

The Eastender

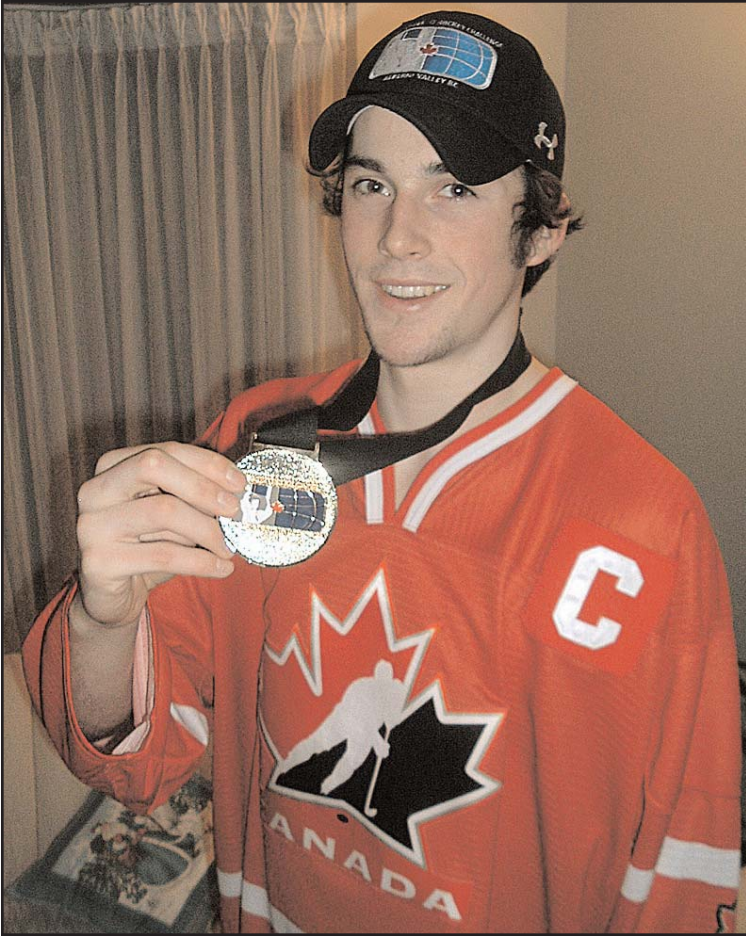
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January 8, 2009

Your environmentally friendly community newspaper

Volume 8, Issue 5



Chapel Hill resident Eric Gudbranson proudly displays the gold medal he won as a member of Team Ontario at the recent World Under-17 Hockey Championships in British Columbia. See story page 8. Fred Sherwin/Photo

Crucial OC Transpo vote set for today

By Fred Sherwin
The Eastender

Striking OC Transpo workers are being urged to reject the city's latest contract offer by their union leadership as they prepare to take part in a supervised vote on Thursday.

Nearly two-thirds of the union members filled a large hall at St. Elias Cathedral on Monday to hear the latest news from the Amalgamated Transit Union leaders who are upset over the decision by federal Labour Minister Rona Ambrose to hold a supervised vote at the

request of the city.

As they went into the hall each member was handed a leaflet which read, "Your bargaining committee unanimously urges you to vote 'No' in this forced vote".

After the meeting, ATU Local 279 president Andre Cornellier boldly predicted the union would overwhelmingly reject the city's offer.

"The vote will be Yes or No and our members will speak on Thursday. And I am sure it will be No," he said.

CLICK HERE TO CON'T p2>

Consultants confirm Kettle I. best location for bridge

By Fred Sherwin
The Eastender

Consultants charged with the task of picking the best location for an interprovincial bridge are sticking with their original recommendation of Kettle Island as the top spot out of six possible sites in the east end.

The Kettle Island crossing, which would see a bridge link into the Aviation Parkway, ranked at the top of list in nearly every single assessment category taking into account over 100 different criteria.

There was some speculation that the consultant group Roche-NCE would put forward a second option to appease opposition from local politicians and residents living in the Manor Park area, but they chose to stick to

their guns instead in presenting their final report to the National Capital Commission on Monday.

The recommendation will likely spark another round of protests aimed at the four levels of government which must give their blessing to the final report before the process can proceed.

With the Quebec, federal and municipal governments on both sides of the river already supporting the consultants' recommendation, the opponents' only hope is to try and convince the Ontario government to insist that a second option be added.

Ottawa-Vanier MPP Madeleine Meilleur and Ottawa-Orléans MPP Phil McNeely would both like to see Lower Duck Island move forward along with Kettle Island, how-

ever, the Liberal Cabinet has yet to take an official position on the matter.

Lower Duck Island would link into Hwy. 174 just east of Canotek Business Park. It's seen as problematic for three reasons: it would be more expensive to build than the Kettle Island crossing; it would add an additional strain on Hwy. 174 and the split; and it would require a great deal of expropriation on the Quebec side of the river. The initial study also suggested that the further east the bridge is built the less people would use it.

If the various levels of government elect to proceed with the EA process, the next phase of the study will assess the Kettle Island crossing in

detail and come up with a preliminary design that will minimize the environmental impact on the Kettle Island corridor. Phase 2 is expected to take 36 months to complete.

The consultants are also recommending that a number of initiatives be carried out over the next three years by the various levels of government, including investigating transportation system management (TSM) measures that could be used to improve the efficiency of the existing infrastructure.

The consultants estimate the bridge and related road improvements will cost about \$413 million in today's dollars. The entire 111-page final report can be downloaded by visiting on www.ncrcrossings.ca.

Community briefs

Robbers hit Convent Glen LOEB store

CONVENT GLEN – Two robbers swooped in on the LOEB grocery store in the Convent Glen Shopping Plaza shortly after 5:30 a.m. this morning and made off with an undisclosed amount of cash. According to police, no one was injured while the robbery was taking place.

Petrie I. Marina to offer Ottawa River sleigh rides

ORLEANS — The Oziles Marina and Bait Shop on Petrie Island plans to offer sleigh rides on the frozen Ottawa River starting on Jan. 17. The sleigh rides will be available every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., weather and ice conditions permitting. The cost of the rides will be \$4.50 per person. Anyone interested is asked to call Oziles at 613-841-0778 to confirm in advance. The Oziles Marina and Bait Shop also rents out ice-fishing equipment and shelters for anyone who wants to try their hand at some winter angling. You can visit their website at www.oziles.com.

