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Annual Parade of Lights brings out thousands to watch /6



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There were lots of brightly, colourfully decorated floats that took part in last Saturday's Parade of Lights, a holiday favourite in Thunder Bay. (Keegan Richard)

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About 70 to 80 soccer players rallied outside of city hall on Monday night in support of an indoor turf facility. (Ian Kaufman)

Indoor turf plex still has life yet

By Ian Kaufman – TB Source

Thunder Bay's city council expressed strong interest in a Soccer Northwest Ontario proposal for an indoor turf facility adjacent to the Community Auditorium on Monday, calling for a report back on the concept by March – months earlier than staff initially said was possible.

About 70 to 80 soccer players, family members, and other supporters rallied in front of city hall ahead of Monday's council meeting, pressing council for action on a file it's debated for years without finding a way forward.

Jaime Carpenter said she showed up because she wants better opportunities for kids like hers, who play with the Superior Rush.

She said the limited options for indoor play leave many children on the sidelines, while others practice at odd hours and miss out on tournaments and other opportunities.

"We wanted to show our support that we think it's important for Thunder Bay to get an indoor sports facility for more than just hockey in the winter," she said. "We're running out of facilities for our kids to play in."

Christine Minnella, whose children play with the Thunder Bay Chill and the Rush, said practicing at the Tournament Centre, where an ice rink has been converted into a makeshift indoor turf field, is also creating more injuries for young players.

She also believes the facility could attract a number of tournaments and other events, saying she travels to Winnipeg several times a year for soccer.

"We're constantly going there, they're benefiting from that economic income to their city," she said. "It would be so beneficial if we had that coming back here."

Inside, Soccer Northwest Ontario leaders presented to council, pitching the facility as a logical next step in municipal infrastructure that would fill a major gap in winter recreation needs.

The group put forward a vision last month for a steel supported structure adjacent to the auditorium, expressing confidence the design could be built for \$20 million or less.

That's less than half the price tag of a \$45 million design at Chapples Park that proved too expensive for the previous council's taste after it failed to attract federal funding.

The 147-by-56.5 metre building would include 10 change rooms, a pro shop, concession, gathering area, meeting room, offices, accessible washrooms, a second floor mezzanine, and floor-level seating.

SNO has noted the city has \$17.5 million already accumulated in a reserve fund intended to be used for indoor turf.

Council voted Monday to direct city administration to assess the SNO proposal and report back by March 13.

That's about two months earlier than staff wanted.

WEATHER FORECAST

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			
Snow	Snow	Snow	Partly Cloudy
Precipitation: 90% HIGH 1 LOW -1	Precipitation: 70% HIGH 1 LOW -3	Precipitation: 70% HIGH 0 LOW -4	Precipitation: 30% HIGH -3 LOW -11

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Blues Fest cancelled

By Leith Dunick - TB Source

The Thunder Bay Blues Festival is a no-go for 2023.

However, Trevor Hurtig, general manager at the Thunder Bay Community Auditorium, says he's not ruling it out down the road.

Hurtig said for now he wants to focus on getting the Auditorium back to full capacity before taking on any outside projects.

The Blues Festival was last held in 2019 and organizers had already announced it would be paused in 2020 before the pandemic struck, citing a lack of available touring artists willing to come to Thunder Bay.

"It's just one of those things where we want to make sure that we're back up at full capacity at the Auditorium before we take any extra risk with something like Blues Fest. Regrettably we're not going to do it this year, but we are looking at options for next year," Hurtig said on Thursday.

The Thunder Bay Blues Festival

began in 2001 and ran through 2019, slowly evolving from a strictly blues lineup to a more rock-centric event, headlined by the likes of the Spin Doctors, Burton Cummings, Bryan Adams and Sheryl Crow in recent years.

Other big names to perform at the festival over the years include Ten Years After, Buddy Guy, Robert Randolph and the Tedeschi Trucks Band.

Hurtig said the possibility of a private promoter taking over the event, or something to fill that early July weekend slot, is on the table.

"It is a definite possibility," he said. "Whether it's actually Blues Fest or another event, we're definitely interested in working with another group that might be interested in it and it's something we've actually looked at, to some extent."

"I think that was always the case over the years, that perhaps we could partner up with a private group and make something happen and that's still something that's a definite possibility, even moving

forward for the coming year."

The city already has one multi-day music festival scheduled, with Tim Hicks and The Brothers Osborne signed to play the second annual Country on the Bay Festival at Fort William Historical Park next July.

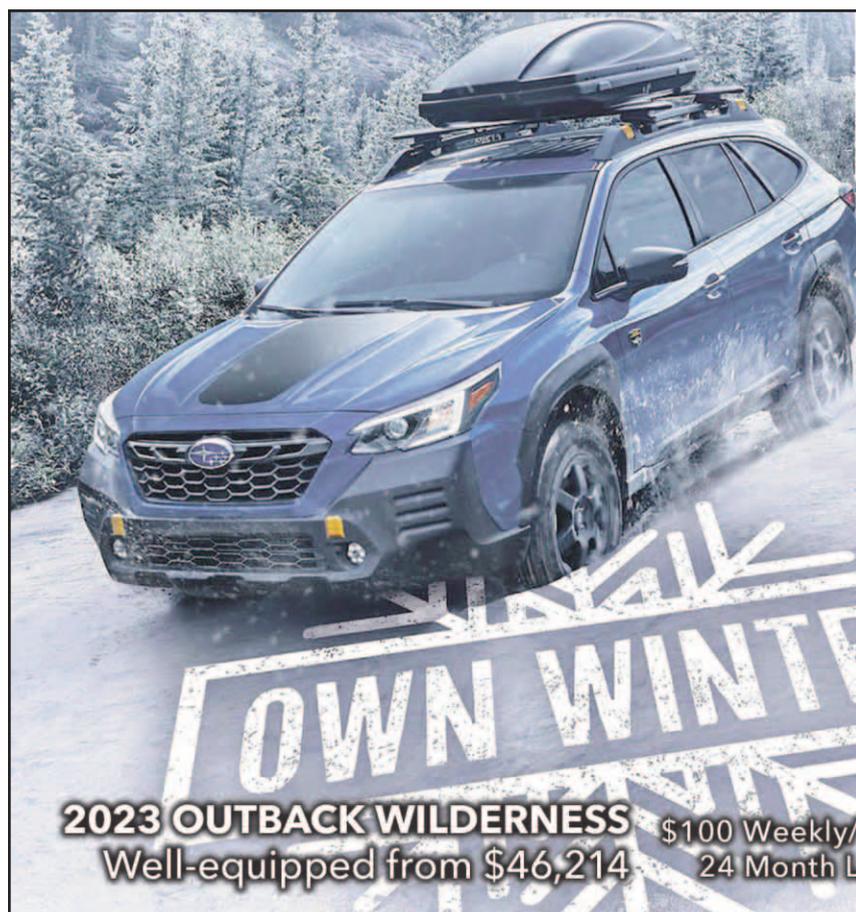
Hurtig said he knows music lovers will be a bit disappointed at no Blues Festival in 2023, adding he can relate.

