

Opinion

MUSKOKA MOSAIC

Introducing Deena Brock

BY PAULA BOON

Three things have remained constant in Deena Brock's ever-changing life: her focus on family, her interest in business, and her passion for creating natural skin-care products.

Brock, who has been making and selling lotions for several decades, has a shop called Rose Petals upstairs in the courthouse building on Chaffey Street. "To me, a rose petal is the epitome of perfect skin. It's supple and soft," she says of the name.

She became interested in natural skin-care products as a teen, when her face reacted to a commercial lotion. "I started playing around with different recipes," Brock says.

During her twenties, when she lived and worked mainly in the Arctic, Brock could only study and read about essential oils and natural products. "But after moving south, I started to experiment and play again," she says. Soon friends, family and others began to buy her products.

Everything Brock sells is as natural as possible. "You could eat them. My kids are a testament to that," she says with a laugh, recounting how she once found her daughter snacking on an open pot of lip-soother.

Brock says she loves helping customers find just the right product for them. "I try to find out what people really need," she says. "I don't want them to spend money on things they can't use. It makes me feel good to help people. Maybe that's why my products work: because I'm making them with love."

As artistic and creative as she is, Brock also has an efficient, business-savvy side. Since May 2006, she has been a managing business consultant at the Muskoka Small Business Centre in Bracebridge. "Our focus is on startup and early growth," she says. Her duties include evaluating various aspects of businesses to identify strengths and weaknesses and day-to-day operation of the centre.

Brock began learning about small business as a young child. Her parents owned the Muskodeer Post, a store located on Hwy. 11 in Allensville until the late 1970s.

Brock helped out at the store, working the till from the age eight on. "Often my mother would put me on the till. She trusted me to make change properly," she says.

That same year, Brock began her first business. "I collected and polished pretty stones and sold them. I made enough to buy popsicles," she says, then glances at her shop's gemstone display. "It's funny: I've come full circle and am selling stones again."

Later, when Brock spent three summers as a historical interpreter at the then-Muskoka Pioneer Village, she usually manned the general store. "I always balanced," she says.

A few months after finishing high school, Brock headed for the Arctic, where her sister's husband was stationed in Inuvik. Over the next eight years or so, she worked in payroll for Health and Welfare Canada, at



the Canada Employment and Immigration Centre, and as an airport clerk for Transport Canada.

Brock's boss at the airport had a big impact on her. "He taught me not to take no for an answer," she says. "There's always a way around it," he said. "You can't be obnoxious, but fight for what you need." He was one of those people you remember forever and you draw on that strength."

Some of Brock's other career highlights include being acting manager at the pioneer village in the late '80s, starting an employment resource centre and business centre on Vancouver Island in the early '90s, revitalizing the Almaguin Highlands Information Centre so that it became profitable, and setting up and then running Huntsville's Employment Resource Centre in the late 90s. Subsequently she assisted in the setup of a non-profit corporation for environmental protection.

Brock, who lives in Huntsville, is also the mother of four children. "Family is hugely important to me," she says. "My kids range in age from 18 to five. They've kept me busy."

Brock doesn't mind having a lot to do. She simply wants to help as many people as she can. "I honestly believe we're here for a purpose," says Brock. "We just have to figure out what that purpose is and fulfill it."

Thanks to Evelyn Coker for suggesting that Deena Brock be profiled.

LETTERS

Planning seems to be lacking in excitement over G8 money

Just a few of things to note about this G-8 upgrading of services for our area.

1. Never ever forget that the money that is "flowing" will all be coming from taxpayers like you. While we, in Muskoka and the G-8 immediate area, will not foot this bill, the taxpayers in general will, and for the next project of this type, wherever that may be in this great big land of ours, we will be partially on the hook to create the funds to "flow" so freely.

2. One hopes that in all the rush, razzle dazzle and hoopla of this "flow" of cash to infrastructure, we will still have a few public works managers who will try to keep their eye on their "needs studies" so that the stuff that gets the fast fix is at least some of the stuff that needed to be fixed in the first place. Process and planning seem to be poor third cousins to the spending binge we

are entering.

3. Once all is built and done, it is our local tax base that must run whatever it is we have constructed.

Don't get me wrong, this spending binge is not necessarily a bad thing for our area. We will certainly make out well compared to some other areas of the country in the short term. It is just that I have never in my 55 or so years of life seen so much money spent so fast for such a short event and with such a minuscule amount of what appears to be "normal" planning.

Let's just hope that the few insiders who are spending all this really do know what they are doing with our money, because they sure as heck are not taking the time for much local input before the contracts are inked.

Brian Tapley
Dwight

Parry Sound-Muskoka needs to reconsider its choice for MP

Tony Clement professes to be an advocate for Northern Ontario. As the federal minister of industry and a cabinet minister, he is in a position to do good in our region. It is time to put his record under the microscope.

The following is a short list of his legacy in the north.

- He was part of the Ontario government that cancelled the Hwy. 69 expansion project in 1996, including the environmental assessment, putting us years behind.

- He is part of the government that decided that FedNor is not important enough to have a dedicated minister of state. Previous governments had such a minister.

- He turned down federal support for Sudbury's Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation (CEMI), a private/public venture that has so far attracted over \$20-million of investment and a vital component in Sudbury's mining cluster.

- He approved federal funding for a mining research centre in Toronto to the outrage of the entire city of greater Sudbury.

