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#### LOCALNEWS

# **OIPRD** report uncovers systemic police racism

Police for too long dismissed Indigenous cases too quickly

#### THUNDER BAY By Doug Diaczuk - TB Source

The Office of the Independent Police Review Director has found that systemic racism exists at an institutional level at the Thunder Bay Police Service.

"Our detailed review of cases involving sudden deaths of Indigenous men and women found TBPS investigators failed on an unacceptably high number of occasions to treat or protect the deceased and his or her family equally and without discrimination because the deceased was Indigenous," Gerry McNeilly, Independent Police Review Director, writes in his report, released last Wednesday.

As part of the review, 36 current and former Thunder Bay Police officers and civilians were interviewed, as well as the chief coroner for Ontario, chief Forensic Pathologist, Nishnawbe Aski Police Service, Anishnabek Police Service, York Regional Police investigators, Crown counsel, and other participants in the criminal justice system.

#### 'Disturbing'

McNeilly writes that his team heard "a disturbing pattern of negative and discriminatory interactions between TBPS officers and Indigenous people."

"These encounters ranged from

allegations of serious assaults to insensitive or unprofessional behaviour," McNeilly writes. "Overall, our meetings reveals nothing short of a crisis of trust afflicting the relationship between Indigenous people and the TBPS."

occasions..." The report examined 37 investigations conducted by the Thunder Bay Police involving the deaths of Indigenous people since

2009. According to McNeilly, inadequacy on the part of TBPS into sudden death investigations was so problematic that at least nine of these cases should be reinvestigated.

"Based on the lack of quality of the initial investigations, I cannot be confident that they have been accurately concluded or categorized," McNeilly writes.

McNeilly writes further that a



**RESPONDS:** Police Chief Sylvie Hauth reacts to the OIPRD recommendations.

number of investigators involved in these investigations "lacked the expertise and experience to conduct sudden death or homicide investigations.'

Further, investigators misunderstood when matters should be investigated, failed to connect autopsy reports to their own investigations, failed to know what was in their own investigative file, and had inadequate supervision.

"I found it unacceptable that a police service such as TBPS investi-

"...TBPS

investigators

failed on an

unacceptably

high

number of

GERRY

MCNEILLY

gating a large number of serious, complex cases has no major crime unit and investigators may lead the investigation of such cases without appropriate training or experience," McNeilly writes.

"The failure to conduct adequate investigations and the premature conclusions drawn in these cases is, at least in part, attributable to racist attitudes and racist stereotyping."

McNeilly recommends a multidiscipline investigation team should be established to undertake the reinvestigation of the nine deaths.

Thunder Bay Police chief, Sylvie Hauth, acknowledged the existence of systemic racism and biases in the the service.

"I have acknowledged and will continue to do so that barriers do exist," Hauth said. "There are barriers within the policing service, but also systemic racism, yes. There are also implicit biases. For me to be able to say that today is not something that is new."

Hauth said the police service will need to go through all the recommendations carefully to determine what the next steps will be. But she added that the service, under her direction as both chief and acting chief, has already been working toward repairing its relationship with the Indigenous community.

#### Making strides

"We have in the last year and a half done exceptional work to start to repair those relationships," she said. "We haven't waited. This report has been two years in the making. What we wanted to do already in my acting capacity, is look at ways to start mending that relationship and regaining that trust."

With 44 recommendations handed down in McNeilly's report, Hauth said implementation will take time.

"I can't tell you exactly what they are going to look like," she said. "This is a significant report and it will be given due attention and will be taken seriously." For in depth coverage of this story, visit our website, www.tbnewswatch.com







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#### LOCALNEWS



AUTOPSY SHOWS TRAUMA: Police are investigating Braiden Jacob's death as a homicide.

## **Suspect charged in teen's murder**

Jonathan Yellowhead faces second-degree murder charge

#### THUNDER BAY By Doug Diaczuk – TB Source

The suspect charged with second-degree murder in connection to the death of 17-year-old Braiden Jacob has been identified as Jonathan Yellowhead.

Yellowhead, 22, of Fort Hope made a brief court appearance on Saturday via video from the Thunder Bay Police Service Balmoral Station. He is also facing one count of breaching a probation order.

Thunder Bay Police announced in a media release issued late Friday night that Yellowhead had been arrested shortly after 5 p.m. that day with the assistance of the Nishnawbe Aski Police Service. Jacob was first reported missing on Dec. 6 and his body was found in Chapples Park on Dec. 9. Police ruled his death a homicide following a post-mortem examination conducted in Toronto.

The 17-year-old, from Webequie First Nation, was in Thunder Bay to seek counselling services. A vigil for him was held by family, friends, and community members on Friday.

The investigation is ongoing and anyone with information is asked to contact Thunder Bay Police at 684-1200 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or online at www.p3tips.com.

Yellowhead will make his next court appearance on Dec. 18 via video from the Thunder Bay District Jail.

# Police board neutered

Justice Murray Sinclair's report says board failed Indigenous people THUNDER BAY By Matt Vis – TB Source

The Ontario Civilian Police Commission has accepted the findings of an independent investigation, concluding that the board's repeated failures to address the concerns of the Indigenous community constitute an emergency.

The determination was released last Friday along with the report of Senator Murray Sinclair, who conducted a review of the Thunder Bay Police Services Board and recommended the appointment of an administrator to temporarily serve in place of the board.