"We're fans ourselves and we definitely enjoyed doing the festival and wanted to make something happen. But at the same time, if you're going to do something, you do it right and I think the key thing here is to make sure we get the Auditorium back to what people are comfortable with and used to and then we move forward with what we can do after that," Hurtig said.

The Auditorium averaged 100 to 140 events a year pre-pandemic, but Hurtig estimated it is only doing about 70 per cent of those numbers in 2022.



Johnny Reid takes a selfie at the 2019 Thunder Bay Blues Festival. (Leith Dunick/FILE)





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City, Auditorium reach deal

By Ian Kaufman - TB Source

City council has voted to move forward with a new, arms-length relationship with the Thunder Bay Community Auditorium, with the municipality putting up well over \$3 million to cover the facility's accumulated deficit and provide capital funding.

City and Community Auditorium leaders said Monday the new arrangement would open up new funding possibilities for the performing arts centre, allowing it to run lotteries and access grants like the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

"It does free up opportunities," said Trevor Hurtig, the TBCA's general manager, including plans to run lottery-based fundraising campaigns.

In an interview, Hurtig said the

move also puts the auditorium in line with other local cultural institutions.

"We were a little bit like a city department, a little bit non-profit, a little bit charity, and it was creating some confusion all the way around," he said. "People really didn't know [what] we were."

"This clears it up: We're going to be like most arts organizations - like Magnus [Theatre], like the [Thunder Bay] Art Gallery... where we're a non-profit organization, we're supported and funded... by the city, but having said that, we run like an independent business."

In terms approved by city council on Monday, the city would provide the TBCA with over \$3 million in support over the coming years to get the organization on its feet as it transitions to operating as a more

independent entity beginning in 2023.

That includes a one-time grant of up to \$2 million to cover the facility's accumulated deficit, a "base loan" of \$500,000, another "short-term revolving loan" of \$500,000 to support special events, and a yearly contribution of \$150,000 for capital maintenance through 2027.

The TBCA would also continue to receive annual operating assistance through the city's Community, Youth & Cultural Funding Program, which has subsidized operating losses at the facility, typically to the tune of about \$750,000 a year.

That city support represented only about 14 per cent of the TBCA's operating budget in 2022, noted staff presenting to city council on Monday, calling that a marked improvement from the 1990s, when



The Thunder Bay Community Auditorium.

the city had underwritten as much as 36 per cent of operating costs.

The previous council voted earlier this year to move to an arms-length relationship with the TBCA effective Jan. 1, 2023.

Council voted unanimously Monday to authorize city administration to sign an updated municipal capital facility agreement with the TBCA board, along with loan and lease agreements.

Hurtig said negotiations to finalize terms of those agreements are "moving rather quickly," anticipating final deals could be in place by the new year.

Community Auditorium leadership announced last week they would not organize the popular Thunder Bay Blues Festival in 2023, in part because the venue is still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hurtig said Monday he hoped the new deal would help the organization make the financial headway it needs to make in order to take risks on major events like the Blues Fest.

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Thousands of people lined the route last Saturday for the annual Parade of Lights. (Keegan Richard)

Parade of Lights colourful display

By Justin Hardy - TB Source

The Parade of lights went off without a hitch Saturday evening much to the delight of the hundreds of people lining the parade route.

The parade route started at Manitoulin Transport on Main St. and came over the bridge at Intercity to Memorial Ave. where it headed North up Memorial Ave to Queen St, and featured a sensory section near the Wholesale Club with no honking or music playing

Greg Stephenson, organizer, says that the weather was beautiful and he's happy with the number of parade watchers who came out to show support as well as the roughly 140 vehicles that participated in the parade.

"It's kind of hard to tell because it's, like, mass confusion here, but we have a lot of highly decorated vehicles that are lining up right now," he

said.

"We have people waiting and we hope to raise a lot of money for the four charities."

This year, the parade was in support of Autism Ontario, Special Olympics Ontario, Therapy Riding Association, and George Jeffrey Children's Centre and volunteers walked along the parade route to collect donations.

"It's important for the four charities. It helps with their operating budgets for the whole year, and this is something that people look forward to," Stephenson said.

"It's kind of like a kickoff for this Christmas season and we're very happy to be able to provide it for them."

For anyone who would still like to donate and help the four charities now that the parade is wrapped up, visit the parade's Facebook page to learn more.

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EDITORIAL

Field of dreams

The fight for a new indoor soccer facility continues.

It's clear the city needs something. There are too many players forced to the sidelines when winter strikes to ignore the problem any further.

While ideally it would be a chance for the private sector to step in and build and operate it, the reality is there isn't a long list of people willing to put up the money.

