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Thursday, December 16, 2021

UPHILL CLIMB

Rethinking the designated truck route decision may be left to next council /9



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Hundreds of truckers use Highway 102 and Dawson Road as they transport goods across the country along the Trans-Canada route. (Leith Dunick)

Happy Holidays

As a child back in my home community of Kasabonika, I used to cling to my kookum as she went door-to-door visiting other families to check in and say hello every Christmas season. I don't think she missed a home. We entered the homes carrying gifts, whether it was a pound of lard or a little bag of flour, because it was a tradition to bring a gift when we went visiting. Often, I would leave with a gift of my own.

My kookum wasn't the only one who carried out this tradition in my community. I also saw our Chief doing the same, checking up on the homes. He showed love and compassion to everyone.

Today, this is the same approach we take here at Tikinagan. As we visit and work in our communities, we show our love and compassion for the children and families we work with. The holiday season is always a special time when we come celebrate our togetherness – a perfect parallel to our service model Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin, which means “everyone working together to raise our children.” Being together and celebrating children at a time like this also makes me think of the Wise Men from the Gospels, who traveled to visit Jesus and his family (Matthew 2:1-11) upon his birth. They, too, also brought gifts when they visited!

This Christmas season, we celebrate how our staff have worked together to keep families and communities safe through this pandemic by following health guidelines. We also continue to work toward the reunification of families and keeping them connected to the family, culture, and community. And as we move closer to a new year, we look forward with faith, hope, gratitude, and joy. Faith that we are on the right path with our families, children and youth we work with. Hope that work that we continue to make a positive impact on someone's life. Gratitude to our Creator for our abilities to be apart of the work we do at Tikinagan. And let us be mindful of the joy that is coming and that is here.

On behalf of our Board, Elders, and Staff, Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to you and yours.

Thelma Morris, Executive Director



Jethro Anderson, (clockwise, from left), Curran Strang, Paul Panacheese, Robyn Harper, Reggie Bushie, Kyle Morriveau, Jordan Wabasse.

Progress made

Overall grade from Youth Inquest jumps to an A

By Doug Diaczuk -TB Source

Progress on the jury recommendations from the Seven Youth Inquest has improved slightly over last year, but legal representatives for six of the seven family members say actions speak louder than grades and all parties involved will continue to be held to account to ensure Indigenous youth have an equal opportunity to education.

Aboriginal Legal Services presented its five-year report card for the Seven Youth Inquest in Thunder Bay on Thursday.

The overall grade on the implementation of the jury's 145 recommendations from 2015 rose from a B+ in 2020 to an A- for 2021.

"We are a big proponent of the philosophy of what gets measured gets done," said Jonathan Rudin, program director with Aboriginal Legal Services. "I think people are concerned with how they are perceived. We are hoping that if we keep grading that people will keep wanting to do things."

The Seven Youth Inquest was called following the deaths of Jethro Anderson, Reggie Bushie, Robyn Harper, Kyle Morriveau, Paul Panacheese, and Jordan Wabasse, whose families were represented by Aboriginal Legal Services, and Curran Strang, whose family was not represented. All seven youth died between 2000 and 2011 while

attending school in Thunder Bay.

Following the inquest, the jury handed down 89 short-term, 39 medium-term, and 17 long-term recommendations to several parties, including the federal and provincial governments, the City of Thunder Bay, Nishnawbe Aski Nation, and Indigenous education providers.

Of the 145 recommendations, 64 per cent are now considered complete, 31 per cent are in progress, and five per cent are listed as nothing done.

Aboriginal Legal Services assigns an overall grade on the implementation of the recommendations, as well as individual grades for each of the involved parties.

All parties saw their grade either improve or remain the same over last year, with the federal government receiving a B- from a C+, the City of Thunder Bay moving from a B to an A-, and NAN moving from a B+ to an A-. The provincial government received the same grade as last year of a B.

Of the governmental parties, the city of Thunder Bay has the highest completion rate at 90 per cent, while three per cent of recommendations are in progress and 6.5 per cent with nothing done.

"I think the issue for the city is some of the recommendations are directed to do things that they think they've done and we don't think they've done," Rudin said.

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Council approves \$400K Parkdale study

By Ian Kaufman –TB Source

The City of Thunder Bay is preparing to spend up to \$400,000 on a study to solidify development plans for the Parkdale area, located west and north of the Thunder Bay Airport.

City councillors debated Monday whether extending infrastructure like sewer lines and roads into the area would be good planning, but unanimously agreed it was worth undertaking the major planning study in an attempt to answer that question.

Councillors voted to add \$180,000 to the draft 2022 budget for a Parkdale Growth Area Secondary Plan study, which would be combined with previously budgeted funds to support the exercise.

The recommendation to carry out the study was made by city administration in response to a request from

developer Nadin Construction to extend a trunk sewer line by around three kilometres to reach a proposed subdivision just east of Maplewood Estates, off of Mapleward Road, which they also developed.

The local company told the city earlier this year it's prepared to spend millions to cover the costs of a sewer line large enough to support the development.

New development in the Parkdale growth area can only proceed on city sewer services, thanks to a 2017 Ontario Municipal Board settlement reached after the province objected to Maplewood Estates being built using private septic fields.

The trunk line itself would likely take at least five years to come to fruition, with plans for the subdivision moving ahead after that, the Nadins have said.

The city would be left to maintain the asset, and staff said Monday it



Parkdale has become one of the city's most desirable areas for developers.

would also need to pay around \$1.1 million to "oversize" the trunk line to accommodate other future development in the area. The city would also need to acquire property or

easement rights from around 17 property owners along the sewer line route.

The decision is about a lot more than a sewer line, city staff said.

Supporting the development of Parkdale would represent a "progression of the urban fabric in a westward direction," said director of planning Leslie McEachern, requiring the city to make decisions about road location, transit servicing, and more.

A secondary plan would take about a year to complete and require an amendment to the city's official plan, sketching out development policies specific to the Parkdale area.

Coun. Shelby Ch'ng was one of several councillors to voice hesitation over the request, saying previous decisions to add city services for developments on the edges of the city had proven to be costly mistakes.

"We need to densify, and stretching out is I think the wrong way to go," she said. "However, I do see that this particular piece of property has potential."



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Budget preview

City manager explains the process of putting together Thunder Bay's financial blueprint

By Norm Gale - Special to TB Source

To make sure we are meeting the needs of our community now and in the future, the City of Thunder Bay goes through a detailed budget planning process every year.

City council sets the budget parameters after receiving valuable input from residents. Municipalities are required by law to annually prepare balanced operating and capital budgets where revenues coming in equal expenses. To balance the budget, consideration must be given to the level of service that is required and desired.

The budget challenge

The Corporation faces many budget challenges. Inflation is rising and that has a big impact. The consumer price index (CPI) rose 4.7% on a year-over-year basis in October - the largest gain since February 2003. A municipality buys a different 'basket of goods' than the typical consumer on which the CPI is based. The municipality's 'basket of goods' is more expensive, resulting in increased financial pressures.

COVID-19 will continue to impact our operations in 2022. Lower revenues in transit, child care and recreation facilities along with increased costs for personal protective equipment, screening and cleaning will continue for the foreseeable future. However, the impact of COVID-19 will not impact the tax levy in 2022.