"Given the long standing and troubling circumstances in Thunder Bay and the Board's dismissive attitudes toward taking positive steps to address them, the Investigation determined that bold measures are required," Sinclair wrote.

"Police services boards need to be cognizant and capable of carrying out all of their statutory responsibilities. The board has demonstrably shown that it cannot."

The civilian police commission has issued an order to appoint Thomas Lockwood as the administrator for a one-year period on an emergency basis.

Celina Reiberger, who had been acclaimed as the board's first Indigenous chair earlier this week, said she accepts Sinclair's findings.

"I do not fault the board. They may have made some mistakes but I certainly know their heart was in the right place," Reitberger said. "Now we're going to have assistance in



TOUGH START: Celina Reitberger (left) and Mayor Bill Mauro are sworn in last week.

doing what we need to do. There's nothing to be ashamed of. We need help. We're getting help. There's going to be some money attached to it. I'm optimistic."

Sinclair recommended that no members of the previous board – which included former chair Jackie Dojack, Coun. Brian McKinnon, previous city councillor Joe Virdiramo and Don Smith – be brought back on the new board, with the exception of Reitberger.

"I think I am really qualified to do this job. I am all about reconciliation," said Reitberger, who helped found the restorative justice program in Thunder Bay and sits on the Indigenous peoples' court. "I see wonderful things happening but they're not widespread enough. I want to be instrumental in making this a better place for Indigenous people to come to live, to seek services."

Smith announced his resignation hours earlier on Friday, effective immediately.

"A lot of these reports are politically motivated," Smith said. "It's not to say they're not needed and there wasn't some positive stuff that comes out of them. But at the end of the day, Thunder Bay has some issues. Until everybody comes together and sits down as one and there is no finger pointing – let's sit down and move forward – that's going to continue."

Reitberger said the spotlight of the nation is on Thunder Bay, though she added there are similar problems in other parts of the country such as Winnipeg, Regina and Calgary.



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The Board and staff of the Thunder Bay District Health Unit wish everyone a safe & healthy holiday season.

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## **Editorial**

#### **EDITORIAL**

### Reports damning

was not a good week for the Thunder Bay Police Service, nor was it any better for the Thunder Bay Police Services Board. Nor should it have been. For years the city's Indigenous population has decried systemic racism practices on the force, telling anyone who would listen they faced a different set of rules when dealing with police.

They complained officers were quick to dismiss their cases, paying little more than lip service when called to investigate. It turns out, more people should have

listened. Two damning reports issued last week,

one from the Office of the Independent Police Review Director, the other from the Ontario Civilian Police Commission, confirmed much of what Indigenous leaders have been decrying for decades.

Police must start taking cases involving Indigenous people seriously, whether it's a missing person, a body found in the river or someone reporting a simple break-and-enter.

The OIPRD report criticizes police harshly for systemic racism, for dismissing cases with a shrug -- leading to a recommendation that nine cases be reopened. The OCPC report says the police board did nothing when confronted with the reality that police were treating the city's Indigenous people poorly.

The report may be a black eye on Thunder Bay, but all wounds heal, if they receive the proper treatment. It's time to start the healing journey together.

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#### Police do good job

To the editor: Without prejudice and with an open mind, it is my strong belief that the Thunder Bay Police force cannot win no matter how hard they try.

Obviously mistakes will be made and none of us is perfect, but the huge task at hand dealing with crime in the city, the low morale created by local and national media serves only to worsen the problem.

National coverage appears to focus on the negative, with little consideration for the circumstances leading to the instances being reported.

Years ago, there was little wrong with our police force. Within a few years this is talk of getting rid of them. These are the same dedicated people that did a good job before our city changed.

Open your hearts and minds. Blame serves only to divide.

> K. Kangas, Thunder Bay

#### **Keep Dease Pool open**

#### To the editor:

ast onday night I attended city council's meeting and listened as council voted 11-1 to close Dease Pool. No one was permitted to speak from the public including myself.

I have been a strong supporter of our outdoor pools over the years and in 1978 I obtained over 1100 signatures to save Dease Pool, the first attempt by the city to close the valuable treasure.

Walter Assef was our mayor at the time and he and the rest of council did the right thing and voted to keep the pool open.

I say this is a valuable treasure because this is where tens of thousands of citizens have learned how to swim over the last 106 years. I also obtained more signatures about 10 years ago to help prolong the life of this pool.

This pool has been the best bang the city has ever got for their dollar and now that the pool needs repairs the city has turned their backs on all the children that use this pool. In my opinion, a new pool at this location is probably the best option. The upgrade of this pool could be done in two steps with the change room facility possibly being built in the second year.

Administration had council vote in this the first night after they took office and ratification of this vote will take place at next week's council meeting giving the public little time to prepare for this meeting.

The public has been shut out of this process.

Administration referred to the cost of replacing this pool and the present

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



usage.

Last year Vickers Street was under construction which did not help attendance and the present facility has no showers.

Whenever I have driven by I have seen hundreds of kids splashing around particularly on very hot days. Some people I have talked to also question the proposed cost of \$1.2 million dollars to replace the pool and \$1.4 million to build a new change

room facility. This is one of the reasons the public needs to have a voice in this decision.

If the pool is not replaced how much money will the city save by having hundreds of restless youths wandering the streets with nothing to do. Is the city not advocating for more facilities for young people and the integration of our youth which this pool is certainly doing.

