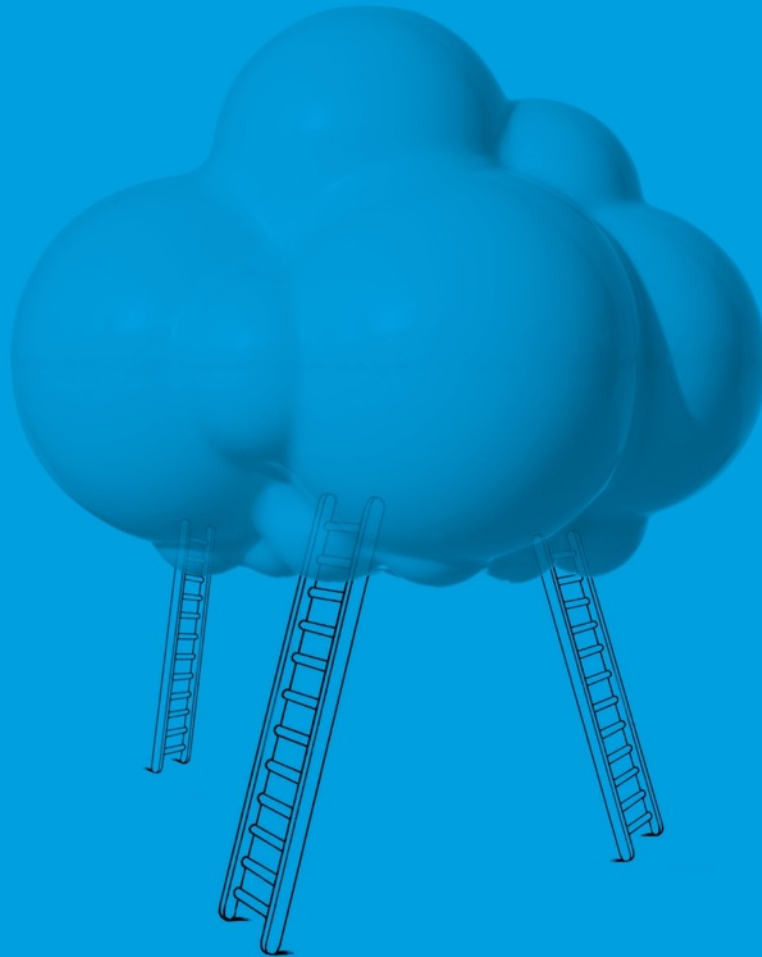


# our trusty newsletter

issue no.3, winter 2022

*the all about* **BIG DREAMS** *issue*





**The land on which we live** is the traditional, territory of the Kijicho Manito Madaouskarini Algonquin First Nation and the Anishinaabeg Peoples. This land is known by the Indigenous Peoples as unceded. We acknowledge that the Indigenous Peoples have been the keepers of this land since time immemorial.

Recognition of the contributions and the historic, as well as, the present importance of Indigenous Peoples must be clearly and openly connected to our collective commitment to truth.

We commit to learning more about the history in North Hastings and how political control, land and waterways were taken from Indigenous People. We want to better understand how colonization continues to impact Indigenous People and how to foster positive meaningful relationships.

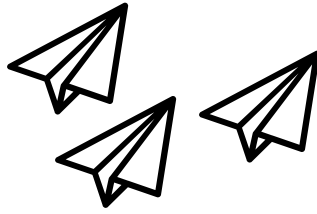
We commit to treating the land, its plants, animals, and most of all, it's people with dignity, honor, and respect.

We encourage all to engage in active and deep listening about the history of colonization in our area and to reflect on how this affects our relationships with all living beings.

We also wish to acknowledge the context of the human condition at present. We are collectively living on a planet that is in crisis and can no longer support life in the ways we have known. The stress and trauma this brings to all of us is immense.

We need each other, we need to repair our relationships to each other and land – we need to hold each other and the land we are on with dignity and respect and love.

*For more information on Algonquin history in North Hastings please see the web site of Kijicho Manito Madaouskarini Algonquin First Nation. <https://kijichomanito.com>*



**our trusty newsletter**  
*issue no.3, winter, 2022*

*the all about* **BIG DREAMS** *issue ...*

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*What's up with  
the blueberries?  
See Page 42.*

# The Act of Dreaming into...

## BROUGHT US A NEW HOME

I have started this article many times knowing that there are many different ways to tell a story and this one feels really important to tell.

It is about a new home for the Trust. It is also about a big gift and community dreams. And it is personal - i cannot seem to tell this story any other way.

### Dear Community,

As many of you now know, the Trust has recently purchased a new building. We were looking for a new space and fell in love with the building at 19 Valley View Drive, and the funds came to buy it. This is a very big deal for us!

But that's only one way to tell the story and there is so much more....

7 years ago, in the Spring, when I was hired by the Trust I was offering emergency support to people over the phone, in coffee shops, and out of the tailgate of my truck. Building relationships this way started to plant seeds for the future. Kindness, appreciation, honesty, compassion and friendships were growing. I paid attention to their growth even though they were 'invisible'. What we couldn't at first see or measure moved us into A Place for the Arts. We could feel our dreams growing and continued to plant new seeds. The seeds matured into more long-lasting good relationships, art-making, funding, food, gardens, harm reduction, and a new space on Bridge Street, more dreams.



This new building on Valley View Drive and the funding to buy it has been getting ready for us for a long time as a result of the seeds other people planted whose dreams overlap with ours. Now this fruit is visible for everyone to see and in the Spring we will be able to

call it ours. It will be a community land trust. This means it will never be sold for profit.

I have learned to pay attention to things that can't at first be easily seen like: Patterns, cycles, timing, inspirations, my feelings and the feelings of others. I have also learned to notice what is happening around us on other levels and layers. I have learned to take the act of reflection and dreaming seriously.

These acts are like water. Reflecting, dreaming and taking our hunches, feelings, and hopes seriously with others leads to inspiration. I have learned to take action on my intuition and inspiration and this has been vital.

Many of us have to interact daily in judgmental, harsh, and confusing environments. In contrast, we continue to prioritize the creation of nurturing spaces where we feel safe to be ourselves,

We want every member of our community to have spaces where they can be more of who they truly are, to feel appreciated, to have their gifts find a home, to have warm welcoming places to go when it's cold outside, to have good food to eat, to have a home in a community where they belong.

where we appreciate each other and where we spend time paying close attention to what is working. This is transformative. This is the magic of our success and we don't want it to be a secret. We want every member of our community to have spaces where they can be more of who they truly are, to feel appreciated, to have their gifts find a home, to have warm welcoming places to go when it's cold outside, to have good food to eat, to have a home in a community where they belong.

This new home for The Trust came to us because of who we are and our deep love for each other, and our community. Sharing oneself this way with others is contagious and reassuring - it means we are not alone.

We look forward to sharing our new space with all of you and hearing your big dreams.

In so much appreciation.

jane kali  
executive director

## How you can help. What we need:

The Trust has been strengthened by the community supports that sustain us. We are mostly funded by community donations. Thank you!

Monthly donations of all sizes really make a difference - this strengthens our foundation and pays for staffing and operations. We know our costs at the new building will be higher. Donations are tax deductible.

Material donations also most welcome as we settle into our new home: furniture, office equipment, desks, lighting, art, and kitchen equipment.

Please join us in other ways - support and participation in programs:

- ROCK (Rural Outreach Community Kindness) needs hygiene items, snacks, hats and mitts, messages of hope and kindness to share
- Harvest The North will need seeds, seedlings, help building new garden space, help maintaining the community gardens throughout Bancroft, gardening tools, a new water pump
- Wood Share is always looking for more participation processing and delivering wood
- Housing - join us in creating truly affordable housing
- Food Share - looking for donations (dried, canned, frozen, fresh)
- Mental Health Support - We are building our capacity to improve the mental health of our community including ourselves and would love you to be involved. We're excited for your ideas and inspirations. We are also welcoming dollars to seed a program that will build on some of the mental health supports we already provide.

Mostly, we need to continue to strengthen our connections at a time when many of us have been shaken, disconnected and afraid. We continue to imagine and practice new ways to work together, find hope, inspiration, courage and a continued sense of belonging for everyone.

