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Thursday, March 7, 2024

PM VISITS

**Prime Minister Justin
Trudeau brings money for
housing, condolences for
former prime minister
Brian Mulroney /3, 4**

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YOUR COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau delivers remarks last Thursday at a party fundraiser at the Vallhalla Hotel and Conference Centre in Thunder Bay. (Leith Dunick)

Warm weather could continue

By Gary Rinne – TB Source

The thunder and lightning that numerous Thunder Bay residents reported Sunday night was just one more indicator of the unusual weather the city has experienced during the entire winter.

December and January were considerably milder than usual, and data released Monday by Environment Canada confirmed that February followed the same trend.

"It was much, much warmer than normal. The [mean] temperature for the month of -6.1 C is a full six degrees warmer than the long-term average for February, which is -12," said meteorologist Jeff Coulson.

"That's a huge difference, and speaks to the fact that when you look at the breakdown day by day, we just didn't really see all that much in the way of outbreaks of real arctic air."

Coulson said current forecast models show that much of Northwestern Ontario from the Manitoba border to Thunder Bay will likely



Snow has all but disappeared in Thunder Bay. (Gary Rinne)

stay milder than normal through March and into the first half of April.

Total precipitation at Thunder Bay Airport last month was only seven millimetres, or just 26 per cent of the normal amount for February.

At a monitoring station at Hazelwood Lake, only 14 centimetres of snow fell, or about half the typical amount for the month.

Debit options to grow

Kevin Jeffrey – Local Journalism Initiative

Officials with the City of Thunder Bay are equipping more facilities with cashless options for concessions.

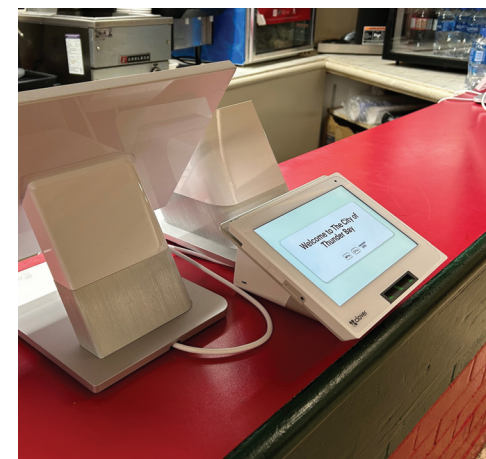
Just weeks after the units were installed at the Thunder Bay Community Auditorium and Fort William Gardens, Matthew Pearson, Manager of Central Support, confirmed that the goal is to install the machines at the Delaney and Port Arthur Arenas with additional ones being put in at Chippewa Park for the rides.

"The customer and employee feedback to having the machines has been positive, and I think that people are enjoying the increased ability and options to pay now," Pearson said. "People found themselves at the arenas with no cash in hand but a card. Now they have the option to use their debit or credit card, which eliminates a trip to the bank or the ATM."

Pearson said that initial feedback regarding the machines going in last month has made other departments within the corporation reach out to examine options for future installations.

When it comes to setting them up and the logistics of doing that, Pearson said it's not that difficult to make happen.

"The machines are very user friendly. It's



Debit machines are now installed at Fort William Gardens.

similar to getting a phone for the first time, and how it walks you through the steps for setting it up and using it immediately." "The process of going from cash only to accepting debit or credit payments is the bigger process. Now that we have done that work, we continue to think about how this can grow across other departments."

Other satellite arenas, provided they have concessions, will also be equipped with the machines in the future.

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Indigenous Services Minister Patty Hajdu and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at Smart Modular Canada. (Leith Dunick)

Trudeau offers up \$21M for housing

By Katie Nicholls – TB Source

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was in town Thursday for a major announcement regarding housing.

At Smart Modular Canada, Trudeau announced \$20.7 million will be doled out to the city over three years to build 600 affordable housing units on underused land.

The city had initially lobbied Ottawa for \$45 million and was granted half that amount.

Mayor Ken Boshcoff said he is still happy to receive the funding.

"We could surrender and complain to the federal government, but we won't. We will have money to get these projects lifted and underway, but I would still think we can stay ambitious. If we prove ourselves, we'll be recognized for it, and justifiably continued funding will prevail."

When asked why the initial \$45 million wasn't granted, Trudeau said they had to look at what's feasible at the moment.

"What we did with the Housing Accelerator Fund was we sat down with the municipalities to talk about what actually can be done in the coming years," Trudeau said.

"Often, people are hugely ambitious around what they're going to be able to deliver. Our focus is what concretely can be done, espe-

cially in the coming years where the pressure is so much. Twenty-million dollars was the number that we came to as being a realistic, responsible way to be able to meet the need, meet the ambition and really change it."

Thunder Bay is one of just a handful of Ontario municipalities that met new provincial housing targets, and it will continue on that path with this funding.

Trudeau said this kind of funding to build homes isn't going to be available to every community.

"Not with all municipalities across the country, just the ones that are willing to be ambitious about changing the way housing is made in this country."

The city is expected to re-zone commercial areas, fast-track development approvals, and put incentives and grants in place to get more housing projects off the ground.

As well, the city is expected to create a dedicated team to recommend systemic changes and work with non-profit organizations, community organizations, advocacy groups, and home builders to reduce construction costs.

The money comes from the federal government's \$4-billion Housing Accelerator Fund, designed to assist local governments in continuing to build homes and increase housing construction.

WEATHER FORECAST

THURSDAY



Snow

Precipitation: **60%**
HIGH **5** LOW **-4**

FRIDAY



Mostly Cloudy

Precipitation: **30%**
HIGH **3** LOW **-7**

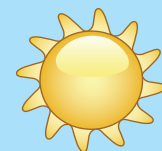
SATURDAY



Partly Cloudy

Precipitation: **20%**
HIGH **1** LOW **-7**

SUNDAY



Sunny

Precipitation: **10%**
HIGH **4** LOW **-7**

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Mulroney will be missed: PM

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called former prime minister Brian Mulroney a statesman who will be deeply missed by Canadians from coast to coast.

Mulroney, who swept into power in 1984 and served until 1993, died on Thursday at 84.

Trudeau, in Thunder Bay for a housing announcement and a private party fundraiser, paid condolences to Mulroney's family in a brief statement to media, and said the country's 18th prime minister was committed to the country.

"He loved it with all his heart and served it many, many years in many different ways," Trudeau said. "He had the courage to do big things, whether it was negotiating free trade with the United States and with Mexico, all the while standing up to protect Canada's environment and pushed back against the Americans on acid rain, to stand strong on the international stage, standing up for Canada's values against communism and authoritarianism and against apartheid."

Lawyer first

Born in Baie Comeau, Que in 1939, Mulroney first came to prominence as a Montreal labour lawyer. He finished third in the Progressive Conservative leadership race in 1976 and went into private business until 1983 as the president of the Iron Ore Company of Canada, a position he held until successfully winning the party leadership.

Mulroney's government won the second largest percentage of seats in Canadian electoral history in 1984 and another majority four years later.

During his tenure, in addition to the North American Free Trade Act, Mulroney helped usher in the goods and service tax, privatized Crown corporations, including Air Canada and Petro-Canada, and pushed Quebec to endorse constitutional amendments, first in the Meech Lake Accord and later the Charlottetown Accord.

Neither attempt was successful.