The sad thing about all this is the timing. Two weeks before Christmas the Mayor and council voted to close this pool and gave debutantes no chance to speak up on behalf of these kids.

Ratification of this motion to close the pool will take place this coming Monday at City Hall.

It is my understanding that the public will have an opportunity to speak at this meeting by submitting a request to Gordon Stover, Committee

Co-ordinator office of the city clerk by the end of the day on Wednesday or by Thursday by 11 a.m.. Individuals can also email Mr. Stover at gstover@thunderbay.ca

The public can also ask to speak at this meeting by getting permission from a councillor prior to this meeting.

> Ray Smith, Thunder Bay

#### Allow cannabis stores

#### To the editor:

appreciate this opportunity to provide the perspective of the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce for consideration in the upcoming debate and discussion regarding the opportunity for cannabis retailers to locate within our municipality.

Thunder Bay residents are already legally able to purchase cannabis online and will have the option to legally purchase cannabis in retail stores in other Ontario jurisdictions as of April 1, 2019.

A 2018 report by Deloitte1 estimates that the legal recreational cannabis market in Canada will generate up to \$4.34 billion in total sales in 2019, of which up to \$1.68 billion will be purchased in Ontario.

That report also provides useful data

regarding cannabis consumer preferences. It indicates that 51% of survey respondents were interested in purchasing from licensed private retail stores compared to a third of respondents who were interested in purchasing online. Cannabis consumers are looking for legal retailers whose staff possess strong product knowledge and provide a positive, engaging shopping experience.

We encourage Council to consider the economic benefits of locating legal retail cannabis in Thunder Bay. These benefits include: new business development, job creation, the generation of municipal property taxes, increased demand for commercial space, and new tourist attraction. This is in addition to the promised per household funding incentive from the Province for municipalities that allow legal cannabis retailers.

We believe that allowing legal cannabis retailers to locate within our community sends a positive message that Council is open for business and is welcoming of new industries as we work together to build a City of Opportunity.

> Charla Robinson, President. Thunder Bay Chamber of Commercce

## **Perspective**

# **St. Nick sightings**

#### Fond memories shared of meeting Santa for lunch

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

had lunch with Santa. No kidding – it happened a year ago just before Christmas when we stopped for lunch at a local eatery.

Santa walked in and everybody noticed him right away because of his bright red suit and furry, white trim, including his beard.

The restaurant was buzzing that day due to the unexpected Santa sighting but the crowd respected his privacy.

Santa works very hard this time of year and deserves some down time while he eats - he has nutritional needs too.

Holding his tray he headed toward our table, nodded, smiled, said hello and then he sat down with us.

Needless to say we all felt very special, lunching with the big guy that day as on looking diners wondered why he chose us.

They may have been a little envious because we got to schmooze with Santa and secure our names on his "nice" list.

We tried to avoid shop talk during lunch but Santa soon started bragging about all the well-behaved kids sitting on his knee.

As long as I've known him, Santa has always been a very positive guy.

for many years and I still remember my first Santa sighting as a kid on Christmas Eve.

It was reported on the radio news that an unknown flying object had been spotted streaking through the northern sky.

Although it was unconfirmed, experts were pretty sure it was Santa's sleigh and we all scurried to bed so he wouldn't catch us.

If he ever caught us while we were still awake we knew what that meant – a one-way ticket to the naughty list.

I never dreamed that years later I would actually be hanging out with Santa, sharing lunch and shooting the breeze with a jolly good friend. But that's exactly

"As long as

I've known

him, Santa

has always

been a very

what happened and although I only saw positive guy." him in uniform that one time at lunch, it wasn't our first meeting.

When I first met Santa it was in the off season he wore civilian clothes and was introduced to me as a guy named John.

I met him at a party at my brother's house and in spite of his impressive white beard, I had no idea who I was speaking with at the time.

A while later (and I don't like to brag) I went bowling with He has been a part of my life Santa - he still seemed like a

regular guy to me, just merrier than most.

When he bowled, I wouldn't say he had a classic delivery but his scores were respectable, as if there might have been some magic involved.

I eventually learned that once a year he put on his Santa suit and made personal appearances at kids' parties and Christmas shows.

He loved to share stories, mostly about kids on his nice list

> although he sometimes referred to the naughty ones too with a sly grin on his face.

But it wasn't until we had lunch with him that I realized the guy I knew as John was Santa, possibly even the real one.

Santa had a veggie burger that day (no cookies) and even though he held off on the "HO HO HO's", he was still jolly, cheery and lively.

Then, he dabbed his beard with a napkin and left the restaurant to complete his appointed rounds.

I haven't seen Santa since that day but I know he's a busy guy whether you are well-behaved or not, everybody answers to Santa. Merry Christmas to all my

friends (naughty and nice) and a shout out to Santa John and any other Santas spreading joy during the holidays.





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SACRED: Lakehead Public Schools superintendent of education Sherri-Lynne Pharand took part in a blanket ceremony, the blanket awarded to her for her Indigenous inclusivity work at the board.

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

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once the home of the founder of the Thunder Bay Museum Society -Peter McKellar, and his wife Carlotta Burgess Spence. The McKellars, originally from Scotland, were fundamental in the early stages of development of Fort William. It took hard work and sacrifice to get ahead in early Thunder Bay, but the reward could be significant.



