

comment

THE BARRIE EXAMINER

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Hockey Night a big score

I believe Barrie is a very special place. I believe we have a hospital filled with incredible nurses, support staff and doctors and I believe the Royal Victoria Hospital's Regional Cancer Center will make our city even better by having better care closer to home.



Patrick Brown
PARLIAMENT HILL

I cannot fully express my heartfelt thanks to so many involved with Hockey Night in Barrie. This year's charity hockey game in support of the RVH was again a tremendous success, garnering both national and international attention. It has become more than just a hockey game; it has become an important cultural event. Where else on the planet but Barrie can you get 5,000 people to pack into an arena on a hot summer night in August to watch a charity hockey game?

Raising more than \$200,000 in one night is a wonderful achievement, but there are many months of planning involved before the puck is dropped and untold sacrifices by so many dedicated individuals that had to happen first. These folks continually rose to the occasion and went well beyond the call of duty.

Player liaisons like Gary Leeman and Hall of Famer Mike Gartner were constantly in contact with me and were vital in organizing talent for the game. They were so gracious in giving of themselves. The amazing Corson/Tucker family signed on from the get-go and the incomparable Jennifer Robinson was forefront in our committee meetings and was personally responsible for getting Kurt Browning to play. For those who were there last Thursday night, it was evident just how much energy Kurt brought to the venue. Coun. Michael Prowse took it upon himself to quietly donate hundreds of Hockey Night in Barrie hats and T-shirts and Coun. Alex Nuttall raised more than \$15,000 himself when he was only asked to raise \$3,000. Barrie Ball Hockey was instrumental in organizing, fundraising and served as our title sponsor. Great job again this year by Brian Broley, Aaron Lutes and their team.

Base Borden was well represented in the crowd and their enthusiastic voices could be heard in unison throughout the evening. Base Commander J.P. Meloche strapped on the blades as a player and chased the puck up and down the ice like a teenager. Minister of Defence Peter MacKay played his heart out, and was beaming from ear to ear after scoring a highlight reel goal during the shootout competition. It was marvellous to have the prime minister's participation and I was so pleased to see him stay behind the bench for the entire game and beyond, even though his lead team had informed us beforehand that he could not stay past the second period. Having Don Cherry coach was also a special treat. His graciousness knows no boundaries. Don is truly a national treasure.

Having Duncan Coutts, bassist from Our Lady Peace and internationally renowned vocalist Michael Burgess playing in the game added a unique entertainment flavour to the lineup. Burgess also beautifully sang the national anthem and Alan Frew (Glass Tiger) opened the evening by singing *I Believe*, the song he wrote for the Vancouver Olympics. His rendition was passionate, powerful and encapsulated the spirit of the evening.

All these people graciously gave of themselves without asking for anything in return, not even tickets for their friends and family. They were a big part of how we were able to maximize the amount we could raise in one night. The fans in attendance at the Molson Centre — the ticket buyers, — never let us down. You came through for your hospital, your city and you should be filled with pride. Thank-you.

Since the game, I have been contacted by some of the foremost hockey players in the world who saw or read about the game. They excitedly expressed their desire to be involved next year. Next year's event should be even bigger.

Patrick Brown is Barrie's MP



canoe.ca

BLOGS

Harper right to take a hard line on Tamils
at blog.canoe.ca

pointofview

Let mixed martial artists pay their own health care costs

Few things are as exhilarating as watching a brawl unfold before your eyes.

Two men beating each other to a pulp brings out the bloodlust in a lot of people. Nothing new there. It is the same thrill the ancient Romans experienced when they gathered to watch gladiators battle each other to the death.

We have often congratulated ourselves for evolving beyond this. But as recent events illustrate, we are not as far removed from this savagery as we think.

Mixed martial arts has emerged as a serious challenge to civility in recent years. It has made surprising inroads. Mixed martial arts events are now sanctioned in seven Canadian provinces and 46 states in America.

The latest to cave is Ontario. The McGuinty government announced last week that the first sanctioned event will be held next year.

This is unfortunate on a number of levels. However, given the crass political considerations that motivate this government, its arrival was perhaps inevitable.

For one, mixed martial arts is big business and a great source of tax revenue. No doubt the bean counters at Queen's Park were tired of seeing their share bypass the province.

As well, Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak had promised to sanction human cockfighting if elected next year. Covering his flank, Premier Dalton McGuinty decided to toss some red meat of his own.

The premier's decision is regrettable in light of the real concerns that have emerged regarding sports injuries, concussions in particular.

There has been a lot of hand-wringing in recent years over the amount of violence and head-hunting in professional hockey. Yet Ontario's government turns around and gives its blessing to an activity that is nothing but violence and head-hunting minus the shinny.

Ontario is endorsing a dubious pursuit. A lot of young people will be drawn to MMA because of the hype, the glitz, the money and the potential for fame. Many will throw themselves into it with enthusiasm. Unfortunately, few will distinguish themselves. Along the way, many will be damaged both mentally and physically.

At the very least — if we must have mixed martial arts — we need a way to tax the promoters and participants so that the costs they impose on our health-care system are borne solely by themselves.

— Monte Sonnenberg

Partnerships key to county

A new joint emergency services facility is under construction in Clearview Township, the latest example of a partnership that is working for the greater good of Simcoe County residents.

