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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2017

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

Canadian Publications Agreement No. 0662445 Vol.14 No. 5

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trailer-hitch case /3

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town touring new album /16

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Curler Al Hackner seeking
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Classes close

Labour dispute escalates at Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board /5



PICKETING PLAN: Catholic elementary teachers walked off the job at three schools on Tuesday, seeking input into internal hiring process.

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LOCAL NEWS

Community supports trailer-hitch victims

CRIME

By Doug Dlaczuk – TB Source

A woman who was the victim of a recent violent assault wiped away tears as strangers lined up to offer their support.

More than 100 people attended a solidarity walk Sunday evening that started at Paterson Park and marched through the downtown south core.

Walking in Solidarity with Indigenous Women was organized by students in the Aboriginal Community Advocacy Program at Confederation College just days ago.

Cinnamon Kelly, a student and organizer of the walk, said she and her fellow classmates were discussing the assault that took place Jan. 28 on Cameron Street where a 34-year-old indigenous woman was struck by a trailer hitch thrown from a passing car. The woman sustained severe injuries as a result and spent several days in the hospital.

“It affected all of us and concerns us,” Kelly said. “We felt like we should show support to her and her sister. We feel that it was a hate crime and we wanted to support her, to show her that we all care, coming together.”

Several people spoke during the solidarity walk, with some calling Thunder Bay a scary city to live in, where women cannot walk down the street without fear of being victims of



WELL-ATTENDED: About 100 people showed up for Sunday night's rally.

violence.

“This type of violence is unacceptable,” one of the speakers said. “Why does this violence continue? We shouldn't have to worry if our mothers, our daughters, our women are walking down the road and that they may end up in the hospital, or worse, that they don't come home at all.”

Kelly said she feels the incident that took place on Jan. 28 has largely been dismissed. However, seeing the amount of support for the victim who was at the solidarity walk, she is hopeful that the issue of violence

against women and indigenous women is getting the attention it deserves.

“It makes me feel proud, especially for this woman,” she said.

Sarah Moreth came out on the cold evening because she said it is important for the people of Thunder Bay to come together and speak out that violence is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

“It's one thing to make a post on Facebook, but I think it's important that we actually come out together, out in the cold, and show people that we are here in solidarity,” she said.

Hate-crime charge considered

POLICE

By Leith Dunick – TB Source

Thunder Bay Police say they've looked into whether or not a recent alleged assault involving a thrown trailer hitch qualifies as a hate crime.

Const. Julie Tilbury said it doesn't at the moment, but courts may decide otherwise should the suspect be found guilty.

Tilbury said police are fully aware of the impact the Jan. 28 incident has had on the community. On the date in question two Aboriginal women were walking on Cameron Street near Mackenzie Avenue, when a passenger in a passing vehicle hurled a rusty trailer hitch at them, striking one of them in the abdomen and landing her in hospital with serious injuries.



JULIE TILBURY

“At this point in time we are looking at the criminal code to see what provisions are there and where this incident fits within there,” the police spokeswoman said.

Brayden Bushy, 18, turned himself into police over the weekend and has since been charged with aggravated assault.

Two other males and a female traveling in the vehicle were interviewed by police, but were not charged and released. Bushby remains in custody.

Tilbury said at this point, the circumstances just don't merit a hate-crime charge, though many in the community, including Aboriginal leaders, have called for it. To lay a hate-crime charge, two sections of the Criminal Code of Canada must be consulted.

The first, Section 318 deals with

hate propaganda and advocating genocide. The second, Section 319, deals with public incitement of hatred or willful promotion of hatred.

The attorney general must be consulted in order to lay a charge under either section of the Act.

“There is a provision that once someone is found guilty of an offence, when they go to the sentencing phase that all the mitigating circumstances, the motivations behind it, if it is deemed to be motivated by hate, bias or prejudice, that it can come into play when sentencing is sent down,” Tilbury said.

“It's decided by all the information that is presented.”

Bushby, who appeared in court on Sunday, will remain behind bars until his next court date on Tuesday.

Tilbury said police are aware this is a problem in Thunder Bay and are encouraging other victims to come forward in order to give them a full scope of just how bad it is.

Weather Forecast

| THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Mainly sunny</p> <p>Probability of Precipitation: 20% HIGH -12 LOW -18</p> | <p>Snow</p> <p>Probability of Precipitation: 90% HIGH -4 LOW -8</p> | <p>A mix of sun and clouds</p> <p>Probability of Precipitation: 30% HIGH -4 LOW -8</p> |
| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY |
| <p>A few flurries</p> <p>Probability of Precipitation: 40% HIGH -1 LOW -4</p> | <p>A mix of sun and clouds</p> <p>Probability of Precipitation: 20% HIGH -3 LOW -9</p> | <p>Light snow</p> <p>Probability of Precipitation: 70% HIGH -2 LOW -12</p> |

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LOCAL NEWS

City to rein in speeds on Arundel Street

CITY HALL
By Jon Thompson - TB Source

Boulevard Lake's surroundings have exploded with life along the Arundel Street Active Living Corridor but motorists' high speeds are making city council call for calm.

Council voted to accept \$34,000 in new traffic calming measures for the Current River thoroughfare on Monday, including installing increasing signage, two radar speed display signs, and flexible bollards running in the east-bound lane parallel to those running westbound that were installed in 2015. Police presence in the area is also expected to increase.

Too fast

Speed radar along the wooded stretch found motorists were traveling an average of 70 kilometres per hour in some seasons, 20 kilometres over the speed limit. At that speed, there's a 90 per cent probability that any auto-pedestrian or auto-cyclist collision would be fatal.



SLOWING DOWN: Adam Krupper says a plan for Arundel Street speeds is tailored.

"I'm really happy," Current River Coun. Andrew Foulds said following council's decision to approve the

measures.

"The last few days, the number of phone calls and emails from constituents happy that this is being dealt with really gives me some confidence that council made the right decision this evening."

Foulds touted the calming tools as "relatively inexpensive," aruing they have already proven to be successful. Traffic passing the radar speed display signs on Dawson Road, for example, travels an average of five kilometres slower than it did before such signs were installed.

Costs the plan will add to the 2017 municipal budget include \$22,000 for the solar-powered radar speed display signs, \$6,750 in flexible tubular markers, and \$5,250 in sign installation and removal. Increased sweeping and snow-plowing for the multi-use lanes will also add costs.

Only Couns. Frank Pullia and Larry Hebert opposed the motion.

Pullia pointed out the Arundel Street bollards were installed as a pilot project, yet administration has never delivered a

report to show the tactic's effectiveness.

Instead, he said, city staff was asking council to approve more bollards in a move he foresees becoming a standard and unwelcome response to speed problems throughout the city.

"Some like them (bollards) but the great majority, including myself, don't. I believe they are a distraction," Pullia said.

"They create unnecessary problems. You think they provide safety for the people who are running and the people on their bicycle? They create all kinds of problems. I heard from citizens including some of the ward meetings who brought this up. They're challenges in the minds of many people. This council hasn't had the chance to assess and evaluate this pilot project that's now in front of us lumped together with a bunch of solutions."

Others, including Mayor Keith Hobbs, challenged administration's decision to hire Winnipeg consultants at a cost of \$30,000 for a project that will ultimately cost Thunder Bay only slightly more to

implement.

