

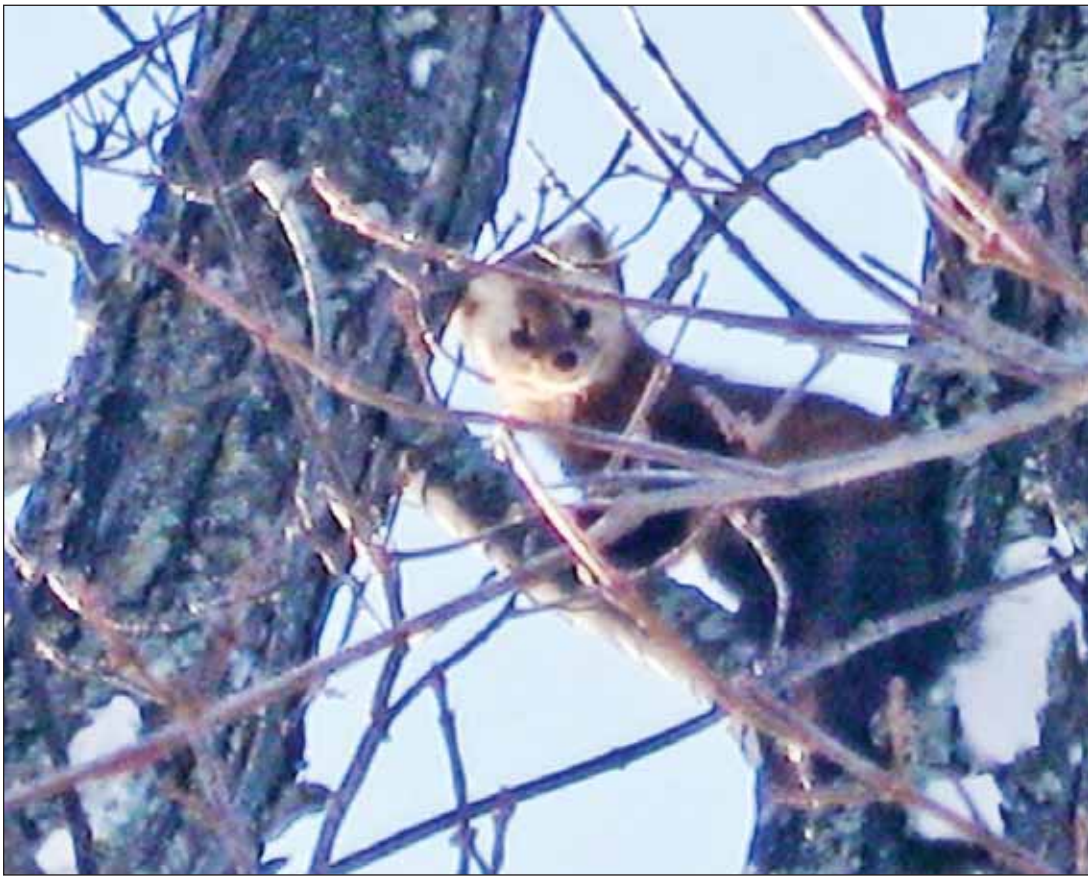
# The Westend Weekly

## Bringing Communities Together



Box 66, 303 Fifth St., Rainy River, ON P0W 1L0 Ph. 807-852-3815, Fax. 807-852-1863, Email. westendweekly@tbaytel.net Vol. 19, No. 35 Wednesday, December 14, 2011  
Serving the Rainy River District for more than 19 years! Read us on line at www.westendweekly.ca

### Photographers' showcase



This little fellow hangs around the bird feeder, commonly known as a Pine Marten. He is very cute, curious, and always hungry, there isn't too many food items he doesn't like, but fruit seems to be his favourite.

Photo by Marie Kubera, Worthington Twp.

We invite readers to use this spot to show off a photo they are proud of or just think other readers might find interesting. No rules, just provide a sentence or two to describe the picture and send the highest resolution, not a reduced size for emailing.

### OPP Stuff a Cruiser event surpasses all expectations



From left, Chris Delrasario, OPP Community Police Officer, Anne McCoy, Anne Renauld of Confederation College, Fort Frances Laker hockey player Conner Hady. In front Anne Renauld daughters, Naiomi and Laura.

**By Marlene Deschamps**  
This year's OPP Stuff a Cruiser event's success is best described by OPP Community Police Officer, Anne McCoy. What a phenomenal event. This year, in the Rainy River District we hosted two Stuff a Cruiser Events. The first being in Atikokan on November 26th and the second event in Fort Frances and Emo on December 10th at four different locations. In Atikokan we stuffed seven OPP cruisers and I am proud to say that today we stuffed twenty cruisers giving us a grand total of twenty seven cruisers! Thank you to the Volunteer Bureau, United Native Friendship Centre, Sunset Metis and Salvation Army for your help with unloading the huge amount of food. We have a generous dis-

trict. This year we came together to help so many organizations to load up their food banks to assist families in need. Items received included turkeys, hams, canned goods, tonnes of cereal boxes, pasta, stuffing, pancake and syrup, coffee, tea, toys and diapers and so much more. There were a lot of community volunteers helping at each location. The Legal Clinic helped purchase the recycle bags, Tess's Kitchen served sandwiches and soup to all those who helped. Community partners helped organize, run errands and deliver flyers to ensure the message got out. Thanks to Anne Renauld, Crystal Swire and Lincoln Dunn in Emo for helping as runner ve-

hicles to transport goods to locations as the cruisers were filled up. There were seven vehicles in Emo stuffed and they couldn't see the floor of the church when they were spread out. Anne extends her thanks to all media, Victims Services, Auxiliary members, Treaty Police and the many volunteers who showed up to help. She says it makes her proud to call the Rainy River District her home. I was also contacted by the Kiwanis who said they stuffed 4 cruisers with approximately \$1,500 worth of grocery items. They have also adopted 6 families through the Salvation Army Christmas program. Kudos to all for their generosity.

