

## Some restrictions in place for Belleville's tobogganers

*Some Ontario cities have put a stop to this sport*

Two popular city locations have areas blocked off to prevent injuries

By Jeremy McKay

Belleville will see no ban on tobogganing anytime soon.

A handful of cities across Canada have placed bans and restrictions on the winter sport, causing a public outcry.

The most recent case was in Orangeville, where the city has banned tobogganing on a popular hill known as Murray Mountain. Hamilton has also banned the winter sport on city property.

Belleville still has tobogganing listed as one of many winter activities that the city offers on its website. Restrictions remain in place on two popular hills in Riverside and Zwick's Park since 2011.

These restrictions began after an incident happened at Riverside Park. A woman was tobogganing with her partner, when she suffered severe injuries. The city took measures to ensure public safety, said Larry Glover, Belleville's manager of parks and open spaces.

"I don't think there is anything more Canadian than tobogganing or sliding. We certainly enjoyed that for generations. Outright banning, to me, seems a little severe," said Glover.

He explained it's a case of managing risk and that liability and public safety are priorities for Belleville.

Riverside Park currently has a fence on the top of the hill to prevent tobogganers or sliders from going into a pond and treed areas. Signs are also posted for out-of-bounds areas. City staff placed bales of hay around hazards on Zwick's hill and signs around areas with hazardous obstacles. Glover said the city inspects both hills on a daily basis and checks them for suitable snow cover.

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This is not quite the case in Hamilton, where there is a bylaw in place prohibiting tobogganing altogether. This happened after the city was forced to pay a \$900,000 settlement to Bruno Ugenti after he was injured tobogganing on a banned hill in 2004. In 2013, the courts found the city fully liable and had neglected to enforce its ban on tobogganing.

Orangeville has had a tobogganing ban on Murray Mountain since 2009. In December 2014, the placement of a more visible sign drew national attention, to the point where residents slid down the hill in protest of the ban.

Orangeville parks and recreation director Ed Brennan said in a press release that sledding has inherent risk and brings liability to the municipality. "This is one of the unfortunate circumstances we find ourselves in the modern world," said Orangeville's Mayor Jeremy Williams in a press release.

Belleville city officials currently have no plans to place further restrictions or bans on tobogganing in the near future, said Glover.



Photo by James Paddle-Grant

Belleville residents and Loyalist alumni Glenda Dunkley (left) and Diana Chambers toboggan down the Belleville Riverside Park Hill last Friday.



Photo by James Paddle-Grant

Loyalist Lancers forward Jamal Okunbor (right) attacks the net with Algonquin defender Brandon Burke in his face. Okunbor finished the game with six points, four rebounds and two assists in the Lancers' 82-69 victory. For a photo on men's action, see page 3.

## Food for Learning gets boost

By Tristan Urry

Three local communities have raised a combined total of nearly \$25,400 to help feed local students.

That total was just \$5,000, shy of their \$30,000 goal.

Maribeth deSnoo, executive director of the Hastings and Prince Edward Learning Foundation, said she was "a bit disappointed with the results, but still we are very thankful to have raised as much as we did."

This was the sixth year for the fundraising campaign. Through the help of the mayors, councils and downtown improvement areas of Quinte West, Prince Edward County and Belleville, parking was free at the meters downtown through December. However, citizens were invited to put donations in the meters to support the foundation's Food for Learning Program.

The funds will be distributed among the schools in each community.

"During the 2013-2014 school year, the Food for Learning program provided 880,512 meals and snacks to 12,820 individual students who may otherwise have the inability to obtain sufficient and nutritious food for themselves," said Kellie Brace, the Food for Learning co-ordinator.

Regardless of the shortfall of the \$30,000 goal, each community successfully raised funds to help go towards food security. "Food Security exists in a community when all people, at all times have physical and economic access to an adequate supply of safe, affordable, and nutritious food to meet their personal and dietary needs to help them live a healthy life" says Brace.

Belleville raised a grand total of \$5,922 for the program this year. Prince Edward County raised \$1,718 and Quinte West raised \$7,386.92 just from the parking meters alone.

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## Tyendinaga getting new water treatment plant

By Annie Sakkab

Homes and businesses in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory are soon to have portable clean drinking water.

The long-awaited water treatment plant for the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte is finally underway. Construction of phase one started last November in Tyendinaga on the corner of Ridge Road and Norway Road, and is expected to be completed in 20 months.

Approval for the new water treatment plant in November 2013, took years of negotiations because of land acquisitions, approvals from different agencies, federal funding and plant design to treat zebra mussels that has come into the Bay of Quinte.

According to Tyendinaga Chief R. Donald Maracle, half of the wells in the community of Tyendinaga show intermittent contamination, mostly E. coli and fecal contamination, either caused by poor well construction that did not meet the Ministry of Environment guidelines, or septic installations that maybe at fault in proper distances between septic and wells.

The Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte community also suffers from what is called GUDI wells, or groundwater under the direct influence of surface water, because of agricultural contaminants that runs off from the north towards the Bay of Quinte.

"Generally, the groundwater quality in this whole region is not good. It's sort of a catch basin for a lot of contaminants related to agriculture and previous industrial contamination from other areas. So the pollution does eventually affect our community because we are by the Bay of Quinte," Maracle said.

Residents of Tyendinaga normally get drinking water from different sources.

"Some have treatment systems in their homes that are working fairly well. Some people haul water from a spigot

in a park. Some people have installed a holding tank and get a truck water delivery, and some people have their own water and sewer services from the town of Deseronto. Others have jugs of bottled water, or water that they have purchased from one of our local contractors," Maracle added.

Currently there are only 294 homes in the east end of the reserve that are served by the 1986 Deseronto water and sewer plant expansion.

The new water treatment plant will provide services to extra 67 homes in the central core area of the community and to all public buildings including MBQ Library, Quinte Mohawk School and Daycare Centre, Tyendinaga Police Services, the new MBQ Administration Office, the Community Wellness building as well as 20-unit subdivision that were recently built to meet the critical mass of houses to warrant capital investment. The water treatment plant will also provide trucked water delivery to 118 extra homes with holding tanks.

The total project cost is \$30,891,790 and is tendered to Peak Engineering & Construction. A total of \$27.6 million is funded by the federal government under the Canada Economic Action Plan, and was approved by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

"Our hope in the future is to get additional money to extend water lines further," said the chief.

"It will cost about \$40 million to put water into the whole community... There's nothing more critical to a community than having a safe supply of drinking water."

The project consists of the building of the plant, a low lift station, two above ground storage reservoirs, 5,380 metres of water distribution line, and a community fill up station for the truck water delivery system.

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