

Up Front

Festival board, public discuss future

By Anne Craig
Reporter Staff

The Festival of the Islands board of directors held its final public meeting at the Gananoque Curling Club last week.

No concrete decisions were made at the meeting but the board and members of the public discussed the recent proposal for Gananoque Town Council, the future direction of the festival and encouraging more sponsors and volunteers to get on board. In that vein, board member Cathy Mangan revealed Yvonne Harper has stepped down as the treasurer. "We have a couple of irons in the fire to replace

her," Ms. Mangan said.

A number of community members have stepped up to help raise money for the festival. Leslie Richmond talked about a fund-raising dinner in May and Jayne Curtis talked about a bonspiel on Feb. 2 that could raise several thousand dollars. Pam Staples has stepped forward to organize a family fun day.

"I saw the winter festival in Portland," she said, "and I want to model it after that."

She talked about an outdoor skating rink and using the Firehall Theatre as a place to warm up an enjoy hot chocolate.

"All money raised would go back to the Children's

Program."

Colin Kennedy stepped up to chair the seniors day with Ron Byers also offering to help out.

Ms. Mangan added volunteer chair are still needed for events including the 50/50 draw, Gananoque's Got Talent, the climbing wall and skate park event, Festival Flavours, the Children's Program and the Landon Bay Fun Day.

Board member Roger Gipson emphasized the importance of getting service clubs other than the Gananoque Rotary Club involved. "I know service clubs would like to do more. I'm also disappointed more

people in the hospitality industry did not come forward."

There was also discussion about the number of days the Festival of the Islands runs. Ms. Gipson, who said he is against day passes, defended the 10 day festival while board member Hal McCarney said he had a different idea.

"I propose we cut out the Friday of the first week and the Sunday of the second week. We've lost money the last two years... We also need to have just one name band, not two or three... The town is in favour of the festival but they will not become involved if we keep

losing money."

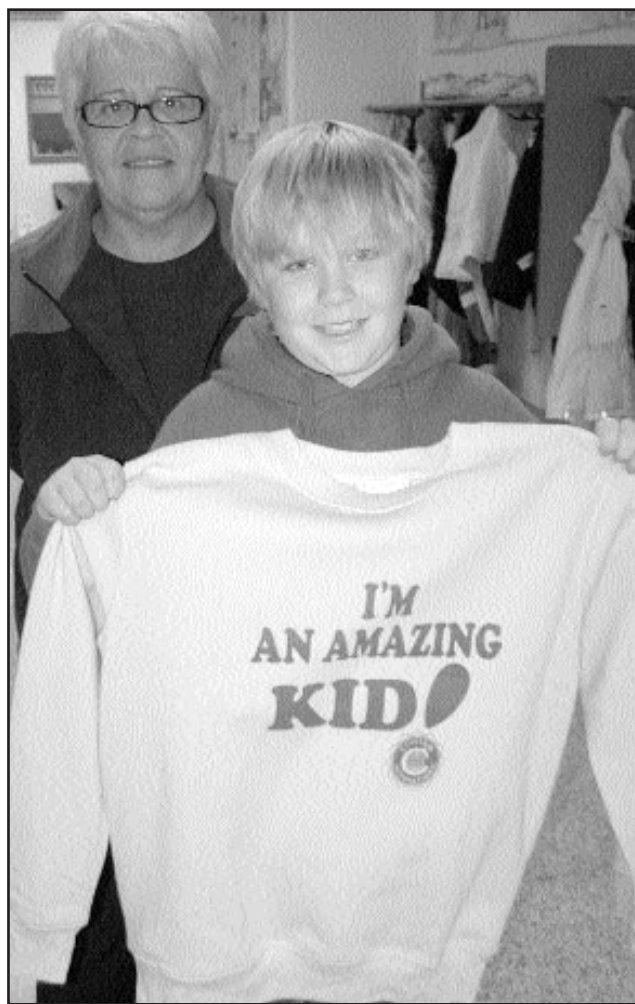
Mr. McCarney said there is a lot of competition out there and that this might be the time to reinvent the Festival of the Islands.

"A lot of expenses must be cut from this festival. It won't be the same as it was, at least not initially. We have to be conservative this year... If we set a realistic goal we will be fine."

