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Thursday, April 11, 2024

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More than 400 people took part in last week's Polar Bear Plunge at Marina Park, raising \$162,000 /5

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 on page 9-11

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Thunder Bay Television anchors Riley McManus (right) and Ryan Bonazzo react to the cold waters of Lake Superior at last Saturday's Polar Bear Plunge. (Leith Dunick)



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Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin?

“ Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin is the Tikinagan service model. In Ojibway/Oji-Cree, Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin means, **“Everyone working together to raise our children.”** It is a system of protecting and caring for children and supporting families that has been designed and is delivered by First Nations people in our 30 communities. ”

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Power promise for Matawa FNs

Premier Doug Ford made stop in Thunder Bay

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

Five Matawa First Nation communities could soon be connected to the Ontario power grid.

On Thursday, Ontario Premier Doug Ford announced the plan to build a transmission line through Marten Falls, Eabametoong, Webequie, Neskantaga and Nibinamik First Nations, though the project will still require extensive consultations with the communities in question before any work can proceed.

Ford, speaking at the Kakabeka Falls generating station, said the goal is to end the communities' reliance on diesel-powered electricity, adding his government wants to ensure Ontario's power supply remains reliable, cost competitive and clean.

"Just as Ontario eliminated its reliance on coal, this is a historic opportunity to now end our dependence on diesel," Ford said.

"Doing so starts with a partnership with First Nations leaders and communities. Our government is working with First Nations that wish to partner with us, to end their reliance on costly diesel-generated electricity. We're making tremendous progress."

The premier compared the new project, which doesn't come with either a timeline or a price tag, to the soon-to-be completed Wataynikaneyap transmission line that to date has connected 15 First Nations communities to the power grid, with one remaining community still to come.

The province provided a \$1.3-billion construction loan for that project.

One by one, chiefs from four of the five First Nations expressed support for the project, but only with the caveat of full consultation.

Eabametoong First Nation Chief Solomon Atlookan said some members of his community face electricity bills of \$700 or more in the winter, a prohibitive cost that's not sustainable.

"This should have been discussed a long time ago," Atlookan said.

"Our residents are paying quite a bit more than probably any other (community) in Northwestern Ontario (for power) . . . We need to work with the government on this. We can't just let them go off on their own and plan things. We need to be there with them."

Nibinamik First Nation Chief Michael Sugarhead said collaboration is imperative, with both senior levels of government, to make a project of this nature happen.



Premier Doug Ford visited Oliver Paipoonge last week.

"We need to be deeply consulted and work in deep partnership with the province of Ontario and Canada, with other developments and to be thoroughly involved in other tables, such as critical mineral strategies, mining and every other development is to come - and municipal law," Sugarhead said.

"We are not opposed to any type of development, but we need to be thoroughly involved in these processes so that our treaty, and what we were promised back in 1905, is upheld."

The province has promised to prioritize input and direction from the communities and their leaders.

As a result, Energy Minister Todd Smith said it's too early to provide many firm details about the project.

"This is very much the start of the conversation," Smith said. "I've met with all of the chiefs and their teams over the last couple of months, culminating with today's announcement that we're moving forward."

WEATHER FORECAST

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Mostly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Sunny
Precipitation: 40% HIGH 11 LOW -3	Precipitation: 30% HIGH 11 LOW 0	Precipitation: 30% HIGH 11 LOW 1	Precipitation: 20% HIGH 13 LOW 3

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Premier delivers housing cash

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

Hitting its provincially mandated housing target earned the City of Thunder Bay \$870,890 from the province to put toward infrastructure that will allow even more housing to be constructed.

Premier Doug Ford was on hand on Thursday at city hall, presenting a cheque to Thunder Bay Mayor Ken Boschhoff, the money drawn from the province's three-year, \$1.2-billion Building Faster Fund. Thunder Bay developers broke ground on 200 units in 2023.

"Thank you for hitting your targets - not only hitting your targets, but exceeding your targets. I think it was over 124, 125 per cent," Ford said, meeting with the mayor, several councillors and municipal staffers.

"There's 200 families now, because of your hard work, who are going to have a roof over their heads that they can call home."

The Building Faster Fund provides funding to communities that hit at least 80 per cent of their provincially proscribed housing target, with an increased formula for those who exceed.

For comparison, Sudbury received \$1.52 million, Georgina got \$1.5 million and Ottawa received \$37.5 million, according to releases issued by the province.

According to the government, Ontario hit 99 per cent of its target of 110,000 new homes built in 2023, a number that includes housing starts, additional residential units and new and upgraded long-term care beds.

A total of 18,992 rental units were started, the highest number on record, according to a government release.

Thunder Bay-Atikokan MPP Kevin Holland called it a win-win for the community.

"Housing is a critical issue for all of Ontario at this time and the provincial incentives are key to making sure our residents can access affordable housing," Holland said.

Boschhoff said having an adequate housing supply is an important selling point for the city.



Ontario Premier Doug Ford (right) delivered \$870,890 to Thunder Bay for exceeding its housing starts target in 2023. (Leith Dunick)

"It lets the investment community know, those who are building, developing and constructing the houses, as well as those thinking about moving here with the mining boom, that lots is happening here," the mayor said.

Boschhoff said the money might not be millions of dollars, but every little bit helps.

"We will take it because it can only help our planning department, our infrastructure needs and as we address those fundamentals, each is a building step."

In late February, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau visited Thunder Bay to announce \$20.7 million, over three years, to help build 600 affordable housing units, less than half the amount the \$45 million the city had requested.

Murder charge laid in woman's death

By Katie Nicholls - TB Source

A murder charge has been laid after the body of a woman was found in a home last week.

City police were dispatched to a home on Academy Drive on March 27.

When officers arrived, they located the body of a deceased 38-year-old woman who was confirmed to be from Thunder Bay.

Both the Major Crimes and Forensic Identification Units investigated and identified a suspect.

Inspector Jeremy Pearson said the victim and accused were known to each other.

Pearson did not give details regarding the cause of death.

"At this point, I know . . . a deep concern for the community is the increase in firearms

violence. I'm comfortable in saying that a firearm was not involved in this incident."

Zachariah Peunish, 41, from Thunder Bay, was arrested on April 1. Peunish is charged with second-degree murder.

Pearson said the arrest occurred in a public area and without incident.

The victim's name is being withheld by police at the request of the family.



Police guard the scene of the second murder of 2024.



More than 400 participants took part in last Saturday's Polar Bear Plunge, raising more than \$162,000. (Leith Dunick)

Conquering an icy challenge

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

The return of spring weather didn't warm Lake Superior much at all, but for the 400 or so who jumped into the frigid waters, it didn't matter much.

Sure, there were a few choice words as they scrambled out of the water, the shock of the cold still settling into their bones, but knowing they did it for a good cause – four local charities, in fact – warmed their hearts enough to help them get over the chilliness.