Fire destroys neighbouring homes in Avalon

ORLÉANS — Two Avalon families were left homeless on Sunday when an early morning fire destroyed both their houses. The fire started at 2105 Avebury Dr. and quickly spread to the house next door at 2103 Avebury Dr. Both of the homes and the contents were completely destroyed while several other homes in the immediate area that had been evacuated while fire fighters battled the flames, sustained water and smoke damage. Fire crews from several stations responded and were able to contain the fire to the two residences. Fortunately, none of the residents or any of the firefighters were injured. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

Orleans Bengals looking for volunteer coaches

ORLÉANS — The Orleans Bengals Football Club is looking for coaches at the tyke, mosquito, peewee and bantam levels. Anyone interested should send their resumes or CVs to VP John Collins at mullingar@rogers.com, or club president Michael Johnson at mqjohnson@rogers.com.

'No' vote will prolong bus strike indefinitely

> **CONT'D FROM PAGE 1**

The major issue in the dispute remains the city's desire to take over scheduling. A move the union believes will undermine their members' quality of life.

In an open letter posted on the ATU website, Cornellier warns that the move will destroy their members' family lives.

"The bottom line is family life. Family, family, family," writes Cornellier. "If we let this go through, it's the end of you and your family, it's the end of the union, it's the end of everything. That is what (management) wants. They want control of you. We have a little bit of that control, and they want to turn our system upside down."

But OC Transpo manager Alain Mercier maintains the drivers will still be able to pick preferred routes and days off under the system that's being proposed by the city.

The ATU says the city has been conducting a misinformation campaign in the media to try and divide their membership.

"(We are surrounded with) lies and deceptions that are trying to undermine our solidarity, unity and determination to stand tall for our goals: better and safer work environment and better life for us and our families," Cornellier writes on the ATU website.

In order to try and explain their latest offer to the union members and the public at large, the city has taken out several full-page ads in the major daily newspapers and bought air time on CFRA.

According to information provided by the city, the latest offer contains an additional quarter per cent wage increase in the first year of the contract which brings the total salary component to 3.25, two and two per cent over three years, two additional sick days and an extra \$500 on top of the \$2,000 signing bonus that had been previously offered.

While several of the striking workers who emerged from the union meeting on Monday predicted a No vote would force the city to back down on the scheduling issue, city councillors appear unified in their support of the current offer.

After a closed door meeting on Wednesday, the councillors unanimously endorsed the latest offer while warning that the union risked prolonging the strike indefinitely if they were to reject it.

"The council is undivided on this issue," Mayor Larry O'Brien told the media after the day-long meeting during which councillors were shown the results of a recent survey which indicated strong support for their position among the city's residents.

According to the Harris/Decima survey commissioned by the city at a cost of \$35,000, 63 per cent of the respondents said they support the city in the strike, while 14 per cent said they supported the union's position. The remaining 23 per cent didn't have an opinion either way.

A full 89 per cent of the people who responded to the survey felt the city's latest offer was fair and reasonable and 72 per cent said the city should hold firm in its position even if the strike even if means the strike may last another month.

Meanwhile, the city is taking steps to alleviate the increased traffic congestion caused by the month long strike.

They have increased the number of carpool spaces available by allowing people to park at Lynx Stadium and Lansdowne Park and they have extended no stopping hours along a select number of streets including Kent Street, Metcalfe Street and Bank Street and they've re-synchronized the lights along Montreal Road to improve traffic flow.

The transportation department has also agreed to examine the possibility of opening up the Transitway to commuter traffic.

DUST EVANS

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"Providing quality legal service to Orléans and area for the past 30 years."

Navan woman plans to resurrect animal rescue shelter

By Fred Sherwin
The Eastender

For Michelle Mayer her 38th birthday will be one she won't soon forget, and not because it falls on New Year's Eve. On her way home from a combined New Year's Eve/birthday party she got a phone call from her step-mother telling her that her house was on fire.

"At first I didn't believe it, but then as I was getting closer I saw the fire trucks and I got out of my car and started running," says Mayer who operated a successful animal rescue shelter out of her modest Navan Road home before the fire struck. "I kept yelling at them to bust the door in so the animals could get out, but it was too late."

The fire ended up taking the lives of five rabbits, a cat, and 13 dogs, including Mayer's 11-year-old bulldog "Panda" and her Golden Retriever "Moxy" along with 11 puppies which were born that same morning.

Needless to say Mayer was devastated.

"It was the best day of my life that morning and then the worst nightmare (of my life) that night," she told A-Channel interviewer Doug Hempstead in a report that aired on the weekend.

Mayer started the Navan Animal Rescue Corporation, or NARC, in April 2007 to help save the lives of so-called "death row" animals which local Humane Society's and SPCAs aren't equipped to care for. The animals have personality or temperament issues which make them unadoptable. As a result the shelters usually end up having to euthanize them unless someone like Mayer arrives on the scene to rescue them.

Once the animals are brought to NARC, a staff of about 20 volunteers begin the process of rehabilitating and re-programming them before finding them a new home. To this point the NARC has been extremely successful in saving the lives of nearly 200 dogs.

For the past two years, Mayer has cared for the animals in her home. She began converting a mobile home into a more permanent animal shelter in November, but it is only partially finished. Now she plans to use the mobile home as a temporary residence until her house is rebuilt. She also plans to keep rescuing condemned animals and finding them new homes of their own.

"I've been getting so many phone calls from people encouraging me to keep going. They just say, 'You can't close NARC. You have to keep NARC going.' It's been amazing," says Mayer. But not as amazing as the support she's been receiving from friends, neighbours and even complete strangers.

While her insurance will cover the cost of rebuilding her house and replacing the contents, it doesn't cover the cost of renovating the mobile home. To that end, several local businesses have already come forward to donate their time and expertise to get the place ready as soon as possible, while several private donors from the area have promised to supply her with several appliances including a fridge and stove.

"Oh my goodness, everyone has been incredible," says Mayer.

But even with the initial outpouring of help, there is still a lot of work that needs to be done. A number of people who have received dogs from NARC have volunteered their services to help make the



Michelle Mayer stands in the middle of what is left of her Navan Road home which doubled as an animal rescue shelter before it was destroyed by a fire on Jan. 1. Fred Sherwin/Photo

mobile home livable, but their availability is limited. Mayer is hoping other members of the community will volunteer as well. Anyone interested in helping can call the animal rescue centre at 613-834-7005.

