Looking forward in Limerick with Reeve Carson



By Jim Eadie

Reeve Sharon Carson, a woman who has done an incredibly wide variety of interesting and important things in her life now finds herself the newly elected chief magistrate of the small rural municipality of Limerick Township.

?I have always tried to change what I am doing every five years or so,? she said. And that looks pretty accurate, as almost five years ago she was a newly elected councillor for the same municipality.

Looking back, she has been a schoolteacher, department head, and principal; an adjudicator with the Ontario Consent and Capacity Board; and been involved in federal and provincial political campaigns, to name a few accomplishments.

Although she lives in Newmarket her roots run deep in the township. Her husband's great uncle was Thaddius Gunter, a township settler in the late 1800s, and the couple has had a cottage in the township on Limerick Lake continuously since 1940.

?Our township has the most beautiful lakes ? you can catch a fish, go for a quiet walk in our forests ? even winter is beautiful here,? she said, hinting that future growth in the municipality depends on recreation.

?It can be a double edged sword,? she admitted. ?Cottage residents become permanent residents, they want their road brought up to standard, there are more roads to plow, they want services and taxes go up. Roads are out biggest expense here. We want development here, but we want to do it right.?

Going into the next four years, Carson has a few things on her mind.

?We need to re-organize the landfill site,? she said. Currently it is used as a transfer station, but Carson wants to explore resuming some landfill operations there.

She is also feels there is a need to look at new township office space. At the moment, the municipal offices, roads department and fire hall are all housed in the same building.

?The girls here, their office is the end of the garage,? she said, noting that the noise from the garage can make it a complicated situation for everyone. ?We are tossing around a few ideas now,? she said.

?Another issue is looking at sharing resources with other small municipalities like Wollaston and Tudor Cashel,? she said. ?Here, we have a strong, very well trained and well equipped fire department.? With obvious pride, she describes their Youth Firefighters Program which encourages young people to become active in their local volunteer fire department and even receive hands on training. Five of the youth members have just successfully completed CPR and first aid training.

As a self confessed lifelong ?political junkie?, Carson has found herself in an interesting new role for at least the next four years.