The Thunder Bay Polar Bear Plunge, which started in 2010 as a way to raise money for Special Olympics, in 2024 has raised \$155,687 and counting, more than double the \$75,000 goal listed by organizers, with the money going to Special Olympics, CNIB, Roots Community Centre and PRO Kids.

It was cold, but worth it, said plunger Shelly Dusoleil, jumping with Team DEK.

"It was great. I loved it. It was absolutely incredible. When you first hit the water, your breath is stolen for just a second and then this whole flush of warm just comes over you on this beautiful sunny day," she said.

"It was for multiple causes in our community, all the best ones too."

Organizer Erin Beagle said she continues to be amazed at just how much support the annual event gets, from volunteers who make it happen to participants who raise the money.

"Today's Polar Plunge is the biggest one

we've ever had," Beagle said.

"They have so far raised the biggest total we've seen too, which to our knowledge is the largest in the province."

There's just such an excitement around the event, Beagle added.

It's a challenge to overcome for a lot of participants, she said.

"It's extraordinary. Jumping into this cold lake from the ice is something that is a bucket-list thing to do. So I think the chance to do that is amazing. There are family groups here, there are school groups here, there are work groups here, there are union groups here," Beagle said.

"It's something to build together and come together to do something. I think just having the variety of charities too, helps, because we can support so many different assets in our community by doing this. And to be honest, having a day like today doesn't hurt. It's just something you want to be a part of."

As of Saturday afternoon, Resolute Forest Products employees had raised the single-highest total of any one group, collecting \$11,390.

Students from the developmental services worker program at Confederation College were second, with a total of \$7,591.

Doug Boardman was the largest individual fundraiser, bringing in \$4,485, as a member of the Lakehead Motors and iCar Block Heaters squad.



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Thunder Bay At-Large Coun. Rajni Agarwal says education is always beneficial, especially for politicians. (Leith Dunick)

Council getting conflict classes

By Kevin Jeffrey – Local Journalism Initiative

The city and the integrity commissioner are one step away from working on finding sessions for council that will assist them in their capacity as elected officials.

Pending ratification at a future meeting, council voted unanimously Monday for both offices to find training that highlights harbouring collaborative relationships, emotional reasoning and conflict resolution.

Council asked for the clerk's office to do this work late last month after amending the recommendation from their appointed integrity commissioner, Principle's Integrity, to remove Coun. Rajni Agarwal from the Fort William Business Improvement Area board, also known as the Victoria BIA.

"We are looking at how members of council function within boards and committees as well as how they work together and manage conflict," explained Krista Power, the city clerk. "The cost of a half-day session would be covered through the city manager's budget."

Power highlighted the cost savings by saying "may benefit not only Coun. Agarwal but all members of council. This could potentially lead to less complaints and perhaps fewer investigations and reports from the integrity commissioner. Those reports cost a significant amount of money, whereas training costs less."

Power said the annual budget for Principles Integrity is \$20,000.

The integrity commissioner's investigation started in Oct. 2023 with a complaint alleging

Agarwal was "rude, abrasive and chronically late for meetings, resulting in significant disruptions and causing delays."

Coun. Agarwal has already been docked 30 days worth of pay in a separate finding by the integrity commissioner after she violated the code during a dispute with residents over the summer.

"I believe education is always beneficial," Agarwal noted after the meeting on April 8.

"There has always been ongoing education in every other occupation that I have ever been in. I love education and taking courses, this exercise should be more robust for everybody. Learning opportunities don't hinder us, they only make us better."

Westfort Ward Coun. Kristen Oliver is also in agreement with the training, especially after the tone of the meeting on March 25.

"I have some concerns recently with the decorum in the council chambers. This is an opportunity for us to step outside of city hall but still work together and get that education," Oliver noted.

"I heard from a lot of constituents that were really concerned about our functionality. Working together doesn't mean that we have to agree on every single thing, but there needs to be respect and decorum, especially when we're in council chambers and we are working with our city administration.

"There is no reason for public shaming and some of the comments that were made hurt our credibility and question the integrity of not just our staff but this council as a whole."

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EDITORIAL

Big plans

Premier Doug Ford has big plans for Northern Ontario.

Last week, during a visit to Thunder Bay and Oliver Paipouge, Ford promised to begin work immediately on connecting five Matawa First Nations communities to Ontario's power grid, the goal to eliminate the need for costly and dirty diesel power. He also confirmed the province plans to build a new hospital in Kenora, to replace the nearly century-old facility in that community.

Both announcements, one planned, one prompted by a media question, hinge on consultation with others and help from other levels of government, including affected First Nations leaders.

This is a chance for the Ford government to show what it's made of, to reach across the aisle, so to speak, and come to an agreement. More importantly, it's a chance to show First Nations what meaningful consultation means.

This is the same premier who once promised to hop on a bulldozer to get the road built to the Ring of Fire.

Governments of all stripes can work together for the betterment of all, but only if the willingness is there.

Stop the spending To the editor:

To the editor:

With the highest taxes in all Northern Ontario, I am at a loss for words that city council is considering building an indoor turf facility at taxpayer's expense.

