

# Former publisher of The News

## Lennyk, Ron 13. Ron Lennyk dead at 68

By Louie Rosella  
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Ron Lennyk, whose penchant for giving back to the community made him Mississauga's "king of volunteers," has died. He was 68.

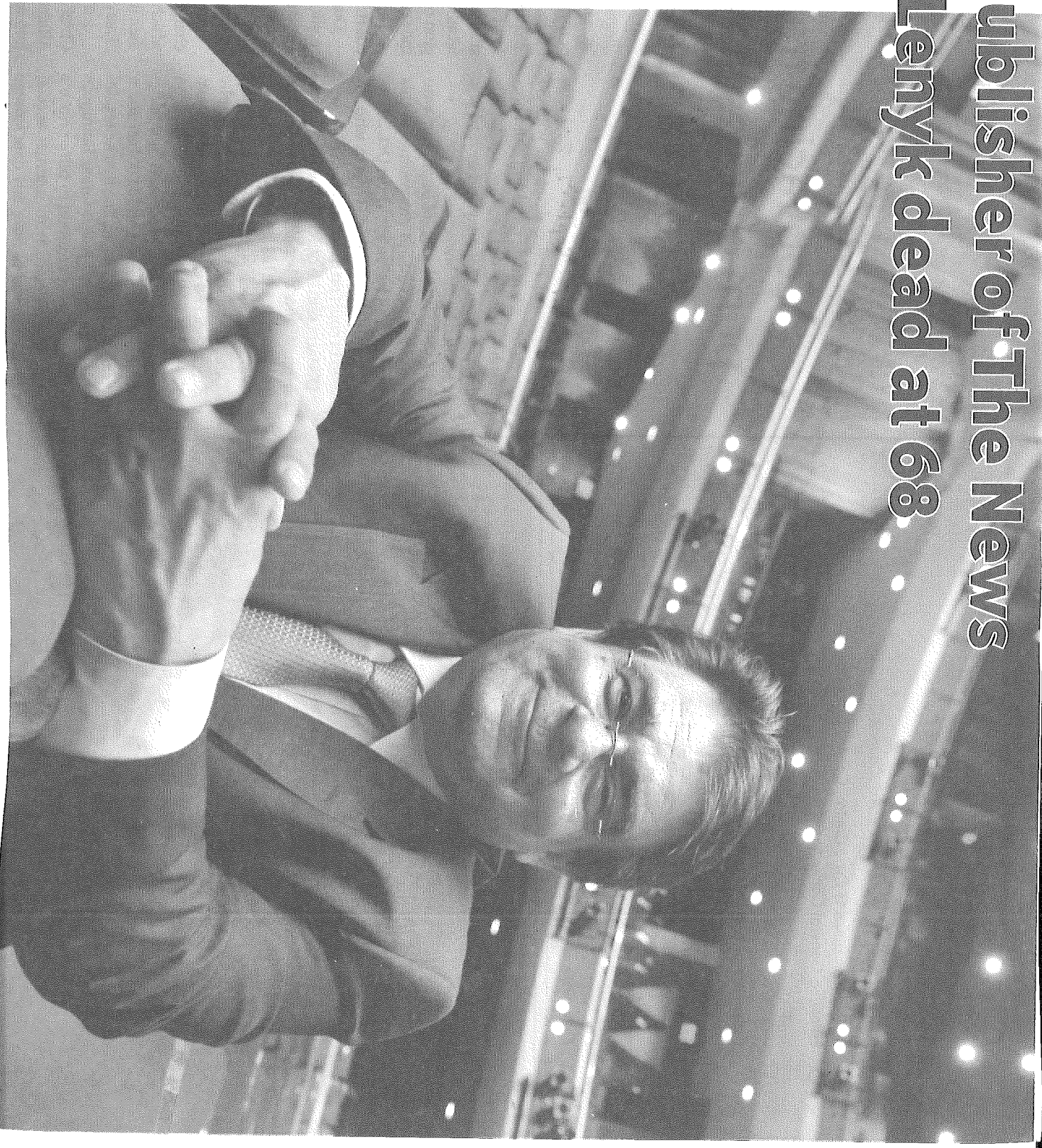
Lennyk died Monday night at Mississauga Hospital surrounded by his family after suffering from heart failure several weeks ago.

