

The Countdown Project gets built



By Kristena Schutt-Moore

The downpour of rain on Monday, July 11 and Tuesday, July 12 didn't wash away the smiles on the faces of the volunteers and community members working on the Countdown Pebble Mosaic Project at Lookout Point Park. The design for this pebble mosaic project was officially unveiled and laid out on jigs where the participants followed the design layout with different coloured pebbles and packed sand to hold them in place. The design featured several intersecting pathways, one of which was a set of bear tracks. The theme of the pathways and the bear, was brought up in the online workshops with community organizations and volunteers. The paths represent many things from, 'path of healing?', 'walking alone?', 'walking together?', 'pathway to a goal?' and more. The bear prints in the mosaic also represent a path, but they also represent life's choices. The Countdown Pebble Mosaic Project is part of a partnership between Maggie's Resource Centre and ReDefine Arts. It is part of a bigger project to place pebble mosaics in communities throughout the province every year to countdown to the day until there is an end to gender based violence. The Countdown Public Art Project works to increase the public's awareness of gender-based violence. There are 10 Countdown public art mosaics across Ontario including, Pembroke, Eganville, Killaloe, Pikwaknagan First Nation, Peterborough-Nogojiwanong, North Bay, Carlton Place, Brantford, Almonte and Bancroft. All were created through community engagement from 2016 to 2022 and is supported through the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Ontario Arts Council and the Toronto Arts Council. The next step for the Countdown Pebble Mosaic Project at Lookout Point Park is the behind the scenes work throughout the month of August. The members of Redefine arts will be taking the jig pieces made by the community and putting them together and cementing them in place to create the mosaic. Then from Sept. 5 to Sept. 9 there will be FireSide Chats held from noon to 4 p.m. held daily with the project's story keeper Roberta Della-Picca. Everyone is welcome to attend and talk with her about their experiences with the project or how they are connected to the topic of gender-based violence. The official unveiling ceremony for the mosaic will be on Sept. 9 at 6 p.m. and the community is welcome to attend and celebrate the finished project, or honour those affected by gender based violence. Those interested in more information are invited to visit the website www.reddressproductions.org.