Mulroney pushed for stronger relations with the United States, and was a vocal opponent of apartheid, the system of racial segregation in South Africa.

Even after Mulroney left office in 1993, he continued to hold sway in Canadian politics, and was able to overlook party lines when Trudeau came to office.

"He was incredibly generous and effective in advising me and our government and the renegotiation of NAFTA during some very challenging years," Trudeau said.

"It was not just the advice and the strategic council he gave me and us, but was also active with his contacts as part of Team Canada to make sure that the messages on how important the friendship and relationship between Canada and the U.S. was, not just for Canada but for the U.S., to keep."

Mulroney was torn, as a proud Quebecer and the leader of Canada, as separatism talk began to grow during his time in office, ultimately leading to the creation of the Bloc Quebecois.

It was that pride in Canada and its promise that shone through.

"He shaped our past, but he shapes our present and he will impact our future as well," Trudeau said.

Indigenous Services Minister Patty Hajdu said she had the pleasure of meeting Mulroney a number of times, including during the NAFTA re-negotiations.

She fondly remembers advice he once offered up to her.

"He told me the worst day in government is going to be better than your best day in opposition, so enjoy every minute. He would give you these little gems of advice every now and then. I think Canada is much better off because of his service," Hajdu said.

Humble beginnings

Opposition Leader Pierre Poilievre said despite working-class roots, Mulroney rose to extraordinary heights in business and politics.

"But it wasn't electoral success that defined his career, it's what he did with it," the Conservative leader told CPAC.

"As prime minister he unleashed free enterprise. He crushed inflation. He signed one of the most important free-trade agreements in the history of the world with the United States that remains largely in place today. And on the world stage he stood firmly on the side of freedom and against communism."



Former prime minister Brian Mulroney, who served from 1984 to 1993, died last Thursday at the age of 84. (LinkedIn)



PIERRE POILIEVRE



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Nurse: Gaza conditions horrible

By Gary Rinne – TB Source

A city-born nurse working for Doctors Without Borders has returned from a tour of duty in Gaza describing living conditions for the people there as "just horrible."

Amy Leah Potter was raised and educated in Thunder Bay but has lived outside the country, including in the U.S. and the Middle East, since 2019.

The emergency room nurse recently completed a month of service in a makeshift clinic in southern Gaza near the Egyptian border, helping families displaced by Israel's ongoing retaliation for last October's attack on Israeli civilians by Hamas.

She spoke about what she experienced and witnessed during an interview Monday with TBnewswatch.

"One of the things I want people to know is it's so much worse than you can possibly imagine," she said.

"That's not through the fault of people in Thunder Bay or people in Canada that you don't get to see it. There's no reporters on the ground . . . So I don't think people realize how bad it is. I didn't realize how bad it was before I went."

Potter said colleagues with much more



Amy Leah Potter has returned to the U.S. from Gaza.

experience in the world's trouble spots than she has have all said conditions for civilians in Gaza are the worst thing they've ever seen.

She said the desperation among the people is the most vivid memory she brought back home with her.

"You would see them line up in queue for hours and hours for water, for food, for medicine . . . Everything is crowded. The living conditions are horrible, and there's just no hope. Every day, people would seem to get just a little bit more desperate, hoping for a ceasefire . . . And the worst part of it is, there's nowhere left to go."

Potter said communicable diseases are spreading at an increasingly rapid rate.

"The people who are affected are not the enemy, for lack of a better term. They're not fighting back, they're not fighting Hamas, they're not fighting the IDF (Israeli Defence Forces), they're not fighting anyone. They're literally just trying to survive every single day."

For many of the nearly two million people trying to find somewhere to live, she said, there's an urgent need for medical care.

"It was deteriorating even just the month that I was there. The elderly patients or people who are chronically ill have had no access to any doctors, no access to any medications for so long. The pharmacies are empty. Things were starting to build up. A

lot of people with diabetic wounds and stuff like that that we take care of, were not treated."

Potter described the case of a little girl who lost her family when their home was shelled in October.

"She was with an uncle when she came to visit us . . . She had a broken leg, and she had these big pieces of metal and trying to put her bones back together, but they had to flee the hospital they were being treated at. So she'd received no treatment since then, including physiotherapy. They didn't even have crutches for her so they were moving her around inside a baby stroller that didn't fit her."

For many Gaza residents, she said, there's not enough water to drink and shower, and not enough latrines.

"We started to see a lot of skin infections, a lot of scabies, a lot of lice and things coming up. That was hard to watch, because these are people who are professionals. These are doctors and bankers and people who before all this lived very successful lives. Now they're staying in tents, and this is everyone doing their absolute best. And through no fault of their own, this is now their new life."



Daniel Zachary won \$50,000 n an Instant \$50K ticket purchased at the Shoppers Drug Mart on Arthur Street. (OLG)

Local man wins \$50K

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

A Thunder Bay man is \$50,000 richer after winning an instant scratch card game.

Daniel Zachary says he decided to pick up a few tickets while out at the store, including an Instant \$50K ticket.

"It took me 15 minutes after discovering this win to call a friend to come over and confirm what I was seeing. He took me to the store

where I validated the ticket. I feel very blessed," the 66-year-old Zachary said in a release issued by OLG on Monday.

Zachary said he plans to enjoy the windfall with his wife, with whom he did a happy dance after telling her about the win.

"I am so grateful to have this experience," he said.

The winning ticket was purchased at the Shoppers Drug Mart on Arthur Street.

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Solomon wants LTC facility

Fort William First Nation Chief disappointed the proposal has been stalled

By Katie Nicholls – TB Source

Five years later, there are still no definitive answers about a promised long-term care facility at Fort William First Nation.

Chief Michele Solomon took the prime minister's visit to Thunder Bay as an opportunity to lobby him and the federal government to move the project forward.

"It's actually been shut down twice after several hundred thousand dollars invested into developing the plan to fit into the green, inclusive fund.

"As I understand it, the Green Inclusive Fund was developed for the Fort William First Nation long-term care facility. It's really disheartening that it continues to not be supported by the government."

The most recent application was made to Ottawa in 2022 when Peter Collins was chief. It asked for \$25 million in funding to support a proposed long-term care home in the community. That application was denied.

Solomon spoke about the commitment that Trudeau had made to the previous chief.

"He may be responding off the cuff to perhaps questions that he wasn't prepared for, but a commitment was made from him directly to former chief Peter Collins. So you know, it is disappointing.

"It's disheartening that that commitment has not been lived up to, and it would have



Fort William First Nation Chief Michelle Solomon says she's been pushing for federal funding to build a long-term care facility in her community. (Vasilios Bellos/TBT News)

been nice to have that commitment reiterated today."

MP Marcus Powlowski has been an advocate for Fort William First Nation to get a long-term care facility, Solomon said.

"Marcus and I have had a few conversations. He has certainly created an opportunity for me to speak to individuals and to try and move this forward. He's tried to be supportive in this, but unfortu-

nately, we're still not [getting] the approval that we need."

She noted that having a long-term care facility would create more jobs for her community.

"I think it's important to mention the economic benefits that a long-term care facility has to Thunder Bay, and not just to Fort William First Nation -- and the jobs that it creates. I believe there's upwards of

200 jobs that would be created by having this long-term care facility at Fort William First Nation."

It was previously estimated that the cost of the project would be around \$40 million. It already has the approval of Ontario's Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, which would support operating costs with a per diem contribution.