The CEO of the Living Arts Centre was found unconscious in his LAC office by a colleague Aug. 24 shortly after 5 p.m. and had been in critical condition for three weeks.

Political leaders and community activists described Lennyk as one of Mississauga's most influential business leaders, community advocates and committed volunteers.

"Ron was the kind of person that epitomized what being a solid citizen was all about. Hard working, caring, loyal and above all, a loving family man who cared deeply for his City of Mississauga and those people in our community in need," said Lennyk's good friend and local philanthropist, Ron Duquette. "His charm, wit and humour affected so many through his short life and he will be sadly missed by thousands. He taught me so much about life and how to live it to the fullest with compassion

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## Lennyk was the King of Volunteers

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sprinkled with fun and laughter."

Lennyk was married with two children and was also a grandfather. He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Olga, daughter Trina and her husband, Jason Christie, and their daughter, Madison, and son Terry, and his wife, Taylor Williamson.

The longtime publisher of *The Mississauga News* (31 years) left in 2008 for a stint as a vice-president of Torstar Corporation, *The News'* parent company. He then went on to become CEO of the Living Arts Centre, Mississauga's prime entertainment complex, in 2011.

Lennyk, who was inducted into the Mississauga Sports Hall of Fame in June, was also named the sixth most influential person in Mississauga in November 2013.

"He was a proud Canadian and always wanted to give back," said Olga Lennyk, adding her husband loved to sing the national anthem whenever possible.

Mayor Bonnie Crombie said thousands of Mississaugans will feel Lennyk's loss.

"There are few who can equal his com-

mitment to this city, his passion for his job, or the amount he has given back to Mississauga over the years," she said. He was a friend and a colleague and I know I speak on behalf of the City of Mississauga when I say that Ron will truly be missed."

Judy Imerson, former director of editorial for *The News*, worked with Lennyk for 28 years, 25 of which were spent reporting directly to him. She has spent the last few weeks in close contact with the Lennyk family and the sorrow was evident in her voice Tuesday morning.

"There are some people in our lives that make a big difference, but then there are those who are game-changers. In my life, he was a game-changer," Imerson said. "He made my life incredibly different. He gave me opportunities and totally changed my life."

Imerson said the impact Lennyk had on her life reflects one of his greatest strengths: believing in people and opportunity.

Born in post-war West Germany in a displaced persons camp, Lennyk came to Canada with his parents in 1949 when he was about 3 years old, landing in Nova Scotia's

famous Pier 21.

The father of two has been lauded by the Heritage Foundation for his work in saving the Port Credit Log Cabin. He was the first chair of the Mayor's Gala and has raised money and sat on the boards of innumerable local charities and arts groups including Mississauga Community Foundation, Carassauga Opera Mississauga, the Mississauga Sports Celebrities Dinner and the Mississauga Millennium Committee. He was a founding board member for Credit Valley Hospital.

"One of his favourite quotes was that 'once I had no shoes, and I complained, and then I met a man who had no feet,'" said Terry Lennyk, capturing his father's spirit and sense of determination.

Terry, who referred to his father as his hero, said his dad was a competitive man who "never gives up. If you tell him something's impossible, he'll never stop trying."

When Ron Lennyk retired from *The News* in 2009, a tribute at the Living Arts Centre dubbed him "Mississauga's King of Volunteers."



Ron Duquette



Judy Imerson



Terry Lennyk



### Career by the years

- 1969 Sports Reporter, *Mississauga News*
- 1970 Editor, *The Mississauga News* and Inland Publishing
- 1977 Publisher, *The Brampton Guardian*
- 1978 Publisher, *The Mississauga News*
- 2008 VP, Newspaper Strategy, Torstar Corp.
- 2011 CEO, Living Arts Centre