NARC could also use monetary donations to purchase items destroyed in the fire like leashes, collars, crates and doggie beds. Fortunately, she kept the pet food in a shed away from the house.

To find out more about the Navan Animal Rescue Corporation and how you can help visit www.narc-charity.ca.

Area residents seek compensation for damaged furnaces

By Fred Sherwin
The Eastender

Orléans homeowners whose furnaces were damaged during a power surge on Dec. 22 may be eligible for compensation from Hydro One.

An unknown number of area furnaces were damaged during the power surge which occurred when electricity was restored to more than 1,700 homes in the former municipality of Cumberland which includes Springridge, Fallingbrook and Queenswood Heights.

While no one knows exactly how many furnaces were damaged, the number was high enough to spark a run on replacement blower motors. By late Dec. 23, every heating and cooling parts supplier in the city was sold out, leaving many people having to wait until the following Monday to get their furnaces repaired.

Homeowners like Springridge resident Alfred Mignott had to purchase space heaters in order to stay warm over the

Christmas holiday.

In most instances the power surge fried the electronics in the blower motor, although some people have also had to replace their furnace's motherboard. The cost of the repairs have ranged from \$500 to over \$800 and because the damage was not caused by any sort of defect, it is not covered under warranty.

The damages are also not covered by most home insurance policies, and even if they were, most policies include a \$1,000 deductible.

The only recourse for homeowners whose furnaces have been damaged is to submit a claim form to Quelmec Loss Adjusters who are mandated to investigate the circumstances surrounding incidents which have caused damage to the property of Hydro One customers. If they find that the damage was directly related to the power surge and that the surge was caused by the hydro utility, then the homeowner would be entitled to compensation.

The forms can be downloaded from the Internet by visiting <http://www.quelmec.ca/claimforms.html>.

This is the second time the Lalondes have been out of pocket for damage caused by a power surge.

Similar surge that occurred when their power was restored after an unscheduled outage on Dec. 14 fried the electronics on their new fridge. The repair bill was \$350.

The Springridge couple says they plan to fill out a claim form for their furnace which was expected to cost them \$750 to repair.

"Our fridge got fried in the last power surge a couple of weeks ago and it cost us \$350. Now our furnace is going to cost us \$750. Somebody's going to pay for it," says Gail Lalonde.

The best way to protect your appliances and other electronic equipment in your home is to have a licensed electrician install a surge protector in your breaker panel.

Year in Review

2008 a rather lacklustre year for local news

By Fred Sherwin
The Eastender

While the past year saw a number of major international stories including the world wide financial collapse and the election of the first black president in the United States of Americas, the situation locally was rather uneventful.

Aside from OC Transpo workers walking off the job in December, there was very little local news of the earth-shattering variety. City council approved a new Transportation Master Plan which includes a multi-billion dollar light rail system to be built over the next 23 years and consultants studying possible locations for an interprovincial bridge settled on Kettle Island as the best spot, which sparked a wave of protests from residents living in Manor Park and Rockcliffe Park.

But among all the stories that took place over the past 12 months, the year will primarily be remembered for two events in particular – “Sewergate” and the OC Transpo bus strike.

“Sewergate” was one of those stories that just wouldn’t go away. It all started when Orléans Ward Coun. Bob Monette took several community leaders on a tour of the Robert O. Pickard Water Treatment Facility in April.

During the tour, the facility operations manager inadvertently told the group that a slough gate malfunction in the summer of 2006 resulted in hundreds of thousands of litres of raw sewage being dumped into the Ottawa River. The timing of the malfunction coincided with a huge spike in e-coli levels at Petrie Island which forced the

parks and recreation department to close the beach for most of August, 2006.

The e-coli levels were a huge black mark on the east end recreation facility. Opponents of the beach used them to argue that it should be closed permanently, while supporters of the beach said the levels were a natural result of higher than average rainfall events that occurred that summer.

There were some people, however, who believed the spike in e-coli levels must have been caused by a massive discharge, possibly at the water treatment plant, but officials with the city’s water and wastewater department said that no such discharge had taken place.

When an Environment Canada study released last March touched off further speculation that a failure in the city’s water treatment system led to the high e-coli levels in 2006, the same senior managers lambasted any such speculation in a letter published in the *Ottawa Citizen*. So when the truth finally came out, the sewage hit the proverbial fan.

The real cause of the spike in e-coli levels at Petrie Island in August 2006 was a malfunctioning slough gate that remained open for nearly two weeks allowing nearly one billion litres of raw sewage to spill into the Ottawa River.

Not only did the managers fail to admit a possible connection between the malfunctioning slough gate and the spike in e-coli levels, they also failed to report the spill to officials with the federal and provincial Environment Ministries.

Within days of the truth coming to light three separate investigations were launched by all three levels of government. Water and waste water supervisor, Jean-Pierre Boisseau was immediately let go for lying about when the Ministry of the Environment was initially informed of the spill and the city was charged with several counts under the federal Clean Water Act.

In September, two more senior managers were handed their walking papers for the roles they played in the scandal and a third was suspended for 20 days without pay.

When city auditor Alain Lalonde released his own study into the cause of the sewage spill and how it was handled in October, he blamed the incident on “gross negligence” and “outright incompetence” on the part of a handful of senior managers.

On a positive note, the federal and provincial governments have pledged \$100 million to upgrade the city’s combination sewers and prevent similar spills from happening in the future.

The OC Transpo bus strike dominated headlines for the last three weeks of



During the federal election in November, Ottawa-Orléans MP Royal Galipeau became the first Conservative Member of Parliament from Orléans to be re-elected to the House of Commons since 1872. File photo

December. The 2,300 drivers, dispatchers and mechanics which make up the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 279 voted overwhelmingly to walk off the job on Dec. 9, which just happened to coincide with the first major snowstorm of the year. The result was absolute chaos. By the next day, however, commuters began to adjust their schedules and the impact was minimal.

The main sticking point in the dispute is the city’s desire to take back the scheduling of drivers which they relinquished to the union in 1999 in exchange for a two per cent across the board pay cut. The union has been adamant in its stance to retain scheduling, calling it a quality of life issue. The fear is that if the city were to take over scheduling, existing seniority rights would be wiped out.