Student designs anti-bullying shirt

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

Emma Rzepczynski says she's seen a little too much bullying around the schoolyard for her liking.

While it may not be egregious acts, kids getting repeatedly tripped in the hallway and hats being deliberately tossed in muddy puddles is happening.

The 10-year-old decided to do something about it.

She entered a Lakehead Public Schools contest and created the winning T-shirt design for Anti-Bullying Day, a pink shirt with the phrase 'Bully Free Zone' and a red heart.

It was her way of telling bullies they should think about their actions and consider a better way to treat others.

"I decided to design it because I see a lot of kids getting bullied and I just feel bad for them that they have to go through that, especially when they're new.

"The heart stands for making sure you remember you have a strong heart and not to let anyone walk over it -- and to help kids too," Emma said on Wednesday at Kingsway Park School, where she attends Grade 5.

Anti-Bullying Day, also known as Pink Shirt Day, arose when two Nova Scotia teenagers stood up for a classmate who was picked on for wearing a pink shirt to school.

They bought pink shirts for all the boys to wear, and the movement spread across the country from there.

Kris Sandberg, vice-principal at Kingsway Park, said he felt a sense of pride when he saw a sea of pink as he looked over an assembly in

the school's gymnasium, the students paying tribute to Emma's T-shirt design win.

"It's great to see our community come together and signify the importance of today's day, to have (parents) have their kids come to school with something pink on and to think about the importance of recognizing bullying does happen in the school, but we need to be proactive and make sure it doesn't happen," Sandberg said.

The goal is to encourage students to think that way throughout the school year, not just on Feb. 28.

"As the kids were leaving, I said we need to carry this forward each and every single day. Within the school we do a lot of things to celebrate kindness and being helpful and we recognize students who are doing things that are kind," Sandberg said.



Kingsway Public School's Emma Rzepczynski.

EDITORIAL

Mulroney's legacy

Like most politicians, former prime minister Brian Mulroney's government had a best before date.

Mulroney stepped down in 1993, handing the reins to Kim Campbell, and the Progressive Conservatives were all but wiped off the political map.

But looking back at his political career, and his willingness to share his experience with future leaders, Mulroney deserved a better fate.

He was instrumental in Canada signing the North American Free Trade Act, a deal that still reverberates today.

And while it was his government that introduced the goods and service tax, sometimes leaders have to do unpopular things in order to help pay for the business of running a country.

Mulroney first and foremost put his country first, and was a pioneer among politicians recognizing the importance of the Earth's changing climate and the impact mankind was having on the planet.

It's a lesson some of his fellow Conservatives could learn from.

Our country is a better place because of a man like Brian Mulroney, and he will be missed.

Art gallery too costly for most To the editor:

If you thought the new waterfront Art Gallery would be a big liability for city taxpayers you were right.

The city initially gave the Art Gallery \$5.7 million and had to take out a \$5-million debenture to do so.

Taxpayers also shelled out \$2.5 million for roads, parking and a walkway around the shoreline and millions more for city services as well as \$2.2 million for the planning stage of this building.

In 2022 the city gave the Art Gallery an annual operating grant of \$270,000 and increased the grant to \$310,000 in 2023. This year the city is giving the Art Gallery an additional \$100,000 dollars bringing the total annual operating cost for 2024 to approximately \$405,300 dollars.

The cost to build the Art Gallery has skyrocketed from the original \$33 million dollars to the present \$57 million. The final cost is anyone's guess.

I have several questions.

1. If the Art Gallery is unable to raise millions more to build this facility are city taxpayers on the hook to come up with the shortfall?

2. The city is already giving \$405,300 to the Art Gallery for annual operating costs. Will taxpayers be expected to come up with even more money each year as this facility, like all other city run facilities, will likely require much more to keep the doors open?

3. The city has designated the Art Gallery a municipal capital facility allowing it to be exempt from property taxes and be charged nominal rent Where is the revenue going to come from to operate this facility?

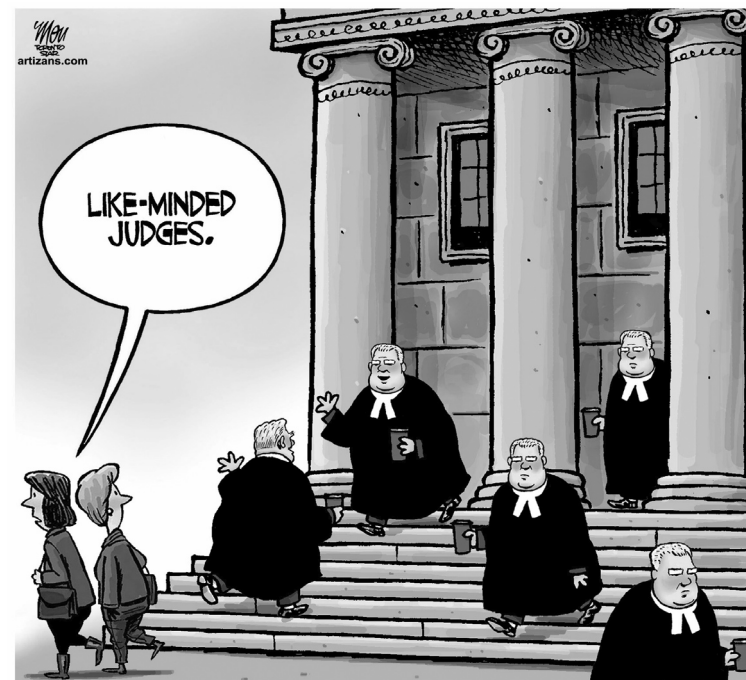
4. Where is the Art Gallery going to get their revenue as they have stated they will have very low membership fees and may offer a pay what you can option?

5. In 2017 there was a community survey listing 14 infrastructure priorities and the Art Gallery was last on the list. Why was there no plebiscite?

This Art Gallery is not expected to open until some time in 2025 and the full impact on the taxpayers is yet to come and for many it won't be pleasant.

The mayor and council are now planning a replay of this Art Gallery as

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



they are planning to build and operate an indoor turf facility at taxpayers expense with the total cost likely to be over \$50 million dollars. All the polls to date strongly indicate that the majority of taxpayers do not support a city funded indoor turf facility.

When can the taxpayers expect a plebiscite on this issue as there should have been on the Art Gallery? Is it any wonder taxes are so high and so many of our citizens cannot afford their rent or their property taxes?

Ray Smith,
Thunder Bay

Lady Chatterley's Lover had three versions

Lady Chatterley's Lover by D.H. Lawrence is one of the most famous (or infamous) novels ever written. It was put on trial in 1960, long after its author died, and accused of obscenity and corrupting British moral standards. It was found not guilty and is now recognized as one of Lawrence's greatest achievements.

What may not be so well known is that Lawrence wrote three versions of this novel between 1926-28 and they are all very different. The first *Lady Chatterley* novel does not have the explicit sex scenes that landed the final version in court.

The main theme of this first draft was not sex but social class. The leading characters are symbols of the class war that was

raging in the UK at the time it was written. Lawrence returned to England in 1926 during the General Strike. He visited the coal mining communities of his birthplace and noted the simmering class tensions among the working class who had been starved into submission. The ruling class had won - for now - but they were hated more than ever.

