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Canadian Publications Agreement No. 0662445 Vol. 20 No. 13

Thursday, March 30, 2023

# GIANTS ON STAGE

**Deadmau5, Dean Lewis and X Ambassadors to headline Wake the Giant Music Festival lineup /15**

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Students at Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School helped introduce this year's Wake the Giant lineup. The festival also includes Ruby Waters, Mattmac, Sagatay and Sara Kae.





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# Council ramps up its library power

By Ian Kaufman - TB Source

City council has voted to expand its oversight of the Thunder Bay Public Library, adding a second councillor to the library's board of directors.

The decision gives council added sway over an institution with which it's sparred repeatedly in recent years - and came as councillors also rejected other governance changes the library board had requested in a Monday evening meeting.

The library had asked council to okay the elimination of dedicated seats on its board for the public and Catholic school boards, a move library leaders said would modernize its governance structure.

The school board reps would have been replaced with citizen members, a move the library said would open the door to more diverse board representation.

Library CEO Richard Togman had emphasized the change was agreed to by the school board representatives themselves in a unanimous vote of the library's board last year.

Councillors rejected the library's request Monday, voting instead to preserve the school board reps, while Coun. Trevor Giertuga put forward a surprise amendment to add another city councillor to the board.

"It is \$7 million-plus that we fund the libraries for each year," he said in explaining the need for more oversight. "I would like to put my name forward... And if there's someone else who perhaps wants to sit on there, then at that point I would suggest we move it to perhaps three members of council."

"This is significant. You know, to put it in perspective, we have two members on the [Thunder Bay Community] Auditorium board, that we've funded for \$750,000 over the last couple years, and we have one member of the library board for ten times that amount."

Giertuga also alleged the library had not directly consulted with the school boards over the change.

Neither school board has yet responded to a request for comment from DougallMedia on the issue.

If the decision is ratified by council in two weeks, it would leave the library with 10 board members, including two school board representatives, two council representatives, and six citizen members.

Council would then proceed to appoint a second representative to join Coun. Michael Zussino, currently the sole councillor on the board.

Zussino and Coun. Andrew Foulds, who was council's previous representative on the library board, both argued council should grant the library's request to remove dedicated school board seats, but welcomed the addition of a second councillor.

"I think there's a real opportunity between city council and the library board, and having one more liaison between the two organizations could be very



Thunder Bay Public Library CEO Richard Togman. (Ian Kaufman)

positive," said Foulds.

"I think that could go a long way in maybe cementing a better relationship going forward," agreed Coun. Greg Johnson.

Johnsen also called Giertuga's motion "a little heavy-handed."

"The board has come to us asking for permission to tweak their board - they want to bring in other skills, visible minorities," he said. "I think that's a good, healthy thing to do for boards and committees."

Library leaders have framed the school board seats as a remnant of a time long past, saying the system was established before most schools had libraries of their own.

Most Ontario libraries have eliminated dedicated school board seats from their boards since the provincial government removed the requirement from the Public Libraries Act in 2002, said Thunder Bay Public Library CEO Richard Togman.

In an interview following council's vote, both Togman and library board chair Carol Grieve said they welcome additional council representation.

"I think it gives us a new avenue to engage in productive dialogue, and to have council better understand library operations," said Togman.

However, he said he was puzzled by council's decision to override the library's recommendation and keep dedicated school board seats.

## WEATHER FORECAST

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>Partly Cloudy</b>	<b>Flurries</b>	<b>Cloudy</b>	<b>Flurries</b>
Precipitation: <b>70%</b> HIGH 1 LOW -4	Precipitation: <b>40%</b> HIGH 1 LOW -10	Precipitation: <b>30%</b> HIGH 0 LOW -8	Precipitation: <b>40%</b> HIGH 2 LOW -3

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# Nearly 600 on city Sunshine List

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

The City of Thunder Bay paid 588 employees at least \$100,000 or more last year, according to the annual public salary disclosure list, 41 more than made the list in 2021.

Topping the municipal list is city manager Norm Gale, who took home \$268,836 in 2022. Now retired police chief Sylvie Hauth was not that far behind, earning \$263,999 last year, while police Sgt. Justin Dubuc earned \$260,506, about \$12,000 more than acting police chief Dan Taddeo, who earned \$248,494.

Fire Chief Greg Hankkio made \$208,482 in 2022.

The city wasn't the only institution with high numbers on the list, which includes the salaries of municipal and provincial employees who make more than \$100,000 in a given year.

Lakehead University wound up with 388 on the list, led by president Moira MacPherson, who

earned \$360,000 last year.

In total, 18 employees at the university took home more than \$200,000, a list that includes employees at both the school's Thunder Bay and Orillia campuses.

At Confederation College, president Kathleen Lynch was the lone employee to top \$200,000, bringing in \$226,923 in salary for the year. There were 132 employees at the college who made more than the threshold required to make an appearance on the list.

Not surprisingly, some of the highest paid workers on the so-called Sunshine List came from the health-care sector.

John Haggarty, senior director of addictions and mental health at St. Joseph's Care Group, made \$410,637, with two other psychiatrists topping the \$400,000 mark.

President and CEO Kelli O'Brien was the 11th-highest paid employee at St Joe's, earning \$336,963. A total

of 167 employees made the list.

At Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, 491 staffers made the list, led by Dr. Robert Sheppard's \$389,242, followed by president and CEO Rhonda Crocker-Ellacott, who made \$375,000.

Dr. Janet DeMille led all employees at the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, where 20 people made the list.

The medical officer of health earned \$362,998 last year.

The Lakehead District School Board had 335 employees make \$100,000 or more, with now-retired director of education Ian MacRae earning \$183,872 last year. At the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board, director of education Pino Tassone made \$207,498 last year, one of 365 employees who met the public salary disclosure threshold.

Neither of Thunder Bay's MPPs made the list, having both been elected for the first time last June.



Thunder Bay had 588 employees who made \$100,000 or more in 2022. (FILE)

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# Top hat welcomes first ship

## Shipping season opens with plenty of promise

By Justin Hardy - TB Source

The *MV Harvest Spirit's* arrival marked the beginning of the 2023 shipping season for the Port of Thunder Bay on Sunday.

"It's a sign of spring for us, and at this time of year, once the first ship comes in, this is the furthest inland port in Canada, so you know, we see the commerce starting up again," said Tim Heney, CEO, Thunder Bay Port Authority.

"It's a pretty exciting time for us and everyone's optimistic. It's a, you know, great day, beautiful weather, perfect"

The *Harvest Spirit* crossed Thunder Bay's breakwall at 0500 hours, a day after passing through the Soo Locks and tied up at Superior Elevator and departed Sunday Night for Windsor with a 14,200-tonne load of canola.

