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Thursday, March 23, 2023

TBPS GETS THEIR MAN



Darcy Fleury is currently the RCMP district commander - chief superintendent, Central Alberta District.

Police Services Board announces new chief will be Darcy Fleury, a 36-year RCMP veteran /3

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Darcy Fleury on Tuesday was named as the Thunder Bay Police Services new chief, replacing Sylvie Hauth at the helm. (RCMP)

New chief hired

Darcy Fleury is a 36-year veteran of the RCMP

By Doug Diaczuk - TB Source

A former Royal Canadian Mounted Police chief superintendent in Alberta has been named the new chief of the Thunder Bay Police Service.

The Thunder Bay Police Services Board administrator Malcolm Mercer announced on Tuesday that Darcy Fleury has been selected as the new chief of police.

"After a comprehensive search process with interested candidates from across the country, we are pleased to welcome Darcy Fleury as the new Chief of Police," Mercer said in a statement.

"The Governance Committee and the Board have been committed to the search for a new chief of police that would meet the key challenges of building and rebuilding relationships in the Thunder Bay community and region, supporting members of the Service, sworn and civilian, and moving the Service through challenges and opportunities. I feel confident that we have achieved that mandate in the appointment of Chief Fleury."

Fleury, a citizen of the Red River Métis and member of the Manitoba Métis Federation, has more than 36 years of policing experience and has most recently served as Chief Superintendent with the RCMP Central Alberta District based in Edmonton.

Prior to that, Fleury has served with the RCMP in Ontario, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and he

served as a criminal operations officer in Manitoba.

"I look forward to the opportunity to be the next Chief of Police for Thunder Bay. I am committed to creating a learning environment within the organization, ensuring community interests are identified in policing priorities, and that the Police Service serves and is representative of everyone within the community," Fleury said in a statement issued Tuesday morning.

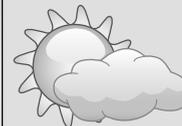
"I am aware of the recent recommendations and reports that speak to needed change within the Service, and I will continue to reinforce and advance the work that is already underway. To move forward, we need to develop strong partnerships to manage crime and ensure the safety of all people in Thunder Bay."

A one-month transition period starting in April will take place with acting chief Dan Taddeo. A formal change of command will be held on May 15, 2023.

Taddeo had been serving as acting chief since former police chief Sylvie Hauth was suspended from the role following a notice of hearing by the Ontario Civilian Police Commission on Police Service Act charges relating to allegations of misconduct.

Hauth officially retired as chief in January 2023, just weeks before a Police Service Act hearing was scheduled to begin.

WEATHER FORECAST

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			
Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy
Precipitation: 20% HIGH 1 LOW -12	Precipitation: 30% HIGH 3 LOW -8	Precipitation: 30% HIGH 4 LOW -5	Precipitation: 30% HIGH 3 LOW -5



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Family wins \$250K

By TB Source staff

A Thunder Bay family is celebrating a big scratch ticket win.

The group of five won \$250,000 with an instant Crossword deluxe ticket, the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Commission announced on Friday.

"When I scanned our ticket on the OLG App, I thought we won \$250. It said Big Winner, so I thought, 'I guess \$250 is a big win.' Until I took a closer look and saw all the zeroes," Johanna Silvestri said in an OLG news release. "I immediately called my daughter, and I couldn't speak when I was on the phone. I was in shock."

Silvestri and her four children — Adrianna Stefanato, Antonio Silvestri, Dario Silvestri and Dianna Zyha — have been playing the lottery for five years.

It feels really nice - this is all new for us. It feels fantastic to play and win with my kids. It's brought so much



Johanna Silvestri picks up her family's winnings.

joy," smiled Johanna.

The family members' plans for their share of the winnings include travel and helping with children's education.

Head librarian named

By Gary Rinne - TB Source

The Thunder Bay Public Library has found a new head librarian from within its own ranks.

The library on Monday announced the appointment of Ruth Hamlin-Douglas to the management team.

Over 17 years, Hamlin-Douglas has served in several different capacities at the library, most recently as the programming librarian.

She started in 2006 as the children and youth services librarian.

According to a news release, the TBPL's selection committee reviewed applications from both across Canada and outside the country, and during the interview process unanimously gave her the highest score by a significant margin.

The hiring of a head librarian is part of an organizational restructuring aimed at improving efficiency and service capacity in preparation for implementing a master facilities plan.

CEO Richard Togman described Hamlin-Douglas as "passionate, dedicated and forward-thinking," and said she has a wealth of institutional knowledge that will be valuable as TBPL plans for the future.

Hamlin-Douglas said she's coming into the job with three areas of focus.

"I intend to give our staff the support they need to provide excellent patron experiences, to ensure our library delivers exceptional value to the community, and to make a meaningful contribution to the ambitious vision our CEO has for the future of our organization."

Togman's predecessor, John



Ruth Hamlin-Douglas has been hired as Thunder Bay Public Library's head librarian.

Pateman, who left the library in 2022 after nine years, held the dual title of CEO and chief librarian.

In an interview, Hamlin-Douglas told TB Source she believes the biggest challenge in her job comes from the very fact that it is a new position at TBPL.

"We've had a CEO/Chief Librarian for the entirety of my career here, and now we've really separated the roles, so it's

figuring out how Richard and I are going to manage that separation."

She said she and Togman "are very much on the same page" but that her role will be "in many ways more inward-facing."

Hamlin-Douglas said that means ensuring that "what makes a library a library is working properly," and that staff get the training and support they need.

Highway crash kills GTA driver

By TB Source staff

A resident of the Greater Toronto Area is dead after a collision between two tractor-trailer units on Highway 17 early Sunday.

OPP said the incident happened around 1:30 am near Neys Provincial Park.

The deceased, a 37-year-old from Brampton, Ont., was operating one of the trucks.

The driver of the other vehicle was taken to hospital by paramedics with what police describe as serious injuries.

Highway 17 was closed for an extended period as a result of the collision.



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Police, board budgets soared

By Gary Rinne - TB Source

The Thunder Bay Police Service and the Thunder Bay Police Services Board each incurred expenses that left them considerably over-budget by the end of 2022.

