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Thursday, December 22, 2022

HIGH FLYER

Diver Molly Carlson returns to her old stomping grounds to inspire the next generation of high-divers /17



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Molly Carlson, a star on the Red Bull Cliff Diving Series, got her start in the sport in 2008 at the Canada Games Complex, before leaving for Florida State. (Leith Dunick)



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Tikinagan

Child & Family Services

Every Christmas season, our First Nations are bustling with a festive spirit of togetherness. This community tradition, whether in the North or our urban communities, kicks off at Christmas and lasts into the New Year. It includes events centering around feasting and square dancing, piling up gifts at the community hall where everyone gathers to exchange gifts, and some of the most creative radio games you'll ever hear about (picture a Santa Claus Hunt, where the man in red is trying to get away from a pack of skidoos!). These gatherings become a time for everyone to fellowship, celebrate, and share a few good laughs.

Many of our children wait in anticipation and excitement as the holidays approach. It is very important to make sure that all children, especially those in our care, are connected to their families, communities, and traditions – in whatever way possible.

This is why Christmastime reminds us of the importance of intangible gifts that we can't buy for our children: an encouraging word, quality time together, and a loving hug. The season also celebrates the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Both offer love, hope, and joy during the holiday. I hope your holiday season can be a time to enjoy family, extended family, and friends.

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

Thelma Morris
Executive Director, Tikinagan Child & Family Services

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Ryan Reynolds (left) spoke to School Chief Derek Monias last Wednesday as part of a media club exercise at Dennis Franklin Cromarty.

Reynolds speaks to DFC students

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

Ryan Reynolds says he's open to the idea of attending a future Wake the Giant Music Festival.

The Canadian movie star, best known for his role as the title character in *Deadpool*, not to mention being one of the highest grossing actors of all-time, last Wednesday virtually joined a media club at Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School, answering questions about his career — and even addressing rumours he's interested in being part of the new ownership group with the NHL's Ottawa Senators.

The 46-year-old Vancouver native was intrigued about the annual festival, an event designed to welcome Indigenous students from remote northern communities who study in Thunder Bay.

"Do I have to know how to play a musical instrument or something?" Reynolds asked. "That might be a deal-breaker," Reynolds said. "Yeah, I would love that. I would love an invite. You guys know where to find me now. You found me here. Assuming I'm not across the pond in England, shooting the next *Deadpool* movie, I would love to be part of something like that."

"No," he was told by school student chief Derek Monias of Sandy Lake First Nation, who conducted the Zoom interview with Reynolds.

That Reynolds would agree to speak to an Indigenous class should come as no surprise. Earlier this year he and his wife, actress Blake Lively, donated \$500,000 to an organization dedicated to bringing clean water to Indigenous communities and last year the Hollywood power couple donated \$250,000 to help launch a Canadian mentorship program for Indigenous high-school students.

Monias said the school's media club was recently

bandying about ideas for guests to interview when Reynolds' name came up. With the help of CBC Thunder Bay, the connection was made.

Reynolds, who dialed in from New York, was asked about his acting origins in Ottawa, his struggles to find follow-up work, leading him to a grocery store job and his return to show business via impromptu comedy, which led him to Los Angeles.

Asked about his outside interests, such as owning a Welsh soccer club, Reynolds said there's a connective tissue that binds his interests.

"It's all storytelling. I love stories. Stories can be found anywhere. You're a journalist, Derek, so you understand that almost better than anyone. It's always about the story. You don't know where it's going or what it's going to be, but if you're listening and you have a pretty open mind, and an open heart as you're doing it, you can cover some pretty spectacular moments," he said.





As for the Senators, Reynolds said there's not much he can say about the situation at this time.

"I think the Ottawa Senators organization can explode, not just within its own community, in Canada, but also globally and that's something I'm deeply interested in. But we'll see. We'll see where it shakes out."

Reynolds said his support of Water First was to help Indigenous communities empower themselves.

"I think that's super important. I look at it like (this). If a neighbourhood in the Greater Toronto region, or Vancouver or any major city in the country of Canada had water that was undrinkable, the way it is in a lot of First Nations and Indigenous communities, that problem I feel would be solved pretty quickly," Reynolds said.

WEATHER FORECAST

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			
Snow	Snow	Snow	Snow
Precipitation: 70% HIGH -11 LOW -16	Precipitation: 60% HIGH -14 LOW -16	Precipitation: 40% HIGH -14 LOW -18	Precipitation: 30% HIGH -14 LOW -16

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City lands '24 women's worlds

A 2023 qualifying event will also be held here Aug. 8-13

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

The baseball world is coming to Thunder Bay for the third time since 2010.

The World Baseball Softball Confederation on Tuesday confirmed that the city will host an six-team 2023 Group Stage qualifier for the six-team 2024 IX Women's Baseball World Cup, which is also scheduled for Port Arthur Stadium.

Team Canada has a wild-card spot in the qualifying event and as host, an automatic spot in the 2024 championship.

Baseball Canada president Jason Dickson said he's really excited to bring international baseball back to Canada, and particularly to Thunder Bay, which last year

hosted a friendship series between Canada and the United States' national women's teams.

"We've seen the product that Thunder Bay offers. We've hosted a couple of times before the U18 (event), and it is no doubt the effort that goes in and the product output, it's a fantastic spot. Any questions or concerns were answered last year in the friendship series when we went up there with the U.S.A and hosted a five-game series," said Dickson, the former big-league all-star who finished third in the American League rookie of the year voting in 1997 as a member of the Anaheim Angels.

"On a short notice, it was quickly organized thanks to our friends in Thunder Bay, who still produced a good product with a lot of turnout and I think really opened up everyone's eyes to see what the women's game looks like and really got the interest going for the next two years."



Canada will play for world women's gold.

The 2023 event is scheduled to take place from Aug. 8 to Aug. 13 and is expected to feature Canada, two Asian qualifiers, two Americas qualifiers and either Australia or France.

Venezuela, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Mexico have also already qualified for one of the two Group Stage competitions.

Joan Garcia, who spoke on behalf of the WSBC, said Thunder Bay has proven itself over and over again.

"We all have great memories of the U18 WSBC Baseball World Cup that took place in 2010 and 2017. I know the global baseball and softball community is very excited to return to this stunning city for a celebration of women's baseball," said Garcia, adding the event will be the first to feature the two-stage format, which was adopted in 2021.

"It sets up a more balanced and efficient competition. It's really a historic moment, and one that will help elevate the relevance and exposure of women's baseball, while also increasing engagement in global audiences."

