

The Westend Weekly

Bringing Communities Together



ZBox 66, 303 Fifth St., Rainy River, ON P0W 1L0 Ph. 807-852-3815, Fax. 807-852-1863, Email. westendweekly@tbaytel.net Vol. 22, No. 12 Wednesday, June 18, 2014
Serving the Rainy River District for over 23 years! Read us on line at www.westendweekly.ca. Check out the pictures on line. They are so good!

And then the Rain Came...



The Rainy River fire department pumper was pumping, along with portable pumps, but could not keep up with the rising water on the north side of River Ave. at First St. until the Krahn family arrived and pitched in to get the job done.



Martin Dufresne took this picture from his back yard on River Ave. in Rainy River while wearing chest waders to show the water level on Monday. This is looking East on River Ave. toward town and the river is quite a way to the left. The water has risen since.



Tuesday afternoon the water continued to rise to surround a house just down from Dufresne's. The house next door to it is also surrounded.



Sean Kilpatrick's house just west of the International Bridge and train bridge required a new walkway to access.



Luke Ruppert from Barwick brought his family to see the flooding on Sunday evening. His four boys pictured here will certainly be enthusiastic volunteers in a few years.



The Herman Krahn family from Dawson Twp. arrived to help and brought their manure spreader which was an efficient way to quickly move water from one side of the road to the river on the other. They saved the day in several locations in Rainy River.



A big green bus full of volunteers from Kenora arrived Tuesday at lunch time following work at La Place Rendez-Vous in Fort Frances. They just showed up in case the town of Rainy River could use them.



Sandbagging on River Ave., Rainy River began again on Tuesday afternoon as the water continued to rise. The Brown house is pictured above on Monday morning.



Greg Bird, who lives on the 5 Mile Road on Couchiching First Nation was grateful for the community efforts to sandbag around his home as the waters from Rainy Lake rose. "I've been here for fifty years and I've never seen this much water due to rain", noted Bird recalling the 2001 flood that was due to a thaw, not rain.



Peter Foy who also lives on the 5 Mile Road on Couchiching First Nation added another sandbag to the front of his home.



The Emo park area is an eerie sight. Leaving Emo on the way to Fort Frances last Thursday was also quite scary as Highway 11 completely washed out. It has since been repaired but now the US highway across the river is under water at Loman a little way east of Emo.



This is not the time to be planning a pot luck party at the park in Emo.

By: Teresa Hazel

It's hard to imagine what forty days and forty nights of rain would be like after experiencing about three or four days of rain and the damage it has caused to the sewage system, basements and lake property in Borderland and the Rainy River district.

The heavy rainfalls required the Town of Fort Frances and other surrounding areas as well as Emo and Rainy River to declare a state of emergency. With the sanitary sewer collection system operating at maximum capacity, the Town of Fort Frances and Couchiching First Nation were issuing

regular requests to local water and sewer customers to disconnect any sump pumps connected to the sanitary sewer system. They were further asking that customers limit the discharging of wastewater to the sewer system.

There were reports of many homes with sewage backed up in their basements and then news came of the dock at The Point being pushed away. Most of the refuse from the dock was collected although another notice was issued asking boaters to be aware of debris that may be floating along

the waterways.

Couchiching First Nation also requested volunteers to help sandbag homes that were in danger of being flooded.

The people of Rainy River owe a huge debt to the tireless efforts of the town crew who are working day and night in an attempt to keep damage to homes to a minimum. They were assisted by members of the volunteer fire department who have also put in endless hours pumping water, manning the pumps through the nights and organizing volunteers.

As well, birms have been

built all along River Ave from First to Sixth Street and the road along the river near the International Bridge has been built up several feet to form a dike.

The volunteers who have been filling sandbags also need to be thanked by everyone in the town for the endless hours they have worked in the background filling the 50 pound bags. And it's still going on.

CBC from Winnipeg was also down on Tuesday afternoon to check out the situation and interview people.

One frightening aspect of the situation is that kids often find high water exciting and take risks that could end in tragedy. They don't realize that jumping off unstable docks into very fast currents could carry them away or trap them underneath. Parents need to warn their kids about the danger.

The International Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods Watershed Board issued a conditions

notice on Monday, June 16th.

"Rainy River water levels are the highest observed in 85 years, compounding the high inflows to the basin both upstream and downstream of the Rainy Lake outlet. The high water levels on the Rainy River and Little Fork River have backed up the dam and are impacting the Fort Frances and Boise Powerhouses. All eight generators at the Fort Frances Powerhouse were taken offline Monday morning as their cooling pumps were under water. The press release went on to say that the Water Levels Committee is regularly monitoring conditions in the watershed and will post updates as conditions warrant. For those who would like the latest information on lake levels, dam settings and basin flows go to www.ijc.org/en/_RLWWB or phone 1-800-661-5922 Ext. 3.

All beaches and docks are closed throughout the area. Please observe the signs.

WE LOVE
OUR VOLUNTEERS

Never hesitate to offer. Maybe just a sandwich and cup of coffee for those people who are there all night and then have to get up for work in the morning. Everyone can help a little.



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