

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

# **Staying home**

Ontario decides to keep kids out of classrooms for at least two weeks as COVID soars /3



REMOTE CONTROL: Most students in Thunder Bay have been learning from home since March 1, when the health unit recommended classrooms be closed to in-class studies.



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**DRIVEN** CARS CANADA



**INSIDE VACCINATIONS BEGIN** 



Pharmacy program starts in city /4 NEWS YOU CHOOSE



No matter where you get your info, your world vision could be skewed /13



wo virtual 10-mile road races to take place around Victoria Day / 14

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### LOCALNEWS

### Your turn is coming soon.



Ontario's COVID-19 vaccine plan is helping to stop the spread and save lives. Thousands of people across the province are getting vaccinated every day.

As vaccinations continue, we need to stay the course to protect those we love. Wear a mask. Wash your hands. Keep your distance.

Find out when, where and how to get vaccinated at **ontario.ca/covidvaccineplan** or call 1-888-999-6488 for assistance in more than 300 languages.





MOVING: Nearly 30 per cent of those eligible in the District of Thunder Bay have been vaccinated.

### **Transparency key in vaccine rollout**

"The

challenge is

there is a

high degree

of desire

to get

vaccinated."

#### **HEALTH** By Leith Dunick – TB Source

**C**anada's health minister says vaccines are almost certainly having an impact on Thunder Bay's plummeting COVID-19 numbers.

The good news is that the public seems to be anxious to get vaccinated, evidenced by how quickly spots in the city fill up when announced by the Thunder Bay District Health unit or one of its partner agencies.

The bad news is the roll-out in the provinces isn't the same across the board. But it's getting there, Hajdu said.

The health minister said she plans to closely watch that vaccines are being used in a timely fashion after being delivered to the provinces and territories and plans to post weekly figures showing how many vaccines have been delivered and how many have been administered on a province-by-province and territoryby-territory basis.

"I think this is something Canadians want to know. They want to know how efficiently vaccines are getting out the door, and they are also curious when it will be their turn," Hajdu said in a Zoom interview with Dougall Media on Thursday. Haj

Hajdu, who toured the health unit's vaccine clinic at the Canadian Lakehead Exhibition grounds on Wednesday, before Ontario's latest stay-at-home order went into effect, said she's aware there have been complaints about the booking process at the provincial level.

She said from her standpoint Ontario's appointment of a new vaccine lead, combined with the federal government's promise to step up to help the province get vaccines into people's arms, should make the process that much smoother moving forward.

"We have actually helped in ways they have identified," Hajdu said, "for example, vaccinating people in remote northern communities. We partnered with the province to send remote Canadian rangers to work with Nishnawbe Aski Nation, for example, to get into communities that are remote, so that we could get people vaccinated in hard-to-reach communities.

"We'll continue to offer that support."

According to the COVID-19 Tracker website, 4.03 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been delivered to

Ontario, with 2.83 million having been administered.

Last Friday the Thunder Bay District Health Unit said at that point, 24.5 per cent of eligible residents in the district had been vaccinated, a number that continues to grow daily. Both the health unit and Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre are capable of vaccinating upward of 500 people per day, with other targeted clinics also filling in some gaps.

On Thursday, pharmacies in Thunder Bay began administering the AstraZeneca vaccine to people aged 55 to 64.

Hajdu urged the public to be patient. More than 10.5 million vaccines have been delivered country-wide, with more than 7.2 million doses administered and more than 17 per cent of the country having at least one dose.

"The challenge is, there's a high degree of desire to get vaccinated, which is a good challenge to have. People want to get their vaccines ... It means people understand the important tool that vaccination plays in stopping the spread," Hajdu said.

### LOCALNEWS



STAY HOME ORDER: Students at all Thunder Bay school board schools will continue learning remotely after the April break.

# School's still out

### Province halts return to classroom for at least two weeks

#### EDUCATION By Doug Diaczuk – TB Source

Despite the local health unit giving the OK for students in the district to return to the classroom after the April break, the provincial government is going to be keeping them at home for virtual learning.

Premier Doug Ford and Minister of Education Stephen Lecce made the announcement on Monday afternoon.

"The situation is changing quickly and we need to respond," Ford said. "Right now I am extremely concerned about the new variants. The South African variant, the U.K. variant, and the Brazilian variant spreading rapidly right now in B.C."

The province recorded more than 4,400 new COVID-19 cases on Monday and Ford said the next few weeks will be critical and there are growing concerns of further community spread.

"Until we get the numbers in the community down, the problem is not in our schools,

it is in our community," he said. "Bringing our kids back to a congregate setting after a week off in the community is not a risk I am willing to take."

Last week, the Thunder Bay District Health Unit gave the green light for district school boards to return to the classroom after the break.

COVID-19 numbers in the district have been on the decline, with 91 cases considered active, the lowest since Jan. 10.