### Special occasion

Captain of the *Harvest Spirit*, Adam Hagen said that being the vessel that opens Thunder Bay 's shipping season was quite an honour.

"We know that the Thunder Bay is one of our main ports of call, this is my first time captaining in the first ship of the year and you know anything to promote the industry as I feel that things are on the up with the shipping industry," he said.

"With the price of fuel and a lot of the environmental implica-

tions that are coming lately, definitely shipping anything by water is many, many times more environmentally friendly and efficient than by rail and certainly by truck."

The 2012-built *Harvest Spirit* is a bulk carrier in the McKeil Marine fleet. McKeil is a marine service operator with over 50 vessels, a sailing and shore-based crew of about 350 and offices in Ontario, New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador.

### Frequent visitor

The *Harvest Spirit* is a regular site in the Port of Thunder Bay, having made 21 trips for grain during the 2022 season. The vessel was second-to-last out of port before its winter closure in mid January.

In a traditional top hat

ceremony on Sunday, Capt. Hagen and chief engineer Gavin Pink received welcoming remarks and tokens of appreciation for opening the navigation season from the Port of Thunder Bay, the City of Thunder Bay and the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce.

"The top hat is an old tradition that they give to the first captain of the year that's in it and as you'll see from in the inside here there's a lot of old captains that have signed on here and some of them I recognize, the gentleman that I've had the pleasure of working with and working for over the years," said Captain Hagen.

"So, to me it's a bit of a club I guess and I'm happy to be a part of it."



MV Harvest Spirit Cap. Adam Hagen.

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EDITORIAL

## Sunshine failure

The so-called Sunshine List came out last Friday (without notice, late in the day, nonetheless), and it's clearly time for a change in the threshold to be included on the list.

When it was first publicized in 1996, the public sector salary disclosure started at \$100,000.

The purchasing power of that same \$100,000 from 27 years ago is equivalent to \$191,000 today.

While \$100,000 is nothing to sneeze at, does it really do the public good to publish the names and salaries of every municipally or provincially paid employee making six figures or more?

If the purchasing power has doubled, doesn't it make sense that the threshold be doubled too, to \$200,000?

The city, for example, would have eight people on the list, not hundreds of rank-and-file employees - 588 this year alone.

Lakehead University would have 18, instead of 388. Lakehead Public Schools would have none.

Even if the threshold was increased to \$150,000, or simply the numbers at or above \$100,000, and not the names, would be an improvement.

## Hospital inevitability To the editor:

The decision to place police in the ER fails to address the underlying problems. This community was served by three emergency rooms and a dedicated mental health facility. It should come as no surprise that people act out inappropriately when placed in stressful even life-threatening situations.

This facility has been in a permanent overload since the day it opened. I doubt this outcome was completely unforeseen and I am in no way attempting to justify violence or threats of violence, however to completely ignore what was surely foreseeable when a community loses some five per cent of the available hospital beds.

The loss of the Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital and its dedicated mental health services means those in crisis inevitably come through the ER.

Staff must be protected, but this community should be asking tough questions to those individuals who failed to understand that poor policy has consequences.

Rick Burns,  
Thunder Bay

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



# Class struggles in Heart of the Lonely Hunter

*The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* by Carson McCullers, her prodigious first novel, was published to instant acclaim when she was just twenty-three. Set in a small town in the middle of the deep South, it is the story of John Singer, a lonely deaf-mute, and a disparate group of people who are drawn towards his kind, sympathetic nature.

Biff, the owner of the cafe where Singer eats every day, is a conservative small businessman who represents the class interest of the petit bourgeoisie.

When his wife dies, Biff is drawn towards Mick, a young girl desperate to grow up, who wants to write symphonies. She represents

the women's struggle. Instead of reaching her full potential she ends up working in Woolworth's.

Blount is an angry drunkard who wants to help people see the inequities of the capitalist system. He is a Communist organizer like Jim Nolan, the working class hero of John Steinbeck's *In Dubious Battle* (1936).

Blount understands that only the class struggle can bring working class people together to fight and bring down the ruling class.

Copeland is a frustrated black

doctor who represents the Black struggle against oppression. But he hates white people and has a furious row with Blount who tries to make him see that the class struggle must be predominant.

There is no hierarchy in oppression - the black struggle is not more or less important than the women's struggle. But the common denominator is class - that is what binds working class people together.

The capitalist system survives only because it succeeds in dividing and ruling the working class along lines



**John Pateman**  
BOOK BANTER

of race, gender and other intersections.

Singer is able to draw all of these forces together. He is their silent confidant and they each pour out their heart to him, and he in turn changes their disenchanting lives in ways they could never imagine.

He is an enigmatic character. He cannot speak or hear but he is a good listener. He brings out the best in people. He is their conscience, showing and telling them the right things to do.

When Singer loses his best friend, a fellow deaf-mute who is committed to a lunatic asylum, he loses all hope and kills himself.

His death is cathartic to his

followers. He has taught them that they must never give up the struggle. Because until all of us are free, then none of us are free. We must fight for ourselves and for each other. No man is an island. This novel was published in 1940 and the final section - which draws the threads of class, race and gender - takes place on Aug. 21 1939.

The date is significant. Europe is on the threshold of war. The characters will have to make some stark choices - will they support Fascism (which doesn't just mean Nazi Germany) but also Corporate America) or Communism (or Radical Democracy, which includes the Soviet Union led by Stalin).

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# Canada needs population growth

By J.R. Shermack

The world needs more Canadians and so does Canada, each for a different reason.

The rest of the world needs more Canadians to be ambassadors for our fully-functioning democracy, one that respects diversity, inclusion and human rights.

These are high ideals but right now much of the world sees Canada as an example of a healthy democracy at work.

Canada itself needs new Canadians for more practical reasons - a strong labor force is the key to prosperity and economic growth but we have a serious worker shortage.

The Canadian government has been very successful in attracting immigrants with the necessary skills and knowledge to help solve this dilemma.

Foreign citizens come for the employment opportunities and many skilled workers choose to stay permanently to become Canadian citizens.

Canada retained its position as the fastest growing G7 country with an annual population growth rate of 2.7% last year.

The new results for 2022 just released by StatsCan showed that our population is pushing the forty million mark, now estimated to be 39,566,248 and counting.

At this rate our numbers will double in the next 26 years which will be an exciting growth opportunity but a daunting challenge for the Canadian government.

One Canadian initiative aims to increase it even further to 100 million by 2100 - who will build the infrastructure to support our burgeoning Canadian population?