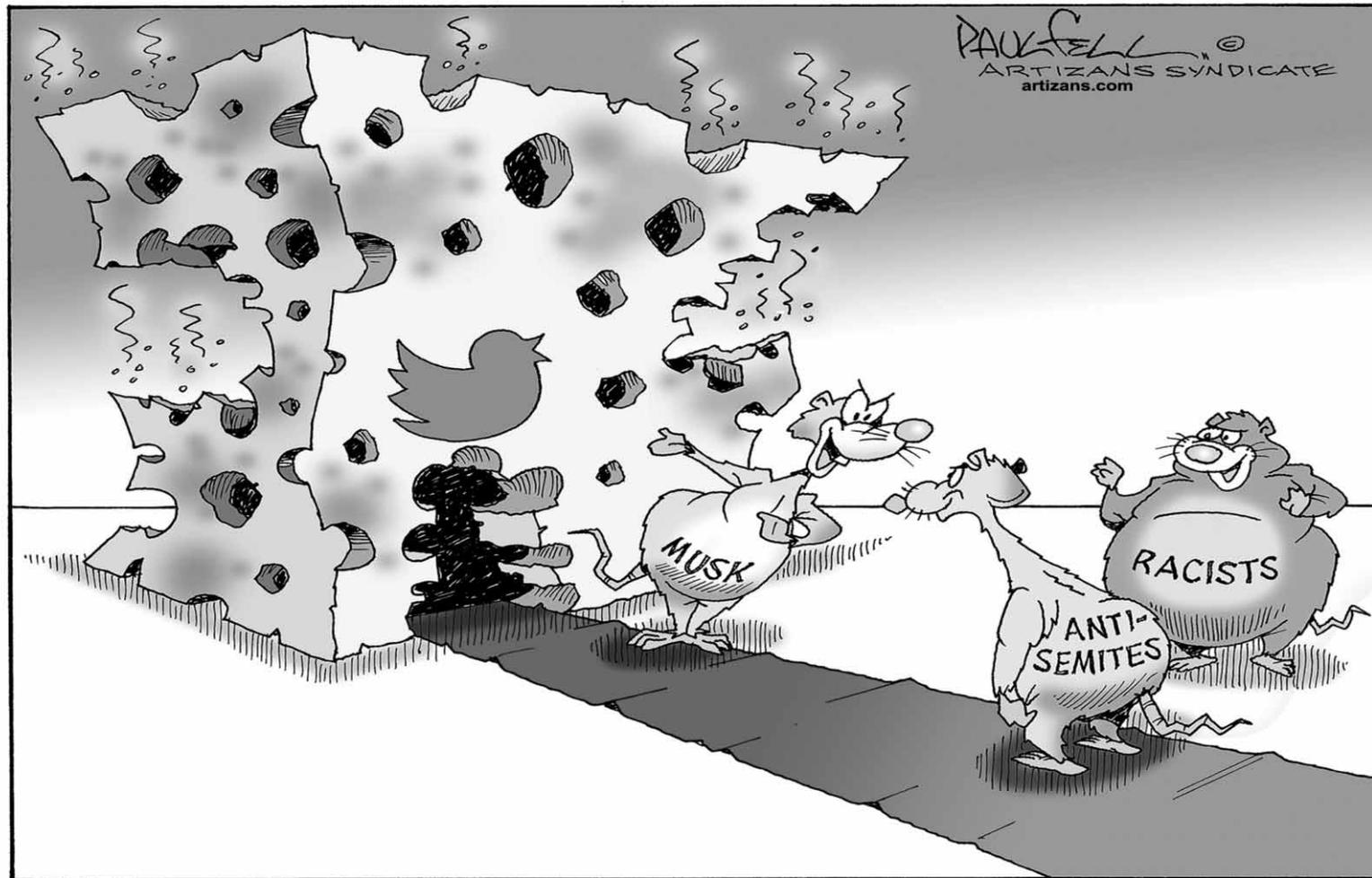
At some point, it becomes a quality of life issue.

The city already operates several hockey rinks, most of which sustain six-figure losses.

The private sector hasn't been asked to take on those facilities, and nor should it be.

The city's mistake to date has been the size and scope of the project. There is no need for a \$35-million building. The soccer, and other indoor sports, communities need a covered field to allow them to continue to play year-round.

Thousands of people in Thunder Bay play soccer and other sports, and \$20 million or so isn't a lot to ask from the taxpayer, given \$17 million is already in the bank. It is important the private sector step up with some of remaining cash needed.



Animal Farm comes to Zimbabwe in Glory

Glory by Noviolet Bulawayo was shortlisted for the 2022 Booker Prize. Inspired by George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, *Glory* is set in the animal kingdom of Jidada where, after a 40-year rule, the 'Old Horse' is ousted in a coup.

At first there is great rejoicing and hope for change under a new ruling horse, Tuvius Delight Shasha (the former vice-president turned rival of Old Horse). Hope, however, quickly vanishes and into the period of post-coup despair steps a young goat named Destiny, who returns from exile to a land where greed, corruption and false prophets are rampant.

Bulawayo leans into exaggeration and irony to tell hard truths. *Glory* is

packed with comedy and farce, poking fun at an autocratic regime while illustrating the absurdity and surreal nature of a police state. Jidada's government ministers reflect the corruption.

There's the Minister of the Revolution, the Minister of Corruption, the Minister of Order, the Minister of Things, the Minister of Nothing, etc.

The human stance of animals waiting to buy scarce commodities brings a double comedy:

'Standing on hind legs, the back leaning against a wall, tail curled or

tucked between the legs. Sitting on the pavement. Squatting. Holding on to walls. Sleeping queues. Sleeping pressed together like hot loaves of bread in queues. Sleeping standing with one eye open in queues.'

But one doesn't have to know Zimbabwe to relish this novel. As with all good satire, the specific speaks to the universal; and many of these specifics are instantly recognizable – a video recording anguished cries of 'I can't breathe'; the sham commitment to 'free, fair and credible elections'; the calls to 'make Jidada great again'. Similarly, the

heart-breaking descriptions of genocide, corrupt rulers and a traumatised nation living in fear, will chime with people all over the world.

Glory is also a fresh and modern take on our relationship to the virtual world and to the novel form itself. In Jidada there are two countries:

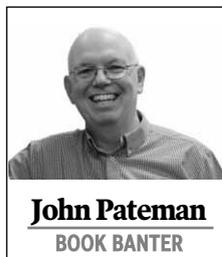
'The Country Country that was the real physical space in which Jidadans walked and lived and queued and suffered and got pained, and then there was the Other Country, where Jidadans logged on and roared and raged and vented.'

This Other Country is captured not only in hilarious hashtagging and

tweets, but with soundbites from animals weighing in on current events. This social media-saturated narrative, interwoven with the oral storytelling techniques of idiomatic speech and call and response, makes Bulawayo feel like a pioneer.

Some may not share Bulawayo's version of post colonial Zimbabwe. There are many who view Mugabe not as a dictator, but as a courageous freedom fighter who liberated Zimbabwe.

Mugabe waged the independence struggle as an African nationalist but later changed his ideology to Marxism-Leninism. That is why he is detested by bourgeois intellectuals like Bulawayo.



John Pateman
BOOK BANTER

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Tiny homes perfect fit for some

By John Shermack

How much personal living space do you need to be happy and comfortable and how many personal possessions could you live without?

These are two questions you need to ask yourself if you would like to live in a tiny house.

It may not be for everybody but many Canadians are downsizing and considering the possibilities of tiny living in a tiny house with fewer amenities and not much stuff.

It is easy to be lured by the romantic notion of living in a fancy, fully functional playhouse but there are more practical and compelling reasons for choosing the tiny lifestyle.

Amid the rising cost of living and the dwindling availability of affordable housing the most obvious benefit of a tiny home is the potential cost savings.

