

# The Westend Weekly

## Bringing Communities Together



Box 66, 303 Fifth St., Rainy River, ON POW 1L0 Ph. 852-3815, FAX 852-1863, e-mail: westendweekly@tbaytel.net - Serving the District for 19 years VOL. 19, NO. 1 Wednesday, April 6, 2011  
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### Royal Canadian Legion Auxiliary Branch #29 hosts 2011 District Meeting



Pictured above, Branch President Norris Piccinato addressing the assembly and Town Representative, Councillor Rick Weidenhoef at opening ceremonies



Val Nelson on the left and Donna Ivall, were representatives from Rainy River. The Rainy River Legion Ladies Auxiliary Branch #54 were pleased to be invited to host the next District Meeting and Rally in 2012. The theme chosen for this Rally will be Walt Disney. This will give everyone lots of choice of characters and Rainy River will have lots of possibilities for theme decorations at this rally being held at the west end of the district. They will no doubt be calling on their Branch and volunteers to make this a highlight event of 2012.

#### By Marlene Deschamps

The Royal Canadian Legion Auxiliary Branch #29 were hosts for the 2011 District Meeting. Around 80 Auxiliary members from Atikokan, Dryden, Ear Falls, Fort Frances, Keewatin, Kenora, Rainy River, Red Lake and Sioux Lookout attended this year's rally.

Friday evening was set aside for registrations and snacks downstairs at the Legion. NDP Candidate, John Rafferty and MPP Howard Hampton both spoke with the ladies and congratulated them on all their good works. In speaking with the two later they said they had seen the upstairs where the banquet and dance were being held on Saturday night and were astounded at the decorations which were in keeping with this year's theme "Pirates of the Caribbean". The room was awash with treasure chests

full of treasures and jolly rogers flags all over. Each place was set up with a small chest full of beads, coins and goodies to take home.

First on the agenda at the Opening Ceremonies was the Memorial Service where a poppy and rose were laid for each member who had passed away over the past year. They were laid on a special table set aside for the service.

District Commander Bonny Faulds welcomed everyone and introduced the head table. There were greetings from Auxiliary President, Silvia Gunderson and then greetings from Branch President, Norris Piccinato. Town Councillor Rick Weidenhoef brought greetings from the Mayor who could not be present. He told the group of women that he really did not have any idea of all the work the Auxiliary did in and for the Town of Fort

Frances. He welcomed everyone to Fort Frances and thanked them for all the work they did in their various communities.

Next came the roll call of Auxiliaries and the minutes of the 2010 meeting held in Dryden were read. There were registration reports and auxiliary reports followed by the District Commander's report and Financial Statement.

Guest speakers were Diane Nesbitt, Chair of Provincial Council and Carolyn Grift, 2nd Vice President, Provincial Council. This was followed by the introduction of Silvia Gunderson as District #7 Scholarship Chairman.

Following a question and answer period elections were held for District Commander and Deputy District Commander and the installation of Bonny Faulds and Pearl Brown. The Bernice Welden Shields for newly initiated members were awarded to Fort Frances for those with more than 100 members and Ear Falls for those with less than 100 members. After new business and the invitation for the next district meeting there were closing ceremonies.

Next came the fun part of the rally as most members donned costumes in keeping with the theme. There were plenty of pirates, wenches and characters from the popular movie "Pirates of the Caribbean", along with someone dressed like a pirate ship and someone dressed as a treasure chest. Both these great costumes won prizes. Following a terrific supper served by the Branch and their volunteers, there were draws for some really great prizes and then a dance that kept the ladies dancing til the wee hours.

Sunday saw breakfast served by the Auxiliary to anyone who wanted to eat before they departed for their various communities. The Fort Frances Legion Auxiliary did a great job as hosts and wish all the best to next year's host.

### It's our anniversary and we are proud to say we've been serving the Rainy River District for 19 Years!



Each year at this time we ask for your volunteer subscription of \$25.00 more or less. As our newspaper is brought to you free of charge, this small yearly contribution helps us immensely. Our big expense this year is to replace our main computer and upgrade our programs. That's an outlay of just over \$4,000.00

We hope you enjoy reading our paper, we really enjoy putting it together.

Please send subscriptions to The Westend Weekly, Box 66, Rainy River, ON POW 1L0 or drop in.