The added challenge has been a loss in revenue from COVID-19 restrictions. We have, however, actually spent less money than we planned because of closures and reductions in city services. But on a net basis, COVID-19 comes with a significant cost that we will have to find. We will be recommending to City Council to finance the impact of COVID-19 through the Stabilization Reserve Fund, and we will advocate for more financial support from provincial and federal levels of government to minimize the impact on our reserves.

Key budget drivers

There are several drivers influencing the draft budget. We are seeing an increase for the Police Service and the Police Services Board of \$1.8 million. This is mainly due to wage increases and inflationary increases. Council wants the capital budget to increase by \$1 million. We are also proposing more health care professionals at Pioneer Ridge, more bylaw officers, more community paramedics,

and upgrading the Pool 6 cruise ship dock and lands. Although some of the new positions will be funded by the province, there are other positions and costs to advance the recommendations from the program and service review.

Insurance premiums for municipalities are increasing at rates not seen before, and they are not sustainable. This is partially being driven by increases in cyber insurance.

Drivers that will help offset the increases above include additional Ontario Municipal Partnership Funding (OMPF), lower tax write-offs, and lower insurance claims and legal fees. As well, Thunder Bay Fire Rescue has reduced its staffing in accordance with their strategic master plan.

The infrastructure deficit

We also see pressures related to the infrastructure deficit. The deficit is the difference between what we spend annually versus what is required to maintain and replace our assets at end of life.

Just last week, Administration presented Phase One of the Asset Management Plan. The Plan demonstrates a \$13.5 million annual funding shortfall to maintain our core assets (roads, sewer, water, bridges). In Phase Two, when buildings, fleet, machinery and equipment, land improvements and sidewalks are included, our annual shortfall will be much higher. In short, we are not spending enough on infrastructure maintenance.

We need to find a way to increase our infrastructure spending in general to support the things we have. If we build new things, we need to also contribute to the renewal of these things through the annual operating budget.

Council gives a target to Administration for our budget proposal.

This year it is 2.25 per cent. This target is well below inflation.

A finalized budget, should it be less or around 2.25%, will be a smaller increase than many other municipalities. Like you, the residents of Thunder Bay, the city faces many challenges that are not just limited to inflation. We are doing our best to manage costs while delivering you valued programs and services.

Throughout the budget process, our goal has been to provide residents with meaningful and effective public engagement to help improve the quality of the decisions we make, increase citizen understanding of issues and government processes, promote transparency and accountability, and increase support, understanding, and ownership of decisions made.

I encourage everyone to get involved.

Additional public engagement opportunities on the proposed 2022 budget will be available early January through an online survey, community handbook, or deputation opportunities. For full details, visit www.thunderbay.ca/budget.

Norm Gale is city manager for the City of Thunder Bay.



NORM GALE

THIS WEEK'S WEATHER FORECAST

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Mixed precipitation Precipitation: 70% HIGH 6 LOW -13	Mainly sunny Precipitation: 20% HIGH -7 LOW -13	Scattered flurries Precipitation: 40% HIGH -8 LOW -15	A mix of Sun and Clouds Precipitation: 30% HIGH -7 LOW -7

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EDITORIAL

Banning trucks

It's time for city council to stop playing politics and put into place a law banning transports from Dawson Road.

How many more people have to die before reality sets in?

Earlier this year, two truckers died in a crash when they failed to stop at the highway's westernmost end, nearly killing four innocent passersby in the process.

Just this past weekend, another trucker died, a 56-year-old, in a collision involving three transports.

It's only a matter of time before it happens again.

Truckers have a perfectly good bypass on Highway 11/17, and plenty of warning to slow down before they hit the more populated Kakabeka Falls.

The bypass was built to save lives.

It's clear the province isn't about to step in, having said in the past it won't even allow signage along the highway warning truckers not to turn onto Highway 102 or Dawson Road. The city, however, owns the latter section and is fully capable of banning trucks.

It has to happen and it has to happen now. Lives are at stake, both the truckers' and residents who use the road each and every day.



A Farwell to Arms Hemingway's masterpiece

'Wars are fought by the finest people that there are ... but they are made, provoked and initiated by straight economic rivalries and by swine that stand to profit from them. I believe that all the people who stand to profit by a war and who help provoke it should be shot on the first day it starts by accredited representatives of the loyal citizens of their country who will fight it'.

So said Ernest Hemingway in his introduction to *A Farewell to Arms*, which many people consider to be his finest novel. Hemingway knew what he was talking about - he took part in three wars. He was wounded as an

ambulance driver on the Italian front in the Great War. He supported the Republican cause as a journalist during the Spanish Civil War. And he ran his own unofficial submarine hunting operation in Cuba and front line skirmishing unit in Germany at the end of World War Two.

I first read *A Farewell to Arms* when I was a student. My high school teacher said that he hesitated giving this text to a group of 16-year-old boys because we were not mature enough to understand and appreciate its contents.

He was right because at that time I read it almost purely as the heroic story of a young man who went to war and got injured. I focused on the action scenes and completely missed most of the novel's emotional content.

Hemingway's writing style is deceptively simple, but most of what he has to say exists between the lines - what is known as the iceberg theory of writing whereby the written text only accounts for one eighth of what

the author intends to convey. Hemingway achieved this by starting each day with a read through of what he had written to date, cutting it down and paring it back to its essence. He then continued the story until he knew what was coming next and then stopped for the day.

The opening paragraph - that begins 'In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains' - is one of the most famous opening passages in English literature. His description of the landscape is brilliant, evocative and captivating. He draws you into the

scenery as if it surrounds you while you read the prose.

Hemingway was not interested in writing fact or fiction and was happy to mix both up in his novels, which is why we should never read them as autobiography. Some of the scenes and characters in *A Farewell to Arms* are based on places and people that Hemingway knew. But for him what really mattered was writing that which is true - which goes beyond facts.

The best edition to read is the Hemingway Library Edition. It includes the 47 alternative endings that he wrote to the novel and a list of 44 possible titles.



John Pateman
BOOK BANTER

CONTACT INFORMATION
87 North Hill Street
Thunder Bay, Ontario P7A 5V6
Tel: 807-346-2600

Editor: Leith Dunick 346-2650 | ldunick@dougallmedia.com
Reporter: Doug Diaczuk 346-2622 | ddiaczuk@dougallmedia.com
Reporter: Ian Kaufman 346-3558 | ikaufman@dougallmedia.com
Reporter: Justin Hardy 346-2591 | jhardy@dougallmedia.com
Sales Manager: Kathy Harris 346-2510 | kharris@dougallmedia.com

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Coffee's a world-wide ritual

Even as prices rise, that cup of java is still a daily routine

By **JR Shermack** -
For **TB Source**

Some habits don't need to be kicked and may even be good for you.

I remember one time when I was a kid waiting for some take-out fries at a small Westfort diner and the coffee drinkers at the counter were upset, annoyed and irritated.

The reason for their outrage - the very next day, all across the city, the price of restaurant coffee was going up from 10 cents a cup to 15 cents.

This was an affront to these coffee drinkers who shook their heads in disbelief and considered more drastic action like quitting, cold turkey.

But that was just an idle threat - the thought of cutting back made them all nervous and twitchy and besides, they all had the coffee habit.