### TO DONATE FUNDS

Please visit our website:

<https://northhastingscommunitytrust.org/> >Support the Trust.

Or write a cheque payable to North Hastings Community Trust.

It can be mailed to P.O. Box 1615 Bancroft ON K0L 1C0.

Please email The Trust at: [inquiry.nhcommunitytrust@gmail.com](mailto:inquiry.nhcommunitytrust@gmail.com)

for all other donations and offers of help/participation.



This is it. Our new home.



*Concept Drawing of Building Exterior and our New Sign*

Do you know the nice two-story building on Valley View Drive, near the new Tim Horton's?

It used to be Whitfield's Plumbing and Heating. In 2022, it will be the new home of North Hastings Community Trust and all our community projects.



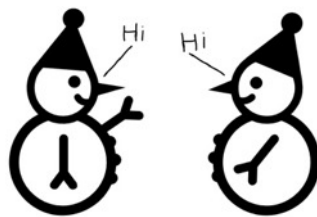


# We're going to be new neighbours on Valley View Dr. And we want to be good ones.

One of the great things about our new home at No.19 on Valley View Drive is that we will have a lot of new neighbours really nearby. There are several apartment buildings right there beside us. It is exciting to think about this group of people who live there and all the interests, talents and ideas we will learn from. We feel sure we will make new friends on Valley View Drive.

After we move in this spring, we'll have an Open House and invite everyone over for coffee, dessert and a tour of the building. Still it would be nice not to have to wait till then to meet our new neighbours. Do you live on Valley View Drive, or do you know someone who does? We'd love to connect. Call us 613-332-3657; drop by The Trust's current home at 23 Bridge Street for a chat. Or email your thoughts: [inquiry.nhcommunitytrust@gmail.com](mailto:inquiry.nhcommunitytrust@gmail.com)

Do you live on Valley View Drive, or do you know someone who does? We'd love to connect.



## In my opinion

We have learned in recent history the importance of lived experience as key expertise and critical knowledge sharing that ensures: *Nothing About Us Without Us Is For Us*, a slogan used to communicate the idea that no policy should be decided by any representative without the full and direct participation of members of the group(s) affected by that policy.

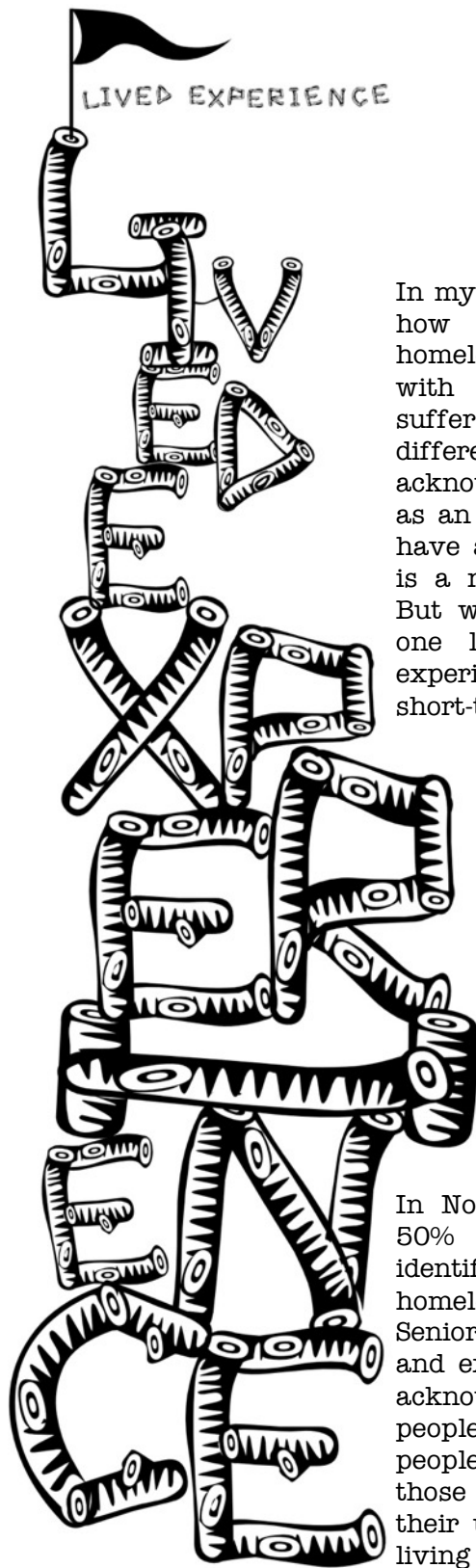
This article was written by Ashley Flemming who is on staff as our Housing Support Worker at the Trust.

Lived experience shared in Harm Reduction has led to a better understanding of the opioid crisis, how we can best support people who use drugs and, for many, created an opportunity during recovery for those with lived experience to assist those that are reluctant to seek professional assistance. More supports have become available to combat the opioid crisis including safe injection sites, decriminalization, stop the stigma, and Overdose Awareness.

Lived experience informing mental health best practices has made huge strides forward in recent years. This has led to mental health finally being acceptable to discuss freely, it being deemed as a disability and acceptance by society in general (for the most part). It led to the creation of *Bell Let's Talk Day*, aimed at bringing awareness to those suffering from Mental Health conditions and calming the fears of those wishing to seek help. It also opened more support for those suffering from mental health issues.

I am a person that used drugs, I suffer from anxiety and depression, I lost my children to the system for almost a year, I have been homeless, lived in a shelter, been evicted multiple times from my home, and survived an abusive relationship. **BUT** I choose to use my lived experiences in a positive way. I now work at North Hasting Community Trust (NHCT) assisting those that are facing homelessness and those who use drugs, I won my kids back, have my own apartment, I run a Facebook group supporting those who use/d drugs and their families, I am hoping to return to school to become a Mental Health and Addictions Worker and am a support for anyone in, or trying to leave, an abusive relationship. All of this because of my own lived experience!

But I  
choose to  
use my lived  
experiences  
in a positive  
way.



In my work at NHCT I have also seen how the housing crisis and homelessness affects and intertwines with those who use drugs and/or suffer from mental health issues. The different levels of government have acknowledged that affordable housing as an issue and a priority, yes. They have also acknowledged that housing is a necessity to overall well being. But what is being done? Why is no one listening to those with lived experience to find both long- and short-term solutions?

We have been told that affordable housing is being built in our County because some rents will be limited to 80% of market value. That amount is not truly affordable. The Provincial government defines 'affordable' as rent that does not exceed 30 percent of annual household income. We are not seeing that kind of housing being built.

In North Hastings we estimate that 50% of those facing homelessness identify as Indigenous. Those facing homelessness in our area also include Seniors 65+, families with children and expectant mothers. Yes, we also acknowledge that some of those people facing homelessness also are people who use drugs, but many of those people also acknowledge that their use is greatly affected by their living situations.

We need REAL solutions to come from all levels of government including Federal, Provincial, Municipal & County. But how can they properly address an issue, if they refuse to educate themselves by listening to those with lived experience? To hear their struggles and acknowledge the obstacles they face every single day. Moreover, many people facing homelessness have lost hope in their society because they have been driven out of local parks and other places. This makes it even more important to create open communication with those that do work with these people every day. But this is not happening!

There are so many examples of how lived experience has led to positive changes, more acceptance within the community, more supports, and more solutions. Yet when it comes to the housing crisis voices are not being heard. These voices are seen as unimportant. If we don't listen now, more people will lose their lives and the community will continue to suffer.

We need REAL solutions to come from all levels of government including Federal, Provincial, Municipal & County. But how can they properly address an issue, if they refuse to educate themselves by listening to those with lived experience?





# Call to Action

**On October 8, 2021, at 1:00 pm,** in front of the municipal office, North Hastings Community Trust (NHCT) organized a Call to Action to end homelessness in North Hastings. It was such a supportive atmosphere with approximately 40 people in attendance.

The event was planned because NHCT was approached by some very brave senior members of our community that are experiencing homelessness. These community members have been advocates & supports for others in our community that are also facing homelessness. We are inspired by their efforts & courage! These community members came to us & asked for an opportunity to speak & be heard. So that is what we did!