This is the background and context for the drama that plays out between Sir Clifford Chatterley, an aristocrat who owns the local pit, Oliver Parkin, his gamekeeper and active communist, and Constance Chatterley, who has taken Parkin as her lover.

Sir Clifford is crippled and impotent, which are both symbolic of his class in the wake of

the Great War. Constance is torn between loyalty to her class (Clifford) and passion for her lover (Oliver). This conflict is not resolved but, when she becomes pregnant, she knows she will have to make a final decision as to who she will spend the rest of her life with.

Constance's dilemma reflected Lawrence's own class ambivalence - he had a working class father and a mother who aspired to become middle class. In his early novels, such as *Sons & Lovers*, he leaned heavily towards his mother's class position. But in his later works, and in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in particular, he leaned into his father's class background.

Lawrence used animal analogies to get his point across. The ruling class were cold blooded, like fish or reptiles, who cared only for themselves. They tried to squeeze every

drop of warm blood from the workers that they exploited.

Constance was always trying to reconcile the classes as she felt trapped between them. But Chatterley and Parkin were in no doubt that reconciliation was not possible. The bourgeoisie and proletariat were locked into a class struggle that was the very essence of the capitalist system:

'Because we know perfectly well we're being carried around by the "system". We're all of us on a bus, or a merry-go-round, or a train, or a pit-trolley, or in a private car, being conveyed around by the mechanisms of a materialist system. We never meet, because we've only just got off some sort of conveyance, and we're going to get on another in half an hour. And so on until it's the hearse - it's the system.'



John Pateman
BOOK BANTER

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Generation Alpha ready to roll

By JR Sharmack – For TB Source

There is a new generation being born that promises to be even bigger than the baby boomers.

Every generation feels that theirs is something special, that their cohort will make a huge difference in the world and put humanity on the right track.

The Greatest Generation was born in the early 1900s and were influenced by living through the hardship of the Great Depression and the Second World War.

They had a strong sense of community responsibility, a highly valued respect for authority and a belief in the promise and reward of honest, hard work.

The Silent Generation (born 1925-1945) was much quieter than the Greatest Generation that preceded them and the vocal and demanding baby boomers that replaced them.

The Silent Generation was traumatized by war which gave them a strong desire for stability in their lives and a strong respect for authority – they made very loyal employees.

As WWII soldiers returned home and started families, huge numbers of Baby Boomers (1946-1964) were born causing a significant demographic bulge still evident today.

Baby boomers expressed a desire for change and progress in civil rights but also focused on personal fulfilment and were known as the 'me' generation.

Nevertheless, they held a strong sentiment that peace, love and happiness would eventually rule the stars although they are still waiting on that one.

Generation X (1965-1980) displayed an attitude and outlook that was skeptical of traditional values and willing to challenge authority.

As more women entered the workforce Gen X became the first latch-key kids which made them more independent and self-sufficient – they were also a very tech-savvy generation.

A lot of negative spin surrounds Millennials (1981-1996), referred to by some as the most narcissistic generation, raised to be perfect and set up for failure.

Others note that they are also the most culturally diverse and socially conscious generation.

Millennials are highly educated entrepreneurs with a wide range of perspectives, ideas and flexible thinking.

Generation Z (1997-2012) is the most ethnically and racially diverse generation in history.

Gen Z are considered 'digital natives' due to



Generation Alpha can also be called Generation Roblox.

their access to technology from a very young age and their exposure to screens, smartphones, laptops and tablets.

Gen Z tends to be more progressive and liberal than previous generations, socially and politically aware and actively working for positive social change.

That brings us right into the new century – the cut-off for Gen X was 1980, the cut-off for

Gen Y (aka millennials) was 1996 and Gen Z ended in 2010.

The question is, what comes after the letter Z and what will the next generation be called?

Enter Generation Alpha (2013-2025), named after the first letter in the Greek alphabet and the first generation of children to be born entirely in the 21st century.

This is a very young generation (some are still being born) and although it is too soon to accurately capture their characteristics some trends have been observed.

Gen Alpha is more digitally intuitive than previous generations – they are familiar and comfortable collaborating with artificial intelligence in every aspect of life.

They prioritize self-expression, self-reliance and personal fulfilment and tend to be open-minded and non-conformist in education, career and lifestyle.

This is the generation that will lead us into the new millennium.

More than 2.8 million Gen Alpha's are born every week and they are expected to number more than two billion individuals globally by 2025, the largest generation in history.

Bigger than the boomers and even at their young age they are already making their presence known – it remains to be seen just how special Generation Alpha will be.

*what's happening
in and around...*

The Bay

To submit an event, email ldunick@dougallmedia.com.
Please include details about the event, including any cost

March 8

Fiesta de Mujeres

Head out on Friday to Fiesta de Mujeres, a celebration of International Women's Day in support of the Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre, at Norteños Taqueria.

Everyone is welcome to shimmy and shake to the caliente playlist by DJ Eddie which includes salsa, bachata, merengue, kizomba, afrobeats and reggaeton.

Beginner latin dance lesson at 9 p.m. followed by the social dance at 10 p.m.

Enjoy delicious food and drinks for purchase from Norteños.

Tickets are only \$10 and advance ticket holders will receive five free raffle tickets for a chance to win many fabulous prizes.

Tickets can be found at eventbrite.ca.

March 9

Ukrainian Easter Egg Workshop

The League of Ukrainian Canadians and Chaban Ukrainian Dance Group

invite you to try your hand at this egg-citing workshop and learn how to make pysanky (The Ukrainian Easter Egg) in the traditional Ukrainian style.

A pysanka is made using a wax resist method, along with a variety of dyes to create beautiful designs. If you have never tried this before, give it a shot and wow your friends with your creations.

Experienced instructors will guide you through all the steps of transforming a plain egg into a work of art. There will also be plenty of helpers on hand to give tips, extra support, etc.

Materials will be provided (eggs, dyes, wax, and stylus/kistka). The cost is \$30.

March 9

Farming workshop

Farming, thriving behind the scene, will feature special guests who will share topics, such as social media marketing, grant writing, agriculture finance and mental health. Don't miss

this opportunity to connect with fellow farmers and gain valuable insights from professionals.

The event is Saturday at the Best Western Plus Norwester Hotel and Conference Centre, from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.

March 11

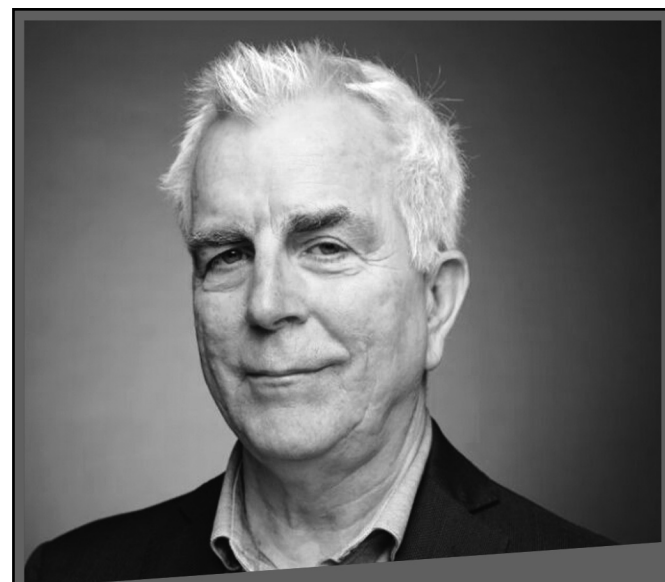
March Break With Mo

Join the Thunder Bay Public Library for crafts, games and activities based on your favourite Mo Willem characters Pigeon, Elephant & Piggie, Nanette, Leonardo and Sam and more!

