

Opinion

MUSKOKA MOSAIC

Introducing Jay Osborne

BY PAULA BOON

Jay Osborne lives consciously, choosing work and pastimes that minimize his carbon footprint and foster connections with others.

The former forestry worker's activities ebb and flow with the seasons, although one constant is his triathlon training. "People may know me as the guy with orange hunting cap running along Brunel Road," he says.

Because his wife Nancy, a security specialist for the United Nations, is often away during the summer for four months at a time, Osborne tends to work hard then and take the winter off to be with her. "If we don't pay attention to our relationship, we could drift apart," the St. Catharines native explains.

In summer, Osborne provides gardening and landscaping services to Lake of Bays cottagers and tends to his own large plot, which has been on the horticultural society's garden tour several times. Preferring not to use manure because of the number of weeds it encourages, the organic gardener collects compost from a coffee shop and restaurant downtown as well as his own household.

Osborne finds his outdoor work satisfying. "I like to stand back and see what I have accomplished," he says.

Since 1998, Osborne has hosted occasional travellers through an international peace-promoting organization called Servas. "It's not just couch-surfing," he says. "You're expected to bring people into your home and into your life." Fostering understanding between people is not a new interest for Osborne; in the 1980s he spent one year as a Katimavik leader and another living and working

in Australia.

Osborne has also volunteered backstage at the Algonquin Theatre since it opened. "I just love it," he says, adding that he enjoys meeting people from the community as well as visiting artists. "Now when I hear Bruce Cockburn or July Black on the radio, I think, 'Oh, that's my friend,'" he says, then adds with a laugh, "I haven't received any Christmas cards from them yet, but I haven't given up hope."

As well as running a life-drawing studio in Bracebridge one night a week, Osborne also models for drawing, sculpting and painting classes at the Haliburton School for the Fine Arts. "I enjoy the opportunity to sit still," he says. "I don't watch TV, and when Nancy's away I usually stand at the counter or sink to eat. The opportunity to sit and contemplate is welcome."

Osborne says he applied for the job because he's always looking for a challenge to take him out of his comfort zone. That's one reason he became a triathlete at age 45.

After several years of watching the cyclists go by on Brunel Road during the Muskoka Triathlon, Osborne thought, "I could probably do that." Although he was never athletic in school, he began to train. Since 2003, he has entered at least one triathlon every year.

Osborne's most relaxing summer pastime is sailing. "It's like having a little cottage," he says of the 20-foot



boat he keeps on Lake of Bays. "You can go out for an evening and feel you've been away. To be out on the water looking back at the land is a different thing."

When the snow flies, Osborne downhill skis at Hidden Valley several days a week, makes maple syrup, works around his home, and enjoys life with Nancy.

The couple met in 1991 when his best friend married hers. "I think we had more fun than they did at the wedding," he says. "It wasn't long before they, too, were married."

The Osbornes bought their home on North Menominee Lake Road in 1995 and have lived there ever since except for the year of 2002-2003, which they spent in Sudan.

With Nancy, Osborne enjoys ballroom dancing, playing bridge, eating good food, spending time with friends – and travelling.

At the end of each of her assignments abroad, he joins her and they travel together for some weeks before returning home. "It helps her with the transition back home, and I have the chance to be a traveller instead of a tourist," he says. "The world is just a fascinating place and I'm one of the luckiest people in it."

Thanks to Nicole Phippen for suggesting that Jay Osborne be profiled.

Huntsville and Lake of Bays representatives share their resolutions for the new year

We asked Huntsville and Lake of Bays councillors to share with us their New Year's resolutions, both professional and personal. Below are their answers. The mayors' responses ran in last week's Weekender newspaper along with those of our MP, MPP and the district chair of Muskoka.

Huntsville councillors



Bill Beatty – Stephenson, Stisted and Port Sydney wards councillor

"My personal resolution is to lose some weight and enjoy my grandchildren to the fullest.

For the town I hope to seek transparency in all council business, as well as ensure that all councillors have access to all information regarding the

operation of the municipality, and that decisions are made by all council members."



Fran Coleman – Town and district councillor

"I hope for peace and goodwill to all in the coming year. My personal resolution is to look after my own well being.

For Huntsville I hope to secure a media centre for the G8 Summit in 2010 and an ice surface for the future, as well as additional infrastructure money to assist the town."



John Davis – Chaffey ward councillor

"As the year comes to a close one is asked to make resolutions for the ensuing year. In order to be resolute in where we are going, we must first realize where we have been. The phrases of the past such as "just get'er done" seem to have faded into oblivion. Reality has filled that void, as have the

physical and financial implications that accompany this reality. Now in our third year on this council, much has been

accomplished and yet we still have much to finish.