We then asked everyone to join us in our Call to Action by calling on all the different levels of government to do more to help those facing homelessness in North Hastings.

North Hastings has no shelter at this time, though the County has indicated that there will be modular units for shelter in Bancroft beginning in Spring 2022.

We have no transitional housing, one social housing complex that accepts those 65 & under, the waitlist for rent geared to income housing is now at 500+ & there are little supports for the people who find themselves homeless. We also estimate that approximately 50% of those facing homelessness in North Hastings are indigenous.





*We really need stable, long term solutions to housing.  
And we have a solution!*

We are asking that the Town of Bancroft & Hastings County make at least 25% of all new rental apartment construction be allocated as rent supplement or rent geared to income.



# COMMITMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE. IT IS TIME THEY WERE MET.

We are calling on our government leaders to keep their word and make affordable housing a priority by insisting that **at least 25% of all new apartments built in North Hastings are available with some form of rent supplement or rent geared to income**



## 5.1 Promote the Principle of 'Housing First'.

This Housing and Homelessness Plan's focus is on better outcomes for people - that means putting people first. The 'Housing First' Principle's primary focus is on helping people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, to quickly access safe, affordable and stable housing. A 'Housing First' approach means that people are provided with a variety of flexible supports based on their needs that can assist them in maintaining their housing, or allow them to be re-housed when necessary. A 'Housing First' approach allows people to address other challenges and needs by ensuring that they get connected to community supports. "Housing First" encourages and improves social inclusion.

County of Hastings (2013). Opening the right door: A ten-year plan to address housing and homelessness issues in Hastings County. (p. 50). Retrieved from: <https://hastingscounty.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/County-of-Hastings-10-Year-Housing-and-Homelessness-Plan.compressed.pdf>

The County's own 10-year housing plan enshrines the 'Housing First' principle.

So, 9 years later, where's the housing?





### Official Plan, Section 2.8.3.3

Affordable housing in new residential construction or redevelopment shall be required. The proportion that is required shall be determined on a site by site basis and calculated as part of the planning approval process for the County and/or the affected Member Municipality. Where developments in excess of 25 residential units are proposed, the County and its Member Municipalities will target a minimum of 25% of all new housing to be in forms that would be affordable to households of low and moderate income.

County of Hastings (2017). County of Hastings official plan. (Dec. 19) (p. 31). Retrieved from <https://hastingscounty.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Part-A-Official-Plan.pdf>

The Hastings County Official Plan provides for affordable housing for low-income people.

What is the County and Town of Bancroft doing to ensure new housing builds (such as the Community Hub and Fountain Hill) are consistent with Provincial Policy and the Official Plan?



**Affordable:** means

(a) in the case of ownership housing, the **least expensive of:**

1. housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or
2. housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 percent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the regional market area:

(b) in the case of rental housing, the **least expensive of:**

1. a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or
2. a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area.

MMAH, (2020). *Provincial policy statement, 2020*. (May 1) (p. 39). Retrieved from <https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-policy-statement-2020>

The Ontario government defines affordable housing without providing sufficient funding to back it up.

What is County Council doing to address this?

## **HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP THE TRUST'S CAMPAIGN FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**1. Join us in asking all levels of government to provide needed housing that we can afford. We are asking our Municipal leaders to make housing a priority to everyone. We are also asking that at least 25% of all new rental apartment constructions in North Hastings be allocated to some form of rent supplement or rent-geared-to-income funding.**

**2. Call Bancroft's Mayor at 613-332-3331**

**3. Call Hastings County Social Services Director at 613-966-1311 ext. 2333**

**4. Call our Provincial Member of Parliament Daryl Kramp at 1-855-229-6676**

**5. Volunteer at North Hastings Community Trust (join our Housing Committee, volunteer your time in any of our programs, donate)**

A RURAL COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (CLT)  
FOR NORTH HASTINGS

## What Is a Community Land Trust?

A **community land trust (CLT)** is a non-profit corporation that holds land on behalf of the community, while serving as the long-term steward for affordable housing, community gardens, commercial spaces and other community assets on behalf of a community. CLT's are rooted in community ownership, true affordability, democratic participation and sustainability. This is a way to protect community spaces and housing, meet community needs, outside of the influence of market forces.

### People Before Profit

Development of new housing has become a low priority for all levels of government. Be it public or private, rented or owned, meeting this most basic need has become alarmingly out of reach for people. A CLT underscores the critical role of community-led groups to help catalyze and develop projects and initiatives that meet people's needs.

We understand that historical and current orientations towards economic growth, expansion, and development have ecological limits and social dimensions that contribute towards the very problems we seek to address.

Our Community Land Trust supports deep sustainability, whole-system/ecological approaches to living with the land, sustainable, affordable housing, and alternative approaches to development itself.

For more information:

