

Innovative Ways North Simcoe Businesses are Responding to COVID-19 Limitations

by MELISSA ELSDON



Photo by TIM MOSSHOLDER on Unsplash

The business owners of North Simcoe have proven to be innovative and resilient during this time of unprecedented restrictions.

A number of manufacturers are adapting their production lines to help supply the needs of the healthcare system. **Industrial Filter Manufacturing**, in Penetanguishene, normally produces specialty and custom liquid filtration bags but has now retooled its operations to begin producing face masks for the healthcare industry. Also in Penetanguishene, **Magna Techform** will retool its current operation to mass-produce a device that can be used to disinfect masks. Likewise, **Franke Kindred** in Midland is currently testing a bacteria-killing ozone technology engineered by staff against the coronavirus.

Local business owners have also realized that additional measures need to be taken in store to help protect their staff and customers. **SCHOTT Gemtron Canada Corp.** is one company that has answered that call in a big way! For the month of April, the company offered both municipalities and local businesses up to 10 pieces of free, tempered glass to assist with social distancing. **Templeton Windows** is producing lightweight face shields that clip onto any baseball-style hat.

As the majority of people lean towards helping to flatten the curve, cooking meals at home has become the norm. With that many of us are craving a night off from cooking and dishes, and our local restaurants have answered the call with physically distanced options. Most of your favourite eateries now offer call-ahead ordering and contact-free pick-up. Some also offer delivery. An up-to-date list can be found at

<https://gbay.ca/covid19-updates>

Also inspiring are the food and beverage businesses that have updated their offerings to include grocery items for their customers. You aren't able to enjoy live music at **The Boathouse Eatery** right now, but you can fill up your freezer with a selection of frozen foods via contactless pick-up. Breadmaking yeast seems to be in short supply on the grocery store shelves, but you can pick some up at **Rawson's Meat and Deli** in Penetanguishene or pre-order your baking ingredient box at **Georgian Bakery** in Midland.

While teachers and school boards have recently been able to make the switch to online learning, there were several weeks where kids at home may have been bouncing off the proverbial walls. Retail art businesses, like **Make a Mess Art Studio**, made take-home art kits available and the **Penetanguishene Library** has been creating fantastic Mystery Book Bags to keep everyone occupied.

A common theme we have seen in the last few weeks is that of helping others. With any take-out order over \$100, **Dillon's Wood Fired Pizza** includes a \$25 gift certificate to be used at another local business — this changes weekly, but past options have been Tripp's Paint Store and Cashmere Blue. **Phil's Casual Dining** in Penetanguishene offers free coffee to all front-line and essential workers as well as special rates on food. Now, more than ever, we need to support the businesses of North Simcoe, as they continue to support us.

Please note: It is best to call these businesses for the most up-to-date information on their offerings and hours of operation. We've found that social media is a great way to keep up with your favourite business as well.

Melissa Elsdon is Local Marketing Coordinator for ShopMidland.com, a resource for local businesses who want to bring their business online and reach more customers; <https://shopmidland.com/>.

FARM 2 DOOR ...a "Made in Tiny" Solution

locally grown & locally delivered

On April 20 Farm2Door, a local farm-food delivery service, launched its online store website and on April 21 made its first delivery. Realizing that farmers were facing an uncertain future and that demand for fresh local products was high, BelleRoots Farm and Bulbs of Fire Garlic — both veterans of the 2019 Tiny Township farm crawl — partnered with an IT craftsman from Georgian Bay Custom, and Farm2Door was born. Many producers have joined the platform and the list of offerings — which now includes artisan bread, soups and vegetables, honey, maple syrup, frozen prepared meals, gourmet garlic, cheese — continues to grow. Definitely a "made in Tiny" solution: <https://farm2door.ca>.

How a Tiny Connection Helped Bring About Hospice Huronia's New Facility



Photo by Irene Wilson

Hospice Huronia building

by IRENE WILSON, WENDAKE BEACH

Tomkins House, a new end-of-life residential facility serving North Simcoe, officially opened on April 6. Hospice Huronia, the driving force behind Tomkins House, has been active in our community since 1993. Started by Bev Gerow (now McPetrie) and Margaret Bayfield (now deceased), and operating out of the old Penetanguishene Hospital site, Hospice Huronia provides in-home volunteer visiting and bereavement support.

With Tomkins House, the organization will now be able to host and care for 150 end-of-life residents each year, and support 750 family members through that difficult time. Tomkins House will also provide a safe, comfortable meeting place for family and friends to gather. Hospital rooms and care facilities often lack the space or amenities to encourage longer visits. Resident rooms are large and private, where family can stay overnight with loved ones. There is a common kitchen/

family room where meals can be prepared and shared, plus an outdoor garden area where beds can be wheeled. The support of staff and volunteers allows family members to be themselves and not caregivers for those last precious days.

All services, including in-home hospice volunteers, bereavement support and the residential hospice, are free to the client and family thanks to the generosity of our local communities and partial funding (about 50%) from the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care. Did you know hospices cost less to run than hospitals? Tomkins House expects to save taxpayers \$1,000,000 in healthcare costs each year compared to hospitalization: a hospice bed costs \$460 per day vs. \$1,100 for a hospital bed.

Tomkins House is located at 948 Fuller Avenue in Penetanguishene. Curious about the facility? Give them a call (705-549-1034). Hospice Huronia staff and volunteers would love to give you a tour once COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted.

The Tiny connection

Tomkins House is named after a generous benefactor, Nicola Tomkins, a former resident of Tiny who was known for many fundraisers held at "the Barn" on her North Shore property. A \$1.56 million donation made by Nicola and her husband David Gowen in September 2018 ensured our North Simcoe community would have a local hospice. Previously, the nearest hospice facilities were in Barrie or Collingwood with limited availability.

How You Can Support Hospice Huronia

Much of the work accomplished by Hospice Huronia is achieved with the assistance of caring and compassionate volunteers. Here are three ways you could get involved.

- 1. Contribute** your time and skills. Hospice Huronia welcomes volunteers who could help clients and their families, provide administrative or office support, fundraise, or help with special events.
- 2. Provide financial support.** The cost of building Tomkins House has been largely funded by private donations, as well as land donated by the Town of Penetanguishene. However, Hospice Huronia still faces many start-up costs to furnish and equip the building.
- 3. Join a virtual Hike for Hospice on May 31.** Sign up and download pledge sheets on line. Find out more on Hospice Huronia's website: www.hospicehuronia.ca.



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