

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. 38 Wednesday, January 18, 2012
Serving the Rainy River District for more than 19 years! Read us on line at www.westendweekly.ca

Photographers' showcase



Who knew you could find so much beauty at the local dump? This is just one of about 15+ bald eagles that were hanging around that day. Simply amazing! The photo was taken January 7, 2012.
Photo by Lisa Stasiuk, Fort Frances

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.

Campbell comes through for Ear Falls

Sarah Campbell, MPP Kenora-Rainy River, is pleased to announce that a crisis has been averted at the Ear Falls Community Health Centre, which will allow the facility to operate without interruption.

Last month, management of the facility contacted Campbell regarding the situation and their difficulty in obtaining assistance from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

"Ear Falls is doing everything they can to find a doctor or secure a locum, and other doctors nearby are trying to help but the Ministry will not return the town's phone calls or emails" she stated during Question Period December 9.

At that time, the Minister stated she was unaware of the situation, but on Campbell's urging instructed staff to find a solution to the problem.

Earlier this week Campbell was advised that the Ministry had accepted the facility's plan

to keep its doors open, which includes assistance from Red Lake physicians and additional locum days to meet the unique needs of the community.

"I am pleased that we were able to resolve this issue quickly and effectively," says Campbell of the news.

She says a lot of credit needs to go to the management of the facility, who had a strong plan to manage the situation.

"This was a unique case," she notes. "Health Centre management had a plan in place, their problem was getting the Ministry to approve it. I'd like to thank Minister Matthews for her assistance on the matter and hope we can continue to work together in finding long-term solutions to the region's health-care issues."

While the announcement means service will continue at the facility, Campbell notes that more needs to be done to ensure uninterrupted service continues

in Ear Falls and across the region, including finding doctors to staff the facility on a more permanent basis and the creation of a northern health strategy to help communities combat both short and long term staffing issues.

"This time we've managed to find a solution, but approval for that solution was unnecessarily complicated," she explains. "We need to find a streamlined process that will ensure northern and rural health centres can obtain the help they need when they need it, and it needs to be part of a larger plan designed to meet the unique challenges our communities face."

She adds that she continues to press the Minister for help in other communities across the region, including Rainy River, where the community's sole remaining doctor recently announced he will be leaving the community next year.

Area woman chosen to be part of Rick Hansen 25th Anniversary Relay



Marie Major, carrying pictures of her TOPS leader and captains.

By Marlene Deschamps

In honour of the 25th Anniversary of Rick Hansen's Man in Motion, they set up a nationwide relay where 7,000 people would be chosen to participate. Based on whether one person can inspire many, imagine what 7,000 could do.

They sought out people who had made a difference to carry the Rick Hansen Medal the distance of 250 meters before handing it to another person chosen for this honour.

All those chosen were supplied with a Rick Hansen Relay uniform consisting of bright yellow jacket, dark pants and a toque. They also received a commemorative medal to keep. The medal was a symbol of appreciation and recognition of being a Difference Maker and to encourage them to continue on their journey of creating positive change in the lives of others.

Marie Major submitted a story of how her experience with TOPS had enabled her to encourage others through her experiences within her chapter. She stated that she was part of a group who walked daily and

how they motivated each other. She also mentioned swimming 5 days a week at the Sportsplex and how she got involved with swimathons to raise money and ended up becoming an honorary member of the Cyclones, a local swim team, along with her TOPS friend. She stated that she spends much of her time encouraging and motivating others which is what she has learned from her membership in TOPS.

Marie was informed by the Anniversary Team that she would be a Medal Bearer in the nation-wide Relay. She would join the team as they retraced Rick's legendary route across Canada passing the Rick Hansen Medal from one person to the next.

As well as carrying pictures of her TOPS leaders and captains, Marie said she also brought her Mom (she lived for TOPS and had passed away) by wearing her red turtle neck and blue pullover under her uniform jacket. Her mother got it for working on the 1995 Nordic World Ski Championships in Thunder Bay. She also carried part of her Dad, who is deceased, by wearing his ring

under her Vancouver Olympic mitts. Marie added that she ran for and with her TOPS chapter, her cybertops buddies and her 900 TOPS friends worldwide and said they were all there in her heart. The 143 leg of the Relay which Marie participated in was held on Friday, January 13th. When contacted on January 15th, Marie said she was still on a high, pumped and overwhelmed with emotion over the days events. When she arrived at the orientation they got a chance to hear everyone's story along with telling their own. They did a warm up dance and watched a video with information on the first Rick Hansen tour. They then went to a gym where the whole school was waiting to greet them. The school was being given some plaques, including one of the original group who left the school 25 years ago in the first run. The crowd cheered as they left. Marie surprised even herself by not walking but jogging for her allotted distance when her time came to proudly wear Rick Hansen's medal during this day 143 of the 25th Anniversary Relay across Canada.

School Board holds another review for Donald Young School

By Marlene Deschamps

Another meeting of the Donald Young School Pupil Accommodation review committee was held on Thursday, January 12th. This review is part of a government initiative to review many schools throughout the province. Other schools being reviewed under this initiative in the Rainy River District are Crossroads and Sturgeon Creek and these reviews will come following the one being done at Donald Young School in Emo. The committee is looking at four distinct categories and these were addressed at the meeting.