After 10 days of taking swipes at one another in the media, the two sides went back to the bargaining table on Dec. 20 to try and settle their differences. Four days later the talks broke down with the union accusing the city of failing to bring anything new to the table. In reality, the city tweaked its offer by offering an additional quarter per cent increase in the first year and two more sick days.

Frustrated with the union’s refusal to put its revised offer to a vote, the city asked federal Labour Minister Rona Ambrose to step in and order a supervised vote which she did on Dec. 31. As the year came to an end commuters were anxiously waiting for the vote to be held.

[CLICK HERE TO CON'T p4>](#)



The consultant group NCE-Roche released their interprovincial bridge study in September which identified Kettle Island as the best location for a possible crossing. File photo

Year in Review

Fallout from 'sewergate' scandal dominates headlines in '08

Cont'd from page 3

2008 will also be remembered for three high profile court cases being cleared off the docket. In January, Christopher Myers avoided a trial by pleading guilty to second degree murder for raping and killing Ardeth Wood in August 2003. Judge Monique Metivier sentenced Myers to life in prison with no chance of parole for 10 years.

In October, Michel Belance was found guilty of second degree murder for a second time for stabbing former Blackburn Hamlet Dapo Agoro to death at an all ages dance club in June 2002. Justice Roydon Kealey also upheld the original sentence of life in prison with no chance of parole for 12 years.

But the trial of the year involved former Orléans resident and Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School grad Momin Khawaja who was charged with several counts under Canada's Anti-Terrorism Act in connection with a London bomb plot.

Five Britons of Pakistani descent had already been found guilty for their involvement in the plot and sentenced to life in prison.

From the beginning, Khawaja's lawyer Lawrence Greenspon admitted that his client had worked on a remote detonation device dubbed the "HiFi Digimonster" for the London terrorist cell, but that he did so under the belief that it would be used by insurgents in Afghanistan. At no time did he suspect or was told that it would be used to detonate bombs against civilian targets in London.

On Oct. 28, Justice Douglas Rutherford found Khawaja guilty on five terror-related charges including financing and facilitating terrorist activities between January 2002 and March 2004, but he acquitted the 29-year-old computer programmer on the more serious charge of building a detonation device for the purpose of being used in the London bomb plot.

In a 58-page document explaining his decision, Justice Rutherford said that the Crown failed to present any direct proof that Khawaja had any knowledge of the bomb plot.

Khawaja will be sentenced in the spring after Justice Rutherford has a chance to go over pre-sentencing reports which must be submitted by both the Crown and the defence on Feb. 16.

One of the most controversial stories in 2008 centred around the announcement of Kettle Island as the best possible option for an interprovincial crossing.

The announcement made by the consultant group charged with studying a number of possible sites, immediately touched off firestorm of protest from residents living in Manor Park who crowded into the salons at the Ottawa Civic Centre in September to voice their displeasure over the selection.

Despite the vitriol, lead consultant Steve Taylor stood by the recommendation which was supported by over 100 different criteria. In fact, Kettle Island consistently ranked the highest among the six potential sites in every single category.

Opponents of the Kettle Island option are hoping the consultants will include a second option in the next phase of the Environmental Assessment process which will be announced in January.

As big as the Kettle Island story was, it paled in comparison to the ongoing debate surrounding the city's Master Transportation Plan. In the end, city council decided to begin construction of a light rail network beginning with a downtown tunnel and having it connect to the Blair Road transit station in the east and Tunney's Pasture in the west along the existing Transitway at an estimated cost of \$1.7 billion.

2008 also saw the re-election of the first Conservative MP in Orléans in 136 years when incumbent Royal Galipeau beat Liberal rival Marc Godbout to replicate the



While Petrie Island continued to be the victim of bad publicity in 2008, revelations over a massive sewage spill in 2006 finally identified the city's aging sewer system as the source of abnormally high e-coli levels following heavy rainstorms. File photo

feat last accomplished by James Alexander Grant in 1872.

Things continued to get interesting at City Hall which is in the middle of a major reorganization. In November, a coalition of 15 city councillors blindsided Mayor Larry O'Brien and several of his allies by cutting off debate of the 2009 draft budget and passing an omnibus motion that, among other things, spared cuts to arts and heritage funding, rejected huge increases in rental fees for recreation facilities and included a 4.9 per cent tax increase.

Earlier in the year, council voted against allowing residents to bring their pets on city buses and torpedoed a move to change garbage pickup from once a week to once every two weeks.

Work continued to progress on the Shenkman Arts Centre, which is scheduled to open in the spring, and the Shenkman Endowment Fund continued to grow as more donors stepped up to the plate to contribute.

Cité Collegiale announced that they plan to build a skilled trades campus at the corner of Hwy. 174 and Trim Road beginning in 2010 and local residents began to catch Obama-mania as the U.S. presidential election easily eclipsed our own federal election in terms of public interest and excitement.

Looking ahead to the next 12 months, the Mayor's trial on influence peddling charges in April is likely to dominate headlines for several weeks, while the highly-anticipated opening of the Shenkman Arts Centre this spring will be a watershed moment in the development of the local arts community.

For the time being, however, the ongoing bus strike will continue to command the attention of the city's media outlets until a resolution is finally reached – whenever that will be.



Work on the Shenkman Arts Centre began in 2008 and will be completed in the spring of 2009. The Shenkman Arts Centre Endowment Fund was also created last year to generate funds for members of the local arts community. File photo

The Eastender

Fred Sherwin
Editor & Publisher

To submit a letter to the editor to *The Eastender* e-mail the-eastender@orleansonline.ca.

Letters should be limited to 250 words.

The Eastender reserves the right to edit correspondence for length with a commitment to maintaining the integrity and spirit of the content.

Presenting the 18th annual Fredzee Awards

It's hard to believe that another year has come to an end. It's been 18 years since I came up with the first ever Fredzee Awards which recognize some of top stories, personalities and outrageous happenings from the previous 12 months.

This year's Fredzee Awards are dedicated to the Philadelphia man who shot another man in a movie theatre for talking too much during a screening of "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button". Only in America. Here in Canada we would have just thrown popcorn at him and when he turned around we would have pointed to the person sitting beside us.

The year's BIG winners

1) The free world

(Barack Obama becomes the first black president of the United States of America proving that there is still hope for us all.)

2) Michael Ignatieff

(He's the interim and soon to be full-time leader of the Liberal Party almost by default.)

