

# Fort Frances Times

Look for the 50 Plus Page on B3!

SERVING THE RAINY RIVER DISTRICT



\$1.67 plus 8¢ HST, \$1.75 U.S.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2023

Printed in Canada Volume 128 Number 18

email: info@fortfrances.com

www.fortfrances.com

ISSN 0834-6283 PAP No. 07429



## INSIDE

### Routes Available Immediately!!

The Times is looking for carriers to deliver our newspapers every week! Most routes take less than an hour. Great for kids, adults and seniors.

**Earn cash while exercising!**

Email [circulation@fortfrances.com](mailto:circulation@fortfrances.com) or call 274-5373 today!



Row i Theatre director Trevor Barker, front left, and vocal director Renée Martin-Brown, front right, lead the cast of Barker's upcoming youth show *13 The Musical* in their first readthrough on Tuesday, August 29, 2023 at Fort Frances High School. The show is scheduled to run at the Townshend Theatre in late November.

— Ken Kellar photo

## Young talent getting the chance to shine with *13 The Musical*

By Ken Kellar

Staff writer  
[kkellar@fortfrances.com](mailto:kkellar@fortfrances.com)

A local music teacher is ensuring young performers in the district get their chance to shine on a stage near you this fall.

Trevor Barker, piano teacher and the man behind Row i Theatre Company, is once again gracing the Townshend

Theatre stage with another of his productions. However, unlike last year's production of *The Drowsy Chaperone*, this show will feature the talents of younger performers as they step up to perform *13 The Musical*, a 2008 musical written by Jason Robert Brown, Dan Elish, and Robert Horn.

While this is not Barker's first local show exclusively star-

ring younger performers, it is the first he's done since *A Charlie Brown Christmas* in 2019, and something he's been keen to do again.

"I like working with all ages. I've been wanting to find the right youth show since 2019 after I directed *A Charlie Brown Christmas*," Barker said.

"I will always try to find a balance between directing

youth shows, and directing adult shows."

Barker noted he has been a fan of the musical since first listening to it in 2008 and has been working towards directing it since then.

The musical itself centres around a young Jewish boy from New York City who is whisked away from the Big Apple and relocated to a small

Indiana town on the cusp of his 13th Birthday and Bar Mitzvah.

"*13 The Musical* is a coming-of-age story about a New York City kid named Evan Goldman," Barker said.

"He's just trying to make it through his day to day life. With his friendships, and fitting in, homework, chores, and the pressures of being a pre-teen.

Please see "Musical" on A3



### Firefighters needed

Emo's new station chief is helping to spread the word — they need volunteers to help keep the community protected. The Emo department currently has nine people on its roster.

### See story on A7



### Fair Queens in the spotlight

Isabelle Meeks was crowned Emo Fair Queen on August 17 with the incumbent Mickenna Ryll handing off the cape and tiara.

### See more on B8

## Aquafit certification still in process, swim lessons begin soon

By Elisa Nguyen  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter  
[enguyen@fortfrances.com](mailto:enguyen@fortfrances.com)

The Fort Frances Memorial Sports Centre says they are still in the process of training a certified instructor for Aquafit classes.

"We are working on enrolling a few of our staff in the necessary training programs for Aquafit certification and are looking forward to offering this program to the community as soon as we are able to," said Nathan Young, recreation and culture manager.

Aquafit classes were initially cancelled in December 2022. The town hoped to resume the program shortly but soon realized it would be necessary to have someone trained.

In an earlier interview with the Times, former recreation and culture manager Tyler Young said they expected to get the program running by early June this year.

"One of our full-time staff members is completing the course to be trained as an Aquafit instructor,"

said the former manager. "She should be finished by the end of this month and we expect to resume Aquafit in early June."

Nevertheless, Young says the centre will keep the community informed about future program offerings as soon as they can.

"At this point we are still working on completing the required certifications to offer these classes. We will announce these programs to the community once we are ready to offer them," Young said.

Swim lessons were recently added to the Fall program offerings with the first lesson set to begin on September 5.

