



OPP framework

Armstrong agrees to police services board concept

Darlene Wroe
Speaker Reporter

ARMSTRONG TOWNSHIP - Armstrong Township has added its name to the list of municipalities that are agreeing to a new framework which would see Englehart and Earlton area municipalities form a joint police services board.

Under the proposal, the City of Temiskaming Shores would retain its police services board, and the municipalities to the east, west and south down to Temagami, along with the Temagami First Nation, could form a southern sector board. The municipalities as a whole represent the area served by the Temiskaming detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police.

At its June 9 meeting, Armstrong council agreed to participate in the proposed arrangement.

The Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General is requiring that municipalities across Ontario decide whether they want to participate in a new board system for communicating with the heads of the OPP detachments.

Up until now, some municipalities have not participated in communications with OPP heads, and some have done so under a less formal committee system, while others have had boards. The ministry is seeking to establish a consistent framework.

Municipalities are not required to participate, but those who do not will no longer have input into policing in their communities, such as advising of an increase in speeding along town streets and requesting increased patrols for that situation.

"Participation is not necessary," commented Armstrong Township Mayor Jean Marc Boileau of the police services board. However, "the detachment board will still be responsible for the entire community including any municipalities that have opted out."



JUST WHAT HE WANTED

Five-year-old Daniel Aylwin of Kerns gave the camera a playful wink as he found the perfect Easter Rabbit candy container on Saturday. The Englehart and District Agricultural Society held its first small animal buy, sell and trade event next to the Englehart arena June 12. Daniel found his treasure in the yard sale barn. Plans are to hold the event every two weeks there through the summer. (Staff photo by Steven Larocque)

Boileau expressed confidence that all municipalities in the Englehart and Earlton area will opt in to the framework.

The City of Temiskaming Shores is putting the proposal together.

Boileau noted that the ministry had introduced the framework with its own view that there should be one board for the entire area policed by the Temiskaming OPP.

The proposal being put forward is different than the ministry's initial suggestion.

"I don't know what is going to come out of it," Boileau said of the area's proposal for three boards. The proposal is due at the end of June.

DID YOU GET The Speaker THIS WEEK?

Here are some of the stories in our June 16 edition...

- Good news says 75 per cent of the people in the district have had at least one COVID-19 vaccination, placing this area in the top 10 of Ontario health units.
- The Temagami Canoe Festival is grounded for another summer due to the pandemic, but something will be floated online about canoeing.
- There is no need for area municipalities to feel blue about recycling costs as the Blue box program is changing.
- A business owner has purchased the former New Liskeard College of Agriculture property at 280 Armstrong Street in New Liskeard.
- Charlton-Dack will take part in a district-wide police services board.
- TDSS graduate Nadia Breault has earned an \$80,000 Schulich Leader Scholarship for math and statistics to McMaster University.
- Children are being encouraged to be more active with an Active Transportation Plan in Earlton.
- Cobalt has renewed its contract with the Animal Control Officer.
- The hottest ticket in the region might be the Temagami Community Foundation Truck and Boat Lottery ticket with additional early bird prizes.



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former New Liskeard College of Agriculture property at 280 Armstrong Street in New Liskeard.

A Quilts of Valour ceremony took place in Earlton where two veterans received quilts as thank you gifts for their service to Canadians.

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Temagami Family Health Team

Submitted by Ellen Ibey

Hyperthyroid and Hypothyroid Disorder Awareness

According to the Thyroid Foundation of Canada, 1 in 10 Canadians suffer from a thyroid condition of one type or another. And as many as 50% of those are undiagnosed.

Thyroid Disease is a Family Affair

Thyroid disease is hereditary and commonly affects other members in the family but may show up in another form. Until this gland goes awry, very little attention is given to its small, butterfly shaped presence at the base of the neck. The hormones it secretes are essential to all growth and metabolism.