Because they are small, tiny homes cost less to build, purchase or rent, with additional savings on lower monthly payments, reduced utilities and less maintenance.



Tiny homes are becoming more popular as people downsize or need affordable housing.

Another major consideration for environmentally conscious tiny dwellers is the reduced carbon footprint – less material for construction, less energy consumption and fewer emissions.

Also fewer personal possessions, so if you move to tiny town remember, there is very little storage

space so you need to get rid of your stuff and not get any more stuff to replace it.

For a while in the '70's and 80's it looked like an idea whose time had come, but once the novelty wore off the tiny home movement had to face some grim realities.

First of all, even though cost

savings is a top consideration for some tiny house buyers, the price tag is not as tiny as the name suggests.

Tiny houses are generally under 600 sq. ft. and can cost anywhere from \$10,000 - \$180,000 or more depending on size, design and luxury options.

Tiny appliances and bathroom fixtures sometimes have to be custom made to fit into tiny spaces and their prices are not so tiny.

Toilets are often too awkwardly placed to provide any privacy and since there is no septic system or sewer connection, you will need to handle your own...you know.

Will you divert solids for use as compost, use a "dry" toilet to wrap and store deposits for future disposal or use modern technology to incinerate the poop and reduce it to ash?

All while preventing embarrassing odors from wafting through their tiny space.

Canadians have a history of tiny dwellings featuring pioneers, trappers and settlers who lived and kept their few meagre possessions in caves, huts, tents and igloos.

Over the centuries generations of Canadians took shelter in cramped quarters and found a cozy nook somewhere to sleep at night.

And now in 2022 some of their descendants are once again curling up in small spaces – the more things change, the more they remain the same.

As for me, I've never lived in a tiny house but I grew up in a small, two bedroom home in Westfort which I shared with my siblings and parents.

It was modest accommodations for a family of eight but I never felt crowded and besides, there were larger families we knew of who lived in even smaller dwellings.

Raising a family in a tiny house would be challenging and in fact, it seems to me that any two people living in such a small place might annoy each other from time to time.

I can't imagine my family squeezed into one – there just wouldn't be enough cozy nooks to go around.

As for married couples, the divorce rate for tiny house owners has soared to 50% - maybe it's not such a romantic notion after all.

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The Bay

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Dec. 16-18

SIJHL Hockey

Three straight nights of exciting SIJHL hockey are on tap this week at two arenas in the Thunder Bay area.

On Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights, the Kam River Fighting Walleye will welcome the Red Lake Miners to the Norwest Arena, looking to build on their first-place standing.

On Friday and Saturday nights, the Thunder Bay North Stars will host the Wisconsin Lumberjacks at Fort William Gardens.

All five games come with 7:30 p.m. start times and tickets are available at the door.

Dec. 16-17

Christmas Carol Musical

This ghostly tale of the Past, Present and Future is brought to life in this exciting new musical adaptation. Keeping true to Charles Dickens original tale, it draws upon the themes of time, family and society's

ills to warm even the coldest of hearts.

Staged at Urban Abbey, at 308 Red River Road on Friday and Saturday night at 7 p.m., tickets are \$11.06 and available at eventbrite.ca.

Dec. 16-17

101 Dalmations Kids

Disney's classic animated tale of kidnapping villains and courageous puppies is adapted in this "fur-tastic" musical adventure.

Pet owners, Roger and Anita, live happily in London with their Dalmatians, Pongo and Perdita, stalwart dogs devoted to raising their puppies. Everything is quiet until Anita's former classmate, the monstrous Cruella De Vil, plots to steal the puppies for her new fur coat. The Dalmatians rally all the dogs of London for a daring rescue of the puppies from Cruella and her bumbling henchmen.

The show takes place on Saturday at

7 p.m. at the Paramount Theatre. Tickets are \$12 plus fees and are available at eventbrite.ca.

Dec. 18

Pet Photos

Santa is making a special stop at Sleeping Giant Brewing Company to take photos with your pet!

Pet photos will be by donation. All proceeds from the event will support Paws for Love.

Pets must be leashed or in a carrier at all times when inside the brewery.

The event takes place from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday at the Sleeping Giant Brewery Co.

Dec. 18

Hotel California

Take a dark desert highway straight to the Community Auditorium to see Hotel California, one of the best Eagles tribute bands out there.

The show starts at 7:30 p.m. and tickets are available at Ticketmaster.

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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Third accused gets 8 years in McKay murder

By Doug Diaczuk - TB Source

The third person charged in connection to the 2018 beating death of 25-year-old Ashley McKay has been sentenced to eight years after pleading guilty to manslaughter.

Darren Oombash, 28, appeared before Justice Bruce Fitzpatrick in a Thunder Bay Courtroom on Monday for plea and sentencing.

Originally charged with second-

degree murder, Oombash pleaded guilty to the lesser included charge of manslaughter.

Oombash is the third accused to be sentenced in relation to McKay's death. Marlene Kwandibens, 41, pleaded guilty to manslaughter in November 2021 and was sentenced to eight years. Terryl Michon, 24, also pleaded guilty to manslaughter in November 2021 and was sentenced to six-and-a-half years.

With pre-sentence custody credit,

Kwandibens was left with 3.5 years to serve, while Michon had an additional two years left to serve.

During sentencing for the two other accused, the court heard that McKay was with Kwandibens in her Cumming Street apartment the night of Oct. 29, 2018 where they were consuming drugs and alcohol. Oombash and Michon arrived later that night and were also consuming alcohol.

An argument erupted after

Michon accused McKay of spreading gossip about her and she told Oombash to remove her from the apartment. Kwandibens then slapped McKay and she and Michon proceeded to beat her.

A post-mortem examination determined McKay suffered more than 80 blunt force trauma injuries to her head, face, neck, torso, and limbs, as well as fractures to her nose and ribs. Her cause of death was determined to be the result of

blunt force head trauma.

According to an agreed statement of facts read into the court record on Monday, Oombash initially told police he had no memory of anything happening that night other than breaking up a fight between the three women.

However, he later recalled that when he tried to go to sleep, the fighting started again and Kwandibens told him to tie up McKay, which he did.



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Truck driver charged

By TB Source staff

The driver of a transport truck involved in a high-profile collision on Dawson Road on Sunday faces a charge under the Highway Traffic Act.

Thunder Bay Police have charged a 24-year-old man from Winnipeg with failing to stop for a red light after an incident that sent two people to hospital with minor injuries and caused significant property damage.

The collision occurred just after 10 a.m. at the Dawson Road and Hilldale Road intersection.