3) Royal Galipeau

(Ottawa-Orléans MP beats the odds to become the first Conservative member to get re-elected to Parliament in Orléans since 1872.)

The year's biggest losers

1) Stephane Dion

(First he gets pummeled in the election, then his effort to take one last grasp at power is stymied by Governor General Michaëlle Jean who grants Stephen Harper's request to prorogue Parliament and avoid the Opposition's attempt to form a coalition government.)

2) Stock market investors

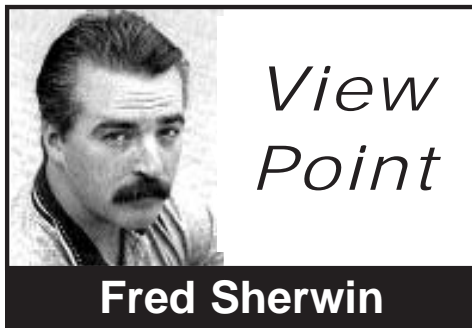
(The TSX dropped by nearly 48 per cent between June 1 and November 20, while the Dow Jones industrial average and the S&P 500 suffered similar fates brought on by the world wide financial crisis.)

3) Maple Leaf Foods

(The Canadian meat-processing company agreed to pay out \$27 million to victims of a listeriosis outbreak that originated in one of their plants and killed 20 people while making an estimated 5,000 Canadians sick. And you think you had a bad year.)

Top local stories of the year

1) City of Ottawa auditor general Alain Lalonde releases "Sewergate" report blaming the crisis on "gross negligence" and "outright incompetence" on the part of senior managers in the city's water and wastewater services department.



Fred Sherwin

2) Former Orléans resident and Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School grad Momin Khawaja is convicted on six counts of facilitating terrorism, but not guilty on the more serious charge of knowingly being involved in a 2004 London bomb plot.

The Civic Appreciation Award

To the two per cent of OC Transpo drivers, dispatchers and mechanics who voted against going on strike before they walked off the job in December.

Comeback of the Year Award

To Conservative MP Maxime Bernier who was re-elected to Parliament in a landslide after having to resign from his Cabinet post as Foreign Affairs Minister in the wake of the Julie Couillard affair in which he left several sensitive documents at his girlfriend's house.

Perception is Everything Award

A tie between the CEOs of the big three American automakers who flew in three separate private jets to Washington D.C. to ask for a multi-billion dollar bailout and vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin who spent \$150,000 upgrading her campaign wardrobe while still trying to come off as an ordinary hockey mom.

The Blindside of the Year Award

To the 15 Ottawa city councillors who took a page from the "Survivor" series and blindsided Mayor Larry O'Brien by cutting off debate of the city budget and passing an omnibus motion that avoided unpopular service cuts and raised taxes 4.9 per cent.

The "Your 15 Minutes of Fame is Up" Award

To Joe "The Plumber" Wurzelbacher who parlayed a chance encounter with soon-to-be President Barack Obama into multiple appearances on late night talk shows and a book deal.

The Dubest Idea of the Year Award

To Mayor Larry O'Brien for suggesting residents pay a snow removal surcharge to cover the cost of getting rid of the mountainous snowbanks left on the city's streets from the worse snowfall in 37 years.

Somewhere out there Brian Mulroney is smiling

The Ottawa-based satirical magazine Frank folds after 19 years.

The Conspicuous Consumption Award

To American Jon Wolf who bought an Illinois-shaped frosted flake on e-Bay for the princely sum of \$1,350.

Headline of the Year

"Man's coffin kills wife on way to cemetery"

Marciana Siera Barcelos, 67, was killed instantly when the coffin carrying her 76-year-old husband slammed into the back of her head while she was riding in the front seat of the hearse.

So Much For The Olympic Ideal

Cuban taekwon-do competitor Angel Matos, kicks a referee in the face, shoves a judge and spits on the floor after being disqualified in a bronze medal match, earning himself and his coach a lifetime ban.

Sacriligious Move of the Year

CBC holds a contest to come up with a replacement theme song for "Hockey Night in Canada".

I Trust They Weren't Air Jordans

Iraqi journalist Muntadhar al-Zaidi throws his shoes at U.S. President George W. Bush during a Baghdad press conference on Dec. 14.

Quotes of the Year

"If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible; who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time; who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer." – Barack Obama after being elected President of the United States of America

"What's the difference between a hockey mom and a pit bull? Lipstick." – Sarah Palin during the Republican Convention

"That's part of our history, part of our life, part of the enthusiasm for the game. When you heard that, you thought Canada, you thought hockey, you thought CBC. What idiot... What the hell are they trying to do? Who's running the CBC?" – former HNIC commentator Howie Meeker on CBC's decision to drop the "Hockey Night in Canada" theme song.

"If Jesus came back today, I think he'd throw up." – Former Minnesota governor and one time professional wrestler Jesse "The Body" Ventura

Declaring OC Transpo an essential service a dangerous move

Commentary
By Fred Sherwin

With members of the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 279 expected to reject the city's latest contract offer today and thus prolong their 26 day strike indefinitely, the call to declare OC Transpo an essential service will likely reach a fevered pitch.

In short declaring OC Transpo an essential service would be disastrous. While at first blush it sounds like a good idea in that it will get the buses rolling sooner rather than later, the financial ramifications would be felt for years to come. The sole reason is that once something is declared an essential service, it is subject to binding arbitration.

Ask anyone who who knows anything about the history of collective bargaining at City Hall and they will tell you that the worst thing city council ever did was to agree to a binding arbitration clause when they harmonized the collective bargaining agreements post-amalgamation.

Yes, it prevents the unions from going on strike, but it also severely restricts your ability to control compensation costs.

In a perfect world, both sides would submit their respective negotiating positions to an independent arbitrator who would then put together a deal that strikes a mutually beneficial balance.

In reality, most arbitrators look to precedence when coming up with their decision. In the case of police officers, they turn to recently negotiated deals in other jurisdictions. That's how Ottawa got stuck having to pay local police officers retention bonuses when there wasn't a retaining issue. The bonuses were adopted by Toronto in an effort to prevent police officers from moving to other cities, but thanks to binding arbitration every urban municipality in the province had to follow suit.

Ditto for the city's firefighters, which received a \$10 million windfall last spring after an arbitrator awarded them the same retention bonuses that were given to the police officers.

If you want to declare OC Transpo an essential service then you need to be ready to accept higher property taxes and more expensive bus passes.