Current stats include a record annual population growth of over one million people for the first time in Canada's history, thanks almost entirely to immigrants and temporary residents.

We already have a housing crisis and now we need housing for a million more people, not to mention social services and medical care amid a national shortage in

both those areas.

Who will build all those houses and provide all the services to new Canadians?

Our huge population increase over twelve months is the result of efforts by the Government of Canada to attract foreign workers to ease labor shortages in key economic sectors.

Temporary residency is granted to foreign nationals who wish to work in Canada - every year 200,000 skilled foreign workers are admitted here with Canadian work permits.

Permanent resident status is given to immigrants from other countries who choose Canada as their new home and intend to work towards full Canadian citizenship.

Newcomers with the required skills are needed in health care, manufacturing, building trades, science, technology and engineering.

The Government of Canada is increasing annual immigration targets to 500,000 by 2025 with an emphasis on crucial work skills and



Canada still needs more people.

Our country depends on immigration to drive economic growth, support a rapidly aging work force and ease the shortage of workers in many sectors.

Canada was settled, built and defended by "new Canadians" and now, generations later, we are calling on new Canadians again to help keep us strong and free.

Our country has always been a haven for immigrants and refugees and we are a global leader in resettlement efforts - those who become Canadians always pull their weight.

Special initiatives are under way to offer temporary refuge for people impacted by the Ukraine war, the instability in Afghanistan and earthquakes in Turkey and Syria.

They will be safe while they are in Canada and who knows - if anybody is looking for work while they are here maybe we could hire them to assist with the infrastructure.

Because right now we're pushing 40 million and we really could use all the help we can get.

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## The Bay

To submit an event, email [ldunick@dougallmedia.com](mailto:ldunick@dougallmedia.com).  
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### March 30

#### SIJHL Hockey

Cheer on your hometown Thunder Bay North Stars in Game 5 of their Superior International Junior Hockey League playoff series against the Red Lake Miners.

Thunder Bay won the first two games at home, then Red Lake grabbed Game 3 on Monday night.

The Stars will either be in a position to clinch the series or take a 3-2 lead, depending on Tuesday night's Game 4 results.

Tickets are available at the door, cash only, and the game starts at 7 p.m.

### March 31, April 1-2

#### Spring Home and Garden Show

Stop by the Canadian Lakehead Exhibition for the 25th annual Spring Home and Garden Show.

Exhibitors will set up shop in five different venues and outdoors as well. Admission is \$5 (cash only) and kids

under 12 get in for free.

Hours are 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Friday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

### April 1

#### Easter Bunny Visit

Hosted by Toy Sense, the Easter Bunny will visit the Bay Street store on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

He'll be at the May Street location from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on April 8.

### April 1

#### Polar Bear Plunge

This year, the Thunder Bay Polar Bear Plunge is sharing all funds raised between Thunder Bay Special Olympics, CNIB, PRO Kids and Roots Community Food Centre.

All of these community organizations do important work in our community.

Head down to the boat launch at Marina Park on Saturday, with plungers starting to jump into Lake

Superior from 12 p.m. to noon.

There will be late registration on the day of the event, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 p.m., so it's not too late to put together a team and join the fun.

### March 30

#### Opportunities Northwest Job Fair

More than 60 exhibitors looking for employees like you will be on hand at the Valhalla Inn on Thursday, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

It's a fantastic opportunity to find the career you've always been looking for and network with some of the biggest employers in the region.

It's a chance to meet person-to-person and get a true understanding of a wide-range of companies and organizations throughout Northwestern Ontario.

Put on by Dougall Media, you can pre-register at [CKPR.com](http://CKPR.com).

Opportunities Northwest Job Fair is free to attend.



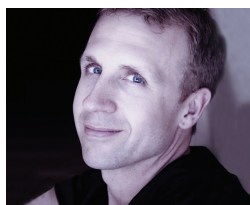
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# Angler's vest a handy fishing option

With the spring fishing season approaching, many anglers will soon be heading back to their favourite rivers in search of migratory steelhead. When hiking long distances on rugged North Shore streams in search of these elusive trout, carrying all the necessary fishing gear can be a real problem. Anglers tend to be resourceful however, and these days we can find several good options to organize and hold a wide variety of flies, leaders and other essentials.



**Keith Ailey**  
the GOOD LIFE

Luckily for us, there are now several really good options that all work better than a traditional tackle box when navigating the fast-flowing rivers that feed Lake Superior.

The big, rectangular plastic tacklebox that is a staple for walleye anglers simply doesn't work on the river.

They are too fragile, bulky and awkward to move around with when navigating the fallen trees and slippery rocks along the river's edge. Instead, modern stream anglers prefer to wear a vest, a chest pack, a hip pack, or a sling pack to hold all their gear while keeping both arms free for fishing.

In my youth, I started out carrying a small box of hooks and spinners down to the river. I can't count the number of times I frantically scrambled back up stream looking for that box after setting it down and wandering away

in search of the next bite.

The realization that I needed to carry my gear on my body to avoid losing it led to me adopting the classic vest by the time I reached my teenage years.

These days I still have the vest but it was basically retired when I discovered an amazing chest pack/backpack combo that I used for a few years.

Eventually a sore back meant that I needed something that kept the weight lower and so I purchased a hip pack with a supportive shoulder strap made by Simms. For the past decade, this has been a flawless solution.

The hip pack holds everything I need to catch fish, plus a couple waterbottles, my lunch, pliers and a hook file, some wool gloves for those cold mornings, and my fishing licence.

On the bottom of the pack, there are two adjustable straps that I use to cinch and hold my rain jacket on those warm days when I need to drop the outer layer.

Of course, what every river angler decides to use in place of a tackle box is a personal choice.

One of my fishing partners is half my age and his back has no problem carrying a fully-loaded fishing vest for twelve hours a day.

Another friend, who is a bit older, wisely uses a sling pack that he can easily slide off to fish unencumbered. I have even seen some people go with a minimalist approach and just throw a few small boxes of hooks and flies into a big jacket pocket and make that work too.

The key is finding what works for you, and then setting about solving the real challenge of actually finding some fish.



Kyle Stratton wears the classic angler's vest.

**We found the minerals.**  
Now we're looking for the people.

Join us at the  
**Opportunities Northwest Job Fair, March 30<sup>th</sup>**

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# Farmer Fred travels away to Toronto

I went away. I had to travel to Toronto for four days for a family obligation. I'm glad I'm back.

Amazingly, Toronto was cold - constant winds.

I was under dressed thinking it would be warmer than where I live. Wrong!

Many people I passed on the streets were decked out in parkas and toques. I should have brought mine. Ah well.

Getting together with nieces and nephews and their offspring was very exciting and intense.