They can hardly wait for this party (and waiting is not easy!) just don't let the Pigeon drive.

The event is aimed at kids from ages four to eight and takes place from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Waverley Resource Library – Auditorium.

Visit the Thunder Bay Public Library's website for information on other March Break events taking place at branches across the city this coming week.



Marcus Powlowski, MP
Thunder Bay-Rainy River

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Time to plan summer travels

This is the time of year that I like to start planning some travel adventures for the upcoming summer mountain bike season. In Ontario, we are lucky to have a vast number of easily accessible mountain bike trail networks with thousands of kilometers to explore.

However, our province is massive, spanning over 1,500 kilometres from the western border to the eastern edge.

Most communities in between offer at least some modest opportunities to ride, but a few areas really stand out as being worthy of a road trip stop. Here are three top hotspots to ride in the Northwest corner of the province.

Tunnel Island in Kenora features several multi-use trails, making it a popular destination for bikers and hikers alike. Here you will find a welcoming trailhead, lots of parking and signage leading into nine kilometers of technical singletrack.



Keith Ailey
the GOOD LIFE

These trails weave around both the east and west end of the island with connecting options throughout the middle portion. Keep an eye out for wildlife and be sure to stop and observe the turtles in the pond. Tunnel Island

is actually just the hub of a much larger trail network here.



Ghost Lake Trails in Dryden are a great place to get your mountain biking on. (Windy Lilholt)

Local rider Barry Kraynyk explains that there are more than 25k kilometres of trail that are spread out in sections throughout the city.

He says, “with most of the trails never more than a few minutes apart, it means that you can ride from one end of town to the other using different trails along the way. Experiencing the beauty of the area’s forests, waterways and lakes from the cockpit of a mountain bike is something unique about Kenora.”

The Ghost and Mavis Lakes area of Dryden offers a Crown land network of singletrack wilderness trails developed by outdoor recreationalists for mountain bikers and hikers to share.

These trails are rocky and challenging, so they mostly appeal to experienced riders. The technically demanding Ferguson Trail is a favourite for skilled riders, while The Boneyard is more popular with riders of all

abilities.

Thunder Bay has now become a mountain biking mecca and Trowbridge Forest is the main attraction.

A massive area of greenspace located within the city, it consists of over 35 kilometres of trails between Kinsmen Park and Shuniah Mines.

In the winter, this system is groomed for fat biking, making it a year-round destination.

The main trailhead at Kinsmen Park parking lot features a pump track, progressive jump lines, kids’ trails and playground, a campground, washroom facilities and a huge trail map.

Cross the Current River bridge from Kinsmen and you immediately enter Centennial Park where the singletrack trail Conveyor Belt will lead you right up into the heart of Shuniah Mines.

This old silver mine area is a singletrack hub where the Blacksheep Mountain Bike Club continue to improve both the quality and variety of the trails.

Some of the older trails here feature technical singletrack with lots of roots and rocks, but many of the newer trails are machine-built and they flow naturally across the varied topography of the park.

It is amazing to see how each of these three communities has developed their own recreational areas for mountain bikers.

With easy access and no fees to ride the trails, we are truly blessed with what we have here.

Fusion cooking is continuing to trend

Anyone in the food industry in Thunder Bay knows it’s its own animal. We are at the forefront of certain trends and lagging way behind in others.

It’s just what it is.

It becomes way easier when you just accept it. As the internet and the availability of information grows, the consumer becomes more educated to flavours, dishes, recipes and ingredients from everywhere around the globe.

The permeation of these items and ideas into our food landscape in North America is something that’s only going to get more normalized.

In 2024 there are a few things that are already happening elsewhere that you may see start to come onto menus in Thunder Bay as creative chefs start to work their magic and find inspiration from far away

lands.

Even if you don’t venture farther than a nearby restaurant in 2024, exciting new flavors from around the world will be at the other end of your fork.

One of the defining trends of the year is expected to be third-culture cuisine, or dishes from a chef’s diverse background.

A huge trend in larger city centers focuses on bridging two cultures in one concept.

Wafu Italian restaurants use Japanese and Italian cultures to create unique cuisine experiences.

Multi layered cultural identities can certainly find ways to incorporate here, as familiar and unfamiliar ingredients can be presented in a familiar dish or with familiar wording.

Not that long ago, matcha was the talk of

the town.

A lot of chefs expect Asian flavors and ingredients to have a moment in 2024.

Black sesame, ube, and milk tea will follow the path of matcha and become more prevalent on menus internationally.

The availability of these ingredients here can be sometimes suspect however a lot of grocers are anticipating more people will embrace Asian fruits, such as rambutan, pink guava, longan, mangosteen, and the various types of dragon fruit.

One of the undercurrents driving food and drink trends is our collective desire to take care of the planet.

More companies will prioritize sustainability in the coming months in surprising ways.

Expect, for instance, the rise of alternative chocolates.

We have talked about the chocolate industry before and many of its harsh reali-

ties overseas.

Alternative chocolate is “made without cocoa,” but it still tastes remarkably similar to your standard bar.

There’s a group of innovators who are creating alternatives that have the same taste, smell, and melt of original chocolate.

One U.S.-based company, Voyage Foods, uses ingredients like grape seeds, sunflower protein flour, and sunflower lecithin to make their alternative chocolate.

In the U.K., WNN Food Labs replaces cocoa beans with ingredients like cereals and legumes.

In a few weeks we will discuss some more expected popular food trends upcoming in 2024.

Derek Lankinen is an award-winning chef, author, and restaurateur. He is the Owner/Operator of Beefcake’s Burger Factory with two locations in Westfort and Current River and Co-Owner of Elite Beef.



Derek Lankinen
Here’s Cooking at You Kid





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RESTAURANT

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Zen of delayed maintenance

So, last column I wrote about how frustrated I get when trying to sweep the barn aisle after “mucking” the horse stalls.

I wrote that my wife, Laura, has the technique, the skill, the art if you will of sweeping without having to repeat the sweeps. I wrote that with Zen-like concentration, I, too, could hope to achieve the ‘Satori’ of sweeping. Well, that ‘Satori’ will have to wait. It is on hold.

In fact, any activity in the barn is verboten for me for the next six weeks. Why? Because Farmer Fred underwent another hernia surgery this past Wednesday. Yup, the first surgery that occurred last June didn’t quite hold.

My surgeon warned me that it might not, although with even wearing a hernia belt daily, I thought that after three months or so (perhaps it was only two?) I could lift some objects heavier than ten pounds. I recall hefting a couple of boxes full of files one day and feeling a sharp pain on the right side of my tum. The pain would come and go for about a week. Oops.

But in September we had to get the wood

bucked and split. My son, Doug, did almost all the bucking with the chainsaw. But when he was away for his day job, I would lift some of the pieces onto the splitter until all the split wood was ready to stack. I guess that was not wise on my part although I was sure that after three months wearing a hernia belt, I would be free of a resurgence of the bulge on my tum. Nope.

And while continuing to wear the hernia belt the bulge didn’t seem to increase, after six months I decided that I had better get the thing fixed.