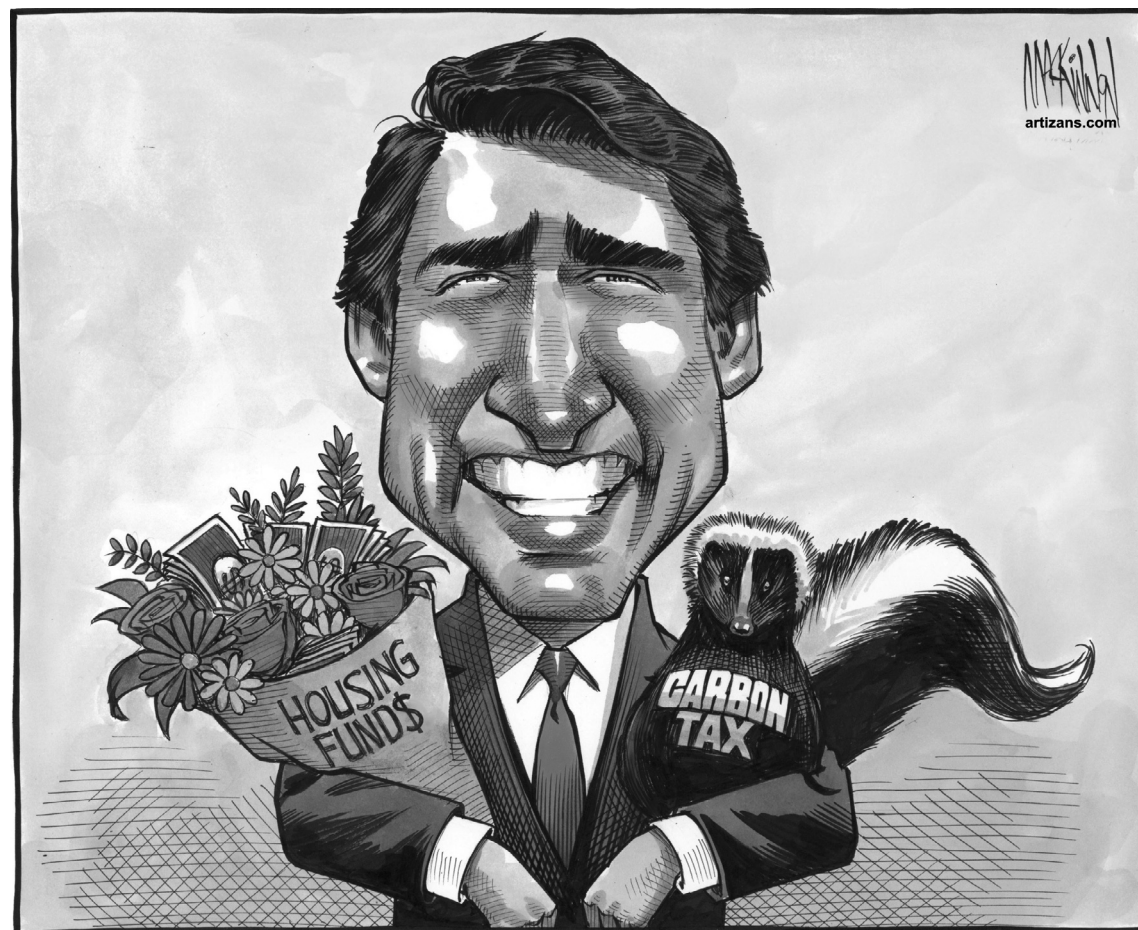
The 5.5 per cent tax increase would suggest we can't afford any high-ticketed projects now or in the near future. If Soccer Northwest thinks this is such a great idea, let them, with the private sector, built and pay for it.

City council needs to control the city's overspending. Let's just try doing what the city can afford. Try paying down the city debt and the money you save on interest charges may help pay for your pipe dream ideas.

Let's pay more attention to Thunder Bay's declining economy and the rise in crime. The mayor and city council need to be reminded they were voted in to act in the best interest of the taxpayers.

David Johnson,
Thunder Bay

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Photographs shed new light on North Korea and its people

North Korea: Like Nowhere Else by Lindsey Miller is a fascinating account of the two years that she spent in Pyongyang from 2017 to 2019 when her husband was posted to the British Embassy.

Miller has a career of her own (she is currently musical director at the Royal Shakespeare Company) and finding herself somewhat at loose ends as a diplomatic spouse, started taking photographs.

North Korea grew on her. 'Leaving was a painful experience,' she writes. 'I didn't want to go home.' When she returned to the UK, she 'felt completely out of place. I felt like I was floating on nothingness.' She revisited her collection of photographs; the result was this intriguing

book.

This is not the first book on North Korea, nor the first photograph collection nor even the first to emphasize that North Koreans are people, individuals, and not cardboard cutouts. But it is organic in that Miller did not set out to publish a book - a very personal, and personable, collection.

The photos are accompanied by captions which combine summary overviews of the political developments of two eventful years - book ended by then President Trump's rants and the Singapore summit - and her personal interactions, which were both more numerous and deeper than she expected.

The observations are, again, more personal

than profound, but Miller comes across as being both empathetic and self-aware. There's something to be said for accounts which are neither made-to-spec documentaries or think-tank output.

The photos fully justify the subtitle that North Korea is 'Like Nowhere Else'. It is a very special place, as I discovered when I visited it with my six year old son in 2000.

We were treated with nothing but friendliness and kindness. The Koreans love children and so they took us on special visits to the funfair, amusement park and zoo, which aren't usually on the tourist itineraries. Like Miller, we did not want to come home.

North Korea has been cut off from the rest of the world by western sanctions but this only serves to bind the Korean people even more tightly together in the face of imperialist aggression. The development of nuclear

weapons is a necessary defensive action while 38,000 American troops remain stationed in South Korea.

North Korea prides itself on its independence which is embedded in its ideology.

It was the connection with individuals and their families that delivered the real revelations of North Korean life, and which left Miller utterly changed from the woman who had nervously disembarked from her plane just two years before. This is her extraordinary photographic account, a testament to the humanity of North Korea.

Those who would make pronouncements about the place and its people might do well - in addition to reading the more scholarly tomes by bourgeois western academics - to have a glance through this book first. Armchair travelers will find this a different sort of travel book.



John Pateman
BOOK BANTER

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School food program needed

By JR Shermack – For TB Source

When it comes to certain questions I just don't have the heart to say no.

When I pay for my purchases at the till and I am asked to support a local school breakfast program for kids I always fork over a few bucks.

Fortunately I can spare the cash and if my small donation buys a few bowls of cereal or some fresh fruit and yogurt to fill empty tummies I am happy to help out.

Of all the scenarios that could possibly pull at my heart strings the thought of a hungry child with nothing to eat is one of the most troubling.

That is why, all politics aside, I am encouraged by the announcement to spend \$1 billion over five years to create and implement a national school food program across Canada.

The plan intends to provide meals to 400,000 kids every year in addition to the approximately two million children who already use existing programs.

Right now there is a mish-mash of food delivery programs that vary in different schools, regions and provinces depending on need – some are free while others are 'pay-what-you-can'.

For example, Prince Edward Island has its



Canada is introducing a school food program.

'Bon Appetit' program that offers a daily lunch option to students from kindergarten to grade 12 at a price of \$5.75 for those who can afford it.

Programs exist in many provinces and terri-

ories which vary greatly by design and the local availability of resources.

And since there are no national school nutrition guidelines this responsibility falls to charities, school boards, governments, churches and businesses which are struggling to cope.

They operate according to different mandates, policy differences, multiple and overlapping funding and face challenges with coordination, monitoring and evaluation.

But hungry kids don't care about all that and sadly, one of every four children in Canada doesn't get enough to eat.

And if they are hungry when they get to school, education and learning take a back seat to satisfying their basic need for food.

Canada is the only G7 country that doesn't have a national school food program or standards and advocates say our patchwork approach is leaving a lot of tummies empty.

How embarrassing that a country with such vast wealth and resources as Canada is unable to properly feed its children.

Other countries are leading by example – Italian cafeteria cuisine is highly regarded for being prepared from scratch on school premises using locally sourced organic products.

Buon Appetito.

In response to concerns about diet-related illness among school-age children the Japanese government offers robust financial support for school food programs.