"I cannot believe we couldn't figure this out ourselves," Hobbs said. "This is stuff we're doing already. Bollards? Working with the Thunder Bay Police? Speed signs? We do this already."

Vital information

City mobility coordinator Adam Krupper said the report is intended as a professional development toolkit for the city's engineering department. While it has implications for other problem traffic areas, he said, it proposes a number of tailored solutions.

"Every other time someone is concerned about speed, we now have a way of dealing with it," Krupper said.

"There were concerns that this was going to be the cookie cutter approach: 'we're going to put bollards and speed radar signs every time there's a speed concern.' But there's over 25 different interventions to deal with speed and the data we're getting to show us how to use every one of these. What's appropriate for the context?"

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LOCAL NEWS

Catholic teachers begin rotating strikes

Lockout looms as educators fight to have say in board's internal staffing

LABOUR
By Nicole Dixon - TB Source

After mediated negotiations failed to resolve outstanding issues between the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board and the teachers association, teachers have begun rotating strikes Tuesday morning.

More than 60 elementary teachers braved the cold to protest outside the Catholic School Board office on Victoria Avenue, holding signs calling for fairness, transparency, and experience.

Ontario Elementary Catholic Teachers Association president Aldo Grillo said fairness, transparency and experience has been their stand since day one.

"In this job action our employer

continues to hold off in giving us and providing us the criteria we are looking for in terms of internal transfers," Grillo said.

"Perhaps, this should send a message to everybody within the Board, much less the entire public, it's the heart of winter here and these teachers are out picketing."

Grillo added that for the board to go to the media and say they've provided teachers with everything they've asked for during bargaining is not true.

"Our employer continues to hold off in giving us and providing us the criteria we are looking for."

ALDO GRILLO

In an open letter from Pino Tassone, director of education with the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board, which was submitted to tbnewswatch.com on Tuesday, the board has worked to resolve any outstanding issues with the teachers association.

"The key outstanding issue in these contract negotiations is the Board's ability to place existing teachers in vacant positions who have all of the reasonable experiences and relevant

criteria to help our students learn," Tassone wrote. "We have thoroughly discussed and agreed with the union's bargaining committee in a number of areas."

The three senior elementary schools, Bishop Gallagher, Bishop E. Q. Jennings and Pope John Paul II will remain open for parents who cannot find different arrangements, while admin staff will provide supervision.

Despite providing supervision, only 20 children were dropped off Tuesday morning.

"As far as I'm concerned that's our sign that the parent group is supporting us through our labour struggle, the fact that they aren't sending their children to school," Grillo said.

The OECTA took a soft approach with the rotating strike by targeting senior elementary schools, so for parents not sending their children to school at all gives the association a clear sense they are behind them 100 per cent.

OECTA officials offered to talk Monday evening, but the offer was turned down by the school board.



ON THE PICKET LINES: More than 60 elementary school teachers started the first day of rotating strikes at three Thunder Bay Catholic elementary schools.

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Editorial

EDITORIAL

Despicable actions

What are people thinking? A trailer hitch? Seriously?

Someone could have been killed. As it stands, a woman was seriously injured and had to spend time in the hospital.

If you haven't heard, on Jan. 28 two women, both Aboriginal, were walking down Cameron Street, minding their own business.

A vehicle drove past and a male passenger allegedly hurled a trailer hitch at them.

On its own, it's a disturbing act.

But it sounds like it's an escalation of a problem already plaguing the city. In the ensuing days reports of eggs and bottles being tossed at First Nations people in the area have begun to emerge.

Who does that?

In the latest case, an 18-year-old man was arrested and has been charged with aggravated assault.

He's lucky he's not facing attempted murder charges, and though Thunder Bay Police can't qualify the act as a hate crime, should the suspect, who turned himself in after police determined who they were looking for, be found guilty he could be sentenced as if it were a hate crime.

In a world where the likes of Breitbart's Steve Bannon are controlling the White House puppet strings, we need to fight back against this kind of behaviour and show the world we're better than the racist ideology that seems to be catching hold around the globe.

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Firefighter fundraiser

To the editor:

You're on a road trip when an oncoming car crosses into your lane without warning. You hear a crash, and your car shudders sideways into the ditch.

Then all is quiet except for the hiss of a punctured radiator.

In your foggy, time-warped trance, you hear sirens and see flashing lights. Your leg throbs. You taste blood from a cut on your lip. Doors slam, and footsteps approach. You sense movement nearby, and a voice asks your name.

Warm hands steady your head, then ease a supportive collar around your neck. Your vision is blurred, but you see dark shapes moving around outside your car.

The tension in your body eases as you realize that someone is helping you.

"Don't worry," the voice says. "We're going to make some noise, but we'll get you out of here."

You hear glass break, and metal groan. You feel strong hands strap something to your back and lift you onto a board. You can breathe better now with help from an oxygen mask. You feel like you are floating as shadowy figures carry you away from the wreck.

Then bright lights appear overhead announcing that you've been transferred to the care of paramedics headed for the hospital.

The shadowy figures disappear like a mirage. Who were they, and where did they come from?

They were probably volunteer first responders and firefighters. In small communities around Thunder Bay, volunteers respond day or night, dropping everything at the tone of a pager to come to your aid.

Vehicle extrication and medical first response are just some of the services they provide. They appear with specialized equipment and training, do their best to help, then vanish back into the camouflage of their daily lives.

Emergency situations transcend geographic boundaries.

When you dial 911, you expect a quick response, regardless of GPS coordinates. But fire protection and medical first response don't just happen in small communities.

They are provided through careful planning and sacrifice of local residents.

Training and emergency calls take a bite out of personal time, and expensive essential equipment is often procured through fundraising.

Please help by supporting a local volunteer fire department. Neebing Fire/Rescue Association is currently holding a raffle for 10 bush cords of firewood, cut, split and delivered

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



within a 100-kilometre radius of Neebing Municipal office. There is also a second prize, a 3,000-watt generator and a job-site radio and a third prize, a 16-inch chainsaw.

Tickets are available at Canadian Tire on Arthur Street, Northern Turf Equipment, Kubota Thunder Bay, NAPA Auto Parts at 660 Balmoral St., Neebing Municipal Office, AJ's Trading Post, Thunder Oak Cheese Farm, South Neebing Variety, Green Acre Variety, Rosslyn & Thunder Bay Home Hardware, Santorelli's Truck Stop and Crystal Beach Variety.

Clara Butikofer,
President,
Neebing Fire Rescue Association

Allow voter reform

To the editor:

I did not vote in the last federal election, an election process that is flawed on several levels.

You cannot vote for the prime minister, the winner in each election does not have to win with a majority, nor do the other votes count.

A simple solution would be to get rid of the dictatorial powers of the prime minister, elect three people to the federal riding, each with a weighted vote based on their percentage vote count, and allow each and every vote to be free.

It was brought to my attention that Switzerland has a better political system, whereby the prime minister only gets one vote on council, much like our municipal system, although even our municipal system could be improved as ward councillors cannot be elected by the majority of the citizens.

Politics, by its nature seems flawed. We have to select between right and left, between one color of the truth or another, when we all know that The Truth is what it is, it is not a party, it is not a color of the rainbow.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, given the choice to select a better system that is democratic, has chosen instead to preserve his dictatorial powers, his rainbow of truths and his party over the wishes of the people of Canada.

