

Wednesday, September 2, 2009

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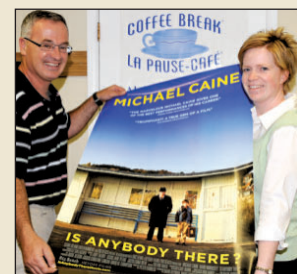
INSIDE



FALL HAS ARRIVED

It was a day for patients,
not politics, but the reality
of impending bed closures
at the Brockville Mental
Health Centre (BMHC) was
never far away as the facility
held its Country Harvest Fall
Fair yesterday.

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FILM TRADITION

In what's becoming a
September tradition, Film
Brockville will raise the cur-
tain on its fall season with a
fundraising screening to
benefit the Alzheimer Soci-
ety of Leeds and Grenville.

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IRONWOMAN

She was nervous and
excited and she survived to
want to do it again. Prescott
native Jenn Howitt finished
fourth in her age category in
her first-ever Ironman
Canada in British Columbia
on the weekend.

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■ **COMMUNITY:** A living, giving garden



NICK GARDINER The Recorder and Times
Daycare children at the Brockville YMCA prepare to help serve a spaghetti dinner Tuesday celebrating the facility's first Giving Garden, a project suggested by the Brockberry Cafe. Pictured children are, in front from left, Camryn Bos and Lucas Haystead, and back from left, Faith Chaplin, Courtney Orr, Jack Chaplin and Amelia Foley. In the rear are YMCA executive director Sueling Ching, Brockberry chef Seth O'Hara and cafe staff Jennifer Robinson. See story on page A3

■ **STEVENSON TRIAL**

Accused appeared shocked, upset

JACK WALKER
Staff Writer

A 37-year-old Mallorytown man accused of killing his estranged wife professed his innocence shortly after his arrest for the murder.

"Who?" Andrew Stevenson asked OPP Constable Rob Sinclair when he advised the accused he was being arrested for the murder.

"Your wife," replied Sinclair. "Is she OK?" asked Stevenson. "I don't know," answered the officer.

Sinclair told Stevenson's first-degree murder trial Tuesday the accused was extremely upset, hyperventilating, gagging and crying after his arrest at his mother's residence at 177 Rockfield Road, near Mallorytown on December 23, 2006.

Two hours earlier, Stefanie Stevenson was felled by a shotgun blast to the right side of her head in the driveway of her MacOdrum Drive residence in Brockville. The 33-year-old mother of two was just getting into her van to drive to the Brockville General Hospital for her night shift on the maternity ward when she was shot.

Sinclair said he twice read Stevenson his rights, including his right to call a lawyer.

"I haven't done anything wrong," Stevenson responded. "I don't need a lawyer."

Sinclair testified he and Sergeant Glen King were originally dispatched to Stevenson's residence at 117 Mountain Road, RR 1 Mallorytown.

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■ **HONOUR:** Medal of Bravery

Posthumous honour for Lalonde

TERRI SAUNDERS
Sun Media

A Merrickville woman who died trying to save a drowning teenager more than two years ago has been honoured by the governor general.

Roxanne Lalonde, 32, jumped into the Rideau River on April 21, 2007, in an attempt to rescue 15-year-old Grant Gallipeau from a fast-moving current near the Andrewville Bridge.

The leading seaman and 12-year veteran of the Canadian

navy could not rescue the boy.

Two weeks ago, Lalonde's mother received a letter from Gov. Gen. Michaëlle Jean saying her daughter had been awarded the Medal of Bravery, an honour that recognizes acts of bravery in hazardous circumstances.

"I was very proud," said Riemke Bles. "It's hard to believe it's been two years since this happened. It doesn't seem like that long ago."

Gallipeau's body was found downriver from the bridge less than an hour after Lalonde

■ **DEVELOPMENT:** Signs of life for riverfront property

Moorings afloat?

MICHAEL JIGGINS
Staff Writer

City council's economic development and planning committee huddled behind closed doors Tuesday night to learn details about a plan to revive the moribund Moorings condominium project.

