

Opinion

MUSKOKA MOSAIC

Introducing Amy Nadrofsky-Freake

BY PAULA BOON

Amy Nadrofsky-Freake has beat the odds, and now she is helping others to do the same.

When the Huntsville woman found herself the single mother of two toddlers at age 23, she was determined to build a successful life for herself and her children.

"Statistically, single parents are among the poorest in our society," she says. "I decided I wasn't going to let us become a statistic."

So Nadrofsky-Freake, who had completed just one year of college in her teens, went back to school, earning first a two-year social services worker diploma from Canadore College and then a degree in sociology from Nipissing University.

How did she manage? "I have phenomenal family support," Nadrofsky-Freake says. "My family is incredible. We're so tight-knit, and they were behind me 110 per cent."

After a stint as a part-time youth care worker and a year on contract as residential support services manager at Lakeland Long-term Care in Parry Sound, Nadrofsky-Freake saw an advertisement in the paper for the position of Muskoka Literacy Council program co-ordinator.

"I thought, 'Wouldn't that be nice, to work within the education field,'" she says. "I liked the idea of helping people move forward with their life."

Nadrofsky-Freake has been working at the literacy council for a year now, and she says the job is a perfect fit.

"Every day is different," she says. "I like to be creative; I like to be challenged; I like to be busy. This career does all those things."

As the literacy council's only year-round paid employee, Nadrofsky-Freake's job description is a broad one.

She does intake assessments of those who want to take advantage of the literacy council's services, determining each person's needs and goals, then tailoring a program for them. She also runs the office, teaches some classes, develops new programs, and looks after fundraising and public relations.

Nadrofsky-Freake says one of her biggest challenges is getting past people's preconceptions about what the literacy council does.

"People say, 'I don't need to go to the literacy council. I can read,'" she says. "But the literacy council does so much: we offer traditional literacy and numeracy tutoring, life skills, job skills, computer skills, college preparation, help with correspondence courses, and help people get ready for GED. And it's all free."

Several of these offerings were introduced by Nadrofsky-Freake herself.

For example, when she was first familiarizing herself with the literacy council's resources, she came across some excellent vocational-type courses that hadn't been used. Now, in partnership with Ontario Works, the council offers monthly workshops teaching job-related skills with a literacy focus.

"They look at the literacy and numeracy skills needed on a particular job," she explains, adding that the workshops have been well attended.

Nadrofsky-Freake was also behind the joint proposal with Georgian College to deliver the ACE (Academic Upgrading for College Entrance) program at the literacy council beginning last January.

"It has gone so well the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has decided to extend it," she says.

While she's busy creating learning opportunities for others, Nadrofsky-Freake continues to upgrade her own skills and

knowledge. In fact, she is now only two courses away from receiving another B.A., in Social Welfare, also from Nipissing University. This degree has been completed part-time while also working and raising her children.

Just married in May, Nadrofsky-Freake says life is good.

She lives in downtown Huntsville with her husband Allan and her kids Deanna, 8, and Daryl, 7, and she wouldn't want it any other way.

"I like being in a place where I can talk to strangers. I do that a lot," she says with a laugh.



LETTERS

Algonquin Park's forests are being sustainably managed

As a registered professional forester who has worked for over 30 years in Algonquin Park, I must agree with Josh Garfinkel, a campaigner for Earthroots, that the majority of people are unaware that logging has been taking place in the area of Algonquin Park for almost 170 years. Even after all this time Algonquin is world-renowned for its recreational opportunities, wildlife viewing, forests and cultural heritage protection.

There can be no comparison of the selection and uniform shelterwood forest management systems used in Algonquin and the deforestation that Mr. Garfinkel states in his letter to the editor. The forest management systems that have been mentioned maintain forest diversity, maintain forest cover at all times and a diverse wildlife habitat. Healthy, vigorous growing forests are left after harvesting, which help to mitigate the effects of pollution/greenhouse gases.