#### LOCALNEWS

# **Council closing pool**

#### By Doug Diaczuk - TB Source

he closure of Dease Pool will go forward after city council voted to ratify the decision made last week to decommission the facility, despite several deputations urging council to allow for public consultation before finalizing the pool's fate.

"I cannot understand how they decided to close something that important to that area without any consultation," said Kateri Banning.

Banning, who grew up in the area and recalls spending every day in the summer at the pool, was one of several deputations made to city council during Monday night's meeting.

Last week, council voted in favour of closing the 106-year-old facility by a vote of 11 to 1. According to Kelly Robertson, general manager of community services, the facility no longer meets current standards and it would cost about \$1 million to repair the pool basin.

A new pool would cost \$1.3 million, with a total price tag of \$2.8 million with the inclusion of new change rooms.

On Monday, Current River councillor,

Andrew Foulds, who was the only one to vote to keep the pool open, put forward a motion to defer the ratification of the decision to the Jan. 14 meeting. Five councilors voted to defer, while five voted to proceed with the closure. Because of a tie, the motion to defer was defeated.

Ray Smith, one of the deputants, said there are hundreds of youth in the area that utilize the pool on a daily basis in the summer.

"This is a second home for kids who play and swim in the summer," he said. "It's not only a meeting place. The ability to learn to swim is essential. These kids can't afford a membership to the Canada Games Complex and don't have camps to go to."

As part of the decision to close the pool, council agreed to reallocate the \$52,000 of the pool's annual operating budget toward other youth programming in the neighbourhood.

Banning agreed that the Dease Pool is in need of repair, but she doesn't believe alternative youth programming will fill the void left when the pool closes.

"Being a 15-year-old you're not going to go and hang out with adults in this

supposed new youth programming that they are claiming they are going to commence with Dease Pool closing," she said. "To take away an important amenity for the youth would be detrimental."

Ron Chookomolin said his deputation to council was to speak on behalf of the Indigenous youth, including many youth in the city from remote northern communities, who utilize the pool.

"When they go swimming, they meet other First Nation children from other communities," he said. "They all talk. Some talk in their own language. Nobody knows this. But I do. I see this."

The possible closure of the pool has been up for debate as far back as the 1970s, with previous reports recommending the pool be shut down by 2016.

Robertson was asked if the pool is simply at the end of its life or if was the victim of poor maintenance.

"I would suggest it's definitely end of life," she said. "There are other issues with the facility from my perspective. One of my biggest concerns of the existing pool is it is not heated and secondly, there is no gradual entry to the pool for a novice swimmer."



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#### LOCALNEWS



CHAFED: Mayor Bill Mauro says administrator Thomas Lockwood should have been an advisor only.

# **Mayor not happy**

#### Mauro says OCPC ruling diminishes council power

#### **CITY HALL** By Leith Dunick - TBSource

Mayor Bill Mauro is dismayed the Ontario Civilian Police Commission has taken away the city's ability to have a say in how the Thunder Bay Police Service is run

Mauro on Monday said he thinks the appointment of Thomas Lockwood as an administrator with sole voting power for up to a year was not necessary, noting Lockwood could have been brought on in an advisory role while still allowing the newly elected board to make the final decisions.

Senator Murray Sinclair's damning report, delivered on Friday, accused the police board of a lack of proper oversight on the police department and its relationship with the city's Indigenous population.

He also ruled that the board should be dismissed until the newly sworn in members have the opportunity to take the proper training to be able to provide the necessary oversight of the police department.

"As such, Sen. Sinclair has effectively, in my opinion, dismissed a brand-new board, two of its members publicly elected in a municipal election ... pushed to the sidelines," said Mauro, one of the two members of council appointed the board last week, along with Westfort Coun. Kristen Oliver.

"As mayor, I do not have a vote. Kristen Oliver does not have a vote. Don Smith, who was nominated by council of Thunder Bay and appointed by council has resigned - no vote. And the current chair also has no vote. The sole vote is given to the administrator, Mr. Lockwood, who is part of Sen. Sinclair's team that tabled the report."

Mauro is concerned it will be up to Lockwood, and Lockwood alone, to choose which, if any, of the recommendations from the report will be implemented, with the cost being borne by the taxpayers of Thunder Bay.

"This is not passing an opinion on the

recommendations, if they're good, bad or indifferent," Mauro said. "This is about the cost associated with the consequences of the implementation of those recommendations."

The mayor noted that the city has learned the cost of paying for Lockwood's salary will be the responsibility of the Ontario Civilian Police Commission, and not city taxpayers as council and administration first believed.

Mauro is also concerned council is being handcuffed by not being allowed to reappoint any previous members of the Police Services Board, with the exception of chair Celina Reitberger. Mauro and Oliver are also exempt, as they had not previously served.

"In my opinion, this has taken away council authority," Mauro said.

The mayor, a vocal opponent of allowing a board already under investigation to hire the new police chief, criticized Sinclair for allowing the hiring of Sylvie Hauth to go forward in the first place, but added he doesn't want the decision revisited.

"I would expect that (Sinclair) knew months ago that the report was going to be damning, yet he allowed the board to go forward with the hiring of the new chief. My point is this, is that if a past member of the board is no longer OK to be on the board going forward, why would that board have been allowed to go forward with the hiring of a new chief?"

