



How’s your mental health?

NOBODY WOULD HESITATE to explain that they missed hockey practice due to a broken leg. In some circles, scars are badges of honour. When I was a kid, students would gleefully sign their names in Sharpies on their friend’s orthopaedic cast.

If you see a friend with a physical injury, you’ll probably ask them about it, and likely they will tell you. “How are you?” is a ubiquitous greeting, and mostly people glibly give happy one word answers like “fine” or “great.” I like to surprise friends who ask by giving them sincere answers. My better half cringes when I give brief but honest answers to strangers who enquire.

I keep doing it though, because I think it’s important to discuss how we are really doing. My sincere answers to “how are you?” sometimes catch people off guard. A question that I sometimes ask, however, has proven to be a real eye-opener. “How’s your mental health?” never gets a glib answer. People don’t expect that one. But often the question provokes really meaningful conversations.

Still, I don’t commonly ask people about their mental health. To some, it remains a deeply private topic. But maybe it shouldn’t be. I wonder how things might be different if we were just as quick to comment on our anxiety or depression as we were our headaches. Normalizing these chats erodes the stigma.

We don’t expect to receive an invoice for our injuries treated at the emergency department, but you’ll likely pay around \$150 for an hour with a psychologist. Stigma inhibits conversation about mental health and I think we might have more comprehensive healthcare if we were all more comfortable talking about it.

I’ve spoken in public and written here about my mental health. I find that after I do so, people share their stories. Such stories are widespread. Years ago, I never thought much about mental health. During my recent short stint of reporting for this newspaper, housing, poverty, substance use, and mental health were the most commonly discussed topics. They sometimes don’t, but often do overlap.

I used to think that when people spoke about problems, they were looking for solutions. I’m

older and wiser now and I know that sometimes people just need to talk. Talking about mental health is therapeutic for folks. And yet, starting conversations about mental health can be difficult. We’re not used to it. We tend not to get taught about it. I like the BeThere.org website, which offers free lessons on how to support struggling with their mental health. The website offers golden rules on how to kick start conversations: say what you see, show you care, and hear them out, know your role, and connect to help.



CHRIS HOUSTON
Special to The Times

If you have a mental health issue, you are likely much less alone than you think. Regarding PTSD, a 2019 paper published in the Red Cross’s academic journal notes that an “estimated 50 per cent of men and 60 per cent of women experience at least one trauma during their lifetime. Around eight per cent of these men and 20 per cent of these women

develop PTSD. In a given year, eight per cent of the general population has a current diagnosis of PTSD.” We can extrapolate that over three million Canadians have PTSD today. The fact that women experience trauma at a rate double digits higher than men, should not go unnoticed.

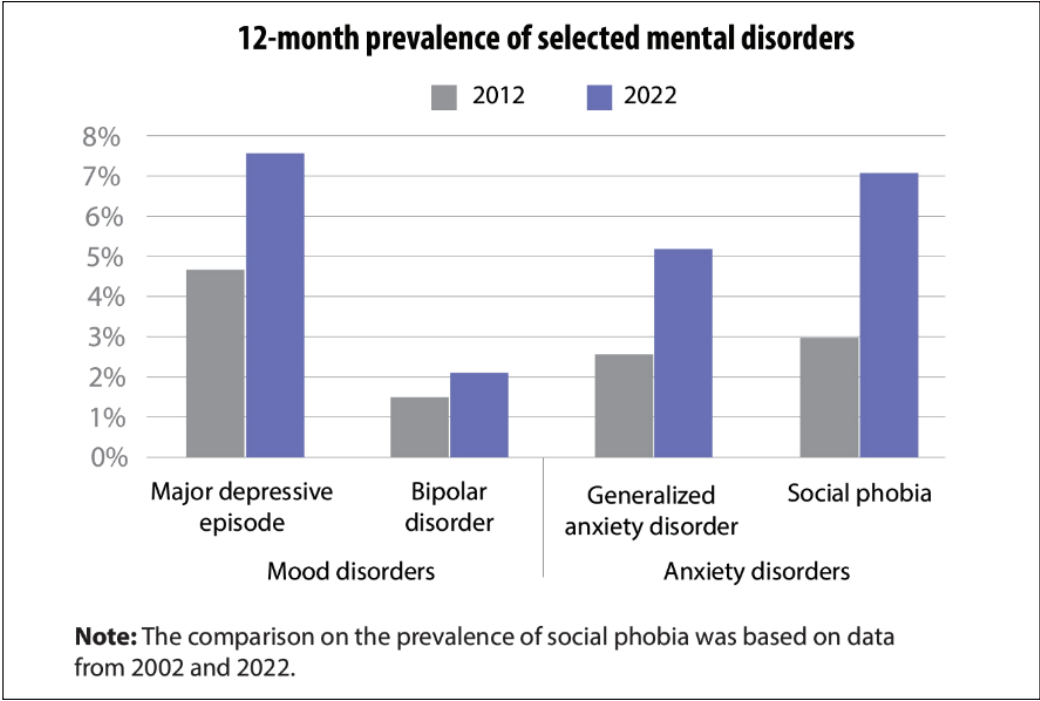
According to Statistics Canada, in 2022 “over five million Canadians (18 per cent) aged 15 and older met the diagnostic criteria for a mood, anxiety, or substance use disorder in the 12 previous months.” The agency reported mood and anxiety disorders trending upwards, and a rise in substance-related deaths.