However, the provincial government said all publically funded elementary and secondary school students across the province will continue remote learning after the April break.

Lecce said the decision to continue with remote

learning was based on medical advice to help reduce community transmission and data will be collected on an ongoing basis to determine when it is safe for students to return to the classroom.

"We will communicate to parents based on the advice we receive from the chief medical officer of health to reopen our schools," Lecce said. "That is our intent. It just has to be safe. As soon as we get that go ahead from Dr. Williams and his team we will make sure parents know with advance knowledge so

they can prepare for the return to school."

Francis Veneruz, chairman of Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board, said it is disappointing that students won't be returning to the classroom, but he understands the decision by the province.

"As we all know, it would be great to have the kids back in school," he said. "We understand they are worried about the safety protocols and what is happening across the province, but whenever we are able to go back, I think that is the best place for the kids to be."

Veneruz said the board was prepared to invite students back to the classroom, but it is also prepared to continue to offer virtual at-home learning for the time being.

"Our teachers will continue to do the great job they are doing to provide the best education they can to their students," he said. "It's hard. Not only is it going to impact students, it's also going to impact our staff. Everyone was excited to get back and getting prepared and having this chance to regenerate and back into the mainstream and I'm sure people are discouraged."

The province is currently under a stay at home order first implemented on April 6 and is to be in effect for at least four weeks.

### Weather Forecast





BUY A TICKET, WIN A PRIZE, HELP A CAUSE

"As we all know, it would be great to have the kids back in school." FRANCIS VENERUZ

### LOCALNEWS

### **AstraZeneca vaccines arrive at pharmacies**

**HEALTH** By Leith Dunick – TB Source

onty Peters says he feels like he won the lottery.

The 59-year-old Thunder Bay man was front and centre on Thursday at the Shopper's Drug Mart on Red River Road, where he was one of the first in the city to receive a dose of AstraZeneca vaccine, available to all Ontarians between 55 and 64.

Peters, whose wife got her shot last Saturday, said he was not concerned in the least about which vaccine he got, brushing aside reports of blood clots associated with the AstraZeneca brand.

There was no hesitation when his wife received an email from Shoppers advising them of the vaccine availability for their age group, thanks to having signed up for a flu vaccine this past fall.

"I read that there were 18 million doses of AstraZeneca in Britain and 30 cases (of blood clots)," Peters said. "That's about one in 600,000. I'd have



JABBED: Maggie Wilmore gives Monty Peters a dose of AstraZeneca COVID vaccine.

a better chance of being hit by a comet when I go for a run." Peters said he was anxious to get vaccinated because he wants to be able to safely visit his daughters, one who lives in Sault Ste. Marie, the other who lives in Barrie, Ont.

"It weighed on me mostly because I can't go out of town to visit my daughters," said Peters, adding he still plans to practice COVID-19 protocols, including wearing a mask and social distancing, until it's deemed safe not to do so any longer.

"Basically I've been staying home all the time. I walk my dog daily. I haven't been out before today in just over a week. My wife and I alternate doing groceries, we go about every 12 days."

Pharmacist Maggie Wilmore, who owns the Shopper's Drug Mart Red River Road location, said she received 500 doses of the vaccine and spots have long been filled up. In fact, there's a waiting list for those hoping to fill no-show spots.

Willmore said there have been about a dozen cancellations already, mainly people who now qualify for the Thunder Bay District Health Unit clinic, which this week dropped its age eligibility to 60 from 70. All were able to secure appointments there, Willmore said.

So far, the process has run smoothly, she said.

The impact is going to be huge.

"I think it's wonderful they're including pharmacies in terms of getting vaccinations out as quickly as possible," Willmore said. "Really it's about working as a team – so pharmacies, the hospital, the health unit – distributing as much as possible."

She noted it's unclear when they will get more doses. Four pharmacies in Thunder Bay were added to the list of pharmacies permitted to administer vaccines in Ontario, when the province last week expanded a pilot program initially only available in three southern Ontario public health districts.

Those getting the vaccine can expect a pretty smooth process, but are asked to wait around for 15 to 30 minutes afterward to ensure there are no complications, the length of time dependent on any underlying health conditions.

LOOKING





### LOCALNEWS



SHIP TO SHORE: MS Columbia brought passengers to the Pool 6 dock 10 years ago.





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## **Council OKs Pool 6** dock upgrade plan

### **CITY HALL** By Ian Kaufman - TBSource

hunder Bay's city council has Tapproved substantial spending on its Pool 6 dock, after officials presented eye-popping economic impact estimates for an anticipated boom in local cruise ship activity.

The city will spend up to \$100,000 for landscaping and a third-party engineering assessment of the facility, which hasn't seen a cruise ship visit since 2013.

It's an investment likely to pay off many times over, said Community Economic Development Commission CEO Eric Zakrewski.

