



Red Rock activity noted



Halladay in the Hall



Big changes in Canada Food Guide

Taste/B6

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## Building courage to take icy plunge

BY JODI LUNDMARK  
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Since Joshua Tomagatick announced he's retired from swimming, he convinced his parents to jump into the icy waters of Lake Superior in his place in the Thunder Bay Polar Plunge.

"We do it because he doesn't swim anymore," said his mother, Dorothy Sackanay. "He had an ear infection once upon a time and it stopped him from swimming, so he says he's retired from swimming."

Instead, the Special Olympics athlete took up basketball and added shooting hoops to the long list of sports he participates in.

The Polar Plunge is returning for its ninth year at Marina Park on April 13 and will raise money for local Special Olympics Winter Games, Roots to Harvest and the local chapter of the CNIB.

Sackanay said the fundraising aspect of the event isn't difficult with all the support they receive from family and friends. But taking that plunge is a different story.

"I always tell people jumping in the water is fine," she said. "It's getting out of the water and running for the tent that's not fine because that's when you freeze."

Special Olympics is an important cause for Sackanay and her family as it's allowed Joshua to be social.

"Being a special needs person, it's kind of isolating for them and it's isolating for the family sometimes so being in a community like Special Olympics gives him a lot of opportunities to be social and for parents to meet up with other parents to get the support they need," she said.

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## Citizen seat filled on police board

THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Georjann Morriseau will serve as the city's citizen representative on the Thunder Bay Police Services Board.

The appointment of the former chief of Fort William First Nation was approved by city council on Monday.

She will be sworn in as a member at the police services board's Febru-

ary meeting.

Morriseau joins board chairwoman Celina Reitberger, Mayor Bill Mauro and Westfort Coun. Kristen Oliver as well as temporary administrator Thomas Lockwood on the police services board.

Lockwood was appointed administrator by the Ontario Civilian Police Commission in response to recommendations made by Sen. Murray Sinclair in his report into

how the police services board oversees the Thunder Bay Police Service.

The report, which was released in December, outlined an absence of leadership from the board and said it was wilfully blind and repeatedly failed to address the concerns of the Indigenous community. The senator said bold measures were required and recommended the board be dismantled with Lockwood temporary

ly exercising full authority of the board until Mauro, Oliver and Reitberger can undergo training.

Morriseau will also be required to take the training as will anyone else appointed to the board.

There is still one vacancy on the board that will be filled by the province.

Once the training is completed, the board members will regain their ability to vote.



PHOTOS BY THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL/BRENT LINTON

From left, Kaila Williams and Jordan Berlinquette work with Indigenous chef Rich Francis in the kitchen at the Regional Food Distribution Association during the Understanding Our Food Systems gathering on Tuesday.

## Food security on plates

THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

For Rich Francis, Indigenous food sovereignty and food security has never been more important.

Francis is the chef and owner of Seventh Fire Hospitality Group based in Six Nations Ontario, and he is the keynote speaker and caterer for the Understanding Our Food Systems gathering.

The gathering is hosted by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit with a host of community partners to explore food security and food self-determination to support First Nations' community food plans.

"Languages are being lost but al-

so our food pathways, Indigenous food I think is the fastest, quickest way to reconciliation to get a better understanding of who we are," Francis said.

At one time, Indigenous food was geared toward our lifestyle as hunters and gatherers, said Francis, adding that they weren't diabetic or obese.

"Diabetes and obesity are the impact of colonization and as Indigenous chef I am more than just feeding people," he said.

Understanding Our Food Systems is working with 14 road acces-

sible First Nation communities.

Jessica McLaughlin, co-ordinator of the Indigenous Food Circle, sees food security as a way of self-determination for the First Nation communities involved and a way to reclaim land through food systems.

"We don't tell communities what to do, we just ask them what they are doing and we help facilitate that," said McLaughlin.

For the three-day gathering, McLaughlin hopes to see a solidification of community plans being worked on, and then look at how communities can implement them.

Understanding Our Food Systems is part of a two-year project funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care that is about building food systems regionally and within First Nation communities.

"From the health unit's perspective, it is about improving health in these communities," said Vincent Ng, public health nutritionist with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.

Ng added that the focus is on reconnecting with traditional foods, culture and ways of eating.



Jessica McLaughlin, co-ordinator of the Indigenous Food Circle, splits wood to start a cooking fire at the Regional Food Distribution Association in Thunder Bay.

## Students build cat boxes



THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL/BRENT LINTON

Conner Silen visits with Parker, a rescue cat from Kitty Kare, during a kickstart class at Superior Collegiate and Vocational Institute on Tuesday. Students in the class have built cat boxes for cats to sleep in and play on, and the boxes will be sold. See the story — and what the boxes look like — on page A3.

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