

Opinion

MUSKOKA MOSAIC

Introducing Lisa Nadrofsky

BY PAULA BOON

Lisa Nadrofsky has three passions: Jesus, helping others and fitness.

"I wasn't a follower of Christ for most of my life," she says. "I was 37 when I was saved. My life's been propelled into a whole new awesome journey. There's a purpose to my life now."

Nadrofsky is an active member of Bethel Pentecostal Church. She is involved with a weekly prayer group, sometimes gives the message during Sunday services, and, as youth leader, she spends three hours each Friday night with young people. "I'm a mentor to them, someone who speaks truth into their life, encourages them and talks through their struggles," she says.

For several years, Nadrofsky also volunteered for a church-affiliated 12-step program at the Dream Center in Burk's Falls called Celebrate Recovery. "I have a heart for encouraging women who've had problems with abusive relationships or who are single mothers," she says, adding that she can relate because she has been a single mom to 19-year-old Zachary for his entire life. "It can be really tough."

Now, although she isn't officially serving in the program, Nadrofsky still attends weekly. "I go to encourage and to get help myself," she says. "I'm not free and clear of hurts, habits and hang-ups. Nobody is."

Nadrofsky says she prays a lot for Huntsville – but she doesn't stop there. "It's nice to pray for people," she says, "but you need to meet their needs, too." As well as befriending many of the

town's youth, she lends her time and energy to help the elderly, the homeless, and anyone else who needs her.

"God has a way of putting people in my path," she says. She talks about how it can be as simple as helping someone with mobility challenges to reach something in the grocery store or driving someone to church on Sunday morning. "In our society, we are so consumed with ourselves, we have no time to spend 30 seconds, one minute, two minutes, five minutes helping others," she says. "I want to encourage others to take the time to connect. It feels so great to do it."

Something else that feels good, she says, is getting regular exercise. When she was 29, Nadrofsky decided she didn't like the way she felt and wanted to lose weight. She started walking three miles a day and lost about 100 pounds.

"I also got involved with a gym, Motivations Fitness, and did some weight training. They've been a huge encouragement to me," says Nadrofsky. About eight years ago, she decided to become a certified personal trainer so she could help others to feel the same. She works one day a week in Dorset, and she can still be seen every day walking from one end of town to the other.

Nadrofsky also co-owns the hair salon Images on King



William Street. After going to school at Huntsville Public School and Huntsville High School, she spent a year in Barrie training to be a hair stylist. This December, she will have been cutting and styling hair for 22 years.

When she returned to Huntsville after finishing her training, Nadrofsky worked at a variety of hair places until she and a partner bought Images about five years ago. "I enjoy it," she says. "It's creative, and being a hair stylist is like being a counsellor. People need to talk to someone, and I'm glad to listen."

Whether it's at work or in one of her volunteer positions, Nadrofsky says helping and serving others brings her joy. She says that on her tombstone, she would love to see the words,

"She gave hope everywhere she went."

"I want to bring hope, joy, peace and love to people," she says. "There's too much of the other emotions in this world right now. One of my favourite scriptures is Jeremiah 29, verse 11: 'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you, and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"

Thanks to Doug Millman for suggesting that Lisa Nadrofsky be profiled.

The economic impact of hosting the Ironman

BY DON MCCORMICK

Overheard in a street side conversation: "I don't know why we have to have these triathlons. Oh sure, the restaurant and motel and resort owners and gas station operators make some money, but I don't benefit from it. For me, it's just an inconvenience. The roads are restricted on race day and I'm dodging cyclists on the roads all summer." Fair comment. Why is the town encouraging events such as triathlons?

Attracting events like triathlons to Huntsville is a very deliberate attempt by the local government to stimulate the local tourist economy. Despite its long history of success in the tourism industry, tourism in Muskoka has been in decline in recent years and, in order to maintain a healthy local economy, the town fathers felt some very proactive measures were needed to stimulate it.

The development of tourism in Muskoka was almost inevitable. The natural beauty of the area started attracting tourists from very early on and the local economy has been benefiting from tourism for over a century. During that time a very large and complex tourism infrastructure has developed.

"The tourism industry in Muskoka, is, by far, the district's largest industry and employer," says Muskoka Tourism in its report on the Muskoka Assessment Project. "No other sector in the region comes remotely close to creating jobs and labour income than tourism does." Hard data is difficult to generate to prove that claim, but even a modest "guesstimate" by consultants would indicate that tourism and cottaging accounts for about 50 per cent of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and 20 per cent of the jobs.