In accepting hosting duties, Thunder Bay International

Baseball Association president Nick Melchiorre said work will be needed to be done to upgrade Port Arthur Stadium, including cosmetic touches and upgrades to the field.

"We've been assured the stadium will be ready for the 2023 season, not only for us, but also for the Border Cats. The field has not been used for a few seasons, so we definitely know work has to be put into that and money has been set aside for that," he said. "WSBC, Baseball Canada and ourselves have identified a person to come to the stadium and Baseball Central in the spring to inspect the fields and the facilities to make sure anything that's remaining gets done."

Dates for the 2024 event have not been released.

Canada has won six medals, but has yet to capture gold at the event, first held in 2004 in Edmonton. Japan has six titles and the United States has won the other two championships.



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City commits \$170K to turf study

By Ian Kaufman - TB Source

The City of Thunder Bay will spend up to \$170,000 to examine a proposal to build an indoor turf facility adjacent to the Community Auditorium and Canada Games Complex.

City council authorized the expense on Monday, after expressing strong interest in the proposal brought forward by Soccer Northwest Ontario (SNO) at a meeting last week.

The funds will support work including a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment, a preliminary geotechnical investigation, development of a floor plan, a third-party cost estimate, and a traffic study.

Staff will also assess the potential impact of the SNO proposal to existing users of the site, which is currently home to a baseball



Director of asset management, Gerry Broere.

diamond.

The 147-by-56.5-metre, steel-supported building proposed by SNO would include 10 change

rooms, a pro shop, concession, gathering area, meeting room, offices, accessible washrooms, a second floor mezzanine, and floor-level seating, it says.

The organization has expressed confidence the design could be built for \$20 million or less, less than half the cost of the design council most recently considered, and rejected, at Chapples Park.

Last week, council directed administration to assess the SNO proposal and report back by March 13, though senior staff cautioned that timeline would be too short to effectively complete the work.

The city will award a \$170,000 contract to Stantec Architecture to perform much of that assessment without a public bidding process.

Staff suggested in a report that was appropriate since the contract is similar to one the firm won

through a competitive bidding process in 2019 to assess Chapples Park as an indoor turf site.

The company's \$170,000 fee estimate for the work, which includes a \$34,000 contingency, is "fair and reasonable," the report stated.

Coun. Andrew Foulds agreed with that assessment Monday, saying he had feared a larger price tag.

Councillors looked to ensure the city wouldn't commit the full \$170,000 if the environment assessment flagged issues requiring serious remediation.

"Let's take it step-by-step so we can be prudent," suggested Coun. Rajni Agarwal, adding she believed the land was previously used as a garbage dump.

Director of asset management Gerry Broere offered an assurance

administration would return to council if significant remediation issues were found, before taking expensive next steps like a \$25,000 traffic study.

Broere added he was "not quite sure it was a dump site" but that an incinerator had been located nearby in the past.

The cost for the contract will be drawn from the city's indoor turf reserve fund, which has a balance of roughly \$17.5 million.

On Monday, council also approved delaying a report-back on five other possible options for an indoor turf complex that the city solicited from the private sector in July 2021, but still hasn't formally considered.

Staff suggested it made more sense to first assess the viability of the Soccer Northwest site, given council's expressed interest.

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Skate park opens

By TB Source staff

The Female Boarder Collective has opened the doors to its new safe and inclusive space for skateboarding in Thunder Bay.

The new space is located in the old Cinema 5 building and the park will allow the collective to offer year-round skateboard programs to all Thunder Bay area residents, as well as partner with local community and Indigenous groups and initiatives such as the Rainbow Collective, Fort William First Nation Youth Centre, and City of Thunder Bay Youth Inclusion Program.

Richard Penko, volunteer and soon to be skate park manager says that the completion of the new indoor skate park is extremely exciting.

"I mean it's been a long time coming to have an indoor skate park in Thunder Bay. Obviously with our harsh winters it kind of cuts off our

ability to skateboard having the Marina covered in snow," he said.

"It's super exciting and it's been a very awesome process to see the park go from just a dusty old theatre to now a fully functioning skate park."

The Ontario government provided \$58,235 through the Northern Ontario heritage fund and Thunder Bay-Atikokan MPP, Kevin Holland says that this investment is developing community recreational infrastructure, supporting social connections and improving quality of life for northerners.

"Our government is hard at work making targeted investments that support economic development and growth right here in Thunder Bay," he said. "These investments demonstrate how, together with our northern partners, we are building strong, vibrant communities and creating real opportunities for the people who live in the north."

Mom still upset at bus incident

By Gary Rinne - TB Source

A Thunder Bay woman is still upset after witnessing an incident Monday afternoon that put the safety of her children at serious risk, and cost a bus driver his job.

It happened after the school bus transporting Melanie Pelletier's four-year-old son and eight-year-old daughter stopped in front of their south-side home.

Student Transportation Services of Thunder Bay has described the incident as "an extremely unsafe drop-off procedure, violating multiple key requirements in stopping and discharging students" and "resulting in a student nearly being struck by the bus."

Video captured by security cameras shows the bus beginning to move forward as the boy was about to cross in front of it, but stopping before he was struck.

Pelletier said there was also an issue with her daughter, whose backpack became pinched in the door when it closed while she was disembarking to follow her brother, forcing her to tear it off before the bus moved.

When the children crossed the road, the flashing red lights on the bus were no longer flashing, and its stop sign was retracted.

"I honestly had no clue what happened in that moment," Pelletier recalled in an interview last Wednesday.

"I had to confirm it with my kids. I'm like 'Did the bus almost run you over?' I couldn't get a hold on that. That's when my daughter was telling me about her backpack, and I'm shaking. I called the transportation office right away."

Acted immediately

Pelletier said STSTB — the consortium that coordinates busing for local school boards — asked to see the video and arranged for the driver to be suspended immediately.

Following an investigation, his employment was terminated by the bus company.

Although Pelletier would have liked to have seen the driver stay to check further on her children before he continued on his route, she said she expects he was just as dismayed as she was about what happened.

"I'm sure he was. Like, I was in shock. I didn't really have any angry feelings until later, when everything started hitting me, but I'm sure he was too."

She's not completely satisfied with how STSTB handled the incident.

"They only called me twice to see if the kids were okay and how I was doing. The kids were



A screen grab from a video showing the incident in question.

pertified to go back on the bus, but they did it, which I'm proud of."

Pelletier posted details about the incident, and the video, on social media saying she wants to draw attention to the importance of bus safety and "how quickly a precious life can be taken away."