### RRHS students say WE day was a great experience



Rock band, Hedley, lead singer Jacob Hoggard performs before the packed house.

**By Marlene Deschamps**

By now many people have read or heard about WE Day 2011 being held in Winnipeg. Many have seen snippets of the day on different news broadcasts. 16,000 young people headed to WE Day 2011 to join together to help change the world.

Rainy River High School Teacher, Dan Mack, spoke of the 33 students and 6 adults starting out in a bus at 5:45 am to travel to Winnipeg. It was the first time students from Rainy River had the opportunity to attend a WE Day celebration. He said it was extremely well organized and when they arrived people were waiting for them. They came right on to the bus, welcomed them and told them where to go. They were seated right on the floor in front of the stage. This opportunity and their seating were because of their involvement with the Brick to Brick program they were involved in that saw them raise \$24,000 for a school and education equipment in Sierra Leone. When asked how they got involved in the first place, Mack said it was because of an English assignment on Current Issues. It was done on child soldiers and this is how they came onto the Save the Children which was started by Craig Kielburger when he was only 12 year old. Since that time he and his brother have devoted themselves to getting other young people involved in helping others. Mack said the school will continue with the Brick by Brick program and this time support a school in Nicaragua. They are hoping to have a chance to go down and help with the building. When getting involved in the program they have 4 areas to choose from. They are fresh water, education, medicine or alternative income. He mentioned that the whole program is starting to look at Northern Canada through former Prime Minister, Paul Martin's initiative. He also said that each of the those attending WE Day were asked to bring a \$10 donation to help with relief for drought and help the local food banks in Winnipeg. Craig Kielburger emphasizes that although it is important to help others in far away lands, they must also help out in their own area when it is needed.

I was lucky enough to interview five students who made the trip. One can determine from the interviews that there was a collective feeling of awe at the power of all those young people together and getting further motivated by the speakers and per-

formers to keep on helping others. Each took away something a little different and each was inspired by a different speaker. Here are the interviews:

Lindsey Westover-17 year old Grade 12 student. "It was extremely inspirational to see all the people who have gone through so much and are still doing things for others. It was really high energy. You have to earn your way there. People on stage introduced schools to each other based on what they were doing so we were introduced because of Brick by Brick. It was overwhelming. There were so many people. I am really excited about the Vow of Silence. We had quite a few involved. It is in support of kids who have no voice. We are going to have a WE Week in the spring and we are working on that event. I am a student leader and now realize that small communities can do a lot. We have so much—we can give to others".

Kathryn Clifford-17 year old Grade 12 student. "It was an amazing, awesome experience. It was inspirational. So glad we were there and now everyday I come to school I feel good about this cause. I was pretty amazed at the speakers and what the parents do also. I will continue to be involved as long as I am in school and probably stay involved in some way in WE Day after school".

Kaylee Heyens-17 year old Grade 12 student. "It was really amazing. There was so much energy. It was really cool to see the \$10 relief for drought program and all the food items for the Winnipeg food banks. I have just completed the Vow of Silence and was completely silent for 24 hours. I used a white board to communicate. It went very well. We explained what we were doing and why. There was a good response from the teachers and fellow students.

Turning off the phone was the hardest part, but just imagine some go their whole life without having a voice. I am looking forward to WE Week to see what we can do".

Cody Armstrong-16 year old Grade 11 student. "It was a wonderful concept, Save the Children. The pace of music wasn't really to my style but I still enjoyed it. I was really impressed by Craig and his brother who started it all. We were right down on the floor. (In response to what Cody thought of Shaq O'Neal, one of the speakers) Shaq is really a big guy especially when you are on the floor looking up at him. I am in charge of the Student Council and will be planning for WE Week in the spring. There was a good split of gender and it was just amazing to see so many people and amazing to see the new MTS Centre".

Jake Jenson-18 year old Grade 12 student. "They had some special speakers but the one who most affected me was Spencer West. There is nothing there from the waist down because of a birth defect and what he is doing is amazing. His next challenge will be to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro in Africa next year. In the future I will look at a challenge differently and know there is nothing I can't do. The music was not particularly to my taste because I like the older style music, but I enjoyed it anyway".

As one can see by the words of the students, they had a great experience in Winnipeg. What is even greater is what they brought home with them. They bring back to the community a personal and collective commitment to continue to help others and a feeling that they can change the world. If one notices, the use of I is very limited. It is usually We. What we can do and what we plan. The parents and teachers of the group that travelled to Winnipeg can be very proud of these students. They are amazing and they do great things and they can teach the adults in the entire district that when you eliminate the I and work on the We, much can be accomplished right here.

There were a group of students from Fort High who also made the trip to Winnipeg and their trip was covered by the Fort Frances Times. They also participated in the Vow of Silence and entered a float in the recently held Santa Clause Parade denoting the Vow and what it was about. They won first prize in their category.

Since it's founding in 2007, WE Day has encouraged youth to contribute 1.7 million hours of volunteer time, raise \$5.4 million for local and global organizations and collect more than 519,000 pounds of food for food bank shelves.



Pictured from left, Kaylee Heyens, Jessica Haw, Shauna Moen, Maria Vandenbrand from RRHS.



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