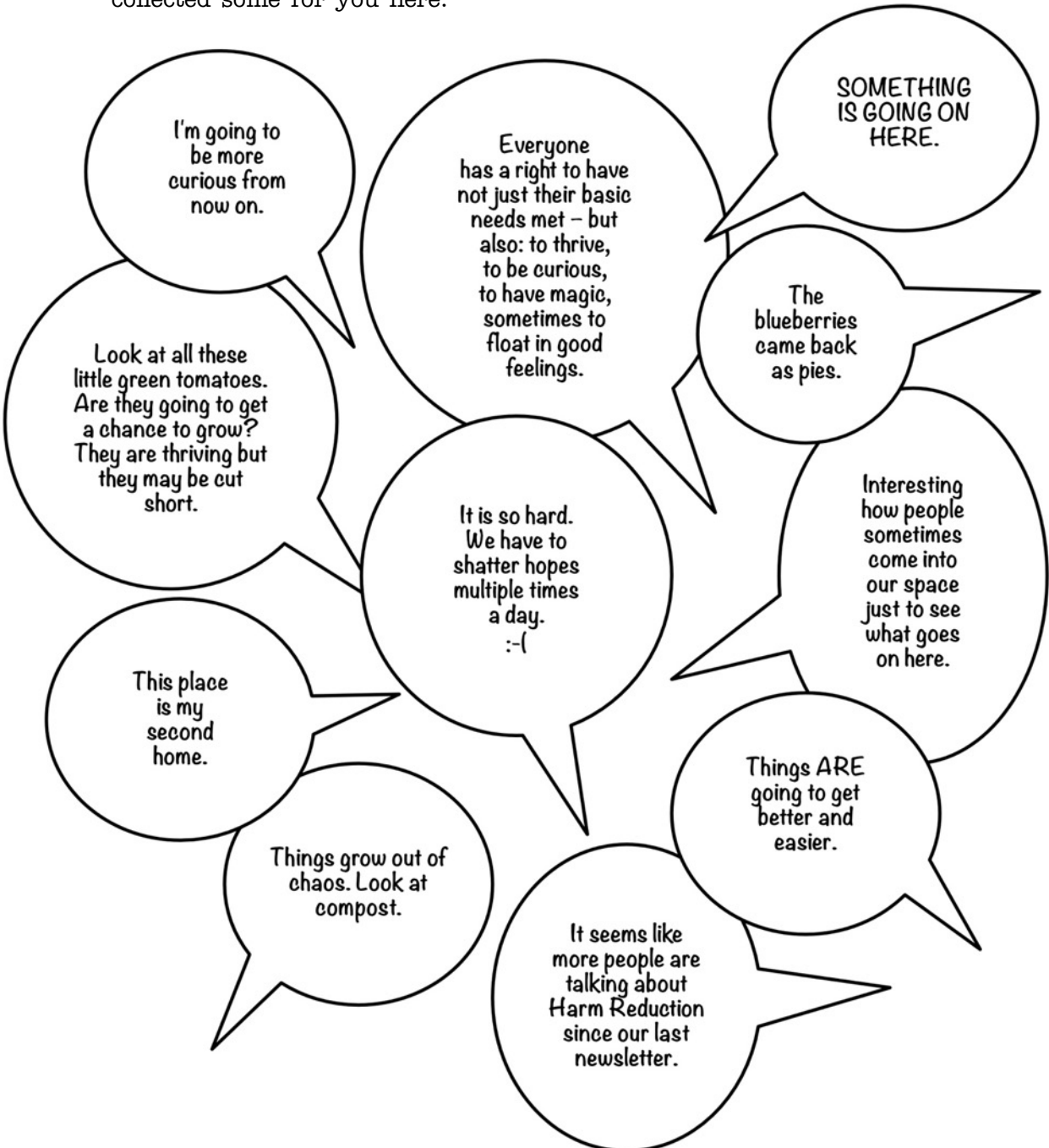
<http://www.communityland.ca/>

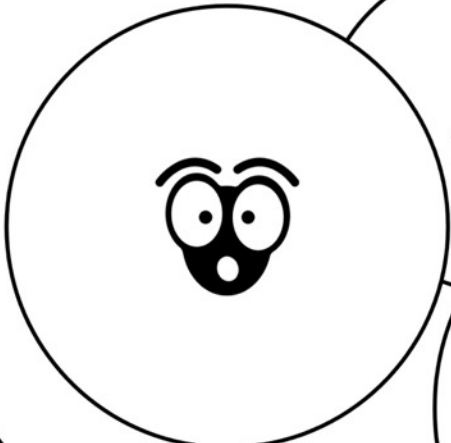
<https://chra-achru.ca/perpetual-affordability-and-community-control-of-the-land-community-land-trusts-in-canada/>



# Overheard around the Trust

It is amazing the words of wisdom, gratitude and humour one overhears all the time at our space on Bridge Street. We have collected some for you here.





Which one?  
The Cutie-Patootie?

Fragile things are beautiful.

I am so encouraged by the efforts of everyone.

I feel safe here.

Well, we can laugh and dance, anyway.

Can you imagine what it would be like if everyone in the world had their basic needs met?  
Imagine how light-hearted we would feel.

They were just there for them.

It is amazing how fast things got bad.  
We've been in emergency mode for almost two years.

It's a Blueberry Riot.

A plant doesn't grow all on its own. Nothing does.

Boundaries hold in goodness and make space for things to flourish and for the next thing to happen.

We're still here.





# Rock Advisory Committee

*“Get a job!” “Stop using drugs!” “Get out of here!”*

People who are homeless and people who use drugs don't get any shortage of advice. Someone is almost always telling them what to do or where to go.

Through their membership in the ROCK program of the Trust, however, they often hear something different: “How do you want things to change? How can we support each other to make those changes happen? How can we be a better community together?”

ROCK stands for Rural Outreach Community Kindness, a group of like-minded people who approach homelessness and drug use from the position of “harm reduction.” (See the Harm Reduction issue of this newsletter for more detail.\*

A key part of this approach is asking people what they need, not telling them. To help make this happen, the ROCK program has created an Advisory Committee of people who are familiar with the issues through actually living with drug use and homelessness every day. The Committee meets weekly and usually consists of around six individuals. Committee members volunteer to serve. To acknowledge the importance

**Our Advisory Committee is made up of people who are familiar with the issues through actually living with drug use and homelessness every day.**

If you have experience with using drugs and would like to participate in the Trust's Rock Advisory Committee, let us know. We'd like to meet you. Please come by our offices at 23 Bridge St. W, Bancroft. Or give us a call: 613-332-3657.

of their input, and the time they put in, they're paid a modest amount each month.

The Committee generates innovative and useful ideas. But in making it possible for members to use their abilities and knowledge to make change, it also helps develop something we all need: a sense of self-worth.

Over the page to read comments from Committee members.

I Never Realized That I would ever find  
a Place to get the help I need

"I never realized that I would ever find a place to get the help I need to survive as a drug user and homeless person. The ROCK and Community Trust gave me the help and guidance to get the help I was looking for. I also found ROCK offered me a place to help fellow homeless people and drug users. Harm Reduction and access to others that also have similar needs. Without the help of the ROCK, so many of us would not have any direction."

"Being valued and compensated for my time helped give me purpose in my life. People actually think I'm worth something."

Being Here has  
Before I drink  
all seemed  
Bern said h  
ma

"I love meeting with like-minded people and talking about issues that affect us. It feels good to connect with people, to make change in the community. We have the answers. Others need to listen."

"Being here has given me structure, or at least started structure. Before, I didn't even know what day it was... Being paid has given me a sense of pride. It feels good to make money, instead of someone giving it to you."

change in the  
the answers

"Get trained in Naloxone and save lives."

"If you can't help us,  
at least, don't hurt

"Thank you ROCK and NHCT for helping me not to be ashamed for using drugs."

Being  
and com  
my time  
purpose  
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helping me not be ashamed for

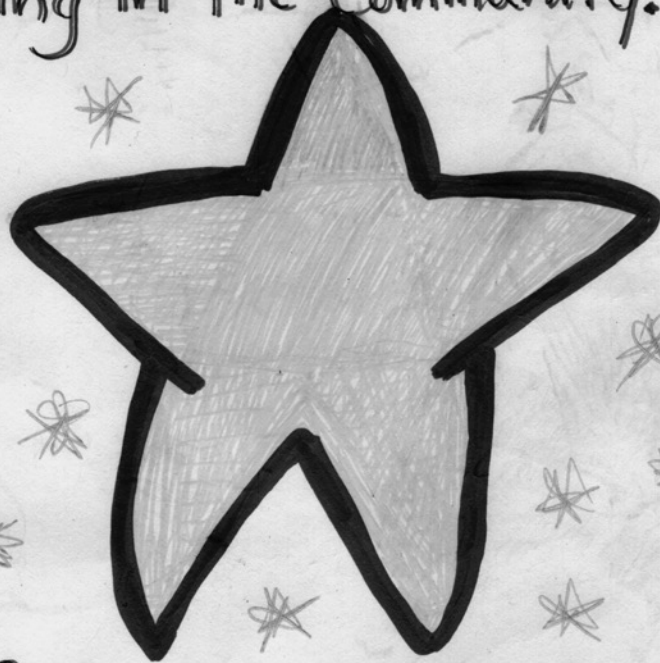




What does it mean to you to be apart of the Community Trust Advisory Committee?

\* It is a good starting point for Commitment.

\* I feel a sense of responsibility to helping in the Community.



\*

\* It feels good to get a bit of money in my pocket.

\* I like being a part of a group.

The Trust supports:

Decriminalization of drugs

Safe supply and elimination of toxic drug supply

Safe consumption sites

A mobile safe consumption site is on its way. Reach out to Safe Use Hastings for more information.



## Safe Use Hastings: Outreach Services

Safe Use Hastings is a harm-reduction, nonprofit organization providing safe consumption, clinical services and place-based outreach services.



We engage with people who use drugs (PWUD) to help balance the sharing of community resources and bring about a lived experience of belonging through intentional acts of inclusion and integration.



Safe Use Hastings supervised consumption services will provide a safe environment for people who use drugs, and reduce:

- overdose deaths
- transmission of diseases and infections
- public substance use and discarded needles.

Safe Use Hastings supervised consumption services are a compassionate, comprehensive, and collaborative form of evidence-based care and provide options when clients are ready for change.

In March of 2020, as the world contracted, so did the people, places and groups on which our most oppressed community members relied: face-to-face meetings with helpful people, gatherings of friends for protection and safe-watching, warm spaces, accessible meals and general connection. Paired with soaring housing prices, this left a lot of people disconnected from their lifeboats. Safe Use Hastings was established in May of 2021 as a direct response to the suffering created by this contraction.