She said she hopes bus companies find a way to get more qualified drivers, noting "apparently they go through extensive training, but it doesn't seem like it."

She also wonders if it would help to have another adult on buses to keep a closer watch on children and allow the drivers to focus on getting the kids off safely.

Social media response

STSTB Manager Craig Murphy posted a statement about the incident on the consortium's Facebook page saying "School bus drivers must be held to the highest standards of safety considering the precious cargo they transport. Prior to obtaining a Professional School Bus Driver's licence they must receive many hours of specialized training, both in the classroom and on the road."

The statement adds: "That's why [this] incident was extremely troubling for us and why we did not hesitate in acting swiftly."

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EDITORIAL Drug issue

The year 2023 has to be better for Thunder Bay than 2022 has been.

The city has seen a record 14 confirmed murders this year, as the drug crisis spirals out of control and those caught up in it face increasingly violent consequences if they happen to cross the wrong person.

The drug problem is the No. 1 issue facing Thunder Bay moving forward. The spiral of addiction often leads to homelessness, more crime and a sense of hopelessness.

City council can't do it alone.

The federal and provincial governments must step in to find ways to solve the problem, through early intervention, the continued support of safe injection sites and programs aimed at youth to keep them off the street and away from the dealers all-too-willing to sacrifice our young people for their ill-gotten gains.

It doesn't help that the police leadership has been in turmoil for a good chunk of the year. Instead of being able to focus on the problem at hand, now-suspended chief Sylvie Hauth had to deal with accusations of systemic racism, ultimately leading her to announce her retirement ahead of the suspension.



FAKE SANTA

A great Christmas ghost story collection

Haunters at the Hearth, edited by Tanya Kirk, is a collection of eerie tales for Christmas nights – when the boundary between the mundane and the unearthly is ever so thin – ushering in a new throng of demons, spectres and shades drawn to the glow of the earth.

Christmas has long been portrayed as an idealised time when we gather together and enjoy the pleasures of hearty food, entertainments and a blazing fire in the hearth.

The oral tradition of using this cosy time of year to share ghostly tales is long established, but the written tradition really took off in the second half of the nineteenth century – credited to a rise in

literacy, changing print technologies and an increased circulation of popular fiction periodicals.

One reason why ghost stories are so enjoyable at Christmas is that they subvert any comfortable domestic familiarity. Homely everyday objects and settings are rendered unfamiliar and uncanny. We feel pleasantly unsettled.

The 18 stories in this collection of weird Christmas tales are drawn from across the spectral spectrum. The earliest dates from 1864, the first golden age of the Christmas ghost story, and the latest is from 1975,

when belief in the paranormal had been overtaken by hard science.

There are some well respected writers known for their ghost tales, such as Amelia B. Edwards, W.. Jacobs and Celia Fremlin. There are also stories by authors better known for an entirely different style of fiction – D.H. Lawrence, James Hadley Chase and Winston Graham, for example. Also included are tales by two writers about whom little or nothing is known – namely E.S. Knights and George Denby.

The subject matter of the stories is similarly wide ranging, encom-

passing time slips, ghostly retribution, portal fantasy, sinister carol singers, a possessed pantomime costume, horror at a Christmas tree farm, and a Black Mass. It's fascinating to read the different inventive eerie ways in which authors use the ghost story's traditional boundaries.

The Phantom Coach by Amelia B. Edwards first appeared in *All the Year Round*, a weekly periodical edited and co-owned by Charles Dickens. Every year Dickens produced a special Christmas edition of *Ghost Stories*. This story appeared in the 1864 edition.

It is a fairly traditional but menacingly atmospheric ghost story that speaks to the conflict between

science and the spiritual world, which would become a major theme in supernatural fiction in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century.

D.H. Lawrence could write in most genres and *The Last Laugh* is a ghost story in which London is turned from familiar to strange and the question of whether we can trust our perceptions is explored. It was published in *The New Decameron* (1925) and picked up the themes of bodily sensation and disability.

Should you find yourself sitting by an open fire this Christmas look into the flames and perhaps you will see a spooky shape or two flickering there.



John Pateman
BOOK BANTER

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COVID helped advance science

By JR Shermack

The advanced medical technology that was used to develop an effective COVID vaccine in record time was just the tip of the iceberg.

During the pandemic we all learned about the capabilities of medical science, especially the ability to develop and use genetically-based therapies.

These technologies continue to produce optimistic results in the quest for treatments and remedies for a number of serious medical conditions.

It may be that debilitating and fatal diseases that were once considered untreatable will one day be successfully treated and even cured.

It boggles the mind to think about this microscopic miracle but you don't have to understand the treatment to benefit from the cure.

Once genetic testing identifies disease-causing defects, those genes are targeted for re-engineering using benign microscopic viruses to deliver genetic repairs.

Gene therapies employ inactive

viruses as couriers to deliver a therapeutic gene package directly to a patient's targeted cells.

The virus infects target cells with the re-engineered gene by insertion into the cell's genome – a medical miracle at the microscopic level.

And ideally it is a one-time treatment to provide lifetime relief.

But patience is required – the prospect of curing hundreds of previously untreatable diseases is exciting but the task is tedious and progress has been slow

It is extremely challenging to introduce new genes into the cells of a living human and keep them working effectively and long term to eliminate disease without adverse side effects.

Not only does the science take time and ingenuity, gene therapies are expensive to research and develop and very expensive to use.

The manufacturing process is complex, time consuming and costly – it can take ten months or more to prepare enough for one clinical trial.

Even so, as of 2022 there are 1,221



COVID vaccines are the tip of the iceberg.

active clinical trials of gene therapy globally to treat many ailments including cancer, immune disorders,

neurological conditions and heart disease.

Gene therapy is one of the fastest growing areas of healthcare worldwide and there are already over twenty gene therapies approved for patient use in treating some rare genetic disorders.

Health Canada approved the first gene therapy treatment in 2020 and for the first time ever, afflicted Canadians were hopeful that they could retain their eyesight.

The first targeted gene therapy treatment was specifically intended to treat two inherited, blinding eye diseases, retinitis pigmentosa and congenital amaurosis.

To date Health Canada has approved five gene therapies and more are coming as clinical trials are completed and they are approved for use.

But there is one more challenge to overcome – once they are proven and approved, these therapies enter the pharmaceutical market with enormous price tags.

Treatment for one of the rare eye diseases is \$850,000 while another

therapy for a rare blood disorder is \$2.8 million.

This high cost won't be covered by most medical plans - governments, gene therapy researchers and health care providers are exploring ways to increase access to gene therapy.