The police had net operating expenses of \$53 million, which was \$3.4 million — or seven per cent — more than what was budgeted for last year.

The approved budget for 2023 is \$52 million.

According to a report prepared for the Thunder Bay Police Services Board, the main cause of the increased expenditures last year was an extra \$1.8 million in overtime costs.

Contributing factors included a new collective agreement with officers regarding increased staffing



Thunder Bay Police investigated 15 homicides in 2022, the highest number in the city's history.

for uniform patrol, a requirement to pay out all time-in-lieu balances by year-end, and overtime related to sudden death investigations and major crime such as homicides.

The report also cites an unex-

pected increase of about \$1 million for wages and fringe benefits related to "the necessary realignment of staffing resources within senior administration" and the cost of dealing with a backlog of recording

and transcribing police reports.

These and other unanticipated expenditures were partially offset by a large increase in revenue for providing security on a pay-for-service basis, and by higher-than-expected criminal record search fees.

The report states "paid duty activity was much greater than estimated as the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre has requested paid duty services in the Emergency Department to improve safety since July 2022."

Combined with higher-than-expected revenue from criminal record searches, these fees generated \$458,000 more than what TBPS budgeted for them last year.

Legal costs pushed police board costs much higher

At the Thunder Bay Police

Services Board, legal costs in 2022 pushed expenditures far beyond the 2022 budget of \$454,000.

A memorandum shows that costs came in at \$702,000 more than that.

"Legal costs through 2022 were inflated well beyond the planned budget largely due to costs incurred in responding to various Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario complaints," the memo states.

It adds that legal costs arising from the Mamakwa-McKay inquest, along with added work on the human rights tribunal files, contributed further to overall expenses.

Legal costs included not only representation for the board itself, "but also indemnification of various members of the service arising from a variety of actions that were ongoing throughout the year, at unprecedented levels."

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City to look at excess property

Parkland and parking lots among properties under microscope

By Ian Kaufman - TB Source

A move to examine city-owned properties including parkland and parking lots for housing development sparked some heated rhetoric at city council Monday over the possibility of cutting into neighbourhood parks.

Coun. Kasey Etreni, who called for the report on municipal lands available for development, defended her motion along with other supporters, who argued there was clearly no intent to sell off green space valued by the community.

Etreni's motion will see adminis-

tration report back by September with a list of city lands including vacant lots, parkland, and parking lots that could be declared surplus to the city's needs and sold for housing development

The at-large councillor says the move is intended to find opportunities for affordable housing in core areas, and help the city create more urban density and tax revenue.

Etreni has maintained she wants only parklands or parking lots that are not heavily utilized to be considered, saying some parks are "within minutes of other parks" and contain areas she believes are rarely used.

"Let me be the first to say, I respect parks and green space - they're both

very important to me," she told council Monday. "But driving around the city, and looking at maps, it is clear the city has an abundance of land, especially in the urban area, where infill and intensification are desired and important."

"The city has parking lots, empty lots, parks and open spaces... A good example of this is the empty lot on Simpson Street that used to be the old Shelter House.

"Many of these areas are open spaces [where we're] just mowing the grass, without any formal trails or playground equipment, and we are spending tax dollars to maintain these."

Etreni added she hopes the city can

attach conditions to their sale that would guarantee development included affordable housing - a point echoed by other councillors.

"Since we own these lands, I hope we have the tools to ensure the development of the lands will result in more affordable and attainable housing, while balancing the concerns of the neighbourhood."

Coun. Shelby Ch'ng said she was interested in seeing the list from administration, but "a little nervous" about the possibilities it opens up.

"What recourse would we have from a big developer coming through, buying up these plots of land, and just sitting on them? Now we don't even have access to mow the lawn there anymore."

"Because I'd hate to have a fire sale on our city parks and then have it be purchased by the wealthy and then

create a greater divide in the city."

Director of development services Joel DePeuter said the city sometimes puts such development conditions in place, but typically only with major properties considered strategically important.

"I think there will be additional work that ought to be done through this process in terms of what properties are sufficiently important that development conditions should be put in place," he said.

Coun. Andrew Foulds said while he had come around to supporting much of Etreni's motion, he couldn't support opening up parkland for development.

"I've sort of been convinced that if some parking lots, particularly in the downtowns, can be redeveloped into something else by the private sector, that's a good thing," he said.



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EDITORIAL

Chief hired

The Thunder Bay Police Services Board finally did the right thing.

By going outside the Thunder Bay Police Service to choose the organization's new chief, a 36-year RCMP veteran who is currently a district commander and chief superintendent in central Alberta, the board has hired someone with the experience to be able to take the department in a much needed new direction.

Most importantly, Darcy Fleury arrives next month with no ties to the current administration, and will be able to examine the force from top to bottom with little to no preconceived notions.

Fleury is also of Metis heritage, which should go a long way in the effort to help repair the relationship with Indigenous residents of the city, who have not seen the type of justice and treatment they deserve from police over the past few decades.

Thunder Bay Police still aren't out of the woods, there's a diametrical culture change that needs to happen from top to bottom. Interim Chief Dan Taddeo started the process, now it's up to Fleury to carry it through and restore the service's reputation.

Fix bus driver shortage To the editor:

I would like to know what the City of Thunder Bay plans to do about the driver shortages for school buses in our city.

At least twice a week my grandchildren's buses are cancelled.

My daughter does not have her own vehicle nor is she walking distance to the school.

Public transportation is also not always an option due to lack of funds or weather as the walk is six blocks from the stop.

Something seriously needs to change as I am sure she is not the only one in this situation.

Our children's education is a right.

This is now being compromised as privatization of this resource is not allowing the drivers to make a livable wage.

This needs to stop. There needs to be a serious overhaul of this service.

Jennifer Gerry,
Thunder Bay

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Understanding Organizations essential reading

Understanding Organizations by Charles Handy has become firmly established as one of the core management texts and is essential reading for anyone interested in organizations and how to make them work better.

Handy argues the key to successful organizations lies in a better understanding of strategies, structures, systems and culture.

