

As someone who has been both a cottager and a full time resident I recognize there might be some things that seasonal residents aren't fully aware of when coming up here at this time. They may want to help and not know how—Here are some thoughts and resources:

1) Keep people safe by not using any of the local services from gas pumps to grocery stores until you have self isolated for at least 14 days. A message from Bancroft Mayor Paul Jenkin's”
“For our seasonal residents who have chosen to spend this time in our area we ask you to please self-isolate appropriately for 14 days. We have amazing service providers and businesses in our area who will help you get the supplies you need, but we are asking that everyone do their part to physically distance themselves as recommended by Public Health. The stress that the next few weeks will place on our first responders is going to be significant, and we all need to do our part to reduce that strain.”

2) Educate yourself on the days that the ODESP and Child Tax benefit cheques come out and do not go to the stores— the hope is to ensure a good supply of food for those who cannot afford to stock up and who cannot go to the grocery store at other times.

Some days to note here are: Child Tax benefit: The 20th of each monthODSP and Ontario Works the the last business day of each month

3) Support local organizations in their fight to keep this community fed, healthy and safe.

There are so many low income families struggling to get by—even before Covid-19—mental health challenges are now being escalated by the anxiety we are all feeling..budgets, food banks and households are stretched beyond the limit now— many people in the community now have the added stress of having to go to work and then go home to immunocompromised loved ones. Support the physical and mental well being of community members in any way you can.

Here are some ideas and organizations to get you started:

North Hastings Community Trust nhcommunitytrust@gmail.com

Telephone: 613 332 3657

Location: 23 B Bridge Street

Needs Help With: Our Food Share program needs food to distribute to people. We are calling for dried, frozen and canned food.

Also looking for snacks for bagged lunches we are preparing and handing out (granola bars, pudding, juice boxes, treats)

Financial donations also appreciated

How to help?: Drop off at our site at 23B Bridge Street (Tuesday-Friday 10:00-3:00)

Bancroft Helps - bancrofthelps.ca

A website set up specifically to address the needs of the town during this crises—a great resource to offer and receive help.

North Hastings Community Cupboard (food bank)

<https://northhastingscommunitycupboard.com>

4) Support the local hospital —they need supplies

The Bancroft Hospital —donate to infection control team: 1-613-969-7400 ext 2361

Needs Help With: *“Our current inventory is not adequate and we have received no timelines for when more will be coming. We are hoping you may consider reviewing your local business contacts and reaching out to seek donations of any/all PPE including goggles, face shields, Tyvek, masks (particularly N95 masks) to be used by QHC staff and physicians. For example any type of industrial facility, mechanical shops, paving companies, veterinarians and construction companies may possibly have a stock of PPE. We will even take expired N95 masks as we can use those for mask-fit testing of our staff/physicians.*

Any assistance you can provide would be greatly appreciated. Anyone willing to donate can contact our infection control team at: 613-969-7400 ext. 2361. They will help arrange the logistics and provide thanks.

I sincerely appreciate your time and consideration.

Please drop off donations at the screening desk in the hospital”

5) If you are coming from the city reach out ahead of your journey to see if there is anything needed in the community that you might be able to bring. Here is a letter written to a local doctor from a cottager that is a good example of this:

‘Hi Greg. Hope you and your family are all safe.

We are coming up to our cottage for a few days. Our house is quite small in Toronto and we are on top of each other. I’m working from home

We will be bringing up all our own supplies so we will not need to go into town at all or rely on town supports.

Is there anything you folks need or any of your neighbours that is difficult to get in Bancroft? We could to pick it up and arrange the appropriate drop off

Unfortunately,

our local hospital is desperate for equipment. So we can’t bring up gloves or masks.

Take care Michelle’

6) Express gratitude for those who are making this community a viable option for you to come to: The people who dispense prescriptions, sell the groceries, fix the roads, sell the gardening supplies, run the hospitals and gas stations— They are often not people with much money to begin with—they are now, literally, risking their lives to continue to do this. Thank them.

7) Our healthcare infrastructure is based on a smaller population than what we will soon be facing...If you are feeling unwell and in need of health care consider returning home to receive it. Those who live here full time do not have the choice of accessing another community's health care. We have so many older and immunocompromised residents who have retired here —please keep them safe.

If this is the community that you choose to keep you safe during this storm, please acknowledge the WHOLE community— its challenges along with its shelter. Then join in doing everything you can to contribute to keeping it healthy and safe for all of us.

Sending peace and wellness to everyone