The high cost will be borne and the use of these therapies will largely be in high-income countries although there is a growing movement to close this global healthcare gap.

There are also ethical questions about allowing widespread use of this innovative healthcare therapy while minimizing any intentional harmful use of these genetic technologies.

The science is still in its infancy, dealing largely with rare, previously untreatable conditions but gene therapy will eventually become less costly and globally available.

Other than that, the future of genetic medicine is already here and as the story continues to unfold, the possibilities are endlessly optimistic.

The future of health care is all in the genes.

what's happening
in and around...

The Bay

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

December 23

Winter Whiteout

Thunder Bay's biggest party of the year is back! NV Music Hall is excited to announce the return of Winter Whiteout 2023.

What better way to celebrate Christmas than hanging out and partying with all your friends who are home for the holidays?

White clothing, house music and an unforgettable experience to be had.

Tickets are available through NV Music Hall and the event takes place from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

December 24

Carriage Rides

What's a more romantic way to spend Christmas Eve than with a carriage ride.

The cost is \$20 per person or \$60 for the full carriage. The event takes place at Skafs Just Basics, at 470 Hodder Avenue from 12 p.m. until 3 p.m.

Happy holidays

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from our Dougall Media family to yours.

We're thankful you choose to read our paper each and every week and happy to provide you with all the news, sports, entertainment - not to mention the wisdom of our remarkable columnists week in and week out.

That said, we won't be publishing the paper next week, as we gather with our friends and families to celebrate the holiday season.

From editor Leith Dunick, graphic designer Lauren Loveday and reporters Justin Hardy, Ian Kaufman, Doug Diaczuk and Gary Rinne, we hope you have a wonderful Christmas and a fantastic start to

your new year.

We'll be back on Jan. 5 with our annual Year in Review issue.

We can't wait to see what 2023 brings to Thunder Bay, for the return of the Thunder Bay Border Cats on June 6, for Canada Day celebrations on the Waterfront and both Country on the Bay and Wake the Giant Music festivals.

This past year has been a trying one for our community, but its people are resilient and we've shown we've been able to get through tough times together.

Take some time to recharge this week, if you can, Eat, drink and be merry, enjoy the time with your family and friends and we'll see you in 2023.

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.

Address them to: **THUNDER BAY SOURCE**
87 North Hill Street, Thunder Bay, ON P7A 5V6

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WEEKLY POLL QUESTION.

THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Should the designated truck route be a priority of the new city council?

TOTAL VOTES: 1,498

YES
57.61%

NO
42.39%

Tbaytel launching 5G

By Gary Rinne - TB Source

Tbaytel will introduce 5G — the latest evolution of wireless technology — to the Thunder Bay market in January.

In an announcement Monday, the company said it will launch 5G services powered by Ericsson in core areas of the city, followed by continued expansion throughout 2023.

The multi-year, multi-million dollar investment will create 60 5G-capable sites throughout the Thunder Bay area initially, with plans to add regional markets by the end of the year.

"It will bring faster data speeds for downloads and streaming, larger network capacities to support more connected customers, and continuous network reliability to enrich Tbaytel's overall mobile experience," Tbaytel president and CEO Dan Topatigh said.

Topatigh added that the 5G network "will provide the

backbone and support for emerging applications and services."

The system will initially use a combination of network spectrums which the company says will provide a superior combination of coverage area and capacity, allowing for data speeds that far exceed the capacity of 4G.

According to Tbaytel, low-band spectrum allows coverage over long distances, providing optimal service in rural and semi-rural areas, while mid-band spectrum will boost speed.

Tbaytel is partnering with Rogers and Ericsson to build and optimize the 5G network.

"We are delighted to be working alongside the team at Tbaytel to bring the world's best mobile wireless technology to Thunder Bay," said Jeanette Irekvist, vice-president and head of Ericsson's customer unit in Canada.

"5G offers faster speeds and lower latency that will provide an enhanced experience ... and will



Tbaytel CEO Dan Topatigh says 5G technology will be introduced in 2023. (FILE)

open innovative new technological capabilities that will support vital industries and enterprises in Northern Ontario in areas including mining, forestry and transportation," she said.

Ericsson previously helped

Tbaytel implement its existing LTE-Advanced network.

Tbaytel said that in order to be ready for the launch of 5G, customers should start ensuring they have a Tbaytel 5G certified smartphone.

OPP seeking crash help

By TB Source staff

Ontario Provincial Police continue to investigate a multi-vehicle collision that occurred Friday night on the Thunder Bay Expressway.

The accident involved three passenger cars and happened on Highway 11/17 between John Street and Oliver Road at 6:47 pm.

In a news release Monday, OPP said two people were taken to Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre for treatment of undisclosed injuries.

No further information was provided, but one of the individuals is said to have suffered serious injuries.

A section of the highway was closed to traffic for about 7.5 hours and was opened in both directions once the damaged vehicles were removed from the scene.

Currently there are no charges stemming from the collision, but police are asking anyone who may have witnessed it to contact the Thunder Bay detachment at 807-939-2133.

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SHERRY STIRLING

WEEK 4
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\$1000 WINNER
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/month
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Auger is an ice-fishing essential

If there is one essential piece of equipment an angler relies on in the winter, it is an ice auger. The auger is crucial as it is the tool required to drill the holes in the ice so you can drop a line down, and hopefully pull a fish up.

I can vividly recall the sight of my first gas-powered ice auger, a hand-me-down from my father, smashed to bits and spread across a snow-covered logging road. I was on my way back to the truck from a day of fishing.

I was probably late for dinner and driving my Ski-Doo way too fast when I caught a bit of air. While the snowmobile handled it well, the sleigh I was pulling behind me did not. I slowed down and turned around to see bits of that auger scattered all down the road. While I did get it back together, it was never reliable again.

With money being tight at the time, I replaced that power auger with a hand auger. Simple, inexpensive and reliable, the hand auger never let me down.

Unfortunately, as an angler who loves to move around a lot, drilling a pile of holes by hand means breaking a sweat. On the ice, getting sweaty means getting cold.

So, I saved up and bought a new Jiffy power auger that has served me well for a few decades now.

It sometimes takes some coaxing to start up and it occasionally leaves my fishing gear smelling like gas, but I just can't go back to a hand auger considering how much ice we get here in Northwestern Ontario.

Lake ice could be four feet thick by March, meaning hand augers are just not practical for run-and-gun ice anglers.

Last winter I had my first experience with a drill-powered electric ice auger that runs off a battery.