In a brief discussion during the open session of yesterday's meeting, the committee heard a new ownership group has taken possession through a power-of-sale process and is seeking an 18-month extension on the existing site plan agreement.

Director of planning Maureen Pascoe Merkley said that agreement between the city and the previous owner, Brockville Moorings Corp., is set to expire Sept. 24 of this year.

The identity of the ownership group was not disclosed, but Mayor David Henderson told The Recorder and Times he has met with one of the principals,

who he said lives in the Kingston area.

"They gave me the impression that they are willing to go ahead with the site remediation this fall," said the mayor.

Heading into last night's closed session, Henderson said "it's like Missouri, let's see it" when it comes to whether the new owners actually develop the property.

However, he stressed he supports extending the site plan agreement because it offers the best chance for city residents to see the property cleaned up.

Work on the site's environmental cleanup stopped suddenly last fall when the previous owners' plans foundered on financial difficulty.

Since then, the fenced-in property at 119 Water Street adjacent to the Brockville Museum has become an increasing source of complaints.

see MOORINGS | Page A2

■ **CLOSURE:** Brighter future amidst darker days ahead

Inpatients looking further afield for new homes

RONALD ZAJAC
Staff Writer

Taylor Closs and Ryan Ada-Lacroix are looking ahead with optimism, despite a few bumps in the immediate future.

The pair, both inpatients at the Brockville Mental Health Centre (BMHC), are engaged. As patients and staff at the former Brockville Psychiatric Hospital enjoyed a perfect day Tuesday for their annual Country Harvest Fall Fair, Closs proudly displayed her ring and noted the big day will be June 21, 2011.

By then, however, the couple will be living elsewhere.

"I'm looking at going to a group home in Ottawa because my part of the hospital is closing down," said Closs, 20, who lives at the BMHC's rehab unit.

The Royal Ottawa Health Care Group announced in June that the BMHC will close its transitional care unit by March 2011, taking the equivalent of 136.5 full-time jobs out of the community.

The 64 transitional treatment beds include 24 for dual diagnosis (patients who suffer both from a developmental delay and a psychiatric disorder) and 20



RONALD ZAJAC The Recorder and Times
Ryan Ada-Lacroix, left, and Taylor Closs, both inpatients at the Brockville Mental Health Centre, plan to tie the knot in June 2011.

each for rehabilitation and psychogeriatric services.

Brockville Mayor David Henderson noted yesterday the impending closure cast a

jumped in after him. Paramedics plucked Lalonde from the river after the failed attempt. She died in hospital.

"She was just doing what she was trained to do," said Bles. "Nobody was surprised she did what she did."

The award will be presented at a formal ceremony at Rideau Hall at a later date.

"Without hesitation, she jumped in the icy waters to search for him, but was suddenly caught up by the strong undertow and pulled towards the

middle of the river," reads the citation. "Others on shore tried to throw a lifeline to her, but the strong current quickly carried her downstream. Sadly, neither the boy nor Leading Seaman Lalonde survived."

Lalonde has received other honours since her death, including the Commissioner's Citation for Bravery awarded to her by the OPP in September 2007.

"These awards keep her memory alive," said Bles. "In some ways, it's like she's still here."

those three transitional care units, people whom Royal Ottawa hopes to move into the community, or to other facilities in Kingston or the Ottawa area, by March of 2011.

Ada-Lacroix, 24, of Almonte, is in the BMHC's forensic unit, which is expected to keep operating after the transitional services are gone, although he is hoping to be discharged long before his wedding day.

The happy couple are optimistic things will work out for them despite any disruptions in the months ahead. And on Tuesday, Taylor and Ryan were focused entirely on enjoying the fall fair.

"It's not often that you get to go to a hospital and they have a fun fair like this," said Closs.

BMHC patient Loretta Horbick spoke on behalf of the other patients as the day-long fair kicked off around the lunch hour, thanking staff for organizing the event.

Organizer Kevin Johnston, a recreational therapist at BMHC's Elmgrove unit, said the fair began five years ago, inspired by his childhood on a farm.

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WEATHER

Sunny and warm
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