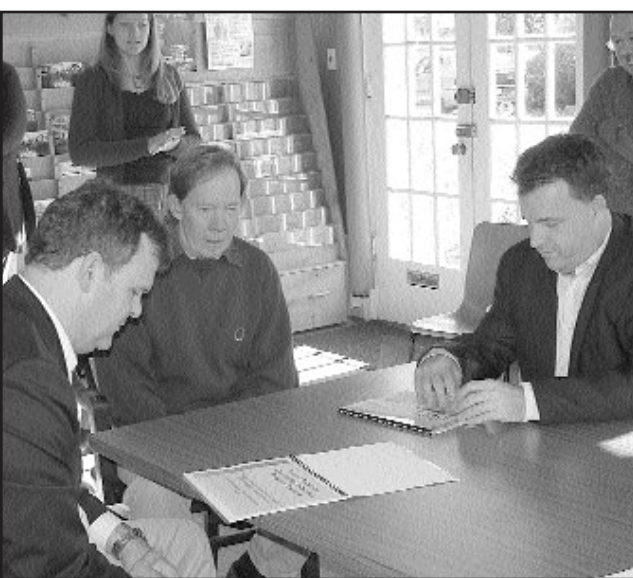
Mr. Gipson put out the idea of a sponsor for the entire festival, something the board has always resisted in the past.

The push for volunteers will continue. Call the Festival of the Islands office at 382-1562 for details.

AMAZING KIDS



Two of the best: *The Gananoque Reporter* introduced a new contest this year, asking people in the community to nominate amazing kids. The contest was sponsored by the Civitan Club of Gananoque and Grekos Pizzeria. Winning this year were Ashley Vanderscheer (l), nominated by her grandmother Valerie Ferguson, and Tyson Tennant, nominated by his godmother Sharon Foley. Pictured with Tyson is Civitan president Sue Smith. Each winner received a sweatshirt, a slice of pizza and a soft drink. The contest will run again next year. Watch for ballots in August. — Photos by Anne Craig



Going over the details: Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve executive director Don Ross provided federal environment minister John Baird and Leeds-Grenville MP Gord Brown with an overview of the organization's mandate and activities. — Photo by Mark Kerr

FABR requests federal funds

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The members of parliament toured the new ethanol plant in Johnstown, Invista and the Marine Discovery Centre in Brockville, and the St. Lawrence Islands National Park in Mallorytown.

Gary Clarke, the chair of the FABR board of directors, said that burnout among the volunteers is a very real possibility. Federal funding would help alleviate some that pressure, he said.

"We are not asking for a handout," said Mr. Clarke, who noted that the biosphere's focus on sustainable development is a great political opportunity for the federal government. "You can

say 'here are our expectations.' The biosphere reserves have the capacity to show a return on that investment. The biosphere reserves are willing to work on a model."

MP Baird said that conservation is fundamental to the current government. With the fall fiscal update recently completed, the environment minister said that the government would begin looking at its priorities for next year.

TLTI Mayor Frank Kinsella told the MPs that the municipality is focused on sustainable tourism. He remarked the FABR is an invaluable resource in achieving that goal.

Chamber hosts 52nd annual awards night

By Anne Craig
Reporter Staff

The 1000 Islands Gananoque Chamber of Commerce holds its 52nd annual awards dinner on Nov. 16 at the Glen House Resort located on the 1000 Islands Parkway.

Event co-ordinator Lisa Wells says the dinner is always a special event for the chamber and its many members.

"The chamber takes pride in being able to honour the wonderful citizens and businesses within our communities," Ms. Wells said. "It is really difficult to only honour a handful of individuals, when we have so many within Gananoque and the township that con-

tribute to both our communities."

In addition to recognizing excellence in Gananoque and the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, the dinner helps sustain the chamber.

"This is one of the biggest fund-raising events for the chamber that is done annually, and we are thankful for all the support we receive for the event," Ms. Wells said.

Several awards will recognize the best people in several categories. The list includes:

- Tourism/Hospitality
- Business/Industry
- Entrepreneur

- Citizen of the Year
- Athlete of the Year
- Keeper of the Gates
- Keeper of the Islands

Cocktails will be served at 6:30 p.m. The dinner and entertainment begins at 7 p.m. and the awards at 8:30 p.m.

Following that The Sunshine Boys will make a special appearance to entertain the guests.

The event is open to the public. The cost to attend the dinner is \$55 for chamber members and \$65 for non-members. Prices do not include GST.

To purchase tickets for the event, please contact the chamber office at (613) 382-7744.

Money for broadband

STAFF—The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville awarded a broadband connectivity contract to Barrett Xplore Inc. Thursday.

UCLG said that the contract will result in broadband coverage being

made available to 83 per cent of the un-serviced households in Leeds and Grenville.

The county and the Ontario Rural Connections will both put up \$259,000 for the project. Barrett Xplore will make a capital

investment of \$4.3-million. Barrett Xplore said that it will commit \$11-million in Leeds and Grenville over the first five years of the project.

UCLG expects that the full network will be operational by June 2008.

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