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Thursday, April 6, 2023







WISHING YOU A

happy

SOURCE VOICEONMUNITY CONNECTION



The Northern Ontario School of Medicine has campuses in Thunder Bay and Sudbury. (FILE)

NOSM wants to stay

By Gary Rinne - TB Source

The president and CEO of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine University says it is up to Lakehead University whether the medical school continues to operate its Thunder Bay campus on Lakehead's property over the long

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine was run jointly by Lakehead and Laurentian Universities from 2005 until 2022 when it became a stand-alone degree-granting institution.

NOSM U's Dr. Sarita Verma has signalled that the new university aims to expand its role regardless, but wants to work closely with Lakehead as it does so.

In an interview Monday, Verma emphasized that the new university will always maintain a strong presence in Thunder Bay.

"We were able to establish a onevear relationship that keeps us here at Lakehead until June 30 this year," Verma said. "And then we would like to stay for as long as they'll have us. I think those discussions rely on their desire to have NOSM U in situ."

Verma said she's been trying hard to reverse the impression that NOSM U is leaving Thunder Bay or the Northwest.

"We're not. Half our staff, half our students, half our infrastructure is here in Thunder Bay. Whether it continues at Lakehead is up to Lakehead," Verma said "We would be aspiring to have very strong relationships with Lakehead and the City of Thunder Bay because we see ourselves actually growing and building, and expanding toward a significant, strong, not only clinical

but health professions future in the Northwest."

She added that she has reached out to Lakehead's new incoming president, Gillian Siddall, and hopes to meet with her as soon as she begins her new role later this year.

Verma noted that NOSM U has a lease for its space at Lakehead for 15

The university responded it hopes to maintain the partnership.

"We continue to nurture a future with NOSM U that builds on our mutual strengths."

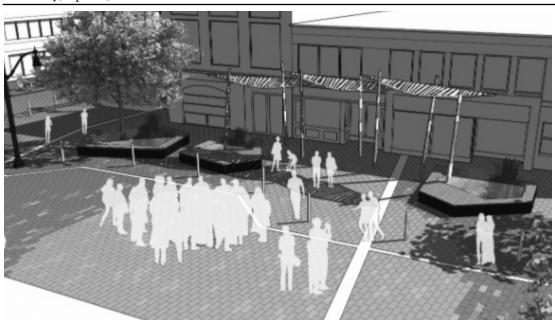
It noted that the two institutions did work together to find a solution that addressed NOSM's space needs on campus this year, and that Lakehead is optimistic the parties will find a solution going forward.

According to the statement, Lakehead and NOSM U entered into a five-year agreement last year.









An artist's rendering of what Red River Road could look like in two year's time.

Downtown core getting a facelift

City council OKs \$13.2-million north-side revitalization

By Ian Kaufman - TB Source

Thunder Bay's city council has bet on the benefits of a significant revamp of the city's north core, rebuilding a key stretch of Red River Road with more space for pedestrians, markets, events, and greenery, and new approaches including a curbless

Councillors expressed optimism the project would further invigorate the downtown, building on the arrival of new businesses, waterfront development, and cruise ship visits, calling it an investment that will bear fruit over generations.

Council on Monday approved a \$13.2 million contract with local Nadin Contracting to complete the work on Red River Road and Court Street over the coming two years. The contract's cost has climbed from previous figures cited by staff.

Three north ward councillors had acknowledged the rising costs in interviews with TBNewswatch last week, with two expressing concern the increase could threaten council suport.

On Monday, however, councillors downplayed the increase, with some suggesting it was more media narrative than reality.

Coun. Shelby Ch'ng argued that TBNewswatch reporting had "misled" the public by citing the full \$13.2 million value of the Nadin contract, when the city will bear only \$11.9 million of that cost after an HST rebate.

The project is estimated to cost the city \$12.6

million after factoring in additional consulting and engineering costs, however. Around \$2 million of that will cover replacement of underground infrastructure, with the rest to rebuild the street and add what staff have called "premium finishes."

The city hopes to cover \$3 million of those costs through applications to the NOHFC and FedNor.

If the funding does not come through, the city will defer other infrastructure work, including storm sewer lining, repaying Memorial Avenue from Central Avenue to the Harbour Expressway.

Staff said an initial \$8 million estimate for the downtown rebuild had covered replacing existing infrastructure, and had risen to accommodate the more ambitious redesign.

The rebuild will feature lockstone-style pavers, a curbless street on Red River that can be fully or partially closed for markets and events, and more benches, greenery, and public art.

Kayla Dixon, the city's director of engineering and operations, said the rising cost responds directly to clear feedback from the public and businesses.

"This project is the result of two years of consultation with the community on what they want their downtown to be - a safer, pedestrian-friendly place where they can enjoy food and beverage outside, businesses can spill out into the public right-of-way, families can come to enjoy street fairs and events, and where visitors and cruise ship passengers want to spend time, and therefore spend money."

WEATHER FORECAST

THURSDAY



Partly Sunny

Precipitation: 40% HIGH -2 LOW -11



FRIDAY

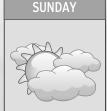
Partly Sunny

Precipitation: 20% HIGH 2 LOW -8



Sunny

Precipitation: 30% HIGH 3 LOW 0



Partly Cloudy

Precipitation:30% HIGH **10** LOW 1







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Thursday, April 6, 2023

Chiefs call out bill

By TB Source staff

An Indigenous leadership group from the Northwest and Far North is objecting to the Ford government's "legislative bulldozer" attempt to put more mines into production faster.

Bill 71, the Building More Mines Act, is getting some blowback from the Matawa Chiefs Council, a Thunder Bayheadquartered alliance of both road-accessible and remote communities in a region that's exploding with exploration activity and includes the undeveloped mineral-rich Ring of Fire area.

The quickened pace by which the Ford government wants to approve more new mines has drawn the wrath of other First Nation communities, which took their beef to Queen's Park last week.

On the same week public consultation sessions on Bill 71 are scheduled for Sudbury and Timmins, the Matawa Chiefs Council issued a "unified political statement" about a month after Mines Minister George Pirie tabled the bill in the Ontario legislature in early March.

In a news release, the leaders say the government's approach with this bill is "exploitive and aggressive" and runs contrary to the principles of reconciliation and the spirit and intent of James Bay Treaty No. 9.

The chiefs point out that the treaty area encompasses 11 operating mines that directly and indirectly employ more than 7,800. By way of exploration projects, 118 of 188 sites are of interest to the chiefs, with 51 of these sites being much-coveted critical mineral plays.

The aim of these amendments of the Ontario's Mining Act is to reduce provincial permitting and approval times to put more new mines into production quicker to meet the coming world demand for high-tech, or critical, minerals.