Now the reason the surgeon warned me about a possible return of the hernia was because he had also removed my gallbladder at the same time and due to a risk of infection, he couldn’t put in a mesh to cover the fixed hernia. At any rate, I succeeded this time in getting an O.R. appointment to fix

the damn thing and that took place last Wednesday.

Blessedly I had the same surgeon who gave me explicit instructions (per my request) on what I could and could not do and for how long. “No lifting anything over ten pounds for

six weeks,” the Doctor instructed. Right.

Actually, those instructions included not pushing or pulling that would aggravate the hernia area so that it lets out mucking stalls, carrying any buckets of water, carrying and emptying the compost bucket, carrying in armfuls of firewood, etc., etc.

They don’t even want me driving my ancient tractor, Big Red for fear that the bouncing up and down on the tractor seat will disturb the hernia area. I mean Big Red’s shocks are non-existent. For a minimum of six weeks.

I can drive, I can walk although walking on our trails at this point is difficult due to the crust of snow and ice that tends to jar with each step.

Not fun. So, I must wait for the trails to be snow-free and ice-free.

I don’t think that it will take long as on Sunday we had rain with a promise of much warmer temperatures throughout the week. I asked my surgeon about walking, and he told me to walk everyday. I told him about the condition of our trails, and he hummed. So, for now, I troop to the end of our driveway to collect the newspaper.

Of course, my being indisposed, exempt from barn chores plus many house chores (on

pain of severe reprimand: “No, you cannot lift the case of pop. It is too heavy! Grrr!” Apparently, a case of pop weighs more than ten pounds.) puts an extra burden on my family, all of whom have day jobs.

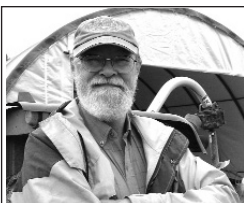
I can do stuff around Casa Jones like dishes, but I’m not allowed to vacuum or do laundry. Too hard on my gut, any bending down, pulling or pushing.

While I was waiting on the gurney just outside the operating room chatting with my surgeon, he told me of one woman who had twenty-four hernia repairs. What?! His wee tidbit gave me added incentive to behave.

So now I very much want to extend profuse thanks to the medical team at the hospital who tended to me from nurse Joanne, nurse Toby, Dr. Yassar the anesthetist (didn’t catch his last name while lying on the gurney), and Dr.. Brynn.

There were two other nurses, Paris, and another lass whose name I can’t recall, sorry, mea culpa.

You guys were all very kind and good to me. But I especially want to thank my surgeon, Dr. Mapeso, with the sincere hopes that he doesn’t have to say “You, again?”, certainly not 24 times.



Fred Jones
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Dune: Riveting sci-fi

Dune II (SilverCity) arrives with keen anticipation in the wake of director Denis Villeneuve's tantalizing first installment, *Dune* which came out in 2021. This is an extension, not a sequel, an adaptation of Frank Herbert's celebrated sci-fi novel.

Though a visual and auditory epic, *Dune* barely got to flesh out characters and the social, political and religious conflicts and Middle Eastern elements that made Herbert's novel a seminal entry in sci-fi. Villeneuve gets closer to the mark here.

At two hours, 45 minutes—10 minutes longer than *Dune*—Villeneuve and co-writer Jon Spaihts delve much deeper into Herbert's vision encompassing the perils of prophecy, religion and fanaticism, colonialism vs ecology garnished with pulse-pounding fighting sequences, stunning cinematography, bone-rattling sound design and Hans Zimmer's atmospheric soundtrack.

For the uninitiated, *Dune* is set in the distant future centering on an intergalactic battle for control of Arrakis, a desert planet solely blessed with an abundance of *mélange* or spice much coveted by mankind. Vying for control are the noble House Atriedes vs the cutthroat, duplicitous Harkonnen.

Dune II picks up where the first film ended as Paul Atriedes (Timothée Chalamet) and his mother Lady Jessica (Rebecca Ferguson) as the sole survivors of the Harkonnen massacre of their family stronghold, are now aligning themselves with the Fremen, the desert-dwelling indigenous people of Arrakis.

Fremen leader, Stilgar (Javier Bardem) views Paul as the legendary messiah. What solidifies Paul with the suspicious Fremen is a mutual hatred for the fascist



Timothée Chalamet stars at Paul Atriedes in *Dune* and its sequel, *Dune II*.

Harkonnen who intend to wipe out everybody.

Paul is drawn to skeptical, prophecy-dismissing Chani (Zendaya). Their relationship embodies most human connections in the story, all uneasy psychologically, the result of ever-present intrigue and subterfuge.

Paul proves himself to the Fremen, not only by fighting one of their own, but by riding the gigantic sandworms—who'll consume anyone---as they burrow ferociously through the sea of dunes. A thrilling sandworm charge recalls the sweep of *Lawrence of Arabia*.

Dave Bautista and Stellan Skarsgård return as Harkonnen baddies, now abetted by Austin Butler's Feyd-Rautha, a far cry from *Elvis*. He's a reptilian, sadistic psycho with an eerie black hole for a mouth.

Chalamet conveys Paul's twisty matu-

ration, accepting his visions of a fateful future. He grapples with the Messiah mantle which grants him power but to what end?

Lady Jessica (Rebecca Ferguson) becomes the Fremen Reverend Mother, demonstrating why the Bene Gesserit is viewed as manipulative self-serving "witches." Her pregnancy (Paul's sister) plays into the sisterhood's visionary and telepathic powers. Christopher Walken's Emperor, who betrayed Paul's father Duke Leto, conspires with his daughter, Princess Irulan (Florence Pugh).

There is the intriguing contrast of desert warfare: knife-wielding Ninja-like hand to hand combat and sand savviness vs Off-World air ships and sand grinders, brandishing imperialistic fire-power.

Paul's sudden ascendancy as a commanding presence is dubious but Villeneuve has created an otherwise riveting realization of Frank Herbert's vision. One eagerly anticipates the sequel.

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Enigma cryptograms are created from quotations and proverbs from around the world. Each letter stands for another letter. Hint: "S" = "D"

"ATNJ KECLOJJDV TW QEWJOR ATW, TWS
RQJW KEC ATK MJ OCLJ RQTR RQJLJ ZO
EWJ LTOBTD DJOO ZW RQJ GELDS."
— RQEATO BTLDKDJ

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ACROSS

- 1 Sol
- 4 Windstorm
- 8 Wild pig
- 12 One (pref.)
- 13 "Dies"
- 14 Hairdo
- 15 Low (Fr.)
- 16 Well (Fr.)
- 17 Sawbill duck
- 18 Fr. month
- 20 Mineral (suf.)
- 21 Lamprey
- 22 Enlarging tool
- 25 Choral music
- 28 Injure
- 29 Lacionian clan group
- 30 Aleutian island
- 31 Catch
- 32 Jab
- 33 Air (pref.)
- 34 Amer. Automobile Assn. (abbr.)
- 35 "Home Sweet Home" poet
- 36 Of flightless

DOWN

- birds
- 38 Mountain (Scott.)
- 39 Ecclesiastical chalice
- 40 Cougar
- 44 Yesterday (Ital.)
- 46 Waterbuck
- 47 Male friend (Fr.)
- 48 Stentorian
- 49 Valley
- 50 Target
- 51 Handle (Fr.)
- 52 Belgium (abbr.)
- 53 British thermal unit (abbr.)