The centre is looking at roughly 150 swim lesson students entering the new season.

"Things have been going well," said Young. "We have been able to add programs to the schedule to accommodate our waitlist and provide lessons to all that signed up in the first week. We are still reaching out to the waitlists to complete the enrollment process."

visit us online [www.fftimes.com](http://www.fftimes.com)

## Coyle to be sentenced in coming months

By Allan Bradbury  
Staff Writer  
[abraddbury@fortfrances.com](mailto:abraddbury@fortfrances.com)

Justice Pieter Joubert reserved his decision for a later date after an all-day sentencing hearing Monday in the Ontario Court of Justice in Fort Frances. Lindsey Coyle pleaded guilty to Criminal Negligence Causing Death almost a year prior to Monday's hearing.

Over the course of the day, family members of the late Hermina Fletcher gave statements about the impact of the crime on their lives.

Fletcher's granddaughters Caitlyn and Melissa, son Melvin Fletcher Jr., and former daughter-in-law Susanne Bragg all testified to the impact losing Hermina has had on them. Statements were also read by Hermina's great niece on behalf of her sister and brother in law as well as two other nieces.

According to the agreed statement of facts, Coyle was employed as a registered practical nurse at La Verendrye Hospital when she altered Hermina Fletcher's chart so she could steal morphine for her own personal use.

As a result of the changed report, which was left with the increased dosage, Hermina received two 10 milligram doses of morphine the evening of January 3, 2015.

Hermina lost consciousness that night and died the next day on Jan. 4, 2015 shortly after 6 a.m.

The agreed statement also says, "Dr. Michael Wilson, the Regional Coroner stated in a report that on a balance of prob-

abilities the death was due to morphine toxicity... Dr. Alfredo Walker, a forensic pathologist of the Ontario Forensic Pathology Service prepared a medical legal opinion on the death of Mrs. Fletcher. His conclusion was that the victim likely died from acute morphine toxicity."

In the family's victim impact statements, there was a running theme of mistrust towards the health care system since Fletcher's death.

"I don't think I can ever feel a hospital is safe again," Melissa Fletcher said.

Melvin Fletcher Jr. recounted a recent hospital stay saying he wanted to check each pill he was given by nurses and would not accept a morphine drip. He also added that his father who had lived through the death of his wife would not go to a hospital as his health failed in his last days.

The family members also recounted Hermina's love for her family and community.

"Grandma could cure anything with brown sugar and chocolate chips," Melissa Fletcher said.

Family members also pointed to a lack of remorse on Coyle's behalf, recalling Coyle's attitude at her plea hearing.

"I did see how you smiled when you turned and talked to the people behind you when you pled guilty," Melvin Fletcher Jr. said. "I had a hard time to hold my anger in. I can't believe you don't even have the common sense to fake any kind of remorse."

In submissions Coyle's defence lawyer, Barry Sinder, argued for a suspended sentence

saying that if Coyle were to violate the terms of the suspended sentence she could be resented to jail time.

Sinder said that the very fact that Coyle pleaded guilty was a sign of her remorse and also added that because Coyle was an addict there is not as much moral culpability which should be seen as a mitigating factor. He also argued that Coyle's three young children need their mother to be their caretaker as well.

Sinder also told the judge the onus was on Coyle's colleagues to ensure the patient was receiving the right amount of morphine.

Crown attorney David Kirk argued that Coyle's crime was a "devastating breach of trust," both of Hermina and her family's, and her colleagues who would not expect to have to ensure the morphine dosages on charts are correct.

"To suggest that the other nurse coming in to replace the offender bears some responsibility for the death of Hermina is repugnant," Kirk said.

He also noted that it was likely that Coyle had created a pattern of this type of drug theft, saying that an extended period of stealing drugs and getting away with it likely only ended because Hermina Fletcher died as a result of Coyle's actions.

Kirk quoted Coyle saying, "I was high as a kite many times at work."

Kirk argued that a crime such as this requires a sentence that would deter potential future offenders.