Cruise ship visits already tentatively confirmed with the CEDC could generate a local economic impact of over \$20 million between 2022 and 2024, and support dozens of jobs, he told councillors.

The city's report did not include details on how the estimates were calculated. Tbnewswatch has requested further details from the CEDC.

Three cruise lines have confirmed their interest to dock at Prince Arthur's Landing starting in 2022, when a federal ban on cruise ships with over 100 passengers is set to expire on Feb. 28.

Viking Cruises plans to send its newest vessel, the Octantis, from Milwaukee to Thunder Bay seven times next year. The 378-passenger boat will be the largest passenger vessel the Great Lakes has ever seen.

Thunder Bay will be used as a turnaround point, with disembarking passengers returning home by air, and a new group flying into the city to embark. That's expected to bring up to 5,200 people through the city per year, with most staying at least one night in a local hotel. The vessel is expected to be in port for about 48 hours on each visit.

Two other companies, Victory Cruise Line Vessels and Hapag Lloyd Cruises, have also expressed plans to visit Thunder Bay next year. The CEDC has three cruise operators with confirmed stops through 2024, Zakrewski said, and is in discussions with another eight or more lines.

City tourism officials have stated they anticipate growth in Great Lakes cruising.

Coun. Shelby Ch'ng expressed some skepticism of the rosy outlook presented Monday, pointing out past forecasts hadn't always panned out.

"We got excited before, and now it's just kind of an annual tradition we announce ships are coming, but there's nothing in the water," she told Zakrewski. "I'm hoping this time with you at the helm, we can get this done finally."

The CEDC head said companies had invested significant time and expense working Thunder Bay into their itineraries, while acknowledging there was no binding agreement to follow through.

"I do have some faith this is going to happen," he said. "I can't guarantee they won't change their plans by next year... The fact we have three cruise lines committed to starting next year, and three the year after, I think that's about as positive an indication as I can offer.'

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### **Editorial**

### **EDITORIAL**

### Vaccines speed up

As much criticism as both the provincial and federal governments have received over vaccine rollout, in Thunder Bay it's actually been quite good.

While it was slower than hoped for at the start, the Thunder Bay District Health Unit and its partner agencies, including Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, has really picked up the pace as of late.

As of last Saturday, 29.5 per cent of the population, representing nearly 40,500 residents of the district, have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

It represents 24.5 per cent of the entire population, which puts the region nearly 4.5 percentage points ahead of the provice as a whole and about the same percentage points ahead of all of Canada.

Last week, the health unit gave 6,799 people their first dose. At this pace, everyone in the district can receive their first dose by mid-July, Knowing not everyone will want one, it's not out of the question that everyone in the district who does want one can have their first dose by the start of summer.

Of course, all this predicates on supply. If it goes up, there's a chance the pace will quicken. But if it goes down, those still waiting may have to wait a little longer than planned.

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### Sheiters need help

To the editor: Did you know that one out of seven shelter users is a child? One out of three food-bank users is a child.

One out of two First Nations. Inuit and Metis children live in poverty. About 2,500 children—mostly girlshospitalized every year due to selfharm.

There's been a 90 per cent increase in child self-harm hospitalizations between 2009 and 2014. There's been a 66 per cent increase in emergency department visits of young people due to mental health concerns between 2007 and 2017.

These statistics reveal why Canada now ranks in the bottom tier of wealthy countries according to a new report on children's well-being by UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund).

We must do better since children are this country's greatest human resource for the future! This is the reason the Regional Multicultural Youth Council (RMYC) is supporting Senator Rosemary Moodie's Bill S-210 to establish the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Youth in Canada.

Seven of us attended an early morning orientation session hosted by the Senator's office on April 7, 2021. We discussed Bill S-210 and strategies to engage the youth and get their ideas about having an advocate at the national level to promote and protect the rights, well-being and views of children and youth.

The RMYC will be hosting Zoom forums to hear youth voices on their priorities and the role the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Youth in Canada can play to make a difference in their lives.

For more information on Bill S-210 contact Senator Rosemary Moodie's office at the Senate in Ottawa.

To provide input on the need for a Commissioner for Children and Youth in Canada and to share ideas on how the commissioner's office should work to improve the quality of life for children and youth, please attend our virtual forums on Friday, April 16 at 5 p.m. and Saturday, April 17, at 1 p.m. p.m.

For more information, please visit the RMYC website at or call 622-4666.

Mae Walsh-Gibb, Mya Dixon, Kamryn Woloschuck, Heran Zharo, Joshua Audley, Chelsea Capay-Kwandibens and

Beatrice Netemegesic Multicultural Youth Centre

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



## The rise of Soviet power

t is an established historical fact that the Second World War was won by the Soviet Union at the Battle of Stalingrad in 1942.

As Churchill said at the time 'The Red Army tore the guts out of the Nazi war machine.' But how was this achievement possible given the generally held view of life in the USSR under the leadership of J.V. Stalin?