The union representing Thunder Bay Transit drivers says their membership is under increasing danger while on the job. (FILE)

Bus safety sought

By Ian Kaufman -TB Source

Safety issues aboard Thunder Bay Transit will be put under the microscope in a review, answering a call the union representing bus drivers made in stark terms before city council Monday night.

Leaders with Amalgamated Transit Union Local 966 told councillors that verbal and physical assault against drivers had become a full-blown crisis.

"Transit operators, your frontline employees, are under attack," said president Fred Caputo. "Operators are having to deal with physical and verbal assaults. This includes being sworn at, spit at, called derogatory names, pushed, grabbed, and having liquids thrown at them simply for performing their job."

Union leaders have called those incidents a daily reality for bus drivers, and charged the city's response has been inadequate.

"Many operators are dealing with mental health issues and PTSD as a result of the increasing incidents and lack of help," said Caputo. "The words 'Just let them ride' have become more and more routinely used by the corporation as a way to not deal with the concerns of the operator."

In response, the union asked council to order a review of operator safety, and to hire dedicated transit security officers at the city hall terminal, among other steps.

Caputo said those security officers must be trained

in de-escalation and mental health crisis response, saying that's where previous staffing using private security has fallen short.

The union also asked the city to staff a second nighttime transit controller, saying that would help increase what Caputo called spotty response times for incidents on board.

The union pulled few punches in describing what it called the failure of transit management and city administration to meaningfully address its concerns.

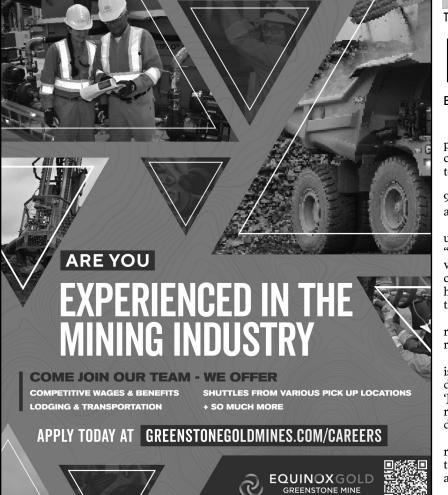
"Countless labour-management meetings involving transit management and senior city administration staff has resulted in no positive action being taken," Caputo said. "The time has come where we need a positive, lasting solution to these ongoing safety concerns."

Caputo repeated a call to install safety shields, saying they still had not been delivered years after the request was first made.

A city plan to test security shields for bus drivers was paused in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as bioshields were installed instead.

City manager Norm Gale said the city is responding to rising incidents of assaults on transit, a phenomenon he and Caputo agreed is happening nationwide.

"I do wish to provide assurances to council that administration is indeed aware of the challenges our transit operators face, and we are actively exploring solutions," he said.



Job Fair connects 100s with eager employers

Second annual event a success

By Justin Hardy - TB Source

The Second annual Opportunities Northwest Job Fair, organized by Dougall Media, was held at the Valhalla Inn on Thursday and hundreds of attendees were ready to meet up and make connections with potential employers.

Event consultant Nancy Milani said that she expected over 1,500 people to attend after receiving 400 more pre-registrations than last year and having more than 80 businesses show up to meet with potential employees.

"Some of them are actually on-site

doing interviews, so it's a great opportunity for people to come down and to see what's out there," she said.

"There's a variety of sectors here, there is everything from mining and transportation, health services, education, there's just so many different booths there. It's very, very busy from the minute we opened the door today."

Many organizations were thrilled at the chance to meet so many potential employees.

Ontario Native Women's Association human resources coordinator Tanya Towner said that it's been amazing to network and meet everybody coming through the

"They're learning about who we

are," she said. "If they know ahead of time and just getting to experience us and experience everybody here and interact with all the other local companies."

Attendees like Pat Levesque were excited to go back to a more oldschool way of job hunting that gives them the chance to meet employers face to face.

"Personally, I like to meet with people. Online, I don't like that personally, and I think there's a lot of people that want to do a one-onone," said Levesque.

"Companies, I believe they get a better sense of who you are, what you're all about, you can't, basically, lie about anything, you're face to face, and you look at the person in the eyes and you can tell."



Potential workers met with companies like Impala at the Opportuntiies Northwest Job Fair.







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NEWS

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Finns welcome NATO

By Gary Rinne - TB Source

The accession of Finland to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has left members of Thunder Bay's Finnish community quietly celebrating the historic occasion.

The Nordic nation officially became the 31st member of NATO at a ceremony Tuesday in Brussels.

Pasi Pinta, the honourary consul of Finland in Northwestern Ontario, said Finns around the world have been looking forward to this day ever since the country submitted its application almost a year ago.

He said this is the last step for Finland "getting out of the shadow of Russia, the Soviet Union, and then Russia again," so its significance is profound.

"One hundred and six years of independence that's seen several wars, has seen Finland moving from a Russian grand duchy to independence in 1917, has seen Finland integrate with the European Union in the early '90s, and now the defence alliance in 2023. It's a progression that has levelled the playing

field for a very small country that's a neighbour to a very, very large and sometimes hostile country."

Pinta said NATO provides Finland with a level of security it has never had before.

Russia is unhappy with the move, but he said it's had over a year to come to terms.

"I think Russia understands the new reality of what they've created with their own

actions"

Despite the importance of the event, Pinta expects it will be marked in a typically low-key way.

"We don't usually make a big fuss about things," he said.

Pothole complaints starting to increase

Autobody shops seeing more work as a result of the city road conditions

By TB Source staff

At the height of the annual pothole season in Thunder Bay, it's no surprise that city councillors are getting an earful from frustrated drivers.

But the city has no control over weather conditions which this year have been particularly conducive to the formation of craters because the freeze-and-thaw cycle was exacerbated by heavy rain that was followed immediately by freezing weather in mid-February.

It's made it extremely difficult for city road crews to stay on top of the situation with cold-mix asphalt, as this is usually only a temporary fix until hot-mix asphalt becomes available when construction season arrives.

For drivers, dodging potholes to avoid damaging their vehicles is often unavoidable.

A spokesperson at Narvi's Truck & Auto Service told TBnewswatch they're doing a lot more repairs to suspension and steering mechanisms this year, and are seeing numerous cases of damaged tires — including separated tires — and rims.

He described it as "a dramatic increase" in this kind of work, and said one driver for a meal delivery service has been in about a dozen times with damaged tires.

At Done-Rite Tire & Auto, a manager also reported an uptick in tire and suspension work.

"Oh, for sure. Right now it's been mostly tires and rims. We've got bent and broken rims, and damaged tires. Yeah, that stuff's leading to suspension issues ... we're seeing a little bit more than we would have last year."

Coun. Kristen Oliver is among those who has been receiving phone calls and emails about potholes.

"We are seeing some pretty nasty potholes out there," she said.