He explores key concepts – management, leadership, ideology – and shows how these can help find new solutions to familiar problems.

All organizations need to select, develop and reward their people; to structure and design their work; to resolve political conflicts; to lay down guidelines for their managers;

and plan for the future.

Hardy argues organizations should be driven first and foremost by their strategy: their aims and purpose and what they are trying to achieve. These must be clearly articulated and based on the needs of the community the organization exists to serve.

For example, in a community divided by racial and economic inequalities, the purpose of the public library should be focused on reducing and mitigating racism, homelessness and poverty.

These aims should be arrived at through public engagement, carried

out by the organization itself: this work should not be outsourced to external consultants.

These strategic priorities should then drive everything that the public library does. For example, the structure of the organization should reflect these objectives. In other words, form should follow function.

Handy outlines the two main traditional ways in which organizations are structured: the 'branch' model, whereby power and resources are focused on individual 'business units'; and the 'specialization' model in which staff become

experts in particular areas of service delivery.

Both of these methods have been proven to have significant downsides. The branch model, for example, can lead to the 'business units' competing with each other and developing their own unique subcultures.

Instead, Handy suggests, organizations should adopt the 'flat army' approach which is more effective, efficient and democratic. In this model power is shared more equitably by all levels of the organization instead of concentrated at the top.

Another advantage of this model is staff intentionally become 'Jack of all trades and master of none.' This

creates a flexible workforce which can be rapidly adapted to the ever changing needs of the community.

The strategic objectives should also drive the operating systems that enable the organization to function. When Handy uses this term he does not just mean systems such as IT and finance, but also the policies, procedures and processes.

The strategy, structure and systems form the base of the organization which shape its ideological superstructure or culture.

Ultimately the key to understanding organizations lies in understanding this underlying ideology and making sure that it is aligned with strategy, structure and systems.



John Pateman
BOOK BANTER

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Another technological bailout

By JR Shermack – TB Source

You might say that humans are very lucky to have somebody to do their dirty work for them.

Whenever we get ourselves in real trouble we call on science and technology to save us and right now we need their help again.

Humans are notorious for creating big problems, making a global mess of things and then hoping that somebody, somewhere will bail us out with another ingenious solution.

It happened most recently when we were held hostage by the COVID pandemic – medical science came through with public health measures and a very effective vaccine.

It remains unclear if the virus was released through human error, but its global spread was enabled by risky human behavior and resistance to proven safety measures.

And what's more, after all we've seen and the lessons we learned the hard way we still ignore the

science until it is too late and then hope for a technological miracle.

For example, environmental disasters have long been remedied, and still are, by the timely intervention of scientists and engineers.

Our excessive use of disposable plastic and other consumer cast-aways has polluted entire oceans and created five enormous floating garbage patches around the world.

Humanity is trying to curb the accumulation of one-use plastic, but in the meantime a Dutch entrepreneur invented a way to remove plastic garbage from the ocean.

One possible scenario has the "Ocean Cleanup" collecting 80 per cent of the plastic waste from the Great Pacific Garbage Patch (twice the size of Texas) by the end of the decade.

Recycled ocean plastic is used in products such as sunglasses, clothing, backpacks and furniture – I don't think the scientists get a kickback for their trouble.

Instead, science and technology has been saddled with the unfair burden of cleaning up plastic



The Ocean Cleanup could collect up to 80 per cent of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.

garbage patches on the high seas around the world.

Much of our undesirable behavior fuels the crisis of global warming – there are a billion-and-a-half fossil-fueled vehicles worldwide belching carbon into the atmosphere.

Personal vehicles with internal combustion engines are a major source of carbon emissions and other air pollutants that contribute to climate change.

Science and technology comes to the rescue again by providing consumers with an eco-friendly option in the form of electric

vehicles (EV's) - I have one on order myself.

EV's will eventually become the consumer's choice as gas-burning cars are phased out and replaced with cleaner technology and alternative power sources.

The latest technological bailout is something we've all been hoping for - if only someone could find a way to remove all that carbon from the atmosphere.

Good news folks, science and technology is developing direct air capture (DAC) technology which sucks carbon pollution from the air and then permanently stores it

underground.

There's no way we can remove enough carbon but perhaps DAC will give us some breathing room, so to speak, until we reduce our carbon footprint.

So don't get too excited – this remedial technology may prove to be very effective but there is no magic cure for the carbon nightmare we face.

We are so dependent on technology to bail us out that it has enabled us to behave irresponsibly, recklessly and dangerously without fear of consequences or widespread disaster.

Whenever we get ourselves in a jam we expect technology to save us from ourselves and it does every time.

As for me, I don't know if science and technology can ultimately save us but it can sure make things easier and a lot more comfortable in the meantime.

We may continue to evade the unintended consequences of human folly but our technological good luck cannot last forever.

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The Bay

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Please include details about the event, including any cost

March 23-24 SIJHL Playoff Hockey

The Thunder Bay North Stars will open the 2022-23 Superior International Junior Hockey League playoffs with Games 1 and 2 against the defending champion Red Lake Miners slated for the Gardens on Thursday and Friday night.

Thunder Bay won six of seven meetings between the two teams and are seeking their first title since 2019.

Game time both nights is 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at the door, cash only.

March 23-25 Rent

Rent, one of the most popular musicals of all time, it's loosely based on Puccini's 1896 opera, La Boheme and tells the tale of a group of impoverished young artists who find themselves struggling in New York City's East Village neighbourhood in the throes of the AIDS and HIV epidemic.

The Paramount Theatre presents the school edition of the musical.

Showtime is at 7 p.m. each night and tickets are available at eventbrite.ca.

March 24 Live at Loch

Maple Suns return to close out the Live@Loch season.

They'll perform music with influences that stem from Tedeschi Trucks to Mumford and Sons.

This husband and wife blues/folk duo is all about sing-a-long songs and getting the audience involved.

The show is free and open to the public, running from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Friday night.

March 24 March Cafe Takeover

If you're a business owner or interested in entrepreneurship join us for our March Café Takeover at Up Shot Coffeehouse on Friday.

