

Opinion

MUSKOKA MOSAIC

Introducing Johnny Langille

BY PAULA BOON

Johnny Langille describes himself as a real eccentric.

"My mother says I'm an original; there's no mold for me," he says. "It's not always easy being unique, but I chose this road, and the love of my family and friends sustains me."

The proud Maritimer from Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia has lived in Huntsville for the past 11 years.

Job-wise, Langille wears three different hats: church organist, restaurant server and superintendent of a housing complex. It was the position of p.m. server at Deerhurst's Eclipse and Steamers restaurants that first brought him to town.

"Deerhurst was owned by CP at the time and I had worked for that company in the past," he says. "The staff is a wonderful, close-knit group of people, and I love serving. Each table is a different experience with different personalities and different challenges."

For the past three years, Langille has also been the superintendent of the Morguard Staff Residence for Deerhurst employees.

"I enjoy being around young people," he says. "It's particularly rewarding to meet people from all walks of life and many cultures."

However, what he calls the work of his heart

is that of organist at Trinity United Church.

Langille's is an extremely close-knit family, and music is the thread that has always held them all together. His mother and paternal grandmother were both church organists, while his father is a fiddler who has been recognized for helping to revive the Don Messer tradition in Nova Scotia and has even played for the Queen during a royal visit.

"My parents always emphasized sharing your talent and your love of music," Langille says. "The most important thing was always going to little community halls and helping to raise money. I have so many fond memories of going to those programs. There would always be fiddling and square dancing followed by a pie auction, with a little woodstove going in the back."

His "grounded, down-to-earth Maritime family" also had kitchen parties most weekends, where people of all ages would gather to play music and tell stories.

In Langille's childhood home, there were many instruments available, including a piano, electric organ, pump organ, violins, ukeleles and a clarinet.

"My mom would get up at 6 a.m. and say, 'Hey, you kids, get off that piano!'" he recalls. On his second day in Huntsville, Langille

walked into Trinity United Church and found out they were in need of a musical director due to the grave illness of their long-time organist Ken McDowell.

Soon after that, Langille "auditioned" for then-minister John McTavish and got the job. Ever since, he has assisted in planning the music and special choral presentations each week, as well as annual Easter and Christmas cantatas.

"This is my opportunity to stay spiritually grounded," he says. "It's wonderful to know your music can soothe the tired soul and reach the broken heart, replacing sorrow with joy. It's about touching the heart and getting people to reflect."

Langille says he admires the warmth and kindness of the congregation at Trinity United. "And the choir is awesome. It has gone from 13 or 14 people to about 30. I love that choir. That's my Huntsville family."

With three jobs to juggle, Langille doesn't have a lot of free time. However, when he does, his first inclination is to spend time alone. "All of my hats are very social," he explains. Having studied history at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax, he is an avid reader of history.

Langille also enjoys going out for dinner and some entertainment. "The thing I love about

Huntsville is that music and the arts are alive, well and thriving," he says. "I'm astounded by the musical talent in this town."

When he gets a few days off, he enjoys going to Toronto or Ottawa. And every October, he spends three weeks in Nova Scotia with his family.

"As a Maritimer, there's always the call of home, the call of the sea," he says. "I've made a decision to make Huntsville my life, but my heart is always at home."

Thanks to Ian McTavish for suggesting that Johnny be profiled. If there's someone you'd like to see in this space, please call Paula at 789-5541 or e-mail pboon@metrolandnorth-media.com.



LETTERS

Residents cut their locks to raise money for cancer cure

I, Richard deVries, am writing to inform the rest of the community about my efforts to raise money for the cure for cancer.

I have been an employee at Robinson's Independent Grocer for many years. Most people might remember me from the photo lab at our old location. Most people who know me, know that I have usually sported the long hair look.

It wasn't until a couple of months ago that I decided to put my locks to work and shave my head to donate the hair to a wig-making company that is specialized for children with cancer.

Many people, including myself, have been touched by cancer in some way or another. Whether it was a loved one, a friend or yourself, most people are able to link their knowledge to someone they knew, or know now, that has cancer.

I have decided that we, as a community, need to come together not only on the holidays to fight against cancer, but to take time to help find a cure as often as possible.

Too many people have been victimized by this disease and it is time that we all try to put a stop to it.

I am inviting everyone to donate either financially at the Independent store or to be present on March 1 at 1 p.m. in the vestibule to show their support as I shave my head to fight for a cure.

Alongside me will be a coworker who sees this as a good time to donate 16 inches of her hair as well. Your support is much appreciated and I would like to thank everyone in advance.

Richard deVries
Huntsville

Let's not put all our eggs in one basket

Re: How many grocery stores can Huntsville support, Huntsville Forester, letter to the editor, Feb. 20.

We do need another grocery store, but not a Wal-Mart or Independent Grocers or A&P. The aforementioned won't let developers put a grocery store up the town line or Yonge Street or further out Brunel Street.

I support Brunel Mart sometimes, but they cannot carry everything I need. If I had a car I

wouldn't drive because I definitely support the Huntsville Transit, but there are a lot of poorer families and seniors on those streets just mentioned who need services. With our experienced in steel workers and woodworkers and miners and quarry people let's get something done for the west end. Please.

