

Hearts for Healthcare Workers initiative comes to Tudor and Cashel

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By Mike Riley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

On Feb. 1, Tudor and Cashel Township announced on its township website and its Facebook page that it would be participating in the Hearts for Healthcare Workers initiative that five other local governments have been doing over the past couple of weeks; the City of Belleville, the Municipality of Brighton, Hastings County, the City of Quinte West and the County of Prince Edward. These governments are encouraging residents to hang a heart in their doorways, windows or yards to support healthcare workers who are feeling the strain of long hours and staffing shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The initiative began as a gesture of love and support from a wife to her husband Andrew Sclar, an emergency room physician in the Boston area. Tanya Russell began posting hearts on her front door and eventually started up a Hearts for Healthcare Workers Facebook page on March 16, 2020, which now has over 100,000 followers. Her gesture has now become a viral sensation and a worldwide phenomenon.

In a Jan. 26 press release entitled "Hearts for Healthcare in the Bay of Quinte," Hastings County Warden Rick Phillips said that throughout this COVID-19 crisis, people have been witness to the extraordinary efforts of healthcare workers as they battled the virus.

"Hastings County council has marvelled at the strength dedication and personal sacrifice people have shown daily. We owe them a debt that cannot be repaid and whether they work in our long-term care homes, paramedic services, hospitals, doctors' offices or cared for us in our homes, they deserve to be recognized for the true heroes they are."

On the Tudor and Cashel Facebook page and on its township website, staff informed residents that the township would be taking part in the Hearts for Healthcare Workers initiative, and they encouraged residents to hang a heart in their front windows, doors or yards to support healthcare workers and the work that they do during this pandemic. They also directed people to a website where they could find and download hearts to put around their homes at www.quintewest.site/hearts and they also encouraged them to take photos of their hearts and submit them to www.pollunit.com/polls/heartsforhealthcare for others to view them and leave supportive comments.

Mayor Libby Clarke says that the comments that Warden Phillips made express her feelings and the feelings shared by the township regarding healthcare workers.

"We hold a debt of gratitude to our healthcare workers for their strength and personal sacrifice that they give everyday. I haven't seen any hearts on my travels in the township yet, but then I too am keeping to the stay-at-home order," she says. "If I could, I would cover all my windows with hearts to thank and encourage our healthcare workers for the extraordinary sacrifice they are making in keeping us all safe."