Take part in the opportunity to

network and meet with staff from the Entrepreneur Centre, Paro, Innovation Centre, Thunder Bay Ventures, as well as other entrepreneurs.

The coffee's on the organizers, and they'll be there to answer your questions about starting, owning or running a business.

March 26 Paws for Love Fundraiser

Wild Thyme Lounge is teaming up with Paws for Love Dog Rescue Thunder Bay to raise funds for this non-profit that rescues dogs in northern communities and finds them their loving "forever" homes.

Paws for Love Dog Rescue Thunder Bay has rescued more than 6,000 dogs and is well known in Northwestern Ontario for its ability to provide veterinary care, loving foster homes, and good permanent homes for man's best friend. Tickets are \$25. Stop in at 55 Cumberland St. S. at 7 p.m.



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INSPECTION

MNRF-Approved Forest Management Plan Inspection for Wabadowgang Noopming 2023 -2033 Forest Management Plan

The Ontario **Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF)**, **NorthWinds Environmental Services** and the **Armstrong Local Citizens' Committee (ALCC)** would like to advise you that the 2023 – 2033 Forest Management Plan (FMP) for the **Wabadowgang Noopming Forest** has been approved by the MNRF Regional Director and is available for inspection.

The Planning Process

The FMP takes approximately three years to complete. During this time, five formal opportunities for public and First Nation and Métis community involvement are provided. The fourth opportunity (Stage Four) for this FMP occurred on July 11, 2022 – September 9, 2022 when the public was invited to review and comment on the draft FMP.

This **'Stage Five'** notice is to advise you that the MNRF-approved FMP, including the supplementary documentation, and FMP summary are available electronically for inspection for the 10-year duration of the FMP through the office of NorthWinds Environmental Services and on the Natural Resources Information Portal at <https://nrip.mnr.gov.on.ca/s/fmp-online>.

Interested and affected persons and organizations can arrange a remote meeting with MNRF staff with the Thunder Bay-Ignace District or Area Office to discuss the approved FMP.

For further information, please contact:

Mitchell Legros, R.P.F.

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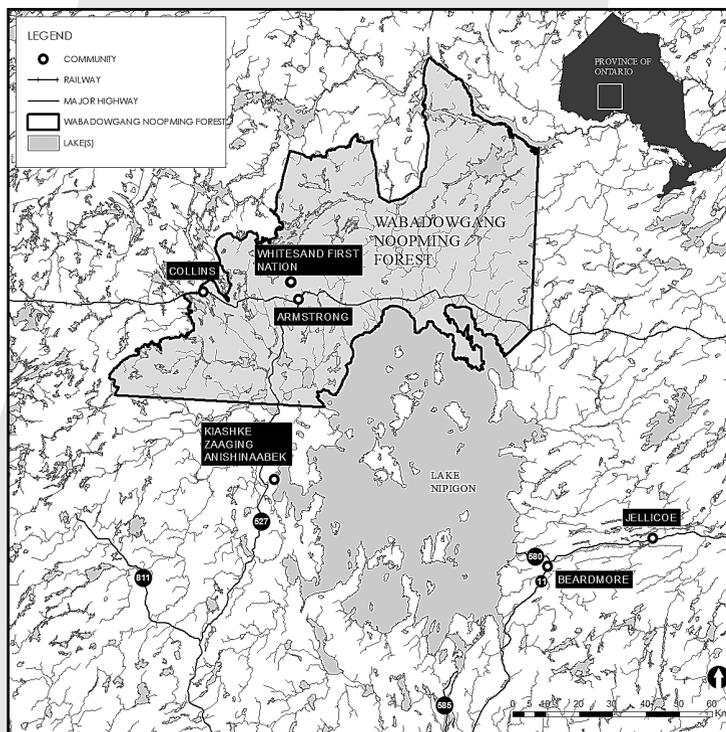
Jeffrey Cameron, R.P.F.

NorthWinds Environmental Services
195 Park Avenue
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 1B9
tel: 807-631-8744
e-mail: jcameron@northwindsenv.ca

Bruce Hyer

Armstrong Local Citizens' Committee
c/o Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
435 James Street South Suite B001
Thunder Bay, ON P7E 6S7

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Police block off a section of May Street last Sunday after a south-side stabbing. (Trisha Letowski)

Arrest made in stabbing

By TB Source staff

A 28-year-old man faces charges after two people were stabbed on the city's south side.

Thunder Bay Police said an officer was in the 100 block area of May Street South just after 5:45 p.m. Sunday, where they observed a fight involving three males and a female along a snowbank.

The officer intervened and broke up the fight.

One male was stabbed during the altercation, while a second male was injured while attempting to wrestle the knife away from the accused.

The two were taken to hospital for further evaluation and treatment of injuries that are not believed to be life threatening.

The accused was taken into custody and brought to the police station.

He faces two counts of aggravated assault and one count of failure to comply with a probation order.

Pool 6 under review

By Ian Kaufman – TB Source

City staff have outlined their intention to update a “master plan” for the Pool 6 lands, setting the stage for further development of the city’s waterfront south of Prince Arthur’s Landing.

The master plan will complement a “best use” study the Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission is already carrying out to explore economic development scenarios for the former industrial lands.

Kayla Dixon, the city’s director of engineering and operations, said the plan will largely be based on feedback collected from the public and key stakeholders.

Developments at Pool 6 could be “transformative” for the city, in much the same way as the construction of Prince Arthur’s Landing, which began in 2009.

Dixon will present city council with an update on Monday, indicating administration’s plans to conduct consultation over the

coming months, and return with an updated plan in late 2023 or early 2024.

The Pool 6 lands, which bear the name of the grain elevator that once stood on the site, sit directly south of Prince Arthur’s Landing and the future site of the Thunder Bay Art Gallery.

Science North has also already announced Pool 6 as its preferred site for a proposed science centre, a prospect widely welcomed by local leaders but still in the development phase.

That’s among the new developments Dixon said led staff to propose updating the 2015 plan.

“Considering the opportunities that are presenting themselves down at the waterfront now — we do have a growing Great Lakes cruise ship industry, as well as developers who are interested in the land, including Science North — certainly it’s a good time to update that plan,” she said.