Mauro said the ability to hire a new deputy chief has now been taken out of the city's control.

Fort William First Nation Chief Peter Collins, who joined six Thunder Bay city councillors at Monday's city hall news conference, said while he accepts the recommendations and wants to see them implemented, there's at least one glaring concern with Lockwood's appointment.

"It's the first time Fort William has appointed a rep at the table and they've taken away that responsibility and representing First Nations at that level," Collins said.



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

Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School • 315 North Edward Street





#### LOCALNEWS



IMPORTANT DELIVERY: RCMP and North Star Air workers get ready to hit the skies for the Toys for the North program on Monday. Dec. 17, 2018.

# Santa Claus makes a northern delivery

#### THUNDER BAY By Leith Dunick - Tb Source

**S**anta Claus is paying an early visit to Ontario's North.

Leaving his reindeer behind to rest up for Christmas Eve and escorted by members of the RCMP's 'O' Division, Saint Nick left North Star Air's hangar with a plane full of gifts for children in remote First Nations communities, the culmination of the annual Toys for the North campaign.

"We have a long list of people, member companies, distribution partners, donors, veteran and policing agencies along with the caring public that helped us to get here today. We're looking forward to seeing all the smiles on the faces of the kids....it's all about the kids," said Staff Sgt. Norman Roy of the RCMP.

North Star Air's Karen Matson said it's a partnership that's four years strong.

"The communities are excited, we all are. It's been weeks of hard work, but today is the day and it's all worth it." said Matson.

Santa will be making stops in Deer Lake and Poplar Hills First Nations.

About 600 toys are expected to be handed out.

Over the years the program has donated more than \$500,000 worth of toys to children in norther parts of Labrador, Manitoba, Ontario and Nunavut.

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YUMMY: Volunteers Emanuel Sposato (left) and Kristin Tsubouchi were busy serving up a Christmas meal during the Salvation Army and Valhalia Inn dinner.

# A holiday meal for all

#### Hudreds turn out for annual Salvation Army Christmas dinner at the Valhalla a good meal and some good company has THUNDER BAY

#### By Doug Diaczuk - TB Source

For anyone not yet feeling the holiday spirit, serving up a hearty meal and sharing gifts with those who may not have those blessing at this time of year will surely turn that around.

"If you weren't in the spirit of Christmas, it's an event like this that really makes you shine," said Travis Batting, general manager at the Valhalla Inn. "Just to see all the kids and all the people who may not have a nice Christmas meal, to be able to give back and be a part of that is an incredible thing."

The Salvation Army and the Valhalla Inn hosted their annual Christmas Dinner on Sunday to more than 400 people.

The dinner was held in the Valhalla Inn Ballroom and Major Lori Mitchell, executive director at Salvation Army community and residential services, said for the past 25 years anyone looking for been welcomed.

"There are a lot of people who may just not have the same means to be able to do something nice at Christmas or they might find themselves alone and I don't know about you, but I don't want to cook a turkey

for myself," she said. "It just means people can come and be part of something bigger than themselves and to know that someone in the community cares about them, that they are valued."

The annual dinner also includes a gift room for families to pick out a present for children and youth.

This year the toy room was nearly bursting with toys donated through various campaigns this year, including Thunder Bay Wellness Centre toy mountain, the Bargain Shop, the Lakehead University

Thunderwolves teddy bear toss, and the Toys for Tots motorcycle ride. "As far as the toys it is more because we

had just under 10,000 toys from Toys R Us,"

Mitchell said. "That has really made a difference in the toys, but what we get from the other toy drives is really awesome as well, but this year we had a little bit of a boost."

But the highlight of the day of course was the traditional holiday meal, which included turkey, potatoes, vegetables, stuffing, and desert.

"Today we are expecting 425 people," Batting said. "That's a lot of turkeys, that's a lot of potatoes, that's a lot of vegetables. We estimate our contribution is about \$12,000 to \$15,000 that we put into this meal."

Valhalla Inn staff also volunteered their time to serve and clean up after the meal. And whether it was a server, someone just finishing up a delicious meal, or a child getting that special toy, everyone left with a smile.

"It's great to see so many people coming together to make an event like this happen," Mitchell said. "For many of the people who come, they would never have a reason to be in the Valhalla Ballroom other than this. So it just makes it so special for them."



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see so many people coming together to make an event like

"It's great to

this happen." LORI MITCHELL

TB**Life** 



December 20, 2018

Thursday,

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# Winter solstice has been celebrated for centuries



The winter solstice. Growing up I used to refer to it as the shortest day. Lots of people still do. I didn't know any better until it was pointed out to me that each day has the same number of hours in it. We know that winter solstice is the day with the least amount of daylight. There.

On this day and its opposite, the summer solstice, the sun appears to be standing still.

In fact, the word "solstice" roughly translates as "sun stands still". At this time of year, the sun appears to rise and set in the south since the world has teetered on its axis further away from Sol's light.

I looked it up: 'tis also known as The Longest Night, Midwinter, Yule, and a host of other monikers in the Northern hemisphere.

Of course, at this time of year many locations in the far north have had no sun since November whereas in the southern hemisphere, the sun has been

#### Merry Christmas from Casa Jones and family

shining all day long. A wee bit of Solstice esoterica for our Finnish neighbours: Helsinki gets five hours and forty-five minutes of sun on Solstice Day.