The two most common types of thyroid disease are:

- Hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid)
- Hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid)

Clinical features of hypothyroidism may include: poor appetite; intolerance to cold; dry, coarse skin; brittle hair; fatigue; constipation; muscle weakness; and poor memory retention. Sometimes the voice becomes croaky and hoarse. Examination may reveal dry, scaly, cold, pale skin; a thickening of the skin and underlying tissues; very slow reflexes; and a slow heart rate.

Clinical features of hyperthyroidism may include: weight loss, nervousness, irritability, intolerance to hot weather, excessive sweating, shakiness, and muscle weakness. Other signs include a rapid pulse, loss of body fat and muscle bulk, thyroid enlargement (goitre), fine tremors of the fingers and hot, moist, velvety skin.

Thyroid disorders for the most part are treatable; however, untreated thyroid disease can produce serious results in other parts of the body. Each person's experience of thyroid illness will be different depending on a number of factors; a patient will not necessarily have all (or even any) of the above symptoms; some patients have the symptoms and no thyroid disease, perhaps due to other causes. A primary care provider should be consulted if a thyroid disorder is suspected. Early diagnosis and treatment are crucial.

The Temagami Medical Centre and Family Health Team... committed to keeping you as healthy as possible!



A driver was airlifted to hospital after being ejected and then trapped under a vehicle on Highway 65 West near Henwood Road 2 earlier this week. Police say the driver suffered serious but non-life-threatening injuries in the June 14 single-vehicle collision. (OPP Photo)

Driver seriously injured after ejection from vehicle

KENABEEK (Staff) – Police say a driver sustained serious but non-life-threatening injuries in a single-vehicle collision on Highway 65 West earlier this

week.

Temiskaming Ontario Provincial Police report the crash occurred shortly after 11 a.m. June 14 near Henwood Road 2.

Police say the driver lost control and the vehicle struck the ditch. The driver was reported to have been ejected and then trapped under the vehicle.

An Ornge air ambulance was called to the scene and airlifted the individual to hospital.

Responding to the collision were police, the Kenabek Fire Department and Timiskaming Emergency Medical Services paramedics.

Highway 65 West was closed for about two and a half hours, reopening shortly before 1:30 p.m.

The collision prompted police to remind motorists in a news release that it takes only seconds to fasten a seatbelt, and only seconds to lose one's life for failing to do so.



Temagami

Family Health Team

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Former Ag College property sold to local business owner

Sue Nielsen
Speaker Reporter

TEMISKAMING SHORES — A major investment has been made by a local business owner who has purchased the former New Liskeard College of Agricultural Technology property at 280 Armstrong Street in New Liskeard.

Ray Stanton, owner of The Temiskaming Printing Company, Phippen Signs and a shareholder in Northern Signs, has purchased the 136-acre property that includes College Boreal, Northern College, and the District of Timiskaming Social Services Administration Board offices.

Other tenants include government ministries of the Temiskaming Ontario Provincial Police, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, Ministry of Government and Community Services, and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

The property also has several agriculture-themed buildings including the agronomy building, a calan barn, teaching area, a large horse barn, maintenance shop, pesticide storage building, veterinary lab, machine and other storage buildings.

The property is well known in the region and will continue to be a mainstay of agricultural-based operations.

As a hobby farmer, Stanton plans on using the property, including the barns and pasture acreage, to raise his Limousin cattle. He hopes the farm will house up to 50 cow/calf pairs.

Limousin cattle originated in France and they are highly prized for producing beef with a low portion of bone to fat ratio.

Stanton has shown his cattle at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair for 15 years and agriculture is something he is very passionate about. He is a third generation beef cattle farmer.

His investment exemplifies confidence in the economic outlook of the Temiskaming region and agriculture as its mainstay.

The property will have office space available for rent in the coming weeks and Northern Signs will be moving to the property in the near future. All current tenants will continue to function as per the status quo.