Forestry activities in the park are con-

ducted under an approved forest management plan that considers all aspects of sustainable forestry. The Algonquin Park forest is independently audited every five years and each of those audits has concluded that the park is being sustainably managed. All audits are available to the public and another audit is scheduled for the fall of 2007.

In addition, forestry activities in Algonquin Park are managed under an environmental management system that is registered to the international ISO 14001 standard. Currently, AFA is seeking certification to Canada's national sustainable forest management standard, which will be another annual independent audit of its forestry activities.

I encourage members of the public to obtain factual information with respect to the management of Algonquin Park's forests.

Carl Corbett, R.P.F.
general manager
Algonquin Forestry Authority

Private sessions should be followed by public summations

What an interesting front page story in the Aug. 24 Huntsville Weekender headed *Town acquires land from Claudex Inc.* What it appears to say in essence is that the Town of Huntsville is "helping" by taking over property at the corner of Centre Street North and Kirby's Way, that the developer does not now want or need, and especially since significant municipal property taxes are obviously owing on this same property.

One can only question what has happened to democracy in government when reading this story. Public works and bylaw director Sara Brown, who by the way is leaving this position shortly, "declined to give the value of the taxes that are being waived, because the number was only ever discussed in private

session"! What happened to the disclosure of this type of "session" by rising from the private session into open session and making a motion that discloses the summation of that meeting, which certainly should by all means, state the amount of the monies involved in the transaction?

The taxpayers of this municipality have a right to know the amount of outstanding taxes that Claudex Inc. owes to the Town of Huntsville regarding this property and to be reassured that there is a legitimate reason for council to relinquish much-needed revenue in return for useless land.

Or is this just another sweet deal?

Frances Botham
Huntsville

Green Party weighs in on faith-based school funding

The issue of whether the provincial government should fund faith-based schools or leave the school system as it currently exists has generated a significant number of responses in our local papers. I applaud our editors for printing a diverse range of letters on this topic.

I would like to proudly confirm where the Green Party stands: one publicly funded school system. A system that promotes inclusiveness within the classroom and reflects today's diversity is increasingly important in today's world. We are a multi-cultural society striving for an understanding and acceptance of one another. With one system our classrooms would reflect the things we have in common rather than our differences. Also with one system, the duplication of resources would decrease, leaving more money for our students' learning.

The Green Party believes that all students in Ontario, regardless of their faith, deserve equal funding. One publicly funded school system in which students of all faiths learn and develop together creates the best classroom environment for all children in Ontario.

Matt Richter
Parry Sound-Muskoka,
Provincial Green Party candidate

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

E-mail:
letters@huntsvilleforester.com

When sending letters to the editor be sure to include your name, address and phone number. Unsigned letters cannot be used.

Photographic Memory



NORTHERN SILHOUETTE: This engraving of a windswept skyline by Harry D. Wallace, circa 1935, is reminiscent of the shores of Muskoka and Algonquin Park. Many have been inspired by the wild Ontario landscape: notably Tom Thomson and members of Canada's famed Group of Seven painters.

Visitors to the Muskoka museum at Muskoka Heritage Place can enjoy this engraving and many more artistic endeavors in "Muskoka Creative" now on exhibit.



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Larry Mitchell & Keith Edmondson

At the Annual General Meeting of the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital Foundation in June, Larry Mitchell retired. Larry served one year as a regular member, then four years as Chair and then two years as Past Chair.

Retiring Foundation Chair, Keith Edmondson celebrated with Larry at the AGM. Keith served one year as regular member, two years as Chair and will be continuing with the Foundation in the Past Chair position.

Huntsville Hospital Foundation is a better organization because of these men. Thank you.

Huntsville District Memorial Hospital Foundation continues to support:

- Huntsville District Memorial Hospital
- Fairvern Nursing Home
- Burk's Falls & District Health Centre
- Muskoka-East Parry Sound CCAC



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