Caesar J. B. Squitti,
Thunder Bay

Opioid use not a surprise

To the editor:

The article reported that the city's chief medical officer says that the high rate of opioid use results from complicated reasons. I tried to find out why this was so and found a few interesting facts.

It is understood that the medical profession uses opioids for various therapies. As well though, the United

Nations and CIA websites publicly report that usage "from greater availability, higher purity and cheaper price" of illicit opioids.

ABC News and 60 Minutes claims Afghanistan is now the world's top producer of opium, having increased 2,000 per cent since 2001 and now has 87 per cent of the heroin market, something Afghanistan never exported before 2001.

The United Nations (UNDOC) reports that in 2009 the value of the global opium market was US\$68 billion, US\$60 billion of that coming from Afghanistan alone. (The Afghan crop is even larger for 2016.)

In the case of Thunder Bay being a border town, a port city, a transportation hub for the centre of Canada, a distribution hub for the North and our underworld connections going back to Prohibition days (1920 to 1933), when Canadian liquor was smuggled south, must surely contribute to the problem.

Add to this a Canadian military and civilian presence in Afghanistan since 2001 must surely be a factor in this problem.

Where there are drugs, there are money, gangs, murders and the rest.

Viewed as whole, this must surely explain some of our city's notoriety for its issues.

Mike Barbeau
Nolalu

Perspective

Wish you were here

People of Thunder Bay must respond to racist attitudes

OPINION
By J.R. Shermack
Special to TB Source

Many people I meet these days tell me how happy they are to be living in Canada.

With all the chaos and turmoil in the United States, they are especially thankful to be here.

I agree with them and in fact I've always felt that way, but lately, it's starting to feel like a false sense of security.

When I was growing up, children were free to explore the back yards, the back sheds and the back lanes of Westfort.

I'm sure there are kids still doing just that today, laughing and running in neighborhoods all over the world.

Some still play, carefree and happy as they use their imagination to create childhood adventures in suburban settings.

But elsewhere, children play among the ruins of shattered neighbourhoods in an atmosphere of anger, hate, death and destruction.

Their playground is one of horror beyond the imagination of most Canadians and their only hope is the kindness of faraway strangers.

Canada provided sanctuaries for thousands of refugees earlier this year with a gesture of friendship and compassion in a troubled world.

The generosity of local citizens was sincere and heartfelt as Thunder Bay welcomed several families from war-torn countries.

They arrived with just the clothes

on their backs, but parents gladly made that sacrifice to keep their children safe.

All Canadians should take great pride in this humanitarian accomplishment – that's the Canada everybody is so happy about.

We claim to be different from and we distance ourselves from the racist policies in the U.S., a mere 30 minutes away.

But we recently discovered that it takes more than an international border to contain hate and violence.

When a Canadian gunman burst into a Mosque in Quebec City murdering six innocent people, we were all caught by surprise.

Canadians were outraged by the level of hatred and violence in the brutal attack that orphaned seventeen children.

It's time we took our heads out of the sand – we are all familiar with racism and discrimination, the home-grown Canadian version.

This shooting was very troubling, especially in the wake of anti-refugee and anti-Muslim sentiments south of the border.

But we are kidding ourselves if we try to blame this on our American neighbours.

Locally, a large crowd of supporters gathered at the Thunder Bay Masjid in a display of fellowship and unity for all Canadians.

As I listened to the radio the next morning it was comforting to hear the words of so many compassionate fellow citizens.

Maybe Canada still has safe, free and friendly neighborhoods, I thought to myself – that is, until I heard the very next story.

A local woman was struck and seriously injured by a trailer hitch thrown from a moving vehicle on a Thunder Bay street.

It was being investigated as a hate crime and demonstrated clearly that our community is full of anger, violence and racism.

When we hear about desperate families in war zones trying to keep their families alive, do we really care?

Saying, "Everything is fine, wish you were here," is not helpful and in our case, it's not exactly true.

When we see and hear racism in our own community what are we prepared to do, how Canadian are we?

People who would never describe themselves as racists are making racist comments and taking racist actions every day in our city.

What are we prepared to do about that, or do we even care?

Remember that famous, and haunting quote, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good people do nothing."

Good people of Thunder Bay, please respond.

"When we hear about desperate families in war zones trying to keep their families alive, do we really care?"

FOWL PLAY



FOR THE BIRDS: Grade 1 student Benjamin Young takes part in crazy hat day last Friday at Agnew H. Johnston Public School, during an afternoon assembly.

LEITH DUNICK

This week in history:

CN Hotel

In the days before the Trans-Canada Highway, visitors to the Lakehead arrived by boat or train. Many hotels were built along Water and Cumberland Streets to accommodate travellers like the Canadian Northern Hotel built before 1902. It was known for its excellent bar and as a venue for local bands, a reputation it held until it was torn down in the early 1970s as part of the city's urban renewal.



THUNDER BAY
MUSEUM

HOW TO WRITE 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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LOCAL NEWS

Turn-in Thursdays

POLICE

By Nicole Dixon - TB Source

A day after its official launch, Wanted Wednesdays has inspired some Thunder Bay residents to come forward.

Photographs of the first four individuals wanted on outstanding bench warrants were published Wednesday on the Thunder Bay Police Service's Wanted Wednesday homepage. One day later some of the feature's subjects have turned themselves in.

"We want people to turn themselves in, ideally, we are looking to the community for their support," said Thunder Bay Police Sgt. Greg Stein.

"We have had some information come in via Crime Stoppers and other avenues, so far, it's looking like this can be a success."

Nobody has come forward off the list posted Wednesday, but there have been a few people who have turned themselves in to avoid having a photo posted online.

The police have had several tips come in since Wednesday, but they still have new warrants coming in every day.



WORKING WELL: Thunder Bay Police Sgt. Greg Stein says their Wanted Wednesday program has already convinced people with outstanding warrants to surrender.

"I just picked up five more warrants from my bucket and it's an ongoing process," Stein said.

"It's a resource that we have tapped into before, so we are hopeful the community as a partner can help us bring these people to justice and get some closure for the victims."

Stein hopes to see the photos of

the individuals will be turned to silhouettes before the next set are put online.

"Anytime you undertake a venture like this it's always rewarding to see there are some successes," he said.

"We are essentially one day into it and we've had people turn themselves in, so I think we can call it a success."

Capay trial postponed

COURT

By Doug Dlaczuk - TB Source

The trial of Adam Capay has been delayed again to allow more time for the completion of a psychiatric assessment.

Following a status hearing on Capay's most recent psychiatric evaluation last Tuesday, Justice Danial Newton has postponed the trial, originally scheduled for March 20 in order to allow more time for the evaluation to be completed.

Capay, who is facing a first-degree murder charge in connection with the

murder of 35-year-old Sherman Quisses, has been behind bars for the last five years.

In 2015, Capay underwent a psychiatric evaluation to determine if he was mentally fit to stand trial.

Capay, now 24 years old, has spent the last four years in solitary confinement at the Thunder Bay District Jail.

In November 2016, Capay's attorney requested his client undergo a new psychiatric evaluation to determine if he is fit to stand trial. A new trial date has not been set but a case management conference will be held on Feb. 22.