It seemed that everyone talked at once. I'm not used to a large gaggle of rapid-speaking persons.

Oh, it was all good: there were no arguments, just debates. I got to spend time and sort of get to know the husbands of my two nieces and their children.

At the end of each day, I was grateful to be back in my sister-in-law's apartment with whom I was staying (my brother having passed twenty years ago) where it was quiet. She lives handily right in the middle of downtown Toronto.

We spent a lot of time sharing memories.

Of course, being Toronto and being a large international city, everyone seemed to be rushing hither and yon. Except for me.

I trudged to and fro moving slowly. Not used to long walks on concrete. Eventually my shins hurt even though I had very good walking shoes, but still...

The sidewalks didn't seem crowded, and everyone was polite although no one looks at you.

Well, except for the occasional member of the walking wounded aka crazy people.

Fortunately, they were harmless - just noisy.

I also got to attend a splendid organ recital in a large church with a large pipe organ played by the resident

organist who is very good and who has been twice to Thunder Bay to give recitals..

Being Johann Sebastian Bach's three hundred and something birthday, the recital was all Bach organ music and then after the recital we were invited to the reception hall for cake!

The cake had a big Happy Birthday, Bach scrawled on the icing. Nice, unexpected treat.

Amazingly, unlike previous times I've visited where I grew up, I heard almost no sirens.

I think only once an ambulance was threading its way through traffic but that was it.

Where I was staying in downtown T.O., I heard no sirens at night, not like when I stayed with my late

sister back in the 1990's.

And then it was time to fly home.

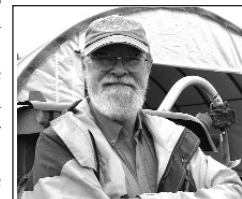
I had flown to the Billy Bishop airport and flew home from there as well. Nearing Thunder Bay on the return trip I pointed out highlights to me seat mate, a young engineer working for Ontario Hydro and in the Thunder Bay area for the first time to check the Hydro generating stations on the Nipigon River.

Nice to be able to recognize familiar landmarks from the air like Pie Island, the tip of the Sleeping Giant peninsula, and then the Welcome islands, and point out Mt. McKay as we touched down on the runway.

My son, Doug, picked me up from the airport and drove me home. Even though I was only four days away, I was still thrumming with Toronto vibes and impressions such that driving home was almost strange - familiar yet not familiar.

But the dogs recognized me and warmly greeted me as did my darling wife.

The chief thing I have noticed since I got back home is the quiet. Now much appreciated..



**Fred Jones**  
RURAL ROOTS



# Direct flight to Ottawa launches

By Leith Dunick - TB Source



Porter's first direct flight to Ottawa left Thunder Bay on Monday afternoon. (Leith Dunick)

Access to the nation's capital is now a direct flight away for Thunder Bay travellers.

Porter Airlines on Monday launched its new Thunder Bay-to-Ottawa route, a twice-daily flight that provides passengers with more options into and out of the city, and an expanded network of connections to destinations far and wide.

It was one of three new routes introduced by Porter out of Ottawa International Airport, a list that includes a daily flight to Boston and two flights a day to New York City, via Newark, N.J.

Brad Cicero, director of communications at Porter, said the Thunder Bay-to-Ottawa route was born out of customer demand.

"Ottawa has always been one of the most popular connecting

markets through Toronto, so now having two non-stop flights a day to Ottawa we think will be a nice complement to this," Cicero said,

just before the inaugural flight from Ottawa landed at Thunder Bay Airport.

It marks the first time in about 20

years that there has been a direct flight to Ottawa from Thunder Bay, and a first for Porter, which first began flying to the city in 2009.

The convenience factor is great for passengers looking to travel to other Porter routes.

"I think it is a good option for connecting flights, especially when you consider Ottawa and Billy Bishop ... where both of those are smaller, manageable airports and offer connecting services. You don't have to deal with the larger Pearson International Airport and getting from gate to gate or different areas or terminals within the airport, so it makes it a lot more convenient," Cicero said.

Ed Schmidtke, president and CEO of the Thunder Bay International Airports Authority, said any additional flights into and out of the city

are welcome news to both the airport and its passengers.

Options are great, Schmidtke said. "Connectivity just helps in general more importantly than which carrier is flying and which one isn't. The fact that we have Ottawa back for the first time in almost 20 years, that's a very big improvement in our connectivity with the rest of the country," he said.

WestJet recently announced it was stopping daily flights between Thunder Bay and Toronto, and Flair Airlines halted a plan to also offer direct flights to Ottawa. WestJet will offer flights to Winnipeg and Calgary out of Thunder Bay Airport.

Schmidtke said the airports authority is in regular communication with airlines about possible new routes, though whether it results in additional flights remains to be seen.

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# Middle America hits menus

We have discussed on HCAYK multiple times about higher-end restaurants looking toward the past or childhood dishes for inspiration. The advantage being relatability.

The general public may not be keen to try blood sausage, however, if you batter it and deep fry it and use one of its more international names, say "Black Pudding Pogo" or "Boulin Rouge Cajun Corn Dog" you may find yourself getting more takers.

It seems in 2023 we are going to begin seeing a few items popping up on menus that take their inspiration from middle America. Many of these items have gained notoriety via social media in the last couple years. One such item finds its origins in Oklahoma and is called "Cowboy Caviar" it resembles a salsa in many ways as the ingredient base is

fairly rooted in traditional Mexican cuisine, with corn, tomatoes, peppers, beans and cilantro being the main ones.

However another step further is the flavourings include cider or other vinegars and honey.

Another trend expected to have some legs this year and probably beyond is "dirty soda."

Which finds its major origins in Utah and is an alcohol free mocktail that usually has diet cola, coconut syrup, lime juice and some kind of dairy (or non dairy equivalent) component, usually half and half 10 per cent cream.

Swig, the chain bills itself as the "home of the dirty soda". Because of

the religious prohibition of hot caffeinated beverages among a large portion of the population, but cold caffeinated drinks not being specifically mentioned, the dirty soda offered a kind of loophole for members of the population that wished to walk on the wild side.

National chain Sonic even has their own version with sprite, cherry syrup and sweet cream known as the "pink lady"

Another food trend near and dear to my own heart is the return of "the trash plate".

The concept is fairly simple, it's an untamed backyard cookout on your plate.

The full composition is up for debate by many people however the



Sonic's dirty soda is known as the Pink Lady.

patties, or again, grabbing one or two of each.

Typically, what follows next is some kind of an aggressively seasoned meat sauce, which resembles more of a thick meat chili or maybe the Thunder Bay equivalent, Coney Island sauce.