Police said Monday that a tractor-trailer entered the intersection against a red light, collided with an SUV crossover, rolled over, went through a fence, and came to rest in the backyard of a home.

The driver of the SUV and a passenger in the transport truck

were taken to Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre for evaluation and treatment of what police believe to be minor injuries.

The outcome could have been much worse.

Tara Gauld, who was at her sister's house on Pine Grove Place adjacent to Dawson Road, looked out the window after hearing a loud noise and saw the truck break through the fence into the backyard.

"I thought the truck was going to drive right into the house," she recalled. "I was trying to think in my mind, do we get out of the house?"

The tractor trailer ended up barely a couple of metres from the residence, where Gauld said a patio is normally in use in the summer.

Sal Carchidi, acting traffic sergeant with TBPS, commented that traffic safety on Dawson Road is a concern not only for community members

but for police as well.

"Vehicles need to slow down on Dawson Road. They need to watch for the lights. Just because of the increased traffic on Dawson and having residences so close, it's very crucial that all drivers watch the speed limits as well as the traffic signals," Carchidi said.

He noted that there's also an advance warning light system in that stretch of Dawson, giving drivers a heads-up that the traffic signal is about to change.

"Those lights give approximately eight seconds' warning to prepare for an upcoming change in the light, or to notify that the lights are red, followed by the period of time for the amber light. So any drivers paying attention or being aware of their surroundings should recognize that and be able to stop in a timely manner."



An overturned transport can be seen from the window of a nearby house. (Tara Gauld/Facebook)

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Guilty plea in 2019 homicide

By Doug Diaczuk – TB Source

A man who conceded to aiding and abetting in the 2019 death of 21-year-old Robenson Saint Jean by facilitating a meeting with a drug dealer that turned violent has pleaded guilty to manslaughter.

Jeffrey Miller, 44, appeared before Justice Danial Newton in a Thunder Bay Courtroom on Monday where he pleaded not guilty to the original charge of second-degree murder, but guilty to the lesser included charge of manslaughter.

First arrested on March 30, 2019 by the Thunder Bay Police Service, Miller was originally scheduled to stand trial on the charge of second-degree murder starting this week.

The charges relate to an incident on the afternoon of March 29, 2019 when police received a 911 call regarding an injured male in the Hilldale Road area.



Robenson Saint Jean was found injured on Hilldale Road in 2019. He later died. (FILE)

According to an agreed statement of facts read into the court record, the man, later identified as Saint Jean of Ottawa,

was located just after 12 p.m. without shoes and a laceration to his throat.

Despite life-saving efforts by police and

paramedics, Saint Jean was pronounced dead at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre.

Broken glass believed to be from a car side window was located at the scene near Saint Jean and a witness in the area reported seeing a white, older model truck in the area shortly before Saint Jean was seen crouched over on the roadway.

Police conducted a search throughout the city for an older model truck with a broken window. The vehicle was located later that evening in the parking lot of a Cumberland Street motel and police determined it was registered to Miller's estranged wife.

Miller and a woman were observed leaving the motel and driving away in the truck. Police conducted a traffic stop and determined Miller was the driver.

Examination of the vehicle revealed shards of glass from the broken window inside and it was later determined that the

shards matched the glass found on the road where Saint Jean was located.

Further forensic examination found blood-like staining on the shards of glass, as well as on Miller's shirt and shoes, with a DNA profile matching that of Saint Jean.

Police learned Miller and the woman were involved with drug use. The woman observed that Miller would drive people around to transport drugs and he would be paid in either drugs or money.

On March 28, 2019, the woman received a text message from someone she knew to be Saint Jean and who she and Miller had acquired drugs from in the past. The message from Saint Jean instructed Miller to give him a ride.

Miller and the woman met Saint Jean at a Leslie Avenue residence that night. When the woman woke up the next morning, Miller and Saint Jean were gone.

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Christmas food from around the world

Canada has an abundance of different cultures all celebrating a number of different holidays this season.

It really is fantastic to see all of the incredible foods that have found their way into the average holiday spread for a Canadian family. This week we are gonna talk about the origins of some favourite and not so favourite holiday foods.

Also known as Yule log, bûche de Noël is a sweet dessert served in France during the Christmas season.

Though there are many variations, one of the most common types is made with heavy cream, cocoa powder, eggs, sugar, and vanilla extract. It's commonly decorated with icing sugar and fruit.

Bûche de Noël commemorates the tradition of cutting and burning a specially selected log known as the Yule log.

Also known as mincemeat or Christmas pie, mince pie is a widely

popular and historical holiday dessert originally from England. Despite its name, most modern mincemeat pies are meatless. Traditionally, mince pies were made of shredded beef or mutton, suet, dried fruit, and spices.

However, most varieties today simply consist of pastry dough, dried apples and raisins, distilled spirits, vegetable shortening, and a spice mixture containing nutmeg, cloves, and cinnamon. Interestingly, the pies used to be oblongly shaped to represent a manger, although most mince pies served today are obviously circular.

Although the butter tart is about as Canadian as it gets and they are readily available year round, it was traditionally a thanksgiving and Christmas treat.

While I was working at a touristy spot that catered to many americans I was tasked with describing a butter tart to them.



Derek Lankinen

Here's Cooking at You Kid



Fruitcake is a polarizing holiday dessert around the world. (Lord Byron's Kitchen)

This was a confusing challenge, its just a butter tart how do I describe it? I landed on a "soft baked caramel with raisins in pastry". It seemed to do the job well enough.

Christmas cake (or just fruit cake) is a popular (but polarizing) dessert around the world. It's made of flour, eggs, sugar, spices, candied cherries,

dried fruit, and brandy.

Traditional Christmas cake is made at least two months ahead to allow adequate time to slowly "feed" the cake with brandy every two weeks. Finally, it's topped with a marzipan icing.

While it's mostly known as a British dessert, many countries

serve Christmas cake during the holiday season. In fact, South Koreans are well-known for their artistic Christmas cake decorations.

During Hanukkah, latkes are a delicious staple on most dinner plates. In Hebrew, the dish is known as leivot.

Made of the simplest of ingredients, you can make latkes with shredded potato and onion, eggs, and breadcrumbs. Other popular Hanukkah treats include sufganiyot (don't try to pronounce that, its just jelly donuts), challah (braided egg bread), and beef brisket.

No matter what food you're serving the best thing about the season is spending it with family and friends and toasting those no longer with us. Happy Holidays everyone!

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.

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Keeping young ones warm in outdoor, winter weather is important for their comfort and health and safety.