On her Facebook page last week, Oliver reported, "I have made a long list of potholes that need to be repaired and submitted it to Infrastructure and Operations. I can only report on the ones I see or where people have shared. I don't drive up and down every street so calling the City at 625-2195 to report a pothole is the quickest way to having it addressed."

But in an interview, she expressed appreciation for what the department's staff are doing.

"I've had a discussion with the roads manager. I appreciate the work that crews are doing. The storm drains are still frozen too, so now crews are going out to try to thaw the grates out and get them open while at the same time trying to mitigate the pothole



Potholes like these on Farrand Street can be found all over.

situation."

"When we're seeing the competing interests that our road crews are trying to manage through to keep the roads in a drivable condition — hats off to them because this has certainly got to be impacting them on a daily basis."

The city's roads division is currently deploying four to six crews a day to manually fill potholes, and is also using its Python 5000 machine.

Oliver believes the proliferation of potholes is a symptom of climate change, a phenomenon that's damaging infrastructure in cities everywhere.

"We don't typically see rain in February ... I'm old enough to remember when winter time meant snow and spring meant rain. And now we are starting to see rain that's accumulating in January and February," she said.

The city's infrastructure and operations department, she said, is taking climate change into consideration now in its planning process.

"Collectively, council would love to put more money into fixing roads, but the matter before us is that we're seeing a lot of pressure from social crises that we're seeing in this community and the pressure it's putting on fire, police and EMS services," Oliver said. "That's causing us to focus in on how we address all that on top of the infrastructure gaps."

She emphasized other municipalities throughout Ontario find themselves in the same conundrum, and said the challenge will remain unless a mechanism is put in place for sustainable funding for infrastructure upkeep.





TBT News anchors Riley McManus and Ryan Bonazzo react to the frigid waters of Lake Superior last Saturday. (Leith Dunick)

Hundreds take up Polar Bear Plunge

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

"Where's my mom? Where's my towel?"

These were the words on Saturday of a teenage jumper as she emerged from a hole carved into stillthick ice at the edge of Lake Superior, one of hundreds who took part in the annual Thunder Bay Polar Bear Plunge, an event that has raised more than \$137,000 and counting.

The student quickly bolted from the waterfront, repeating the post-jump routine of most participants, who scrambled to the warming tent after doing their part for local charities, including PRO Kids, Roots Community Food Centre, Special Olympics and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

Jennifer Aikenhead was among those who chose charity over reason and plunged into the frigid waters along with members of her OSSTF team.

Not that it was her idea, she joked.

"Actually, a co-worker of mine decided that she wanted to go in it and she wanted some other people to go in it too," Aikenhead said.

"So, we kind of got talked into going. I don't know if I'm crazy, or what, but it's for a good cause, so why

Matt Pawlicki, Morgan Perozak and Andraya Colistro had similar reasons for taking part, members of Chocolate the Moose.

There might have been a little bit of office pressure

"To be completely honest, our boss came up to us at work and said, 'Hey, we're going to put in a team.' She knew that we were going to have to be the best team members for that, so we decided to go a long with it. It was probably the best thing we did all day,' Perozak said.

About 400 jumpers took part on Saturday, cheered on by hundreds more lining the shoreline.

Organizer Ryan Gibson said said he was thrilled at the turnout for the 13th annual event.

"It's a home run. Last year we were around 258 plungers and we're over 400 registered this year. I can't believe it," Gibson said. "I think back to when this first started, many, many years ago and just 37 people showed up for that.

"It just speaks to the community and how warmhearted everybody is and how they give back. We're closing in on \$140,000 and our title sponsor — PDR Contracting — has said if we hit \$140,000, they're going to throw in another \$10,000 to make it

Superior North EMS raised the most money by a team, collecting more than \$17,000, while Mitch Maunu was the biggest single fundraiser, with more than \$5,200.

Police lawyer leaves

By TB Source staff

The in-house lawyer for the Thunder Bay Police Service is leaving the organization to return to the private sector.

Acting Chief of Police Dan Taddeo confirmed the departure of Holly Walbourne in a brief statement provided to news media.

He said Walbourne has decided to resume private practice after five years with the police service.

"We are grateful for her many contributions and look forward to maintaining a working relationship with her," Taddeo said.

Walbourne served while former Thunder Bay Police Chief Sylvie Hauth was in office.

Hauth was suspended in June 2022, and resigned from the police service in January of this year.

Taddeo is poised to confirm his own plan to retire from the police service.

He will make the announcement in



Former TBPS in-house lawyer Holly Walbourne.

May after the change-of-command ceremony for the new police chief, Darcy Fleury.



or The Gift Box at St. Joseph's Hospital or Hogarth Riverview Manor

LICENCE NO. M835740

NEWS

Visit TBnewswatch.com
Thursday, April 6, 2023

PRO Kids donation

By Gary Rinne - TB Source

A campaign to make recreational programming accessible to children and youth whose families can't afford the fees has received a boost.

Thunder Bay business owner Cliff Friesen has committed to match up to \$25,000 in donations in support of the PRO Kids Power to Play campaign, which has a goal of raising \$50,000 in the month of April.

"For as long as I can remember, recreation has been an important part of my life," Friesen said. "Helping

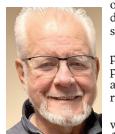
our children grow up with sports and recreation in their lives increases their participation in community, promotes fitness and good health, and develops social relationships that can last a lifetime." Over 25 years, PRO Kids has helped more than 27,000 children enjoy recreational programs despite financial barriers.

The organization works closely with over 200 activity partners who donate free or discounted spaces within their programs.

Through various fundraising projects, PRO Kids is able to pay for additional spaces that allow more children to access recreational activities.

Coordinator Laura Daniele's work requires her to contact families to discuss their eligibility.

"The other day, I spoke with a woman who is the sole income earner in her family of five. she makes \$18 per hour ... Her husband stays home to care for the baby. These are the realities of people living right here in Thunder Bay," she said.



CLIFF FRIESEN



MP Patty Hajdu (right) speaks with staff at Sovereign Dental, outlining the federal government's promised dental care plan.

Dental plan cheered

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

Dr. Derval Clarke says the introduction of a national dental care program is long overdue and should improve the dental health of millions of Canadians.

Clarke, who co-founded Sovereign Dental in Thunder Bay, said providing care to all children under 18 by year's end, and to families with income under \$90,000 by the end of 2025 is a game-changer for dental health across the country.

The Canadian Dental Care Plan, which eventually will provide full coverage for households making less than \$70,000 and partial coverage, with co-pays, for those making up to \$20,000 more, was pushed for by the NDP, a key plank in their agreement to support the governing federal Liberals through 2025.

The 2023 federal budget, unveiled earlier this week, costs the plan at \$13 billion over the next five years, with \$4.4 a year beyond that.

Another \$250 million, over three years, and \$75 million a year ongoing, will be spent to establish an Oral Health Access Fund.