Then finally garnished with diced raw onions, and plain old ballpark yellow mustard and served with some kind of bread on the side for sopping.

I can definitely see the trash plate coming to Beefcakes sometime in the future.

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.



**Derek Lankinen**  
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# LU Juried exhibit shines at Art Gallery

By Linda Maehans - TB Source

There couldn't be a better time to visit the Thunder Bay Art Gallery. Treat your eyes, senses and emotions to a world of surprises with the LU Visual Arts Honours Exhibition alongside the Juried show at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery.

For this viewer, the Honours side reveals a most satisfying reverence for tradition, family, and ways-of-life. Especially considering the desert of COVID we've all traversed; and in the face of disheartening social and economic trends ever in the news. The 2023 cohort-of-grads appear to have "blue skies" in heart-and-mind. Well done!

We are greeted by lush, thickly-woven (knitted, crocheted) landscapes: aerial shots of parkland, or are these campgrounds? No, we decide, after noting the titles:

Schreiber, Terrace Bay, Marathon and White River.

Surely these are golf courses; perhaps memories of a rejuvenating road-trip along Superior's north shore. We're smiling. But we become quiet and hushed, gazing at the exquisitely perfected graphite sketches of hands: skin textures, veins and wrinkles; human postures of fortitude, and patience. Lifetimes. Here's that reverence I mentioned.

Nearby, jugs and urns are "mended", stitched back together from whatever damage so that now these vessels remain smoothly intact, ever useful, maybe even sturdier than they originally were.

Along another wall and back corner, seven pastel-graphite-and-conté-on-paper and acrylic-on-canvas scenes draw our attention. Everything is slightly askew; looks higgledy-piggledy. Rooms,



Exhibits are on display now.

certainly old-world, are nonetheless and obviously cherished. We realize we've been whisked back in time and into an immigrant family's home

of shag carpeting, shelves of VHS tapes and home-grown produce just picked from the garden.

"This house belongs to someone close to my family," explains Honours grad Matthew Clara.

"My Bisnonna and Bisnonno lived here, in the East End, around the same time. A woman in her home some 50-plus years now; she arrived in the Lakehead from Italy in the mid-1900's. It's a special bond and emotional experience for me. I find (her home) reliable, humorous, and comforting - religious symbols, floral china, plastic bags from defunct department stores - all stand out for me, and so I'm enthusiastic about including the heritage of my ancestors in my artwork."

In the adjoining gallery, a big switch to bright colours and sharp crisp edges; sunny-warm portraits of family and friends; and some

sweeping outdoor vistas, acrylic-on-canvas, mirrored by intricate "blueprints" rendered-via-fine-threads woven taut around nails pounded into snowy-white boards. Fabulous examples of one artist's mind's-eye skill and perspective.

In TBAG's third and largest gallery, the Juried Exhibit features well over one hundred works in every imaginable medium, genre and subject matter. Beauty, whimsy, noteworthy imagination and talent: it's all there, uncluttered, pleasingly grouped and arranged.

A gala reception and awards-presentation gets underway at TBAG this Friday evening, March 31, at 7 p.m. The Juried show is only up until April 16, so plan to visit (and maybe re-visit) before filling out your People's Choice ballot.

The Honours exhibit continues until April 23.



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# Art theft ring in court

By Doug Diaczuk - TB Source

The five Thunder Bay accused in the Norval Morrisseau fraud ring made their first court appearance on Friday and some charges are expected to be withdrawn next month.

Gary Lamont, 61; David Voss, 51; Diane Champagne, 63; Linda Tkachyk, 59; and Benjamin Morrisseau, 53, all appeared in a Thunder Bay Courtroom on Friday.

All accused with the exception of Lamont, who is in custody at the Thunder Bay District Jail on separate charges, appeared in person. Only Lamont is in custody at this time.

Voss is facing charges of forgery, uttering forged document, defraud the public over \$5,000, three counts of fraud over \$5,000, commission of offence for criminal organization, and instructing commission of offence for criminal organization.

Champagne, Lamont, and Tkachyk are all charged with forgery, uttering forged

document, defraud the public over \$5,000, and commission of offence for criminal organization.

Morrisseau is charged with forgery and participation in criminal organization.

Jeffrey Cowan, 47, of Niagara-on-the-Lake, James White, 81, of Essa Township, and David Bremner, 75, of Locust Hill are also facing numerous fraud charges and will appear in court in their respective communities.

Lamont was arrested last year on charges of sexual assault and has previously pleaded guilty to five counts of sexual assault from incidents that took place between 1993 and 2007 involving male victims between the ages of 17 and 24 years old.

All the accused were arrested as part of a three-year investigation conducted by the Thunder Bay Police Service and the Ontario Provincial Police into forged works purported to be done by prominent Indigenous artist, Norval Morrisseau.



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# Deadmau5 tops Wake the Giant

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

Deadmau5, one of the biggest names globally in electronic dance music, will headline this year's Wake the Giant Music Festival.

The Canadian DJ, known without his famous mouse helmet as Joel Zimmerman, has been nominated for six Grammy Awards and won three Juno Awards for his work, which three times landed him atop the U.S. singles dance category, will be joined by X Ambassadors and Australian singer-songwriter Dean Lewis atop the festival bill.

Following last year's showstopping performance by electronic superstar Steve Aoki, Deadmau5 is another huge get for the event, which was created to help Indigenous students from remote northern communities moving to Thunder Bay to attend Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School.

Organizer A.J. Haapa said the festival is making a name for itself in the music industry, which is making it easier and easier to convince like-minded artists to top the bill.

"I think we continue to kind of make waves on the music scene and I think people are kind of talking. I think they're excited to get involved with this music festival. It's more than just a music festival, it's a movement," Haapa said.

"We're looking to make some social change, so I think there are a lot of artists who are excited to be a part of this festival and jump on board. We're super excited to have Deadmau5. We had Steve Aoki last year, who is obviously in the same kind of league, so here we are this year, we're delivering once again."

X Ambassadors, who emerged from the Brooklyn indie scene in the mid-2010s, are best known for their global singalong hit Renegades, while Lewis is an up-



Deadmau5, Dean Lewis and X Ambassadors highlight this year's festival lineup.

and-coming artist whose debut album, *A Place We Knew*, landed him atop the Australian charts and No. 15 in Canada.

His 2018 single, *Be Alright*, was a top 5 hit across Europe.

There's also a huge Indigenous presence on the bill, including Ruby Waters, Mattmac, a blind music producer and rising pop-trap star and Lake Helen First Nation's Sara Kae, who grew up in Thunder Bay and is best described as an adult contemporary singer-songwriter who infused authentic Indigenous sounds in her songs.