During the COVID pandemic many countries realized the fundamental importance of proper nutrition for the long term health and well-being of children.

The United Kingdom and New Zealand expanded their school meal programs to ensure that students get the food they need to stay healthy and do well both in and out of school.

Many, but not all, hungry Canadian kids are also happily snacking and munching their way through school thanks to thousands of volunteers and generous donations.

The Federal program will be in place for the next school year to support the existing school food programs and to provide nutritious food for 400,000 more hungry kids.

Poverty, unemployment, low wages and global price inflation cause food insecurity, a convoluted term describing children not getting the food they need to live and learn.

Growing kids need to eat and if they arrive at school hungry their day should begin with a trip to the pantry.

When a hungry child needs something to eat who has the heart to say 'no'?

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The Bay

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Please include details about the event, including any cost

April 14 April Wine in Concert

Originally based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, April Wine enjoyed international success in the 1970s and 1980s, releasing more than 20 albums since 1971, and selling over 20 million albums worldwide.

April Wine's extensive discography includes numerous gold and platinum selling albums featuring mega-hits like *Roller*, *I Like to Rock*, *You Could Have Been a Lady* and others.

Best known for their international top 40 hit *Just Between You And Me*, an iconic power ballad that made them the very first Canadian band on MTV, April Wine went on to release more than 20 albums and have received a combined total of 11 Juno Award nominations in the Group Of the Year, Album of the Year, and Best Selling Single categories.

In 2009, April Wine was inducted into the Canadian Music Industry Hall of Fame and were honoured with

a Lifetime Achievement Award for being part of Canadian Music History for 40 years, and in 2010 the band was inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame.

They'll take to the Community Auditorium stage on Monday night.

Tickets are available at Ticketmaster.ca and the show is scheduled to start at 7:30 p.m.

April 18 Mini Pop Kids Live

The Mini Pop Kids are so excited for their brand new 2023 concert tour featuring the year's biggest hits.

This isn't just a show, it's an experience the whole family will love.

This ultimate family-friendly concert experience features the year's biggest hits from Lizzo, Justin Bieber, Dua Lipa, Olivia Rodrigo, and more! Don't miss your chance to see the best-selling original kids music group live.

A concert for kids, by kids, with a

hint of nostalgia and throwbacks that everyone will enjoy! Come sing, dance and pop to all your favorite songs.

Tickets can be purchased at Ticketmaster.com and the show takes place at 6 p.m. on Thursday.

April 20 Beerlympics

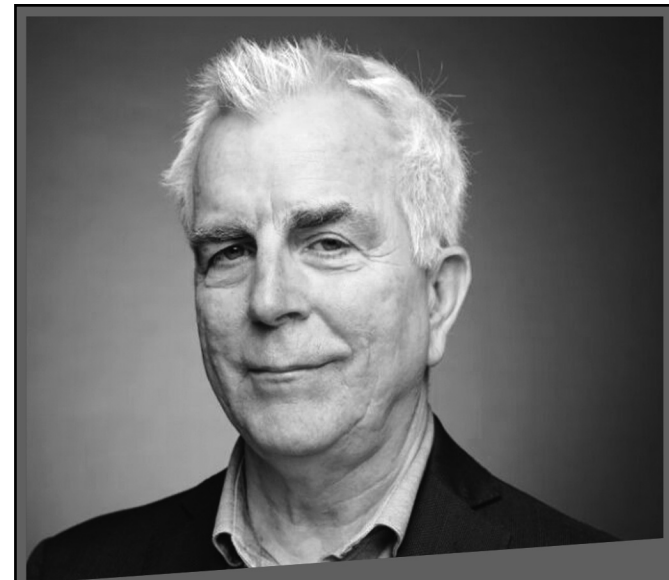
In celebration of the Olympics and their love of craft beer, the Red Lion Smokehouse is hosting the Beerlympics.

Register a team of two for \$10 and play classic pub games, including giant Jenga, darts, water-pong, crokinole, cornhole and more.

It's a great chance to bring your friends, grab a beer and get ready to win some prizes.

Register by April 16 to secure your spot.

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4 Gift Certificates Avail.

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Retail Value \$2,599
Starting Bid \$1,300

Ashley Homestore
Round Fire Pit Table

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Retail Value \$2,000
Starting Bid \$1,000

C&M Tile & Granites
5 Gift Certificates Avail.

Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$2,000
Starting Bid \$1,000

Carvalho Custom Granite
2 Gift Certificates Avail.

Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$1,800
Starting Bid \$900

**Nova-Pro
Industrial Supply Ltd.**
Milwaukee Tools and Swag
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Retail Value \$1,668
Starting Bid \$834

Bodymind Centre
12 Month Membership Pass
2 Available

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Retail Value \$1,500
Starting Bid \$750

Rizzo's Custom Cabinets
2 Gift Certificates Avail.

Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$1,371.68
Starting Bid \$686

City of Thunder Bay - Golf
Gift Certificate / Membership

Older adult membership - 60+



Retail Value \$1,283.19
Starting Bid \$642

City of Thunder Bay - Golf
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Intermediate membership



Retail Value \$1,250
Starting Bid \$625

Thunder Bay Harley Davidson
2 Gift Certificates Avail.

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Retail Value \$1,200
Starting Bid \$600

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Country Diving**
Reef Cressi Paddle Board
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Starting Bid \$500

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5 Gift Certificates Avail.

One Gift Certificate Per Purchase



Retail Value \$1,000
Starting Bid \$500

Chimo Building Centre
2 Gift Certificates Avail.

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Retail Value \$1,000
Starting Bid \$500

**Wally's Thunder
Country Diving**
Dive Package + Equipment
Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$1,000
Starting Bid \$500

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2 Gift Certificates Avail.

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Retail Value \$1,000
Starting Bid \$500

Cinema 5 Skatepark
Membership &
Lesson Skate Package
Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$950
Starting Bid \$475

Larson Lawyers
Professional Corporation
Couple's Will PKG 3 Avail.
Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$725
Starting Bid \$363

Bodymind Centre
5 Deep Tissue Massages

Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$650
Starting Bid \$325

Larson Lawyers
Professional Corporation
Single Will PKG 3 Avail.
Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$500
Starting Bid \$250

Canada Games Complex
8 Gift Certificates Avail.

Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$500
Starting Bid \$250

Wayne Toyota
5 Gift Certificates Avail.

Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$255
Starting Bid \$128

Bodymind Centre
3 Registered Massage
Therapy with Kodie
Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$225
Starting Bid \$113

Bodymind Centre
3 Tai Yoga Massage Therapy

Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$114
Starting Bid \$57

Bodymind Centre
6 Drop In Passes
for Reformer Pilates (3)
Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$102
Starting Bid \$51

Bodymind Centre
6 Drop In Passes for Yoga
3 Available
Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$100
Starting Bid \$50

Boston Pizza
10 Gift Certificates Avail.

Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$100
Starting Bid \$50

Bodymind Centre
Gift Certificates for the
Athletic Boutique (12)
Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$100
Starting Bid \$50

Countdown Escape Rooms
5 Gift Certificates Avail.

Check Website for More Details



Retail Value \$50
Starting Bid \$25

Countdown Escape Rooms
10 Gift Certificates Avail.

Check Website for More Details

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Spring weather finally arrives

At last the snow is disappearing at the farm. I've been watching as the wee trail I made to the bird feeder was snow-free as of Sunday. So then I wondered if enough of the white stuff had melted or evaporated to permit me easy walking of our trails. Meanwhile, my wife, Laura, The Gardener in the family, wondered when she could get shovel into ground.

Sunday morning was bright and sunny.

After morning coffee, I headed out to the barn to do my usual feeding and then turving our boarder horse outside.

After breakfast, I returned to muck the stall, lay down new bedding, and then trundle out to Mt. Crumpet with the quad pulling the manure-filled cart.

Of course, along with the melt comes mud. While the weight of the quad and cart isn't enough to wreck any trail at this point, driving Red on snow-free trails would not be wise.

Experience from past springs has taught me that the big tires and the weight of the tractor plays havoc with the roadbed.

So, best to avoid using Red if possible until

the ground is a lot drier..

But while enough snow has disappeared to permit me to drive up onto Mt. Crumpet, not enough snow has gone from our walking trails as yet.

Soon, though, soon.

Mud season means muddy doggie paws. Our black lab, Sophie, is obsessed with retrieving tossed balls. I try to hurl them to where the ground is still white trusting that when she returns and re-enters Casa Jones, I won't find little muddy paw prints.

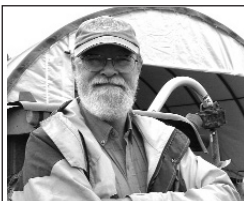
Failing that both she and our other pooch, Lilly, have to have paws wiped with an old towel before I let them into the inner sanctum.

Eventually this requirement, with the on-going warmth drying up the ground, will pass.

The melt and the warmth make me restless to get out onto our trails and do my on-going inventory of my favourite tree, the white pine.

So far, I have counted twenty-five soaring sentinels that are at least a hundred or more years old.

Again, soon, Fred, soon.



Fred Jones
RURAL ROOTS

filling the bird feeder, I heard a Sandhill crane uttering its weird call coming from across the road on the property to the north.

Laura was hauling trays of seed pots from storage in our shelter to the greenhouse at the rear of Casa Jones.

"Did you hear that?" I asked.

"Yes, I did," she answered and then said: "Poor birds arrive on time according to Nature only to discover that their homes are still frozen."

Well, hopefully not for long.

You may recall that we had a warm spell about a month ago. The days were getting warmer and that prompted Laura to head out to the vegetable garden to see if she could dig up some parsnips that had over-wintered in the ground. No luck.

"I could get the shovel only two inches into the ground before hitting frozen dirt."

And that's the thing: avid gardeners are impatient to get "hands in dirt", to plant veggies from seed like carrots that can go straight into the ground instead of having to start them indoors.

Until the ground has thawed and the snow on trails has melted, both gardener and trail trekker (me) will just have to be patient.

Back in Casa Jones, The Gardener has been busy transplanting and planting into seed cups. Since the mornings are warming up quickly, more trays of young plants are appearing on the shelves in the greenhouse that is attached to Casa Jones.

Laura is working towards being qualified as a Master Gardener (you are required to take courses for this gig) and on Saturday she volunteered to staff a table at the annual Seed Swap that took place at the Nolalu Community Center. She came home with a bag full of seeds.

"You buy these?" I asked.

"No," she answered, "I was given all these."

I looked over the collection. "Guess we're going to have a lot of beans, peas, celery, and parsley," I chortled.

And even though it is finally warming up out here, there is still ice on the beaver pond and snow on the ground and in the woods. Saturday morning, I fed the "tweety birds" at the bird feeder and as I was about to return to the house, I heard that unmistakable rusty gate screech of a redwing blackbird.

Sure enough, there was a male member of that tribe up in the bush near the feeder.

I saw it again Sunday morning and after

BLAKE SHELTON DALLAS SMITH TRACE ADKINS SAWYER BROWN HIGH VALLEY

JOSH ROSS THE WASHBOARD UNION
MACKENZIE PORTER TEBEY
TYLER JOE MILLER SACHA
GRIFFEN PALMER BRAYDEN KING
PETRIC FT. CATIE ST GERMAIN

JAKE VADELAND & THE STURGEON RIVER BOYS
BREE TAYLOR DJ JOHNNY RIVEX ALL WEEKEND LONG

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Clouds block eclipse

By Brandon Walker - TB Source

Despite the cloudy, damp day, dozens of families travelled to Fort William Historical Park on Monday to try to catch a glimpse of the eclipse.

And while they didn't get to see the Moon cross over the Sun in person, the historical park had a live look of the celestial event from a feed in Detroit, Michigan.

Nine-year-old Esper Benwell Atwood had a chance to hold a real meteorite and said it was a great opportunity to learn things outside of school.

Benwell Atwood said the cloudy weather didn't put too much of a damper on things.

"It means we probably won't be able to see too much of the sun," they said.

Morgan Sand, 15, went to the park because she was interested in learning more about the solar eclipse.

"My science teacher was telling me about it and I was interested in learning more space things because I have a space project too," Sand said.

She went into the observatory to learn more about the eclipse and said the rain didn't ruin the experience for her.

"I love the rain," Sand said, adding that she couldn't decide what her favourite activity was at the historical park.

"My favourite has probably been all of it. I can't just choose one."

In addition to the meteorites, there also was a display based on Kepler's Laws of Planetary Motion that showed the different speed of planets as they travel around the sun, and a display on Anishinaabe culture and perspectives on the sky.

As it got down to the final minute before the total eclipse, staff at the historical park announced they would countdown the final 10 seconds.

When the time came, everyone in the



People of all ages went to Fort William Historical Park on Monday to watch the solar eclipse.

room joined in on the countdown.

Jonathon Reid, environmental ecological and outdoor education specialist at the historical park, said people have always been fascinated by the sky.

"We have records from 3000 BC of cultures that are talking about eclipses. For a long time, eclipses were

connected with culture and religion," Reid said.

"And I also think people just like looking at cool things in the sky."

The historical park will offer programming related to astronomy and astrophysics in December and also next year in February.

ENIGMA™ CRYPTOGRAM

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

"XJOXDW PSZ PVF WRPSIRWN, WRXZX QN FPWRQFI EGNPHSWXHB QF PSZ DPVXX."