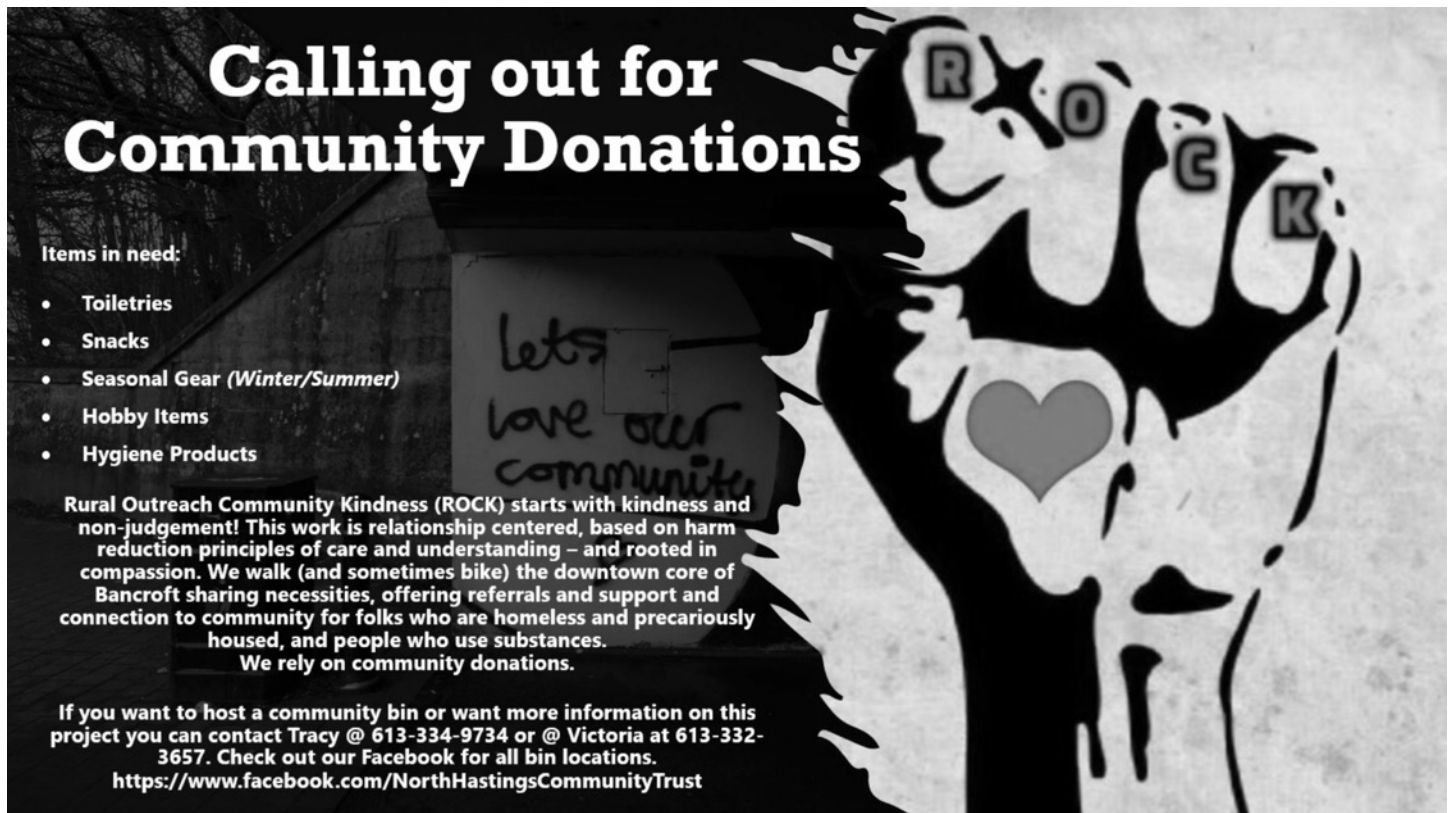


Safe Use Hastings supervised consumption site will contribute to the improved sharing of/balance with community resources. Our goal is inclusion and integration for PWUD into community life - which leads to belonging and improved quality and dignity of life

**MAKE A DONATION TODAY**  
<https://my.charitableimpact.com/send/to/group/safe-use-hastings>

The heart of our work is about creating dignity for all people.  
"We're Doing This"

# Have you heard about the amazing Rock Bin Donation Program?



**Calling out for Community Donations**

Items in need:

- Toiletries
- Snacks
- Seasonal Gear (*Winter/Summer*)
- Hobby Items
- Hygiene Products

Rural Outreach Community Kindness (ROCK) starts with kindness and non-judgement! This work is relationship centered, based on harm reduction principles of care and understanding – and rooted in compassion. We walk (and sometimes bike) the downtown core of Bancroft sharing necessities, offering referrals and support and connection to community for folks who are homeless and precariously housed, and people who use substances.  
We rely on community donations.

If you want to host a community bin or want more information on this project you can contact Tracy @ 613-334-9734 or @ Victoria at 613-332-3657. Check out our Facebook for all bin locations.  
<https://www.facebook.com/NorthHastingsCommunityTrust>

Here are some of the places where you will find a bin:

North Hastings Community Integration Association  
Northern Rural Net  
McArthur Mills Christen Fellowship  
Deuce Tattoo  
The Carriage House  
Steven Steve N Sons  
St. Paul's United Church  
OATC



## Remembering with silence & steel

Since the beginning of covid, our small community has lost at least 16 people to drug-related issues: including accidental overdoses, toxic drug supply and in a few cases, suicide.

Even one death is too many. But here's the real shocker: taking into account the population of North Hastings - about 12,000 permanent residents - this rate of death is worse than Toronto's. And not just a little worse: as a percentage of the population, the problem is about 5 times worse in our rural community than in the big city. For an introduction to the causes and what can be done, check out our previous newsletter on Harm Reduction.

Statistics and strategies, however, took a back seat to memories during two events last spring and fall in Bancroft.

Statistics and strategies, however, took a back seat to memories during two events last spring and fall in Bancroft. On June 11, a silent walk around the streets of downtown Bancroft, gave friends, family and supporters a chance to quietly remember and mourn the people we've lost, people who once walked our streets with vigour and hope.





Then, in August, a commemorative plaque was unveiled outside the meeting place of the Trust on Bridge Street. The event was part of a global focus that day on overdose deaths. The memorial incorporated messages of remembrance, and reproductions of drawings made by friends and family members of those who have died due to drug overdose. Manufactured in bronze and steel by the Hastings Highlands Workers' Co-operative led by artist Rocky Dobej, the plaque will move between several locations in North Hastings.

Both events served as symbolic reminders of how we can best honor the lives of those we have lost. Silence is appropriate, but it's not the whole answer. We also need a steely determination to say and do anything we can to care for people and stop the dying.





**NO**  
**One**  
will go  
hungry

right, no one

## Jo & The Magic Seed

I stood in my driveway taking in what I have just built. I had handpicked each and every piece of wood. I would go up into the pine plantation behind our house and choose small red pines that had fallen down or from the tops that had snapped off in one storm or another. I dug two holes with my shovel, working through rock and hard-packed soil. I built in two stages, as there were two sides to this masterpiece. Bright and shiny, silver hardware was the perfect contrast to the colour of the small pine trees. I'm smiling, actually revelling, at the most beautiful gates I have ever built. Ah, yes, don't forget the final pieces. In bright, bold, red letters, were two signs, "KEEP OUT" and "NO TRESPASSING". The gates were closed, the signs were hung, job well done! "Stay out world, stay out people." What a bold statement that was.

This article was written by Jo Reynolds who is our on staff champion of the Harvest The North community gardens.

The truth is I was hurting. I was beat mentally and emotionally. I had chased the rabbit down such a deep, dark hole for so long that I had no idea where to find the light. The light that at one time in my life was warming and healing. I left it, and I had forgotten to tie my lifeline on when the rabbit had come along. I no longer felt that I had self worth, and I believed the community I was living in didn't want me around. There was never any sense of inclusion. I became isolated.

Deep down inside of me I knew that I had more than just anger and hate to offer this world. There were parts of me that held space for my desire, my need, my wanting to give the good parts of me. I started to believe that I had more to give. But how? And where?

To answer these two fundamental questions, I began to look in the best place I could think of. I started by reading the two local newspapers. They would always host stories and musings of local stories and initiatives being led by various organizations, community groups and businesses.

It began as a curiosity about how to build a greenhouse using crates from automobiles. Wouldn't that be something? Then there were articles about growing food in raised garden beds. Each article became more and more interesting. Then the moment came when a



community call went out and an invitation, so nicely worded within one of the newspaper stories. Harvest The North? Who are these people? I felt like a beautiful set of arms were reaching out and opening up in such an inviting way that I was a fool if I didn't at least meet this group of extraordinary people wanting to do something extraordinary! Grow food and share knowledge. What a great concept.