How could a country wracked by political terror (if we believe the orthodox histories) defeat the strongest and best organized military machine since the Romans conquered the world?

Did 27 million Soviet soldiers and citizens give their lives simply defending the Motherland or were they also defending its political system – the dictatorship of the proletariat established after the Great October Revolution in 1917 and the building of socialism in one country by Lenin and Stalin?

The answers to these questions are provided by Vassily Grossman in his two novels *Stalingrad* and *Life and Fate.* 

In both of these magnificent works of Soviet literature Grossman takes a granular view of the battle by inserting



himself on the front line, just as he did in real life as a Red Army reporter in 1942, covering this epic clash between Communism and Fascism.

Grossman lets us in on conversations between Hitler and his generals and between Stalin and his confidantes.

We also get to hear the thoughts of battle field commanders and front line soldiers in this brutal battle that was fought from house to house and street to street, with both sides stating that surrender was not a possibility.

By comparing these conversations we note a marked difference.

The German soldiers believed in their country and in military conquest but they did not believe in the Nazi ideology. This was a fatal weakness that led to their ultimate defeat.

The Red Army soldiers, on the other hand, not only believed in their country but also in communism, and this is what motivated them to keep fighting in even the most impossible situations. They were not fearful of the political Commissars who visited the front lines to ensure that there was no talk of defeatism or surrender.

They gave their lives willingly for a cause that did not seek to impose its will on the world but, rather, create a better world for all who lived in it.

Both of Grossman's books gained the attention of the Soviet authorities. Even though Stalin was concerned that Grossman's account of the battle was too realistic as it made clear that the new Socialist man was fallible and not yet fully developed, Stalingrad was published to great acclaim in 1952.

Life and Fate was a different story. It included the real life character Nikita Khrushchev, who was a front line commander during the Battle of Stalingrad. Khrushchev, who denounced Stalin in a secret speech given to the Soviet Communist Party, took exception to *Life and Fate* and ordered that the book, rather than its author, be arrested.

It remained unpublished until 1980.

### **Perspective**

# Honeycrisps are sweet and tasty Developed in Minnesota, the apple has quickly become one of the hottest fruits on the market

**OPINION** By J.R. Shermack **Special to TB Source** 

An apple a day keeps the doctor away, or so they say.

The other day I was watching a young friend munching on a fresh apple and I could tell from the juice running down his chin that it was an excellent piece of fruit.

And the loud chomping confirmed that he was enjoying every bite – one of the few people I know who actually eats an apple a day, sometimes two if his mother lets him.

And who can blame him because just like many other apple-lovers he has been crunching on the rising star of the Canadian orchard, the Honeycrisp apple.

This is currently the fruit of choice among Canadian apple connoisseurs and it may someday achieve the widespread notoriety of a McIntosh or a Red Delicious.

### Still popular

Here in Canada the McIntosh is still the most popular and accounts for 25 per cent of all apples grown in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and B.C.

In the U.S., the Red Delicious lost its throne to the Gala a couple years ago after being the No. 1 apple in that country for 50 years running.

But sweeter, juicier varieties including the increasingly popular Honeycrisp are taking over from traditional apples which suddenly seem less sweet and juicy by comparison.



AN APPLE A DAY: Honeycrisp apples are becoming increasingly popular, despite their higher price tag.

Honeycrisp apples are considerably more expensive than most of their ordinary tasting cousins but consumers appear willing to pay premium prices for this premium fruit. According to 40-year apple breeder, David Bedford, "It's crisp, and when you bite it, it kind of explodes in your mouth. It's a really juicy sensation."

Every bite is a mouth-watering expe-

rience but there is another reason for the high price of this juicy fruit -Honeycrisp are one of the most difficult apples to grow.

The thin skin and delectable crunch that are so appealing to consumers also make it difficult for growers who must handle the finicky, delicate fruit with care

Only 60 per cent of the crop makes it

to the lucrative "fresh" market with the remainder used for juice which captures only a fraction of the price for unblemished apples.

With most other varieties almost 90 per cent reach the fresh market.

Also, Honeycrisp need to have their stems clipped during harvesting so they don't puncture their thin-skinned neighbors during packing and shipping.

These high maintenance trees and the fruit they bear demand more care, more time and more labour, increasing the cost of production and the price of the apples.

Everyone knows that an apple a day is supposed to keep the doctor away but eating a daily Honeycrisp could become an expensive habit.

A crunchy, juicy, crisp, sweet, tart, delicious, expensive habit.

Apples have come a long way - they have grown in the wild since prehistoric times and have been cultivated for more than 3,000 years.

#### Lots of apples

There are 30,000 varieties growing worldwide although only about thirty are used commercially - very few ever achieve the apple stardom of a Honeycrisp.

The average Canadian consumes 86 apples (all varieties) every year, 60% eaten out of hand and the remainder in processed foods and juice.