I was amazed at how quickly the drill punched a series of holes across the small bay we were set up in. By the time we hit all the spots we wanted to try, we must have punched fifty holes and we were well into the spare battery.

But I have to say the experience was enlightening, and I wouldn't hesitate to make my next auger purchase an electric one.

Regardless of the type of auger you prefer, there are a few key points to keep in mind.

First, choose the right-sized tool for the job. A six-inch auger chews through ice quick and easy while being wide enough for fishing smaller species like perch and brook trout.

The standard 8-inch auger is all you need for walleye and most lake trout. However, when targeting trophy-sized pike, whitefish and lake trout, a luxuriously wide 10-inch hole will definitely



Ice fishing means drillings holes on a frozen waterway.

increase the odds of getting those big fish up onto the ice.

Second, always keep the blades sharp. The sharper the blades, the easier and quicker it will be to drill through the ice and get some lines in the water. Owning extra blades is a smart investment too, just in case the first set start to dull over the course of a long day.

Finally, I would recommend always starting your auger and checking the shear pin before leaving home.

There is nothing more frustrating than travelling to the lake, getting out on the ice, and then realizing the auger isn't working or the shear pin that holds the two pieces together is missing.

Trust me, I know.



Keith Ailey
the GOOD LIFE

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Global holiday traditions

Last time HCAYK was published before the holidays we talked about holiday traditions that many people adopt in their homes in our country. This week we are going to talk about maybe some that aren't so common and aren't here in Canada.

While researching this article admittedly I was shocked when I ran into this one. In Japan around Christmas time, the customary meal is KFC.

Yeah, take-out fried chicken, and it's not just an unprompted trip down to the local KFC to get it either.

Many families order it up to two months in advance.

Marketing for their Christmas Party Bucket was so successful that it has become a Christmas Eve tradition!

Fun fact, did you know Dave Thomas of Wendy's was also the creator of the KFC bucket? True story, the more you know.

Lutefisk is a winter delicacy for the people of Norway (as well as Sweden and parts of Finland and the North American descendants of immigrants from such places).

It is dried or salted whitefish (often cod) which is subsequently treated with lye. That's right, the corrosive chemical you might find

in soap.

This process breaks down proteins and gives the fish a gelatinous texture similar to oysters. The corrosive qualities are soaked out afterward in water, and the fish is cooked with copious amounts of salt.

Continuing with our fish theme. In the Czech Republic Christmas begins on the eve of December 24 but lasts through December 26. Christmas Eve is called "Generous Day" in Czech, and the abundance of food at the dinner table gives the truth to that label.

Fish Soup is a staple for all holiday meals and as carp is abundant and commonly served for the holiday, it is no surprise that fish soup comes along with it. The meal begins traditionally when the first star appears in the sky that night.

In Lithuania, the traditional holiday meal consists of 12 dishes, one for each Apostle. As part of a holiday fast, no meat, eggs or dairy products are served.

Typically, herring with carrots or mushrooms is one of the main dishes, and you may find dumplings stuffed with sauerkraut.

While this rigorous 12-dish spread is popular in Poland and Ukraine as well, in Lithuania you are unlikely to find many sweets on the table.

When the holidays come around, the French go with what they love: oysters and foie gras. While these things are enjoyed year round, around the time of the holidays the consumption really goes up.

The old rule about only eating oysters during months with the letter 'r' in it may have had something to do with it, but this peak at the end of the year makes oysters, at least, a true holiday tradition.

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



Derek Lankinen

Here's Cooking at You Kid

Lutefisk is a traditional Norwegian meal.

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OPG donation helps RFDA

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

Thanks to a generous gift from Ontario Power Generation, the Regional Food Distribution Association has purchased a pair of refrigerated outdoor containers to store frozen food destined for remote Northern Ontario First Nations.

Brendan Carlin, the RFDA's community services manager, said OPG's continued support, which over the past few years has totaled more than \$450,000, will have a huge impact on improved food security in regional First Nations.

"They can either be refrigeration units or they can be freezer units," Carlin said on Wednesday of their latest purchase.

"We're currently using them as freezer units and they help with our storage. In the past we were renting out that space, which was costing us \$2,000 a month. Now it doesn't cost us anything but the power to generate them. They're efficient containers and there's no diesel fuel involved."

Carlin said they bought the containers as a bit of a pilot project, knowing the RFDA would



The RFDA's Brendan Carlin (left) and OPG's Dwayne Korchak near an outdoor container.

ultimately like to purchase more for relocation to several remote communities.

"We can use them as distribution points so we can ship frozen food up there and they can distribute it at their leisure, as opposed to now, where they have to get it up there and then they need to have somebody receive it and get it out as fast as possible to avoid spoilage," Carlin said.

Dwayne Korchak, the director of plant operations for OPG in Thunder Bay, said donations to the RFDA are part of the utility's

corporate citizenship program.

"One of the areas we've all probably witnessed is some of the challenges we're having putting food on the table, and the RFDA is looking after people that are struggling with that. We really thought it was a great cause for us to help support," Korchak said.

The \$450,000 donation over two years has also helped with food procurement, logistics and storage.

Staal Fleet and Auto has also helped, providing the graded soil needed.

Felling a tree an annual tradition

Two weekends ago we decided it was time to venture to the “back 40” and get a Christmas tree.

But the question was how were we to get to the “back 40” and bring a tree home.

During the autumn we had gone for a walk - “we” being me, my wife, Laura, and our son, Doug. As I have mentioned before, the “back 40” was once a field used for growing grain. This property had been a farm until the 1960’s. Thus the very back of the property was self-seeded by the surrounding forest and continues to do so - spruce, balsam, jackpine, and white pine. Scotch pine and redpine were planted back then beside the beaver ponds. The red pine trees soar up to sixty feet now. The Scotch pines are now mature trees and therefore no good for harvesting as a Christmas tree.

Each year but one since we moved on to this property back in 2001, we

have trooped to the “back 40” to select an appropriate tannenbaum to be set up in our living room and duly decorated. That one year when we did not make the trek into the “back and behind”, I purchased a Scotch pine from the Kiwanis in the city.

Wow!

As the tree branches unfurled, the distinct aroma wafted into the nostrils of both Laura and me and we were transported back to our youths in Toronto. But no Scotch pine was to be found this year so into the “back and beyond” we journeyed.

As I mentioned, the problem we faced was how to get back, fetch the tree, and get it back to Casa Jones. Our first choice was the quad hauling a cart.

Would we be able to make it through the snow? Laura recommended that I do a trial run without the cart and see if the quad could make it over the trails. Well,

although I drove slowly, the steering was tricky as the snow wanted to grab the front wheels but I made it almost to the back field where a likely arboreal Christmas candidate resided.

