

The Westend Weekly

Bringing Communities Together



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Howard Hampton leaving politics after 24 years



By Marlene Deschamps

In a recent press release, Howard Hampton stated he would not be a candidate in the upcoming Provincial Election. After 24 years as a member of the Ontario Legislature he feels it is time to do some other things in his life. Howie was contacted to find out just what those other things were and who would be the NDP candidate who would replace him. Howie obviously puts his family front and foremost and they will be what he concentrates on in the coming years. He said that Sarah who will soon be 17 is entering Grade 12 and Jonathan will be entering Grade 8. They will finish up this phase of their education and then the family will move to Fort Frances. He added that he will also be doing something both Sarah and Jonathan have been asking him to do over these past few years and that is to be their hockey coach. He said both of his children are

pretty good hockey players so he will be an assistant coach for their teams. He mentioned how they enjoyed the Muskies and Laker hockey games they attended together.

We spoke awhile about two major events that happened at Queens Park while he was there. One was the 12 day 12 night filibuster regarding the amalgamations of small communities with the larger close by municipalities. While unsuccessful, it was a very exciting time. The other event was when the NDP were successful in their bid to stop the sale of Ontario Hydro to private corporations. He is very proud of that work. We also spoke briefly about how he came to have his office in the old train station and how he ended up there because it would help the Save our Station committee save the station from being demolished. He was the first paying tenant and also helped with securing grants.

Until his last official day which is October 7th, he will be supporting the NDP candidate in the upcoming election. He said they would have nominations August 12-14th, being held in Kenora, Dryden and Fort Frances. To date they have two who are still considering having their name stand. They are Sarah Campbell from the Dryden office and Tanya Cameron from Kenora. Sarah was in the region a short time ago hosting informational workshops regarding the different energy retailers that district residents have been dealing with. Tanya ran in the recent federal election. He did say candidates from each of the parties will have a very short campaign as the election will be held on October 6th.

Thanks Howie and good luck in your retirement. We wish you well and look forward to seeing you around the District when you move back home.

Driver survives horrendous crash



If you look closely, the only thing in the cab which is not mangled is the driver's seat.

On July 31st, 2011 members of the Rainy River District OPP Detachment responded to a single vehicle collision on Highway 11 twenty kilometres west of Atikokan. Although the vehicle suffered extensive damage, the male driver of a tractor trailer unit was taken to Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Center (TBRHSC)

with non life threatening injuries as a result of the single vehicle collision. Officers kept the roadway open to one lane as the investigation was conducted.

A Technical Traffic Collision Investigator from the Thunder Bay OPP Detachment attended to assist with the ongoing investigation.

The cause of the crash is still under investigation and further information will be released once it becomes available.

Drivers are reminded to remain attentive at all times while operating a vehicle on Ontario highways and to ensure all persons in the vehicle are wearing their seatbelts.

Launch of "Sophia's Journey" draws crowd



Monique Strain and author, Frances Shelfantook.

By Marlene Deschamps

On Thursday, July 28th, there was a book launch and signing for "Sophia's Journey" written by Frances Shelfantook. Mrs. Shelfantook taught for many years and was a beloved teacher to so many and it was evident in the number of former students who turned up to speak with her and to get her book. Her daughter, Linda Prior, said that there were many students and couples who turned out and they were just thrilled with the turnout. There were 97 books brought to the library and that was barely enough. Joan Miller of the Writer's Group stopped by to tell Frances that the group was

very proud of her and mentioned that she had been a teacher to all her children. Frances' daughter was here for the book launch along with son-in-law Guy as well as other family members. There were quite a few grandchildren present and they were all obviously very proud of their Grandmother. There were dainties and refreshments set up for the many people that attended.

Sophia's Journey is the story of Frances' great grandmother. There are two more books to be published. The next book is about her Grandmother, Emma followed by a book about her mother, Anna. She said she had

nine children one of which died at birth and one who died at age twelve, leaving her to bring up seven children. The book portrays the difficult times settlers had when they came to Canada from the 'old country' and how people survived and flourished through those tough times. They never compromised their values and they never forgot where they came from. They embraced their new country and made it their own. These type of people made Canada what it is today. It is a great read. There are a few for sale at the Fort Frances Public Library and Technology Centre.

J. Fontana tries his hand at fiction for his 4th book



By Marlene Deschamps

J. Fontana, known by most in the area as Jim or Jimmy retired 6 years ago after serving on the bench in Ottawa for 21 years. He still works on an on call basis. During his tenure, he published books on law and his Law of Search and Seizure in Canada is the standard lawyers' reference on the topic in Canada. He has also wrote for True Crime and newspaper articles on motor sport. On occasion he has been invited to judge at concorsi (beauty pageants for Italian cars) in Ottawa's Little Italy. Jim also wrote a book called No Cause of Death. This sold out book was about a murder that took place in Ottawa and was the first case where someone was found guilty but they couldn't say how he died. His next book was the Mad Bomber of Parliament. It was about the deranged man who came from the west with the intention of blowing up Parliament and killing the leaders. He almost succeeded and Prime Minister Pearson and Diefenbaker were both present on that day. Fortunately, for them, the bomb went off prematurely and although there was extensive damage his plan did not succeed. Jim said it was big news for about four days and then ignored. He was asked to write

about it for historical purposes.

His first foray into fiction is based on the Mille Miglia. When he was visiting Italy at the age of 12 he saw the passage of the 1950 Mille Miglia. In the following years he monitored the standings at the local radio station as they came in on the teletype from Europe. Jim explained that this race was run from 1927-1957 and was 1,000 miles long. They went over normal public roads at unbelievable speeds and when there were a number of spectators killed during the 1957 race it was shut down. It was revived in 1986 but was turned into a tour in tribute of the previous race but is done at normal highway speeds and is a motor racing festival that attracts millions. It follows the original route but takes place over 3 days instead of 12 hours and there are a lot of stops and a lot of speeches. Jim's book is about a young man who takes part in the race. It has been called a wheel gripping ride. The story captures the intrigues, danger and ambiance of the original Mille Miglia. The reader is taken behind the scenes and travels foot to the floor around the 1,000 mile circuit with the international cast of eclectic characters, and their lives and loves, in parallel sub-

plots that are not resolved until the last car crosses the finish line in a dramatic and unexpected ending.

Jim has received great reviews from Will Silk, Motorsport Writer published in Sports Car Digest, Martin Swig, writer and founding Director of the California Mile who writes "Loved the 1,000 Mile Dream. Having driven the Italian event 20 times and the California mile 21 times, I feel you really got it right." And Mark Vandusen, Broadcaster/Journalist who wrote "Jim Fontana blends his love of classic cars, passion for his Italian roots, his fondness for offbeat characters and a zeal for motorsport history. Intrigue hatches in high mountain passes, and vengeance flags the finish. Through every twist and turn of the 1,000 Mile Dream, Fontana shifts gears with the pacing of a professional circuit driver. Settle in and enjoy but be sure you are buckled in".

The books are available at Chapters and online at borealispess.com (48 hour turn around time) or by order at Chapters, Indigo or Barnes & Noble stores. They cost \$29.95 for the hardcover and will be available in the next few weeks in softcover for \$19.95. Congrats Jim.

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