As for me, I grew up munching on McIntosh, which I still eat, but I also enjoy many others including Honeycrisp.

My favourite apple is any variety that is baked into a pie and if that happens to be Honeycrisp, my slice will be even sweeter and juicier.

A slice a day may not keep the doctor away but whether it is eaten for good taste or for good health, never underestimate the healing comfort of fresh apples or freshly baked apple pie.

I'm sure my young, apple-munching friend would agree with that.

**May Street Post Office** 

This building on North May Street opened in 1904 with a post office on its main floor, a custom's office above that, and the postmaster's residence on top of that. The imposing structure of dark red brick and stone then housed the unemployment insurance offices from 1935 to 1966. It succumbed to fire while under renovation in 1982.



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etters to the editor are most welcome. Those kept to 350 words or less have priority.

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## TBLIFE people health home food leisure

## **Catch and release fishing works fantastic**



recently caught and released a trout twice in the same day. This particular fish, from a north shore river not far from the city, was easily identifiable by a scar it had on its head.

The fact that this fish was willing to bite twice on the same morning demonstrates just how effective catch and release fishing can be when the fish are handled properly.

Keep it in the water. While a bass is hardy enough to be lifted from the water and held vertically while it is unhooked, a trout requires a bit more finesse.

Big fish especially should not be removed from the water for more than a few seconds. Knowledgeable anglers will hold trophy fish, or any delicate species like trout, in the water while it is unhooked. Other than being lifted out of the water for a quick photo, the fish is always breathing and never able to damage itself by flopping around on shore. Ideally, trout anglers can get in the water with the fish to ensure it won't touch the bank.

Time for a photo. One great way to tell how effective we are at catch and release fishing is to note whether there is water dripping from our fish in photos.

Water dripping from a fish only last a few seconds, so if you are seeing this in all your photos you know you are doing a great job. In addition, fish should be held close to the water, either in a horizontal position or angled with the head slightly down. Either way, they should always be held with two hands, one by the tail for control and the other under its belly, just behind the head for full support.

Net or glove? Fish have a protective coating of slime over their scales, which is easily compromised if the fish is removed from the water and brought on shore or allowed to thrash around on the bottom of a boat. Modern nets and handling gloves, when used properly, do not remove the slime and are helpful tools that allow anglers to keep the fish in the water while they remove the hook and prepare for a photo.

While there is debate over which tool is better, the fact is that both will keep the fish off the rocks and prevent it from being dropped. Handling gloves must be wet to be effective while nets should be made of rubber or specially coated to protect the scales.

Many anglers are discovering that the wild trout that swim in our waters are far too valuable to kill. With the vast number of catch-and-keep fishing we have for species like walleye, salmon, perch, lakers and whitefish, it just makes sence to preserve healthy populations of wild brook trout and rainbow trout/steelhead. We are lucky to live in a pristine place where we can successfully and repeatedly catch and release these beautiful fish in an unspoiled natural wonderland. Let's make sure we handle them properly and release them in good health so our children and our grandchildren can also enjoy fishing for these wild trout.



LIVE AND LET LIVE: Keith Alley practises the art of catch-and-release while fishing the waters of Northwestern Ontario.

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**S**o, we had a wet couple of days. The rain soaked the ground that made digging in the garden a lot eas-

The digging is part of the plan to rid our vegetable garden of the dreaded quack or crabgrass is anathema to successful veggie gardening.

I have a photo album of the vegetable garden belonging to my grandparents who lived on a farm north of Toronto. The garden is big with orderly straight rows of closelycropped pathways of grass in between each bed. I showed these photos to my wife, Laura, the Gardener in our family. "How the heck did they maintain the beds without constant weeding of crabgrass?" I asked. " I suspect that they didn't have crabgrass like we do here. Much different climate," she posited.

#### Hard to remove

We have spent two spring/summers trying to remove the darn stuff. digging and then (if it is me) on knees sifting and shaking the clumps of soil to remove the dirt and then throw the remaining crabgrass in a wheelbarrow to dump outside the garden. Not fun or easy work.

I have to do the job on my knees as





ier.

quack grass once and for all. The

my back complains when I bend over. To protect our hands, we wear gloves that allow us to feel the roots



NUISANCE PLANT: Crabgrass takes a lot of work to get rid of in a garden.

of the crabgrass without damaging our digits. But it is a painstaking job, necessary if we want veggies and not competing weeds.

Sure, we could use chemicals to rid the soil of the crabgrass roots but we garden organically so no Roundup or anything like that gets put on our garden.

The roots of crabgrass are amazing. One root can grow up to six feet long snaking its way through the dirt to pop up far away with a grass shoot. I grabbed one and pulled. It kept going on and on through the soil. Was it ever going to end?

We used to rototill the garden until we learned that the blades of the rototiller just broke the crabgrass roots that then went on to grow and extend more roots and grass.

