

Front-line warriors give us hope

BY ROOPA RAKSHIT

AS 2019 drew to an end, none of us fathomed that Thunder Bay would be under weeks of isolation in the coming year. Businesses have reduced hours, restaurants are empty, lucky few are able to work from home and we are all cautious as we wander through grocery aisles trying to finish our shopping as quickly as possible.

What started as a few worrisome articles on the news in north-east China — then Italy and South Korea — resulted in the World Health Organization finally declaring COVID-19 a global pandemic.

With summer approaching, we've started to get used to this new normal. It seems like overnight, our world has changed and we anxiously read to see how many new cases have emerged since we had last checked.

Amid the slew of disheartening news updates, headlines, information scattered across myriad posts from governments, health experts and related organizations, we try to do the best we can to cope. Government and communities have



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Thunder Bay's Anti-Racism and Respect Committee and Diversity Thunder Bay produce this monthly column to promote greater understanding of race relations in Northwestern Ontario.

come together at all levels to extend support — be it financial aid, cheering our healthcare workers, big and small grassroot initiatives, heartwarming stories of resilience and strength — all of these have given us hope.

Also consider this: we are in better times to respond to such a pandemic. Scientists are collaborating from laboratories from universities all across the planet to find a vaccine or to find more efficient ways to test the population. Information (and misinformation, unfortunately) is being easily spread

with our various technological tools to keep us informed and safe. Spirits have been lifted through various digital mediums and platforms.

That said, we must not forget that the pandemic impacts the same vulnerable communities that will be the most impacted by the effects of climate change. We must also not forget that the emerging financial crises that will open doors for innovations, creativity, and enhanced public health and wellness preparedness.

We can take comfort that in Thunder Bay, our health-care system and front-line warriors have been able to cope with the cases with vigour and passion and that we are slowly re-emerging to the next phase.

This article is a humble tribute to the front-line workers, the auxiliary staff, and various social services and charitable organizations.

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