She'll be working with students on a song they'll create together and perform on stage at the Wake the Giant Music Festival.

Sagatay, who hail from Big Trout Lake make a return to the festival after a thrilling Year 2 performance, and the Thunder Spirit drummers will also perform.

DFC student Breanne Meekis said the festival is important for the students because of the sense of welcoming it brings to teenagers living far from home.

"And it's a really great way to kids inspired to come out to high school, because it is a big event. The festival is the one time of year we can stay out past curfew. It's a very big thing to get look forward to," said Meekis.

Tickets are expected to go fast in 2023. Last year's event saw more than 6,500 head to the festival site at Prince Arthur's Landing, and even more are projected to attend on Sept. 16, the culmination of the three-day event which also includes workshops and an Amazing Race-style competition for students at the school.

"The best way you can get a hold of those suckers is to go to [www.wakethegiant.ca](http://www.wakethegiant.ca)."

Tickets, which are on sale now, will be sold in tiers, starting at \$105. A limited number of VIP tickets will also be sold.

Children 11 and younger can attend the festival for free, but must have an admission ticket. Paid-for tickets will be required for all ages in the VIP area.



# John Wick non-stop fighting

One approaches *John Wick: Chapter IV* (SilverCity) with understandable cynicism. Is there anything worthwhile to be found in this avenging assassin saga?

The answer is affirmative though that may not necessarily be a good thing. *Chapter IV* is stupendously over the top, brimming with full-bore nonstop fighting sequences emblematic of the series, mixing more visual style here with much mayhem.

Reluctant rebel assassin John Wick, (Keanu Reeves) is trying to get out from under the \$20+ million bounty on his head established in the previous film. To gain his freedom, he has to negotiate a duel set by the

mysterious High Table, an over-seeing underworld organization.

His nemesis is Marquis de Gramont (Bill Skarsgard), stylishly-tailored, filthy rich, sadistic and dubiously accented. He hates "the idea" of John Wick. The Marquis demolishes the hotel owned by Wick's so-called ally, Winston (Ian McShane) who shot Wick last outing. (It's complicated.)

Aware (fearful?) of Wick's deadly talents, the Marquis schemes to ambush Wick before the duel, blackmailing blind assassin Caine (Donnie Yen) a one-time Wick ally, good with quips and sensors, and engaging a mercenary, Tracker (Shamier Anderson) and his appendage-munching dog. Both

Caine and Tracker intend to keep Wick alive long enough to suit their separate agendas.

Wick gets peace if he survives the duel, Winston gets restitution. The stakes are meaningful enough to warrant passing interest.

Despite the ridiculous carnage, one can't help but marvel at director/ex-stuntman Chad Staheski's elaborate and masterful fight choreography as Wick fends off wave after wave of hapless henchmen staged with clarity, astounding martial arts physicality interspersed with blazing gun play, moving from moody, sumptuous interiors to exterior global landmarks. Admire the filmmakers' craft, park the silliness.

Wearied Wick endures, partly due to his specially designed bullet-proof suits. He has an endless supply of clips for his pistol to cover the movie's near three-hour running time. Collisions with automobiles plus 20-foot drops do not stop John Wick. No matter. The fans are getting their money's worth.

One sequence has Wick outdoors fighting his way up a steep flight of stone stairs only to endure a bruising Wile E. Coyote setback. The crowd giddily groans. "Oohs!" emanate during a harrowing traffic battle around the Arc de Triomphe. Nary a cop in sight.

Another sequence in an old manse

offers an overhead doll's house view, revealing the meticulous fight orchestration as a video game, which the series has unfortunately morphed into.

The film's key problem is imbalance. The focus on the extended fight sequences sidelines the film's characters. Reeves still manages to convey Wick's Zen-like spirit and widower's pain, fanning the tepid flame of viewer empathy.

The soundtrack, production design, global locations and cinematography are very impressive. One appreciates Lance Riddick's final screen appearance as Winston's hotel concierge.

Winston gets the film's best line at the climax, well worth a chortle.

Stay through the exhausting end credits. Vengeance threatens. Patience rewarded.



**Marty Mascarin**

MOVIE TALK



**KEANU REEVES**

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# Predicting the MLB campaign

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

Baseball is back and as we do every year, here's a look into some of Thunder Bay's biggest baseball fans' crystal balls, giving you their take on how they see the season unfolding.

Joining Thunder Bay Source editor and Dougall Media director of news Leith Dunick is CKPR's Bryan Wyatt, Rock 94's Ted Jessop, TBNewswatch's Matt Vis, Dougall Media sales associate Ryan La Via and two guests, Ryan Gagnon and Jordan Lester.

With pitch counts and no shifts, it's going to be an interesting season. Let's play ball!

## Leith Dunick

### Director of News, Dougall Media

- **AL East:** New York Yankees
- **AL Central:** Chicago White Sox
- **AL West:** Houston Astros
- **AL wild-card:** Toronto Blue Jays, Texas Rangers, LA Angels
- **NL East:** New York Mets
- **NL Central:** St. Louis Cardinals
- **NL West:** LA Dodgers
- **NL wild-card:** Atlanta Braves, Milwaukee Brewers, San Diego Padres
- **World Series:** Atlanta Braves over New York Yankees
- **AL MVP:** Shohei Ohtani, LA Angels
- **AL Cy Young:** Jacob de Grom, Texas Rangers
- **AL Rookie:** Gunnar Henderson, Baltimore Orioles
- **NL MVP:** Ronald Acuna, Jr., Atlanta Braves
- **NL Cy Young:** Corbin Burnes, Milwaukee Brewers
- **NL Rookie:** Jordan Walker, St. Louis Cardinals

## Jordan Lester

### Blue Jays Booster

- **AL East:** Toronto Blue Jays
- **AL Central:** Cleveland Guardians
- **AL West:** Houston Astros
- **AL wild-card:** Seattle Mariners, Tampa Bay Rays, LA Angels
- **NL East:** New York Mets
- **NL Central:** St. Louis Cardinals
- **NL West:** Los Angeles Dodgers
- **NL wild-card:** San Diego Padres, Atlanta Braves, Philadelphia Phillies
- **World Series:** Toronto Blue Jays over Philadelphia Phillies
- **AL MVP:** Mike Trout, L.A. Angels
- **AL Cy Young:** Shane McClellan, Tampa Bay Rays
- **AL Rookie:** Josh Jung, Texas Rangers
- **NL MVP:** Trea Turner, Philadelphia



There's more reason to be excited in San Diego than there has been since the team formed in 1969. (Leith Dunick)

## Phillies

- **NL Cy Young:** Corbin Burnes, Milwaukee Brewers
- **NL Rookie:** Corbin Carroll, Arizona Diamondbacks