But, according to that same report, between 1999 and 2003, the number of visits by tourists dropped 25 per cent and is continuing to drop. While increased gas costs and a stronger Canadian dollar have had an impact, the real reason for the decline in tourism is that many other regions of the province, of the country and of the world have caught on to the economic importance of tourism and have been actively and aggressively trying to attract these same tourists to their area. And, they have been successful in doing so with the result being that the tourists are not coming to Muskoka in the same numbers.

But, if you don't make your livelihood in the tourism industry why should this be a concern to you? Well, in fact, your job is probably indirectly affected by what goes on in the tourism industry. A healthy and vigorous tourism industry generates jobs and income for builders, electricians, plumbers, architects, draftspeople, surveyors, lawyers, real estate people, land developers, hydro and telecommunications workers, doctors, nurses, lab technicians, chiropractors, physiotherapists, massage therapists, administrators, the entire wholesale and retail sales sector and so on. There are probably few sectors of the

economy in Huntsville that are not affected by what is happening in the tourism industry.

So, it is highly likely that that person complaining about triathlons in the street side conversation is affected by what is happening in the tourism industry but that they had just not thought it through.

But, why are the town fathers promoting events like triathlons rather than just promoting general tourism?

Since the tourism has become so much more competitive it has become necessary to find a niche market in order to "get a leg up" on your competition. Huntsville also has a long and successful history in sports and culture. Why not try to attract tourists to our community with sporting and cultural events?

In a survey done during the 2004 Muskoka Triathlon, the 1,247 participants and the people accompanying them spent about \$224,000 (about \$252,000 in 2008 dollars) for a one-day event. Most of that – about \$94,000 – was for accommodation with about \$57,000 being spent on restaurant meals, \$43,000 on gas and \$30,000 on general shopping.

Since this is an annual event, that amount of money is coming into the community every year.

According to John Finley, Economic Development Officer for the Town of Huntsville, the 2006 Ontario Winter Paralympics Championships brought in well in excess of \$162,000 into the community.

The Canadian Pond Hockey Championships – also an annual event – probably brings about \$400,000 into the community each year.

And these events are widely reported in the media, giving invaluable exposure of the local area to provincial, national and international audiences – exposure that the town could not possibly afford to purchase.

The Muskoka Ironman 70.3 triathlon will have a much larger economic impact on Huntsville and Lake of Bays than does the Muskoka Triathlon. With 1,299 participants, this race has much greater potential for growth and is an annual event.

And, the reason you've been dodging cyclists all summer is that participants have been coming to Muskoka all spring and summer to participate in training camps and to train on the course and that, in itself, has been another tourism economic generator.

Clearly events such as these are huge economic generators for the community and provide considerable stimulus to the local tourism industry. That influx of tourist dollars will eventually trickle down through the entire local economy.

Yes, it makes for some inconvenience, but the alternative would be to accept a deteriorating tourism sector that would ripple down through the entire economy in the form of lower incomes, fewer jobs, increased unemployment, fewer services and a much less vigorous and interesting community in which to live. Not much of a choice!

LETTERS

Local people made Ironman 70.3 incredible

I would like to thank all the incredible volunteers and spectators who stood out in the wind and rain during the Ironman 70.3 on Sunday.

Those who were involved in the swim portion of the event might have been actually wetter than the swimmers! The 94 km bike ride is long and can be quite lonesome, but the people in Dwight, Dorset and

Baysville as well as the many people along the route made the ride fly by and kept boosting the bikers onward, lifting their drive to peddle faster.

Along the run route the water stations were manned with boisterous people giving out fuel and cheering everyone on.

Huntsville and the surrounding communities should be proud of the amazing vol-

unteers who come out time after time to support numerous community events and activities.

Janet and Mitch Fraser from Trisport run an incredible series of triathlons. The local people with their enthusiasm and commitment to their events make them even better!

Jane Wolfe
Ironman 70.3 participant, Huntsville

Out-of-town triathlete impressed by spectators

Hello, Huntsville and Lake of Bays residents. We finished the Ironman Muskoka 70.3 triathlon yesterday and had such a great experience.

We all know the weather was not ideal (read that some rain on and off, then a lot of rain), but we had signed up for this a year in advance and you cannot change the weather.

What impressed us to no end were the crowds of people who came out despite the weather to cheer us on during the race. In the towns, at the aid stations, and at the end of each cottage road they were out with bells, clappers, costumes and enthusiastic cheers.

The volunteers and spectators were out in force! We can't say enough about how

much of a lift that gives you. It was a great race. It was a tough course. We love the beauty of Muskoka but it will be the reputation of the support of the people of the Huntsville and Lake of Bays area who will make this event a must do on the triathlon calendar for years to come. Thanks to you all.