Thus, attempts to rid the garden of

crabgrass using the machine just made it worse. Hence, the "on your knees, Jones" (for me) solution of trying to create a wee-free garden.

Crabgrass is the worst weed menace but we do get other weeds. However, they are much easier to eradicate (still down on my knees for that job).

What Laura has begun to do is create permanent beds contained within wooden frames. You dig out the bed, shake out the dirt, extract the crabgrass roots, replace the soil and add fresh dirt from our wellcomposted manure pile (Mt. Crumpet), and add some form of mulch (old hay).

The problem with the crabgrass and its evil root system is that is is pervasive throughout the entire garden. So, even after you've cleaned out the beds of the roots, you still have the aisle ways in which the roots thrive.

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So, the lanes betwixt the beds also need to be dug and the crabgrass roots removed.

Once that task is completed, then Laura lays down cardboard over top of which she adds wood chips to weigh them down. The crabgrass removal project thus requires a lot more work than simply creating the beds.

As I have mentioned before, we had a horse-riding business until a few years ago but our collective health required us to capitulate and close it down.

#### Repurposed

In addition to the permanent stalls in the barn proper, we added some wooden ones out in the annex area where we stored hay. Those stalls have been empty for years. Hah! The boards making up the walls are an easy source of lumber with which to make frames for the raised beds in the garden.

Just need a crowbar and hammer and voila! Free lumber.

Actually, a lot of that lumber came from our trees. We hired a guy who knew what he was doing with a chainsaw and also who had a portable sawmill and we made boards for stalls. Now those boards get reused in garden bed frames.

Laura now has four permanent raised beds. How many to go? Don't ask. Lots. And once made, we certainly hope our garden will be crabgrass free.

The only other menaces (as I have also mentioned) are invading deer and groundhogs. But that requires other solutions.

#### **Prince Philip** visited city three times

### THUNDER BAY By Leith Dunick - TB Source

Prince Philip, who died last Friday at age 99, visited the Thunder Bay area three different times during more than 73 years of marriage to Queen Elizabeth II.

Prince Philip first visited the Lakehead area in 1951, a year before the Queen ascended the throne. The couple then returned in 1959 and then one final time in 1973, three years after Port Arthur and Fort William amalgamated to become the city of Thunder Bay.

That final visit proved to be the most infamous, thanks mostly to the city's colourful mayor, Walter Assef, who introduced Prince Philip and Queen Elizabeth as "his Royal Highness and his lovely wife.'

The prince, who married the future

Queen in 1947, allegedly referred to Assef as "that jolly little mayor from Thunder Bay."

It led to a new nickname for the feisty civic leader - Jolly Wally.

Assef also allegedly patted the Queen on her behind, though the former mayor, who died in 1988, always maintained he had simply been guiding her to a chair.

The Queen and Prince also visited the newly opened Old Fort William, which today is known at Fort William Historic Park.

The 1959 visit coincided with the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

The Royal Couple arrived in port on the Royal Yacht Britannia and had lunch at the Royal Edward Hotel. Peter Szablowski was the chef at the

hotel and was invited to serve lunch to Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip.

In a 1980 interview with Thunder Bay

Television, he said he was surprised and honoured to be asked.

"They advised me about two months before they arrived in Thunder Bay ... but I didn't know I was going to have the chance to prepare a meal for them. I thought they were going to bring the chef from the yacht and he was going to look after them," Szablowski said.

"But I talked to our manager and they told me if I was good enough for the Thunder Bay people, I'm good enough for Her Majesty the Queen and Prince Philip."

During the 1959 trip, Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip paraded through the streets of Fort William, with cheering crowds lining the roadway for a chance to catch a glimpse of the Royal Couple.

Prince Philip's first visit to the area occurred in 1951, part of a five-week tour of Canada by the future Queen and Prince.



VISIT: Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip arrive in Fort William in 1951.

## **Crabgrass bane of gardeners**

**TBLife** 

# **Rotary House Lottery sells out in 5 weeks**

### THUNDER BAY By Leith Dunick – TB Source

t only took five weeks for the Fort William Rotary House Lottery to sell out.

Lottery co-chair David Knutson says he's astounded it happened so quickly, with zero open houses to entice buyers.

And yet, just over a month into a planned seven-month selling period, all 16,000 tickets have been gobbled up by the public.

"We were just completely amazed by that short period of time. We only had last year's experience and ... we were selling tickets into October. This year we elected to take that same extended sales period. We added a number of cash draws to try to keep people's interest in the lottery into October, and here we are five weeks into it and we're sold out," Knutson said. "It's just an amazing result."

Knutson said he thinks a number of factors played into the rapid response from ticket buyers.



VIRTUAL SALE: David Knutson, co-chair of the Fort William Rotary House Lottery draw, says he's amazed how quickly tickets sold out.