## Ryan Gagnon

### Cleveland Crusader

- **AL East:** New York Yankees
- **AL Central:** Cleveland Guardians
- **AL West:** Houston Astros
- **AL wild-card:** Los Angeles Angels, Toronto Blue Jays, Baltimore Orioles
- **NL East:** New York Mets
- **NL Central:** St. Louis Cardinals
- **NL West:** Los Angeles Dodgers
- **NL wild-card:** Atlanta Braves, Philadelphia Phillies, Arizona Diamondbacks
- **World Series:** Cleveland Guardians over Philadelphia Phillies
- **AL MVP:** Shohei Ohtani, LA Angels
- **AL Cy Young:** Shane Bieber, Cleveland Guardians
- **AL Rookie:** Triston Casas, Boston Red Sox
- **NL MVP:** Juan Soto, San Diego Padres
- **NL Cy Young:** Jacob de Grom, Texas Rangers
- **NL Rookie:** Corbin Carroll, Arizona Diamondbacks

## Ted Jessop

### CKPR Radio

- **AL East:** New York Yankees
- **AL Central:** Minnesota Twins
- **AL West:** Houston Astros

- **AL wild-card:** Toronto Blue Jays, Seattle Mariners, Cleveland Guardians
- **NL East:** New York Mets
- **NL Central:** Chicago Cubs
- **NL West:** San Diego Padres
- **NL wild-card:** Atlanta Braves, LA Dodgers, Philadelphia Phillies
- **World Series:** San Diego Padres over New York Yankees
- **AL MVP:** Aaron Judge
- **AL Cy Young:** Carlos Rodon, New York Yankees
- **AL Rookie:** Gunnar Henderson, Baltimore Orioles
- **NL MVP:** Juan Soto, San Diego Padres
- **NL Cy Young:** Corbin Burnes, Milwaukee Brewers
- **NL Rookie:** Corbin Carroll, Arizona Diamondbacks

## Ryan LaVia

### Baseball wanderer

- **AL East:** Toronto Blue Jays
- **AL Central:** Cleveland Guardians
- **AL West:** Seattle Mariners
- **AL wild-card:** Houston Astros, New York Yankees, Texas Rangers
- **NL East:** New York Mets
- **NL Central:** St. Louis Cardinals
- **NL West:** San Diego Padres
- **NL wild-card:** LA Dodgers, Atlanta Braves, Philadelphia Phillies
- **World Series:** San Diego Padres over Toronto Blue Jays
- **AL MVP:** Vladimir Guerrero Jr., Toronto Blue Jays
- **AL Cy Young:** Dylan Cease, Chicago

## White Sox

- **AL Rookie:** Gunnar Henderson, Baltimore Orioles
- **NL MVP:** Ronald Acuna, Jr., Atlanta Braves
- **NL Cy Young:** Corbin Burnes, Milwaukee Brewers
- **NL Rookie:** Corbin Carroll, Arizona Diamondbacks

## Bryan Wyatt

### CKPR News Director

- **AL East:** New York Yankees
- **AL Central:** Cleveland Guardians
- **AL West:** Houston Astros
- **AL wild-card:** Los Angeles Angels, Toronto Blue Jays, Baltimore Orioles
- **NL East:** Philadelphia Phillies
- **NL Central:** St. Louis Cardinals
- **NL West:** Los Angeles Dodgers
- **NL wild-card:** San Diego Padres, Atlanta Braves, New York Mets
- **World Series:** Los Angeles Dodgers over New York Yankees
- **AL MVP:** Aaron Judge, New York Yankees
- **AL Cy Young:** Gerrit Cole, New York Yankees
- **AL Rookie:** Anthony Volpe, New York Yankees
- **NL MVP:** Trey Turner, Philadelphia Phillies
- **NL Cy Young:** Zach Wheeler, Philadelphia Phillies
- **NL Rookie:** Kodai Senga, New York Mets

## Matt Vis

### TBNewswatch Editor

- **AL East:** New York Yankees
- **AL Central:** Chicago White Sox
- **AL West:** Houston Astros
- **AL wild-card:** Toronto Blue Jays, Seattle Mariners, Tampa Bay Rays
- **NL East:** Atlanta Braves
- **NL Central:** St. Louis Cardinals
- **NL West:** Los Angeles Dodgers
- **NL wild-card:** San Diego Padres, New York Mets, Philadelphia Phillies
- **World Series:** San Diego Padres over New York Yankees
- **AL MVP:** Shohei Ohtani, LA Angels
- **AL Cy Young:** Gerrit Cole, New York Yankees
- **AL Rookie:** Gunnar Henderson, Baltimore Orioles
- **NL MVP:** Juan Soto, San Diego Padres
- **NL Cy Young:** Max Fried, Atlanta Braves
- **NL Rookie:** Corbin Carroll, Arizona Diamondbacks



# Kelly joins McCarville

## Former Team New Brunswick skip joins five-player squad

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

Krista McCarville has won four medals at the Scotties Tournament of Hearts, but has yet to capture gold.

The Thunder Bay skip is hoping her latest move will finally help her capture that elusive national women's curling championship.

McCarville on Monday made it official, announcing former Team New Brunswick skip Andrea Kelly will be joining the team and will play third, with Kendra Lilly, Ashley Sippala and Sarah Potts rotating in and out of the back end throughout the 2023-24 curling season.

It's a big change, said McCarville, who finished third at this year's Scotties, following up on a second-place finish at Fort William Gardens in 2022.

But it's one that was necessary.

"It's been eight years together and in eight years we've done really well, always making the playoffs. We've been second, we've been third, we've been fourth, never first. It's getting to the point where you are proud of your performance, but it's also super frustrating because it's like when is it going to be our time," McCarville said, reached by phone after making the news official on CBC's The Curling Show.

After making some on-ice changes this past season and still coming up short at nationals, they started looking at outside options, allowed on import on the team while still qualifying for the Northern Ontario Scotties berth.

"There was a little bit of communication with Andrea. Her name was brought up and we thought, there's no way," McCarville said. "She's with her team and very similar to us, they're very good friends. But when we heard that she was actually making changes on her team, we thought this is the opportunity that we



Andrea Kelly has been a fixture at the Scotties, skipping Team New Brunswick. (Curling Canada)

need."

Kelly, who curled last season with Katie Forward, Jill Brothers and Sylvie Quillan, parted ways with the team, a year after winning Scotties bronze in Thunder Bay.

She said changes in the curling world usually happen fast and furious, and this decision was no different.