The plan could be crucial in informing what kinds of develop-

ment take place on the lands, with consultation in 2015 indicating the public preferred plans emphasize green space and public recreation opportunities.

The economic development commission’s best use study, meanwhile, will consider integrating public amenities with private uses that could include housing or hotel developments.

The 2015 master plan envisioned uses including a mountain biking and skating area, Nordic spa, a large multi-use field, and a pavilion for cruise ship visitors.

Some of those ideas may remain in the updated plan, while others could be discarded.

Coun. Andrew Foulds, recently appointed as chair of the city’s waterfront development committee, agreed the timing is right.

He said the updated plan will play a key role in the next stage of developing Thunder Bay’s waterfront, which he said is “on the cusp of greatness” after investments at Prince Arthur’s Landing.



Pool 6 lands offer plenty of development opportunities in Thunder Bay. (FILE)

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Polar Bear Plunge needs jumpers

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

Winter may be officially over, but with two weeks to go before the annual PDR Contracting Thunder Bay Polar Plunge, organizers are still looking for at least 100 more people to brave the chilly waters of Lake Superior.

Normally 300 people take part in the event, which raises money for Thunder Bay Special Olympics, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Roots Community Food Centre and PRO Kids, but not quite 200 had signed up as of this past Friday.

The more the merrier, said organizer Erin Beagle.

"I am a little bit worried about it," Beagle said on Monday. "We are always searching to have about 300 people sign up and right now we're just under 200 people. I know that



This year's Thunder Bay Polar Bear Plunge target is \$75,000. (FILE)

Thunder Bay is this notorious last-minute community, but it takes a little while to get yourselves

psyched up to jump into Lake Superior.

"We also need people to look to

the community for support to help us reach our fundraising goal, so it's not something you can just sign up for the day before. It takes a little bit of planning."

The event is in its 13th year, having spent two years on the sidelines in 2020 and 2021, the victim of COVID-19 restrictions and concerns.

Last year's Polar Bear Plunge raised \$100,000, and the goal for 2023 is set at \$75,000.

The impact on the community is huge, said Laura Daniele, coordinator of the Thunder Bay PRO Kids program.

"The funds raised from the Thunder Bay Polar Bear Plunge go directly towards enrolling kids into sports and recreation so that everyone gets a fair chance to participate. We can literally register hundreds of kids each year because

of this event," Daniele said in a release.

Dozens of community groups have pledged support, including members of the Lakehead Thunderwolves men's and women's basketball teams.

It's that type of spirit committee chair Ryan Gibson is hoping to inspire over the next dozen or so days in the hunt for 100 more participants.

"Overall, this event is about community and about fun. We're one of the largest Polar Bear plunge events in Ontario because Thunder Bay always steps up to join and support. We need that community support now," Gibson said.

"I'll be there taking the plunge and I hope more people will join me."

The Thunder Bay Polar Bear Plunge takes place on April 1 from noon to 2 p.m.



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The further foibles of Farmer Fred

So it snowed. Ol' Man Winter gifted us with at least a foot-and-a-half of the white stuff, all of which had to be cleared from driveway, parking areas, yard, and on the other side of the fence, the area leading to the horse paddock.

The snow clearing is done by my ancient diesel tractor, Big Red. On the rear of Red was a snow-blower, a big, seven-foot wide blower that does the trick when the snow is light and fluffy.

When the snow is heavy and wet, then the bucket on Red's front must do the job.

I write "was" because the blower is no longer on Red's rear and therein lies a tale of Farmer Fred's Foibles.

Red's right, rear tire was looking

fairly flat. I tried to pump air into it but what I got was liquid escaping from the valve. Now why was this happening? I called my mechanic neighbour and he said big tractor tires are about three quarters liquid calcium and the rest air.

Since there was less air in the tire, the calcium now had pushed up. Oh. "You have to raise the tire off the ground to get the calcium to sink. Then you can pump air into it," he advised. Calcium is used to weight the big tires.

OK, then all I have to do is place my jack under the panel where I rest my right foot when driving, and lift. Tractor didn't lift but I bent the panel. Argh! Now what? Called my mechanic again who told me to drive the tractor to

his place where he has a professional jack and a huge air compressor.

But first (I thought) wouldn't it be much easier if I removed the blower from Red's rear? That blower weighs a ton. But here is where foible No. 1 enters the story: It is very difficult to re-attach the blower.

So, I thought no doubt we'd get more snow, but I could attach the blade to the rear of the tractor and together with the bucket deal with any further storms.

There was a lot of snow. But I suited up in a warm get-up and headed out to get to work. After all, no vehicle could easily manage the driveway with the amount of snow that had fallen unless I did snow clearing.

All was going well until I finally decided to clear the straight stretch that goes past the eastern horse paddock and then the veggie garden.

I drove with both bucket and blade down along the east side of the driveway without incident.

But when I retraced my path now clearing down the south side Foible No 2 occurred.

The right, front wheel grabbed the soft snow and into the ditch we went.

No amount of backing and forthing worked. The left rear tire just spun on the solid ground of the driveway and the right one spun because the snow in the ditch was so soft. Capitulation: another call to my mechanic friend who has a towing service as well.

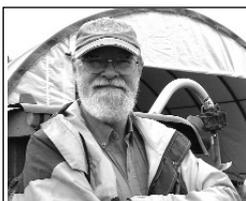
He and his son arrived and were able to extract Red back onto a solid driveway. Since it was still snowing I elected not to take any more chances on that stretch of road. Anyway, vehicles could get in and out driving past the barn.

This latest snow storm even tricked a seasoned driver like my wife, Laura.

I had not yet cleared snow and the part of the driveway opposite the barn's east door was tricky to distinguish solid surface from not solid. She got caught in the not part.

I wasn't home but son, Doug was and managed to extricate the car using the truck. When I arrived back from town, I saw Doug placing orange marker cones along the edge of the driveway. Unfortunately, there wasn't one where Red slipped into the ditch.

