

PERTH NEWS BRIEFS

Window smashed

At 2:30 a.m. on Saturday, July 17, Perth Police responded to a 911 call at a Gore Street business. A customer got angry when the store clerk asked for proof of age prior to a purchase. The customer then fled the store smashing the front window on the way out. The culprit is described as a white male, having tattoos down his arm, wearing a dark coloured t-shirt and dark coloured cap.

Anyone who may have information concerning this incident of mischief is asked to call the Perth Police Service at 613-267-3131.

Township compiles list of veterans

Tay Valley Township is currently compiling a list of all war veterans, including those who have served in either World Wars, The Korean War and subsequent wars.

As a recent amalgamation of former South Sherbrooke, North Burgess and Bathurst Townships, Tay Valley would like to honour all residents who died while serving their country by immortalizing them with a commemorative plaque outside our newly renovated Municipal Office. This memorial will stand as a reminder of the sacrifice Tay Valley's men and women have made.

The township will be working with other local sources such as the archives and churches. A preliminary list of former war veterans has been compiled, and the process of confirming and adding names has begun. Any persons with information regarding former war veterans from any of the three founding townships is asked to contact Tay Valley Township.

Talking to young people

Effective ways to talk to youth about drugs and alcohol will be the focus of two workshops at the YAK Youth Centre Wednesday, July 28 and Thursday, July 29.

Entirely led by youth and sponsored by this year's Skills Links group, the workshops are geared toward service providers and parents. The workshop for service providers will run from 9:30 a.m. to approximately 12:30 p.m. July 28. The parents' workshop is set for 7:30 to 9 p.m. July 29.

The YAK Youth Centre is located at 1 Sherbrooke St. East in Perth.

Pirates of Penzance this week

Perth Academy of Musical Theatre will present Gilbert & Sullivan's 'The Pirates of Penzance' this Thursday, July 22, at 7 p.m., Friday, July 23 at 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. The shows take place at the Myriad Centre for the Arts in the Old Perth Shoe Factory, 1 Sherbrooke St., Perth.

Tickets are \$10 each (HST included) and are available at the door or by calling 613-267-9610 with a credit card number.

Annual tournament filling up fast

The Perth and District Chamber of Commerce has announced that there is room for only four more teams for the annual Dorothy Griffith Memorial Golf Tournament.

The tournament will take place Wednesday, Aug. 18 at the Perth Golf Course.

To register contact the chamber office at 613-267-3200.

FESTIVAL

• From front page

sample of every volunteer t-shirt from 1991 to 2010 was on display, along with a slide show of pictures from past festivals.

The first festival was organized as part of the town's 175th anniversary celebrations, and was so successful that organizers decided to bring it back the following year and it quickly became an annual tradition.

The chairman confirmed that the 2010 edition went

very smoothly. "There are always some hitches and glitches backstage, but when you're out front enjoying the music as part of the crowd, you don't really see that," said McKenty.

Plans for 2011 will be taking shape soon. "Believe it or not, we meet today," McKenty said Monday morning. "You want to get the best that's out there, so you have to start planning early."

LYME

• From front page

followed when Saunders began studies toward a master of science degree in nursing at the University of Ottawa in September and had difficulty navigating the amphitheatre steps. Her professors advised her to take leave until her health problems were worked out, and a long round of testing began in an effort to diagnose the problem.

After an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) test in October came back negative, Saunders' doctor wondered if the problem might be stress, and referred her to a psychologist. The psychologist decided she was fine, and said, "Go back to work, it'll be good for you."

Returning to work unable to walk or speak normally, Saunders was given a job typing, where she wouldn't have to do either. "Basically," she said, "my central nervous system was being attacked."

Saunders began to experience difficulties speaking the day after she received an H1N1 flu vaccination on Oct. 29. The vaccination was mandatory due to her job at the hospital, but is only supposed to be given to healthy individuals. "I had Lyme disease then and the vaccination must have taxed my system enough to cause significant problems with my speech," she said.

In December Saunders saw an ear, nose and throat specialist who immediately said she appeared to have a

neurological problem and wanted to test for Lyme disease. An Elisa blood test, the approved Canadian test for Lyme disease, was ordered, but came back negative. Saunders was not informed that the test produces false negative results 50 per cent of the time.

A second MRI in December also produced a negative result. The results of a lumbar puncture in January 2010 proved inconclusive. A series of EMGs, nerve conduction studies, also came back negative, as did a third MRI in March. In the meantime, Saunders had stopped working for good in February.

By April, she said, "My parents were beside themselves." They took her to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, a facility with a world-wide reputation for diagnosing diseases, but returned without a final diagnosis.

It was decided that another test of Lyme disease was required. The Western Blot test, which costs \$1,000 and requires a requisition from a doctor, was performed in California (at the IGenex lab). The results came back positive, but because she did not have the typical symptoms of the disease, her doctor was unwilling to conclude that she had Lyme disease.

At this point, said Saunders, "my symptoms were never addressed. I wanted a Lyme-literate doctor."

After doing some

research on her own, Saunders' journey led her to Dr. Steven Bock of Rhinebeck, NY. "He tells me, 'you're really sick,'" she recalled. Bock, who has 30 years' experience with Lyme disease told her, "I've never seen so many antibodies in a person's blood work as in yours."

With a firm diagnosis, Saunders was prescribed antibiotic treatment. As one Ontario government publication on Lyme disease notes, "The earlier treatment is received, the better." Saunders says the lengthy delay in diagnosing her condition is not the fault of her doctors, who she said lacked knowledge to diagnose and treat Lyme disease.

"Lyme disease affects people in many different ways," said Saunders. "It's not the doctors' fault; it's that they rely on tests. If the test is negative, you don't have it. I'm very grateful, not angry."

Her blood serology shows Saunders was bitten by something - likely a tick - which gave her the infection. In addition to Lyme disease she has three coinfections Babesia Duncan, Ehrlichia, and Bartonella.

After daily intravenous antibiotic treatments began, Saunders suddenly found herself able to run six kilometers for the first time in many months. Unfortunately, she has been unable to do so since. She has noticed a marked improvement in her ability

to speak after three weeks of treatment, and is looking forward to other improvements. Saunders said she has been fortunate not to experience the chronic pain reported by other disease sufferers. The key to successful recovery, she says, is a combination of antibiotics and homeopathic methods. Saunders hopes to bring Bock to Perth in the fall to make a presentation to local health care providers on the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease.

Education needed

Another Lyme disease sufferer, Esther Anne Davies of Manotick, says "both the province and the federal government need to be doing more to educate and train doctors to deal properly with this disease."

"My word for this is 'crazy,' because I've been made to feel that maybe I am," said Saunders. "We need to be more educated and open-minded about peoples' health."

Saunders has been told to expect a full recovery, although there is no way to predict how long that will take. At this point, her oldest son Logan's dream is to compete in the Iron Man triathlon with her in 2014, when he turns 18.

Saunders says the support of the community, her family, her church, and especially her three children, has been vital: "If I didn't have them, I wouldn't be here."

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