Sincerely,  
Jacque and Martin Dufresne and our star reporter, Marlene Deschamps, official critics Ann, & Jack and staff



### St. Mary's receives visitor from Sierra Leone, Africa



Youth Minister Ken Desjardins and Josephine Koroma, Deputy Director of the Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD)

#### By Marlene Deschamps

The St. Mary's Youth group once again made breads of all kinds under the supervision of Helen and Ray Cousineau to sell and auction off to raise funds for Development and Peace. This was the 10th year the youth of the parish have to experience what the atmosphere of a bakery can be like. There were various kinds of breads and fresh baked buns available for sale and also various soups prepared by the parents of the students and buns at a dinner on Saturday, April 2nd and Sunday, April 3rd. Those attending the meal were requested to contribute to a silver collection. Bob Grynol said the event went very well and over 100 people attended which helped them raise \$1,000 to go to Development and Peace. He expressed thanks to this very generous community.

St. Mary's Youth Group along with parishioners had a special treat this year as they were visited by Josephine Koroma, Deputy Director of NMJD. In the past the youth send the monies they raise on to Development and Peace and they receive pictures and videos from the various communities their dollars go to to help. This year they received a visit from a real live person who could speak directly to them and to answer any questions they may have regarding Development and Peace operate in many parts of the world

and this year has seen many catastrophes where they went in to help.

Josephine holds a Bachelor of Arts, a post graduate diploma in Education, and Master of Arts from Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone. Before her current position, she worked for the Office of National Security in the Moamba District. Prior to that she worked as a high school teacher in Freetown. She has attended numerous international conferences on mining, women, security and arms. After 10 years of a devastating war, NMJD is working to help unify the country. Through the Campaign for Just Mining to counteract the trade in Blood Diamonds, promotion of human rights, democracy, communication and conflict resolution. She spoke to the youth and to the parishioners about building a world of justice. Josephine travelled from Sierra Leone to Montreal, to Thunder Bay where she made a presentation of the University. She then was driven to Fort Frances. There has never been a visit from a representative of NMJD here before so everyone was pleased to meet with her. Josephine said they work with many partners in their quest for peace. She said they are now keeping an eye on North American Countries that operate in Sierra Leone to see if they are using fair extractions methods. She spoke of the peace in Sierra Leone as being

very fragile and spoke of what became known as blood diamonds being sold to fund the rebels who kidnapped children and used drugs to turn the boys into soldiers and girls into sex slaves. She mentioned they have done a lot of work, medically and mentally to offset the horrors of those children's lives but they still have a long way to go. She told me that it is still a male dominated society and they are working on education women and letting them know that they do have rights and what those rights are. When working with the girls they must first look to health care and counselling because they are traumatized. They also teach them skills because they do not fit into a regular school system. The also educate the public so they can remove the stigma the girls face. Since they do not have funded health care in Sierra Leone, they also provided care to women who are pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 years of age. Josephine said she is one of six partners that are travelling across Canada. She will be going to Sudbury and Sioux Ste. Marie from here. She said this is the first time she has been in the area and she was impressed with how warm and open the people are. She said in her country they have such a huge problem coming from war and it will take many years of continuous work. She mentioned other societies such as the UN and UNICEF presence which have helped and noted that the most benefits for the people come from the grass roots. They have used dollars to help around 6,000 families connected through farmers' association and now are eating much better. They are participating in their villages development in partnership with other support agencies. They also worked hard to get a compensation program for people whose property was expropriated by a mine in one region and are still working on these types of issues. Josephine is such a positive person despite all she has endured and witnessed. She will no doubt make very good use of any funds set to her from the St. Mary's Youth Group.

### Bicycles for Humanity being collected

#### By Marlene Deschamps

Bicycles are being collected by a group of people to be sent on to Africa. The bikes are converted for medi care workers, teachers and students. They will be shipped to Thunder Bay for repair before being shipped on. There have been 17,000 collected between Thunder Bay and Ottawa so far and the group from this area have collected 30

so far. It does not matter the condition of the bike as long as they can be fixed. The group is collecting only adult bikes and they will be fixed with a trailer behind for use for patient transfer and to carry such items as firewood.

Mark Mast at the Rainy River Covenant Church will be showing a video sometime during April on how this project works

out. They have talked with students in Stratton and explained the importance of people in Africa having access to this means of transportation.

Bikes can be dropped off with Richard Veldhuisen in Emo, Doug Barron in Barwick, Sonny Ferris in Finland and Mark Mast in Rainy River. Please call Inge Scheibler for more information at 487-2237.



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