DELAYED AGAIN: Adam Capay has been behind bars for more than four years.



NOTICE

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Friday, February 17, 2017

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February 20, 2017**

LOCAL NEWS

Working to bridge the racial divide

THUNDER BAY
By Doug Dlaczuk - TB Source

As a way of addressing the growing problem of racism in Thunder Bay, organizers of a unique public discussion want to bridge the racial divide through honesty and conversation.

On Monday, more than 75 people attended a discussion at Lakehead University, Conversations Across the Racial Divide.

The event was hosted by a variety of different organizations, including Diversity Thunder Bay, the Fort William First Nation, Lakehead University's Office of Aboriginal Initiative, Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund, the city of Thunder Bay's Anti-Racism and Respect Committee, Racialized Young Professionals, and Youth Social Infrastructure Collaborative.

"You can't just have a bylaw or a policy that says we're just not going to

have racism anymore, that doesn't work, that's not possible," said Rebecca Johnson, co-chair of Diversity Thunder Bay. "What we can do is each individual, sitting down and having conversations at the community level, one to one, by changing people's attitudes and making them look at racism and how to respect each other."

The session was facilitated by Aftab Erfan, a conflict resolution specialist from Vancouver. Erfan said the purpose of the event was to bring together voices that don't usually speak to one another.

"We know in Thunder Bay, and actually all through North America and the world, there's this division that is happening between people who are different from each other racially, culturally, around religious lines, so the idea of this dialogue is the more they don't talk to each other the bigger the gaps will be between them and the bigger between the possibility of not understanding each

other, of violence, of all the bad things that can happen," she said.

Erfan utilized a unique method for discussions known as deep democracy, which was created in the aftermath of apartheid in South Africa.

"We show our agreement or disagreement by walking through the space and as a result, we get a quick sense of what the views are, what are the differences, and what people are really thinking and feeling and we will have a deeper conversation," she said.

During the session Monday afternoon, much of the crowd moved in the same direction, agreeing with others on issues relating to cultural diversity, racism, respect, and violence.

Johnson acknowledges that racism is a growing issue in Thunder Bay and she added that creating community dialogues is the best way to address it and move toward finding solutions.

"That is how it's done, one to one, it



DOUG DLACZUK

DEEP DEMOCRACY: Aftab Erfan (right), listens to a participant during public discussion.

takes a lot longer, but at the same point in time, it's a social attitude, it's a social feeling about things," she said.

Erfan agreed that the session on Monday is the first step in a multi-step process towards creating change in any community.

"I think this is one piece of so many other things that need to happen," she said. "There are a whole number of initiatives that are trying to do things around racism. The idea with this one, this is where the voices of people come in contact with each other."

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TREMENDOUS TOTAL: Jody Nesti (from left), Susan Childs and Ron Hell announce the total raised during this the 21st Bearskin Airlines Hope Classic.

Hope Classic hits milestone

Women-only curling event raises \$154,000, tops \$3 million over 21 years

CURLING
 By Doug Dlaczuk - TB Source

A popular bonspiel that raises money in the fight against breast cancer has reason to celebrate this year, as donations and pledges have pushed the total to new heights.

The Bearskin Airlines Hope Classic celebrated its 21st year, which to date has raised more than \$3 million to fight breast cancer.

"I never thought we would meet three million dollars," said Susan Childs, chair of the Bearskin Airlines Hope Classic Committee. "Who would have thought 21 years ago when we started this. We were going to do it for one year, we wanted to raise \$5,000 for the breast cancer support group. The first year we did it, we raised \$39,000 and we haven't looked back. It's wonderful."

This year, the Hope Classic raised \$154,000, down slightly from last year's \$180,000. But Childs said any money raised goes a long way towards helping women in Northern Ontario affected by breast cancer.

Take nothing for granted

"We never know what to expect," she said. "Our goal is, if we have 250 curlers, we know we will make \$25,000 because each curler has to make a \$100 pledge. We never know how it's going to be."

The Hope Classic was started in 1997 by Linda Buchan, who was undergoing breast cancer treatment, and Barb Crooks, a breast

cancer survivor. All the money raised by the annual bonspiel stays in the region.

Childs said every year she is blown away by how phenomenal the atmosphere is, how much fun everyone has, and the amount of pledges and donations the Hope Classic receives.

"I don't want to call it a party atmosphere, but there is so much energy and enthusiasm in the room," she said. "There is no competitiveness. It's not about the curling. It's about having fun and raising money for this event."

And that is why people keep coming out and keep making pledges. While the Hope Classic always has its fair share of laughs, goofy costumes, and good times, it's still about fighting a terrible disease.

"Cancer has touched everybody," Childs said. "Whether it's a co-worker, a family member, a friend. There is nobody that has not been touched by cancer and these women feel so strongly about raising money and trying to find a cure."

Linda Buchan lost her battle with cancer in Dec. 2011 and the organizing committee decided to carry on what she had started. Each year, one participant is honoured with the Spirit of Linda Lou Award, which is given to someone who demonstrates some of Linda Buchan's traits and spirit.

This year, that honour went to Liz Manahan, who was part of the first organizing committee for the Hope Classic 21 years ago.

"I was on the very first committee with Linda Buchan," she said. "She was just an incredible person and she made all of us feel the passion that she felt. She made all of us feel how important it was. I just can't say enough. If I thought for a minute that I had any of her traits, even a little bit, it's an honour. It's incredible, she is the most incredible person I have ever met."

Still going strong

Manahan said the first committee was full of dedicated and driven women who wanted to help those affected by breast cancer. She said the committee today is still just as dedicated and she is pleased to see younger women becoming involved as well.

"It's always been very rewarding to those who work on it, to see the people who want to keep doing it," she said. "It becomes, not an obsession, but a passion that these women feel. I think they feel it from the committee, they feel it from the cause, it's a terrific cause and it's easy to work for it and everybody wants to work for it."

Part of that passion came from Linda herself, who worked tirelessly to make the Hope Classic into the successful annual fundraiser it is today.

"I don't think anyone could come near to what she was actually like, the passion and the initiative," Manahan said. "Linda made it happen. She didn't just say we should do this. She made it happen."

DOUG DLACZUK

A wintry wilderness walk on water



FRED JONES
RURAL ROOTS

We followed the path established by Laura and me on our several snowshoe tromps at least as far as the corner of the Pond Paddock fence.

The dogs, used to leading the charge, had turned the corner and were half-way down the lane to where the bush ends and you come to the western edge of the pond.

Swamp stomp

Instead, I headed straight through the tag alders and onto the upper part of swamp probably where the beaver pond had originated before growing in.

The land was dotted with hillocks and clumps of rushes and reeds, almost impossible to walk upon in summer but now easy to negotiate.

The dogs were thrilled as they ran past me sniffing this new territory occasionally sinking in the snow but quickly recovering as they forged on ahead.

Soon we found one of the many beaver canals now frozen, covered in ice and

snow that snake their way from the main pond to the bush.

The beavers make these inroads as it were, to food sources in the woods surrounding the pond.

The dogs were happy because now they had a clear path, hillock-free upon which to run as we threaded our way towards the pond.

We reached the edge of the pond and as the dogs dashed across the frozen surface, heading towards the beaver lodge, I stood at the edge and looked around.