Keeping warm

“Det finnes ikke dårlig vær, bare dårlige klær” is a Norwegian saying that translates to “there is no such thing as bad weather, only the wrong clothing.”

Living the good life here in Thunder Bay requires us to learn from a young age just what the right clothing is, so that we can enjoy our favourite winter interests from December through March.

Vigorous activities like skating and Nordic skiing generate plenty of heat while also moving fast enough to create some significant windchill. Therefore, dressing for these sports requires a focus on blocking the wind and maximizing breathability.

Other winter pursuits like ice fishing and walking the dog are a little more relaxing and will therefore require more of a focus on staying warm.

Regardless of what we are doing outside, we always want to be comfortable. Dressing for the weather will have a major impact on that comfort level as well as our overall enjoyment of wintertime and all the amazing activities that come with it.

To help ensure we keep smiling out there, here are a few key things to keep in mind when heading out for some fun this weekend:

Dress in layers with a focus on the core. If our core (torso) area is warm, our hearts will keep pumping warm blood to our fingers and toes. However, once we start to get cold at the core, blood flow will be more focused there to protect our vital organs.

The side effect of this survival trait is that less blood will flow to our finger tips and toes, meaning

cold and numbness in those areas.

Merino wool or a synthetic base layer under a thermal layer will keep us comfortable while a waterproof, windproof and breathable outer shell protects us from the elements. This system allows us to shed layers if the temperature rises, and to regulate our body temperature to stay comfortable with varying activity levels.

Cover the head and ears. Wearing a warm hat or toque is the best way to retain heat during low-intensity activities.

Choose something that also protects the ears, which are prone to frostbite when exposed to the bitter cold.

Protect the extremities. For our hands, mitts will be the warmest option, but if our winter pursuits require dexterity, three-fingered “lobster claw” gloves are a good choice. For those who prefer five-fingered gloves, it is worth investing in some

good ones with a leather outer and a Thinsulate lining.

For our feet, it is tough to beat wool socks. One great trick is to always put on a fresh pair right before you start your activity. Believe it or not, feet can get sweaty in a good pair of boots before you even step out of a vehicle, and that moisture can quickly make your feet quite cold.

Chemical hot packs and battery-powered insoles are other options I have had success with on days when it is below -20C.

Winter offers us so many exciting activities and adventures. Choosing the right clothing will allow us to maximize our enjoyment of them and spend even more time outside.



Keith Ailey
the GOOD LIFE



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Spielberg's youth

The Fablemans (SilverCity) is filmmaker Steven Spielberg's self-made bio about his formative years, outlining what sparked his passion for filmmaking as a youngster amidst a turbulent family life. There's some truth, some fabrication, hence the name Fableman.

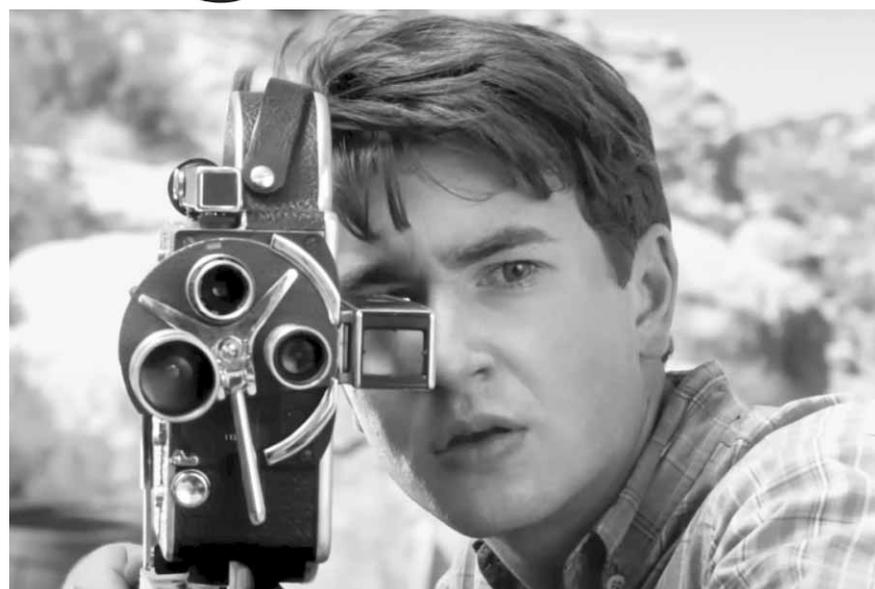
There are peaks and valleys in *The Fablemans* which has a very effective first half giving way to some uneven renderings in the second half.

The movie has its best moments beginning with young Sammy Fableman's (Mateo Zoryan) initial spark with film, going from fears of bad dreams being in a movie theatre to become enraptured by his first cinematic experience, *The Greatest Show on Earth* he sees with his parents Burt and Mitzi (Paul Dano, Michelle Williams).

The DeMille epic fires his imagination, prompting Sammy to use his train set to re-imagine the *Greatest Show's* climactic scene when the circus train goes off the rails colliding with a car. Spielberg allows us to see Sammy's point-of-view (POV), his camera placed at table level with the oncoming model locomotive.

This carries forward into amusing montages of Sammy employing his family members and Boy Scout troop as his actors to create Super-8 home movies about mummies, (using up the household supply of toilet paper), and westerns, (using inventive techniques to simulate six-shooters firing.) He's already showing a flair for resourcefulness, establishing shots and editing.

Obvious parental effect is accounted for, providing the alchemy that goes into Spielberg's make up. Mitzi is



Mateo Zoryan stars as budding filmmaker Sammy Fableman in Steven Spielberg's *The Fablemans*.

artistic, supportive, and impulsive, an aspiring concert pianist who gave up her dreams for motherhood. Burt is the bespectacled, naïve engineer-whiz who cannot fathom his son's obsession with film. "Why can't you make something people can actually use?" he asks Sammy.

As Sammy evolves into a more mature, confident teen storyteller (Gabriel LaBelle) using upgraded equipment he finally senses his ability to trigger requisite reactions from his audience.

The film shifts from contentment to disillusionment as the family deals with relocation, marital discord and antisemitism settling down in northern California in the film's latter half.

The extra-marital affair—mom's fondness for Burt's best friend, Bennie (Seth Rogen)—is hazy on detail which

leaves us removed from the gravity of the familial breach. However, this sequence provides Williams with her best moments as she's forced to wordlessly confront her true feelings for someone else courtesy of Sammy's home movie footage.

Sammy's first real girlfriend experience – she's a devout Christian – seems lifted from a teen rom-com. There's also an abusive all-American bully harassing Sammy who suddenly has a change of heart upon seeing Sammy's high school film showing him in a positive light. His self-realization is dubious.

