

The Westend Weekly

Bringing Communities Together



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Local hero receives Medal of Valour

By Marlene Deschamps

On June 4th, Sergeant Russell J. R. Gregoire officially received the Medal of Valour from Governor General Michelle Jean. The medal was awarded on May 29th, 2009 and Gregoire's residence is listed as Shilo, Manitoba. Many area residents know this latest Canadian hero and are quite proud of his bravery.

On June 14, 2008, Sergeant Gregoire's section was ambushed in Zhari district of Afghanistan. What was initially considered light contact quickly became a concentrated amount of small arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire, splitting the section in two. With the lead element taking serious casualty and in danger of being overrun, Sergeant Gregoire formulated an extraction plan. Regardless of risks, he led the remainder of the section into heavier fire to provide cover for the beleaguered soldiers' evacuation. Sergeant Gregoire's selfless devotion and courage inspired his platoon throughout the three hour engagement.

The Medal of Valour is the second highest medal awarded and the Governor General presented the medal to Gregoire along with other honours and medals for various accomplishments at a ceremony which was shown on CPAC.



Official opening held for Fort Frances Library and Technology Centre



Pictured above from left, Ruth Caldwell, Friends of the Library, Jean Boileau, Friends of the Library, Howard Hampton MPP, Mark Kowalchuk, Chair of Fundraising committee, Joyce Cunningham, Chair, Library Board, Nancy Tullock, Tourism and Culture, Mayor Roy Avis, Margaret Sedgwick, Librarian, John Rafferty MP, Davetta Shepard, Friends of the Library, Mitchell Riordan, Library Patron, and Herbert Medhurst, (102 years old and still a library regular.)

By Marlene Deschamps

The Official Opening Ceremonies for the new Fort Frances Library and Technology Centre were held on Monday, June 21st. Fitting date—beginning of summer—beginning of many new opportunities at the new Library and Tech Centre.

Mark Kowalchuk, served as emcee for the event. It began with the singing of O Canada by the Robert Moore Festival Choir directed by Natalie Von Niebelshultz. This was followed by a blessing by Elder Bessie Mainville and prayer by Captain Angel Sandoval.

Mark introduced the key players involved in the long road to this day. They included Mayor and Council, Department heads, those heading the different government agencies that had grants they could apply for, the Friends of the Library, the volunteers, the different committees that played a part including the fund raising committee, private, public and corporate sponsors and thanked them along with thanking all those who contributed with the fundraising efforts. He also acknowledged the building committee along with project manager, Brian Avis, Architect,

John Kotts, Aurora Construction personnel present and the Library staff. He thanked everyone for coming, some from across the province and told all those gathered "This is your library."

Margaret Sedgwick, CEO/Librarian told everyone she was totally overwhelmed and almost too happy to speak. She did introduce her staff and said they were the greatest. She mentioned all the volunteers who helped get the library ready for this special day.

Mayor Avis gave an overview of Mayor and Council's role of Mayor and Council's role

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Rainycrest Courtyard comes alive



By Marlene Deschamps

Over the past week, the Fort Frances Horticultural Society have been busy beautifying Fort Frances Bay courtyard (northeast). They have used dollars they raised from selling their cookbooks and spring and fall plant sales along with a grant from the Ontario Horticulture Association.

The courtyard is really coming alive with colour that can be enjoyed by the residents of Rainycrest and their families when they come to visit. There are small shrubs, colorful plants and literally hundreds of bedding plants. It is already looking like a flower garden

and when completed will be a just like a garden park.

The Fort Frances Horticultural Society meets the 4th Monday of the month at the Volunteer Bureau. They have interesting presentations and swapping of information and plants. They always welcome new members and you don't have to have a yard or garden area to join or to benefit from

their expertise in growing flowers. Patio planter gardens are a new thing and these are the folks that know how you can make yours flourish.

Their annual Flower Show is scheduled for August and will be held at Farmer's Market for the second year. It was a big hit at the market last year and will be a highlight again this year. Watch for the date and time.

Please note that The Westend Weekly will be closed for 2 weeks holiday July 7 and July 14. We will have a paper on June 30 and the next paper will be July 21.

Fort Frances Lions Club holds 3rd Annual Dand-e-Lion Festival



Memorial bricks are laid in front of the Fountain of Hope.

By Marlene Deschamps

Sunday June 20th saw the Fort Frances Lions Club hold their 3rd annual Dand-e-Lion Festival at the Lions Park on Second Street East. Although the weather was quite nasty in previous days, this Sunday turned out to be one of the nicest weekend days people have seen since early May.

The Festival lasted from 1-4 p.m. and there were free colouring books, crayons and balloons for the youngsters along with fun & games. The Lions collected used eye glasses, hearing aids and cell phones and anyone donating these items were given their choice of either a hot dog and pop or hamburger and pop. For those not donating, they could purchase these items for \$1 and \$2.

There was also free coffee. There was music from the Borderland Ensemble, comprised of Bob Wepruk singing and playing guitar; Dr. George Elliott on violin, Don Hughes with accordion and Jacques Fiset with rhythm bones.

At 2 p.m. there was the laying of bricks at the Fountain of Hope. The Lions sell bricks throughout the year and each year they lay 30 new bricks. People purchase them in memoriam or gratitude for special people in their lives. They choose where they want the bricks laid and are usually present when this special event takes place. Most of the 30 people who purchased bricks this year were on hand to see.

President Jacques Fiset used his trowel to remove the plain bricks and place the one etched with the name of a loved one in its place. The person to get in touch with to purchase a brick to be laid at the Fountain of Hope is Luke Schill. When they sell 30, they will have another brick laying. It is a great way to remember a loved one.

Incoming President Jeannette Roth said it was a fantastic turnout and they were very pleased. She added it was the first nice weekend which turned out great for them. The Lions members then served free cake to everyone and the children let go of dozens of brightly coloured balloons to float up and away into the blue sky.



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