

# OPINION

## Living

WOODBRIIDGE

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### My view



**Tina  
Rogers**

## Podcasts: great for your health

**I**t's tiny, yet connects with the world. It fits in the palm of my hand, yet takes me to far-away places instantaneously. An iPod Nano was one of my best investments ever, and I am not a gadget person in any way.

There are thousands and thousands of intelligent broadcasts – called podcasts. The selection is enormous, and the great part is thousands of them can be listened to, free. They cover all and any topic, including life and culture in all parts of the world, and can keep you up to date with news and events, discoveries and theories, attitudes and culture.

Like a kid in a candy store, you can get to the podcast directories available through the Web, do a search on any topic or category you feel like. Program after program choice is displayed with a 'subscribe free' button next to it. In fact, the hardest part is choosing your programs. Then it gets better. The podcast categories that you like and decide to subscribe to, can automatically update themselves on your computer/podcast player as soon as a new program is available.

I have five favourite podcast categories – including documentary archives, how the world is changing, and women's issues for example. I have subscribed to these free shows and every couple of days I connect my tiny portable device to my computer which politely and efficiently downloads all the new programs. At any time I have about 20 hours of programming stored.

You may ask how this could help your health.

You know how tedious exercising can be? Not for me any more. Now I plug in the earphones, set off on my morning walk, continue outbound until a 30-minute podcast ends, start another one then return home. I get to walk for an hour most days, and the time goes by effortlessly. A pious, adequately exercised and better educated person walks through the door. I've lost four pounds and I can converse with authority about many more subjects.

There's no denying that many of the free podcasts are, well, garbage, so you have to be discerning in your choices. I'm not knocking listening to music while exercising, but podcasts somehow seem to make much better use of my time and I really do look forward to my morning walks now and to a thinner, healthier better educated me.



PHOTO BY TINA ROGERS

## Around Around Town

Catering to 30 top chefs – that's stressful. The Doctor's House Chef de Cuisine Winni Tsang (centre) rises to the challenge of pleasing the most discerning palates by preparing exceptional hors d'oeuvres and a six-course dinner for La Toque Blanche, Toronto's exclusive club for executive chefs. Here, during a quarterly meeting to discuss innovations and changes in the catering industry, club members pause to celebrate Chef Winni's expertise.

## YOUR VIEW

### Could you be an art critic?

Woodbridge Living will try to get to all of the June events we've written about. But perhaps you can help. Let us know what you think of the 5k event in Kleinburg, or tell us if you decide to enter the quilt square contest. If you decide to take an art class it would be great to hear about that too. If you go to any other events or functions, please write your own reviews.

Your neighbours will appreciate knowing, and so will we!

Email Tina at [woodbridgeliving@rogers.com](mailto:woodbridgeliving@rogers.com)

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## Living ON OUR COVER



COURTESY GIRLS ON THE RUN

Hundreds of walkers and runners will enjoy a spring morning in Kleinburg June 4 as they complete the 5k It's Cool To Be Me event in support of Girls on the Run GTA & York Region and then enjoy refreshments, entertainment and bonhomie. The organizers invite Vaughan residents to enjoy a morning full of energy and enthusiasm either by completing the event, or by taking in the atmosphere and cheering on the participants. See page 5.

### Iconoclast



**Chris  
Caldwell**

## Farmers feed cities

**O**nce more the provincial government suggested regulating farmers markets with hygiene rules akin to those in restaurants. Interesting. For millennia we have lived off the land, eating organic food full of nourishment, with no cancer-causing pesticides, and no genetic modification. Now they want to make sure everyone is washing their hands? I trust the methods of ancient cultivators. Indeed, my life is in the hands of Ontario farmers.

Canada is as healthy as its food supply. If a city cannot produce enough food to feed itself, it has to rely on imports – it becomes a food security issue. Higher gas prices and processing costs force imported food to become more expensive. We could see less food on shelves, lower quality, or likely both.

Consider your yard. If you worship your lawn, you are using treated water, time and fuel on maintaining it, for appearance's sake. Mower fumes ruin air quality, pesticides and fertilizers run off and find their way back into your body either through drinking water or other types of exposure. Northern polar bears have been found to have traces of chemicals used in the southern hemisphere. Environmental Defence did a pick of Canadian celebrities from across the country, including artist Robert Bateman, and found they all had varying levels of contaminants in their bloodstreams: [www.environmentaldefence.ca](http://www.environmentaldefence.ca)

Farmers markets have sprung up everywhere in North America. There is a revival of support for good food to the tune of \$2 billion dollars a year. America is riddled with diabetes and obesity because of the fast food craze which has crept its way into Canada, but with the results of eating poorly becoming so apparent, the popularity of local farm fresh goods is on the rise. Even Ontario youth are getting involved. The revival in good food has sparked interest in the revival of the rural way of life, which translates to a simpler and more environmentally-friendly method of living. It is encouraging to see our relationship with food, which has formerly been characterized by lack of known origin or clandestine handling techniques, getting back to a from-the-field-to-your-table culture. This is especially important for children, who now grow up thinking food is plentiful and comes from a can or fancy packages. Check out the Junior Farmers web site at [www.jfao.on.ca](http://www.jfao.on.ca) for more information.

Support your nearest group for the best Ontario has to offer. To your health, and that of your children!

*Chris quit corporate life to follow his passion for sustainable communities and urban planning, and is pursuing a masters degree in environmental studies at York University.*