I opened one side of my gate. I didn't want to open both at once just in case I needed to retreat quickly. I ventured out to my very first Harvest The North community meeting. The host for this meeting was Jane Kali, a name I was not familiar with in the town I grew up in. The room was beginning to fill with people and I didn't know anyone who was there. The first thing that I noticed was the purple hat that had little white polka dots and a brooch shiny and sparkly, in the shape of a "J". Her smile was contagious. I found myself smiling at her and her smile.

The second thing I noticed was the food. The tables had been set up and there was so much food, that I wondered where everyone would sit. I sat and I listened. This group of people were motivated, as well as open and inviting. They were planning an event that would see people order and purchase rain barrels. The day of the event had finally arrived. The big transport truck had come to a halt, and its big door on the trailer had been opened. There they were: rain barrels in various colours; large caged holding tanks were in the midst as well. The event stretched out all day and folks from all over North Hastings came to pick up the barrels.

Something magical happened this day. Instant friendships were formed and an electric spark ignited what I had been searching for. Community. Inclusion. Empowerment. Laughter and so many other ingredients began to fuel and nourish my soul. The contagious smile had infected me and I wanted more. In fact, I needed more.

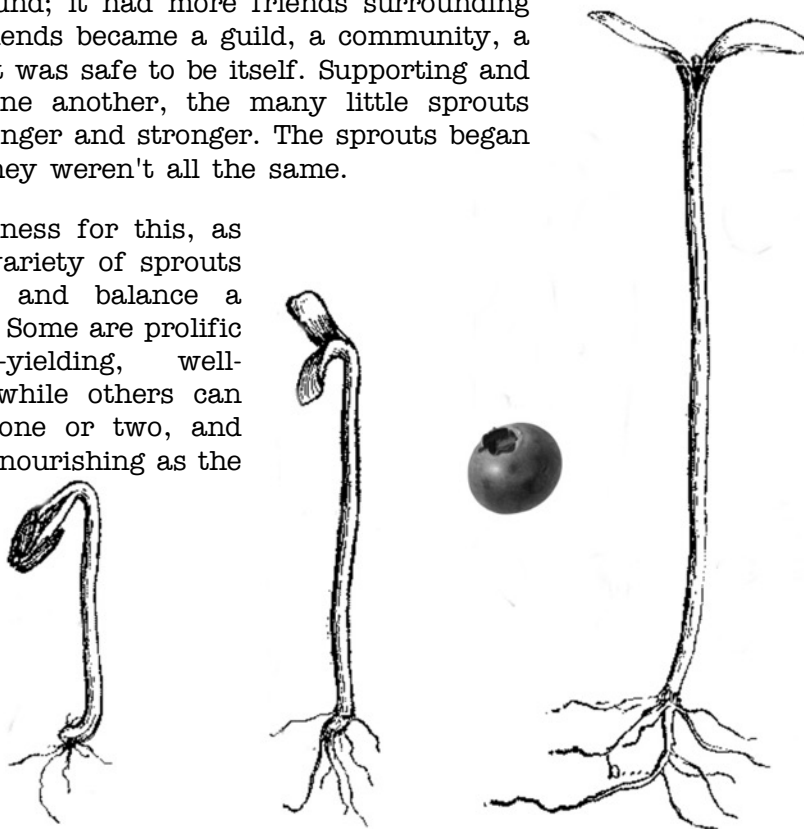
I began to share myself and the skills that I possessed to help Harvest The North's vision of seeing more raised garden beds within the community. It was a place where people could come together and grow not only food, but also develop a sense of belonging. The type of belonging that was felt when hands were in the soil. Mother Earth's

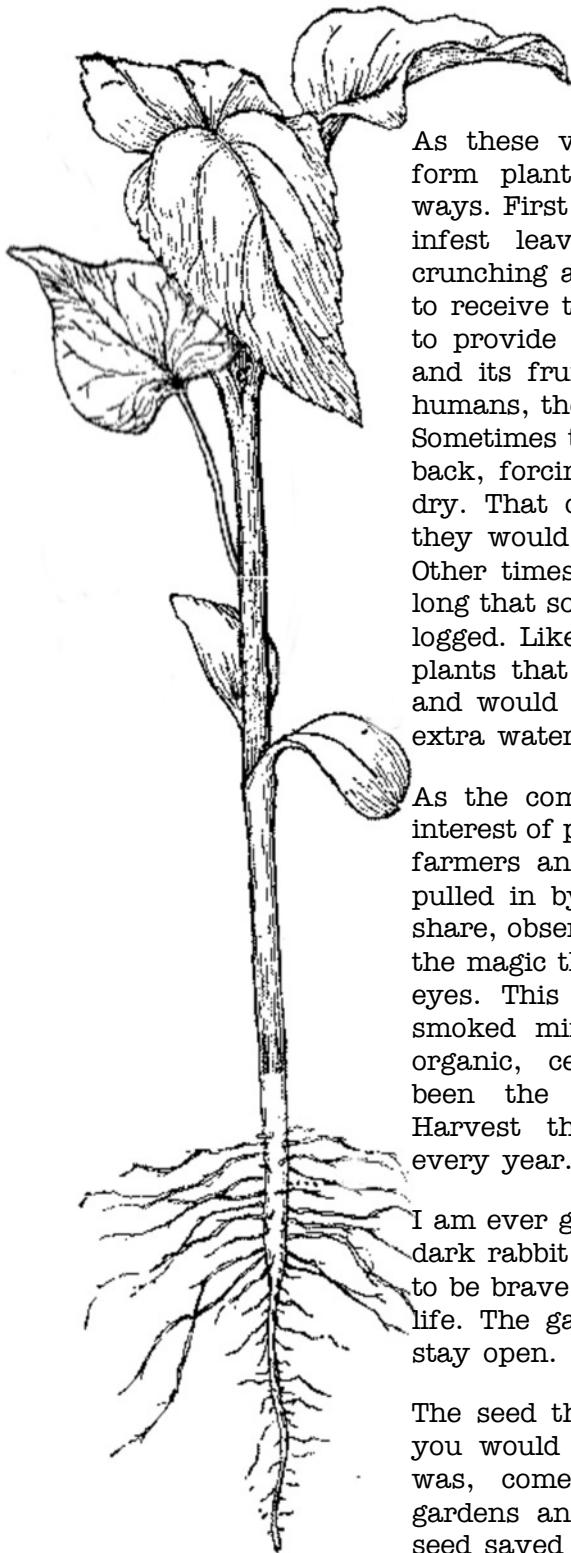


soil was enriching everyone that came to the community gardens. That dark hole I mentioned? Someone had placed a seed in it. That tiny little seed knew exactly what to do, and that was to germinate and grow. Seeds are magical. They instinctively grow towards the light. The light that I had no idea was there. So, I hitched a ride with the most delicate tendril that formed from this tiny seed. The tender shoot was not afraid. It was brave in the way it had the strength to push its way through the dark soil to find the sunlight. It paused for the briefest of moments, contemplating the warm soil just below the surface. The warmth was welcoming. It had been a long journey to make it this far. One last push and it threw the top layer of soil aside to meet the waiting sun. "Hello world!" it said. "I am here, and I am going to continue to grow with the help of my friends Water and Sun. I do not yet know what I am, but I just know that I have something magnificent to offer."

How brave and courageous this little sprout was. As the water and sun helped the sprout, the sprout realized when it was strong enough to look around; it had more friends surrounding it. These friends became a guild, a community, a place that it was safe to be itself. Supporting and nurturing one another, the many little sprouts became stronger and stronger. The sprouts began to realize they weren't all the same.

Thank goodness for this, as it takes a variety of sprouts to nourish and balance a community. Some are prolific and high-yielding, well-resourced, while others can only offer one or two, and still just as nourishing as the others.





As these various sprouts began to grow and form plants, they were challenged in many ways. First it was the insects that would try and infest leaves of the plants, munching and crunching and making it difficult for the plants to receive the sunlight, and even more difficult to provide shade and protection for the plants and its fruit. With help from the hands of us humans, the insects were sent elsewhere to eat. Sometimes the water would play tricks and hold back, forcing the plants to become thirsty and dry. That did not deter the human hands, as they would bring water to the parched plants. Other times the water would rain down for so long that some of the plants became a bit waterlogged. Like an excellent eco-system there were plants that enjoyed copious amounts of water, and would send out their roots to soak up the extra water.