When completed, the new facility will meet the



Cal Patterson
SIMCOE COUNTY

needs of local paramedic, fire and police services along with municipal emergency operations in one location. By engaging in this joint venture with Clearview Township, the county is ensuring efficiencies and effectiveness. There are many benefits derived from working together on this project, not the least of which are the financial savings. We are building just one facility when in the past, the practice was to build three separate service facilities. That means we are realizing tremendous savings by building four walls to house three service providers that will work from this central location.

Simcoe County and the Township of Clearview engaged in the joint venture for the cost efficiencies and other benefits, including improved communications and strengthened partnerships.

The emergency service facility under construction at the eastern edge of Stayner is a major accomplishment that will provide a satellite office for Huronia West OPP, which currently has its main detachment in Wasaga Beach and a small office at the township office in Stayner.

It will also be the new home of Station One for the Clearview Fire Department, which currently is housed in an aging building in Stayner.

As well, the site will provide a permanent station for the Simcoe County paramedic service. Currently, the county has no permanent paramedic facility in Clearview, the closest being Angus, Wasaga Beach and Collingwood. Similar to the OPP, paramedic services work out of a small space at the township office in Stayner.

The county assumed direct delivery of paramedic services in 2004 and continues to provide 24/7 service. Since that time services have been and will continue to be enhanced, providing additional life-saving medical interventions for county residents and its visitors.

As part of the service delivery, the department provides quality assurance reviews, health and safety training and audits, as well as planning and delivering ongoing continuing education and medical training.

As with many areas of the county, community partnerships play a key role in paramedic services success.

On Feb. 25, 2010, Simcoe County council approved the deployment of an advanced care paramedics (ACP) program for the county. Starting in the fall of 2010 the ACP program will expand the scope of practice of more than 50 county paramedics by the end of 2012.

Paramedics who complete ACP training will be equipped with enhanced critical-thinking and additional patient-care protocols. There will be up to 12 ACPs on the road in the county by the end of 2010.

While many of our residents meet our paramedics during an emergency situation, I invite everyone to learn about the contributions the service makes to our communities.

It has assisted in the establishment of an influenza assessment centre in the north end of Barrie in 2009.

There have been immunization clinics for both seasonal and H1N1 vaccination administration and more than 1,500 doses of vaccine delivered to paramedics, police, firefighters and vulnerable people

The public access defibrillator program continues to expand into schools and other sites. In 2009, this program trained 890 people and 80 automated external defibrillators were installed, bringing program totals up to more than 3,000 people trained and 234 units installed.

For more information about County of Simcoe paramedic services, visit simcoe.ca.

Cal Patterson is Simcoe County's warden



quote
of the day

We lost him, but a lot of people are showing how proud they are of him. Kevin died doing what he wanted to do and what he believed in."

Fred McKay, father of Pte. Kevin McKay, who was killed in the line of duty in Afghanistan in May.

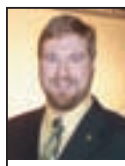
Critical Mass rides promoting pedal power

Last month I thrilled to take part in Barrie's first Critical Mass ride. And next Friday, I'll be at it again — with many of you, I hope.

Critical Mass is a fun, active, family-friendly way to build confidence in cycling and awareness in the community, especially amongst drivers. Too many citizens are afraid to ride their bikes on our streets because drivers don't pay them enough respect. Those that do ride face unacceptable risks.

Bike lanes are part of the solution. We already spend billions of dollars building roads; why can't we share them safely with other modes of transportation? I believe we can, and that's what Critical Mass is about.

Neither a protest nor a demonstration, it's a celebration of



Erich Jacoby-Hawkins
ROOT ISSUES

cycling as a mode of community transportation.

Here's how it works. On the last Friday of each month, participants meet at a central location and then just go for a ride together, wherever their whim takes them.

Last month we had close to 100 participants, and this month we expect more.

There really is nothing to match the exhilarating feeling of being part of a huge, supportive cycling group instead of facing hostile or indifferent traffic alone. Bikes fill the whole lane and spread over a block or more, and cars simply

"Cycling is a healthy, fun, and environmentally friendly way to travel, but it can't catch on if we live in fear of being cut down by our fellow traffic. Cycling together lets us overcome those fear through safety in numbers."

have to respect them as fellow vehicles and wait their turn. For a few short minutes, one day a month, the car is no longer king on our public streets.

We, too, are traffic. This event has special meaning for me. Almost two years ago, my cousin Sam was biking home in London from classes at Fanshawe College.

While waiting to make a legal left turn, he was struck from behind by a full-speed SUV whose driver apparently didn't notice him despite his reflectors. Bike helmets can't protect against this

kind of impact and he was killed instantly.

I hadn't ridden my bike since, until last month.

Sam's death didn't have to happen. Drivers need to know that cyclists are part of traffic and watch for them.

Cyclists should be able to trust drivers to see and respect them. We all deserve to share the roads that we all pay to build and maintain. That's a big part of what Critical Mass promotes.

Cycling is a healthy, fun, and environmentally friendly way to travel, but it can't catch on if we

live in fear of being cut down by our fellow traffic.

Cycling together lets us overcome those fears through safety in numbers, and creates the visibility to change attitudes.

On the last Friday of each month, Barrie's Critical Mass meets at the Spirit Catcher from 5:30 pm, then hits the streets at 6 to ride joyfully for about 90 minutes.

The ride is suitable for all levels of cyclist. You don't need to be a Lance Armstrong to come along. We adjust speed to suit the participants, and try to respect the rules of the road.

I really hope to see you there.

Erich Jacoby-Hawkins is an educator, father, volunteer, and politician. Comment on this and other Root Issues at www.ErichtheGreen.ca.