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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- 19 Welsh symbol
- 20 Comparative ending
- 22 Jewish scholar
- 23 Black
- 24 Counsel
- 25 Volcano crater
- 26 Concert halls
- 27 Hades
- 28 Sheep's cry
- 31 No (Scott.)
- 32 Beat rapidly
- 34 Luzon people
- 35 Cotton fabric
- 37 Chemical compound
- 38 Biblical tower
- 40 Long piece of wood
- 41 Mayan year
- 42 Send out
- 43 Imou pine
- 44 Bantu language
- 45 Eternity
- 46 Russ. secret police

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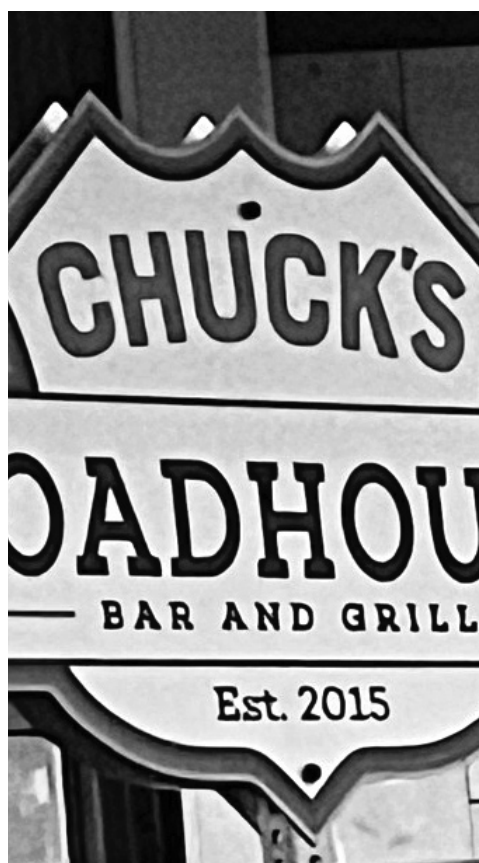
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Chuck's Roadhouse is popular in southern Ontario.

New Chuck's Roadhouse is on its way

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

A popular restaurant chain is opening soon in Thunder Bay.

Chuck's Roadhouse, which launched in 2015 and has dozens of locations across southern Ontario, will open at the former Naxos Restaurant location at 610 Arthur Street West.

The company uses the slogan, food the way it ought to be, priced the way it used to be. The menu includes steaks, prime rib burgers and lobster tails.

"We appeal to communities who look for that classic roadhouse taste, comfortable ambience and second-to-none guest experience. We're a brand dedicated to delivering a hospitable dining experience and creating that comfortable place for everyone to enjoy a meal, grab a drink or watch their favourite team on the big screen TVs," reads a bio on the restaurant chain's website.

The company confirmed the location on its website, listing it as coming soon.

The owner of Naxos Restaurant announced earlier this year she was closing the business.



Gabi Epstein is the star of *Tell Me Sunday*, a Magnus Theatre offering that features the music of Andrew Lloyd Webber.

Tell Me Sunday begins

By Linda Maehans – For TB Source

Beautiful music stirs the soul. Ignites emotions, either joy-filled or poignant, or both; often unexpectedly.

Such precious feelings are not easily put into words. Such lovely music comes from a universal longing in the heart.

Magnus' next curtain rises to a remarkable love story. The Canadian premiere of *Tell Me on a Sunday* features music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, lyrics by Don Black, and the beautiful voice of Gabi Epstein; accompanied by a live band to augment all her shimmering endless energy.

One look into those eyes, deep pools of effervescence fueled by curiosity, I'm not exaggerating, and a genuine smile that pulls like a magnet, and I know I would willingly travel to the farthest reaches of whatever plateaus and valleys Gabi chooses to take me. You'll feel the same.

Gabi's journey from London to the Big Apple has, as she explains, not been fraught with further difficulties or disappointments; she has left such matters-of-the-heart behind. At last. Hopefully for good. All that awaits her now are fresh adventures and the future's titillating unknowns; perhaps even a new romance if those precious stars align.

"A bit overwhelming, yes," confides Gabi in a sunny crisp accent that confirms her origins from across the ocean. "It's very loud here, traffic everywhere, but gosh it is exciting!" The entrance to Tiffany's is mere footsteps away. For the smallest fraction, Gabi's sparkle seems to dim, her small lithe body appearing vulnerable amidst all the hubbub of Fifth Avenue at

noon. "I've needed a change, a new start. But I am optimistic. To be here, and who knows what sort of excitement will follow!" The sparkle returns, bright as clusters of emeralds-and-diamonds-in-June. "I mean, I wouldn't say no if a new man came into my life."

Suddenly I'm given a glimpse of Gabi-the-coquette. "I like putting on my makeup in the morning, doing my hair, so, um, let's see what happens, there. It's been nice, getting some attention from some very nice-looking gentlemen."

Has me feeling good. So, thank you, and yes, fingers crossed."

I'm bold enough to ask about her 'taste in men', as it were. Gabi is forthright. "My past relationships have been, well, similar. The men? All tall; tall-dark-and-handsome, and they've treated me like garbage. I've had a type. Oh yes, a type. Now? Well, I want someone who is kind, who respects me. I don't know, I've arrived at some clarity, somehow. I am in control; of myself, with no need to compromise myself, for a man."

My plan? Well, I work remotely so I'm not tied down; I can take my laptop to coffee shops, try lots of delicious new foods here...I really do want to take in the culture. And I'm okay with putting myself 'out there', into this wonderful world of New York. It just feels right."

As said, you'll feel it too. Oh, and bye the way, New York isn't the only place Gabi takes us.

Tell Me on a Sunday opens at Magnus tonight (March 7), enchants through to March 30. Book your beautiful travel ticket today.

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rootsofempathy.org

Bonot rink confident at Brier

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

Ten years ago, Mike McCarville earned a spot at the Brier, and at the time, thought it was the first of many to come.

Re-enter Brad Jacobs, the four-time Northern Ontario champion, who in 2014 skipped the Northern Ontario playdowns to focus on the Olympic Games, despite being the reigning national men's curling champion.

Jacobs returned to the playdown circuit in 2015 and proceeded to win six straight titles before COVID-19 wiped out the 2021 tankard, then again in 2022.

"To tell you the truth, when I went 10 years ago, I thought this is going to happen again and the years start ticking by and 10 years goes by. Honestly, when this team came together a couple of years ago, I said, we're pretty good," said McCarville, the third on Trevor Bonot's team that earned a spot at this year's Montana's Brier with a win over defending Northern Ontario champion Tanner Horgan of Sudbury, needing a measurement in the 10th end to capture the provincial title late last month in Little Current, Ont.

"Especially after our run last year and then this year we got better and better and this year I really believed we could get back."

Coached by the great Al Hackner, a two-time Brier and world champion in his own right, the Bonot rink also includes a formidable front end, with lead Kurtis Byrd and second Jordan Potts, whose wife Sarah has eight Scotties Tournament of Hearts appearances, curling with McCarville's wife Krista, a four-time medallist at the Scotties.

For Potts, it's his first taste of a national championship. It's the thrill of a lifetime, he said.