Over \$200,000 from reserves in 2009 should see the River Mill Park finally completed, road work that was identified for Hanes Road by the old council should also be accomplished in 2009, but much more road work is needed, as I am sure most of the constituents reading this article will attest. Road improvements in every area of Huntsville are required, and with the assistance of the federal and provincial governments I hope much more of this work can begin in 2009.

There is an old adage often heard about the squeaky wheel getting the grease. It is also often complained about, after the fact. Council is yours to direct, if you give it direction, and just like a train if it receives no direction it will soon run off its track.

We have very limited resources at our disposal without unduly raising taxes, so what we spend these limited resources on depends on input from you, the constituents, through your elected representatives.

I believe, as I have stated in the past, that we must do more for the many and less for the few and yet once again we are talking about spending millions of dollars on a second arena not just in the building of it, but in maintaining it, while much-needed road work falls further and further behind. If the (2010) G8 (Summit) makes it so by supplying the finances required to build the facility then we will have it. If not, we should not.

My resolution to you is to encourage the many to make their voices heard this year. If some of council don't hear you, talk louder and more often. I will continue to see that the users pay a greater portion of recreational needs as they should with sewer and water. If we each pay our fair share we, as a council, can do more for all.

We must all look to 2009 and beyond for the positives, if we accentuate these, the negatives will disappear, the economy will grow and perhaps we will all have the financial ability to enjoy the many benefits of living and playing in Huntsville and Canada.

On a personal note, I want to laugh more, love more, cry more, travel more and share more, especially time with my four granddaughters. I want to eat less, move more, snore less and sleep more. Continue to reuse, recycle and repair, not simply replace, to use and enjoy our natural resources without abusing them. Spend more quality time with my wife, after all, it is a short life. I want to read more books in my special time. This is what I wish for 2009."



Mary Jane Fletcher – Huntsville town councillor

"My personal resolution is to understand and accept my time restraints. Because this year I'm working a full-time job and being a part of council I need to be able to better focus my tasks at hand and use the time given to me better.

In the last two years of being a representative of council the learning process, of understanding municipal acts and municipal policy, has been exciting but it's also been daunting and I've learned there's so much more to know.

My resolution as a councillor is to continue my focus on the environment committee. In the last year we have basically created an environment committee and we now have staff, we have financial backing, and we are now in the process of doing a green plan.

I would like to see Communities in Bloom and Greening Huntsville amalgamated and to focus on things like an anti-litter campaign and diversion programs for the people of Huntsville.

These initiatives started out as us needing the town to be G8-ready and I've decided we can be G8-ready but let's do it for the people here. Let's do it for the people of Huntsville.

If we care about diversion and our environment, we will generally just care."



Mike Greaves – Brunel ward councillor

"On a personal basis I resolve to live long enough for my RRSPs to recover.

For the town I resolve to get the town ready by the end of 2009 for a world inspection in June 2010."

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<p>MOE'S PICK OF THE WEEK 2006 CHEV EQUINOX</p> <p>3.4 L, 6 cylinder engine, auto., 49,540 km. Stk# TP9091</p> <p>\$16,995</p>	<p>2003 GMC SIERRA</p> <p>4.3 L, 8 cylinder engine, auto., 119,200 km. Stk# 9108-A</p> <p>\$9,995</p>	<p>2000 CHEV SILVERADO</p> <p>5.3 L, 8 cylinder engine, auto., 81,916 km, 4 doors.</p> <p>\$8,995</p>	<p>2003 BUICK CENTURY</p> <p>3.4 L, 6 cylinder engine, 89,099 km. Stk# 9100</p> <p>\$7,995</p>	<p>2004 PONTIAC SUNFIRE</p> <p>2.2 L, 4 cylinder engine, auto., 71,556 km. Stk# 8635.</p> <p>\$7,995</p>	<p>BRAY MOTORS</p> <p>PONTIAC BUICK GMC CHEVY TRUCKS</p> <p>GM</p> <p>HWY 11, SUNDRIDGE (705) 384-5333/4 • 1-800-989-1113 braymotors.com</p>
	<p>2004 CHEV SILVERADO</p> <p>5.3 L, 8 cylinder engine, auto., 149,472 km. Stk# 8513</p> <p>\$11,995</p>	<p>2005 BUICK ALLURE CX</p> <p>3.8 L, 6 cylinder engine, auto., 30,846 km. Stk# 9093</p> <p>\$13,995</p>	<p>2005 GMC SIERRA</p> <p>5.3 L, 8 cylinder engine, auto., 45,525 km. Stk# 7705-B</p> <p>\$19,995</p>	<p>2005 CHEV SILVERADO</p> <p>5.3 L, 8 cylinder engine, auto., 4 doors, 61,991 km. Stk# TP8656.</p> <p>\$15,995</p>	

SHORT DRIVE . . . LONG ON SAVINGS