Zoryan and LaBelle are well cast as younger Stevens, and Dano and the cast are fine, including a cameo with Judd Hirsch as Uncle Boris.

Mr. Spielberg offers just enough affecting moments to make *The Fablemans* a palatable foray into his budding years as one of Hollywood's most successful filmmakers.



Marty Mascarin
MOVIE TALK

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- ACROSS**
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 - 5 Mulberry of India
 - 8 Large intestine beginnings
 - 12 Immediately
 - 13 Individual
 - 14 Irish exclamation
 - 15 Austral. marsupial
 - 17 Queen of Sparta
 - 18 Epoch
 - 19 Declare
 - 21 One who is (suf.)
 - 22 Federal Aviation Admin. (abbr.)
 - 23 Assistant (abbr.)
 - 25 Right, in law
 - 28 Incinerate
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ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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- 1 Pretend
- 2 Munich's river
- 3 Blue Nile
- 8 Wolframite
- 9 Toothless
- 10 Arabian judge
- 11 Aleutian island
- 16 Anti-satellite (abbr.)
- 20 Compass direction
- 22 Pita
- 24 Blue color
- 25 Double (abbr.)
- 26 Estuary
- 27 Got
- 28 Rom. first day of the month
- 29 Hyson
- 30 Yorkshire river
- 32 Sweet flag
- 35 Tattle
- 36 P.I. knife
- 38 Muslim court official
- 39 Berne's river
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Terrifying tale of wonder, hope

By Linda Maehans - TB Source

Don't want to imagine it. Don't want to believe it.

Well, stop. Don't even say or think such things because you can; you will, and be ever so glad you did.

From the first moment a lone figure wearing an old-fashioned frock coat steps from the shadowy gloom and onto his stage, lights a stubby taper on a bureau, grasps then opens a heavy tome...well, we are hooked.

Stilled and silenced. Mesmerized. As the terrible true tale of Jacob Marley, now-deceased business partner of one Ebenezer Scrooge, begins to unfold before our very eyes, ears and senses.

And! Oh! Our imaginations do not have the slightest choice but to come along for a flight through Eternity; a journey from which we will not return the same. No, not nearly the same.

Exaggeration? Sappy melodrama? No sir. No madam. If anything, my words have been softened to avoid a



Thom Currie stars in Magnus Theatre's production of Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol.

lasting or possibly fatal fright. Certainly the audience, on opening night of Magnus' *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol*, will attest to my caution.

This is not a show for cynics nor the faint-of-heart. Truly.

He's usually known to theatre-goers in this community as Magnus' Artistic Director. But no longer. Thom Currie has undergone a metamorphosis near impossible to describe, adequately or even slightly.

The man has become a chameleon

of lurid dimensions and gleaming hues we are loathe to behold: menacing; cunning; hideous and horrible. In the next instant, we feel choked up by a pitiable creature whose gruff-and-bluster has shrivelled like a shroud in a lonely grave.

Then, next instant, some temporary relief, sliver of humour, glimmer of hope; as Marley's solicitous travel-companion attempts to ease our way through hell and beyond. In fact, next time you hear that little voice (of conscience) whispering or whining in your own ear, might be a good time to take heed, maybe listen. But I digress.

By now, time-travel has become also our norm.

Currie's constant motion-on-stage, up and down, crouched and twisted, or defiantly erect; on knees, or perched on dizzying ledges and edges...well, by now we've realised we are moving side by side with myriad characters, people, through Time. Backward. Forward. Around and around. Look, here we are again. Eternity is a big place.

Huge kudos to Thom Currie for the journey.

Yet, as with anything, he doesn't go it alone. Not by a long shot; in this case, it's in equal measure by the sound and lighting and special-effects folks whose talents are so integral to this powerful production.

Very soon into our ghostly tale we notice we are holding our breath; gripping our seat; bracing ourselves for what might be coming next. It's not called a sixth-sense for no good reason. No sir. No madam.

A reverberating and explosively-enthusiastic round of applause for Joe Pagnan (lighting-sound-projections) and Warden Bémont (set): unforgettable reasons why we don't return from this trip the same as when we set out.

Praise also for Gillian Jones' stage direction; Lisa Macchilone's costume design.

Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol by Tom Mula shocks, daunts and inspires right up until Christmas Eve. Take heart and encounter a truly wondrous show.

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Jays slow out of free-agent gate

Just when I was starting to lose faith in the Toronto Blue Jays front office, they swooped in and signed right-hander **Chris Bassitt** to a three-year, \$63-million deal.

Jays fans were waiting for something at the winter meetings, but watched as free agent after free agent linked to the team were scooped up elsewhere.

Justin Verlander chose the New York Mets, as did OF **Brandon Nimmo**. **Cody Bellinger** decided Wrigley Field better suited his quest to return to MVP form.

Pitchers **Taijuan Walker** (a former Jay), and **Jameson Taillon** chose bigger American markets.

Bassitt, however, is a huge win for a team needing at least one, if not two starters to keep Yusei Kikuchi and Mitch White as far from the rotation

as possible.

Bassitt was 15-9 last year with 167 strikeouts in 181.2 innings with the New York Mets, and finished eighth in the Cy Young voting in 2022.

Hopefully they're not done.

Were the Jays to sign a player like **Andrew Benintendi**, or to a lesser extent, **Michael Conforto** or **Michael Brantley**, it would go a long way to plugging some major lineup holes.

I have to say, the Jays signing **Kevin Kiermaier** really doesn't move any needles for me.

Don't get me wrong, he's a great defender, one of the best in the game today, and in a key position, centre-field.

But I think I might be able to outthit the guy.

He turns 33 less than a month into the 2023 season and has only played

130 or more games once, in 2015.

He hasn't hit .260 or more since 2017 and his on-base percentage over his career is a woeful .308.

Toronto should still have some money freed up by **Hyun-Jin Ryu's** injury, the bulk of his salary covered by insurance.

There are plenty of interesting pitchers left out there too.

Lefty **Carlos Rodon** is the most high-profile, and if the Jays were in on Verlander, why not go in on the former White Sox hurler?

Unfortunately, by the time you read this, Rodon may have signed with the New York Yankees. And he's probably no longer in the team's budget

But that still leaves plenty of options out there.

Noah Syndergaard, originally drafted by the Jays and sent to New York in the **R.A. Dickey** deal, is still unsigned, as is **Nathan Eovaldi**. There's always the chance the Jays bring back **Ross Stripling**, a pitcher

the team should have qualified before letting him hit free agency.

