recent loss of Marjorie Cook and extend our thoughts to her family and friends. Marjorie made a huge contribution to the well-being of countless women in our area, over more than 15 years of service as a volunteer on the Muskoka Parry Sound Sexual Assault Services helpline for women. The helpline is a 24-hour commitment by volunteers ready to quietly and anonymously support women struggling in the aftermath of a sexual assault, whether recent or in the past.

Marjorie was always ready to help

us cover the line, taking many many shifts over these years, often being in the fallback position of covering on short notice when someone else could not and often covering on holidays such as Christmas and New Year's.

We wish to publicly acknowledge and honour the tremendous commitment she has made over the years in our community. We will miss her greatly.

**Laurie Lupton, Lauren Power, Maria
Duncalf and Linda Clarke
Muskoka Parry Sound Sexual Assault
Services
705-646-2122**

ClubLink should not be held responsible for deaths

Most people that go to a bar or club go there to drink and have fun. When a person leaves, who knows where they go or what else they've had to drink?

Suppose they have a bottle or a case of beer in the car and they start drinking it. Why is the person who served them at the bar or club held responsible? Any person who is of legal age to drink has to and should take responsibility for their actions.

Maybe these three young men who died thought they were invincible because they came from money. It's truly sad that they had to die, but it's not the responsibility of ClubLink. Who knows what they had in the car, or maybe they stopped somewhere else for a brew or two.

Grow up, people. The onus is on all of us, not the people who serve the drinks.

**Brian McKay
Midland**

Thanks to Lakeland Power for annual community service

Do you ever wonder how the Christmas wreaths get magically hoisted on the downtown poles around Dec. 1 each year and then are magically taken down in late January to make room for the next seasonal decorations?

Well, we owe a big thank you to Lakeland Power. Every year the BIA beautification chair calls upon Lakeland Power to ask if they can find time, workers and equipment to raise the wreaths onto the poles and plug them in. One year they even made custom extension cords so the extra length wouldn't be visible. Now that's community service!

Not only do we owe a debt of gratitude to the Lakeland Power fellows for their contribution to downtown Huntsville, we also want to acknowledge how happily they do it. They go the extra mile carrying the wreaths to storage places and help out in all kinds of ways. They are a fun group who seem to sincerely understand the meaning of volunteerism.

Many, many thanks, Lakeland Power.

**Sue Ashley, beautification chair and the
rest of the downtown Huntsville Business
Improvement Area**

Visit us at: www.huntsvilleforester.com

Use this yoga move to relieve lower back pain

Health News

BY ALLIE CHISHOLM-SMITH

Allie Chisholm-Smith has been teaching yoga in Muskoka for 10 years.

Are you suffering from the seasonal disease of snow shovelling back-itis? When you stand upright, do you cringe and push your lower back down with your hands?

Aside from the cure of heading to the tropics, there are things you can do to help your back. Traditional yogis didn't have driveways to shovel but they were in rice patties an awful lot. They developed lots of stretches to help mend the low back like the following one that is a variation on the Pigeon Pose.

Sit down on the floor, leaning on your outer right hip. Bend your right knee out in front of you at a 90-degree angle (if that is too much or if your knee feels strained in this stretch, bend your knee more and tuck your foot under as much as you need to).

Stretch your left leg back and slowly lean your body forward over the right inner thigh. Your inner knee should end up in the centre of your chest with your outer thigh pressing into the floor. You will become acutely aware of your right gluteus maximus and perhaps the low back. If you can lean on your elbows and really fold over your leg, you may feel this stretch right up to your over-used shoulders. Imagine breathing right down into your pelvis and low back. See if you can inflate your belly as you inhale and then draw your belly back and soften into the floor as you exhale. Hold this for at least five very deep and long breaths, release slowly and do the other side.

Prevention tip: When you are shovelling, hold your belly toward your spine so that you are keeping the low back supported and long. Also, remember your legs are built to hold you up and so bend the knees and lift from your legs.

Stay tuned for next time when we will look at the shoulders.



HEALTHCARE HEROES

Harvey Mulligan and Friends

For several years The Friends of Burk's Falls & District Health Centre have put a float in the Burk's Falls Santa Claus Parade. Each year Harvey Mulligan has provided his truck and trailer for the group.

Last December, the Friends found themselves in a bit of a predicament. There were not many of them available. Up stepped Harvey and his grandchildren to help Friends Chair Clarence Tschantz put it all together. Harvey and Jenny England played their instruments to provide some lively tunes. Thanks to Angie Steengaard for rounding up some children. The Friends' parade float has never been so lively. Thanks everyone.

This ad sponsored by...



Live well with

PHARMASAVE

Historic Downtown Huntsville

789-7800

Huntsville Hospital Foundation

4-100 Frank Miller Drive

Huntsville, ON

P1H 1H7

Tel: (705) 789-0022 Ext. 350