A better move would be to get the House of Commons to pass back to work legislation which would likely include binding arbitration as a component, but it wouldn't be made permanent which would be the case if OC Transpo was declared an essential service.

As for the rising call to bring in replacement workers, it's not quite as simple as it sounds. Where would they come from? How many would sign up? How much training would they need? Which routes would be reinstated? What would the criteria be? How much would security cost? The questions are endless and each would have to be answered before taking such a drastic step.

Finally, a lot has been made about the money the city is saving during the strike.

According to OC Transpo general manager Alain Mercier, the city is saving \$3 million a week. But that figure will be a lot smaller if council agrees to refund the cost of OC Transpo passes purchased in December, or votes to reimburse a portion of the transit levy on our property tax bills for which we haven't been receiving any service.

Local business

Panic free computing is just a phone call away

By Fred Sherwin
The Eastender

If you depend on your lap top for your livelihood you probably live in mortal fear that A) it will be stolen, or B) it will simply stop working either due to a virus or the hard drive simply gives out.

The latter is more common than you think, especially if your hard drive is constantly being used. Over use can sometimes cause the processor to stop working all together. In such a case it can cost between \$800 and \$1,000 to retrieve the data and load it onto a new hard drive. One solution is to create a back up, but not everyone refreshes their back-up drive as much as they should.

Then there's the issue of theft. Laptop thefts are quickly becoming an epidemic and even if you have a backup there's still a chance that the person who stole your computer can cause a considerable amount of damage if they can access the data.

So how can the average business person insure peace of mind as well as complete security? Well fortunately there is a company out there that specializes in providing small and medium sized businesses with a safe secure alternative to do-it-yourself IT, and they're Canadian too.

No Panic Computing is the brainchild of Keating Technologies president Larry Keating. It's a revolutionary new service that allows businesses and individuals to lease an HP Notebook laptop with a full range of safeguards backed up by 24/7 technical support.

The backbone of No Panic Computing is NPC Data Guard which automatically

backs up your data every time you log onto the Internet and ensures that it is safe and protected from electronic predators using a dual approach.

The first level of defence is the laptop itself. Each HP Notebook is installed with the latest anti-virus, anti-spyware software plus a data auto-destruction function which allows you to remotely wipe out the data on your computer should it be stolen.

The second level of defence is powered by Iron Mountain technology and features the highest level data encryption to protect against hackers and a data recovery system that can access stored data and programs at any time.

Each unit also comes with no charge parts replacement, power surge protection, accidental damage protection and quick replacement program in case your laptop is lost, stolen or accidentally damaged for whatever reason.

Should any one of the above occur, NPC will quickly send you a replacement unit with your programs installed and your data restored.

Customers can choose between an HP 8510p or 6910p loaded with Windows XP Pro, the Microsoft Office Suite of programs, ESET Antivirus and Antispyware Business Edition and Claritude Speed-filler. Each laptop features an Intel Centrino Pro mobile processor, a 120GB hard drive, 2GB of memory, Intel wireless technology, a fingerprint reader, ATI graphics accelerator, built-in speakers and a microphone.

The cost to the client is \$129.95 per unit based on a 36 month lease. If clients want



Jacques Mailloux is the president of Storm Micro Systems which is the only authorized dealer of No Panic Computing in the National Capital Region. Fred Sherwin/Photo

to stick with their own laptop and simply take advantage of the NPC Dataguard service to protect their data the monthly fee is just \$49.95 per month.

One of the few licensed No Panic Computing dealers in Ottawa is Jacques Mailloux who just happens to reside in Orléans. Jacques can be reached at 613-851-5958, or you can e-mail him at info@stormmicro.com. He will be more than happy to discuss the many advantages of using NPC with you.

Local sports

Local boy captains Team Ontario to U17 gold

By Fred Sherwin
The Eastender

While most of the country's attention was focused on Ottawa during the recent World Junior Hockey Championships, another major international tournament was taking place in British Columbia.

The World Under-17 Hockey Championships features some of the best U17 players in the world, many of whom have gone on to represent their countries at the World Junior Championships. In fact, 22 of the players on Team Canada at this year's World Junior Championships, played at the World Under-17 tournament.

This year's U17 world championships included teams from Russia, the United States, Slovakia and Finland, as well as teams from every region in the country.

The defending champions were Team Ontario. One of the selections on the team was Chapel Hill resident Eric Gudbranson who was picked fourth overall at the 2008 OHL Priority Draft by the Kingston Frontenacs.

While Gudbranson was thrilled to make the team, he was even more excited when he walked into the dressing room with the rest of his teammates for the first time and saw a "C" on the front of his jersey.

"We walked into the dressing room and our jerseys were all hanging up in front of our stalls and mine had a 'C' on it. It kind of caught me off guard a little when I saw it. I felt really happy. It gave me a sense of accomplishment," says Gudbranson, who returned to Ottawa on Wednesday to celebrate his birthday with his family before heading back to Kingston.

The 6-foot-4, 185 lb. defenceman was chosen to be the team leader by the coaching staff and the director of hockey operations. It was only surprising in that he hadn't had any experience in big tournaments. In fact, he hadn't won a championship of any significance since his first year in Novice except for the odd small tournament here and there.

With the "C" came additional responsibility which Gudbranson was more than ready for.

"I knew I had to keep the guys in line and make sure they stayed focused on the

goal. I also wanted to make sure that they represented Ontario well when we were out in public," says Gudbranson.

After winning their one and only exhibition game against Finland on Dec. 28, Team Ontario opened the tournament with an 8-1 win over Atlantic Canada the next day. They followed that up with three consecutive wins over Russia, Germany and Pacific Canada to finish first in their pool.

In the semi-finals they were matched up against Western Canada and ended up winning 7-4 with Gudbranson notching a pair of power play goals. Not only were they his first two goals of the tournament, they were his first two goals of the season.

The gold medal game was a rematch between Team Ontario and Team Pacific who had downed the favoured Americans in the other semi-final.

After the first two periods Team Ontario held a slim one goal lead thanks after Team Pacific scored late in the second period.

The third period was all Team Ontario as Gudbranson and the rest of his teammates stepped up their game.