What a perspective! You spend most of your time viewing the pond and the beaver house from the one open area accessible by land down the laneway. Now I could look all around and see far more closely the eastern pond edge.

It had been many years since I stood on the pond ice. Back then several dead trees were poking their trunks up through the ice, trees that had been there since the beaver laid siege and flooded

the area who knows how many years before we landed here.

I used to enjoy walking down the lane to the western edge of the pond to see if there were any beaver residents plying the pond waters and watch redwing blackbirds racing to and fro and landing on top of bulrushes or perching in the branches of these dead spruce sentinels.

Now there are no more trees poking out of the water. All of them have fallen into the pond.

It was my turn to cross the ice. The beaver lodge has been there for decades and this winter it is inhabited as evidenced by the tops of branches – beaver food – sticking out of the ice near the lodge.

Further trek

Dogs and I then headed up and over the dam and down to tread along more beaver canals until we reached the even larger, lower pond.

But this year a serious breach had

occurred in the lower dam and almost all of the water had drained out. The beaver had not repaired this much older dam. I decided not to traverse that stretch of frozen water but to cut across and up into the stand of red pine that has a riding trail wandering through it.

For the rest of the snowshoe walk I stuck to the trail Laura and I had made the week previously. I had seen lots of deer, rabbit, fox, and squirrel tracks in the snow.

But now I saw for the first time since Laura and I began our treks, the small, unmistakable single-line tracks of a ruffed grouse whose imprints resemble tiny snowshoes.

'Twas a good walk and it fulfilled its mission of tiring the dogs who flaked out once we re-entered Casa Jones, them to chew bits of snow and ice from their paws and me to indulge in a hot chocolate and to realize just how lucky we are to live where we do.

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ON HEALTH

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Rob, our laser therapist, has been trained to treat concussions for over a year now and is currently working with patients with concussions. Not surprisingly, when these people suffered their concussion injury, they also sustained other injuries to their neck, shoulder and upper back. They are responding better now. They had been told to "wait and see". This approach, which is very conservative, does not, in many cases, help the individual to improve and get better.

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This is not a scientific article meant for scholars. We have the research to show them if they are interested. Your family doctor and most therapists won't know much or anything about laser therapy for concussions unless they are constantly reviewing the current literature.

If you want to learn more, there are avenues you can take. My recommendation would be to come to the upcoming Laser Seminar on February 15th. The next best would be to call and schedule a free consultation with Rob to see how you could benefit from laser therapy for concussions, sports injuries, arthritis, quitting smoking or other conditions. The next, would be to go to our web site and do some reading about laser therapy. We have a lot of information to share with you.

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Mindfulness is a simple and effective way to combat stress. You can easily include the practice in your daily routine by simply paying attention to your breathing, tuning into your body's physical sensations and taking a few minutes for meditation.

Being more mindful creates many positive effects directly on the immune system, including reducing inflammation symptoms and stress hormones. It also improves activity in the areas of the brain responsible for coordinating the immune system. Incorporating mindfulness into your lifestyle has the added benefit of minimizing the occurrence, length and severity of the common cold and flu.

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Ice racing returns to Lake Superior

AUTO RACING

By Doug Diaczuk - TB Source

Mackenzie Holmwood wasn't sure if his car was going to run on Sunday morning, but once he got it started, hit the ice, there was no stopping him.

"I haven't been in the car yet this year," Holmwood said. "It wasn't really running very good this morning during practice and I wasn't sure it was going to run at all. But it just kind of seemed to burn the demons out and finish the race."

On Sunday, Holmwood was one of more than 18 drivers competing in the first race of the Thunder Bay Autosports Club ice racing season, which got off to a late start due to some unusually warm January weather.

"Unfortunately, during the month of January and a little bit of December, mother nature wasn't as kind as we would have liked," said Gary Adomko, president of the Thunder Bay Autosports Club. "We had freezing rain conditions that caused snow mounds on the track. When we went to plough the track last weekend, we had a lot of unevenness."

The racing season was originally scheduled to start Jan. 22, but with the warm weather wreaking havoc with the track, it was postponed for two weeks.

Normally the season includes 10 weekends of racing at Mission Bay, but Adomko said this season it will have to be shortened to seven weekends, with a double weekend scheduled for March.

"The long term forecast, we look at that, and we are going until the end of February with good cold temperatures



KEEP YOUR MOTOR RUNNING: Mackenzie Holmwood battles (left) for top spot during the studded class race last Sunday at Mission Bay. He finished his first race in first place.

and I think we should be able to finish off the season into the second weekend in March," Adomko said.

During his first race of the season, Holmwood was close behind the lead car in the studded tire class. In second place throughout the entire race with snow constantly blinding his vision, he finally made his move on the last lap.

"I didn't think I was going to make it around him," he said. "The car seems to have longer legs when I get it out there so I managed to keep an eye on him on

the back corners, catch him, and just make a good pass."

Holmwood finished his first race in first place, which is a good start to the season, especially since he wasn't sure he was even going to get a chance to race this year.

"I didn't think it was going to happen at all," he said. "It was cancelled and then it got really warm. I just figured they would kibosh the whole season, but they decided to try it anyway."

For insurance purposes, at least 16

inches of ice at Mission Bay is required to race. According to Adomko, it was actually the unexpected rain in January that saved the season.

"We had the warm spell the last couple of weeks and the rain actually helped us correct the situation," he said.

Melissa Lamothe was participating in her very first ice racing season. After several practice runs on the track, she had a few slippery moments.

"I've been out three times so far," she said. "The first two were okay, but the

third I ended up in the snowbank. But that's okay. That's part of the sport."

For Lamothe, the decision to take up the sport of ice racing came after seeing the cars racing on the dirt track at Mosquito Raceway, as well as wanting something to do in the winter.

"It does sound a little crazy, but we're Canadian and we only have four months of the year that are summer, so you have to do something in the winter, too," she said. "I think it's a lot of fun. It's definitely something different to do with your winter and everyone is very welcoming. We've had a great time so far and I can see us doing this for a long time."

Adomko said the sport, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, is gaining popularity, with more cars coming out each year.

"Thunder Bay has always been strong on the sport and we're hoping for many more years to have the sport around," he said. "My grandchildren are actually coming up and I'm probably going to be putting one of those guys in the cars shortly."

When it comes to racing on ice, with studded tires or just bare rubber, there are some simple strategies that the drivers employ.

"Never brake hard," Lamothe said. "Everyone here will say it's about car control. So know your car, know where you're going, and hope for the best."

For Holmwood, the strategy is similar, just a little more simple.

"No brakes is good," he said. "And a heavy right foot and a little back bone maybe."

DOUG DIACZUK



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| 4. Bank | 17. CST Consulting Inc. | 30. Bling by Carol | 46. Josh's Botanical Creations |
| 5. Scentsy | 18. Country Goodness | 31. How Sweet it is platters | 47. Just the 2 of Us |
| 6. HC Creations Jewelry | 19. Wooden Roses | 32. Wood Bowl | 48. TB Olive Oil (3) |
| 7. Tiber River at Home | 20. Nerium | 33. Pure Romance | 49. Thirty-One Gifts |
| 8. Rodan & Fields | 21. JK Apparel | 34. Lowe Farm | 50. Young Living Oils |
| 9. Pampered Chef | 22. Exchange for Crafts | 35. Tupperware | 51. Yardzee |
| 10. Toad Emporium | 23. TB Olive Oil (1) | 36. TB Olive Oil (2) | 52. Lipsense |
| 11. Rocksvilla Amethyst | 24. do Terra | 37. Avante | 53. Melodies in Motion |
| 12. Novi's Bread & Sweets | 25. Sunset Gourmet/Perogies | 38. Chocolate Truffle | |
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FRANK ZANATTA, CFP
THE MONEY COACH

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IN THE bay

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DOING IT THEIR WAY: Ian Thornley (second from right) and Big Wreck will be returning to Thunder Bay to play the Rockhouse on Feb. 14.