I think most of them eventually dug up that extra nickel but their complaining and grumbling showed how deeply coffee culture was entrenched into Canadian society.

The price of a cup of coffee continued to increase nickel by nickel and quarter by quarter until modern day drinkers pay five bucks or more for a designer cup of joe.

I wonder what those old-time coffee drinkers would say about the menu and price list in coffee shops today - it all started with that first nickel increase.

The aroma of fresh coffee drifts into every corner of modern Canadian culture from business meetings to social gatherings to the brunch buffet to the hockey arena.

Coffee is the beverage of choice among Canadians aged 18 to 79, surpassing even water and believe it or not, beer.

Water remains the most commonly consumed beverage on the planet, but here in Canada we choose coffee over tap water most of the time.

Canadians are known for drinking

a lot of coffee, some of us more than others, but there is no reason why we couldn't up our intake even more.

According to the Coffee Association of Canada two-thirds of Canadians enjoy at least one cup per day with the national average being 3.2 cups daily.

My personal coffee habit keeps my daily consumption above average - I am making up for the abstainers and tea drinkers who aren't drinking their fair share.

When you compare our national consumption to the caffeine intake of other top 10 coffee swilling nations there is clearly room for a second refill, maybe even a third, large.

Coffee consumption is measured nationally in pounds per year, divided by the total population including non-coffee drinkers.

Accordingly, the people of Finland consume a respectable 26.5 pounds per person followed by Norway (21.8 pounds), Iceland (19.8) and Denmark (19.2).

The top 10 list also includes the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland

and Belgium - Luxembourg is No. 9 and Canada slips into 10th with 14.3 pounds per person.

If Canada doubles its coffee consumption over the next year we could be a contender for top spot - we might also be a little nervous and stressed out from the caffeine.

It is true that coffee has side effects in some people but by the same token the health benefits are extensive and supported by research.

Coffee contains high levels of antioxidants and beneficial nutrients that protect and lower the risk of Type 2 Diabetes, Alzheimer's and Dementia, Parkinson's and some types of cancer.

You might even call it a health food - unsweetened coffee is listed as a healthy drink choice in the Canada Food Guide.

As for me, I continue drinking more than my share of coffee and just like those coffee drinkers I saw, I dig out an extra nickel when the price goes up.

Some habits don't need to be broken.



Canadians drink 14.3 pounds of coffee a year.

what's happening
in and around...

The Bay

To submit an event, email ldunick@dougallmedia.com.
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December 16-18

Winnie the Pooh Kids

Paramount Live presents Winnie the Pooh Kids, based on the beloved A.A. Milne characters and the 2011 animated Disney film. Described as a honey-filled delight, the musical features Winnie the Pooh in the 100-Acre Wood in search of honey, where he meets Tigger, Piglet, Rabbit and Owl. He also learns that Christopher Robin has been kidnapped.

Tickets are \$13.75 and full vaccination is required for those 12 and older. Shows start at 7 p.m.

December 17

Skiitour in concert

Two-fresh-off-mountain electronic music addicts are hitting the Atmos stage on Friday night to create a turbo-funk dance for the late-night crowd. Tickets to the Thunder Bay stop on the We Belong Tour are \$35 and available at www.atmostbay.ca. The show starts at 9 p.m.

December 18-19

Christmas at Saalem

Saalem Church will host its annual Christmas concert on Saturday night at 6:30 p.m. and again on Sunday at 4 p.m. Registration is required due to capacity limits. Find the link on the church's Facebook page. Sunday's concert will also be streamed online. Saalem Church is located at 21 Walkover St.

December 18

Boreal Museum Grand Opening

Come check out the Boreal Museum's brand-new exhibit, Life on Ice, featuring the animals and habitats found around Canada's frozen Arctic Oceans.

The exhibit looks at the different forms of life found in these extreme habitats as well as human influences and impacts on these delicate ecosystems.

There will be plenty of free activities for adults and children and the

gift shop will be open for the scientist on your holiday shopping list.

The grand opening takes place on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the museum's new location in the Hub Bazaar at 507 Victoria Ave. East.

COVID-19 protocols will be in place.

December 19

PauperMTG

Head down to Thunder Games and Gifts for 10:30 a.m. start. Prizing includes one pack per match win as well as a random foil pack. Second and third-place prizes too.

December 21

Gingerbread House Night

Members of the Red Lion Smokehouse's 100 Club are invited to an exclusive event, making gingerbread houses while enjoying their wide selection of holiday beers.

For more information, please phone 286-0045 or email hello@redlion-smokehouse.ca.

HOW TO WRITE TO US:

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

The Thunder Bay Source reserves the right to edit submissions for content and clarity. All attempts will be made to preserve the core argument of the author.

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THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Should Thunder Bay be placed under tighter COVID-19 restrictions, with cases climbing significantly?

TOTAL VOTES: 4,378

YES 53.02% NO 43.63% DON'T KNOW 3.36%

Liveable incomes protest held

By Doug Diaczuk -TB Source

Poverty Free Thunder Bay had some carols to sing to political leaders in the city, but the message in these songs called for ways to keep people above the poverty line and earning liveable incomes.

As part of the United Nations Human Rights Day, Poverty Free Thunder Bay held rallies outside the office of MPP Judith Monteith-Farrell, Thunder Bay City Hall, and the offices of the Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board.

“We called this rally to draw attention to the fact that liveable incomes are part of human rights,” said Sarah Williamson, who is a

member of Poverty Free Thunder Bay.

Income can include social assistance, pensions, WSIB benefits, and wages and Williamson said more and more people are facing situations where these no longer constitute a liveable income.

“The worst of it is that people on Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program, their assistance money has been frozen at the same level for three years and they are way below the poverty line as it is,” she said.

Williamson added that individuals on these programs can make a little over \$700 a month. Citing a recent Thunder Bay District Health Unit report that revealed the cost of

healthy eating in the district is approximately \$256 a month, little is left over for other expenses.

“After you pay that and you only have \$733, you still have to pay the rent, pay for transit, you have to pay for clothing, non-prescription medications, utilities, laundry,” Williamson said. “There’s a lot of other necessities that need to be covered and there just isn’t enough to go around.”

The cost of living has also been increasing across the country and the cost of food is expected to go up even more in 2022, which is resulting in many people seeking help through services like food banks.

The high cost of childcare is also



Poverty Free Thunder Bay hold a rally.

forcing people to make a choice between working and caring for a child.

“It’s keeping people out of the

workforce and small businesses are saying we can’t get labour,” Williamson said. “If child care isn’t affordable, then people can’t afford to come into work. It’s just stunting people’s careers as they move forward and it just doesn’t make sense. It doesn’t make good economic sense from any angle.”

Williamson added there are many people and organizations in the city who step up to help those in need, but it’s just a band-aid solution.

“If you can’t have the basic incomes coming in, the things that are lost on the side, that’s one thing, but when you don’t have what you absolutely need, it’s just not right,” she said. “You cannot live with dignity.”

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A truck turns onto Dawson Road, which is under Thunder Bay's jurisdiction. The road later turns into Highway 102. (Leith Dunick)

Truck route trouble

It may be up to the next council to implement a DTR

By Ian Kaufman -TB Source

Thunder Bay's city council must overcome a steep procedural hurdle if it wants to take any action on a proposed Designated Truck Route, city staff have confirmed.

