

The Westend Weekly

Bringing Communities Together



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Gun & Hobby Show gets bigger each year



by Marlene Deschamps

This year's Gun & Hobby Show was held on Saturday, May 7th at the Fort Frances Curling Club. This is the 4th year for the show which was first held in Barwick.

There were 62 tables this year and participants came from Thunder Bay to the Manitoba border. The show drew a large crowd, including many from the States. Scott Stafford who began the shows said there was a steady stream of people who visited and he is very happy it is growing and continues to have strong public support. He added they are part of the Northwestern Ontario-Manitoba circuit which will see shows held in Steinbach and in Dryden in the fall. The local

show will continue to be held on the first Saturday in May. He noted the turnout was 30% bigger this year and they are already looking at next year's show. Some winners this year were: Walker Mose - winner of the kids' corner prize of a pop gun; Jim Martindale won a door prize of a tempered glass cutting board; Chad Hughes won a Winchester knife set; Angela Mihichuk won a daisy collectors sign and Ken Badiuk and Brett Prymak won gun show caps.

The show still has the antler contest with prizes for both full and shed antlers up for grabs. The winners this year were: James Krahn full rack prize winner taking home an embroidered gun case. He was also the

shed winner which saw him receive a Mossberg shinning knife. Andrew Loney won 2nd place for his entry in the full rack contest and he won a Browning knife.

The crowd at this year's show were very diversified with men, women, children and many families taking time to visit the show. They were amazed at the variety of merchandise available with many being interested in the antiques guns that were for sale. There were, of course, a lot of hunters at the show but there were also a lot of interest from target shooters which is becoming a fast growing sport in the area. All in all there was something for anyone who had any interest in guns and their various uses.

Medical School buys into Rainy River House

Final approval was given last week for the building design concept for Rainy River House, the locum housing project proposed for the Town of Rainy River.

The Rainy River Health Care Committee, comprised of voting members from Rainy River, the Townships of Morley, Dawson and Lake of the Woods, and Big Grassy First Nation, as well as citizen volunteers, endorsed a resolution to go ahead with the plan to purchase a waterfront lot and build a 3,000 square foot duplex to support medical services in the region.

The building design is by Claude Lord of Kenora. It includes one two-bedroom unit, to be used for part of the year by medical students doing clinical training in town, and one three-bedroom unit, which will be rented to visiting locum doctors. The larger unit is designed to accommodate a physician for a month or more, and will be suitable for a partner or family to come along. The Committee anticipates a need for more locum coverage in longer-term locum periods as recruitment and retention issues begin to hit home following Dr. Albert Beller's recent resignation. Dr. Beller will be leaving in September, 2011, after 17 years of medical service to this area.

The shortage of physicians throughout the country, and particularly in the North, is acute and chronic. Dr. David Singleton, staff physician in Rainy River, says, "The kind of doctor that is required to work in this practice setting is in even shorter supply, because they need to be comfortable with manning a 24-hour emergency room without backup and with minimal access to lab support. Any accident could potentially bring several

severely injured people into the ER at once. Some doctors don't want to take on that level of responsibility."

Many communities throughout the province are doing everything they can to attract doctors to their understaffed services. Signing bonus packages of five to six digit figures are being offered to doctors who will make commitments of several years, and full-time recruitment officers are being hired even in relatively small places. In Rainy River, the partnership of communities whose residents use the Rainy River Health Centre believe that significantly improving the housing they can provide to visiting doctors will give them their best chance to address several related medical staffing issues at once; it will increase the communities' attractiveness as a locum destination while allowing them to present the area well to students and locum doctors who may consider working permanently here.

Rainy River House will be designed as a showcase for the area, promoting local products, services craftsmanship, recreational opportunities and real estate.

Good news for the initiative came last week as the Northern Ontario Medical School agreed to rent one unit of the duplex for a minimum of 20 weeks per year for its medical students, who come to Rainy River in pairs throughout the year for clinical training. The arrangement will be good for both parties. The school will have permanent access to the accommodation it needs, at a fixed rate. The community will have access to this unit for additional locum needs when the students aren't using it, and the steady income from NOSM will support the operating

expenses. Organizers are particularly pleased that the attractive housing for medical students will help this area compete with bigger and wealthier communities in their recruitment efforts.

Fundraising activities are well under way, with a kickoff dinner planned for Saturday, May 14 at the Rainy River Rec Center at 5:30, after the Trade Show. There will be a roast pork dinner, entertainment and a Silent Auction. Tickets are available at Wood's Bakery, the Rainy River Health Centre, Big Grassy Band Office, Rainy River Drugs and the town office. Efforts are also under way to secure government and corporate support for the project.

Dr. Singleton has given a number of presentations to various groups in the five member communities to explain the reasons for the initiative and describe the plan. He has indicated that he's willing to carry on with this work for any group that would like to arrange it. Bookings can be set up through the Town of Rainy River municipal office at 852-3244. Dr. Singleton has said he believes "improving our locum accommodation situation is the single best thing we can do for the stability of our medical services in the future. I think it will make a big difference."