— ZXFX LXNOEZXN

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ACROSS

- 1 Accent
- 5 Decree
- 8 Hall (Ger.)
- 12 Atop
- 13 Videocassette recorder (abbr.)
- 14 Purplish-brown
- 15 Poet
- 16 Lively (Fr.)
- 17 Occupational Safety and Health Admin. (abbr.)
- 18 Other (Lat.)
- 20 Earthenware maker
- 22 Beseech
- 25 Low (Fr.)
- 28 Presidential nickname
- 29 Repeat sign: music
- 33 Spruce
- 35 Expanse
- 37 Irish assembly
- 38 Last of the

- Mohicans
- 40 "The Jungle Book" python
- 42 Bacon, lettuce, and tomato (abbr.)
- 43 Naut. rope
- 46 Honor
- 49 Light refractor
- 53 Son of Ruth
- 54 Own (Scott.)
- 57 Design
- 58 Hair (pref.)
- 59 "Blue Eagle"
- 60 Bagpipe hole
- 61 Bargain
- 62 Tally
- 63 Lounge

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

C	O	B	A	C	A	D	O	D	U	S
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DOWN

- 1 Musical instrument (brass)
- 2 Gem
- 3 Jap. food alga
- 4 Endow
- 5 Average (abbr.)
- 6 Circuit Court of Appeals (abbr.)
- 7 Ruminant's stomach
- 8 Saw
- 9 Austria (abbr.)
- 10 Longing
- 11 Father of Cordelia
- 19 Snow (Scott.)
- 21 Org. of Amer. States (abbr.)
- 23 Tablespoon (abbr.)
- 24 Foul-smelling
- 25 Heat unit
- 26 Scot. alder tree
- 27 Thus
- 30 Prate
- 31 Nothing
- 32 Danube tributary
- 34 Sickness (Fr.)
- 36 Amer. Automobile Assn. (abbr.)
- 39 Wilt
- 41 Dadaist
- 44 Nothing (Fr.)
- 45 Practice
- 46 Beer ingredient
- 47 Fetish
- 48 Honey
- 50 One's own (pref.)
- 51 Vend
- 52 Shopping center
- 55 Individual retirement acct. (abbr.)
- 56 Seize

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Food in school a great thing

Canada is the only country in the G7 that doesn't have a national school food program, according to the Breakfast Club of Canada. Advocates have consistently argued that a national program is needed to fill gaps left by the admittedly makeshift system that exists between provincial, local and charitable programs that are under a tremendous strain due to low resources and high food prices.

As I sit here to write this, the federal government announced this morning it will launch a national school food program, allocating \$1 billion dollars and hoping to deliver meals to an additional 400,000 children per year. This was filling in for the 2021 campaign promise made by the governing Liberals.

The program is going to attempt to be launched for the 2024/2025 school year. "Canadian families are struggling. With inflation pushing food prices to stratospheric levels, we know that a national school food program would help children and youth access nutritious food, which would then support their mental health, behaviour and study habits," Debbie Field, co-ordinator of the Coalition for Healthy School Food, said in a Feb. 27 media statement.

The school food program is not one of the policy provisions set out under the Liberal-NDP supply-and-confidence deal, which has seen the New Democrats support the government in key votes for two years. However, the NDP recently called for the federal government to implement a program and will no doubt support it. Provinces have jurisdiction over education in Canada.

Trudeau said Monday the government would work with provinces, territories and Indigenous partners on implementing the program, including through augmentations to existing policies.

Why are these programs important? Breakfast is how we break our overnight fast, and for many people, breaking fast doesn't have to happen first thing in the morning.

That's right, folks: breakfast does *not* have to happen first thing in the morning. If you are not hungry when you wake up, that is normal, and you do not need to eat.



Kids who aren't hungry tend to learn better. (iStock)

That old myth about "revving up your metabolism" with food first thing was largely created by breakfast cereal manufacturers.

Regardless of what time of day you break our overnight fast, scientific evidence shows that all humans have improved cognitive performance and more sustained energy from meals that don't spike our blood sugars, so meals with a lower glycemic load.

What does this mean? Low carbohydrate meals.

The mental impact of kids not being hungry this morning assists kids with being able to get their metabolism firing on all cylinders and letting them have the best chance to come to class without being hamstrung by poor or no nutrition. As a dad, I understand how hard it is

sometimes to get kids to eat, however sometimes you gotta just give them the options and they will eventually get it. Lets give them the options they need.

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



Derek Lankinen

Here's Cooking at You Kid

Local steelhead numbers down?

About 15 years ago, something significant changed in the rivers flowing into Lake Superior's Black Bay. Tributaries that historically had seen healthy spring runs of migratory steelhead suddenly seemed to only be producing large fish. Within a couple years, as the older fish died off, these rivers were producing far fewer fish in general.

To understand what was happening, we need to look at a long-term population study, with conclusive scientific data, that has been conducted for decades on Portage Creek, one of the small tributaries flowing into Black Bay.

The data from Portage shows the population crashing from over 2,000 spawning adults to just a couple hundred in a short period of time.

Interestingly, Portage Creek still showed the key signs of a healthy population, including varied age classes and high survival rates of adults, for many years after the population crash.

Without the actual population estimate from the scientific study, we would certainly not know that the population had decreased by 90 per cent.

Portage Creek is considered a "marker stream" as it likely mirrors the problems happening on other tributaries flowing into Black Bay.

This highlights the importance of a series of similar studies, known as the Co-operative Angler Program, being conducted by volunteers on tributaries flowing into other areas of Lake Superior.

So, what was happening in Black Bay? As the population of adult steelhead in the rivers was dropping, anglers fishing in the lake were also reporting an explosion of huge walleye in Black Bay at the same time. This led many people to conclude that the growing population of big, hungry walleye in the bay was feasting on juvenile steelhead as they smolted out of the river and into Superior at just a few inches in length.

More recently, a similar trend has been noticed on tributaries in other areas of Lake Superior's north shore. Luckily, we have data collected from the Co-operative Angler Program study to help us keep a close eye on the disturbing trend.

If it were not for the volunteers collecting scale samples through the Co-Op program, we would have little more than speculation about the health of the steelhead populations in these other tributaries.



Steelhead numbers may be down in local waters.

For steelhead, there is a one-fish limit, and a 27" minimum size restriction on some rivers.

These regulations are working to help sustain populations despite whatever environmental changes are happening. Though the populations are dropping, the overall numbers are still being adequately maintained because of anglers' catch-and-release mentality. But changes can be subtle, and anglers do not always notice them.

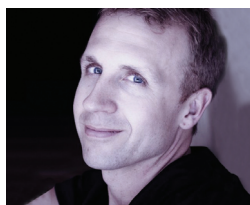
Typically, anglers overestimate the number of steelhead in a river

because barriers, such as a waterfall or a weir, result in fish stacking up in a relatively short section where fish are caught and released repeatedly.