Clarke said affordability barriers shouldn't be the reason Canadians don't see their dentist or hygienist on a regular basis, adding the newly introduced program was never meant to be an all-inclusive program.

"There are a lot of grumblings that the money isn't enough, \$600 or whatever it is per child. I think people missed the point. I would think the aim here is to prevent dental disease," Clarke said. "Active dental disease is difficult and expensive to treat."

It can result in the need for crowns or implants, preventable procedures often required when the underlying dental disease itself isn't treated in time.

"This is what this program allows. It allows a child to visit the dentist twice a year and catch problems before they really manifest into something that becomes really expensive."

Minister of Indigenous Services, Patty Hajdu, said the goal of the Canadian Dental Care Plan is to ensure no one falls through the cracks for financial reasons.

Canadians shouldn't have to be wealthy to have a healthy smile, she added on Friday, unveiling the plan at Clarke's Fort William Road office.

"This is something we started working on last year with coverage for children who didn't have coverage via direct payment to families. But by the end of 2023, the program will expand to include seniors, to include those under 18, to include people with disabilities, and by 2025, anyone who is needing of dental care that meets the financial threshold will be able to acquire benefits," Hajdu said.

"It's an exciting time because it means oral health and dental care are going to be considered just as essential as all the other kinds of health care that's covered under our universal health-care system."

The program, the details of which have yet to be worked out, will be administered by the federal government, unlike traditional health care, which is under the auspices of the provinces. Hajdu said this was done to ensure consistency from coast to coast to coast.

Last year, in response to a push by the NDP, the Liberals launched the Canada Dental Benefit, which provided tax-free payments of up to \$650 per child, based on family income.

NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh this week said he was proud to have helped shepherd through expanded dental care, and his party will support the budget, even though NDP members aren't universally thrilled with everything it contains.

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre has said he won't support the budget, but has not said whether he would keep or scrap the Canadian Dental Care Plan should his party take over governing in the next federal election.



EDITORIAL

Plan has teeth

It's about time Canada added dental coverage to universal health care.

Dental health, time and time again, has been proven to be a key part in one's overall health, and by not providing access to everyone because of financial barriers, many Canadians have developed serious problems as

The program will be expensive, but the Canadian Dental Care Plan, when fully implemented in 2025, will provide coverage to those in need making less than \$90,000 in household income.

Those making more than that are likely already covered in the workplace.

The good news is those making \$70,000 or less will not face any co-

The shame is it took this long, and the threat of the federal budget potentially bringing down the Liberal minority government, for it to happen.

Preventative care will keep people out of hospital emergency rooms seeking treatment, but more importantly, it will improve their quality of life, protect their teeth and gums from disease and that's a good thing.



The Absolute at Large is a story about greed

The Absolute at Large by Karel Capek has been described as 'one of the genuine masterpieces of science

In this satirical and enduringly relevant work of futuristic imagination, the acclaimed Czechoslovakian author Karel Capek offers a prescient fable of the benefits and dangers of atomic power.

Originally published in 1922, the story is set in 1943 Czechoslovakia in which an inventor develops the Karburator, a device with the potential to provide abundant low-cost energy.

But the reactor's exciting possibilities are shadowed by its dangerous side effect: instead of carbon dioxide, it emits the Absolute, a spiritual essence that inspires a powerful religious fervor.

Greed triumphs over ethics as the

inventor and his business partner proceed with mass production, resulting in religious strife that ignites a world war.

Capek is best known for popularizing the term 'robot' in his play R.U.R.

He offers another strikingly foresighted vision in The Absolute at Large,

written decades before global warming awareness yet predicting the catastrophic consequences of the unchecked pursuit of profit.

This short novel is the perfect combination of scientific fact and fiction. He predicts a world in which

the capitalist desire for constant growth leads to the overproduction of goods that nobody wants or needs. Production becomes an end in itself rather than a means to an end. This is one of the contradictions of capitalism which Marx predicted would become its 'gravedigger'.

Overproduction leads to the constant cycle of boom and bust which has plagued capitalist soci-

eties since its inception. It has led to periodic crises known as recessions and depressions, which are increasingly becoming the norm.

Global recessions are happening at more regular intervals and tend to be deeper and last longer than past depressions. The Karburator - a source of boundless energy - is the perfect symbol for this crisis of capitalism.

Marx and Engels theorized the economic base determined the ideological superstructure. In other words, men do not have spontaneous ideas, but these ideas are shaped by the underlying economic system.

The Absolute represents the

ideology that is created by the Karburator. And it is this ideology of constant growth that will ultimately lead to the destruction of the Karburator and all that it represents.

This will come at a great cost. In the real world it led to two world wars that resulted in mass slaughter on an industrial scale. But that was only the tip of the iceberg. Each year capitalism continues to kill millions of people around the world through starvation and disease.

It's preventable, but the economic laws of capitalism determine that greed must be put before need and profits must come before people. The solution is not to reform capitalism, but replace it with socialism.

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John Pateman

BOOK BANTER

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Space travel now for the rich

By JR Shermack

Do you have the right stuff to board a spaceship and leave the planet behind?

Space travel isn't just for astronauts anymore and even though it may be a long shot we can realistically dream of soaring through the cosmos someday.

It is a billionaire's destination right now but space will eventually be affordable for ordinary millionaires as well and one day, even the ultra-rich will be floating weightless in space.

Not affordable for most

As for any other would-be spacetravellers, this is definitely out of reach for average Canadians of modest means, but many people alive today will one day have a chance to go to space.

Perhaps you could be inspired by previous examples from wellknown space travellers and space industry leaders.

William Shatner flew into space at the age of 90, boldly going

where no person his age has ever gone before and it didn't cost him one thin dime.

Jeff Bezos is a *Star Trek* fan and as a well-known nonagenarian who once played Captain Kirk, Mr. Shatner was offered a free ride on a Blue Origin spacecraft, partly as a publicity stunt.

He happily accepted the generous offer.

Jeff Bezos previously took the youngest ever space tourist into space - an 18-year old high school student named Oliver Daemen was Blue Origins' first paid customer.

Believe it or not there was a cancellation on a Blue Origin space flight and Oliver's wealthy father purchased the newly-available \$28 million seat as a gift for his son.

For those who never rose to the rank of Star Fleet captain space travel can be very expensive.

To buy a seat on the next rocket to space you will need millions, preferably billions, or at the very least you should be ultra-rich enough to finance the trip.

If you have to ask the price of the tickets you can't afford to go.

To get a free ride to space you will need a decades-long acting career, a well-known face, a recognizable voice and a very wealthy fan with a rocket ship.

Even if you aren't as famous as Kirk, what could it hurt to make a few discreet inquiries and possibly get on the waiting list?