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EDITORIAL

Turtle nesting season

Be aware that it is turtle nesting season in Ontario.

Ontario is described as one of the last refuges for turtles as they are in sharp decline across Canada. Turtles will be on roads and shoulders of roads laying their eggs in the soft, warm gravel.

If you come upon an object in the middle of the road that looks like a rock, it could very well be a turtle.

Please slow down and, if need be, help the turtle cross the road safely.

If we can save one turtle from perishing on area roadways that helps greatly in the overall conservation of turtles.

There are eight species of Turtles in Ontario including the larger snapping turtles, Blanding's, northern map, eastern musk, spotted, wood, spiny soft-shell and painted turtles.

Turtles are keystone species and are the base of the wildlife food webs.

Turtles support 70 per cent of Ontario's wildlife by helping to clean lakes and rivers.

If turtles are at risk of extinction, it can also be viewed that other species are to follow.

If you love a nice clean lake, then turtles, especially snapping turtles, are your friends.

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They called him "chief"

Sometimes our past comes back to haunt us.

The past has come to poke the eye of the present concerning the hundreds of graves of Indigenous children being discovered at former Canadian residential schools.

We celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21.

We have much to be proud of in this country but equally much to be ashamed of.

The treatment of our Indigenous people is a disgrace and one that eats away at me.

When I worked for the newspaper in Espanola, we had the First Nations of Sagamok, Birch Island, Naughton, Spanish and those on Manitoulin Island in our coverage area.

I was welcomed with open arms to each and every community and became friends with

people in those communities.

I played ball with several girls from Sagamok and Birch Island.

My daughter went to high school with First Nation kids who became her good friends. She was bullied by the jocks at school for being what they called a "Nish lover."

People referred to a First Nation apartment complex in town as a "cement tipi."

There was a great deal of prejudice towards First Nation people and it bothered me.

On weekends I volunteered to play the music for minor hockey games. One winter a Sudbury hockey league decided to host U17 travel team tryouts in town.

There was a young man from the Whitefish River First Nation trying out. He was an excep-

tional hockey player, fast, incredibly skilled and smart.

Whenever he got the puck he made things happen.

I often wrote about him in my Sport Shorts column with the paper.

The Sudbury big wigs were scouting the players in the same booth as I was playing music in. They called that player "chief" instead of his real name, rated him as low as they could and continually disparaged him.

I spoke up one day reminding them of what they were saying in front of a reporter's ears.

The look on their faces was priceless. Years later I was shocked to read his obituary in the Sudbury Star. I cried. He took his own life at age 23. He was described as passionate about hockey with big dreams.

He was a shy kid away from



Sue Nielsen

the rink but a really good kid. He was beaten down and I can only imagine the other instances of racism he faced in his young life.

It's time to end the throwing of trailer hitches, the name calling, the dirty drinking water, the murder of Indigenous children and the apathy to racism.

It is time to tell the real story and stop denying what Indigenous peoples have suffered and lived through. Let us support Indigenous peoples and be accountable for the historical and present day wrongs of colonialism.

It is time to do better.



Lindsay Cote



FAMILY FUN

Gordon Bilow and his three-year-old son Dalton took advantage of the warm sunny weather recently to get a little fishing in at the Wabi River on Murray Street in New Liskeard. But young Dalton wanted to explore the area, picking dandelion flowers along the way. (Staff photo by Sue Nielsen)

City offering business recovery help

Diane Johnston
Speaker Reporter

TEMISKAMING SHORES – The city is offering a recovery program to eligible businesses hit hard by COVID-19.

It includes rebates for a portion of water and sewer fees in 2020 and 2021 and relief on interest and penalties for property taxes.

Temiskaming Shores council approved the program June 1.

Mayor Carman Kidd anticipated that the help would be “well-received” by the commercial sector.

The program is open only to commercial-class ratepayers.

To be eligible, they must have been required to close or significantly restrict services to comply with provincial pandemic restrictions, and must provide documentation demonstrating revenue loss.