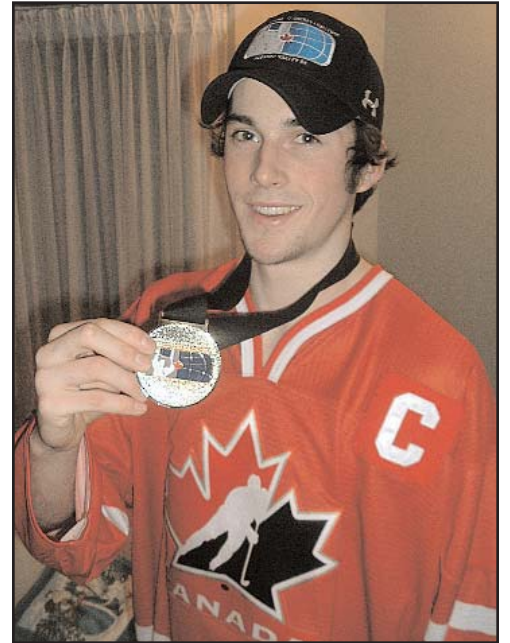
After setting up the team's third goal which was scored by John McFarland, Gudbranson put an exclamation point on the team's effort by scoring another power play goal with 1:20 left in the game.

To cap the whole experience he was on the ice during the last minute of the game and kept possession of the puck as the final 10 seconds ticked off the clock.

What followed was complete pandemonium.

"It was absolutely unbelievable and the best part about was that as the kept I got to hold the trophy first. Being able to lift a World Championship trophy over your head, not many people get to do that, so the fact that I was able to do it was just an amazing experience that I'll never forget," says Gudbranson whose mother and father and younger brother Alex got to watch the whole thing transpire from the stands.

The only downside about playing in the tournament was the fact that they didn't have time to watch much of the World Junior Tournament except for bits and pieces here and there and the odd highlight. But not to worry, Gudbranson and



Chapel Hill resident Eric Gudbranson proudly displays the gold medal he won as a member of Team Ontario at the recent World Under-17 Hockey Championships. Fred Sherwin/Photo

several other of the players on Team Ontario are hoping to build on their success at the tournament to earn a spot on the national under-18 team that will be playing in the Ivan Hlinka Tournament in the Czech Republic next August.

A good showing in the Hlinka Tournament would go along way to possibly making the World Junior team, which is Gudbranson's goal right now.

"Absolutely. I just have to work my tail off and keep improving and hopefully make the under-18 team. If I can make a good impression, hopefully I'll be able to make the World Junior team. That would be the ultimate," says Gudbranson.

His more immediate focus will be on helping to turnaround the Kingston Frontenacs season. The team is currently in last place in the East Division having only won eight games so far this season.

Looking more long term, Gudbranson will be eligible for the NHL Draft in 2010 when he hopes to fulfill the dream of every young hockey player in the country and make the NHL.



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Local sports

East end teams come up short at Bell Capital Cup

By Fred Sherwin
The Eastender

The Gloucester Blackhawks Minor Atom RepB team and the Cumberland Jr. Grads Minor Pee wee 'AA' squad were both hoping to ring in the New Year with a win at the Bell Capital Cup on Tuesday, but instead that each suffered heartbreaking losses in double overtime.

The Gloucester Blackhawks were on the ice first, waking up at the crack of dawn to take on Team Comcast in the Minor Atom 'AA' final at 7:45 a.m.

The group of nine-year-olds had intended to play in the 'A' division, but moved up to 'AA' at the invitation of the tournament organizers largely due to their 19-0-1 record in league play so far this season and their success at the regional Silver Stick tournament in Sudbury where they lost to the second-ranked 'AA' team in the province.

Blackhawks head coach Ron Castleman said everyone agreed to the promotion, including the parents who though it would be a great experience for the kids.

"There was a risk that we'd go three and out, but at least we'd get a chance to play against some tougher teams," says Castleman.

Certainly no one thought they'd do as well as they ended up doing. After splitting their first two round robin games – a 2-1 win over the Pittsburgh Aviators and a 2-1 loss to the Barrie Colts – they hammered the Atlanta Fire 5-0 to earn a spot in the playoff round on goal differential.

In the semi-finals they faced the Burlington Eagles who are ranked 7th in the province at the 'AA' level and had scored 16 goals in their three round robin games, while given up just three. The result was a lopsided 4-1 victory for the Blackhawks in which Declan Hilton registered a hat trick.

In the final against Team Comcast, the Blackhawks managed to get on the board first on a goal by Samuel Paquette at the 9:50 mark of the first period.

Team Comcast, which is coached by former NHLer Keith Primeau, tied the game with a power play goal early in the second before Oliver Castleman and Nicholas McHugh scored less than three minutes apart to give Gloucester a two goal lead.

Down but far from out, the team from Philadelphia scored a pair of goals in the final minute and nine seconds of the period to tie the game at 3-3.

After neither team could find the back of the net in first three-minute overtime period, they went to a second extra session with three skaters apiece.

The deadlock was finally broken three minutes and 13 seconds into the second overtime period when Matthew Cassidy scored to give Team Comcast the win.

Despite the heartbreaking result, Castleman says the kids could hold their heads high at going as far as they did.

"Of course they were sad that they lost, but they beat some good hockey teams along the way. Our defence played extremely well," says Castleman.

Because the Minor Atom AA final went into double overtime, the Minor Pee wee AA game between the Jr. Grads and the North York Knights was delayed by a half hour. The Jr. Grads made it to the championship game by way of a 2-1 overtime victory over the Kanata Blazers in the semi-finals on Tuesday, while the Knights beat the Ottawa Sting 4-3 in the other semi-final matchup.

A well-rested Jr. Grads squad got off to a quick start against North York outshooting them 7-4 in the first period and were rewarded with a goal by Brett McKenzie who picked up a rebound at the side of the net and coolly slid a backhand past the Knights' goalie.

The Jr. Grads kept up the pressure in the second period and very nearly went up 2-0 when defenceman Zack Salloum ringed a wrist shot off the post from the top of the left faceoff circle.

The Knights finally tied the game with 38.7 seconds left in the second stanza on a laser beam of a shot by Ryan Hunt that Jr. Grads' goalie Aidan Ethier managed to get a piece of with his trapper before it went into the top corner.

Besides the lone regulation goal, Ethier was outstanding in net for the Jr. Grads especially late in the third period when he had to come up big on two scoring chances including a shot from point blank range to preserve the 1-1 tie. Ethier also got some assistance from the goal post on a shot by Hunt with 1:10 left on the clock.