The feast we celebrate at this time of year has its origins in ancient times in Europe when the cattle and pigs would be slaughtered as that last meat until the new cows and pigs could be raised.

Dec. 25 was the date when in Roman, pre-Christian society, the Feast of Saturnalia was the Midwinter celebration, Saturn being the god of sgriculture. This date was the astronomical turnaround of the year and the hope that Ol' Sol will be replaced by New Sol and a good growing season.

In ancient Germanic and Celtic societies, there was a belief that on "The Longest Night", dark spirits roamed the earth and people were encouraged to hang out together, eating, drinking, telling stories, and generally keeping each other company so that the things that go bump in the night, wouldn't get them.

The ritual of burning a Yule log wasn't just to celebrate the return of the sun but also to help ward off evil.

The late, great Canadian author Robertson Davies collected and published a book of ghost stories that traditionally would be told at this time of year.

Oh joy.

However, we anticipate joy on Tuesday, Christmas Day, as we gather around the groaning board to partake of the feast with family and friends and, so I have been told, a couple of "waifs and strays".

This was a tradition my parents did when I was growing up.

Both my older brother and sister had friend who were boarding at school and couldn't afford to fly home, so, we invited them for the feast.

No reason not to continue the practice; and so fellow college and university students may be joining us for the meal. I mean it would cost an arm and a leg to fly home to New Delhi (as an example of one of the "waifs").

In the words of Julian of Norwich: "All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well..." We can only hope.

And I hope you all have a merry Holiday and best wishes for the New Year from me, my wife, Laura, my two urchins, Doug and Beth, our dog, Baxter, cat, Cleo, and several equines too numerous to name.

#### Holiday schedule changes for all areas and zones

Check your **2018 WASTE/RECYCLING COLLECTION SCHEDULE** and note changes for the week of December 23 & December 30.

	AREA	NEW DATES			
	Area 1 – <b>BLUE</b> Cards	Monday, December 24	Monday, December 31		
	Area 2 – ORANGE Cards	Thursday, December 27	Wednesday, January 2 Thursday, January 3		
*	Area 3 – <b>GREEN</b> Cards	Friday, December 28			
	Area 4 – <b>PINK</b> Cards	Saturday, December 29	Friday, January 4		

Check your Waste/ Recycling Collection Schedule for your recycling day. Garbage must be out for collection by 7 am. Questions? Call Infrastructure & Operations at 625-2195



## New funds for post-secondary education

The Canada Learning Bond program can help low-income families with up to \$2,000 towards postsecondary education **EDUCATION** 

#### By Michael Charlebols - TB Source

The federal government is suggest-ing a different way to give a Christmas gift this year.

On Friday, MP Patty Hajdu announced an initiative in partnership with a local counselling organization, which will help families get a headstart funding their children's academic future.

Thunder Bay Counselling, a local organization that assists clients with financial services, will be servicing low-income families by allowing them to register for a federal bond program.

"I wanted to make sure to plan for his future, and make sure we had something financially ready for him," said Shanna Anness.

Anness' son Liam paid more attention to colouring than the prospect of a federal savings bond on Friday, but Shanna believes he will see the value. Liam, and those like him, will be eligible to receive more than \$2,000 towards post-secondary education up until the age of 15.

It's one of the many ways children from low-income families can receive support for their post-secondary education, but Hajdu said it is being under-utilized.

"Many families don't know about this benefit," Hajdu said.

"Children should have that base of money that's available regardless of the family members ability to provide," Hajdu said. "Once that money is in the bank, there's more likelihood that the child will attend post-secondary education.'

Hajdu added that just 0.2 per cent of eligible families have accessed the service across Canada since it became available in 2004.

Hajdu herself was raising two boys as a single mother when she invested in a federal savings bond. She said some family members helped contribute to their education rather than give traditional Christmas gifts.

"It made a really big difference in how that fund grew," she said. "Money was available to be used in ways that addressed their needs as students."

Families who are eligible and interested can contact Thunder Bay Counselling at 807-684-1880, or visit their office at 544 Winnipeg Avenue to register.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: MP Patty Hajdu and Aiden Prairie discussing Fruit Loops at the Thunder Bay Counselling Centre.



### **TBLife Municipal workers give United Way \$134K**

#### THUNDER BAY By Leith Dunick – TB Source

City employees, together with Superior North EMS staff and Thunder Bay Public Library routinely hand the United Way its largest single annual campaign donation. They didn't disappoint in 2018.

Although their \$134,027 total was about \$19,000 lower than last year's contribution, the money will have a huge impact, said campaign chair Stephanie Noel on Wednesday, after receiving cheques from all three at a luncheon held at the Community Auditorium.

"We're extremely delighted with all the efforts the city and the Superior North EMS and the Public Library have done to contribute to this part of the campaign," Noel said.

"At this point we're at about 62 per cent of our goal, and we couldn't be

happier."

The United Way set a modest \$2.28 million target this year, more than \$300,000 less than their 2017 ask.

Noel acknowledged it's getting tougher and tougher to get people to give as much as they have in the past.

"I would say that there is always a challenge when you're holding campaigns for donations. Every single year there are always more demands for people's dollars, and all we can say as a group is that we're very grateful for every dollar that every citizen of Thunder Bay and this region gives to the United Way," Noel said.

Library workers gave \$3,369, while paramedics chipped in \$32,020 and city staff gave \$98,638.