First and foremost, with no open houses, people weren't waiting to take a tour of the home, valued at \$642,000, to pick up their tickets, which were one for \$100 and three for \$250. Online sales also helped, making it easier for consumers to click and pay. Finally, the pandemic also played a

Knutson said people seem to have more time on hand and, with travel and extra-curricular activities curtailed in

role.

large part, more money to spend.

"One thing we can't underestimate is the convenience of being able to go onto a dedicated website and make that order fairly quickly. We love to have the open houses, we like to showcase the builders' work ... but since we have the website and we have a video tour on the website, I think it's just that convenience of being able to get on and complete the transaction quickly," Knutson said.

"I think the other thing is everyone is fatigued from the COVID situation and perhaps they've got a lot of time on their hands at home, or time to be surfing the net. On the other hand, it's something to look forward to. You have the cash draws and the big grand prize. Maybe it will be coming at a time when you're looking at the tail end of COVID."

Money raised is distributed to local charities and Knutson said because they sold out so quickly, it's likely they'll receive a bigger share because of reduced expenses.



## IN THE bay arts entertainment culture

## **Shifting life gears in Nomadland**



The much heralded *Nomadland*, has finally arrived on Disney+ and it doesn't disappoint.

The film is director/screenwriter Chloé Zhao's moody character study of a woman named Fern (Frances McDormand) who looks to redefine herself after significant loss in life.

It is the untimely passing of her husband Bo and the virtual shutdown of her one-industry town of Empire, Nev., which spurs Fern into action.

With nothing else to bind her to Empire, Fern packs up her ramshackle van which morphs into her home and embarks upon an odyssey taking her throughout the American western frontier, subsisting on part-time jobs and encountering a variety of characters and situations as she flits from one RV park to another.

Fern joins the ranks of nomadic "van dwellers" who have chosen (or been forced) to follow an alternative path after sustaining a life experience of some sort, whether financial, health, personal or otherwise.

#### Van life

Heading the nomads is real-life van dweller Bob Wells, who oversees a commune-like operation in Quartzsite, Arizona providing support for those living on the margins like Fern.

Wells himself suggests that Fern might find solace in re-connecting with nature and finding a 'tribe' to help assuage her emptiness. New female friends Linda May and



REINVENTION: Frances McDormand plays Fern in Nomadland, a woman looking to redefine herself after suffering a loss.

Charlene Swankie give practical tips on everything from spare tires to toilet buckets while others share life experiences.

It seems this mindset has always preexisted within Fern. A home may symbolize creature comforts but also brings with it baggage she deems burdensome and unnecessary.

"I'm not homeless,' she says, "Just houseless."

For most of the film, Fern herself is an enigma. She interacts with people but hangs back from further intimacy. We learn little of her previous life until a much-needed vehicle repair loan forces her to reconnect with her more conventional sister and brother-in-law, whose job as a real estate agent presents a philosophical conflict.

Director Chloé Zhao brings to Nomadland a similarly quiet, quasidocumentary approach she employed in the wonderful *The Rider*, heralded as one of the best films in 2019.

Little happens plot-wise, but Zhao illuminates Fern's new world with interesting empathetic characters, some real-life, and everyday details, cultivating an intimate, authentic view of this intriguing American subculture based on Jessica Bruder's non-fiction book.

### Thinking a lot

The mood is reflective and contemplative, but not romanticized. The film builds to a realistic conclusion consistent with its heroine.

In Frances McDormand, Zhao has an emblematic non-conforming protagonist. Fern takes life on her own terms. She won't quit smoking. She savours bathing in a brook and braving a wind-swept, wave-tossed rocky shoreline. McDormand is unafraid of looking shopworn. She's so genuine here.

Ludovico Einaudi's spare, affecting soundtrack and cinematographer Joshua James Richards's breath-taking landscapes embellish the beauty and mood of this engrossing little movie.

*Nomadland* is nominated for six Oscars, including Best Picture and Best Actress, and has won another 216 awards.

It is heartening to see smaller scale films like *Nomadland*, and *Minari*, among others, sharing the limelight with bigger productions. Little human dramas have re-gained stature on the cinema scene.



IN THE **BAY** 

## News you choose shapes your opinions

saw an old episode of *NCIS* in which a reporter asked a passerby for her personal opinion on a political issue. The woman responded, "I don't know. I'll have to go home and ask my husband."

While most of us would find this submissive attitude ridiculous, the fact is, we're all this woman, one way or another.

We may not be running home to ask our husband what "we" think, but we're asking someone. Intentionally or not.

Between social media and online options, more and more people are sharing their opinions and influencing others.

However, are they educated opinions? Do they have merit?

Some, like the aforementioned wife, think they've done their homework when they ask friends and family for their opinions. Then, they just piggyback on the sentiment.

Meanwhile, others will turn to the



media for answers. And this is where the "research" many claim to have done, goes off the rails.