It doesn't have to be Jeff Bezos – you might try Richard Branson over at Virgin Galactic or even Elon Musk at SpaceX, if you dare.

If all else fails maybe you could ask your dad to pay – tell him about Oliver Daemen's father.

But if you are lucky enough to wrangle a reservation (even an aisle seat) there are some things experienced astronauts want space tourists to know before blasting off.

First of all you need to be mentally and physically fit for space flight, at least as fit and well as a 90-year-old former starship captain.

Mr. Shatner had no ill effects but when he returned to Earth he appeared to be emotionally overwhelmed by the experience – be prepared.

Lots of tests

Also be prepared to be spun around in one of those human centrifugal force machines you see on TV – making spinning astronauts barf since the 1950's.

And finally, pay close attention to your pre-flight potty training – if you have to go in space, using a toilet in zero-G is complicated and if you miscalculate, you clean it up yourself.

Other than that just sit back, relax and enjoy the ride.

As for me, most of the people I asked were intrigued by the prospect of space flight but even if Captain Kirk himself asked them along they would politely refuse the invitation.

They have the right stuff but are happy to keep it right here on the ground.



William Shatner went to space. (Amazon)

what's Happening in and around. . .

The Bay

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

April 6

Easter Seals Celebrity Roast

Lawyer Johnny DeBakker will be on the hot seat on Thursday night, the target in this year's Easter Seals Celebrity Roast.

Per Lundstrom, Vince Mirabelli, Dave Thomas and Peter Provenzano will take turns giving it to De Bakker, with emcee Jordan Lester working in a few barbs about them all.

Tickets are \$125 each and tables of eight and 10 are also available.

To purchase tickets, visit the Easter Seals Ontario website.

The roast has raised more than \$700,000 since it was first introduced in 2003, helping families of children with physical disabilities.

April 6

KISS tribute band

If you're looking to rock and roll all night and party all night long, then NV Music Hall is the place to be on Thursday night.

Destroyer, one of the top KISS tribute bands on tour, will take the stage and bring the '70s icons to life in Thunder Bay.

KISS ruled the music scene in the mid-1970s, with hits like I Was Made For Lovin' You, I Love it Loud and Beth.

Tickets start at \$28 and are available at NVMusicHall.com. The show starts at 8 p.m.

April 16

Easter at St. Paul's

An Easter musical tradition with a unique Canadian touch is returning to St. Paul's United Church on Sunday, April 16.

It's the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ told in song. A 40-voice choir will present this modern-day interpretation of the Easter story written by Canadian composer Rick Gunn. This cantata, as it is called, will feature a live band and even a DI! This production called 'Awaken Us' is a resurrection of its own. The first rehearsal was held just before Covid hit. Then all went dark.

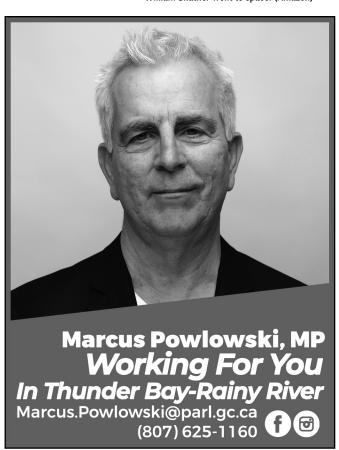
Late last year, Jacqui Soulias, the music director at First Wesley United, called everyone back together to revive the event. Composer Rick Gunn, of Halifax, the son of a United Church minister, will attend. He says he wrote the cantata to explore the idea of the Crucifixion, a concept he never fully understood.

Gunn's songs will take us to Jerusalem 2,000 years ago where Jesus' followers meet and speak together in an upper room.

Gunn's interpretation is lively with upbeat rhythms and gorgeous harmonies that will move and energize you.

The cantata is considered as a church service. It begins on April 16 at 10:30 a.m. There is no cost for admission. There will be a collection.

The event will also be live-streamed.



Lease negotiations delay gallery

By Ian Kaufman - TB Source

Negotiations over a ground lease for the Thunder Bay Art Gallery's new waterfront location appear to have held back construction on the project by several months.

City of Thunder Bay staff had initially said they expected a 50-year lease to be negotiated by the end of the summer of 2022, after securing city council approval in July.

Instead, the process has dragged on for eight months, pushing back construction the art gallery says it would ideally have begun in January.

The gallery said it has now signed a finalized lease and accompanying municipal capital facility agreement, which could be approved by council as soon as late April.

A building permit for the waterfront site, just south of existing development at Prince Arthur's



Crews are set and equipment is ready to start work on the new art gallery. (Mike Lang/TBT)

Landing, will not be approved by the city until the lease is signed, the gallery said.

Until that happens, the gallery said

its main construction work cannot start, though it is allowed to conduct preparatory site work and pile installation.

"We had hoped to start construction in January 2023, or earlier, had the permit been in place," said art gallery director Sharon Godwin.

The gallery announced in January it had hired Tom Jones Corporation as construction manager for the project, which has faced numerous delays since it was initiated in 2009.

Godwin has not been available for interview on the issue, but said via email the lease and municipal capital facilities agreement are both now complete, and have been signed by the gallery and delivered to the city.

That comes after city staff said as recently as last week the documents were still being finalized.

Assuming council is satisfied with the lease and authorizes city staff to sign it, council would proceed to pass a bylaw officially granting the waterfront gallery status as a municipal capital facility.

That designation under Ontario's Municipal Act will exempt the gallery from property taxes and development charges, and enable the city to charge nominal rent.

Like many galleries across the province, the Thunder Bay Art Gallery is already exempt from those taxes in its current location at Confederation College.

Godwin said the soonest the municipal capital facility bylaw could be passed is April 24.

"Should this be the case, we expect that the building permit could be issued that week," she said. "It is our hope that this schedule holds true."

Despite the delay in finalizing the lease, Godwin said the city and the gallery have had a positive working relationship over the project.



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Visit TBnewswatch.com
Thursday, April 6, 2023

Potholes, foxes, false spring

Road conditions have been awful so far this year, and avoiding potholes next to impossible

Let us begin with the potholes.

Over the winter the rural highways I drive when commuting to and from town are pockmarked with potholes. Some of them are seriously deep such that if you don't see them, the

front and rear tires really let you know that you've plonked in and out of one.

I have a choice of two highways to travel en route to the city: Hwy 588 and Hwy 608. Hwy 608 has two major troughs that are grievous to your vehicle's shocks. They

are more like narrow trenches that reach right across the road.

Fred Jones

RURAL ROOTS

There is no avoiding them. Unfortunately, only one of them has a warning sign put there by the highway guys. The one closer to the village of South Gillies just before the big hill that descends past the Rose Valley Lodge, is not

marked. After a couple of "whams!" to my car due to lousy short-term memory, I realized that I had to remember the trough's location and come almost to a halt when crossing. The one closer to Hwy 61 is marked but

also requires one to come to a dead stop before crossing.