Please see "Estate" on A3

**Rob & Kathleen are here to help!**

**Borderland JEWELRY**

We specialize in:

- In-House Jewellery Repair
- Creation of Custom Jewellery
- Jewellery Sales
- Buying & Selling Gold/Silver

324 3rd Street International Falls, MN - 218-283-4701

Customer satisfaction guaranteed.

**RON'S AUTOBODY**

Ministry of Environment Licensed and Approved Facility

- Insurance Company Recommended • Lifetime Paint Warranty
- Complete Autoglass Replacement

Call 807-274-4400 After Hours: 807-274-5497  
Email: [ryellowega@hotmail.com](mailto:ryellowega@hotmail.com)  
990 McIrvine Road, Fort Frances, Ontario P9A 3W5

"Our reputation is your guarantee"

# Musical offers alternative for youth not as interested in athletics

More from A1

His parents then tell him that they're getting a divorce and he's moving with his mother to Indiana. So that adds another layer of hardships for Evan as he's trying to navigate his new town and new school. I was already a fan of the writer Jason Robert Brown, and was very familiar with his shows *The Last 5 Years*, *Parade*, and *Songs From A New World*. So the idea of a kids show written by my favourite writer was exciting. I think now is the right time to produce it because our district has a lot of young talent that are eager to be onstage. [There are] a lot of great young performers with limited opportunities."

While high school aged students can take part in Fort Frances High School's various shows, and adults also have Barker, Fort Frances Little Theatre and other independent playwrights at their backs, until now it's been much more rare to see opportunities for those younger performers in the district outside of the Rainy River District Festival of the Performing Arts, or perhaps a show put on by classrooms at one of the elementary schools. As such, the response Barker got when he set up audition times was overwhelmingly positive and energetic.

"I love audition days," he said. "A lot of nerves are floating around the room, but there's also excitement. You're trying to

get the sense of an individual's skill set in five to 10 minutes. I asked everyone who was interested in auditioning to prepare a song and a monologue. Or they could choose to prepare a song, and read an excerpt from the *13 The Musical* script. After the casting day is done, I get input from my team. I then send 'casting proposals' to each cast member who got a part."

The final cast list is made up of a mix of experienced performers who will be recognizable to many in the district, as well as some first timers who wanted to try their hand at being in a show, but working with a younger cast isn't all that different from working with an adult one, as far as Barker is concerned.

"Each cast is unique," Barker said.

"In general, I find all casts of all ages have an electricity about them. 95 per cent are really excited to be there. Younger casts have a bit more energy as they're bouncing through the doors. Adults bounce less. They're tired. Both adults and children are the same in that they need to be reminded to practice, drink water, and get sleep."

Barker said he wanted to make sure that youth in the district who weren't interested in sports had an alternative that would be as meaningful to them as a hockey team would be to a young athlete, giving

them something to be part of until they reach high school age and can be part of those shows. However, he's also quick to note that he can't put these kinds of shows on without help, something which he finds himself with plenty of, helping to ensure these young performers will have an all-star team behind them to help them make their version of *13 The Musical* the best it can be.

"I couldn't do this production without my incredible team," Barker said.

"A lot of the same team as *The Drowsy Chaperone* is involved with this production. Renée Martin-Brown is back to vocal direct, Catherine Bruyere and Caren Fagherdahl are our costume ladies, Inno Laur is in charge of building sets, Cynthia Hudson is choreographing, and Sara Empey is our stage manager, and we have many other volunteers who are very generous with their time, energy and efforts."

Rehearsals are about to get underway in preparation for a late November run, and Barker said that tickets for the show should become available for purchase closer to the end of September. Anyone interested in following along with the show's production can follow the Row i Theatre Facebook page.

# Estate also pursuing civil case against Coyle, Riverside

More from A1

"This case calls for a sentence of real jail. Nothing short of that can reflect the gravity of the circumstances of this case," Kirk said. "Simply, a suspended sentence is of no consequence for the actions that have taken place."

He also noted that Coyle had pleaded guilty to a charge of failure to comply with a court order that was broken when Coyle was discovered to be under the influence of alcohol with her children in her care.