So, likely, you know people living with mental disorders. The sooner we all talk about it, the better it is. Practice it: “How is your mental health?”

October 10 was World Mental Health Day.

Chris Houston is the president of the Canadian Peace Museum charity that is fundraising to open in Bancroft.

For information on mental health services in Ontario, you can phone 211 or phone Connex-Ontario toll free on 1-866-531-2600. 988 is the national suicide crisis helpline.



LETTERS & SUBMISSIONS

Minimum wage

Letter to the Editor,
When the minimum wage was \$1 an hour the deposit on a beer bottle was 2 cents

Now that the minimum wage has risen over seventeen times to \$17.20 an hour why has the deposit on the bottle only risen five times to 10 cents. Shouldn’t the deposit be up seventeen times also to 34 cents or shouldn’t the minimum wage be less than one third of what it is at only

\$5.05 an hour.

Every time the minimum wage rises jobs are lost as a small business might not make enough money to pay this wage.

All we are doing is racing towards a great depression.

Winston E. Ralph
Bancroft, Ont.

Two people charged after stolen mini-van crashes into a ditch

The Central Hastings detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police has charged two people after a stolen vehicle ended up in a ditch along Hwy. 7. Officers responded to a complaint regarding a dangerous driver shortly after 12:30 a.m. of Oct. 8 along on Highway-7 in the Tweed area.

Officers quickly located the vehicle, observed it for a short time and then attempted to conduct a traffic stop. The vehicle fled at extremely high speeds. The officers did not engage in a pursuit in the interest of public safety.

The mini-van was located in the ditch a short distance away.

Two people, a male and a female, were found in the vehicle, along with traces of methamphetamine and drug-use paraphernalia. The vehicle had been stolen earlier. The two individuals were transported to hospital as a precaution and were

returned to police custody.

A 16-year-old female is charged with:

- Dangerous operation of a vehicle
 - Flight from a peace officer
 - Theft of a vehicle
 - Possession of property obtained by crime over \$5,000
 - Fail to comply with a probation order
- A 22-year-old male has been charged with:
- Possession of property obtained by crime
 - Fail to comply with a probation order - two counts
 - Failure to comply with a release order

Both of the accused remain in custody with bail hearings scheduled for today before the Ontario Court of Justice in Belleville.

Submitted by the OPP East Region

LETTERS & SUBMISSIONS

Hilly Hundred organizers present U-15 Girls Jets with donation

Hilly Hundred took place on Saturday October 5 with all levels of cyclists coming out to enjoy a ride through the roads of North Hastings. Every year the Hilly Hundred donates the proceeds to local charities and their generosity exceeded each organizations expectations. This years recipients were the U-15 Bancroft Jet Girls hockey team who enjoyed the day volunteering at the event by helping prepare the drink station, handing out prizes, recording riders as they arrived back from their adventures and the best part for

the girls was cheering the riders on as they came across making them feel like celebrities. Hospice House was also fortunate enough to receive a large donation from the Hilly Hundred, with their store being damaged in a fire recently, these funds were greatly needed and appreciated. Both organizations would like to thank the Hilly Hundred for their amazing generosity.

Submitted by Melissa Armstrong



U-15 Bancroft Jets Girls receive their cheque from Hilly Hundred. /SUBMITTED, Melissa Armstrong



U-15 Bancroft Jets Girls were waiting to cheer on the riders as they arrived back to North Hastings High school. /SUBMITTED, Wes Hill

HOME AGAIN

To adopt a cat...
to display a cat on this ad...
or to donate to

HOME AGAIN

please call 613-334-8471
or email us at
info@homeagainbancroft.ca

The Cat Corner

Bonded cats: Two for the price of one

Looking for a pet who amuses you, loves you, and makes no demands on you? Consider adopting these two bonded brother cats, born in April 2019. Two are always better than one. Seaweed is a super social and lovable cat, greets people at the door, likes to snuggle in your arms and under the blanket at night. He loves his belly rubbed and will hold onto your arm to let you know he wants more. Captain is a very lovable and social cat. He loves to hang out in the bathroom sink. He loves to run and play with the other cats in his foster home. Call 613-334-8471 for an appointment to see them without obligation. \$150 for the pair.

SEAWEED & CAPTAIN

Copper Creek Kennels

Pet Boarding

Christine & Andrew Walker

675 East Road Loop
Bancroft, ON
613-338-2377

coppercreekkennels@hotmail.com
www.coppercreekkennels.com

PAUDASH LAKE MARINA

Rod & Tyleen Copland
marina@paudashlakemarina.ca
613-339-2600 Fax: 613-339-1960
1320 McGillivray Road, Bancroft, Ontario K0L 1C0

Zehua CLOTHING boutique

22 Bridge St W
Bancroft, Ontario
(613) 332-2812

Bancroft Just Wine & Beer

613-332-0697
Bird's Creek Plaza, Bancroft
www.bancroftjustwineandbeer.com

petvalu
your pet • your store

613-332-5010

PEG Bookkeeping & Tax Returns

Peggy Dullaart
613-332-5461 • Cell 613-334-0062

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