This gives the false impression of highly inflated numbers of fish. In contrast, the studies provide an accurate picture of what is actually happening.

Now that we know the populations of our naturally reproducing steelhead are very susceptible to change, continuing to monitor them through the volunteer-based Co-operative Anglers Program is going to be essential as we move forward.

Visit www.northshoresteelhead.com for more information on the program.



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Zombies invade Westgate

By Justin Hardy - TB Source

The Westgate Collegiate & Vocational Institute's drama program is bringing a popular off-broadway musical to its cafeteria stage.

Zombie Prom, first produced at The Red Barn Theatre in Key West, Florida in February, 1993, is set in the atomic 1950s at Enrico Fermi High. It tells the story of high school senior Toffee, who has fallen for the class bad boy who meets his end then returns again to win her back.

"It's about two forbidden lovers, one from the good side of the tracks and one from the bad, and our parents and the principal do not approve of us," said Hayden Chepesiuk, who plays Toffee.

Drama teacher and director of the show, Kim Buoncore, said the reason she chose this musical was because it's totally new to Thunder Bay.

"I love that we've never done this in Thunder Bay before, so it's kind of a premiere to this city," she said.

"And part of what I love about this show too is its campiness. It's got a little bit of that melodramatic flair to it.

"There's lots of comedy and the music is really catchy and fun, very energetic and it's



Zombie Prom runs April 10 to 12 at Westgate CVI.

got a really good storyline about how do we accept each other and love each other even when we might not be the same."

Zombie Prom runs on April 10, 11, and 12, at 7 p.m. in the Westgate Cafetorium. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$15 and are available at the door or through the Westgate office during school hours.

A jolting view of drug crisis

A Sobering Story captures Thunder Bay's epidemic

News reports regularly trumpet the opioid crisis in Thunder Bay but few of us are actually confronted by this grim reality. An absorbing new documentary *A Sobering Story*, by local filmmakers Ryan La Via (director) and Ryan Hill (co-producer with Mr. La Via) takes us into Thunder Bay's drug scene through the eyes of local caregivers, victims, and addicts.

A Sobering Story will be screened by the North of Superior Film Association (NOSFA) Wednesday April 17 at SilverCity.

Opening scenes set the stage, with news reports citing vital statistics. The mortality rate in Thunder Bay from opioids is five times the provincial average. One pill laced with fentanyl can be fatal. Attached to this is an increasing violent crime rate.

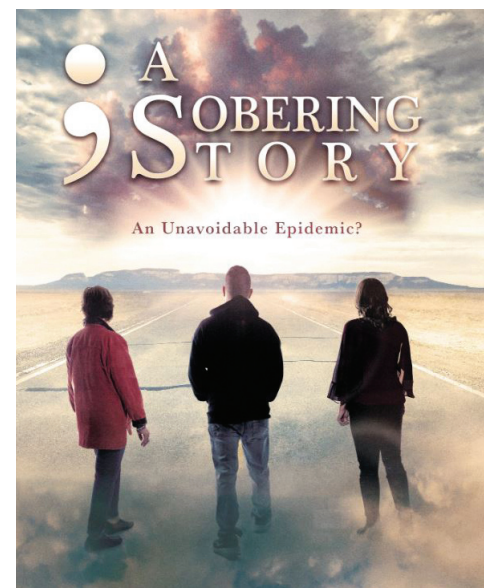
The filmmakers then weave together an exhaustive array of interviews with medical personnel, social workers, addiction recovery workers, police officers, and local politicians, collectively piecing together the many aspects of a very complex problem.

The interviews are enlightening, touching and well-edited, flowing from institutional commentaries and front line expertise to accounts from victims and addicts. The narrative is augmented by low-key, stylistic cutaways. Michael Kondakow's brooding soundtrack underlines the tone.

Interspersed among the commentaries are stories from three individuals, each recounting the loss of offspring due to drugs, citing a shortage of resources, systemic indifference or fateful circumstances, undermining their protective efforts. These interviews are heartrending, commendably minus melodramatic flourishes.

One novel touch features an animated sequence, narrated by clinical psychologist Melanie Morrow, with a humanoid character illustrating the medical mechanics at play, showing the effects of opioids and fentanyl in layman's terms that are clear and understandable.

The interviewees cite factors leading to addiction: psychological and physical trauma, familial loss, disruptive home life, developmental issues and abuse. If conventional health care cannot help, or is unavailable, people resort to other means to ease their



A Sobering Story will be screened on Wednesday.

pain.

Kyle Arnold spent 20 years on the streets. He gives a revealing account of his descent into substance abuse due to loss of loved ones. He's out to rectify preconceived notions and stigmas surrounding addicts. "It is not fun," he says. "It gets to be an obsession to bury pain."

Kyle delivers the film's gut punch, describing a chilling episode involving an overdosed acquaintance he barely knew, leaving Kyle to make a fateful choice. It was his moment of reckoning. Kyle now works as a recovery support worker.

A lack of facilities and support personnel leave the paramedics and police serving as ill-resourced safety nets, already burdened by

other attendant concerns including homelessness, mental health and gang activity.

The filmmakers deserve kudos for assembling a tight, pungent, and affecting story, drawn from hours of interviews. This is a bracing, incisive look at a local crisis invisible to many of us. This is excellent filmmaking.

Admission is \$10, credit card or exact change. No advance sales. Shows: 6:30 and 9 p.m.; Q & As after each screening. Info: Facebook; www.nosfa.org.



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Johnston rink wins mixed title

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

Dylan Johnston never led the Northern Ontario Mixed Curling Championship finale until the last rock was thrown.

Until that moment his opponent, Kory Carr, hadn't lost a game, led 3-0 and 4-1 at various points on Sunday afternoon at the Kakabeka Falls Curling Club, but found himself essentially stymied as he took the hack to throw his last rock.

Johnston was sitting shot stone and Carr's only chance was to throw as much weight as he could muster and hope to untangle a trio of stones surrounding the button, two of them belonging to Johnston.

As soon as he let the shot go, Carr knew his fate was sealed.

Johnston was left with a steal of two and will represent Northern Ontario next November at the Canadian Mixed Curling Championship in St. Catharines, Ont., the top-seeded team pulling out an improbable 8-6 wins, scoring deuces in the final two ends to secure the triumph.

"It feels great," Johnston said. "We struggled the first couple of ends. I missed a few shots, but we battled back and never gave up."



Skip Dylan Johnston (from left), third Samantha Morris, second Chris Briand and lead Marcy Barry. (Leith Dunick)

The turning point came in the fifth. The Johnston foursome, a lineup that includes lead Marcy Barry, second Chris Briand and third Samantha Morris, had hammer, but did not have shot rock and had to navigate a mass of stones of both colours

in the rings.