Saturday was sunny. Red and I cleared the rest of the snow without mishap since it was now a lot easier to see edges with the snow cones. And yes, I regretted removing the snow blower knowing from experience that we aren't through winter yet. But so it goes.



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XTERRA triathlon set to return in August

After a three-year hiatus, the Sleeping Giant XTERRA Triathlon is making a comeback this August. Race director Phil Brown and the organizing committee have made some big changes to ensure the long-awaited return is a success, and the race roster is already filling up with participants from across Canada and the United States.

XTERRA is a global brand of triathlon that holds races in 47 different countries around the world. The race began in Maui, in 1996, and it has now grown into the world's premiere off-road triathlon racing series. While all triathlons combine swimming, cycling and running into one epic event, the off-road variation has the bike portion on technical mountain bike trails

and the run segment incorporating plenty of dirt and maybe some muddy or rocky sections of trail.

Despite being a global brand, our own XTERRA Sleeping Giant is hosted by a group of passionate volunteers, aspiring to bring a premier event to Thunder Bay while helping to grow the sport of triathlon in our region.

XTERRA Sleeping Giant premiered in 2014 at Sleeping Giant Provincial Park on the Sibley Peninsula. The event ran continuously until 2019 but has been cancelled for three years due to the pandemic.

While the venue at Sleeping Giant Provincial Park was fun, scenic and popular, it is exciting to see that the 2023 event will move right into the city of Thunder Bay. This will



Brooke Ailey competes in 2019.

improve the quality of the mountain bike course, simplify logistics for participants and organizers, and allow many more spectators to

watch the action.

This year, the XTERRA Sleeping Giant races will include a sprint distance and a full distance triathlon as well as relay events, a duathlon, and trail runs. The full-distance event consists of a 1.5 km swim, 26 km mountain bike and a 10 km run with qualifying spots to the XTERRA World Championships in Italy up for grabs.

Marilyn Ailey, who won the silver medal here in 2014 and travelled to Hawaii for the World Championships that year says the experience was unforgettable.

She recalls "having the chance to race with the very best in the world will inspire you to prepare and perform at your absolute peak. You go into a world championship race with no expectations but lots of confidence and you finish with a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that is absolutely immense."

Ailey is excited to see both her daughters compete this year, with the minimum age for the sprint event allowing participants aged 16 and up.

The new Thunder Bay course is sure to impress racers of all ages. Boulevard Lake will be the swim venue, while the bike and run courses will have athletes traversing the incredible Trowbridge Forest trail system.

Though the new XTERRA bike course will not include the most technical trails in our local system, the route still promises to include some singletrack and test each athlete's skill as well as their endurance.

It has been 3 long years, but with a new venue and different event options to suit every level of endurance athlete, the 2023 edition of our local XTERRA promises to have been worth the wait.



Keith Ailey
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Not all chefs created equally

I have no idea what its like in other trades, but it seems like in the cooking game there are definitely levels to it. You have professionals, who apprenticed, learned, and spent years in the industry honing their craft.

Then you have long-term industry people who worked in the business, gained their clout and are respected within the business.

There is another level, people who work in the business at some lower level who work in kitchens, but haven't been in charge anywhere and have created dishes, but never been responsible for a brigade or an entire menu.

The issue is, with these three levels

and all points in between, they will all call themselves chef.

The further down the experience ladder you may go, the more likely it is you will find someone who refers to themselves as a chef or uses it to preface some form of criticism in a restaurant or food space, as if their word about their experience should get their critique a higher level of consideration than a typical paying customer.

In a way it's an arrogant way of telling a server, who is a random bystander that your words should somehow have more weight than that of any other customer.

This in and of itself is completely asinine. Now, being in this business

for any amount of decent tenure is something that should be respected.

The business is a grind in a lot of different ways, it is not remotely for the faint of heart or the weak of will.

However, I have not (in my nearly 25-year career) known a chef whom has gained my respect that boasts it out loud in such a way.

Most of the chefs I know, do not wear it on their forehead. For a lot of us, our younger years were dedicated to the craft, and now that we have been in it for a while, it has become sort of a reserved confidence.

Even after all this time, people still feel the need to offer their own kind of advice.

"Well what I do is" said with some kind of smug, condescending way. The problem is also, you can't tell them to get lost, you have to smile

and take it, because that's the business we are in.

I kind of attribute it to that old Simpsons episode, Marge exclaims "If you're truly cool, maybe you don't need to be told," and Bart and Lisa contradict her by saying "of course you need to be told, how else would you know?"

Well, if you're truly a chef, chances are you won't need to tell anyone because you recognize that the general public won't really care and anyone else you may be telling should probably already know.

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, Brick and Mortar Food Co. and Eat Loco Tacos.



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Historic rectory coming down

By TB Source staff

The chair of the Thunder Bay Heritage Advisory Committee feels it's unfortunate that the parsonage at the former St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church has to be torn down.

But Andrew Cotter said the committee won't stand in the way of an application to the city to demolish the 82-year-old building at 226 Pearl Street.

The committee has determined that its design, historical and contextual value is "low to intermediate," and therefore it doesn't warrant designation under the authority of the Ontario Heritage Act.

"We went to evaluate the building for its heritage potential ... but it's not enough to save it from demolition," Cotter said. "It's far beyond repair. It's prohibitive to repair."

"It's a shame we are losing another heritage building. That building does mean something to the community. In that particular area it's the last residential building located on that street."

The church property was added to the City of Thunder Bay Heritage Register in 2014, after the submission of a report that referred to the historical and structural significance of the church but made no reference to the manse.



The former St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church was added to the city's historic register in 2014.

A spokesperson for Gathering Table — the new name that was adopted when the congregations of St. John's and St. Luke's Anglican churches merged in 2018 — told TBnewswatch the rectory hasn't been used for a decade or more.

David Reid, a warden for Gathering Table, described the structural condition as "pretty

rough."

Over the years, he said, the plaster has deteriorated and there's been considerable water damage, to the point where the manse ultimately became unusable for any purpose.

"It started to have big plaster pieces fall off the walls ... and we were getting continuous sewer

backup into the basement," Reid said.