It will take a two-thirds majority vote of council to either enact or definitively reject the DTR, councillors heard Monday in a report from the office of city clerk Krista Power.

The report advised councillors they have four options on the DTR, which would force heavy trucks off Arthur Street and Dawson Road and onto the provincial highway network, as well as restricting their travel within the city.

Recent fatal collisions involving transport trucks on Highway 102, which turns into Dawson Road, have put a renewed spotlight on the issue, and on Monday prompted more heated rhetoric from Coun. Trevor Giertuga, who has long championed the DTR.

He suggested councillors voting to block the DTR were allowing those incidents to continue, emphasizing that administration continues to recommend passing it, after finding it would lower the rate of deadly collisions.

Some councillors have rejected that advice, saying the Highway 11/17 extension that turns into the Harbour Expressway is unprepared to handle an estimated extra 1,000 trucks a day the DTR would shift to the route.

"We have administration who's telling us the safer route is the DTR," Giertuga said. "I know I sleep well at night - I hope everyone else does."

Council's options to move forward with the DTR include rescinding the original 2019 vote to implement it; amending that decision with a meaningful change to the DTR proposal; reversing a 2020 vote against a bylaw to enact the DTR; and taking no

action, leaving the issue for the next council elected in October 2022.

All but the last, taking no action, would need to be put forward by someone from the winning side of the previous vote, and would require a two-thirds majority, Power advised.

That would appear to be a challenging threshold to meet, with previous votes on the DTR passing by tight 7-6 or 7-5 margins.

Once the 2022-2026 term begins, council could move forward with a simple majority vote, Power said.

The decision to implement a DTR was passed 7-6 in 2019, but after Coun. Brian Hamilton had a change of heart on the issue, two subsequent votes to enact it with a new bylaw failed to find majority support.

City manager Norm Gale told councillors last month his administration won't present another proposed bylaw unless council provides direction on specific changes it wants to see.

Coun. Cody Fraser, whose Neebing ward includes the stretch of Arthur Street West that would see truck traffic removed by the DTR, said he'd be willing to broker what might be a politically damaging compromise.

Fraser offered his support for an amendment to have the DTR force trucks only off Dawson Road, allowing them to continue using Arthur. He hoped the change could address the more pressing Dawson Road situation while alleviating concerns about increased truck traffic on the Highway 11/17 extension.

"I don't do that lightly, but there are some things more important than my political capital, and that's one of them," he said.

He encouraged any councillors who might be open to changing their votes to reach out to him. On Monday, however, council accepted Power's report with no action taken.

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There will be no paper
Thursday, December 30th, 2021

Deadline for Jan. 6, 2022 Paper
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Thunder Bay Regional is going to use personal support workers to supplement staffing. (FILE)

Hospital plans to hire PSWs early next year

By Gary Rinne - TB Source

Facing a shortage of nurses, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre will recruit some personal support workers to help take care of patients.

It's the first time the hospital has done this.

Approximately 15 full-time-equivalent PSWs are expected to start work by the end of February or beginning of March.

A hospital spokesman told *Thunder Bay Source* none of the PSWs will replace a nursing position.

He described the initiative as a temporary measure that's being implemented as a trial.

The hospital plans to revisit the use of PSWs after six months.

No official was available for an interview, but TBRHSC provided a statement referring to the nationwide nursing shortage exacerbated by pandemic-related stress that's caused more sick leaves.

It said the hospital is nonetheless trying to move back toward normal operations, and is currently using more nurses than it has ever employed before.

The statement provided this overview of the work the PSWs will perform:

PSWs work as a member of the interprofessional health care team. They are trained to assist in the identification of relevant patient

information using basic assessment and communication skills, assist patients with routine activities of daily living, applying basic knowledge of growth and development, common alterations in functioning, disease prevention, health promotion and maintenance, rehabilitation and restorative care.

The hospital said adding PSWs to its staff will allow nurses to focus on acute patient needs while ensuring the basic needs of patients are met.

It was announced last week that staff members at TBRHSC and all other hospitals in Northwestern Ontario will lose their jobs if they are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by Feb. 11, 2022.

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Kindergarten masks mandatory

By TB Source staff

When kindergarten students return to class after the Christmas holidays, they must wear masks to reduce the risk of acquiring or spreading the COVID-19 virus.

Lakehead Public Schools and the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board announced the policy Monday.

It takes effect Jan. 3, 2022.

Up to now, the mask mandate applied to other grades, but it was only recommended that Kindergarten students wear masks.

In a joint statement, the two boards said the change is the result of a recent increase in the number of positive COVID-19 cases impacting Kindergarten students.

"Including kindergarten Year One and Year Two in our masking protocol will help keep our youngest

learners protected and as safe as possible," said Lakehead Public Schools' director of education Ian MacRae.

The director of the Thunder Bay Catholic board, Pino Tassone, said masks in kindergarten will minimize the chance of infection and lower the potential for school-wide outbreaks.

Under the policy, students who are unable to maintain physical distance from others during outdoor breaks are asked to keep their mask on.

If that's not possible, mask breaks may be taken outside while students are with members of their cohort.

Parents who provide masks for their children are requested to ensure they have them each day.

Should a replacement mask be required at school, the school will have extra masks on hand.

An online fact sheet is available.



Students in junior and senior kindergarten will be required to wear masks most of the day in schools, starting on Jan. 3 (Cathy Metcalf)

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& Happy New Year

THUNDER BAY **SOURCE**
YOUR COMMUNITY CONNECTION



Musab Saboon is the co-accused in the killing of Lee Chiodo in 2019.

Murder trial is delayed

By Doug Diaczuk – TB Source

A murder trial that was set to begin this month for two accused of first-degree murder in connection to the 2019 death of 40-year-old Lee Chiodo has been pushed back to early 2022.

A 10-day trial for David Hui and Musab Saboon was originally set to begin on Dec. 6, 2021 but the matter was adjourned at the request of the Crown.

New trial dates have now been set and the 10-day trial will begin on Feb. 28, 2022.

Hui and Saboon are both facing charges of first-degree murder and kidnapping for their alleged role in the death of Chiodo, whose body was found in the Mission Marsh area on Feb. 24, 2019.

Hui was arrested in the Academy Drive area on March 2, while Saboon turned himself in to the Waterloo Police on March 5 following a Canada-wide warrant for his arrest.

A third accused, Marshall Hardy-Fox, who turned himself in to the Thunder Bay Police on March 3, was also initially charged with first-degree murder and kidnapping but he has since pleaded guilty to kidnapping and accessory after the fact to murder.

The pleas were entered in June 2021 and sentencing submissions for Hardy-Fox are scheduled to be heard in court on Feb. 22, 2022.

Saboon remains in custody while Hui and Hardy-Fox have been previously released on bail.

None of the allegations against Hui and Saboon have been proven in court.

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Drone footage at the scene of a deadly Highway 102 crash. (Facebook)

Trucker killed in 102 crash

Passenger suffers critical injuries

By TB Source staff

Ontario Provincial Police are still trying to reach family members of the truck driver who died in a collision on Highway 102 on Sunday.