Big Wreck on Grace Street

MUSIC
By Doug Dlaczuk - TB Source

Ian Thornley has been making music for more than 24 years and it has become the only life he knows. But when he first started and made it big with the band, Big Wreck, that life felt a little more constrained than it does now.

"It felt like I was trying to fit myself into a suit that was fitted for someone else," he said in an interview with the Thunder Bay Source.

Big Wreck and front man, Thornley, are returning to the stage this winter on a North American tour in support of their latest album, *Grace Street*. The 26-date tour will see them back in Thunder Bay performing at the Rockhouse on Feb. 14.

Big Wreck broke onto the Canadian music charts with 1997's *In Loving Memory Of*. . . and hits like *Blown Wide Open*, *That Song*, and *The Oaf*.

After a second release in 2001, the band disbanded, with Thornley releasing several albums with the eponymous band, Thornley. In 2010, Big Wreck reunited and released

two more albums, *Albatross* and *Ghosts*.

Thornley said returning to Big Wreck after a long hiatus was like a return to the past and a rebirth for the band at the same time.

"The way we are approaching this now is a lot different than it was back then," he said. "It's a lot more optimistic, it's a lot more open, there's a lot more communication, the vibe is better and I think by proxy the music gets better."

Big Wreck's latest album, *Grace Street*, which was released on Feb. 3, utilizes an eclectic mix of genres, styles, and eras.

"I think each song is it's own journey on this record," Thornley said. "More so than anything I've done previously. That was by design. We wanted every song to feel completely different."

While *Grace Street* includes big old guitars and big fat drums, reminiscent of previous Big Wreck albums, producer Garth Richardson brought forward new ideas that Thornley said he never considered, including the use of wine glasses.

"I'm sure you could find a sample of it somewhere, but actually doing it and doing it

for real, not only was it fun and interesting, but it adds to the tone of the record and adds to the overall sonic way it comes off," he said. "It feels real. It feels like human beings making music."

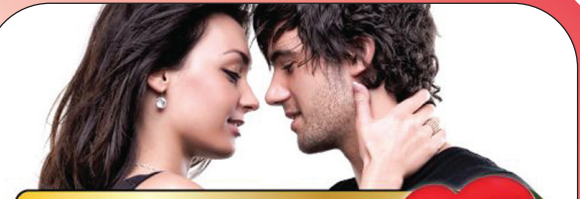
Fans who have followed Big Wreck from the late 90's and stayed with them during the reunion in 2010, will be treated to a mix of old and new on this upcoming tour.

"I think we struck a happy medium with new and older stuff," Thornley said. "If people have been to a show before, it will be much like it was before, but with new music."

For Thornley, returning to the recording studio and to the stage is not like it was in the past. He's living his life his way, the only life he knows.

"We're doing it our way and not trying to fit it into something and not trying to make it sound like whatever was big last week," he said. "Just having a sense of artistic freedom. I think I value that a lot more now than I did then."

To read the full interview, visit www.tbnewswatch.com.



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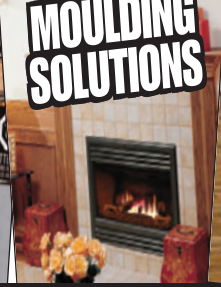
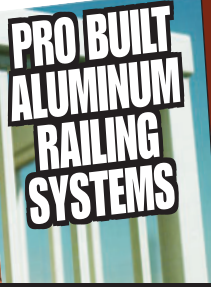
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IN THE bay

Is an Oscar cancellation in the cards?

Trump's policies will politicize the Academy Awards



with FIONA GARDINER

The Academy Awards are just weeks away. Meanwhile, in the wake of Donald Trump's travel ban, some Hollywood insiders are calling to cancel what could become the most political awards show ever. Period.

Of course, cancelling doesn't seem likely.

Despite the fact awards shows ratings drop every year, would America's most narcissistic population actually forego a televised opportunity to pat themselves on their collective backs just to prove a political point?

And one the general public isn't

completely sure they deserve to have?

There's a growing animosity toward superstars who force their liberal beliefs on average Americans. People are tired of being lectured by celebrities. Trump's policies don't apply to them because their jobs aren't being downsized or shipped across the border. Hollywood is a far cry from the real world. So why should their

opinions matter?

However, Trump's executive orders are affecting the Oscars directly.

The travel ban – "It's not a ban ... it's a vetting system" – means neither Oscar-nominated Iranian director Asghar Farhadi nor the Syrian volunteer rescue workers who are the subject of a nominated documentary will be able to attend.

Ironically, despite their claims that Syrian and Iranian "bad dudes" must be kept out, the White House has offered waivers for these nominated individuals to attend the ceremonies.

Farhadi has refused the potential offer, saying the conditions of the exemption are "unacceptable."

And what of the other members of the film and television industries?

If they're already in the U.S. with green cards, they might not be able to

travel for work without fearing they cannot return to the U.S. afterward.

So their livelihood is certainly affected.

Then there are those who feel that with fame, comes responsibility. The media loves to publicize celebrities' political comments.

And if those match the growing public consensus, then why not use this well-spoken, well-oiled media machine against Big Brother?

So Leonardo DiCaprio is hailed by eco-groups for talking about the climate crisis during last year's Oscars. And Susan Sarandon is a spokesperson for civil liberties after condemning the death penalty during her *Dead Man Walking* acceptance speech.

Of course, some simply feel political rhetoric have no place at the Academy Awards. This is a feel-good night to

celebrate excellence in film, not discuss the State of the Union.

But besides entertainment, isn't the point of movies to educate, share opinions, and encourage change? Films are outlets for the social and political opinions of their writers, producers, and yes, performers.

According to *Scandal's* Kerry Washington, "actors are activists no matter what, because (they) embody the worth and humanity of all people." (There's that narcissism again.)

So Hollywood will likely condemn Trump's ban during the Oscars, causing some to tune in, others to tune out. The irony is that the original movie studio system was built by mostly Jewish men whose families fled persecution in Europe. And without those refugees and the industry they built, Donald would be just another rich guy in a suit.