"Sarah's been there so many times and I see how much it means to her and her team. For us it means the world because we've seen how special it is. We've put in the work and we just want to go make Thunder Bay proud and see what we can do," Potts said last Tuesday night, at a sendoff party for the team at Fort William Curling Club.

The key to success is winning the games against teams ranked below them and being competitive in the games against the higher ranked teams.

"If we sneak out a win against one of the really top teams, then we're in a good spot," Potts said. "If we win what we know we can win, and we win the one that's on the fence, then we're good to go."

Bonot, 38, said it's finally sinking in that he's going to the Brier.

The former Canadian mixed champion has waited a couple of decades to realize the dream of playing in the national men's curling



Skip Trevor Bonot (from left), third Mike McCarville, second Jordan Potts, lead Kurtis Byrd and coach Al Hackner are representing Northern Ontario at the Brier. (Leith Dunick)

championship.

But he's not satisfied just being there.

"It's a lifelong dream for all of us, for sure. Mike's been there before, but getting back is pretty special for him. Our expectation going in is we want to play well," Bonot said.

"We know that if we can play our best, we can give teams really good games and win a few. So, with that, we have to start as strong as we can, not get too distracted by the big lights and the fans and everything that's going around us, and just play like we can. Then with

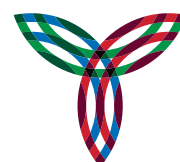
that I think we can attain our goals."

Team Bonot opened the Brier 4-1 with wins over New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario and Alberta, dropping a 9-8 extra end decision on Sunday to Manitoba's Reid Carruthers.

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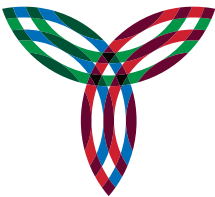


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North Stars in playoff mode

By Leith Dunick -TB Source

To win in the postseason, teams have to learn to play playoff hockey.

The Thunder Bay North Stars got a double dose of it this weekend in a home-and-home series against the Fort Frances Lakers,

The Stars, still jockeying for playoff positioning in the Superior International Junior Hockey League and looking to lock down a top-three spot before the regular season comes to a close in two week's time, got the job done.

After roaring back from a 4-0 deficit on Friday night to squeak out a 5-4 overtime win on the road, Thunder Bay outlasted the Lakers on Sunday afternoon at the Gardens, thanks to an Edison Weeks deflection late in the third period that secured a second straight 5-4 triumph.

"Obviously we want to win every night, so if we can get home-ice advantage in the playoffs, that would be awesome," said forward E.J. Paddington, whose seven-game goal-scoring was snapped on Sunday – though his three-assist effort upped his point streak to nine games.

"If we can finish second, that would be awesome, or third. We just don't want to drop so we've got to keep winning."

The Stars (31-11-5) temporarily jumped back into a first-place tie with the Kam River Fighting Walleye (34-9-1), leapfrogging the Sioux Lookout Bombers in the process. Kam River later downed Kenora 11-0 to retake solo first.

The trouble for Thunder Bay is opportunities remaining.

The North Stars have just two games left on their slate, a pair of home games against the Dryden Ice Dogs, starting on March 15.



Thunder Bay's Easton Mikus pots his 30th goal of the season, tying him for top spot in the SIJHL. (Leith Dunick)

The Fighting Walleye have six games left and the Bombers have five – and neither team piles up the losses.

The fourth-place Ice Dogs still have a shot to catch Thunder Bay, who have clinched home-ice advantage in the opening round of the playoffs, but can't afford a loss in any of their three remaining contests.

Defenceman Sam Skillestad, who had a goal and two helpers, said it felt good to get a win like that out of the way.

"It's crazy and fun having it be so competitive," the Missoula, Mont. native said.

"But each game matters. If we lose both games in Dryden coming up here, we could be in (fourth) place. And if we win both and have some luck on our side, we could end up in first."

The Lakers looked like they were determined to make up for Friday's loss, and opened the scoring just 1:07 in, Brady Krentz notching his 17th of the season at the expense of North Stars goaltender Ben Laurette.

The lead lasted just over a minute, when Thunder Bay's Beau Helmeczi tied things up. A two-minute 5-on-3 helped the North Stars

take their first lead of the night, Easton Mikus potting his league-leading 30th of the season past Fort Frances goaltender Gunnar Paradis, the grandson of former Lakehead Thunderwolves coach Bill MacDonald.

Brody Lindal tied things up at 17:10 of the first, but the North Stars jumped back in front early in the second after Paddington and Alex Remenda were stopped on back-to-back quality chances.

Skillestad fired from the top of the right circle and the puck went untouched into the net.

As they did all night long, it was the power play that got Fort Frances back on even ground, Krentz taking a pass from Lindal and burying it by Laurette, at 16:25 of the middle frame.

Remenda gave the North Stars their third lead of the night just 23 seconds into the third, a quick shot from the slot, but the Lakers fought back again.

Clark Scaddan kept the play alive with a diving stop at the blueline and Magnus Pearson rifled a blast home to even the game 4-4.

Weeks, in a battle with Paddington for the SIJHL scoring lead, a chase he currently leads 73 to 68, finally got on the board, tipping home Paddington's shot with 5:41 to go in regulation.

North Stars coach said the Lakers (9-29-6) may be locked into seventh, but they play hard each and every night.

"The way we played, this was our sixth game in nine nights, that's a lot of hockey. I think physically we were OK. Mentally you don't always make the choices you should make, because I think they're more mentally tired than physically tired," DeGagne said.

Winter Games were an exciting event to cover

I had an absolute blast covering the Ontario Winter Games.

What a great event, and what great results for local athletes, winning medals in a whole host of sports, including hockey, futsal, wrestling, biathlon and skiing.

It also gave me a chance to spend some time with Mike and Krista McCarville, who spent the second weekend watching their daughter, Bella, play second on Team Dubinsky, winning a silver medal.

Both are high-level curlers, one fresh from her 11th Scotties Tournament of Hearts, the other getting ready to leave for his

second Brier appearance.

Both parents beamed with pride watching Bella curl, but it was also fun to listen to Krista and Mike work out the strategy they might employ in given situations, versus what the team actually called.

None of it was critical, either.

It was also neat to see some of the young curlers taking part in the event realize they had a Scotties finalist in their midst, timidly asking Krista if they could maybe get a picture with her.

She said yes every time.



Speaking of class acts, the Kam River

Fighting Walleye showed plenty of it on the weekend.

Let's face it, the Kenora Islanders are not a great hockey team.

They try hard, but matched up against the top team in the SIJHL, and the results weren't all that unexpected. Kam River outscored them 34-2 and outshot them 270-40, but kept the celebrations to a minimum after the first couple of goals each night and made sure their third- and fourth-liners got plenty of power play time.

In other words, they weren't trying to run up the score, which is smart for another reason – in all likelihood the two teams will meet in the first round of the playoffs. No sense creating any more bad blood in place.



It's my annual Strat-O-Matic baseball draft in Halifax this weekend.

Our league has been at it since 1998 and if I had put in the amount of prep work and study into my high school and university days, I probably could have gone to medical school.

If you've never played, and love baseball, it's a wonderful game, played with individualized cards and dice, the chances based on a specific season's results. We're a league of 14 and play using the most recent season available. I've kicked around the idea of starting a league here and had a smattering of interest.

I'm also seeing the Halifax Mooseheads, for the first time since MacKinnon and Drouin suited up back in 2013, or so.



Leith Dunick
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