Helen Prager
Huntsville

Rural dwellers shouldn't have to pay for in-town services

The well and septic proposal is the most unbelievable thing we have heard of in our lives.

The people who had anything to do with this proposal had better stand back and give their heads a shake. We in the country and rural area are already helping out the town. We pay more for phone and hydro, and we have poor road maintenance and no sidewalks.

The town has already hit us once. With this stupid septic inspection, when they came to my place, there was a girl that came and looked at the ground, said it was dry so it was working okay, and charged me \$40.

As far as using town services, we could go to Bracebridge to shop. I don't think that town would mind us using their services at all. So, give your head a shake because it must be plugged full of cobwebs.

One person says that proposal will only work if rural residents are reimbursed for well and septic expenses. If not, all the town residents should be charged the \$20,000 we had to pay for our septic, wells and permits. And they should also pay to pump our septic out and give us chemicals to maintain them.

Donald and Sheila Coker
Port Sydney

Clean practices important at body art salons

BY DR. COLIN LEE

Tattooing and body piercing are fashion trends that are popular among people of all ages. There are even television shows devoted to the topic. But what is not so common is any talk about the serious health risks that can be associated with these procedures and what you can do to protect yourself.

Tattooed artwork involves breaking one of your body's main protective barriers — the skin. This means you can be more susceptible to skin infections and other skin reactions. Some of these risks include: Blood-borne diseases: If the equipment used to create your tattoo is contaminated with the blood of an infected person, you are at risk of being infected with hepatitis C, hepatitis B, tetanus and HIV.

Skin infections: Tattoos can lead to local bacterial infections. Typical signs and symptoms of an infection include redness, warmth, swelling and a pus-like drainage. There have been potentially serious antibiotic-resistant skin infections such as methicillin-resistant staphylococcal aureus associated with tattooing done by tattoo artists who don't follow proper infection-control procedures.

You can come in contact with the blood or other body fluids of an infected person if the equipment being used has not been properly sterilized, if needles are reused, or the artist does not wash his or her hands between clients. Used needles can also get barbs, micro bumps and hooks in them that can mangle the skin and carry infection.

Too many people focus on what and where to get a tattoo or piercing instead of searching out the safest salon to have work done. Don't take chances with your health. There are people who practice their art skillfully and responsibly, so shop around and look into the practices of a salon and artist.

Make sure that the salon displays a certificate of inspection from the health unit, is clean and well lit, has a sink with hot and cold running water and liquid soap, has sterilizing equipment and uses that equipment on required tools before each use.

Talk to the artist and ask about their experience and training. Ask to see some examples of their work and have them explain how their equipment is cleaned and sterilized. Watch them at work so that you know they wash their hands before and after each client, wear gloves during the procedure and use new, packaged, sterile, piercing and tattooing needles for each client. If the artist can't answer your questions, then find a different artist.

If you are getting a piercing make sure the artist uses jewelry and metals designed for piercing and does not reuse or resell jewelry. Your piercing artist should also ask about metal allergies/medical conditions and give you information on healing. Note that piercing guns must only be used on ear lobes, as they can cause serious damage and infection if used to pierce other body parts.

After your tattooing or piercing is done, be sure to cut the risk of infection by keeping the area clean. Wash your hands thoroughly before you apply lotions or ointments to the tattooed or pierced area and before rotating jewelry. Follow the written and verbal aftercare instructions from your artist. See your health-care practitioner immediately if you see any signs of infection such as redness, swelling, tenderness or heat around the pierced or tattooed area.

For more information about reducing your risk of infection or to discuss infection control practices around tattooing and piercing, call Your Health Connection from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays at 721-7520 (1-877-721-7520) or check www.simcoemuskokahealth.org.

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.



HEALTHCARE HEROES

Huntsville District
Memorial Hospital Foundation
100 Frank Miller Drive
Huntsville, ON P1H 1H7
Tel: (705) 789-4756

Allan Kydd & Friends

Helping hands - Surgeons and operating room staff at the Huntsville Hospital have a new tool at their disposal thanks to the efforts of some prominent local businessmen.

Allan Kydd, of CIBC Wood Gundy, helped spearhead the acquisition of a ligasure machine that will be a valuable tool for a variety of surgical procedures.

Pictured above with the new piece of equipment are (left to right) Cindy Bumstead, RN; Harold Featherston, MAHC Chief Professional and Diagnostic Services Officer; Mary Kydd, RN; Sharryn Pasma, RN; Todd Knapton, Hutcheson Sand; Sue Bedore, RN; Jason Armstrong, Huntsville Honda; Pauline Gilbert,



RN; and Allan Kydd, CIBC Wood Gundy. Thanks Pauline for an informative demonstration on the importance of this equipment in saving lives, time and length of stay.

Missing from the photo but not from the praise are Bruce Smith, Brian Moore and Kimberly Clark Inc.

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



Live well with

PHARMASAVE

Historic Downtown Huntsville
789-7300