John Hall
Dundas, Ontario

First Ironman won't be this athlete's last

To all the Ironman spectators and volunteers: thank you, thank you, thank you.

My name is Tracey Stone (number 1,015). A year ago I decided to participate in the inaugural Muskoka Ironman 70.3 event. It was my first Ironman, but probably not my last, thanks to you. Everyone was amazing.

The fans cheering from the side of the

road were wonderful and I really appreciate the fact that they stood there in the pouring rain. My husband mentioned to me to use the crowd and feed off their enthusiasm, and I did. As people cheered me on I cheered back and gave everyone a smile and I thoroughly enjoyed my Ironman experience.

Today my legs are tired but my spirits

are high. I'm still wearing my medal and I'm so happy with myself. But as I go back over the day my best memories are the cheering crowds standing in rain and the enthusiasm of the whole event. I can't say thank you enough! Big cheers and a big thank you to everyone.

Tracey Stone
Huntsville

Website shows Tories' low opinion of voters

In a recent mailing from the Conservatives, I was directed to a website about the Carbon Tax being proposed by the Liberals at www.willyoubetricked.ca.

This site is another clear demonstration of the Conservatives' low opinion of the intelligence of Canadian voters.

The cartoon-style pages are a compilation of quotes from Stéphane Dion and broad attacks on all forms of taxation. There are references to the leaders of other political parties: "Jack Layton will pay more ... to power his electric moustache

trimmer," and Green Party leader Elizabeth May is referred to as Dion's "maiden."

My personal favourite is a caricature of a 10-year-old boy: "Bobby, a paperboy, will pay more with the Dion Tax Trick when he buys candy with his route money." Seriously. It says that.

I think intelligent humour is important in all aspects of life, including politics. Although this site does have some smirk-worthy items, it would be funnier if it contained any information about the Conservative pollution policy or even an

actual critique of the GreenShift plan. And I can't believe there are no pictures of the Tar Sands project. Think of the hilarious caption possibilities!

As the great Canadian educator and philosopher Marshall McLuhan said, "The medium is the message."

Take a look at this website and ask yourself: "Do I really want the people who created and approved this site running the federal government?"

Doug Banwell
Huntsville

Firefighters thankful for help during big blaze

The fire fighters of Station 40 Baysville would like to thank the following people for their aid with the fire on Wednesday morning.

Special thanks go out to Huntsville Station 1 for their response in assisting in the battle against the fire. Their community should be very proud of the new ladder truck and the firefighters who run it. It was incredible to see it work and was a huge

help in getting control of the fire in the timeframe we did. We were very grateful for the hard work of the team from Huntsville, and we functioned as one big unit under Chief Hernen.

Thanks to Station 20 Port Cunnington for their response in the new fire boat. The extra personnel was greatly appreciated.

While fighting such a big fire you tend to use a lot of energy and need to build it

back up in order to continue. Thanks to Tom Brown, director of public works for Lake of Bays, who provided breakfast for all the firefighters. As well, thanks to Michelle Macisaac for staying up all night and baking muffins and cookies to help replenish our strength.

Thanks to the community of Baysville for their continued support of our station.

The firefighters of Station 40, Baysville

Plan to vote ABC: anybody but Conservative

Anyone who cares about Canada's declining health-care system (the ongoing Americanization, translate privatization, initiated by Brian Mulroney, furthered by his clone Chrétien, and now being acceler-

ated under republican Bush-sycophant Harper) should read and re-read letter-writer Barbara Power's masterpiece, Don't Vote Conservative, published in the Sept. 3 Forester.

Harper and his boy, Cottager Clement, will ruin Canada beyond recognition if they get a majority. Vote ABC (anybody but Conservative).

Mendelson Joe
Emsdale

Walkerton and listeria can be compared

To accuse any of us who link the two tragedies as having only a geriatric grasp of reality is offensive for its ageism, artisanship and ignorance. They are not matters of bureaucratic jurisdictions as your writer avers. Both are matters of public health and public safety, regardless under whose brass plate such catastrophes

are politically designated.

To suggest that this is not the responsibility of our beloved Cottager Clement is a wilful disregard for the truth. More than a dozen Canadians have died of food poisoning due not only to contaminated meat but also to a three-week delay in informing the public of the out-

break. This occurred because of an appalling lack of co-ordination between local and federal health laboratories. To play pass the buck under such circumstances is disgraceful, disrespectful and deceitful.

John Scully
Lake of Bays

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: E-mail: letters@huntsvilleforester.com

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Unsigned letters cannot be used.