The organization touches the lives of about one-in-three residents of the city, and Kelly Robertson, the municipality's campaign co-chair, said workers often



GIVING TIME: City, Superior North EMS and Public Library staff turn over \$134,000.

#### see the need first-hand.

"As city employees, many of us touch the lives of residents of Thunder Bay on

a day-to-day basis," Robertson said, noting paramedics often see the worst of the worst in the course of doing their

"They encounter people throughout the city who are not in a great situation and how they can benefit from the support of agencies funded by the United Way. For us in community services, a lot of our focus is on children and youth in the city and the funding that is provided to the agencies that benefit from the United Way funding can help our kids be the best that they can be, a very important cause.'

Robertson added that most people in Thunder Bay live with the possibility of one day needing services funded by the United Way.

"Something could happen to us in our lives where we might need to rely on the programs that are supported through United Way funding. You never take for granted your health and your economic situation. It's a very important cause," Robertson said.





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# IN THE bay arts entertainment culture

# **Real Northern Logger has been found**

#### THUNDER BAY By Doug Diaczuk - Tb Source

t was an intense beer pong match like no other and for good reason – there was a lot riding on this one beyond simple bragging rights.

But in the end, it was Carlie Pennock who beat fellow competitor, Patricia DePiero, to be named the first Sleeping Giant Brewing Company Real Northern Logger.

"I'm excited and I'm relieved that it's over," Pennock said.

The final round in a competition that began earlier this year to find the Real Northern Logger wrapped up in the Sleeping Giant Brewery Pop-up Shop at the Intercity Shopping Centre on Saturday.

Last weekend, five competitors faced off in an obstacle course at the Brewery, with Pennock and DePiero being named the two finalists.

Seeing the final competition was a mock beer pong match, which used cups of water and small sample cups of beer, received mixed emotions from the two competitors.

"I was pretty excited that it was beer bong," Pennock said. "And it went really well. I do have some experience."

"I was very upset, because I absolutely despise beer bong," DePiero



THE REAL NORTHERN LOGGER: Carlie Pennock was named the first Sleeping Giant Brewing Company Real Northern Logger.

said, adding that she was hoping for maybe something a little more trivia based.

"This week I was reading up on lumberjack trivia," she said. "Seriously, hours and hours of reading lumberjack stuff, for nothing."

In a best of three competition, Pennock took the first round quite handily. During the second round, DePiero kept it close and the two were down to three cups each, but Pennock was able to nail her shots, knocking DePiero out of the running.

"I'm trying to stop myself from crying," DePiero said after the match. Pennock walks away with the label as the Real Northern Logger, an engraved axe, and a year of free beer.

"I just tried to relax and do my best and it worked out for me," Pennock said. "For Halloween I made a Mr. Canoehead costume, and they came up with this contest, so I decided to do the contest and the rest is history." For Joanna Dowhos, Sleeping Giant Brewery Pop-up Shop manager, the first Real Northern Logger competition was a huge success.

"We had two great contestants that are really good at representing what it is to be the Northern Logger but Carlie came on through and won the pong challenge," she said.

The contest is named after Northern Logger, one of Sleeping Giant

Brewery's most popular craft beers.

"We really wanted to engage the community and give Northwestern Ontario an identity when it comes who the Northern Logger is," Dowhos said. "We really believe in supporting local and this is a really great event to bring people into that kind of environment."

Dowhos added the fact that the two final contestants were women shows that women not only enjoy craft beer just as much as men, but also breaks down stereotypes of what the Real Northern Logger should be.

"When they won the obstacle course, I said future is female," Dowhos said. "That is a great thing. It just shows you don't have to be a guy with a beard to be the Northern Logger."

"I'm not surprised at all," DePiero added. "I'm a strong, independent woman. I feel bad for the guys, but hashtag sorry, not sorry."

Pennock said she will be back next year to defend her title if she can. DePiero, who signed up to represent her local roller derby team, the Grizzly Madams, said she won't be back, but this probably won't be the last time you see the Grizzly Madams.

"They've seen all my tricks," she said. "I busted out my flag, my outfits, my red lips, which is my staple for roller derby. But maybe someone else from the Grizzly Madams will."



IN THE **bay** 

# Santa, can you save us from ourselves?

Dear Santa: I know many people would feel it inappropriate for a grown woman to write to you, but if Americans can believe in Donald Trump as a president, I sure as figgy pudding can believe in you.

Now I could start off with a list of my good qualities. For instance, I haven't peeked at a single present under the tree. Which is pretty good for someone who gets impatient peeling a Mandarin orange.

And I haven't complained – too much – about the weather. In fact, I can live with the cold.

Because with the limited space in my freezer, I'm usually driving around with a turkey in my backseat right about now.

But since you already know if my behaviour is deserving of your favour or not, I won't waste any more of your time. I will, however, remind you that adults deserve an extra boost



at this time of year.

You, my friend, may have a contingent of elves at your disposal, but most of us are going it alone.

Now, it's true I don't have kids. But I do have three dogs. And every night I re-assemble my living room after the pack has their day of play while I'm at work. I walk them regularly, pick up way more poop than should be possible from three bowels and vacuum enough hair to make another dog. So hear me out.

I don't want toys or money. I'm just looking for a few minor miracles.

I'd like people to start learning more and reacting less to what they see in the media. Perhaps then "fake news" will work its way out of our vernacular, along with the one who coined the term.