He explained that the removal of trees for the construction of the nearby Keskus Mall in the 1970s affected drainage in the area, resulting in flooding issues on an almost annual basis.

Exterior components such as the soffit and fascia have also rotted.

Church officials hope removing the rectory will eliminate a worrisome issue related to drug use.

"We used to have a nice garden back there. But it's been kind of trampled down because of traffic there," Reid said. "There's a lot of drug use, and we're always picking up needles."

He said church members became concerned that, because the parsonage blocks the view of rear of the property, someone could suffer an overdose and not receive help in time.

The church itself remains open and active, with regular Sunday services.

St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church was considered the "mother church" of the Thunder Bay Deanery, as it was established in 1872 as the first Anglican church in the area.

The original church and rectory were destroyed by fire in 1881, and were rebuilt by 1884.

The current parsonage was constructed in 1941, but after a new one was purchased on Blanchard Street in 1967, it was remodeled to provide office and education space.

It will likely be torn down this summer.

Reid said the church hopes Habitat For Humanity will be able to salvage items such as doors, baseboards and hardware.

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WBC injuries could hurt event

I'm a little torn about the future of the World Baseball Classic.

Lots of fans, and plenty of players love the event, and all things equal, it's been pretty entertaining.

Admittedly, my interest waned when Canada was knocked out by Mexico, but I understand why fans around the world are loving every pitch.

That said, two high-profile teams have played a pretty hefty price.

The New York Mets lost closer Edwin Diaz to a knee injury, celebrating a Puerto Rico win, and the Houston Astros lost all-star second baseman Jose Altuve to a thumb injury. He'll be sidelined for six to eight weeks.

While I think there's definitely a place for the tournament on

baseball's calendar, perhaps looking to hold it after the regular season (and possibly playoffs) are done might be the smarter move.

Players who do get hurt would have a longer time to heal.

A guy like Diaz might only miss half a season, and Altuve might not miss any time at all.

Fans are paying big bucks to get into ballgames these days, and it makes

sense they want to see the best MLB has to offer.

The insurance companies may have the final say in all of this. If they're not willing to offer to cover the salaries of players injured in a pre-season Classic, then perhaps the

post-season option is more attractive.



Just got back from Halifax for my annual Strat-O-Matic draft.

We've been playing head-to-head for a quarter of a century and I'm going to keep going until I win a title. Maybe this is the year.

If you're a baseball fan, it's one of the greatest simulation games out there, the Dungeons and Dragons of baseball, my partner likes to say.

I've got plenty of pitching, and added Spencer Strider with the third overall pick, but my hitting and defence is a little short of expectations.

For the uninitiated, each player has his own card, with 36 possible outcomes, based on the roll of three dice. The third dice determines

whether or not you read the result off the hitter's card or the pitcher's card.

Stats are based on the previous season, and factor in power, speed, bunting and the ability to hit in the clutch, etc.

I've been thinking about seeing if there's enough interest in starting a local league (or joining an existing one if there is such a thing), though warn it does take a commitment.

Games usually take 45 minutes or so to complete and my Halifax league has a 78-game schedule, six games each against the other 13 teams.



I'm looking forward to the start of the SIJHL playoffs on Thursday night. The Thunder Bay North Stars were one of the hottest teams down

the stretch and they'll open against Red Lake, a team they beat six times in seven outings this season.



The Thunder Bay Chill have been busy in the offseason, adding several new players over the past week as they gear up for the 2023 campaign.

Amongst the newcomers are Irishman Brandon Bermingham, Canada's Hugo Tavares, Ivory Coast's Abdoul Karim Pare, Italy's Edoardo Calzola, Scotland defender Thomas Gray, France's Pierre Lurot and Ireland's Jamie Wynne.

The sheer number of international players is encouraging for new head coach Tony Colistro, who returns after nearly a decade in the front office.

I'd be shocked if this team isn't in the USL League 2 playoffs.



Leith Dunick

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Stewart wins gold

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

Not even a blizzard could slow down Thunder Bay's Anna Stewart on the final day at the 2023 Canada Ski Nationals.

Stewart on Friday topped the under-20 field at Lappe Nordic, capturing gold, despite the tough conditions, with an impressive 1:17:53.2 finish to defeat teammate Katya Semeniuk by just over 10 seconds in the 20-kilometre event.

It was the first gold for Stewart, who currently skis for both Nakkertok Nordic and the Alberta World Cup Academy, at Ski Nationals, after a second-place finish in the open women's sprint and a fourth in the open women's 10-kilometre race earlier in the week.

An exhausted Stewart was thrilled with her result.

"It was a really, really, really tough race, especially with the weather, just puking snow and the tracks were really slow," she said. "You didn't want to lead the entire race, because that would have taken a lot of energy."

"I skied behind my teammate, Katya Semeniuk for lots of the race. We worked together. It's so fun winning on trails that you grew up on."

Winning national gold was the icing on the cake, Stewart added.

"I've had a great championship so far. It's been a lot of fun, but I couldn't have done it without all my teammates."

In the open women's category, veteran Olivia Bouffard-Nesbitt, who calls Quebec home, took the top of the podium finishing the 30-kilometre finale — in 1:58:00.7, edging British Columbia's Amelia Wells by 23 seconds, Wells winning the university title.

Carleton's Maggie McClure took second in the university category, with Calgary's Stella Duncan taking third.



Thunder Bay's Anna Stewart, who now skis in Alberta, won the 20-kilometre U20 race at Ski Nationals.

Leah Reitz won silver in the open category, crossing the line in 2:02:58.

Bouffard-Nesbitt said the race, though shortened because of weather, is the gold standard of cross-country skiing, the one competitors eye as the crown jewel of the sport.

"To get a national title — it's my first national title in this event, the long-distance mass start, so it feels really good," she said.

"Honestly, I think it was my experience. This is actually a really young field. I'm the senior by quite a few years and I think I just had the experience and the confidence to know where I wanted to ski in the pack and I had maybe the advantage of knowing my strengths and knowing I just had to ski my own race and ski smart to save my energy for

where I wanted to use it."