I retraced my track, attached the cart, loaded the chainsaw, fetched Laura, and together we rode on the trail almost to the back field.

What prevented us from completing the journey was a large, long poplar tree that the ice storm of month or so ago had toppled. I had to fire up the chainsaw and cut a path for the quad.

Normally when fetching a Christmas tree I do not take a chainsaw; I take my hand-held camping saw and my camping ax. But having encountered the fallen poplar, I elected to haul the noisy saw to deal with both trees - poplar and Christmas.

We forged on into the “back 40” and then dismounted to trudge in the deep snow and see if we could recall which tree son, Doug, had selected. We couldn’t. However, I

spotted a likely spruce growing right next to a tall, mature one and called Laura to come and see if it would do. It would.

So, I cut about two feet above the snow line and levered it onto the cart.

We found a horse lead rope stashed in a side pocket of the rear quad seat and lashed the tree securely to the cart. Then we motored back to the ‘hoosie’ sans incident.

Once back at the house we prepared the space where the tree was to stand and then dragged our specimen inside and while I lifted it Laura placed it in the tree stand. At one point we had to holler at Doug to come and assist as the tree was a lot taller than I expected and tended to teeter.

The three of us managed to set the tree straight and centered in front of our main living room window. The peak of the ceiling is fourteen feet high. The tree touched the peak. Oops. but I didn’t want to go through the arduous task of hauling

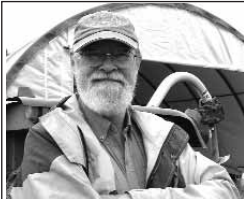
the tree outside, shaving off two feet, hauling it back inside, and having to re-enact the setting up task. During the evening I unstrung the lights and tested them. They all lit up.

We decorated on the Sunday. With a tall ladder set up upon which to climb so that we could string the lights from the top down, we clipped the very top of the tree to make it six inches shorter.

I love early mornings during the Christmas season when it is still dark. I trundle and before even turning on the coffee pot, I turn on the tree lights and bask in the magnificent glow spreading throughout the living room.

Then I put on the coffee and then a fire in the fireplace. With the crackle, crackle of the burning wood, the beautiful array of lights sparkling as they are reflected off of the decorations, and with mug no. one, I sit in my rocking chair to indulge my senses and imagination.

Wow! Christmas is here! I want to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Fred Jones

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Dream Truck draw

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

Time is running out to win a 2022 Ford Bronco Sport Big Bend, valued at more than \$43,000, in support of the Boys and Girls Club of Thunder Bay.

The club's Dream Bronco raffle winning ticket is scheduled to be drawn on Dec. 28. In addition to the grand prize, a secondary prize of \$3,000 worth of gift cards, including \$1,500 to WalMart and \$1,500 to the Real Canadian Superstore, are up for grabs.

"Tickets make a great stocking stuffer," said organizer Mike Tallari.

Tickets are one for \$20, three for \$50 and seven for \$100 and 100 per cent of the proceeds will help support the Boys and Girls Club at their Windsor Street location.

Tickets can be purchased by email at miketallari@gmail.com or by phoning 807-632-4896.

"Alternatively, there are several community partners around town



The grand prize is worth \$43,650.

selling tickets in person," Tallari said.

Visit <https://tbayboysandgirlsclub.org/dream-truck> for more information.

Avatar sequel is a little wet

The much heralded *Avatar: The Way of Water* has finally arrived at SilverCity, 13 years since the debut of the original *Avatar*, which is remembered as a 3-D special effects extravaganza with a simple, melodramatic story. Beyond that, memory fades.

The tale about imperialistic humans (aka "Sky People) and the indigenous Na'Vi, peaceful inhabitants of Pandora, proved to be a box-office titan. But was the cinematic world really holding its collective breath for a sequel 13 years later?

The plot is mostly a re-hash of the first film albeit with technical visual improvements. Returning is the villainous Colonel Quartich (Stephen Lang) who died in the original, getting a second life assuming faux Na'Vi-like form along with a platoon of similarly transformed marines, serving as cannon fodder for real humans commanded by General Edie Falco.

Quartich's snarling for revenge against Jake Sully, (Sam Worthington) an ex-*Avatar* marine who led the ousting of nasty humans from Pandora, "becoming" Na'Vi himself, eventually siring a family.

Sully, realizing that his continued presence in the 'forest lands' makes his people targets for Quartich, seeks asylum with the 'Reef People' of the 'Sea Clans', led by Cliff Curtis and Kate Winslet. This central section deals with Sully's young family trying to uneasily assimilate within a different culture while developing an appreciation for the aquatic life surrounding them.

Cameron could have scaled down this bloated mid-section inflated by visual underwater splendour without advancing the plot.

Cameron and his co-writers up the melodrama ante. There's also an ecological threat posed by hi-tech scientists utilizing whaler-like weaponry ruthlessly determined to secure precious hormones secreted by whale-like creatures called tulkins that offers a 'fountain of youth' for humans. To further underline their villainous aggression, their vehicles are monstrous and crab-like.

Connection to the tulkins and their superior whale culture provides one of the more emotionally engrossing subtexts in the narrative, focusing on the plight on one outcast tulkin, befriended by one of Sully's sons.

Way of Water is typical Cameron, favouring visual spectacle and action over clunky dialogue, wallowing in melodrama, blending in elevated themes with a penchant for extended climaxes.



Avatar: The Way of Water has already earned \$435 million.

The special effects initially are oddly offset by a distracting glazed tinge (due to vacillating frame rate?) that eventually and mercifully diminishes as the movie progresses, allowing the impressive aquatic sequences—colourful creatures and luminescent plants—to finally pop the eyeballs.

Frame rates aside, one can be impressed by *Water's* visual design while remaining emotionally detached. The simplistic characterization and heavy melodrama diminishes Cameron's commentary about neo-colonialism, imperialism, ecological exploitation, family unity. A Vietnam sensibility permeates the dialogue. The actors are submerged in their Na'Vi guises.

Proceedings are redeemed by the rousing, protracted climax. Echoes of *Titanic* reverberate here.