As the community of plants grew, so did the interest of people. Gardeners, residents, visitors, farmers and others young and old were being pulled in by some rare earth magnet to learn, share, observe, and most of all, be included with the magic that was happening right before their eyes. This magic has no sleight of hand, or smoked mirrors. It's real and it is originally organic, certified authentic. Community has been the master magician responsible for Harvest the North growing and succeeding every year.

I am ever grateful that a seed was place in that dark rabbit hole six years ago. The opportunity to be brave and open my gates has changed my life. The gates are both open, and continue to stay open.

The seed that was placed in the dark hole? If you would like to know what kind of seed it was, come around the Harvest The North gardens and ask Jo, and I will tell you what seed saved my life.



# Harvest The North takes steps to make truth and reconciliation real within our community

**On Friday October 1, 2021** the Trust had an opportunity to celebrate and unveil a very important message to residents and visitors of North Hastings. Back in the springtime the coordinator for Harvest The North Community Gardens, Jo Reynolds, began a journey to acknowledge the land that the community gardens are situated on. Through great consultation with Elder Noreen Tinney at Kijicho Manito Madaouskarini Algonquin Nation, signs were designed, acknowledging the shared opportunity of growing food on unceded Algonquin Land.

Harvest The North with one of their key community garden partners at Riverstone Residence installed a land acknowledgment sign.

Through great consultation with Elder Noreen Tinney at Kijicho Manito Madaouskarini Algonquin Nation, signs were designed, acknowledging the shared opportunity of growing food on unceded Algonquin Land.



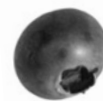
A small intimate gathering was held at Riverstone Residence. The residents, community members, and Trust supporters, were led in ceremony and song by the Shawashkong Ikwe Singers. Creator and Mother Earth were certainly smiling down upon the group with warm sunshine and the sound of the Shawashkong River in the background.



*Women of The Shawashkong Ikwe Singers, with special guest, Alice, from Riverstone Residence.*



# How the Good Food Bag happens in Bancroft and our awesome partnership with the Trust Bancroft.



Hi there Bancroft Folks.

My name is Bren Foran and I am the Facilitator for Bancroft Good Food Bag program working with Community Development Council in Belleville.

This article was written by Bren Foran, of the Community Development Council in Belleville.

I wanted to give a little insight of our GFB program and our travelling to Bancroft each month. Since the pandemic started in 2020 we had to change the way we delivered our program to all our 14 communities in Hastings County. How we did this was by creating a curbside pick up location for our customers in each community. Thanks to North Hastings Integration and Bancroft Legion folks, they have allowed us to use the back parking lot as our pick up location. We come the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month with \$10 veggie bags and \$5. fruit bags pre-ordered. Since Covid our orders have increased. Our partner Community Trust Bancroft takes some orders the others order through CDC.

We start our day @730am at our packing site in Belleville, we have a amazing volunteer team that come each Tuesday to pack our bags. This particular GFB Tuesday is our largest as we pack for Marmora, Madoc, Limerick, Coehill and Bancroft. We pack between 500-600 veggie bags and 500-650 fruit bag this day and my driver Peter n I have to be on the road by noon to make it to Trudys to unload Limerick order, then maybe have a quick lunch if time, then on to Bancroft for hopefully 2pm @ Legion parking lot. We encounter weather conditions, construction and lack of time on this 1<sup>st</sup> of the month Tuesday.

Our amazing volunteer Jo (Community Trust) would already be there directing traffic , setting up line for vehicle pick ups. The 3 Amigos would then get started... Peter in back of truck, Me getting order names, Jo (sometimes other awesome volunteers) would put orders in vehicles. Very fast paced, in all weather conditions. We have been a team since early 2020, wearing masks outside as CDC protocol. We have made many acquaintances(customers), started good

friendships (Jo and CT folks), teamwork and to let folks know about this valuable program. GFB is available to anyone in Hastings County, a GREAT VALUE! \$10 veggie bag and \$5 fruit bag. Contact Community Trust Bancroft or CDC Quinte 613-968-2466.

Hats off to the team at Community Trust Bancroft for sticking with us throughout this pandemic. A HUGE THANK YOU to Jo and the other awesome volunteers from CT that have helped us out to bring affordable produce to your community.

2022 is just ahead and I look forward to seeing you then!!

All the Best.  
See you in the  
NEW YEAR.  
CHEERS,  
Bren Foran,  
*GFB*  
Peter Whittle,  
*Volunteer*  
*driver/unloader*



GFB is available to anyone in Hastings County, a great value! \$10 veggie bag and \$5 fruit bag. Contact Community Trust Bancroft or CDC Quinte 613-968-2466.



# Loggercize

## The Joys of Wood Sharing

*“Dopamine.”*

Sue Zielinski is listing the words that come to mind as she describes her feelings about participating in the Trust’s WoodShare program. *“It just feels so great,”* she explains. Then she adds to the list. *“Spontaneity. Learning. Conviviality. Connections. Sense of purpose...”*



Sue is regularly part of volunteer crews that deliver emergency supplies of firewood to neighbours who might otherwise go short. She particularly remembers one delivery from last winter. “I was listening to fiddle music on the way there, and we kept listening as we unloaded the wood into this person’s home.” A line formed to pass the firewood from hand to hand in time to the music. “Soon people were dancing, singing along and joking about ‘loggercize.’”





WoodShare volunteer coordinator, Ernst Grell, also remembers the delivery fondly. “The person getting the wood also got caught up in the spirit and was laughing and singing along.” Ernst schedules deliveries and crews for the WordShare program. “I work out of my home, and live out of town, so it’s a great way for me to connect with people, to experience community.”

Soon people  
were dancing.

Both Sue and Ernst also mention how much they value the understanding of how other people live that comes with the deliveries. “I realize every time how much I have,” Sue says, “and also how easily this could be me getting the delivery.”

But the topic always returns to the pleasure of meeting new people and having fun together. “At one place,” remembers Sue, “they fed us perogies. They also offered vodka, but I was driving, so...”


For more information on participating in WoodShare by providing wood or helping with deliveries, call the Trust.





## It's a Blueberry Riot!

Something awesome happened at the Trust this summer, having to do with blueberries. Roger and Valerie Kelly have a beautiful farm, just south of Maynooth. In 2021, they had an unusual and spectacular flourishing of halflight blueberries.




Realizing that it was not going to be possible to harvest all of this unexpected windfall of berries, the Kellys got in touch with The Trust. They offered free blueberries in exchange for people who would come to pick them. This resulted in the most wonderful experience. Many different teams of people went into the field to pick and chat and solve the world's problems.

Many, many large tubs of perfect blueberries made their way to The Trust. From The Trust, plentiful blueberries went off to a lot, a lot, of people!

More berries were shared with sister organizations: including Riverstone Residence, Children's Services day care, NHCIA garden club, Life House, Algonquin Nation, and SIRCH Community Services. SIRCH brought those berries back to us as baked blueberry pies. As one delighted spectator observed: "It's a Blueberry Riot".

Many, many large tubs of perfect blueberries made their way to the Trust.



Abundant thanks to the Kelly's for this generous donation, to Lynn Singer for organizing all the folks who picked (there were many!), and to all who participated in one way or another in this summer's most delicious event.



