

## New lamppost banners now up in South Algonquin



**By Mike Riley**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

New lamppost banners have been put up in South Algonquin Township to beautify the community. Placed along the Hwy 60 corridor through Whitney, the banners feature photos from the community that depict the township, including two banners from the Algonquin Indigenous community. Councillor Joan Kuiack mentioned them in a June 29 Facebook post, thanking everyone that participated in helping to design and purchase them for the community to enjoy.

Kuiack tells Bancroft This Week that since becoming a new councillor last year, she's been working with a great group of people that came together to look at ways to beautify Whitney. She says that this subgroup, the beautification committee, works under the recreation committee and met in February and again in April to brainstorm ideas.

Flowers and banners were the two projects we selected for this year. The recreation committee was in full support. The banner project evolved over a short period of time. It was discussed at the recreation committee meeting to do something unique. The idea of requesting photos from the community was formed and although we didn't get many, the submitted photos perfectly depicted our township. We also reached out to our Indigenous community and they designed their own banner to add to our initiative. They are a big part of our community and we welcomed their addition, she says.

Robert Craftchick, Margaret Haskins and Debbie Avery from the Algonquins of Ontario Whitney office were very involved with the banner creation and say that they have a great working relationship with South Algonquin Township which is "second to none." The Indigenous themed banners are located at each end of town, so people will see them when they enter Whitney from the east or west. The banners feature the Algonquin community logo and says "welcome" in Algonquin to people passing through, residents and tourists alike. Haskins thought the banners turned out beautifully.

"They did a good job on them. It was a pretty proud day to put our Algonquin language out there," she says.

Kuiack says that the recreation committee reviewed all the photos and chose the top 10, although she says they didn't receive that much more than that. She says she worked closely with Classic Displays to create the physical banners.

"The quality of the image was important and needed to be of high resolution. We submitted the photos to Classic Displays and we relied on them to determine the quality of the photo. Seven were chosen to be put into print," she says.

Kayla Shui is the graphic designer from Classic Displays ([www.classicdisplays.com](http://www.classicdisplays.com)) and says it was a pleasure working with Kuiack and Bryan Martin [the CAO/clerk-treasurer]. She says the process from initial design to final printing was smooth, and that Kuiack came to her with eight photos

And they reviewed the quality of each, with only one photo not being useable due to its low resolution.

"After finalizing the selection of photos, Joan and I worked together on the design. Joan's vision involved having a red border around each photo, with the township logo on top. The idea was that the vibrant red paired with the photographs would reflect the township's branding identity while showcasing its landscape. Once this concept was decided upon, I drafted two designs before Joan settled on the ones you currently see in Whitney. Overall, myself and Classic Displays are very satisfied with the outcome. When shown the final designs, Joan confirmed that the banners look perfect. We are very pleased with her reaction and take satisfaction in the happiness of our customers. Classic Displays would like to thank Councillor Joan Kuiack again for the opportunity to work with the Township of South Algonquin. We hope the residents of Whitney love their new banners!" she says.

Kuiack says that very little time was needed for the banner initiative and that it just seemed to fall into place nicely. Overall, she says it all cost under \$1,500 to make a reality.

Joe Avery with the Whitney Recreation Committee says that the committee loves these new banners.

"We feel it brings new light to the community and shows the people travelling through or staying within the Township of South Algonquin what we have to offer. We cannot wait to see what is going to happen next," he says.

Local businessman Bongo Bongo, who co-owns Camp Bongopix in Whitney, thinks the new lamppost banners are wonderful, although he didn't have much to do with them besides a meeting with Kuiack about some ideas for the banners.

"I think it brightens up the downtown area of Whitney with imagery that represents the township. I especially love the Indigenous banners. I think it's really important for visitors and locals alike to see that kind of Indigenous imagery and language in public spaces. All the feedback that I've heard has been positive. I think people are happy to see their council putting so much effort into beautifying the township's downtown areas. As I understand, the images on the banners were all generated by locals, which is a great idea. We have locally made imagery in our community that reflects our residents. It's all great to see. Keep it up, council!" he says.

Kuiack says that the goal was to have the banners up before July 1, which they did, as two volunteers erected them on June 29. There are nine banners; seven with local-themed photos and as previously stated, two Indigenous themed banners. They are all placed along the Hwy 60 corridor through Whitney.

"The community reaction has been fantastic," she says. "We are proud of the place we call home and these photos show the beauty

we see everyday.?