Johnston put a little extra weight on his shot and somehow kicked both of Carr's stones out of harm's way, his shooter stopping in the rings to score three, tying the match 4-4.

Carr got a deuce back in the sixth but

couldn't make a tough double in the seventh and left Johnston a draw for two to tie the match.

"My heart was definitely racing," Morris said, the match coming down to the wire, her team forced to manufacture a steal in the eighth end to pull out the victory.

"Dylan made some amazing shots in the couple of last ends there to really keep us in it. It was a bit of grind. We were ranked first going into it and didn't have the results we wanted the first couple of games, but we grinded back (in) that C-side and it really paid off having that much more ice time. We knew how to manage the rocks better."

Carr had waltzed to the final, downing Mike Assad in the A-side final on Friday night.

Johnston's route was a little more circuitous, losing to Zach Warkentin in a B-side match, meaning they had to win three straight to get to the semifinal, then edged Warkentin 5-2 earlier on Sunday to make the championship match.

It wasn't an easy win, but Johnston and his team made the shots when they mattered most.

"They were playing so well so we had to hope for a couple of misses here or there, which they didn't really give us," Morris said.



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Canadian Corey Conners fires out of the sand at the 2015 Staal Foundation Open at Whitewater. (Leith Dunick/FILE)



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Masters field has Staal vets

It's Masters week, and looking through the field, it appears there are a trio of golfers who played in the former Staal Foundation Open at Whitewater Golf Course in this year's field.

Corey Conners, of course, is the best known of the three, at least to Canadians.

Conners finished in third place in 2015, then was runner-up in 2016 at the Staal Foundation Open, the Mackenzie Tour-PGA Tour Canada event that took place in Thunder Bay from 2014 to 2018.

The 32-year-old, who hails from Listowel, Ont., has enjoyed plenty of success at Augusta National over the past several years, despite missing the cut by five strokes a year ago.

Conners had three straight top 10 finishes at the Masters, from 2020 to 2022, and has made the cut four of the six times he's played the event.

Since his success in Thunder Bay, Conners has gone on to win two PGA tournaments, the Valero Texas Open in 2019, capturing the same event four years later to solidify his spot at Augusta.

Conners isn't the favourite amongst the Canadian contingent headed to the Masters.

That title belongs to Nick Taylor, author of four PGA Tour wins, who will be playing in just his second Masters, his first since 2020.

Taylor made the cut that year, finishing tied for 29th. Adam Hadwin is the other Canadian challenging Amen Corner this week.

Taylor Moore, who captured the Staal Foundation Open in 2016, beating Conners by three strokes, is currently ranked 55th in the world and is coming off a runner-up finish at the Texas Children's Houston Open.

Moore, 30, finished tied for 39th at last year's Masters, his Augusta debut.

Moore's lone PGA Tour win came at the 2023 Valspar Championship, where he bested Adam Schenk by a single stroke.

The final member of the field with Staal Foundation experience is Jake Knapp, who missed the cut in 2016 at Whitewater, and bounced around the feeder tours for several years afterward before finding his game and climbing to No. 52 in the Official World Golf Rankings.

Not surprisingly, 2022 champion Scottie Scheffler is the huge favourite to take home a second Green Jacket, followed by perennial

favourite Rory McIlroy, who needs a win at Augusta to complete the career grand slam, a feat accomplished by Jack Nicklaus, Tiger Woods, Ben Hogan, Gary Player and Gene Sarazen.

That's pretty elite company.

□□□

The Toronto Blue Jays are in dire need of some pitching and hitting help. They're giving up far too many home runs – a major league high 19 in their first 10 games. That puts them on pace to set a new record, which currently stands at 305, set by the Baltimore Orioles. The Jays are pacing toward 307.

As a team, the Jays are hitting just .193, collectively. That's awful, and yeah, it's early, but it's ugly. Only the Minnesota Twins, checking in at .191 as of Sunday's games, are worse.

□□□

Was glad to see Thunder Bay's Todd Skirving land on his skates. Skirving was the captain of the now-defunct Newfoundland Growlers of the ECHL. Team ownership abruptly pulled the rug out from underneath its players last week. Skirving, who had 14 points in 60 games with the Growlers, was picked up by the Florida Everglades and earned an assist in his debut with the club.

□□□

The Thunder Bay Chill are well on their way to fielding what looks like it will be a playoff calibre team again in 2024.

The USL 2 squad has beefed up its roster in the offseason. Among the imports are English attacker Sam Jordan, French midfielder Jules Pecelon, American keeper Joshua Moya, Italy's Nicolo Lanari and midfielder Phillip Jacil, from Switzerland.

The Chill signed a pair of former FC Manitoba players, Tyler Attardo and Diego Reveco, and fellow Canadians Mamaddu Ba, Karim Bacher Bey and Felix N'Sa.

Matteo Bosch, Tulio Melo, Nick Phyllis and Leevi Swearngen return from last year's squad.

Locals Matthew Keeler and Parker Mork have also signed.

The Chill plan to play pre-season friendlies against the Winnipeg Lions on May 18 and May 19, a team of Thunder Bay all-stars on May 22 and a pair against Winnipeg Hellas SC on May 25 and May 26.

They'll open the regular season at home on May 31 against Bavarian United.



Leith Dunick
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In the Estate of **ROBERT CHARLES RANDLE JR.**

All Persons having claims against the Estate of **ROBERT CHARLES RANDLE JR.**, late of Thunder Bay, ON, deceased, who died on or about February 3, 2023, are hereby notified to send particulars of the same to the undersigned on or before April 25, 2024, after which date the estate will be distributed, with regard only to the claims of which the undersigned shall then have notice and the undersigned will not then be liable to any person of whose claims they shall not then have notice.
Dated at Thunder Bay, Ontario on the 19th day of March, 2024.

ROBERT CHARLES RANDLE SR.,
ESTATE TRUSTEE
c/o ERICKSONS LLP
ATTN: RYAN VENN
Barristers and Solicitors
291 South Court Street
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 2Y1



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NOTICE TO CREDITORS & OTHERS
In the Estate of **EVERT MAKKINGA**

All Persons having claims against the Estate of **EVERT MAKKINGA**, late of Thunder Bay, ON, deceased, who died on or about March 6, 2024, are hereby notified to send particulars of the same to the undersigned on or before May 16, 2024, after which date the estate will be distributed, with regard only to the claims of which the undersigned shall then have notice and the undersigned will not then be liable to any person of whose claims they shall not then have notice.
Dated at Thunder Bay, Ontario on the 11th day of April, 2024.

JOHN MAKKINGA,
ESTATE TRUSTEE
c/o ERICKSONS LLP
ATTN: RYAN VENN
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291 South Court Street
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