After the first three minute overtime period, the game went into double overtime where Ethier continued to stand tall in the Cumberland net. A minute and half into the extra session he made a huge save in stopping Andrew Neayem on a breakaway attempt.

A little over a minute later, the Knights' Dylan Lastman managed to get in deep and



The Cumberland Jr. Grads Minor Pee wee 'AA' team show off their trophies and banner after making it to the finals of the Bell Capital Cup last week. Fred Sherwin/Photo

poke a shot towards the net while getting sandwiched between a pair of Jr. Grads. The puck slid under Ethier's stick, who was going down on the play, and between his legs for the game winning goal.

Even though the Jr. Grads lost in the final, they could take pride in the fact that they had advanced past the quarterfinals for the first time in three trips to the Bell Capital Cup and that they did so competing against 30 teams in their division. They also can look forward to coming back next year when they will be competing at the Major Pee wee level.

For Jr. Grads head coach Steve Malette, having to play in back-to-back overtime games was almost more than his system could take.

"It was unfortunate that we had to lose, but to be a finalist out of 30 teams from all over the place is an amazing accomplishment in itself," said Malette.

The group of 11-year-olds will now focus on climbing up the ODMHL standings where they are currently in eighth place. After an 0-6 start, they have won four of their last 10 games with three ties.

They also played in three tournaments so far this season and have only lost twice, once in the semi-finals of the Quinte Red Devils 'AAA' Tournament and in the semi-finals of the Bell Capital Cup against North York. Their lone win came in the Mississauga Terriers Tournament.

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Grads shake off holiday rust in win over Bears

By Fred Sherwin
The Eastender

Two days after dropping a game they should have won against the Kemptville 73s last Friday night, the Cumberland Grads finally shook off their post-holiday malaise to down the Smiths Falls Bears 5-4 on home ice Sunday.

The Grads spotted the Bears an early 2-0 lead before bouncing back to tie the score late in the first period on a pair of goals by Mathieu Ouellette and Brent Bisdee.

Ouellette's goal came off a bad turnover just outside the blue line in which he picked off an errant pass and skated in all alone on Smiths Falls goalie Joe Quattrocchi before depositing a backhand shot into the back of the net.

Bisdee then tied the game on a great individual effort that saw him blow by the Smiths Falls' defenceman on the play and swoop in on Quattrocchi who didn't appear ready for the shot.

The Grads eventually took the lead at the 12:34 mark of the second period on a goal by Brock Plouffe who was set up beautifully on the play by David Pacan who battled for the puck at the side of the net before gaining possession and sending a pass over to his wide open teammate.

The Grads scored again with 4:16 left to go in the second period when Michael Sorrenti picked off a clearing pass deep in the Bears' offensive zone and then flipped a pass to Tim Hennessey who had gotten behind the defencemen on the play and scored on the backhand.

Call-up Adam Mohr played another solid game in net for the Grads, making several key saves including a huge stop early in the third period in which he prevented the puck from crossing the goal line by throwing his stick back and corralling the puck into his body.

Twenty-four seconds later, Marc-André Labelle picked up a nice lead pass along the boards from Jeffrey Clarke and then fired a blistering shot from the right faceoff circle that caught the inside of the far post just outside the reach of Quattrocchi's trapper.

The Bears would get one back on a power play goal midway through the final period, but it was too little too late as the Grads easily held on for the win.

Jeffrey Campbell had an especially strong game on defence in helping Mohr pick up his third win since replacing Adam Laderoute in a game against the Cornwall Colts in Dec. 19. The Grads regular starting goaltender, who has been nursing a minor injury, is expected to be back between the

pipes when the team faces the Kanata Stallions on Tuesday night.

Despite the exceptional job Mohr has done in filling in for Laderoute, Grads' head coach and general manager Mark Grady says he's still actively looking for someone with more experience to back up the team's number one goaltender.

"Adam has done a great job for us, but I don't want to keep him out of Major Midget AAA for too long" says Grady, who believes the 17-year-old is still a year away from playing full-time in the CJHL.

With the team about to play six games in the next nine days, including the next three in the other teams' buildings, Grady is happy with the way his team is playing of late.

"We have three lines that can score and we're even getting some production from our fourth line," says Grady. "Kanata should be a good test. We haven't beaten them yet this season."

The Grads are currently seven points clear of the Gloucester Rangers atop the Robinson Division with three games in hand. Overall they're in fourth place, one point ahead of the Brockville Braves and three points behind the Bears who have played three additional games than they have.

Gloucester Rangers lose goalie to Div. I school

By Fred Sherwin
The Eastender

The Gloucester Rangers are in search of a back-up goalie again after Alex Beaudry recently signed a scholarship with the Providence Friars.

Beaudry was acquired from the Kemptville 73s by the Rangers a little over a month ago in exchange for Matt DiMillo and the rights to Stittsville Royals goalie Justin Gilbert. The deal, which teamed the Cumberland Barons product with Rangers starter Francis Dupuis, gave Gloucester one of the best goalie tandems in the league.

In the eight games he started for the Rangers he won two and lost six including three overtime losses while posting a 3.70 goals against average.

Besides giving the Rangers depth in net, Beaudry was considered an insurance poli-

cy to replace Dupuis for when he was called up by the Guelph Storm to replace Thomas McCollum who played for Team USA during the World Junior Championships.

Before he signed a scholarship with Providence a number of Division I schools showed an interest in Beaudry including Princeton and Merrimack. His intention was to hold off on making a decision until later in the season, but Providence ended up making him an offer he couldn't refuse.

The Friars had lost their starting goalie to injury in November and their back-up goalies weren't getting the job done. Beaudry will be expected to step between the pipes as soon as he arrives in Rhode Island. Their next game is against the University of Massachusetts-Lowell on Jan 10.

The Friars currently sit in last place in

the Hockey East standings with a record of 0-8-1. Among the other eight teams in the league are Boston University and Northeastern who are ranked 3rd and 6th respectively in NCAA men's hockey.




Alex Beaudry


Beaudry has been taking part time courses at the University of Ottawa ever since he graduated from école secondaire Béatrice-Desloges in June 2007.

He plans to major in business economics at Providence where he will be receiving a full ride scholarship.

"It's pretty rare to start in the middle of the year like I'm doing. It only started to really sink in a couple of days ago," says Beaudry who left for Providence with his mother and father last Friday.



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