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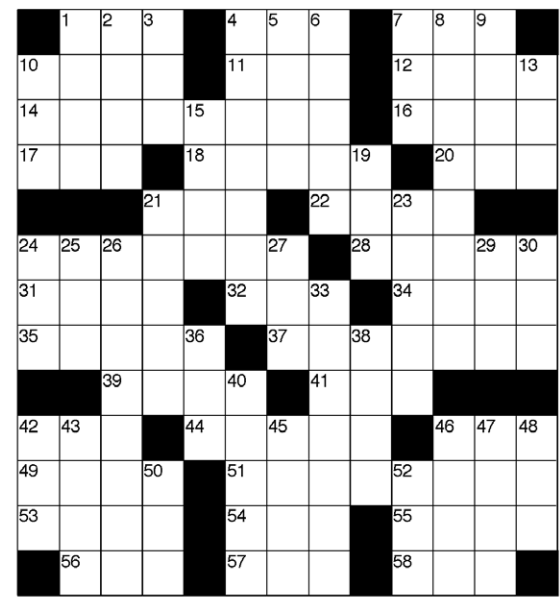
- ACROSS**
- Clear
 - Outer (pref.)
 - Tongue-clicking sound
 - "Lorna Doone" character
 - Line
 - Mayan year
 - Mast (2 words)
 - Wrong
 - Mineral (suf.)
 - Fallow deer
 - Than (Ger.)
 - Frost
 - People (pref.)
 - Remark
 - Pardon (Lat.)
 - Concert halls
 - Head covering
 - Arabian judge
 - Skin disease
 - Cougar
 - Ship's wheel
 - Truth: Chin.
 - Luzon people
 - Sully

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| BOY | SCAN | GABI |
| APA | HONE | AMID |
| FAL | SETTO | NAGA |
| THEME | NAG | |
| | EPIC | MANET |
| MEOW | RANI | ADA |
| ELA | CANOE | COO |
| ABS | OSTE | ALMS |
| DATER | OLIG | |
| | AAA | CANIS |
| REND | BODHG | AYA |
| ELSE | ACRO | GAB |
| ELAM | SKYR | ARA |

- DOWN**
- Tumult
 - Scientific name (suf.)
 - Banned pesticide
 - Eating away
 - Illness
 - Shak.
 - contraction
 - Article
 - Grassland
 - Cabbage
 - Sluggard's stat
 - Bureau of Labor Statistics

- (abbr.) fish
- Walk
 - All-terrain vehicle (abbr.)
 - Appearance
 - Hundred (pref.)
 - With (pref.)
 - Harem room
 - Mossbunker
 - Faucet
 - Cyprinoid fish
 - Broadcast
 - Engraver's punch
 - Ancient times
 - Votes
 - Phrygian king
 - Bother
 - Forbidden
 - Red pine
 - Cassava
 - Sister of Ares
 - Succor
 - Cutting tool
 - Public vehicle



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WORD SEARCH

N Q T P E R P E T R A T O R L
 Q G Z E G N I K C I L C I E Z
 I D S E N S J W A L I M O S Z
 E G L U B T N D E E A A I K Y
 Y D U A G G S E R S S N D N O
 P P N R D N R T V E D Y I A L
 U M D D I I S A S E I Q R Y A
 Y O U E P P E G F C S R G K O
 B D E S I A C E C P E K E S D
 E E S O S C N X L R I R C E L
 L L E N N S A X U S U N S A K
 T B M Z I E U D J E I S T J J
 S A I B L A N D F Z A A T A I
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|----------|----------|--------------|-------------|
| Aisle | Eerie | Indefensible | Perpetrator |
| Alias | Endure | Inspid | React |
| Bland | Escaping | Jacks | Riles |
| Bulge | Eureka | Laser | Rueful |
| Cabled | Evens | Limes | Serum |
| Catnip | Fatal | Model | Spire |
| Classed | Gated | Nestle | Tents |
| Clicking | Gaudy | Nosed | Undue |
| Crusty | Grains | Nuances | Yanks |
| Dirge | Havoc | Oases | Zincs |

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 NO VXRYQ XHYQ FNC."
 - CXXQNMF VQXHYQJ

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| | 7 | | | 5 | 1 | | | |
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| 8 | 5 | | 9 | | | | | 6 |
| 6 | 9 | | 1 | | | 8 | | 5 |
| | | 1 | 5 | | | | | |
| | | 5 | 3 | 9 | | 1 | 4 | |

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Sports

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Hackner seeking 10th title

CURLING
By Leith Dunick - TB Source

At 62 and entering his 19th Northern Ontario men's curling championship, Al Hackner really has nothing left to prove.

Or does he?

Known affectionately in the curling world as The Iceman, the Nipigon-born Hackner is a former two-time world curling champion who could easily rest on his laurels and just enjoy the week, much the same way golfers Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus and Tom Watson now do each April at the Masters.

Greyer and a little more grizzled than he was when he won Brier championships in 1982 and 1985, Hackner wants no part of being a figurehead as the 2017 Travelers Men's Provincials kick off on Wednesday at the Fort William Curling Club.

No, he's here to win.

"One more crack at the Brier would be special," Hackner said on Monday.

That said, he knows he's carved a special place for himself in the game, and is willing to relish it a little bit these days.

"In curling, there's a lot of respect everywhere and I can really sense a lot of respect from the other players, regardless of their age, toward me. I try to show them a little of that back. You carry forward with the traditions of curling and if I can show them an example of how to compete on and off the ice, that's always a good thing," Hackner said.

The nine-time Northern Ontario champion's team ranges in age from 29-year-old lead Kory Carr to 65-year-old second Frank Morissette, who skipped the rink to a Major League of Curling championship in Hackner's absence, appeared in his first Northern



STILL GOING: Nipigon's two-time world champion Al Hackner captured his first Northern Ontario men's provincial curling title in 1980.

Ontario provincials in 1967 and led Alberta into the 1976 Brier.

Fifty-year-old Gary Champagne rounds out the roster, seeking to knock off prohibitive favourite and reigning Olympic champion Brad Jacobs of Sault Ste. Marie.

There's no question the Jacobs rink, with Ryan Fry, E.J. and Ryan Harnden, is the team to beat this week, Hackner said.

But he thinks they've got as good a chance of anyone to take the crown away from Jacobs, winners of six of the past seven titles, the lone blemish coming in 2014 when the Sault Ste.

Marie rink skipped the event to win Olympic gold in Sochi.

"We've been pretty steady," said Hackner, who last captured the Northern Ontario title in 2001, 21 years after winning his first.

"Kory Carr, now the reigning national mixed champion (with Trevor Bonot's team), has been throwing the rocks exceptionally well all year. If he continues to play like that, we should have a good chance at at least making the playoffs."

Hackner's squad is one of three Thunder Bay teams in the mix this week.

Dylan Johnston's team was the only one to beat Jacobs at last year's provincials, and will play alongside brother Cody, Mike Badiuk and Travis Showalter. Bryan Burgess will captain a squad that includes Robin Champagne, Al Macsemchuk and Pat Berezowski.

Other skips in contention this week include Sudbury's Jordan Chandler and Chris Gilbert and Tanner Horgan, the younger brother of former Ontario Scotties champion Tracy Fleury and a finalist at last year's Canadian Juniors.

Rounding out the event is New Liskeard's Ryan Sayer.

2017 TRAVELERS MENS PROVINCIALS TEAMS

The 2017 Travelers Men's provincial curling championship takes place from Wednesday to Sunday at Fort William Curling Club.