However, Hwy 588 is festooned with many potholes most of which are not marked.

Again, one must remember their location. In one spot I have to slalom to the right around a set of

two right in the middle of the lane and immediately slalom to the left to avoid the big one close to the edge of the shoulder.

Both driving to the Stanley turnoff and driving back one must focus hard to avoid these menaces.

I am curious to know when the

highway fixers will be filling in these holes-in-the-highway.

What conditions do they require? The highways are dry for now (although at time of writing - Sunday afternoon - there is a threat of up to 15 cms of snow midweek. Boo!).

So, one must drive these highways on full alert.

But, we rural rooters are not alone: the streets of town are also treacherous. It has been a rough winter for roads.

Speaking of roadways - well, sort of - I have beheld a series of tracks in the snow outside Casa Jones not made by our pooches nor by Madam Fox.

What can they be? I suspect a small rodent ploughed its way hither and you leaving a narrow furrow. Mole? Mouse? No idea.

Mama Fox has been active around our 'hoosie'. One morning this past week I happened to look out our kitchen window to spy her feasting on the sunflower seeds dropped from the feeder.

Gorgeous colour! I waited for ten minutes before allowing the dogs outside. I observed that she was pretty much finished and starting to head off.

The explosion of barking just urged her to get a move on. Fortunately, she outran the dogs. Then again on Friday morning I opened the front door to permit the dogs to exit. Baxter (the elderly large one) immediately spotted her and began his deep basso profundo bark.

Sophie, the lab retriever, wasn't interested (probably didn't see Mama Fox) since all she wants to do is have me throw balls that she can chase and retrieve.

Lily, the terrier mix, was still inside the house. Mama Fox casually trotted away probably realizing that the big barky thing was not a real threat.

On Saturday morning my wife, Laura, and I were trooping across the yard from the house to the barn negotiating the icy surface.

I stopped and asked if she had heard what I had heard - the call of a Redwing Blackbird? Yup, she had.

Oh no, the poor creatures and we are still in winter with a promise of more to come! How do these birds then manage? Hopefully putting out bird seed helps until the snow goes.

There is a funny chart some people post of the Book of Face giving the seasons we in the north experience. I believe we are in False Spring.

Wait! It's snowing. I just looked out my library window only to see a blizzard Blowing past.

Remember last winter (or was it False Spring?) when we said: "if it is snowing, it must be Wednesday"?

That was because it seemed that every Wednesday, it snowed. Well, Wednesday came early this week.

Please be cautious.

Conserve natural resources. Recycling E-Waste recovers valuable materials that can be used to make new products.



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REPUVISION WASTE Thunder Bay

Hospital moves out of COVID response

By TB Source staff

The Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre is shifting out of its COVID-19 response, and into what officials call a "new normal."

In a news release issued late Friday afternoon, hospital officials said the facility will stop using their colour-coded internal pandemic response levels and no longer have screening booths set up at the main entrance.

The hospital said, starting Saturday, their new normal operations will take effect. A restricted state will be implemented if needed to reinstate protective measures.

While the main entrances won't have screening booths, hospital officials said passive entrance screening will be in place, and there will be check-in stations with signage, hand sanitizer and masks.



Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre.

Masking will remain mandatory in the hospital, and the facility's assessment centre will continue operations without any changes.

SPACE PROVIDED THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND ONTARIO MUNICIPALITIES TO SUPPORT WASTE DIVERSION PROGRAMS



It doesn't matter how bad it is outside, Northern Ontario anglers are ready for any kind of weather all year round.

Weather-resistant

Keith Ailey

the GOOD LIFE

One thing we can count on each spring in Northwestern Ontario is a final blast of winter. We received some April snow this week and I am relatively certain we will get more over the next few weeks.

Remember last year when we had a winter storm on every Wednesday in April?

When it comes to fishing, I do not necessarily dread the extreme spring weather as it typically pairs with a lot of extra room to move around on the river. It is always good to get out early in the season and take a few casts in open water. If you can get past the cold and damp conditions and you manage to catch a fish, the photos are usually pretty epic. Those freezing cold days,

filled with snow and rain, always seem to be memorable for one reason or

Typically, a change in the weather involving a drop in temperatures will shut down the bite. However, on heavily-pressured rivers, the extra elbow room can offset the sluggishness of the fish and still allow a persistent angler to be successful. Dressing for the conditions is key to tolerating the

cold. Focus on covering your head with a hat and hood. Layer up to provide the insulation necessary to keep the core warm, and wear a quality outer layer to shut out the wind and dampness.

Along with the cold, torrential rain or heavy snow can challenge the hardcore angler's resolve more than anything else. Being wet means being miserable and nothing can derail a fishing adventure quicker than cold, wet hands.

I like to carry a small hand towel to dry off my hands after releasing a fish or enduring relentless rain. Thoroughly drying each hand before slipping the gloves back on will definitely prolong your day.

Surviving the weather is only part of the hardcore angler's skillset. They must also be able to endure extra early mornings and long days on the

Hiking into a fishing spot by headlamp or backing into the boat launch at first light are standard procedure for hardcore outdoors people. Strong coffee, a good fishing partner and heightened expectations can all help get you out

of bed early.

On those rare occasions when the fish are biting and you have the whole day free to spend on the river, you want to make the most of the opportunity. Putting in an exhausting marathon day of fishing requires a very understanding partner, but the real secret to lasting from first-light through to the evening bite is to have a special level of stubbornness too. It also helps to have a strategy that

includes plenty of fishing spots to try, savory snacks to keep the energy up, and perhaps a midafternoon nap in the truck.

Wild weather, early alarms and long hours are worth-while challenges because they often result in good memories, great pictures and fantastic fishing stories for those anglers who are hardcore enough to get outside no matter what obstacles they face.

Kitchener man wins \$1.5M 50/50 lottery

By TB Source staff

The newest member of the Thunder Bay 50/50 winners' club is from southwestern Ontario.

The Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation on Friday announced that Kitchener's David Sloane was the winner of the March jackpot, collecting a prize of just over \$1.5 million.

"I'm floored. I've been working for 40 years and didn't know when I could retire," he said in a statement issued by the hospital foundation. "My partner and I were hoping to buy a house together. I wasn't in a place to go out in the market and this changes everything dramati-

Sloane's winning number was part of the \$75 ticket bundle he purchased.

The Thunder Bay 50/50 draw has



David Sloane won last month's 50/50 draw.

awarded more than \$21 million in prizes. "We're grateful this month's draw took off the way it did," hospital foundation president and CEO Glenn Craig said. "From the start, it was our fastest growing regular monthly draw ever."

The April draw will have \$25,000 in early bird prizes, including a \$10,000 draw on April 5. The April jackpot draw will take place on April 28.