Thank you!  
Roger &  
Valerie  
Kelly

## *A Love Letter to The Community*

*Thank you for being you. Thank you for who you are, for your spirit, for your care. Thank you for being on the planet right now at this time while everything feels so upside down. Thank you for your creativity, your skills, your hopes, and your presence. Thank you for your commitment to making sure everyone knows that they belong, that they have purpose and value. Thank you for your dreams and your work towards the goal of making sure that everyone is warm, fed and housed.*

*Your love is expressed in so many ways - you share food, clothing, seedlings, garden veggies, wood, kindness, listening, time, connection. You share your money that pays for so much - for mental health supports, for harm reduction, for food, for grief and bereavement support, for keeping the lights on and the Trust warm, for all the programs supported and projects realized.*

*You share your energy by picking up groceries; picking blueberries this summer; processing, stacking and delivering wood; writing proposals; leading and participating in working groups; organizing fundraisers; helping us in The Trust space; managing incoming emails and messages; envisioning and inspiring new ways to structure ourselves; providing guidance and healing. Thank you for your art, wisdom and generosity when it comes to your expertise and knowledge that comes from your lived experience.*

*Thank you for being part of important ceremonies to honour people and for holding all of those we have lost close in your hearts. We miss seeing the faces of those no longer with us in this world, but we feel them close, they are in our company – We feel them holding us up and holding us strong.*

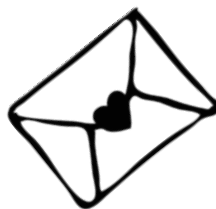
*We want to thank the people on the outside who are finding ways to move closer in. It is so good you are here.*

*Many of us are close up to what is hard. Many of us are experiencing losses, deprivation and trauma. Let's grow and strengthen our connections knowing that we all need to belong; we all need care and kindness now more than ever - belonging and care are vital to our collective survival.*

*With full hearts, we look forward to discovering new ways to honour, care for and appreciate each other and the earth.*

***With so much love and appreciation,***

***All of us at The Trust***

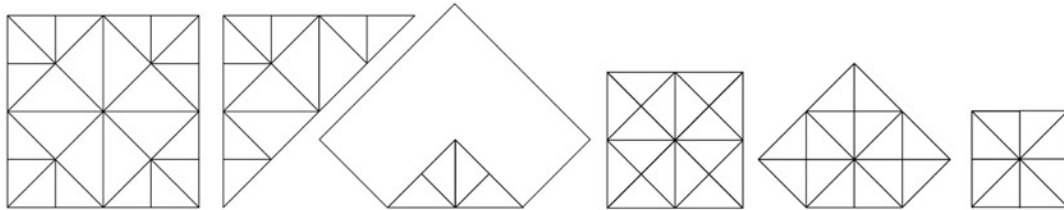




# Hey kids!

## Make a Dream Machine

*We've got Big Dreams here at the Trust. Make our Dream Machine from the back page of this Newsletter, and play the game to see which Dreams will come to life. Follow the instructions below. Once you've learned to make one Dream Machine, you can make another. How about making one with Your Dreams printed in there? If you make one, we'd love to see it. Bring it by The Trust to show us.*



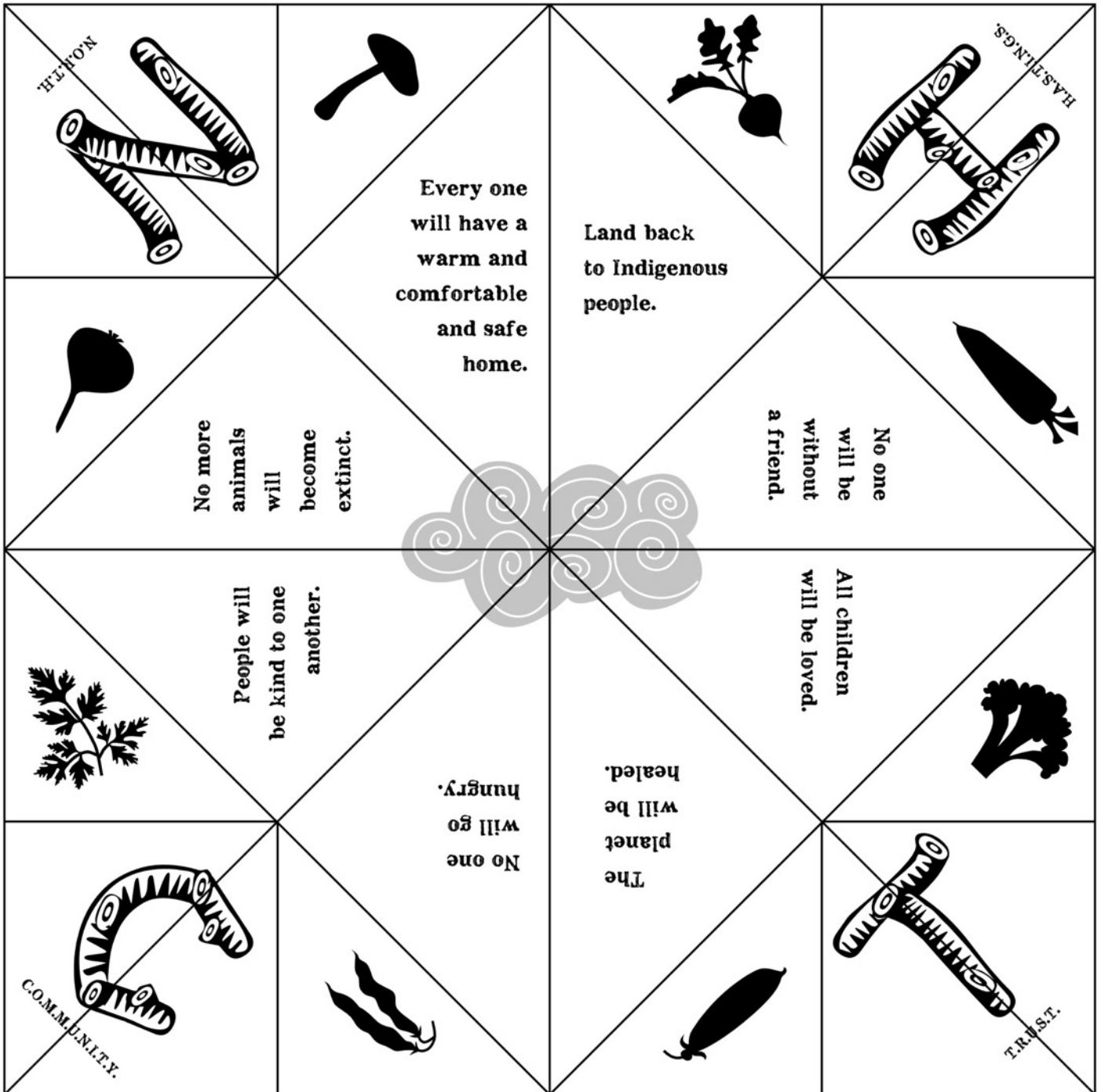
### **How to assemble your Dream Machine.**

1. Fold the cut-out square in half one way, and then unfold and fold in half the other way.
2. Unfold and turn the square over so the top is blank. Fold each corner into the middle.
3. Turn over and again fold each corner into the middle.
4. Turn over again, so you can see the 4 letters: N.H.C.T.
5. Fold in half again to form a rectangle.
6. Slide your thumb and forefinger of each hand behind 2 of the lettered squares, and press together. The paper will bend and touch, forming the Dream Machine shape. All 4 letters should now be facing out, touching in the centre.

### **How to find a dream.**

1. Ask a friend to pick one of the four letters N.H.C. or T.
2. Open and close your fingers to open and close the machine; while spelling the chosen name, (ie. 5 times for N.O.R.T.H.)
3. Ask your friend to pick a fruit or vegetable.
4. Open and close the machine, while spelling the chosen name, (ie. 4 times for B.E.E.T.)
5. Ask your friend to pick another fruit or vegetable.
6. Lift the flap over the one which was chosen, and see which of our dreams will happen.

Cut out this Dream Machine and follow the instructions to assemble and play.





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Thanks for reading our Third Newsletter, the Big Dreams Issue. After our first two Newsletters were in circulation, many of you made awesome donations. We felt awe, gratitude and so much appreciation. Your support has kept our doors open through this whole difficult pandemic. It has even made it possible for us to have a home of our own in this new year.

We still need your help. Our expenses in the new building will increase. More monthly support would be really helpful. Any amount is welcome. Also there are wonderful bigger projects we can do more than dream of now that we have our own space to work with. Greenhouses, anyone? Aquaponics? Tool Library? Perhaps you are in a position to donate a large sum just one time to make one of these dreams happen?

What a year this next year will be. We are full of hope because we know we are all in this together.

*Donations are tax deductible.*

Thank you to the United Way Hastings & Prince Edward for supporting the Trust over many years and being part of our growth and vision. Thank you to all the organizations in North Hastings and beyond working to build healthy communities. A big thank you to SIRCH for the meals! And thank you to all of you who make donations. You make it possible for us to really be a community-based organization.