The collision occurred shortly before 12:45 p.m. at the intersection with Auto Road.

The 56-year-old deceased was from Quebec.

OPP say his eastbound tractor-trailer collided head-on with a westbound transport truck after the westbound unit jack-knifed into the eastbound lane when its driver applied the brakes.

Simultaneously, the westbound unit was rear-ended by another westbound tractor-trailer.

The eastbound driver was pronounced dead at the scene.

A 68-year-old passenger in his truck suffered critical injuries but was said to be in stable condition in hospital on Monday morning.

The 32-year-old driver of the first westbound tractor-trailer was also listed as stable in hospital with serious injuries.

Highway 102 was closed until early Monday morning.

It's time to get a Christmas tree

OK this time getting the tree means going to the 'back 40' and harvesting a Christmas tree, a Tanenbaum, not what I previously wrote about getting firewood.

Both my wife, Laura, and I grew up in the Toronto area.

Most Christmas tree lots only had Scotch pine for sale to be hauled home, set up, and decorated.

But since we live in the country on property that was once farmed until the 1960s (or so I was told), the field has grown in with trees - jack pine, spruce, balsam, and white pine. So, over the years we have trooped back to grab a tree, haul it home, and decorate.

Every year there has been a debate about which species to bring to Casa Jones. The choice is either spruce or balsam. In the past, I have preferred spruce because it is 'bushier' with denser foliage. However, both daughter Beth, and Laura prefer

balsam. Why? "Spruce smells like cat pee," goes the argument.

It has been a saw off: one year I win, the next they win. But there was one year when without their knowledge, I snuck into town, drove to the CLE lot where Christmas trees were being sold. There spruce and scotch pine. Of course I chose a juicy pine and hauled it home. These trees come wrapped and so once I had it placed in a stand in our living room, I waited for the tree to 'unfold'. In the heat of

the living room, the smell was gorgeous. The memory field flooded. There I was at age nine with my father at a parking lot at night.

The parking lot was all lit up with strung lights and we walked through rows of bundled scotch pine trees. It was magic, being in a forest of pine

trees in winter with snow on the ground. We chose one and got it strapped to the roof of our station wagon and home we drove. Once we unstrapped the tree and removed it from the roof of the vehicle, my Dad told me that it had to stay on the front stoop until he could fashion a stand.

He had a couple of two-by-fours and soon he nailed them together.

Then he drove a nail through the stand into the bottom of the tree and carried it to the spot where we usually stood the tree all set to be decorated. Slowly as the warmth of the house affected the tree, the distinct smell filled the living room. From somewhere the boxes of decorations appeared and the ritual of decorating began. I don't think we had the tree more than a week before The Day and, of course, it stayed up until January 1st.

But on one of our ambles on our property, Laura found the perfect balsam in the 'back forty'. "Okay," I said, "I'll go and fetch that one and bring it back home." Beautiful tree,

inexpensive, just requiring some effort on my part to fetch. I don't use a chainsaw when harvesting a Christmas tree. I take my short camping saw and labour to make a clean cut. I feel that hacking a tenenbaum with a roaring gas-fed saw is sacrilege. After all, the trunk is not that thick and only demands a bit of effort.

But then it snowed, big time and too much for the quad to negotiate. So, I had a choice: strap on snowshoes and trudge the half mile to the back of the 'back 40' where the selected tree grows, cut it down, and haul it back the half mile to Casa Jones; or attempt to get there on Big Red, my ancient tractor. And even though since the big snowfall a lot has disappeared through evaporation, I didn't want to chance getting the quad stuck. So, Big Red it has to be. It is a tad awkward negotiating the winding parts of the trail when you have a big seven-foot snowblower attached to the rear of the tractor but we made it to the site, did the deed, and made it back carrying

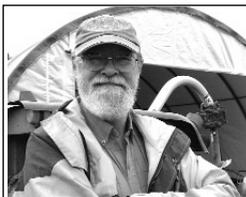
the tree in Red's bucket. And because I managed to quickly get the felled tree into the bucket before too much snow accumulated, back at the house making the tree snow-free prior to bringing it inside was easy. I hauled it into the house, having prepared the site with plastic garbage bags to catch any remaining wet snow.

Then we surround the base with a special Christmas embroidered cloth all set to place under the tree presents.

Soon I haul upstairs from the storage room the bins of decorations and so it begins. Decorating is a ritual as well involving first the stringing of the lights and then the hanging of the ornaments while listening to Christmas carols.

Next morning when it is still dark, I head to plug in the lights before making coffee or a fire in the fireplace.

Lighting the tree has also become a daily ritual during the time of Christmas. Absolutely enchanting. Magic!



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Urban fat biking has arrived

While the accumulation of snow up at Lappe has allowed Nordic skiers to enjoy four weeks of perfect conditions already, the first real snow to fall in the city of Thunder Bay has finally arrived.

Visit any one of the recreational trail areas and it is obvious that the blanket of beautiful snow, combined with some pretty great weather, has inspired many people to get outside and enjoy their favourite winter activities while the temperatures remain mild.

One of the many advantages to living in Thunder Bay is the accessibility of the many trails and paths that are scattered through the city itself. An expanding network of year-round multi-use paths compliment the long-established unpaved trails that meander through all our naturally wooded areas.

This multi-surface trail system is

the playground for urban fat bikers who are keen on finding their adventure right out our front door.

Not having to pack the bike into a vehicle and drive to the trailhead is a real treat and I often find myself just hopping on the bike for a quick ride after dinner before settling in for the evening.

Time is a limiting factor for many of us and the convenience of cutting out the commute and just getting some easy exercise and a chance to clear the mind with a quick ride after work is an effective way to manage stress during

the week.

We are quickly approaching the shortest day of the year, so when it comes to riding in early winter, having a set of lights on the bike is essential.

Daylight fades early in December, especially when riding in the woods, and since we never seem to want to



The LED lights on a fat bike light the way for riders looking for a late-night cycle.

stop riding until well past sunset, adding some rechargeable lights is a wise investment. We use flashing red lights on the rear of the bike to be seen at road crossings and

powerful bright white LED lights on our handlebars and helmets to illuminate the dark trails and paths in front of us.

Having a big, powerful light on the

handlebars serves to illuminate the snow-covered trails while a smaller, lighter helmet-mounted light allows us to see what is happening all around as we pedal through the darkness of winter.

Big five-inch wide fat tires give us enough floatation to ride crust-covered snow and moderately packed trails but the addition of carbide-tipped studs in the lugs of these tires has become a real necessity, especially for urban riding.

With the wild swings in weather we are currently seeing as a result of climate change, ice-covered trails are increasingly common. When that ice is hiding under a dusting of fresh snow, regular fat tires don't stand a chance.

Just like every other aspect of our lives, the key to making the most out of winter riding is being able to adapt. Having a good set of lights, studded tires, and a selection of clothing suitable for riding through everything between +5C and -30C is crucial for those wanting to ride through the entire winter.



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Broccoli and cauliflower aren't traditional holiday sides, but a crowd pleaser (spendwithpennies.com)

Christmas sides

Last week on HCAYK, we talked about your holiday potatoes. We talked about upsetting the established order and introducing a little bit of chaos into the mix.