Anthony Leek was requested by Emo Municipal Council to make a presentation for the committee's consideration toward the rebuilding of the Donald Young School on their behalf. He addressed the following four categories:

1-Value to the Student: Emo has several recreation amenities within our community available to the students of the Donald Young School for their physical activity programs. These include the arena/auditorium; curling rink; sports field; tennis court/outdoor skating rink;

spray park; waterfront park, including play ground equipment; walking, biking, cross-country skiing trail and more is part of Safe Communities Rainy River District while the Pioneer Museum provides cultural learning for the students of Donald Young.

2-Value to the System: Medical and dental services are available within the urban area of the community which can provide immediate care for any child that is injured or suffers an allergic reaction during school hours; Emo toy Library/Resource Centre could be utilized as part of the Donald Young School if it were rebuilt; also Council has received positive feedback to relocate Emo public library to a new school facility, therefore reducing the school operating budget for library services; Donald Young School has been a drawing card and provides economic value to the community, being the school with the highest enrollment of the three neighbouring schools-Cross Roads, Sturgeon Creek and Donald Young.

3-Value to the Community: A

new school could provide many community uses, a gymnasium for public performance (concerts) and a training/meeting facility for not for profit groups; joint use agreement between the school and the Township for use of green space to provide recreation activities and necessary playground area; additional play ground property could be made available.

4-Value to the local economy: Over the past 30 years Emo has not seen a decrease in population according to the Municipal Directory. In 2011, a seventy lot subdivision was approved; a twenty eight lot rural subdivision is in the design stage; a future development is in the planning stages. The Township of Emo supplies municipal water and sewer. The infrastructure would be able to provide adequate building lots and necessary services to attract mining contractors and management for the proposed mining project in the north portion of the Township of Chapelle; five special activities within the community such as Spring Fever Days; Emo Walleye Classic; Stock Car

Races; Canada Day; Rainy River Valley Agricultural Society Fair plus numerous children's programs throughout the year.

Although the review is to study the logical, statistical and economic role, it is to the citizens of the community an integral part of our lives.

Mr. Leek ended with stating the they hoped that the review committee will hear and see more and more, the passion, enthusiasm and dedication of people in the community to keep a school in Emo.

Tom Mosbeck spoke on behalf of Tompkins Hardware and family.

He said that it was easy to show pride when speaking about Emo and Donald Young School and mentioned that the family currently had their fifth generation of students attending. He stated that Donald Young has been, and is, the foundation of the community. Emo continues to provide a safe and progressive learning environment for the students and a large portion of the students walk to and from school every day. He added that the students and their families provide Emo with a rea-

son to continue adding services and infrastructure. Mosbeck gave further reasons why Emo continues to provide cost efficient services to its students and pointed out that Emo is the hub of the area. Its surrounding area is dominated by growing self-employed and small business operations. He also pointed out that at no time in the past has Emo's future looked so bright and, along with the many young families in the community, it continues to welcome new families year after year. He presented two viable options for a new facility. Finding funding to proceed with a new school with day care on the same site with the use of additional long term land use agreement with the Township or, build a new school with day care on donated property within reach of town services large enough to meet any and all future expansion needs.

Another presentation was made by Catherine Williams. She is a conductor, and musician with the Borderland Community Orchestra. She also is a parent volunteer and runs the school's drama program. She said that the school is

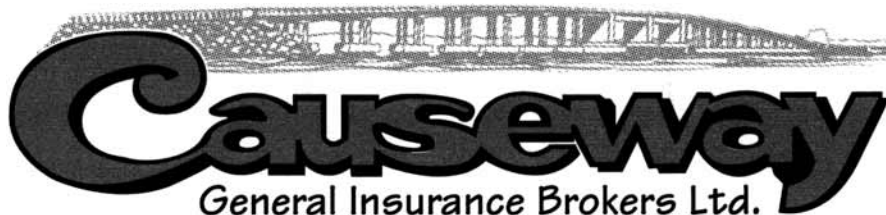
the home base for the orchestra and that people from all over the district and beyond travel to Emo to practice at the school where instruments are also stored. She stated it was a perfect venue as it is in the middle of the district. In exchange for the use of the school, the Orchestra does a lot of fund raising for the school. As well, they bring artistic entertainment to the entire district.

The drama program she runs has the support of the whole community, including the businesses. Her program is so successful the students have performed outside of Emo and have won awards at the music and drama festivals. The students gain confidence and self worth through their participation. Williams ended our conversation by saying that she told the review committee that the drama program has made the students ambassadors for the school and the community.

From what I understand this process by the review committee will take some time before any decisions are made about the fate of any or all of the schools being considered.



Martin Dufresne
275-8916
852-4237



Are you paying too much for rural insurance?

Insure a \$175,000 home for less than \$500*

* with \$1,000 deductible and qualifying discounts

Proudly Serving the Entire Rainy River District



Melissa Wiebe
274-6688



Robin Payeur
274-6688



Pam Buttner
274-6688

229 Scott Street, Fort Frances 1-800-289-9917