Visit **TBnewswatch.com**Thursday, April 6, 2023

Lotto win worth \$1M

By TB Source staff

A winning Lotto 6/49 ticket has made a local woman a millionaire.

The Ontario Lottery and Gaming Commission on Firday announced that Thunder Bay's Ann Carlson had won \$1 million in a Gold Ball Draw on Feb. 1.

"I always play numbers that are significant to me," Carlson said at the OLG Prize Centre in Toronto to pick up her winnings.

"I was at home when I saw an email from OLG. I thought it was a scam, so I didn't pay much attention to it for weeks. When I logged into my account and noticed I really did win, I couldn't believe it!"

"I'm at a loss for words. I feel very humbled. This joy will be shared with family and friends. I've always wished I had the means to give people a helping hand and now I can do that."

The winning ticket was bought online.



Ann Carlson won \$1 million on Lotto 6/49.



Quiche is a dish that can be relatively easy to make at home, as simple or elaborate as one wants. (iStock photo)

Quiche for all

Real Men Don't Eat Quiche is a book by Bruce Fierstein and satirical examination of masculine stereotypes published in 1982.

It's an outdated sentiment based on the fact that to the average man in the '60s and '70s quiche, sounded effeminate.

Now as someone who was only born in 1982 and studied classical French cuisine in my early years, I would become accustomed to many French terms so therefore I have no base of knowledge from which to draw why quiche (a food) would be considered so androgynous, there are many possible reasons and for fun lets dive into a couple.

Many people believe quiche is difficult to make, and nothing can be further from the truth. Grab a pie shell beat some eggs, add some meat cheese or veggies and bake, and you're done.

Many people have insecurity about pronouncing Quiche, which is also simple, phonetically its as easy as KEEEESH. Theres also a misnomer that you need a specialized dish to cook a quiche in. Just use a pie plate, man.

Quiche can be as simple or elaborate as you want. Eggs got a bad rap in the 90s by many heart health groups. Eggs were previously associated with heart disease risk as a result of their high cholesterol content.

However, a solid body of research shows that for most people, cholesterol in food has a smaller effect on blood levels of total cholesterol and harmful LDL cholesterol than does the mix of fats in the diet. The foods people typically eat with eggs, such as bacon, sausage and ham, might do more to boost heart disease risk than eggs do. Plus, the way eggs and other foods are cooked — especially if fried in oil or butter — might play more of a role in the increased risk of heart disease than eggs themselves do.

Most healthy people can eat up to seven eggs a week without increasing their risk of heart disease. Some studies have shown that this level of egg consumption might even help prevent certain types of stroke and a serious eye condition called macular degeneration that can lead to blindness.

Now, baked eggs in a little bit of pastry shouldn't necessarily add to the risk of heart disease, however, adding a lot of bacon, cheese and other cured or smoked or items, high in sodium can inflate the risk needlessly. Its best to limit those kinds of additions to your quiche and add more vegetables.

Super foods like spinach make excellent additions to a quiche and add a lot of helpful nutrients and fibre. As with all things, balance is the key, you can add a little bacon and then a ton of leeks and onions to make the classic quiche Lorraine or just freestyle it and create your own combination.

Derek Lankinen is an award-winning chef, author, and restauranteur. 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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- Full rules and regulations are available on www.tbnewswatch.com.

The outdoor rink at Prince Arthur's Landing has been a huge hit since it first opened. (Leith Dunick/FILE)

Marina Park rink closes

By TB Source staff

The Prince Arthur's Landing rink closed on Sunday and will transition back to the family favourite splash pad in time for the summer heat.

In a release from the City of Thunder Bay, the Community Services Department wished to thank

residents who came out to use the rink on the Waterfront and said that they look forward to seeing residents out again next winter.

Though the rink will be closed, the Water Garden Pavilion will be open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. throughout the summer season according to the city's website.



D&D goes big time

Uncertainty fades away with an entertaining, passably good movie

Upon entering Dungeons and Dragons: Honour among Thieves (SilverCity) there was the nagging, snobby notion that surely something more elevated is streaming elsewhere on various small screens. But, like a fun house mirror, we gave in to the ol' curiosity bug.

The dubiousness is further heightened by this corner's total obliviousness to the popular medieval fantasy video game, save some hilarious bits on The Big Bang Theory. Was one going to be alienated by in-jokes and obscure references?

Not quite. Co-directors and writers (with Michael Gilio), John Francis Daley and Jonathan Goldstein aim to achieve a balance between giving D & D fans their familiar lore while providing non-gamers with a generic fantasy adventure. Overall, they've succeeded, but not without some reservations. Commendably, novices needn't be concerned about the movie's so-called Easter eggs.

Chris Pine plays Edgin Darvis, a knight-errant spy, belonging to a do-good group called the Harpers. Darvis' life falls apart when his wife is murdered by the Red Wizards, avenging Darvis' own thievery. To bring his wife back, he attempts to steal the Tablet of Reawakening, but he's betrayed and winds up incarcerated along with ally Holga (Michelle Rodriquez), a rough-edged warrior supreme.

They escape jail - unknowingly pardoned - to find that Darvis' daughter, Kira (Chloe

Coleman) has been brainwashed and housed paternally in a formidable castle by Darvis' traitorous ally Forge Fitzwilliam (Hugh Grant) who's partnered with evil Red Wizard Sofia (Daisy Head), afflicted with too much eye shadow. Guards and CGI creatures abound.

Such is Darvis' D & D quest: to retrieve both Kira and the tablet, prevent humourless Sofia from wiping out the kingdom's humankind, and thwart thieving Forge from

making off with ill-gotten riches.

To do so, other allies are enlisted including Simon (Justice Smith) an insecure wizard who's enamored with Doric (Sophia Lillis) a shape-shifting druid. They also get transitory help by noble Xenk (Regé-Jean Page).

Their combined skills are required to surmount the requisite challenges along the way. There are inventive comical bits including a quiz for undead corpses, loopy portals and a hapless pudgy dragon in a



Dungeons and Dragons is playing at SilverCity.

dungeon.

Marty Mascarin

MOVIE TALK

D & D's sardonic tone and breezy approach are double-edged. The glib wisecracks, though welcome, sometimes come at the expense of characters truly resonating. Obviously, this is not to be taken at all seriously. The plotting is familiar and derivative but still works thanks to the cast.

Pine is both wise-guy leader and emotional center, longing to recover his family, indefatigable with endless

back-up plans. Rodriquez impresses with her physicality. Smith, Lillis and Page have their moments. Grant is agreeably cheesy, sinister, slimy, and whiny. The action sequences are well choreographed.

A momentous choice happens at the climax, resolved in fairly pat fashion, emblematic of the movie's lightweight emotional heft.

More sardonic wit, greater character depth and shorter fight sequences would've given the movie a tighter, sharper edge. Nonetheless, D and D is a passable cinematic outing.