"Things just happened really fast for our team and I started having chats with Kendra and then Krista last week. It was really exciting. This wasn't really on my radar," the 37-year-old Kelly told The Curling Show's Devin Heroux and Colleen Jones, who called McCarville the

best skip yet not to win a Scotties title.

"But after the Scotties this year, and it wasn't really a great week for our team, there was lots of things to think about and consider about how I wanted to see the next couple of years go at this point in my curling career."

She added it was a team decision, one they all agreed upon.

"When Sarah's not able to play, Ashley will play lead and Kendra will continue to play second. When Sarah's back, it'll be Kendra or Ashley playing second. We don't exactly know that part of it because we've never actually done this. It's going to be a trial and we'll see how things go."

### ENIGMA™ CRYPTOGRAM

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

"ZPXTCP FA YNMMYP PJHPQWPW. T WITYY YPTU XNYY WNQU T KCPTM WSNH."

— ZPQGTINQ ACTQUYNQ

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3		9						

#### ACROSS

- 1 Yemen capital
- 5 Bright-colored fish
- 9 John brown's dog
- 12 Son of Judah
- 13 Indigo plant
- 14 Amer. Bar Assn. (abbr.)
- 15 Zenith
- 16 Pilaf (2 words)
- 18 Mani
- 20 Black
- 21 Trolley
- 23 Sp. hero (2 words)
- 26 "Fables in Slang" author
- 29 Cleopatra's attendant
- 31 Vein of ore
- 32 Knave of clubs
- 33 Eng. poet
- 35 Amer. Automobile Assn. (abbr.)
- 36 Zulu warriors

#### DOWN

- 38 Hindu widow's suicide
- 39 Spread to dry
- 40 Pers. carpet
- 42 Nutmeg husk
- 44 Irish nobleman
- 46 Legislature
- 50 Smoked beef
- 53 Arabian Sea gulf
- 54 Mother of Hezekia
- 55 Academy (abbr.)
- 56 Dear (Ital.)
- 57 Pounds (abbr.)
- 58 Tire casing
- 59 Liquefy

#### ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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- 7 Fr. resort
- 8 Church property
- 9 Mack
- 10 Absolute (abbr.)
- 11 Exclamation
- 17 Puppet
- 19 Urinary disease (suf.)
- 22 Brothel keeper
- 24 Scientific name (suf.)
- 25 Late
- 26 Sacred Egypt. bull
- 27 Girl
- 28 Accent
- 30 Defer (2 words)
- 34 Fr. historical provinces

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57					58			59			



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# Volpe, Walker eras set to begin

Every year baseball brings the promise of top young prospects making a splash.

Last year, catcher Adley Rutschman and centre-fielder Juan Rodriguez lived up the hype, while third baseman Bobby Witt, Jr. may need a little more seasoning.

This year shortstop Anthony Volpe has made the jump and landed a spot on the New York Yankees, while outfielder Jordan Walker has made the grade with the St. Louis Cardinals.

A few short years ago, neither player would have stood a chance to make the cut out of spring training, as teams manipulated service time in order to save themselves a little

cash down the line.

I can't wait to see these two play. Volpe hit .302 in spring training and blasted three homeruns, while Walker hit .277 with an equal number of dingers for the Cards.

I get excited for every baseball season, but this year there are just so many story lines, starting with stars in new places.

The often-injured Jacob de Grom is now in Texas, replaced in the Met's rotation by future

hall-of-famer Justin Verlander.

Chris Sale is back and healthy in Boston (Red Sox fans hope) and the Yankees have added Carlos Rodon to what appeared to be the best rotation in baseball before Luis Severino was sidelined with a lat

injury.

Aaron Judge versus Shohei Ohtani is almost as good as Ohtani versus Mike Trout with the World Baseball Classic on the line.

And who isn't rooting at least a little for the San Diego Padres, a team that hasn't won a thing in 54 years, but ponied up to sign Xander Bogaerts to a crazy deal this offseason?

Add in the return of the Thunder Bay Border Cats this summer and America's game is looking great this summer.

□□□

Speaking of the Cats, I noticed a few former players having pretty decent springs.

Jason Vosler, who appears to have made the Cincinnati Reds out of spring training, was 10-for-38 as of

Monday and could serve as a backup to Joey Votto, who will start the season on the injured list.

Catcher Michael Papierski hit .294 in 17 spring at bats for the Detroit Tigers, while Andy Weber had two hits in six at bats for the Cubs.

Matt Batten had a tough time in Cactus League play, going just 3-for-19, while reliever Greg Weissert was 0-1 with a 3.68 earned run average and a 0.95 WHIP in seven appearances with the New York Yankees.

All but Weber have MLB experience.

□□□

Eric and Marc Staal raised quite a stir last week when they refused to wear Pride-themed warm-up jerseys prior to the Florida Panthers game against the Toronto Maple Leafs.

The brothers cited their religion,

saying as Christians the LGBTQ+ lifestyle is something they couldn't support - while adding they welcome any and all to the sport.

The NHL has got to figure this out once and for all.

While it's easy for me to say just wear the jersey, I haven't picked up a bible since the '70s.

That said, the NHL is duty-bound to continue holding Pride Nights (and honouring other minority groups).

But I think the practice jersey days are probably at an end.

Players, like the Staals, are being put in an unenviable position, which in turn is causing hurt in the LGBTQ+ community, who maintain the jerseys aren't about endorsement, but acceptance.

That's the message I hope Eric and Marc take away from the backlash.



**Leith Dunick**  
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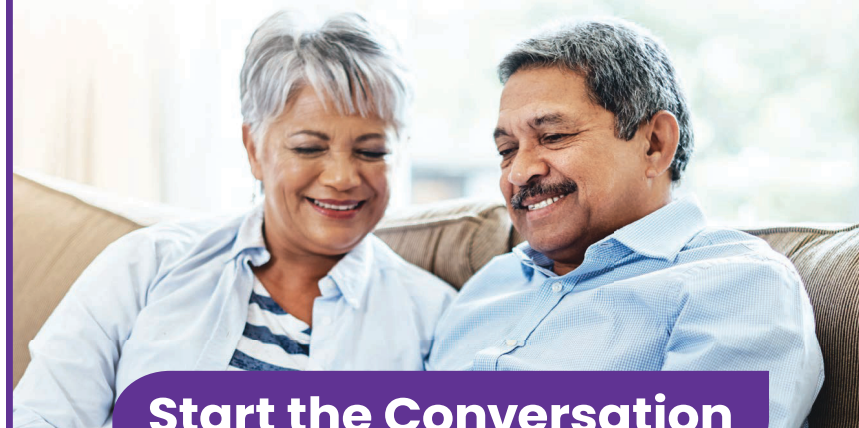
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