Qualifying applicants will be eligible for a 35 per cent rebate of water and sewer fees. Relief of penalties and interest associated with property taxes will apply to the 2020 and 2021 taxation years.

Treasurer Laura-Lee MacLeod outlined the program and its potential costs to the municipality in a recent report to city council.

Under a worst-case scenario, she said the combined measures could tally almost \$491,400.

To cover that cost, she said the municipality has almost \$255,000 remaining in Safe Restart funding, provided under a federal-provincial agreement.

To cover the shortfall of almost \$245,000, the city’s corporate services committee recommended that money be drawn from the municipality’s working funds reserve.



Become a BOARD Member

Timiskaming Home Support is a charitable organization committed to providing home and community support to seniors and physically disabled individuals living in the district of Timiskaming. Like our vision **Living at home – your choice, our goal**, we want to enable individuals to remain in their home environment of choice by providing them with services that are accessible, innovative and quality driven.

Our Board of Directors comprises leaders from non-profit and for-profit sectors who are dedicated to the organization’s mission and vision.

Serving on the Timiskaming Home Support Board of Directors is an extraordinary opportunity for an individual who is passionate about strengthening leadership and governance in the non-profit to make a difference.

Timiskaming Home Support seeks experienced and well-connected individuals who live within or outside of the district of Timiskaming and who are passionate about seniors and physically disabled individuals. The ideal candidate is committed to supporting and positively impacting the policy environment in which Timiskaming Home Support does its work. **Prior non-profit board member experience is a welcomed asset.**

For inquiries or to submit a letter of interest:



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Council Meetings: The next Regular Council meeting will be held on Monday, June 21, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. This meeting will take place electronically. Details of the meeting will be posted in advance of the meeting. Anyone interested in listening in on the meeting can call the Office for details.

By-law No. 16-35 outlines that during the summer months of June, July and August, there will be one (1) regular monthly meeting only. During the 2021 summer season, the regular council meeting schedule is as follows:

Monday, June 21, 2021
Monday, July 12, 2021
Monday, August 9, 2021

Municipal Office: The Office remains closed to the public until further notice. This is to minimize non-essential travel and in-person visits to the office to help keep staff and the public safe and to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. The Province has moved into Step 1 of the Roadmap to Reopen which focuses on resuming some outdoor activities and limited retail and other services. Additional information regarding the Roadmap to Reopen can be found on the Province’s website at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/public-health-measures>. The Township continues to encourage the use of internet payments through your financial institution, or by mailing cheques to the Municipal office. Residents can call the office at 705-679-8833 for assistance as the office is staffed during this time. The office will not be staffed on July 1, 2021 in observance of Canada Day.

Municipal Waste Site: Hours of Operation Tuesday and Saturday - 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Closed: Statutory Holidays **All** garbage deposited at the Municipal Waste Site is subject to applicable tipping fees.

Garbage: A maximum of three (3) regular sized garbage bags of household garbage will be picked-up weekly. Please ensure your garbage is out by 7 am.

Recycling: Next June collection date will be on Tuesday, June 29, 2021.

Building Permits are required for all construction in the Township of Coleman. Please allow sufficient processing time for your application.

By-law Enforcement: To report a property standards issue or if you want to report some illegal dumping or other by-law infraction, please contact the municipal office or Pete Gilboe directly at 705-648-3750.

Animal Control: For emergency animal control services, please contact the Animal Control Service Provider at 705-648-4583.

Burning Permits - are required effective April 1st, 2021

The permit is **NOT** valid between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on any day except with special permission - **Daytime burning is prohibited.** Please visit the Township’s website to complete an on-line application. **Reminder:** No fire permits for open air burning will be issued during the months of July and August.