Thursday, April 6, 2023

Stars oust Miners

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

The Thunder Bay North Stars are moving on.

The fourth-seeded Stars erupted for four first-period goals on Thursday night and clinched their openinground Superior International Junior Hockey League playoff series with a 6-0 win over the defending champions Red Lake Miners.

The home team, playing in front of 562 fans at Fort William Gardens, were backstopped by a 50-save, Game 5 shutout performance by goaltender Keenan Marks, playing his second straight match of the best-of-seven series after backing up Conner Lemieux in Games 1 and 2.

"It was awesome. That was a good game," said Marks, stepping in for the injured Lemieux, and now the North Stars await their second-round opponent, which will be either No. 1 Kam River or No. 2 Dryden.

Nothing easy left

Thunder Bay coach Rob DeGagne, who told his troops it's only going to get harder from here on in, said the North Stars will take on any-and-all comers, having to beat the best to win a championship.

It doesn't really matter what order it happens, he said.

"We have no control over it, so we don't care," DeGagne said. "We've got to beat both of them, probably, to win, so whether it's the Walleye, whether it's Dryden that we play first, chances are those are the teams we'll have to beat going down the stretch anyway."

It was the North Stars offense that shone in the first in the clincher, against a team they beat 10 times in 12 meetings this season, including the playoffs.



Thunder Bay goaltender Keenan Marks makes a stop, with Red Lake's Matthew MacPherson looking on.

Edison Weeks, Nolan Desjardins, E.I. Paddington and Nikolas Campbell each lit the lamp in a penalty-free opening period, the North Stars getting on the board just 1:29 in when Weeks snuck the puck past Jack Osmond after Dimitri Trahiotis won a tough battle in the corner and fed the puck out front. By the time Nikolas Campbell buried a Colby Feist past at 14:29 of the first, the Stars were up 4-0 and well on their way to a series win.

"That calms everything down," said Marks, who had one shutout in 26 regular-season appearances as an SIIHL freshman.

Despite being outshot 22-10 in the second, it was Thunder Bay who emerged with the lone tally, extending their lead to five with 2:26 to play in the period, Mason Wesley ripping a shot past Jack Osmond.

Big stops

Marks stood tall throughout the second, denying the Miners on all three power play opportunities in the period, helped by his ever present blue-line, who cleared the puck out of danger on more than one occasion.

"Keenan was outstanding," DeGagne said. "He stopped everything. His rebound control was good as the game went on. I thought he was maybe a little bit nervous in the first, putting some pucks back out in front of him.

"But boy he played good in the second and third period."

Trahiotis rounded out the scoring on the power play late in the third.

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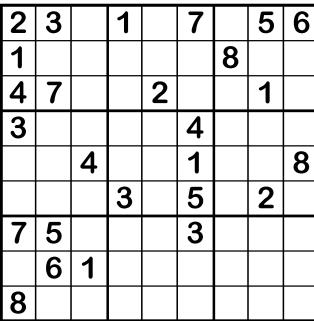
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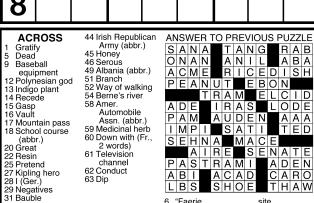
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38 Levantine ketch

35 Court order





21 Marble 22 Irish fortified place 23 Scientific name (suf.)

24 Noel 26 Sun hat 30 Notched 32 Rhine tributary 33 Arabic letter 36 Bird 39 Mediocre grade

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Burgess rink claims U21 silver

A big shoutout to Dallas Burgess and his teammates for a silver-medal showing last Sunday at the Canadian Under-21 Men's Curling Championship in Rouyn-Noranda, Que.

Just missing the top of the podium is still a wonderful result for a team that's cut its teeth playing in the Tbaytel Major League of Curling series the past few seasons.

Burgess, Jackson Dubinsky, Matt Duizer and Owen Riches were in pretty good shape

against Johnson Tao's Alberta foursome in the finale, but gave up a steal of two in the sixth that unravelled their championship hopes, leading a 7-4 loss.



Leith Dunick
SPORTS SHORTS

historic feat he's been nearing for several weeks.

The 19-year NHL veteran, as of Monday, had compiled 455 career goals, leaving him one shy of Alex Delvecchio

for the most goals by a

Thunder Bay-born

I reached out to the Florida

Panthers earlier this week in hopes

of speaking to Eric Staal, about a

Delvecchio, who apparently still stops by the family business in the Motor City area,

spent 24 seasons with the Detroit Red Wings, winning three Stanley Cups and election to the Hockey Hall of Fame.

player.

Staal has 14 goals and 14 assists this

season and is now tied for 60th spot on the all-time goal list with Theoren Fleury.

With 28 points, he's now tied for 73rd spot all-time with Pat Verbeek. both players amassing 1,062 points in their careers.

So far this season he's passed hall of famers Daniel Sedin, Henri Richard and Denis Potvin, and is a point shy of another, Joe Mullen.

Chris Bassitt's first start with the Toronto Blue Jays didn't exactly go as planned.

The newly acquired starter gave up three first-inning home runs to the St. Louis Cardinals on Sunday and four in 57 pitches, including a pair to Nolan Gorman, who, of course, played here in Thunder Bay at the 2017 U-18 Baseball World

EVERY

Cup.

Add in Alek Manoah's awful Opening Day start and Jays fans must be wondering what's up.

It's early, not time to panic, yet. But if the team doesn't have pitching, they're not going anywhere this season.

I've seen plenty of debate about the Norris Trophy winner, and who the writers should pick.

Positionally, Erik Karlsson is having a season that's rivalling that of Connor McDavid,'s the runaway favrourite for the Hart Trophy.

Karlsson has 95 points, playing for an awful San Jose Sharks team that's been essntially eliminated from playoff contention for months.

He's also a -14.

There's a loud crowd, including

the *Toronto Sun*'s Steve Simmons, who don't think Karlsson should be a slam dunk. Blueliners like Cale Makar, Charlie

McAvoy, Adam Fox and even Josh Morrissey have been mentioned as better alternatives.

Karlsson, make no mistake is

Karlsson, make no mistake, is going to be named the NHL's best defenceman.

Analytics aside, he's got a great chance to become the NHL's first defenceman with 100 points since Brian Leetch did it for the New York Rangers in 1991-92.

Bobby Orr, Paul Coffey, Al MacInnis and Denis Potvin are the only other defencement to reach the century club.

Orr did it six times and Coffey did it five. Ray Bourque came close, with 96 points in 1983-84, 95 in 1986-87 and 94 in 76 games in 1990-91.



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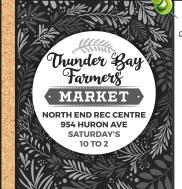
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