

The Westend Weekly

Bringing Communities Together



Box 66, Rainy River, ON POW 1L0 Ph. 852-3815, FAX 852-1863, e-mail: westendweekly@tbaytel.net - Serving the District for 17 years VOL. 18, NO. 43 Wednesday, February 10, 2010
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Original Bell from HMCS Fort Frances hangs in Royal Canadian Branch #29



by Marlene Deschamps

On Monday December 14th, 2009, a framed history of the HMCS Fort Frances was presented to Fort Frances Mayor, Roy Avis. In the article printed about the event it was noted that the bell residing on the lawn in front of the Civic Centre was the bell from the HMCS. I was informed that the original bell was located at the Legion and not on the lawn of the Civic Centre.

The bell is indeed at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #29. It hangs in the Club Room and is given a place of honor. The engraving states: "HMCS Fort

Frances 1944-This Bell was recovered from the bottom of Halifax Harbour by divers of the Atlantic Command and donated to the CPO's Mess in June of the following year through Unit West. It resides at the Legion Courtesy of LCO E.D.Thompson". How the bell ended up at the bottom of Halifax Harbour is unknown but it was rumored that someone was trying to withhold it to keep for a souvenir and it fell out of his hands into the water. Whatever the reason it was a lucky break for the War Museum of Canada and for the residents of Fort Frances who

are interested in preserving the history of the HMCS and it's contribution to the war effort.

The Bell does not belong to the Legion but to the War Museum of Canada and to keep it the Legion pays royalties as is the case whenever an article is loaned out. This is the original bell from when the HMCS was first commissioned.

There is a plaque on the wall behind the Bell that states whoever rings it gets to buy a round for the house. Great care was taken while taking pictures so as to not ring the Bell while copying the inscription.

Northwest Catholic District School Board holds kindergarten registration



St. Michaels kindergarten student, Samantha Halliday showing a gift bag that the new registrants will enjoy.

by Marlene Deschamps

This is the week that School Boards are holding registrations for Kindergarten. The Northwest Catholic District School Board's registrations started on Monday the 8th and will run through the 12th.

When a child registers at St. Michaels, they are given a guided tour of the playground & kindergarten exit; the gym; Ms. Hyatt's/Mrs. Jean's J.K. Classroom, the Library/Computer Lab, the Coatroom & Washrooms; Ms. Tolton/Whately's S.K. Classroom, Mrs. Cousineau's S.K. Classroom, Mrs. Wood's

S.K. Classroom and the Office. They are given a small passport at the start of the tour and each place they visit will see them receive a stamp on their passport. There is room for a picture of the student inside. Each student receives a bright red cloth bag with the School boards logo and it is full of goodies, games and information. They also receive a bag of hygiene items from the Board and the Northwest Health Unit. It contains a new toothbrush along with other items. There is also a draw prize for the family to enter after registration is finished.

St. Michaels Principal, Brenden Hyatt, said there were 38 registrations last year and they are looking at 40 for the 2010 school year. The Board will also hold a 'Welcome to Kindergarten' session during the late spring where those who have registered can come and spend a half day at a kindergarten class. All these events and tours make it a lot easier for youngsters to transition into their schools years with a positive attitude towards school and their adventure in learning. The registrations will continue throughout the week.

Beat the February blah's with a visit to the Farmer's Market

by Marlene Deschamps

February is usually a blah month, despite the new Family Day holiday and the possibility of the rodent telling us we will have just a few more weeks of winter (never seems to happen lately and we are again slated for six more weeks.). This year there is an event which should brighten up the month. Clover Valley Farmers' Market is hav-

ing a "Seedy Saturday" on February 13th. This event will give people a chance to dream and plan the upcoming gardening season. The Fort Frances Horticultural Society will be there along with other growers to participate in a seed exchange, gardening advice, hand-outs and sales.

They will also have a \$1 Seed Sale. The proceeds from the

Seed Sale will be donated for the renewal project of the courtyard gardens at Rainycrest. The \$1 Seed Sale is for vegetables, flower and perennial seeds.

Other vendors with local foods are expected to visit also. The event is slated for Saturday, February 13th from 9 a.m until 2 pm.