- **SKIP:** Bryan Burgess
LEAD: Pat Berezowski
SECOND: Allen Maczemchuk
THIRD: Rob Champagne
CLUB: Kakabeka Falls C.C.
- **SKIP:** Jordan Chandler
LEAD: Lee Toner
SECOND: Luc Ouimet
THIRD: Bryan Burgess
CLUB: Sudbury Falls C.C.
- **SKIP:** Chris Glibota
LEAD: Matt Gordon
SECOND: Eric Gelinat
THIRD: Dustin Montellier
CLUB: Copper Cliff C.C.
- **SKIP:** Al Hackner
LEAD: Gary Champagne
SECOND: Frank Morissette
THIRD: Kory Carr
CLUB: Fort William C.C.
- **SKIP:** Tanner Horgan
LEAD: Maxime Blais
SECOND: Nicholas Bissonnette
THIRD: Jacob Horgan
CLUB: Copper Cliff C.C.
- **SKIP:** Brad Jacobs
LEAD: Ryan Harnden
SECOND: E.J. Harnden
THIRD: Ryan Fry
CLUB: Community First C.C.
- **SKIP:** Dylan Johnston
LEAD: Travis Showalter
SECOND: Cody Johnston
THIRD: Mike Badiuk
CLUB: Fort William C.C.
- **SKIP:** Ryan Sayer
LEAD: Gavan Jamieson
SECOND: Ryan Forget
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Ex-Leafs like new team

NHL

By Leith Dunlck - TB Source

When Auston Matthews fell into the laps of the Toronto Maple Leafs, it jump-started their rebuilding schedule.

But no one, not president Brendan Shanahan, not general manager Lou Lamoriello and certainly not coach Mike Babcock thought it would happen so fast.

The Leafs, whose last-place finish last season paved the way for Matthews to make his way north of the border, are tied with Boston with 58 points for third in the NHL's Atlantic Division, with four games in hand.

As of Monday's 6-5 overtime loss to the New York Islanders, they're also only a point behind Philadelphia for the second and final Eastern Conference wild-card spot. The current management team isn't the only group of people caught off guard by the unexpected early success of the new-look Maple Leafs.

New stars rising

A trio of former Toronto greats said they like what they see from Matthews, Mitch Marner and William Nylander, whose hat trick helped the Leafs slip past the Bruins 6-5 on Saturday night.

Dave (Tiger) Williams said he knew it would happen the day Babcock and Lamoriello came on board.

"Last year was a learning process, getting them used to the way Babcock and Lou run things. The kids have bought into it," said Williams, the NHL's all-time



LEITH DUNLCK

FAN FAVOURITE: Dave (Tiger) Williams is still the NHL's all-time penalty leader.

penalty minute leader who spent six seasons with the Leafs before being dealt to Vancouver in 1980.

"We've got some pretty good talent there with those two draft choices (Matthews and Marner) and they're playing unbelievable. But I've known Babcock since he was 14 years old and he makes you own it."

As Williams was headed west 37 years ago, rookie Rick Vaive made his way east. He'd spend the next six seasons with Toronto, becoming the first Maple Leafs player to crack the 50-goal mark, a feat he achieved three times from 1981-82 to 1983-84.

He too likes what he sees.

"They're going in the right direction," said Vaive, who joined Williams last week for the NHL

Alumni Tour game against local law enforcement all-stars at Fort William Gardens.

"That's wonderful to see. It's wonderful to watch. And they've got a bunch of young guys playing junior and even a couple in the American (Hockey) League that will probably make it there at some point. It's a lot of fun to watch. I've enjoyed this season a lot and the outdoor game was just the icing on the cake.

Always Leafs

Vaive, Williams and former first-round pick Al Iafrate were among the Leafs greats who suited up for the Alumni Classic on New Year's Eve, along with hall-of-famers Darryl Sittler, Lanny McDonald and Mats Sundin.

Iafrate, who also played for Boston, Washington and San Jose during an injury-plagued career, said he'll always be a Leafs fan.

The new management team knows the recipe to build a winning squad and is busy compiling all the ingredients, Iafrate said. It's never an easy task, he added.

"The NHL is such a tight league. You're a bad signing and a couple of bad draft picks away from being a mediocre team at best. It seems like everything they're doing is coming to fruition, when it comes to how they're executing and how they're bringing all young guys in and how their other guys are exiting that don't fit into the new plan that they have," Iafrate said.

"It's great to see. It's a fun team to watch."



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Consistency key to volleyball success

T-Wolves struggling to put wins on the board, swept by Gryphons

VOLLEYBALL
By Leith Dunick - TB Source

If one judged the Lakehead Thunderwolves by their place in the standings, it would be pretty easy to dismiss the women's volleyball team.

Mired in last place and winners of just three matches in 16 outings, the Thunderwolves have struggled to find their groove throughout the 2016-17 campaign.

But while the losses continue to pile up, including Saturday's straight-set defeat at the hands of the visiting Guelph Gryphons, their confidence remains high.

Just ask first-year outside hitter Cecile Tshibungu.

The Scarborough, Ont. native said while it's frustrating being on the losing

end of most matches, the team's nowhere near as bad as the record might indicate.

"I believe every step, every game we play, we're improving," Tshibungu said.

"We're not far from being the best team. I believe we practice harder than every single team."

Finding consistency is what will propel the Thunderwolves to the next level. It's been missing so far this season.

"We need to work more on our serving. And every time we attack we need to go for the kill, not just an easy ball. We are great in passing, but everything overall needs help. We're working on it," she said, after her team struggled to compete for a full set against the Gryphons, losing 17-25, 22-25 and 15-25, a night after dropping three of four sets to the same Guelph squad.

Fellow hitter Leah Mousseau, who led LU with six kills and six digs, said the effort is always there, even if the results aren't.

"Yesterday we came out a lot more physical. Today we made a lot more errors and our energy was a little slow,"

said the Ottawa product.

"Overall we did a good job though. Our blocking was a little better yesterday. We had a hard time reading and moving and playing defence today. I think passing was there. We got in too many runs on offence and in the end I think we couldn't execute up front."

The Wolves were competitive in all three sets - to a point.

Guelph jumped in front 16-10 in the first and were on the verge of winning the set when LU rolled off three straight to cut the gap to eight.

But it was too little too late.

Lakehead kept the second set close to the end, trailing 24-22 before the Gryphons put it away. Guelph (9-5) raced out to a 5-0 lead in the third and final match, but the Thunderwolves clawed back and trailed 12-11 before their opponent scored four straight cruising the rest of the way to a weekend sweep.

Maddie Dedecker and Victoria Goleblowski led Guelph with 10 kills, each adding eight digs to their resumes.



NET SHOT: Lakehead's Olivia Bowman kills the ball against Guelph's Libby Donevan.

LEITH DUNICK

Lakehead



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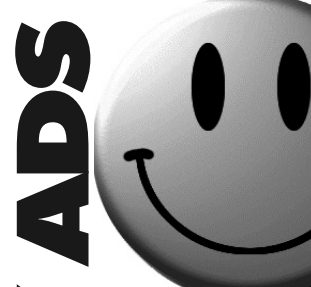
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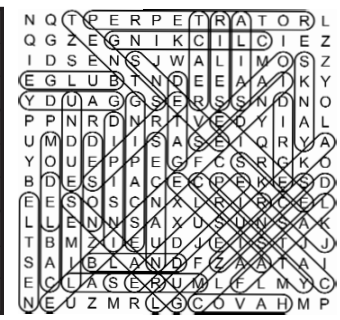
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74. INFORMATION | 74. INFORMATION | 74. INFORMATION

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