

OPINION



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Editorial

York Region's sports heroes make us immensely proud

**ISSUE: Region's top athletic
achievers deserve accolades
for their accomplishments.**

Like a good rock anthem
blasting through a stadium's
sound system, firing
up the fans, the recent
accomplishments of York
Region's athletes have us on our
feet, hooting and hollering.
This month alone, we have
reported on two phenom-
enal sports success stories in the
region.

First up, top NBA prospect
and Thornhill native Andrew
Wiggins is expected to go high in
the draft, if not first overall.

The city of Vaughan will hon-
our this achievement by naming
NBA draft day, June 26, Andrew
Wiggins Day.

In King Township, Olymp-
ic hockey gold medallist Alex
Pietrangelo, who helped Canada
to a perfect record in Sochi, will
be feted in July with a gold-medal
celebration.

Meanwhile, Canada's tennis
phenomenon, Thornhill native
Milos Raonic, hosts his Raonic
Race for Kids, a fundraiser that
benefits the Milos Raonic Foun-
dation and Tennis Canada's Let's
Make Tennis Matter for Kids
campaign.

Similarly, Richmond Hill's
native son, world figure-skating
champion Elvis Stojko, recently
provided the prize donation of a
skating show for the York Region
Abuse Program fundraising gala.
He also attended that event.

Then there's Canadian wom-
en's Olympic hockey champion
Gillian Apps, for whom a day in
Markham was named after her
Winter Olympics win.

And let's remember Olympic-
winner and King Township
resident Rosie MacLennan. The
township also hosted a mass
celebration for her stellar 2012
achievement.

Over in Stouffville, Keith Acton
has played and coached in the
NHL for more than 30 years.

He is also the associate coach

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of the Edmonton Oilers. Ice pads
at the Stouffville Clippers Com-
plex are named for him.

Speaking of ice, Holland Land-
ing's Sam Bennett, who plays for
the OHL's Kingston Frontenacs,
is the first overall prospect in the
NHL draft coming up June 27.
Vaughan's Michael Dal Colle, who
plays with the Oshawa Generals,
is rated fifth overall for the NHL
draft.

And let's not forget Stouffville's
Olympic trampoline medalist
Karen Cockburn. She was also
feted by the municipality with a
day held in her honour.

Finally, Newmarket skater
Gabby Daleman enjoyed a cel-
ebration in her honour for her
efforts at the Olympics this winter.

These local athletes have risen
to the top of their fields and stand
out as among the best in the
world, but they are by no means
the only local athletes who do us
proud.

There are also many, many
young athletes from our com-
munities who are impressive or
promising achievers.

What's more, it is not only
those who play in championships
or bring home medals who are a
source of pride to our community.

We want to take this opportu-
nity to congratulate all our sports
participants, who show commit-
ment, energy, determination,
tenacity and good sportsmanship
in all that they do.

And as the next round of ath-
letic endeavours are set to begin,
soccer and baseball spring to
mind, this is a good time to salute
them all.

**BOTTOM LINE: All who par-
ticipate in local sports deserve a
salute for energy, commitment.**

LETTER OF THE WEEK

MP's sponsorship appreciated

*Re: Timely call for political prayers in our
town, column by Jim Mason, May 22.*

Mr. Mason mentioned in his colum that
Mayor Wayne Emmerson spoke during the
prayer breakfast, but he did not see Oak
Ridges-Markham MP Paul Calandra at the
event.

Mr. Calandra was in Ottawa doing his
job.

He does sponsor a table at the event and

invites people to sit there.

Our sponsors are very important to the
breakfast as they, and host Station Creek
Golf Club, have helped keep the cost of a
ticket down to the same amount it has been
for several years.

We are already planning next year's
breakfast, and it is always held the Thursday
morning before the May long weekend.

DIANE WARD

WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE
PRAYER BREAKFAST

Fake 911 call put responders at risk

I was having a bonfire
this month, the allowable
size of one-metre squared.

Someone who doesn't
like me or doesn't like bon-
fires was driving by and
called in a fake call to 911
saying that my house was
on fire, presumably to get a
rise out of me for whatever
reason.

The caller said it was a
structure fire with occu-
pants, huge flames, with
black smoke. I was out
front beside the bonfire the
whole time. Small flames,
no smoke...

And not once did I see
anyone stop to see if we
were OK.

So not only did the fire-
fighters risk their lives and
others to try and get here,
I spoke to a couple of York
Regional Police officers
who risked their lives and
others to get here to save
us. They were in "emergen-
cy response mode". Lights
flashing, sirens full blast.

I would like this message
delivered to the citizens of
Whitchurch-Stouffville: Do
not use the emergency ser-
vices to get at someone or
something you do not like.

Someone could have
been killed that night by the
emergency responders trying
to get here to save us. How
absurd that someone would
waste our tax dollars and put
innocent lives at risk.

I hope the person who
called reads this and really
thinks about what they did.
Also, I think the fire depart-
ment should investigate
why this person would drive

by a house on fire, and not
stop. Quite odd.

NICK HOCHER

WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

Students can finish totem carving

As a totem carver, I was
recently honored to be invit-
ed as a guest artist to lead
the carve of a Totem by stu-
dents at a local school.

The outpouring of sup-
port and enthusiasm from
both within the school and
the community at large in
the creation of this magnifi-
cent work, inspired by Haida
art, was overwhelming.

While totem carving is a
global artform, the most rec-
ognized Canadian totems
are those of the west coast
tribes, among them Haida,
Tlingit and Kwakwaka'wakw.

The carving of towering
cedars bearing the unique
crests of each tribe sadly
almost became a lost art in
Canada, a result of Assim-
ilation Legislation intro-
duced in the 1800s and not
repealed until the 1950s. To
replicate the crests of these
or any other tribes or persons
would be unfathomable.

Totems are an artform
deserving of great respect.
There is a way to carve, there
is a process, which is diffi-
cult to explain but amazing
to experience, to honor the
artform, to understand his-
tory, to carve with respect,
to listen to the wood, to
allow the spirit to soar.

As this carve was an
extracurricular activity with
no mark, the 20 students
who were to participate
chose to invest themselves

in this amazing work, a
20-foot pole to be designed
and carved by the students,
then gifted to the school for
permanent placement.

The school is a tribe, a
family unto themselves.
Unique crests would be cre-
ated.

*It is indeed sad
for all involved
this amazing work
of art could not
get school board
approval...*

By creating five tribes of
three to five students with-
in the greater tribe, each
responsible for a three-foot
section from design through
completion, students would
all play an integral role in
the creation of an outstand-
ing collaborative work.

It is indeed sad for all
involved this amazing work
of art could not get school
board approval within suf-
ficient time to ensure the
integrity of the carve. While
this result will be disheart-
ening to many, I believe for
the students who were to
create this work, it must be
particularly difficult.

While unable to change
the outcome, I would like
to extend to those students
who would like to continue
their carving journey, my
invitation to come to my stu-
dio on their own time to do
just that. I may be reached
at 905-473-7014.

CARIN BACHER,
ONE HORSE FARM STUDIO
CEDAR VALLEY