The same way any dinner with your family should be. Chaotic and amazing, you would hope.

This week we are gonna talk veggies. The necessary, albeit mishandled afterthought member of the team. We are NOT going to be talking about green bean casserole. Let your aunt Gladys make it.

Broccoli and cauliflower: Controversial vegetable choices. I totally get it. However, this one is easy, when broccoli gets together with its best friend cheese, magic happens. Broccoli and cheese casserole is an easy veg choice that is always a crowd pleaser.

You know the one your grandma makes, 1 can of cream of mushroom soup, butter, cheese, onions and your broccoli. For an updated version, try using a little bit of Greek yogurt in place of your mushroom soup. Don't forget your seasonings, salt, pepper and garlic at a minimum but you know, feel free to screw around a bit with it.

When you're using cheese on vegetables, you can always use the sharper, more potent cheeses. Don't be afraid of using aged cheddars, swiss or gouda. For your crunchy topper, double down on the cheese and smash apart some cheese nips or swiss cheese crackers.

Too much effort? Breadcrumbs work too.

Creamed corn: I know what you're

thinking, really dude? Really? That's a very juvenile attitude. Creamed corn, for what it's worth is a very versatile side. You can give them a southern kind of feel, mix them with onions, bell pepper and jalapeno.

Add a little bit of cajun style seasoning.

You can also make it a little more of a Mexican feel with bell pepper, red onion, scallion, jalapeno, lime juice, cumin and cojita cheese. Each of those can be mixed cold, topped with breadcrumbs and baked until hot. NOW, If you got a weirdo at your table that can't handle spicy or bell peppers like I do (you know who you are), you can also go decidedly north American with it, warm up some cream cheese, and mix your corn into it, add some onions, garlic, salt, pepper and tomato, add some cheddar cheese, top with breadcrumbs and bake.

For an extra special mélange, you can mix these two ideas together and toss some broccoli in with your corn or some frozen corn in with your broccoli. Don't be afraid to get a little creative with the vegetables, you might inadvertently create a

beautiful new star for your holidays. Make sure you write what you do down though, if you can't recreate it you could have drama next year. You can keep that to your drunk uncles' controversial political beliefs.

Derek Lankinen is an award-winning chef, author, and restaurateur. He is the Owner/Operator of Beefcake's Burger Factory and Co-Owner of Elite Beef, Eat Loco Tacos and Brick and Mortar Food Co.



Derek Lankinen
Here's Cooking at You Kid

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Wishes granted

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

More than 700 children are going to wake up on Christmas morning with a Dilico Christmas Wish Bag under their tree.

The 13th annual Christmas Wish campaign was a resounding success, said family care director of medical health and addiction services Tina Bobinski.

“Dilico is so thankful for the ongoing community support for the Dilico Christmas Wish campaign year after year. It’s all about bringing people together for a common cause, creating positive childhood memories and showing children that wishes can come true. For many, this is the only gift they are receiving at Christmas,”

Bobinski said.

The program, in its 13th year, personalizes each bag for each child, with a special tag attached that provides details including their age, interests and Christmas wishes.

Presents handed out include everything from toys and books to winter sleds and warm clothing – even an authentic Montreal Canadiens jersey.

Wish bags overflowed with gifts destined for children who might otherwise go without this Christmas season.

“One volunteer was brought to tears seeing how much thought and care was put into a gift that included a Baby Jumper and an amazing bag full of everything for a newborn,” Bobinski said.

“It was incredible to see how much thought and care went into selecting items, and the worker knew how appreciative the family would be to receive such amazing things for their baby.”

Sponsored by Sovereign Dental and helped by a number of donors and supporters in the community, the program has had – and continues to have – an incredible impact over the past 13 years.

“This is a Christmas gift that children won’t ever forget. No matter what the situation the child is experiencing, the sense of joy and belonging this campaign brings truly embodies the Christmas spirit,” said Dilico Anishinabek Family Care director of finance and corporate services, Terry Bortolin.



Dilico Anishinabek Family Care Director of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Tina Bobinski & Director of Finance and Corporate Services, Terry Bortolin. (supplied photo)

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Rachel Zegler makes a splash playing Maria in Steven Spielberg's reimagining of the classic 1961 film West Side Story.

West Side Story a competent remake

For a guy who hasn't directed a musical before, Steven Spielberg certainly picked a bucket list biggie to chew on with his remake of "West Side Story" (SilverCity.)

Despite its stature, the 1961 original had its blind-sides: the infamous sidelining of Latino actors for white stars, cringing make-up for white and non-white actors alike, and an under-nourished look at race relations, were significant lapses. Nonetheless, the original set the bar as an iconic achievement in transplanting a popular Broadway production onto the big screen.

The ill-fated inter-racial Romeo and Juliet romance, violent racial rivalry and the immigrant experience were all memorably and collectively realized by Jerome Robbins' athletic, zestful choreography, lively lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, Arthur Laurents' script, robust orchestrations by Leonard Bernstein, shaped dramatically by director Robert Wise. These considerable strengths enabled the original to attain classic status.

Spielberg has a dicey balancing act, trying to improve upon the predecessor's missteps while remaining faithful to the flavour and temporal sensibilities of the original film. An over-produced approach and modern attitudes could potentially dilute the brio that characterized the 1961 movie.

Ultimately, much like its predecessor, the 2021 "West Side Story" has definite pluses and some minuses.

Right off, Spielberg and screenwriter Tony Kushner make their presence felt with a more realistic look and slightly deeper exposition and backstory.

Here, the infamous Jets and Sharks not only threaten each other but their collective turf is under

siege by urban renewal and gentrification, as old neighbourhoods are giving way to the new Lincoln Center.

Spielberg surpasses the original's theatrical frat boy fistfights with gritty blood and bruises. The active camera seamlessly captures the energetic choreography. "America" gets its rightful due, retaining the brassy, sassy contrast between masculine cynicism and feminine idealism towards life in the USA in a sequence embracing an entire city block. Janusz Kaminski's cinematography is impressive.

Some songs are shifted around, sung by different characters, to varying results. 'Somewhere', originally sung by Maria and Tony, gets transposed to Rita Moreno's new role as Valentina, widow of candy store owner Doc (Ned Glass in the original). Though touching from a wistful, older generational standpoint, its impact is undercut by distracting cutaways, quicksilver editing being an annoying constant today.

Casting is impressive. Rachel Ziegler is all wide-eyed innocence as Maria, Canadian David Alvarez is tough, aggressive Bernardo, Ariana DeBose is smart, no-nonsense Anita (Rita Moreno's Oscar winning role in the original), and Mike Faist is authentically resentful as Riff.

However, Ansel Elgort craters as Tony, failing to capture his edgy parolee gone straight backstory. Though both can sing, there's no chemistry between Elgort and Ziegler, unlike 1961's Natalie Wood and Richard Beymer, who generated a credible starry-eyed connection despite miscasting and dubbed voices.

Caveats aside, "West Side Story" may not surpass its predecessor but deserves to find a place with a new generation.