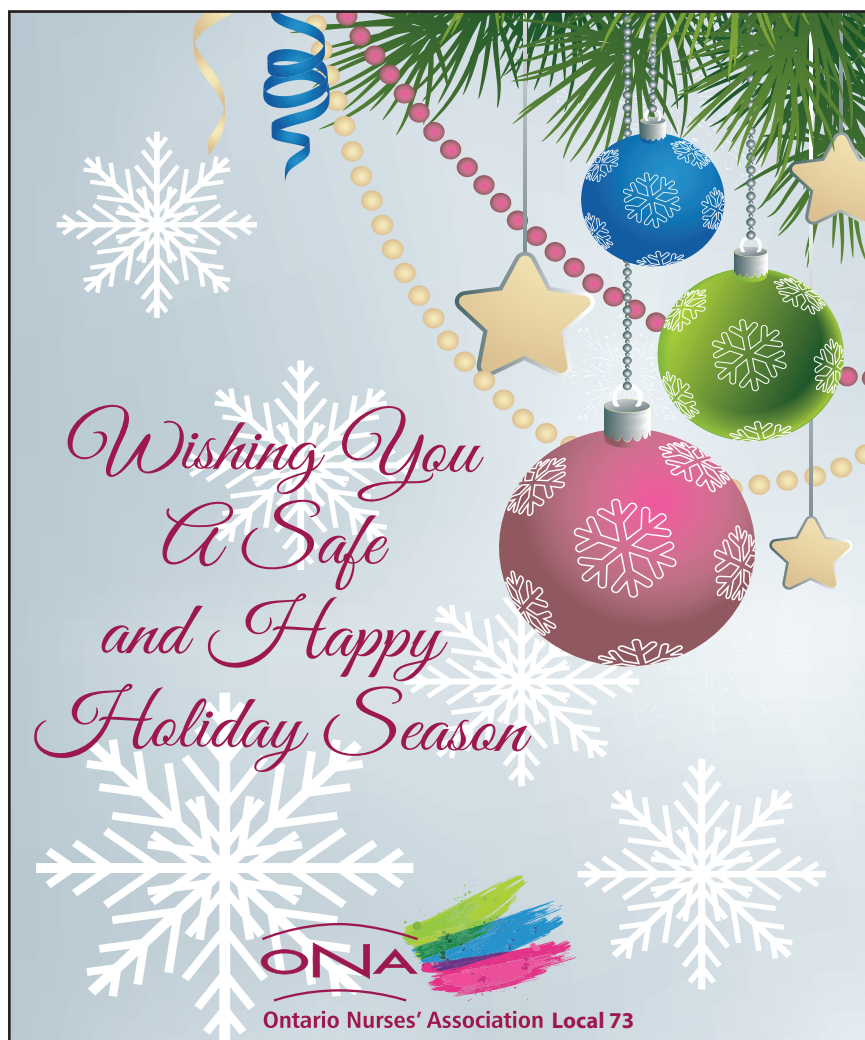
Then there's an unlikely rescue near the end hinting that this vendetta is not

over yet.

Bottom line, Cameron gets a nod for visual brilliance. We simply hope his scripting matures by the next go 'round.



Marty Mascarin
MOVIE TALK



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

"QB QF HJB CJFFQWRM GJP JHM BJ
BMUTX JBXMPF ZXJ TUHHJB BMUTX
XQF JZH GUKQRL."

— TJHGATQAF

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- ACROSS**
- 1 Diplomacy
 - 5 Television band abbr.
 - 8 Fruit
 - 12 One's own (pref.)
 - 13 Nat'l Endowment for the Arts (abbr.)
 - 14 Gas
 - 15 Musical instrument (string)
 - 17 Love (Lat.)
 - 18 Dutch commune
 - 19 Fr. artist
 - 21 Genetic letters
 - 22 Ear (pref.)
 - 23 Back of the neck
 - 25 Guess
 - 29 Jewish month
 - 32 Toward shelter
 - 33 Loop trains
 - 35 Gaming cubes
 - 36 Style of art

- ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE**
- 38 Slow: music
40 Broad structural basin
42 Belonging to (suf.)
43 According to (2 words)
45 S. Afr. village
47 Summer (Fr.)
50 Salary
52 Redo
54 Gr. festival
55 Before
56 Bauble
57 Distant
58 Three (pref.)
59 Wide-mouthed vessel

- DOWN**
- 1 Single entry
 - 2 Irish exclamation
 - 3 Move (pref.)
 - 4 Fox (Scot.)
 - 5 Free

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New heights for Carlson

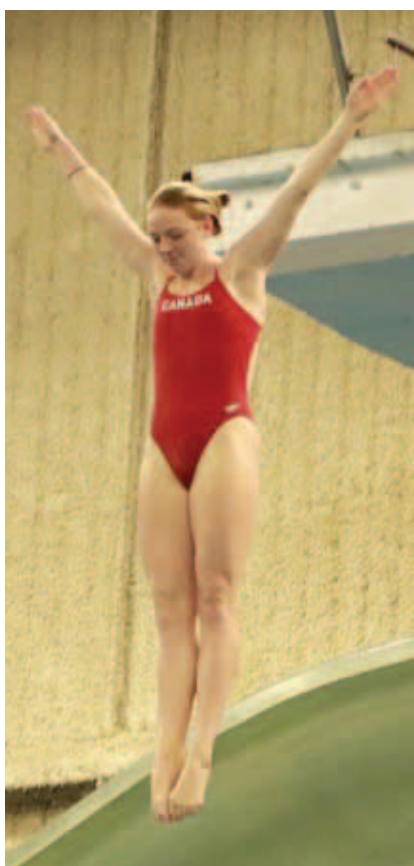
By Leith Dunick - TB Source

By the time Molly Carlson was 10, she had her eyes set on the 2016 Olympic Games.

When it didn't happen, Carlson was crushed, the self-identity she'd built in her mind washed away, and at 18, she began struggling with mental health issues, wondering how she could start all over again and still stay focused on diving at Florida State University.

She ultimately turned to cliff diving, a breathtaking sport that sees her step onto a platform just large enough to place her feet upon and twist and turn through the air before plunging feet first into rivers like the famed Seine, in Paris.

As a member of Team Canada, the 24-year-old, who was born in Fort Frances and grew up in Thunder Bay diving at the Canada Games Complex, finished second this season on the Red Bull Cliff Diving Series, including a win at the Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series.



Molly Carlson, who now calls Montreal home, spent her formative diving years in Thunder Bay.

Focus changed

"I always thought the Olympics was my only path, if I don't make it, I'm a failure," said Carlson on Sunday, just before doing a diving demonstration at her old Thunder Bay stomping grounds, along with her boyfriend and fellow high diver Aidan Heslop.