Michael Wacha, **Corey Kluber** and **Zack Greinke** had also yet to sign, as of press time, but after that, it's pretty ugly.

Rich Hill, **Mike Minor** (both getting cut from my Strat-O-Matic team this winter), **Drew Smyly**, **Johnny Cueto**, **Chris Archer** and **Dylan Bundy** don't exact fear from opposition batters, though Wacha did post a 3.3 WAR last season with Boston and might be worth a flyer at 31.

The Jays also have the option of trading for a starter, and an abundance of catchers to entice a dance partner.

Danny Jansen is the name who keeps coming up, but the Jays are starting to run out of suitors, with Atlanta and St. Louis both landing backstops in the past week.

They could also use a catcher as bait to land **Bryan Reynolds** from Pittsburgh.

□□□

I had a note from **David Pineau** the other night telling me his son, Jack, has signed with Creighton University.

Jack, of course, earned a spot on Canada's national junior baseball team that competed earlier this year at the U18 Baseball World Cup in Florida.

There's a chance that the younger Pineau could play for the Thunder Bay Border Cats this summer, though that will likely be up to the folks at Creighton, an NCAA school located in Omaha, Neb.

Creighton's most famous alumni is hall-of-famer **Bob Gibson**, who played for the school from 1954 to 1957. Current MLBers **Darin Ruf** and **Nicky Lopez** are also alumni.

Former Cat **Zach Daeges** played for the Blue Jays program too, though he never made it to the big leagues, despite being a sixth-round pick of the Boston Red Sox.

Good luck, Jack!



Leith Dunick

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Westgate's Blundon recognized

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

Nolan Blundon loves the Toronto Raptors.

In fact, he loves basketball in general, whether watching Pascal Siakam and company on television or in the stands, or lacing up his sneakers and hitting the court himself for a little hoops action of his own.

Blessed with a shot that even Steph Curry might salute, the Westgate Collegiate Vocational Institute student was recently honoured as the School Athlete of the Year by Special Olympics Ontario, a nod to his abilities on and off the court.

"I play basketball, floor hockey, bowling, golf, track and field," Nolan said.

"This award makes me full of joy and excitement. I'm just happy that I won it."

The teen said he's loved sports since he was a kid, adding that taking part in the various activities he does keeps him active and in good health.

"And I get to learn skills too," he



Nolan Blundon was named the School Athlete of the year earlier this year by Special Olympics Ontario. (Leith Dunick)

said. "I learned shooting and passing and dribbling and stuff."

Kyllie Daniar, a teacher and coach at Westgate, said Nolan was

nominated by Special Olympics Ontario for basketball player of the year, which she said in large part was a result of the efforts on the

ground of the local Special Olympics organization.

Having a robust program benefits everyone who participates, from

the athletes to the volunteers.

"Just the opportunity for fair play and the opportunity to have the ability to come together with students and athletes of like ability and lets you get out on the court or the field or the rink - whatever it is they're participating in - and come together as a team and work on the dedication of work ethic and determination, but ultimately just having fun," Daniar said.

Nolan, who says former Raptor Kawhi Leonard is his favourite NBA player, has a knack for basketball, which is great too, she added.

"Nolan is not only a phenomenal athlete, but a phenomenal kid. He works very hard, not just on his shot, but he's determined. He wants to talk basketball all the time. He wants to play basketball all the time and it just goes to show that with a little hard work and dedication, he can play with not only traditional athletes in the Special Olympics program, but also some of our unified players," Daniar said.

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Westlund-Stewart eyeing playdowns

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

For Nicole Westlund-Stewart, the Tbaytel Major League of Curling season has been all about building up to peak in time for the Northern Ontario Scotties.

The team, which consists of Megan Carr, Samantha Morris and Rebecca Carr, on Wednesday night showed it can play under pressure, rallying from a 6-3 deficit to edge Bryan Burgess 8-6, stealing three in the eighth end to pick up its second win of the season.

“We tried just to focus one end at a time and focus on our goal for that end, and stay in it until there were no more rocks left,” Westlund-Stewart said.

“My players made their shots and were setting up the end really well. I decided on my first (shot) to go for it. That was our only chance to make the tap to set up the potential tie or win for us. We went for it and made it and we had some help from the other team, of course.”



Nicole Westlund-Stewart watches her shot last Wednesday at the Port Arthur Curling Club.

A bit of misfortune cost Burgess in the seventh.

Looking to remove a Westlund-Stewart stone to score two, his final shot picked, made a hard left turn and instead Burgess gave up a steal of one, his lead cut to just 6-5.

Getting the win was great, Westlund-Stewart (2-0-5-2), who moved into a tie for 10th with Kory Carr, leapfrogging Ben Mikkelsen, Jodi Judd and closing to within five points of a playoff spot.

“We’re a brand-new team, so

we’re kind of learning, trying to get games in together and trying to build the wins,” she said.

Two sheets over, it was a battle between spouses, Krista McCarville and Sarah Potts looking for bragging rights against their husbands, Mike McCarville and Jordan Potts, who play on Trevor Bonot’s foursome.

Coming off a win last week, the defending Scotties semifinalists were looking to stay on roll. McCarville, Ashley Sippala, Potts and Oye-Sem Won jumped out to a 4-1 lead, picking up steals in the third and fourth. Bonot battled back with a pair in the fifth and stole another in the seventh to tie the match 4-4, giving McCarville the hammer heading home.

She made the most of it.

“The last end, there were a lot of rocks in play, but a lot of the angles were kind of in our favour, so they had to kind of make some moves. We didn’t have to quite as much, so it was a little more thinking on their part, a little less thinking on our

part,” McCarville said.

“The angles seemed to work out really nice and Oye made a really nice one on her last one to set up a tougher one on them. They were missing by an inch here or an inch there and gave us the chance to make some easier shots.”

Bonot (6-0-2-1) attempted to bank his final shot off his own stone, the plan to roll into scoring position, but couldn’t execute, leaving McCarville (4-1-3-1) with the point she needed for the 5-4 win. McCarville is tied for sixth with Denis Malette (4-1-3-1), who blanked Al Hackner’s replacement squad 6-0.

In other action, Brian Adams Jr. climbed past Hackner to claim top spot in the standings, edging Kory Carr 4-3. Ron Rosengren only needed six ends to knock off Ben Mikkelsen 7-3, Gary Weiss and Judd shook hands after five, Weiss winning 8-1 and Dylan Johnston kept his playoff hopes alive with a 10-4 win over Dallas Burgess.

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