A web link devoted to the Rainy River House project has been set up on the town's website at www.rainyriver.ca, with detailed background information available and regular updates planned. Contact information for the Rainy River Health Care Committee members can be found here, too. There's also a Facebook page called Rainy River House where residents can follow the project's progress.

Fort Frances Masons hold open house



Meeting room in Fort Frances

by Marlene Deschamps

The Fort Frances Masons held an open house on Saturday, May 7th at the Granite Lodge No 446 located at 302 Scott Street. They were there to answer questions, have discussions and give people a tour of their Lodge. The walls in one area are filled with pictures of past Masters. Today's Master is Don Zuchiatti and he proudly showed how past Masters were many of the leaders of the community. The meeting room is a marvellous display of what Freemasonry is all about and the carpet made and imported from Scotland is unique. At the forefront is a small podium on which rests a Bible. It is the Volume of Sacred Law. In Turkey the Lodge has six such religious books, one symbolizing the different religions in the area. Masons are welcomed as brothers at any Lodge anywhere in the world as everyone

is equal and brothers in the Masons.

Locally there are 60 members and they have been here even before the town became Fort Frances. They first began here in 1896 and were one of the first organizations formed after the churches. The Masons are based on the stone masons who were builders. This is found in many communities in this country as well as around the world where they have 6 million members. The Lodges do not allow discussions on religion or politics believing all have equal value and the requirement of belief in a Supreme Being does not identify that Being. Membership is open to all men over 21 years of age who believe in the same principles of fraternity, charity and morality. There are three degrees of Craft Masonry and the ceremonies use symbolism drawn from the ancient stone-

masons to teach lessons that 'make good men better'. These ceremonies are the only thing about the Masons that are kept in secret and men find out about them after they are initiated into the different degrees. The local club is a fraternal social club that contributes to a charitable foundation, not through fund raising but from their own monies. Some of the charities and programs they support are prostate cancer research, cochlear implants, hearing research bursaries and the CHIP program. The more benevolent part of the Masons are the Shriners and although all Shriners are Masons the reverse is not true. There were pamphlets available loaded with material on what Freemasonry is, about the Grand Lodge and Granite Lodge, friendly conversations with the members on hand and answers for the curious. The open house was to help make people aware of who and what the Masons were so the could become familiar with what they do and to encourage them to consider membership.

Mark Hecht speaks at Victims Services Supper



Mark Hecht

By Marlene Deschamps

The Rainy River District Victims Services Program held their Volunteer/Community Partner Appreciation Dinner on Tuesday, May 3rd at the Fort Frances Curling Club. The speaker for the evening was Mark Hecht, co founder of Beyond Borders. The topic was trends in International Child Protection and their impact on our Communities.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious dinner prepared by Todd Maxham prior to hearing Mr. Hecht.

Mark Hecht, along with Rosalynn Prober, began

Beyond Borders in 1996 as a children's advocate group for children's rights and to stop the sexual exploitation of children. They have been effective in their work including a campaign to get the age of consent raised from 14 years of age to 16 years of age. Beyond Borders has worked with the UN and the International Court of Justice. He spoke of international trends and how they impact us and spoke of the following four trends. The first is hemispheric reversal of child investment. Wealthy countries are pressured to provide resources to poorer countries. The truth is, he said, that there are some positive results ie: exchange programs, childhood health and improved protection. But he added over the last five years there has been an economic deterrent although other countries who have suffered economic problems continue to give, others have not. He said he recently visited in Africa where a remote village had a new school complete with a supply of Apple MACS, funded by SEATA. He also visited an Algonquin reserve in

Quebec where there is no running water, very little electricity and terrible living conditions. This appears to be a trend that is adversely affecting local children. The second trend he noted is a shift in the youth justice system and how they still haven't figured out what to do with children who commit crimes. He noted they must still have their needs provided and must be protected. They must be given a chance for rehabilitation. He noted that the exception to children's needs being protected are for children who commit sexual crimes. This first came on the scene in 1996 and was discussed at a conference on child sexual exploitation. There have been two more since that time but the trend is that the justice system appear to treat children who commit sexual crime far more harshly than others. These crimes include internet luring and production of porn. According to the Hecht, most of these offenders are also victims and they are acting out. He noted that there is a misapplication of the law that has to do with the age of

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Countdown to Rainy River Relay for Life
44 DAYS
Call 852-4551 for info & to register

Rainy River Trade Show

Saturday, May 14
10 am to 4 pm

It's the **BIGGEST** Show this end of the district has ever seen!

Penny Table

Rainy River Recreation Centre
There's LOTS to see!

Business Booths
Government & Health Booths
More details on pg. 5

Support local merchants, artisans and crafters

Food Booths & Prizes

Fun Zone 1pm to 4pm



DOOR PRIZE
Kicken Up Kountry Concert in Karlstad, MN June 16, 17, & 18
Featuring: Diamond Rio, Sammy Kershaw, Bomshel, Ashlee Hewitt, Jaron & The Long Road to Love, Memories of Elvis Show, Terry Lee Goffee Johnny Cash Tribute