There are as many falsehoods online as there are facts. For every truth, there is an alternate theory. For every reality, there is a conspiracy.

So instead of anonymous internet opinions, many turn to television for "truth in reporting." And there, things can get even murkier. Depending on the



#### APPEALING STORY: Newsworthy or not?

network they tune in to, not only will viewers get different perspectives on the issues, but also they'll be told which issues are of actual importance based on the amount of media coverage.

For example, last month, while the more liberal news outlets were reporting on U.S. Presdient Joe Biden's trilliondollar COVID relief bill, the conservative channels were focusing on Mr. Potato Head's gender and a handful of obscure Dr. Seuss books that were being taken out of print.

Now, admittedly, one of these topics is pretty dry. It's constantly changing. Frankly, it's depressing. And yes, that could describe Mr. Potato Head's genitalia. However, I am, in fact, talking about COVID relief. It's exhausting and increasingly complicated.

But it's important – vital to the U.S.'s survival – which should make it the hot topic that day for every news outlet.

And yet, Fox News and its beloved Tucker Carlson instead focused on the Potato Head drama, Dr. Seuss, and "liberal cancel culture."

So those who leaned right – being

informed by Fox, NewsMax, OAN and the like – were told that these were the most serious issues affecting their lives.

Meanwhile, those who consumed their news from left-leaning CNN, NPR, the alphabet networks, and HuffPost (to name a few) were more focused on COVID policy.

Their opinions moving forward will be based on what their respective media outlets tell them to think.

And if you asked both groups why they believe what they do, they'd staunchly argue that they'd researched the issues. They'd done their homework.

But the truth is their "husband" who tells them what to think is now a biased news network, questionable online information, and social media attitudes just like their own.

So before everyone gets too confident in their opinions, we need to think about where they're coming from. And if those opinions are truly our own.

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57 58 59 (abbr.)	The <b>tbSOURCE</b> Classifieds are ONLINE, so it's easier than ever to find exactly what you're looking for. visit tbnewswatch.com	PREVIOUS SOLUTION: "Hard things are put in our way, not to stop us, but to call out our courage and strength." — Anonymous

MILLENIUM MAN: Carolina's Jordan Staal.

**Jordan Staal** 

hits 1,000-

game mark

hunder Bay's Jordan Staal joined his older brother Eric on Monday night

in the NHL's 1,000 games played club.

The 32-year-old Carolina Hurricanes

captain became the 349th player in NHL

history to hit the mark, in a game that

featured his older brother Marc, a

defenceman with the Detroit Red

Staal is 10th all time on the Hurricanes

The veteran forward has 238 goals and

328 assists in his 15-year NHL career

that includes a Stanley Cup win with

"To be able to compete in the best

league in the world for that many games

is quite an accomplishment," brother

Marc said in an interview with the

Charlotte News & Observer, ahead of

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

games played list, with 569.

Pittsburgh in 2009.

Wings



# Road races going virtual

#### RUNNING By Leith Dunick - TB Source

he Firefighters Ten Mile Road Race is going to be a virtual event again in 2021.

Organizers on Monday confirmed the event, which began in 1910, won't be able to be held as a traditional road race on the Victoria Day weekend because of ongoing COVID-19 protocols.

The new format, which is scheduled for a one-year staging, will open registration to anyone in the region, across the country or around the globe.

"Participants will be responsible for selecting a safe 10-mile course anywhere of their choosing as well as following directives of Thunder Bay Regional Health Authority pertaining to masks, social distancing and gathering in groups and any other applicable directives," said race director Herb Daniher in an email sent on Monday.

"The 10-mile distance would be completed on one of the days between Saturday, May 15 and Tuesday. May 25.3

Those who finish the race will be awarded virtual finishers medals. There will be a slight change in

format too. "Unique to this version of the Fire Fighters Ten mile is that there is no three-hour time limit to complete the event. The only requirement is that the ten miles be completed in a continual manner whether your running or walking the 10-mile course," Daniher said.

"This gives more people the option to complete the Fire Fighters Ten Mile Race which is not normally available. The committee thought this option was important and keeping the spirits up and the community active as the community battles COVID."



RUNNING DOWN A DREAM: Trevor Zimak crosses the finish line at the 2018 Firefighters Ten Mile Road Race.

To sign up, visit www.10mileroadrace.org.

The Firefighters virtual race won't be alone in 2021.

Gary Young says for the second straight year, he'll be holding a Virtual Victoria Day 10-Mile

Jayson Stoppel, CPA,CA

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Challenge, the second straight year he's hosted the event.

Runners are allowed to enter for free, with a request for donations. "A total of 58 persons finished the

first virtual 10 mile," Young said in an email to Dougall Media.

"This year will be the second virtual Victoria day 10 mile race and the 88th timed and recorded Thunder Bay 10-Mile . This year the charity is St Joseph's Foundation of Canada." More information is available at www.tb10milechallenge.com.



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