"That was my state. I was like, how do I prove myself, to get out of Thunder Bay and show that I'm part of this bigger community of diving. When I started facing these mental-health struggles, trying to get on that one path, I thought there's got to be another path I can fall in love with that still includes diving. So, when I met high diving, it was this natural click, that was just meant to be. Mental health finally found exactly where I wanted to be."

She clearly made the right choice.

also started sharing the struggles that come with it and being able to be authentic, being terrified up there and bringing my phone and saying, 'Hey guys, I am absolutely terrified to do this new dive, but I'm going to do it with you all.' It's almost like this community that encourages me every single day."

As natural as she looks hurling herself into the air from 20 metres above the water, Carlson said when she arrived at her first event and saw the set-up, she immediately wanted to head back to the airport and head home.

Nervousness never goes away

She still gets butterflies every time she competes.

"This sport never gets less scary. I think that's something people need to know about high diving. There's an element of fear that you need to be safe, because you can't do this sport if you're not 100 per cent mentally strong," Carlson said. "That first year was absolutely terrifying. You go from a perfect facility, flat water, flat platform your whole life, to outside on a little rock into three-metre waves and you don't know what height you're jumping from."

"It was such a learning curve that terrified me, but you learn throughout the times you do it and the second season was not effortless, but more comfortable."

Carlson, who moved to southern Ontario in her first year of high school, still has Olympic dreams, and is hopeful enough countries form high diving federations to be considered for inclusion at the Games in the not-too-distant future.

"The more people that join it, the more chance we can be at the 2028 L.A. Olympics," Carlson said.

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Ukrainian divers seek billets

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

When Molly Carlson was diving in Thunder Bay as a teenager, her biggest worry was getting to the Canada Games Complex on time for practice.

For Ukrainian divers Stephan Movchan, Nelli Chukanivskaya (the first ever junior high diving world champion), Vladislav Balkin and Vyshivanov Dmitry, it was the constant worry that their homes wouldn't be standing or their family would be killed by a Russian missile attack.

The foursome, who range in age from 12 to 17, were whisked out of the war zone earlier this year and resettled in Croatia, but are now on Canadian soil and looking for billets in Thunder Bay willing to open up their homes and house the young athletes through August — the end of the diving season.

Mitch Geller, who coached at the Thunder Bay Dive Club for seven years, is the technical director at Dive Canada, and joined Carlson at city hall on Monday to make a plea to the community to help the Ukrainian divers out, through Project Genesis.

"It's a close-knit community and in the diving world, we all know each other, so everybody has been very concerned for our friends in Ukraine. We thought we would try to do something, and do



Several Ukrainian divers want to move to the city.

something meaningful. We sent out an invitation to the Ukrainian diving organization, and we let them know that what we would try to do is if any of their athletes were wanting to potentially come to Canada to find safe haven and continue to have some sort of a normal life and continue to pursue the sport, that this is what we can do," Geller said.

"We would look for willing hosts and homes, sort of an adopt-a-diver concept, in cities that have diving programs."

Geller said Dive Canada is looking for three or four homes to house the athletes, knowing the Games Complex is open for training, with their coach, Oleg Vyshivanov, also accompanying the

athletes, while helping the local diving club establish a new junior high diving program.

Carlson said she's trained with many of the divers and said they'd be model guests should they find a billet to open their doors and welcome them into their home.

"They are so passionate. There is nothing more that these athletes would rather do than to high dive and to see how inspired they are to be in a community that supports their goals is inspiring for us," said Carlson, a former junior Pan-American Games champion who returned to Thunder Bay this week, along with her boyfriend and fellow Red Bull Cliff Diving Series silver medallist, Aidan Heslop.

It's win-win for the club and the local diving community too, she added.

"To see this club be rebuilt, with some passion I just think would be an inspiration to us and to the whole community. So, if there are people out there willing to support the next generation of not only the club ... and these youngsters, to help them out with not only their dreams, but to be in a safe place, that would mean the world to me."

Anyone interested in more information is asked to email Andy Ritchie, an assistant coach with the Thunderbolts swim club, at andy.ritchie@mac.com.



U.S. Bank Stadium was pretty quiet last Saturday as halftime rolled around.

An unbelievable Vikings triumph

I've been to a lot of NFL games over the years, close to 40 now. I was at the game when Adrian Peterson set the single-game rushing record and have been lucky enough to see most of the great quarterbacks of the past generation play live at least once.

But I've never seen anything like what I experienced last Saturday at U.S. Bank Stadium, where my beloved Minnesota Vikings found themselves down 33-0 at halftime to an Indianapolis Colts team missing its star running back, Jonathan Taylor, who left early with a season-ending ankle injury.

Fans started streaming out of the stadium at the half, but after driving six hours to get there (albeit, 10 minutes late thanks to my alarm not going off), I wasn't going anywhere, content to lean on the rail in the standing room section rather than climbing stairs to the nosebleeds.

When QB Kirk Cousins hit K.J. Osborne for a third-quarter touchdown, I thought at least the Vikes aren't getting shutout.

My buddy, Gilles Gallant, a betting analyst at the Action Network, responded to a tweet of mine, saying maybe I was getting set to watch the greatest comeback in Vikings history. I laughed.

It turns out he undersold it. After C.J. Ham barrelled up the middle to make it 36-14, Cousins hit Justin Jefferson, and Adam Thielen to make it a one-score game, then, with time running out, dumped it off to Dalvin Cook who rumbled 65 yards for the tying score, the Vikings QB connecting with T.J. Hockensen for the two-point conversion to send the game to a roller-coaster overtime period that ended when Greg Joseph hit a buzzer-beating 40-yard field goal for the 39-36 win.

It was the greatest comeback in NFL history and I still can't believe I was there to see it live and in person. I've never seen a stadium erupt like it did, the crown in a frenzy, save for the smattering of Colts fans who witnessed Ryan blow another large lead - though this time it wasn't the Super Bowl.

The Vikings also clinched the NFC North, another bonus.

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Sunday, December 18	CLOSED
Monday, December 19	8 am – 6:30 pm
Tuesday, December 20	8 am – 6:30 pm
Wednesday, December 21	8 am – 6:30 pm
Thursday, December 22	8 am – 6:30 pm
Friday, December 23	8 am – 6:30 pm
Saturday, December 24	8 am – 4:30 pm
Sunday, December 25	CLOSED
Monday, December 26	CLOSED
Tuesday, December 27	8 am – 6:30 pm
Wednesday, December 28	8 am – 6:30 pm
Thursday, December 29	8 am – 6:30 pm
Friday, December 30	8 am – 6:30 pm
Saturday, December 31	8 am – 4:30 pm
Sunday, January 1	CLOSED

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