Annual Community Chest Dinner date set for March 7th

by Marlene Deschamps

The annual Community Chest dinner will be held on Sunday, March 7th at La Place Rendez Vous. Cocktails will be served at 5 p.m. and dinner will follow at 6 p.m. The dinner is put on by the Rendez Vous staff, the Legion Ladies Auxiliary Branch #29, the Kiwanis, the Lions clubs, the Knights of Columbus and the Spirit of Christmas.

Around \$20,000 is raised each year and it is used to provide financial help to local and area families that need help to cover medical costs that not covered by other means. Around \$60,000 a year is spent to help those in need.

There will be a silent and live auction along with many draws. They are still looking for donations for the auction and draws and to donate you

can contact Linda Hamilton at 274-3221 or 274-8782.

Tickets for the event cost \$30 each or \$240 for a table of eight. Tickets are available at the Rendez Vous and from Joelle Blanc. There are only so many tickets available and they are usually sold out in short order. If you are planning to attend you might want to get your tickets soon so you won't

be disappointed.

Remarks from past dinners are usually the same - "The meal was awesome". "The prizes are awesome" "The evening was awesome". So you can be assured that anyone attending is going to have a great time while contributing to a great cause. You better pick up your "Awesome ticket" soon.

Shiver on the River in Rainy

by Marlene Deschamps

The 2nd Annual "Shiver on the River" run is coming up shortly. Last year, although the turnout was small, the runners ranged in age from 10 to 61 years. They came from Fort Frances, Baudette and Williams

Minnesota and, of course, Rainy River. The 5K run is another chance for those avid runners to strut their stuff. Call Meghan at the Rainy River Rec Centre (807) 852-4446 to register or you can register on the day of the race starting a 9 a.m.

Breaking up is hard to do

Gerd O'Sullivan, Northwestern Health Unit Board member for the Rainy River District Municipal Association, quit smoking on January 18, 2010, ten days after the birth of her newest grandson. O'Sullivan is publicly sharing her experience in hopes of encouraging others to quit during the fifth annual Driven to Quit Challenge hosted by the Canadian Cancer Society.

This is the seventh time O'Sullivan has tried to quit and once again she is finding it difficult. However her past attempts are an advantage because of the insight she has gained. The nicotine addiction is tough to break but for her, the rituals associated with smoking have stood in her way to being smoke-free.

"I can shake the nicotine withdrawal symptoms in a few days" she says "it's figuring out how to enjoy coffee without a cigarette or what to do in the evening without a cigarette that would sink me each time."

Over her previous quit attempts O'Sullivan has learned more each time about how to be successful in beating the addiction. This time she is more confident that she will succeed. One thing O'Sullivan has learned about quitting is that it helps to remove any temptation. For instance, she wasn't able to break the connection between coffee and cig-

arettes until the Smoke-Free Ontario Act removed that temptation for her. To her surprise it became easy to go to the coffee shop and enjoy a cup of coffee without a cigarette because it had become a non-smoking set-



Gerd O'Sullivan with her new grandson, Graeme Thomas.

ting.

Taking this wisdom one step further, O'Sullivan deliberately made her car and home completely smoke-free. If she wanted a cigarette she had to smoke outside no matter what the weather and many times that was enough to make her decide not to bother. She also stored her cigarettes in the freezer in her garage so she had to get dressed for the outdoors to get a cigarette and then stand outside to smoke. Many times this proved to be not worth the effort.

"Gerd is experiencing what many smokers do when they quit," says Jennifer McKibbin, Tobacco-Free Living program manager at the health unit. "A few days with lots of water and

willpower will flush the nicotine from your body but, for most, smoking is far more complex than just a physical craving. After that passes a smoker begins the tough work of identifying their personal triggers and successfully replacing them with healthier options. Gerd has learned a lot about her addiction and is well on her way to being a successful quitter."

More than 168 people in the Northwest region have already committed to quit smoking this March by registering for the Driven to Quit Challenge.

There is still time for others to join Gerd as registration is open until February 28, 2010.

Ontario adults can enter with a support buddy and pledge to quit smoking or tobacco use for the month of March 2010. Entrants who are successfully smoke free for the month of March have the chance to win a 2010 Ford Escape hybrid and one of two \$5,000 vacation getaways. A \$2,000 MasterCard gift card is exclusively reserved for one person in the Northwest region. Prizes are generously sponsored by McNeil Consumer Healthcare.

To register for The Challenge, Ontarians aged 19 and over can visit www.DrivenToQuit.ca or visit the Northwestern Health Unit for an entry form.



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