After the lawyers' submissions, Justice Joubert gave Coyle the opportunity to address the court.

Coyle said she'd never expected to become an addict and she was trying to take responsibility for her actions.

"I hope that moving forward I can only make better

decisions and I am given the opportunity to do that for my children," she said. "I would just like to apologize one more time to my community, my coworkers and patients, and the families. I know that's not good enough, but that's what I have to say."

A date for sentencing will be set on September 12 which will come in October or November as scheduling for all involved parties permits.

Law firm Judson Howie LLP is representing the surviving family members of Hermina Fletcher in a civil suit against Coyle and Riverside Health Care. On Tuesday, the firm announced that the family has written to Ontario health minister Sylvia Jones requesting that the ministry conduct an investigation of La Verendrye Hospital in Fort Frances.

"The Fletchers have requested that the Minister of Health

facilitate an investigation under section 8 of the *Public Hospitals Act*, which allows for investigation and reporting on 'the quality of the management and administration of a hospital, the quality of the care and treatment of patients in a hospital or any other matter relating to a hospital where the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers it in the public interest to do so,'" said the release.

The Fletchers have requested that "the investigator's report ought to include policy recommendations to government and hospitals to improve safeguards and increase victim transparency into the details of professional discipline matters arising from serious and life-threatening misconduct. We also suggest that impacted patients, families of victims, and health care workers be contacted as part of this process."

## See us for... Purchase Orders & Invoices

807-274-5373 • 1-800-465-8508 • www.timesprinting.ca

# BINGO

## HAGI TV Bingo

Cards will be available for purchase in Fort Frances!

**Purchase your Bingo Cards at SKI'S VARIETY**  
located at 508 Second St. East, Fort Frances

Cards will be available starting Tuesday, September 5th, 2023

Each 9 card Sheet is \$6.00 and offers a chance to

**WIN \$3300 for Full House Game**      **Additional 2 Super Bingo Full House Games prize \$5000.00**

100% of the proceeds from HAGI TV Bingo stay in Northwestern Ontario and are used to support various programs and services which work to improve the quality of life for persons with a disability, including seniors. Each year HAGI TV Bingo supports the Wilderness Discovery Centre, a wheelchair accessible camp on Lake Shebandowan. The experience allows individuals with disabilities to participate in activities such as swimming, fishing, and boating, which they may not have otherwise had the opportunity to do. As well, HAGI TV Bingo gifts local food banks and other charitable organizations.

Replaced the 4-Corner Game with the Letter H Game

Game 1 of the 20th Season of HAGI TV Bingo

**Begins Saturday, September 9th, 6pm EDT** and can be seen on T Bay Tel Digital, CKPR channel number 205 and CHFD 215 Shaw Direct advanced line up CKPR 148 and CHFD 147, Bell 1066 CKPR and 1065 CHFD

**PRIZE Value \$200.00**

# GLOW

CMHA Fort Frances Branch

## 8TH ANNUAL GLOW RUN

### STEPS AGAINST STIGMA

#### SAVE THE DATE!!!

**Thursday Oct. 5, 2023**  
**7:00 p.m. (details to follow)**  
In honour of Mental Illness Awareness Week (October 2-8, 2023)

## Sweep into a new season!

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
Wednesday, September 20th at 6:30pm  
Upstairs at the Curling Club  
Proxy votes will be available on the website.

**ONLINE REGISTRATION** Individual Registration for all Leagues will run from September 1st to the 10th with payment by e-transfer.

**IN PERSON REGISTRATION** for all Leagues will run September 12th and 13th at the club from 6:30 pm to 8:00pm.

[curlfortfrances.com](http://curlfortfrances.com) or call 274-6667 & leave message



## Bennett Lincoln Taylor

Born July 4, 2023 weighing 6 lbs.

Proud parents  
Faith Rydoell and Tristan Taylor  
of Mitaanjigamingi First Nations.



## Call for Referees

Fort Frances Minor Hockey is seeking Senior and Junior officials for the 2023/2024 season.