Marty Mascarin
MOVIE TALK



*Wishing you a Merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year!
From the students and staff at Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School.*

ENIGMA™ Enigma cryptograms are created from quotations and proverbs from around the world. Each letter stands for another letter. *Hint: "E" = "T"*
CRYPTOGRAM

"KXJU KUD BQPV ESJXHL S VQZC XB
AHJAXGU ESQD VQZC XB EQVUDE."
— MPVVI GHDRQI

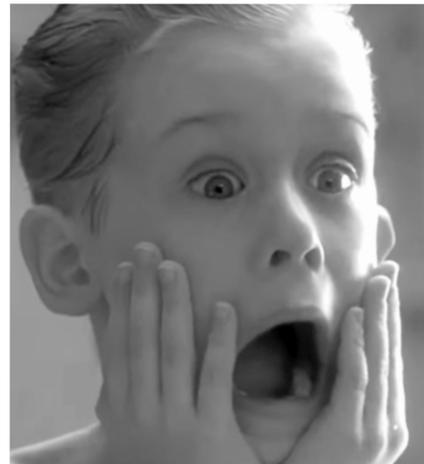
Twisted holiday TV

At this time of year, the networks are filling up with holiday specials and movies to help us get in the mood to overspend on items nobody needs but everyone just has to have.

There are two types to choose from. The first have Christmas as a sub-title, the not-so-Christmas classics. For example, *Die Hard* is a holiday hostage situation and *While you Were Sleeping* has a woman pretending to be engaged to a guy in a coma. And who could forget *Lethal Weapon* in which a hooker is killed to the tune of *Jingle Bell Rock*.

Then there are the movies that are all about the holidays. And despite a multitude of Christmas classics to choose from, there's always new fare on the menu. **C a n d a c e** Cameron Bure stars in *Switched at Christmas* as a set of estranged twins. Meanwhile, *Glee's* Amber Riley stars as a college student who tries to hire a family for the holidays in *My One Christmas Wish*.

These are nice little films. Yet, they don't quite meet the standards that were set by my juvenile heart so many Christmases ago with films like *It's a Wonderful Life* and *Miracle on 34th Street*. Now, those were magic.



Macauley Culkin in Home Alone.

Or were they? My ultimate Christmas classics include a suicide attempt and locking up Santa in a psychiatric ward. And that's just the tip of the iceberg.

Even the true children's classics are rife with questionable content. *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* was ostracized by his peers and only accepted after he could prove his value. *A Charlie Brown Christmas* focuses on a neurotic kid and his pathetic little tree. And *Frosty the Snowman* involves theft and a murdered snowman.

In *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*, Santa holds a grudge against an entire town for the comments of one loudmouth idiot. (Hopefully Kim Jong-un isn't watching.) And don't get me started on *The Grinch*.

Of course, in the last few decades, some new classics have popped up. Everyone loves *The Santa Clause*. A guy steals a dead man's red suit and as a result, is blackmailed into giving up his life for this new job. It was followed by *The Santa Clause 2* in which the same guy is now forced to find a wife who is then emotionally blackmailed into giving up her life too.

In *Home Alone*, Macauley Culkin is "accidentally" left behind when the family leaves town for the holidays. But don't be afraid children. That sound you heard downstairs was actually someone breaking in while the cops ignored your pleas for help.

Elf wears green tights. Should be fun, right? Except he's sent away from everything he knows by his adoptive family. Then his biological father shuns him too. (Can anyone say DACA?)

And what's the holiday without *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* and an electrocuted cat?

OK, so perhaps our Christmas classics are as twisted as our tendency to over-shop and complain about it. But at least we're watching them together.

This column previously ran in 2017.



Fiona Gardiner
FI TV

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- ACROSS**
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 - 5 Below (naut.)
 - 9 Swab
 - 12 Century plant fiber
 - 13 Consort of Siva
 - 14 Sayings (suf.)
 - 15 Thick slice
 - 16 Estrade
 - 17 Malay gibbon
 - 18 Marked with lines
 - 20 Tree
 - 22 Fuel ship
 - 24 Ancient (abbr.)
 - 25 City on the Loire
 - 26 Papal church
 - 30 Irish fortified place
 - 31 Antiaircraft artillery (abbr.)
 - 32 Where (Lat.)
 - 33 Small sturgeon
 - 36 Celebrated
 - 38 Dawn: goddess
 - 39 Capable of
- DOWN**
- 1 Miles per second (abbr.)
 - 2 Trouble
 - 3 Mole
 - 4 Jap. drama
 - 5 Viper
 - 6 Guide
 - 7 Egg (pref.)
 - 8 Aurochs
 - 9 Polynesian

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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10 Son of Judah Automobile Assn. (abbr.)
11 Beseech 26 Buddhist column
19 Article (Fr.)
21 Before common era (abbr.)
27 Moll
22 Tablespoon (abbr.)
28 Brother of Seth
29 Pheasant brood
31 Rom. bronze
34 Electric reluctance unit
35 Unfasten
36 Foist
37 Abbey (Sp.)
39 Mother (Ital.)
40 Foreboding
41 Woman's work basket
42 Rhinoceros beetle
43 Legal claim
46 Knond language
48 Vehicle
49 Teacher of Samuel

Nightclub capacity will stay at 25 per cent

BY TB Source staff

Ontario is delaying for a second time the planned lifting of capacity limits in "higher risk" settings like nightclubs and wedding receptions, as it continues to monitor COVID-19 trends including the rise of the Omicron variant.

That will keep capacity capped at 25 per cent in venues including clubs and other food and drink establishments with dance facilities, strip clubs, sex clubs, bath-

houses, and wedding receptions held at meeting and event spaces where there is dancing.

The decision was made in consultation with chief medical officer of health Dr. Kieran Moore, the province said in a release Tuesday announcing the extension.

The province first announced the pause on Nov. 10, saying it would monitor COVID-19 trends for 28 days before making a further decision.

Minister of Health Christine Elliott also indicated on Monday the province could delay other planned milestones in its reopening plan, like the lifting of vaccine passport requirements, tentatively set for January.

The decision is a precaution, the province said, as it experiences a slow uptick in new cases and considers the impact of the Omicron variant. Severe outcomes from COVID-19 remained manageable, the government reported.

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Cats won't bat in 2022

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

Bryan Graham is adamant the Thunder Bay Border Cats will be back in 2023.

But for a third straight summer, the Northwoods League team has been relegated to the sidelines, once again the victim of ongoing uncertainty surrounding the border between Canada and the United States.

Bryan Graham, the Border Cats general manager, said the team and its ownership group tried everything it could to ensure baseball would be played at Port Arthur Stadium in 2022, but unable to present the league with any certainties, the Northwoods League was left with little choice but to move on for another summer.

Travel rules

At present most foreigners entering the country must be fully vaccinated and must present a negative COVID-19 molecular test result before being permitted to cross the border. The Border Cats are the lone Canadian team in the league, meaning the league would have to insist all players in the North Division be fully vaccinated in order to travel to Thunder Bay.

"It's disappointing," said Graham, a baseball fanatic who will have to settle for following his beloved Minnesota Twins next summer.

"We've had discussions the last three weeks with the league, so the news today doesn't come as a



Ryan Windham pitched for the Border Cats in 2019, the last time the team took the field.

shock, but it still stings because we knew it was coming."

There just wasn't any easy way to make it work, said Graham, adding the 21-member ownership group is already working on plans for 2023.

