

Colours of Fall concert begins countdown to Thanksgiving and Hallowe'en

Start your Thanksgiving weekend off right with a trip to Town Park to take in the Colours of Fall.

The Town of Aurora will once again host its popular Colours of Fall concert next Thursday, October 8, from 6 ? 7.30 p.m. with live entertainment from Lennon Live, a tribute to John Lennon's career and the music of The Beatles.

Over the years, the Colours of Fall concert has become a traditional way to kick off not only Thanksgiving but Hallowe'en as well, with free pumpkin carving and decorating on-site a favourite for youngsters and the young-at-heart.

This tradition will continue in 2020, albeit, like what our collective Thanksgiving and Hallowe'en experiences will be this year, in a decidedly different way.

As the Colours of Fall concerts will be limited to 100 free tickets with concert-goers required to stay in their own social bubbles on specially-allocated patches of lawn, each allocated space will include a pumpkin, carving kit, and locally-grown apples so you can still have fun and maintain your social distance.

?We wanted to do whatever we could to keep this tradition,? says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora. ?With the music being a tribute to John Lennon and the leaves turning to the fall colours, I am really hoping this tradition continues with a beautiful evening with great music so families can have the opportunity to carve their pumpkin together and maintain that tradition.?

Tradition will also take a new form as the Town begins the sale of Hallowe'en Kits for families who might want to mark the spookiest of all traditions in new ways, including celebrating without trick-or-treating.

The Halloween-In-A-Box concept is something the Town has been brainstorming since July, says Ms. Ware, and once they saw the success of their Camp in a Bag program over the summer, it was full speed ahead in developing something fresh for young ghouls and goblins between the ages of 4 and 12.

?We still don't know what the Province's [health regulations] will say about Hallowe'en, so this made it even more of a passion project for us to make it work,? says Ms. Ware. ?We have worked hard to put together various activities that hopefully will take a child a week to complete them all and they have STEM activities, hands-on activities, virtual ones, various skill levels, a whole spectrum of options within this bag which we are selling for \$20 per bag. It is just to bring our recovery costs there. The bag is to provide families with activities to do inside their home. The prep work is done, the instruction sheets are done, everything is ready-made and turnkey to help them do this.

?If a family chooses not to celebrate in a traditional way, I hope this is a meaningful replacement to support their decision and to provide families with this outlet, which they can do safely together. Some of the activities, aside from the virtual ones where we have ghost stories that are actually filmed virtually and are accessible through a special code in the bag, they get home entertainment and we have designed a Hallowe'en Car Rally where families can tour around and do various activities together collecting points.

?It is not just for families who choose not to celebrate in a traditional sense; it is for everybody, but I am hoping for those who perhaps aren't that they take a chance with this bag and they feel that there was good value in it and that their family made new memories that maybe they wouldn't have otherwise.?

As nobody really knows at this point what to expect next year, Ms. Ware says she is hoping the quality of the programs they have developed, along with the re-imagining of long-standing events hosted by the Town of Aurora, will endure.

?As the importance right now is maintaining your personal social bubbles, this bag will enable you to do different activities that

maybe wouldn't have already been in your tool chest to pull together, or things you would be able to find in local stores. It is all conveniently packed, all the supplies you need are in one vessel. With your own family, with your own bubble, there is everything you can do together which will help make a very meaningful tail-end to the fall season.

?I want to encourage those who aren't successful in registering [for the Colours of Fall concert] to still plan a nice night on Thursday, October 8. If it is within your means, order take-out, have a meal at home, and watch the live-stream of the concert. The virtual views and the live-stream views of our concert series? have been outstanding. Some of the highest virtual views in York Region in comparison to other like events that have been occurring. Even if you don't get the chance to come in, grab a pumpkin while you're listening to the tribute to John Lennon. It is going to be a treat for those who are there in person, but for those who aren't able to be there in person, still plan it as a date night to take in the concert in real time.?

For more information on the Colours of Fall concert, including registration, visit aurora.ca/fallconcert.

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