Previous refereeing experience is an asset, however online courses are available, and in all cases mentoring is provided.

**We have openings for unlimited Junior Officials and unlimited number of Senior Officials.**  
(Senior officials will be required to provide a criminal reference check.)

Monetary compensation is paid on a per game basis.

For more information please contact  
Fort Frances Minor Hockey Referee-in-Chief  
Matt McLellan at 271-4411.



## Bill Shine

is turning **90!**

Please join us for a come and go celebration!

When: Sunday, September 3  
Time: 2:00pm to 4:00pm  
Where: Shine Residence  
1045 River Road West

No gifts please - your presence is already a gift.  
We hope to see you there!

## MOOD WALK

An opportunity for physical and mental well-being  
**Get active, explore nature and reconnect.**

Mood Walks is an eight-week walking program which promotes both physical and mental well-being. Walking combines physical activity with exposure to nature and has proven benefits for mental and physical health. Join a group of 8-12 people and experience the healing effects of nature while engaging in your community.

FREE REGISTRATION. VISIT [MOODWALKS.CA](http://MOODWALKS.CA) FOR MORE INFORMATION.


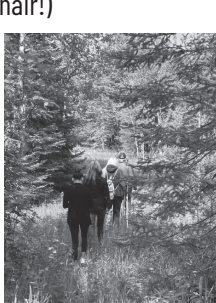
**Date & Time:** September 14th at 1:00pm Walking for 8 weeks, ending Oct. 26. Routes will vary. Light-moderate pace, ~5km/hr.

**Location:** Meet at the Point Camp Office (near the red chair!) (Sept 14th). We will be walking along the Waterfront - The walk will vary each week!

**Contact:** Norma Reather, 807-274-2347 ext 211 or Tamara Robson 807-274-2347 ext 212

We will be accepting the first 12 registrants!

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

## Thank You!

Backpacks for Kids organizers Kathy Lampi and Kelsey Langtry, along with Fort Frances Family Dentists would like to extend great thanks to all those who donated to make our 10th year a success.

Donations made to this amazing program stuffed

# 265 BACKPACKS

for the children in the Rainy River District and surrounding areas.

**A Special Thank You** to the following amazing people:

- Paige Anderson who I think stuffed 80% of the back packs
- Our backpack stuffers Danielle DeGagne, Casandra Gilbert
- To Dawn and her staff at The Bargain Shop for everything you do to help us out each year!
- Family and Children Services and Weechi-It-Te-Win Family Services

**And the following business and individuals:**

Badiuk Equipment	NCDS
Boston Pizza Fort Frances	New Gold Inc.
-Dale & Liz	Northwest Community Legal Clinic
Causeway Insurance	Ron's Autobody
C-Tech Mechanical	Royal Bank
Couching Band Office	Tess's Kitchen
Flint House - Duane & Grace	Tompkins Home Hardware
Fort Frances Dental Centre	Westland Insurance
Fort Frances General Supply	Westside Bait and Tackle
Gizhewaadiziwin Health Access Centre	Wilson Stationary
Green's BrandSource Furnishings	Diane Hoffman
Kaemingh Fuels	Barb Monaghan
La Place Rendezvous	Darcy Byrnes
Ladies Auxiliary Legion	Susan Allison
Lawrence Phillips	Kathy Matheson
Leons	Sandy Bliss-McNay
Lowerys	Diane Maxey
ML Caron	Darcy Oliver
The Fort Frances Lions Club	Karen & William Hammond

**A special thanks** to all who donated at The Bargain Shop drop off location, to Daniel at The Fort Frances Times and B93 The Border

## GEAR UP FOR BACK 2 SCHOOL

# SHOP OUR END OF SEASON SALE

## SAVE UP TO 50% OFF

PRICES AS MARKED. ALL CLEARANCE IS FINAL SALE.



**McTAGGARTS** SINCE 1922  
228 Scott St. Fort Frances

**TAGGS Source for sports**  
130 Second St. Fort Frances