Bouffard-Nesbitt also hit the podium with a third-place finish in the open women's 10-kilometre event and was fifth in the open women's 900-metre sprint.

Quebec's Alexis Ermel captured the under-20 men's 20-kilometre race, in 1:04:47.5, 2.9 seconds better than Quebec's Samuel Picard and 11.8 quicker than third-place finisher Ian Mayer of B.C.

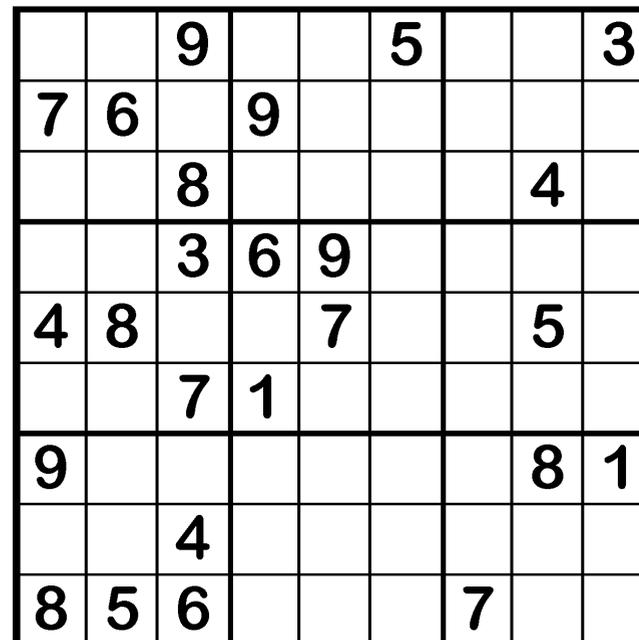
In the open men's 30-kilometre competition, Quebec's Leo Grandbois was the first to cross the finish line, claiming gold in 1:34:27, 42.6 seconds ahead of NTDC-Thunder Bay's Julian Smith, who earned silver. Lakehead's Erikson Moore was victorious in the university race, finishing second overall, in 1:34:51.07.

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"XKFBJWBBWPP LP BCYNLBI ZFY
ECSFBYDKQ UDXBWPP."

— PWBWAD



ACROSS

- 1 John, Gaelic
- 4 Wall (Fr.)
- 7 Wood sorrel
- 10 Son of Odin
- 11 Full of (suf.)
- 12 Blue star
- 14 Apt
- 16 Jack-in-the-pulpit
- 17 Amer. Automobile Assn. (abbr.)
- 18 Father
- 20 Alabama (abbr.)
- 21 Possessed
- 22 Food
- 24 Afr. dried apricots
- 27 Mother-in-law of Pluto
- 30 Smell
- 31 Established value
- 32 Plexus
- 33 Rubella
- 35 Fur seal
- 36 Nipple

DOWN

- 37 Altar constellation
- 38 Handle
- 40 Current rectifier
- 42 Female sheep
- 45 Scientific name (suf.)
- 47 Evergreen shrub
- 49 Salt
- 50 Circuit
- 51 Monster
- 52 Ruddle
- 53 Salamander
- 54 Stinging insect

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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Champions is based on a true story and is a remake of a 2018 Spanish film called *Campeones*. Many of its scenes were shot in Manitoba.

Crowd-pleasing underdogs

Champions (SilverCity) is a formulaic, predictable underdog sports comedy, a combination of “Bad News Bears” meets *Hoosiers* meets *One on One*.

Woody Harrelson plays a minor league assistant basketball coach, a know-it-all hothead with a record of physicality who, thanks to a DUI charge, gets assigned to a 90-day community service stretch coaching a special needs team in the wintery back water of Des Moines, Iowa (aka Winnipeg.)

Champions is a remake of a 2018 Spanish film, *Campeones*, based on the real-life story of a special needs team in Burjassot, Spain.

Director Bobby Farrelly (*There's Something about Mary*) goes for triumph of the human spirit here, scoring points with his likeable cast, many of whom are Special Olympic athletes, some hailing from Winnipeg and Selkirk, Man., where the bulk of the film was shot.

Mark Rizzo's script contains enough guffaws and comical incidents to paper over patchwork holes and soft plotting. Coincidence and convenience are prominent here.

Harrelson gets himself acclimated by having a bumpy one night stand with a feisty local lass (Kaitlin Olson, “It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia”). Later on, Olson (coincidentally) shows up as the protective older sister of one of his players, eventually (and conveniently) consenting to bus the cash-strapped team around with her RV outfitted for her middle-school Shakespearean classes.

Kaitlin describes herself as a “40-ish woman with (seeming insatiable) needs” and Harrelson is happy to oblige. Olson is very appealing in her character’s rather complex involvement with Harrelson.

The film also benefits from the engaging presence of Ernie Hudson as Harrelson’s former head coach and Cheech Marin as a recreation centre manager.

Adjusting to his new reality amazingly quickly, Harrelson’s dark tendencies (conveniently) shrink almost instantly, exhibiting his more genial side, demonstrating surprising tolerance towards his players.

The amiable squad, known as the Friends, exude tendencies associated with Downs’ Syndrome and autism.

They are endearingly cocky and quirky, minus any condescension, providing Harrelson with comical coaching challenges that invariably leads to the team’s suddenly winning ways.

They are a likeable bunch though most are identified by a singular character trait. The players show some independence, holding down jobs, living in group homes. They are supportive of each other, adding to the film’s charm, coupled with the inevitable if hardly earth-shattering epiphany that coach and his team will have a beneficial effect upon each other. Will Woody finally outgrow his self-absorption?

Harrelson’s yearning to return to the NBA is kept in check just long enough to provide some drama in the last act. His combativeness is nicely addressed in the Big Game. Success is not always realized on the scoreboard.

Previous low-brow offerings aside, Bobby and his brother Peter have earned awards for “decades of championing people with disabilities,” in front of and behind the camera, helping to change public perception.

Superficial and sometimes corny, *Champions* is a mild, easy-going distraction from the dog days of winter.



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Dated at Thunder Bay, Ontario on the 6th day of March 2023.



SANDRA BELLIN & SHARRON DUNGEY,
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