"The fact that American players playing in the league do not have to be double-vaccinated causes a big issue at the border, when teams are travelling back and forth all summer long. Obviously our

players that we recruited were all double-vaccinated," Graham said.

"We did have to pass on about 10 players that said they had no plans to get their shots."

Graham said the team was encouraged when it learned both the U.S. and Canadian borders were opening to vehicular traffic, but that quickly dissipated when testing and vaccination requirements were put in place.

He added even if things change at the border over the next few months, there's no chance the team will be back in 2022.

"We tried to buy as much time with the league as we could, when we had those initial talks with them about three weeks ago. But I would say now, it won't happen. Our players are going to be dispersed to other teams in the league or they'll play elsewhere in other leagues," Graham said.

"(The league) didn't want to wait for three months until March, which is what they did last year, to go to Plan B with this part-time team that's going to fill our road games. At this point, I think the 2022 ship has sailed, unfortunately."

Taking their place

The Minnesota Mud Puppies will play a 36-game schedule in place of the Border Cats, giving the league an even number of teams for at least a portion of the schedule.

"This was a difficult decision to make, playing the 2022 season without the Thunder Bay Border Cats," said Northwoods League president/commissioner Ryan Voz. "They have a rich tradition in the League."

"We were expecting the Mud Puppies to be a one-year stop-gap in 2021, however with the ongoing impact and uncertainty of international travel requirements, the decision was made to bring them back for 2022."

Vaccine proof needed for 12+ athletes

By TB Source staff

The Thunder Bay District Health Unit has tightened its vaccination rules for youth playing organized sports, pointing to a resurgence in cases locally and the discovery of the Omicron variant.

The agency announced Thursday it will require players 12 and up to provide proof of vaccination before entering arenas and other indoor venues as of Jan. 31.

Many local sports leagues had also already announced requirements for players 12 and up to be vaccinated, including Hockey

Northwestern Ontario and all local school boards, for co-curricular sports.

Thunder Bay's medical officer of health, Dr. Janet DeMille, issued a revised letter of instruction under the Reopening Ontario Act to owners and operators of indoor sports venues on Thursday. The original letter applied the same rule to coaches, officials, and volunteers, but not athletes under 18.

"With increasing cases in our area, there is an increased risk of exposure and spread in sporting activities, which can lead to disruption in those activities," DeMille

said in a statement Thursday.

"As we progress through the winter months, especially with people spending more time indoors, the risk of virus spread will continue. In addition, the recent discovery of a new, highly transmissible variant of concern highlights the need for strengthened public health measures to reduce the risk of transmission."

She said the measures targeted indoor sports because they bring a higher risk of transmission.

"Close contact, heavy breathing, long exposure times, crowded indoor spaces, and masks removed

during physical activity, all contribute to increased risk of COVID-19 transmission. Requiring more groups to be protected with COVID-19 vaccinations will help reduce this risk while continuing to maintain opportunities for sport."

The rules will apply until further notice, and will require players to present identification along with proof of vaccination or valid medical exemption. A photocopy will be accepted for those under 18.

The health unit urged parents and guardians to have their children vaccinated.

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Braving the NFL and NBA stands

In January 2020, I took the family to the Target Centre in Minneapolis to see the defending champion Toronto Raptors take on the hometown Minnesota Timberwolves.

Little did I know it would be the last time I would see a major in-person sporting event for nearly two years.

That streak ended last week.

With the border open, and my Expos mask firmly locked to my face, I made the trek back to the Twin Cities, my home away from home in pre-COVID times.

Wednesday night I took in the



Leith Dunick

SPORTS SHORTS

Timberwolves and Utah Jazz, Donovan Mitchell going off for 36 points as the visitors absolutely routed the home side, winning by 31 points.

Thursday night, after spending the day at the not-so-crowded Mall of America, I made my way downtown once again and hit U.S. Bank Stadium, where the Vikings were playing host to the Pittsburgh Steelers, one of just seven teams I'd never seen play live in a regular-season game.

I chose my seats carefully for the basketball game, picking an aisle seat with an empty seat to my left,

hoping to avoid as much contact with other humans as possible.

Mission mostly accomplished.

At the Vikings game, I arrived about 80 minutes early and hit up the standing room section above the end zone, sliding to the end of the railing where the only person next to me was a fully masked usher.

I've missed live sports so much. Normally I go to half a dozen or more baseball games in a year, at least one or two NFL games and usually a basketball or hockey game too.

Mind you, if the Vikings don't learn how to hold a lead, that six-hour drive is going to seem a lot less appealing.

How about that Dalvin Cook. He

rushed for 205 yards and a couple of scores, wearing a harness after separating his shoulder just two weeks earlier.

Less than two weeks, given that it was a Thursday night game.

What a remarkable athlete. If only quarterback Kirk Cousins could elevate his game. Too many mistakes, including a pair of interceptions, that let the Steelers back into a game that saw them trailing 29-0 at one point.

It actually came down to the final play of the night, Steelers tight end Pat Friermouth unable to hang onto a Ben Roethlisberger pass in the endzone that could have sent the game to OT.

We're supposed to be headed to

Toronto for New Year's Eve and the Raptors and Los Angeles Clippers at Scotiabank Arena, but I wouldn't be surprised if Ontario decided to ban crowds at sporting events all over again, given the rising COVID cases.



Thunder Bay is guaranteed at least one curler competing at the Scotties Tournament of Hearts.

While most expect Krista McCarville will be the Northern Ontario representative, Karlee Jones has quietly earned her way into the field as part of the Nova Scotia entry.

Jones left a few years ago to attend school in Halifax. She's a great kid, and the daughter of local golf legend Trevor Jones, winner of five Strathcona Invitational titles.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Kam River's Madge new Mr. Zero

Make it back-to-back-shutouts for Austin Madge.

The Kam River Fighting Walleye goaltender made 26 stops on Saturday night leading his team to a 6-0 win over the host Thief River Falls North Stars, the team's ninth straight triumph.

Ethan Lang, Jeremy Dunmore and Alex Enegren had a goal and assist apiece to pace the offensive attack, as the Fighting Walleye improved to 19-3-1 on the season. Carson Gorst and Tyler Ralph also scored for Kam River.

McGill at worlds

Kam River's Calum McGill is trying to help Great Britain elevate itself into the Division 1 grouping, the second tier of the IIHF's world junior hockey championship ladder.

The Scottish-born defenceman is in Romania this week, where Great Britain opened with a 7-2 win over Spain.

McGill picked up an assist in the victory.

The 18-year-old has a goal and an assist in 12 games for the Fighting Walleye. Italy, South Korea, Romania and South Korea are also competing.



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 41. Northward
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 45. Auctions
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 47. Travel
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 50. Personal
 51. Notices
 52. Tenders

BUSINESS & SERVICES
 53. General Services
 54. Home Improvements
 55. Bus. Opportunities
 56. Training Courses

EMPLOYMENT
 57. Help Wanted
 58. Careers
 59. Child
 60. Health Care
 61. Employment Wanted
 62. Students For Hire

ANNOUNCEMENTS
 63. Coming Events
 64. Craft & Flea Markets
 65. Happy Ads
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 67. In Memoriam
 68. Death/Funerals

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 Dated at Thunder Bay, Ontario on the 16th day of December, 2021.

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