- He allowed Xstrata to break its agreement not to lay off employees in Sudbury for three years, claiming that he obtained new promises from the company (when in fact

the company had already committed to those items).

- He refused to disclose the contents of Vale Inco and Xstrata's agreements with the federal government, claiming that these agreements cannot legally be disclosed (he failed to read the exceptions in subsection 36(4) of the Investment Canada Act).

- He engaged in partisan bickering with the Ontario government. For example, released a nonsense letter to the editor in Sudbury stating that Minister Bartolucci did not have contact with FedNor.

I believe it is time for Parry Sound-Muskoka to reconsider its choice for MP. Mr. Clement has not done anything significant in Parry Sound-Muskoka to help diversify the economy and create jobs. Rather, he is stifling the north by refusing to support our industrial capacity.

Make no mistake. We need representation in this region with the north's best interests in mind, not his. Support someone actually from the region with the region's interests at heart.

Ryan Minor
Sudbury

Canada shouldn't sell off any part of atomic energy company

In either case, the newly hatched and desperate scheme of selling off any part of Atomic Energy of Canada (AECL) has to be the most regressive political danger to Canada's future ever contemplated by any Canadian political party in our history.

It shades even the Avro Arrow selloff of Canadian expertise and industry. It becomes only a question of whether it is A, an outstanding case of utter stupidity or B, political policy influenced by interests other than those best for our national integrity and benefit.

Dealing with the first question, AECL has been funded for all time by our taxes and has proven to be the most successful atomic energy plant producer in the world and is recognized as such by the rest of the world.

Since all scientific fact states clearly that our environment and life on earth will depend on nuclear energy from this point in time, Canada, with its enormous supply of uranium and the world's leading technology, can become the world's major energy answer to our planet's future. AECL has already proven and validated processes for totally safe disposal of any waste.

The operational safety of the Candu reactors is proven by the large number of them in operation throughout the world. To sell any part of this national treasure because our present government is incapable of proper financial management to maintain equipment as at Chalk River and to sell it at low market extreme must boggle the mind of all thinking Canadians.

Responsibly running a government cannot and must not be only about buying votes with voter income tax deductions. Proposing to sell such a national investment in our future in a give-away market recession demands the question as to whether this totally irrational move is intended to provide desperate funding for the ever-changing budget reports. Sounds to me like a repeat of the tactic of a previous provincial government with disastrous financial results

to our province.

Selling public assets and investments to cover budget miscalculation or mistakes seems to be a Conservative desperation tactic. Perhaps a name change would be in order and I would suggest the much more appropriate "Regressive Conservative Party" with the motto: "Everything for sale, cheap."

Dealing with the second question and remembering the Fifth Estate production on political financing in Canada by American oil interests, it is clear that the privatization of our national AECL investment would be of immense financial benefit to any oil interest, such as Exxon, who are now firmly in control of our total oil production.

With some 12 years' experience within that industry at management levels, I find much to believe in the Fifth Estate's findings and opinions of American financial intrusion in our political process. It begs the realization as to what a strategic advantage it would be to be able to politically control both the development of nuclear-powered energy and the continuation of the oil sands with astounding profits to the oil industry, at Canada's unbelievable expense.

And to top it all off, greatly delaying any action or even political will to believably address mankind's worst enemy, climate change.

I do not accuse anybody of lying to the public, but I want all your readers to know that I certainly do not and cannot believe in anything this government is saying or doing with respect to maintaining Canada's major role in providing a safe, environmentally and financially sound, energy production capability.

The financial and environmental future of our country is in a most perilous position put there by the desperation of our present government.

Ray F. Smith, B.A.Sc.P. Eng.
Burk's Falls

Stealing gnome wasn't cool

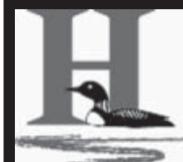
To the person or persons who stole the gnome off our lawn: please return it. No questions will be asked.

We make these ornaments to help our neighbourhood look better. If you think it was cool to steal it, it wasn't. If this sort of thing continues we will be forced to take all

our lawn ornaments off the lawns. It will be your loss, not ours.

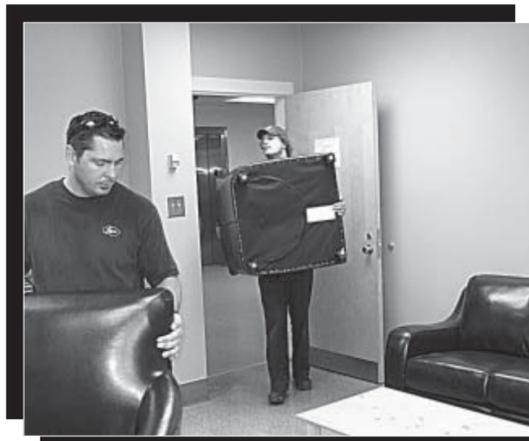
By the way, this has been reported to the police.

J. and R. Tambosso
Huntsville



HEALTHCARE HEROES

Leon's Furniture



Delivery men from Leon's dropped by last week with furniture donated by Leon's in celebration of their 100th birthday. The furniture is in the chapel of Huntsville Hospital.

The chapel is used daily by patients and their families, in happy times and sad times. Soon the chapel will have a new memorial wall; watch this space for details.

On June 14th, the Brooks Family will be hosting and celebrating with the President of Leon's at their Huntsville location. Drop by; there will be lots to see and buy. Join us in saying Happy Birthday and thank you Leon's Furniture Stores.

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