Speaking of which, I'd like news outlets to not cover every item that Trump tweets. He used them to guarantee reputable national coverage during his election campaign despite a lack of verifiable facts, or detailed plans. Now he uses them to distract us from his failures. So get the media to focus on actual news.

I'd also like this winter's new shows to be inspiring and demonstrate the good we can do together – instead of focusing on how to stop a zombie apocalypse. One takes a little effort. The other ignores reality entirely. Guess which is which.

Furthermore, I'd like reality shows to be limited to baking competitions and home renovations. Let's be done with anything that incorporates hottub dates, alliances, Housewives and the Kardashians.

I'd like television studios to make more comedies. We already know a thousand and one ways to kill someone.That's easy. Making people laugh? That takes talent. And we're going to need something to break the tension after *The Big Bang Theory* ends this spring.

Those are my wishes for 2019. A little something for everyone.

Although on a more personal note ... Thank you for bringing Nathan Fillion back to TV with that *Rookie* job. But I'd still prefer him in person for New Year's Eve.

And a bigger pooper-scooper.



LESS OF THEM: Fewer Kardashians on TV is high on Fiona Gardiner's Christmas wish list.

<b>CROSSWORD PUZZLE</b>			WORD SEARCH	Season's Greetings		
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	4	55	PREVIOUS SOLUTION: "Rudeness is the weak man's imitation of strength." – Eric Hoffer See page 9 for this week's answers			
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# **Stars streak halted at 11**

**SIJHL** By Matt Vis – TB Source

he Thunder Bay North Stars' 11-game winning streak has come to an end.

The Superior International Junior Hockey League leading North Stars fell 3-2 in a shootout to the Thief River Falls Norskies at the Fort William Gardens on Saturday night, suffering the team's third loss in their first 24 contests of the campaign.

Thunder Bay forced overtime with a Ryan Mignault equalizer with just 25 seconds remaining in regulation, before the visitors scored in both of their shootout attempts to come away with the victory. The North Stars accumulated 62 penalty minutes, though they held Thief River Falls to a single goal in nine power play opportunities.

While North Stars head coach Rob DeGagne said he was proud of his team's effort and ability to battle back, the constant parade to the penalty box left a sour taste in his mouth after the game.

The league should be ashamed of itself, DeGagne said, insisting local media should ask SIJHL commissioner Bryan Graham for an explanation.

"I'm 53 years old, I've never seen anything like that in my life," DeGagne said.

DeGagne and Graham engaged in a brief shouting match in the hallway following the game. One night after finding the back of the net eight times, the potent North Stars attack was stymied by Thief River Falls goaltender Bailey Schmitz,

who turned aside 58 of the 60 shots he faced, along with both of the shootout

"I'm 53 years old, I've never seen anything like that in my life." ROB DEGAGNE tries. Thunder Bay opened the scoring in the first period as Avery Siau, who was suspended for the first 18 games of the season, scored his first of the season, whacking home a rebound from the doorstep while the North Stars held a man advantage.

The Norskies answered back before the end of the period when Boe Bjorge grabbed a

puck in the offensive zone and beat North Stars goalie Dougie Newhouse between the wickets.

While the middle stanza ended without any tallies, the North Stars earned plenty of frequent flier miles making trips to the sin bin. In a nearly five-minute stretch, Thunder Bay accumulated 38 penalty minutes, including three 10-minute misconducts. That led to a bizarre scene where the home penalty box had five players seated, while the Thief River Falls box was empty.

While the Norskies power play couldn't get anything accomplished in that period, they did go ahead with a power-play tally early in the third. With just five seconds remaining in their man advantage, Brett Piper solved Newhouse for the visitors' first lead of the night.



ICE BATTLE: Red Lake's Blake Nelson (left) and Thunder Bay's Ryan Mignault tangle in the corner last Friday night.

That edge stood until the final minute of regulation, when a frantic Thunder Bay push ended with Mignault capitalizing from in close, leading to a jubilant eruption from the home side and disbelief from the road team.

After an uneventful overtime, Thief River Falls sealed the deal with shootout markers from Bjorge and Blake Nelson while Mignault and Keighan Gerrie came up empty for Thunder Bay.

**Star gazing**: The North Stars' previous loss was a 6-0 defeat to Dryden on Oct. 27...The league handed out suspensions to three North Stars players, with forward Jacob Anttonen sitting for eight games, forward Alex Erwin out for two games and defenceman Cole Turbide getting one game for their actions in Friday's contest against Thief River Falls.

SIJHL SCORING LEADERS						
Player	TM	G	Α	PTS		
Bryce Young	RLM	33	21	54		
Keighan Gerrie	TB	22	25	47		
Ryan Mignault	TB	24	19	43		
Joel Willan	TB	14	28	42		
Kyle Auger	TB	9	33	42		
Boe Bjorge	TRF	17	23	40		
Eric Stout	DRY	18	20	38		
Michael Di Lullo	RLM	16	21	37		
Brett Piper	TRF	13	23	36		
Alec Daman	TRF	18	15	33		
Spencer Milne	RLM	12	21	33		
Nick Lucas	FFL	15	17	32		
Trey Palermo	DRY	7	24	31		
Cameron Coutre	DRY	13	16	29		
Ethan Stuckless	RLM	7	22	29		

EITH DUNICK



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