Reminder: Open air burning is considered to be any fire set outside, other than a small confined fire for obtaining warmth and cooking. Small confined fires for cooking and warmth, that comply with the regulations and are contained to your own property, or a property in which an individual has permission to use, are exempt from requiring a Fire Permit under the Open Air Burning By-law. No. 13-23. There are size limits, clearance requirements, and provisions respecting fire control measures that you must have in place, if you decide to burn.

Intention to Adopt a Municipal Budget for 2021

Section 291 of the Municipal Act, 2001, outlines that before adopting all or part of a budget under section 289 or 290, or amending such a budget, a municipality shall give public notice of its intention to adopt or amend the budget at a council meeting specified in the notice.

Take notice that the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Coleman intends to adopt the 2021 Budget at an Electronic Public meeting of Council to be held on Monday, June 21, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. via teleconference. The complete public notice and budget presentation are available for viewing on the Township’s website. For information or questions regarding the proposed budget, including information on listening in on the public teleconference meeting, please contact the CAO/Clerk-Treasurer at: 705-679-8833, or by email at: toc@ontera.net.

Those who would like to make comments on the proposed budget to do so by submitting written comments to the CAO/Clerk-Treasurer by 12:00 noon on Friday, June 18, 2021. The comments will be distributed with the agenda package and will be subject to disclosure by way of publication of the agenda. This teleconference meeting will be recorded and made available by posting on the Municipal website.



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DISCOVERING GREAT PLACES

Liam Soutar, 9, (left), his brother Nixon, 7, and their father Preston were recently out exploring Pete's Dam Park. The family recently moved to New Liskeard from Paris, Ontario, and is working on familiarizing themselves with the special places around the area. (Staff photo by Darlene Wroe)

Armstrong preparing to open Earlington pool

ARMSTRONG TOWNSHIP (Staff) - Armstrong Township has set a tentative date of Friday, June 25, for the summer opening of the Earlington Swimming Pool.

While the opening date is about one week later than in other years, "I think people will understand because of COVID," Councillor Michele Rivard stated at the township's June 9 council meeting.

Leading up to the opening, public works staff are painting and preparing the pool.

In an email, township clerk-treasurer Amy Vickery Menard commented that the township is still seeking qualified lifeguards.



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Wheel away with a special find

TEMISKAMING SHORES (Special/Staff) – Cyclists looking to get moving this summer should pedal over to the bike exchange Saturday.

You may be able to find a free ride at the community bike exchange, which will be held at the New Liskeard agricultural research station June 19.

Dozens of bikes of various sizes have been donated. Each one has been checked by volunteers for safety and repaired to ensure it's road-ready.

The refurbished bikes will be given to new owners on a first-come, first-served basis. Pandemic precautions will be in place, and everyone will be provided a time slot on arrival at the site.

All bikes are free. There is no need to donate a bike to receive one.

"Biking can be a great way to get around, be active and be kind to the environment. It's an affordable means of transportation and it's fun," said Erika Aelterman, coordinator of the exchange, in a news release.

"Bicycles can be hard to come by, whether it is because of supply or cost. This event helps recycle bicycles that would have maybe ended up at the dump.

"Many of the bikes we receive are in great condition and we have some available for the whole family."

The exchange runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Road safety information, helmet fitting, and goodie bags will also be available.

The event is made possible with the help of volunteers and partners including the City of Temiskaming Shores, the research station, and the Centre de santé communautaire du Temiskaming.

"We are looking forward to seeing everyone out cycling on their new bicycles very soon," said Temiskaming Shores rec director Matt Bahm in the release.

Financial help for the bike exchange came from The Temiskaming Foundation's For Kids Sake Fund, Alexa Corneil Fund, Rotary Club of Temiskaming Shores, REMAX Pursuit Realty, and the 100+ Women Who Care Temiskaming Shores and More group.

The bike exchange is one of the initiatives taking place in June during Bike Month in Temiskaming Shores.

A series of rides ranging from 25 kilometres to 50 kilometres, on paved roads and gravel, are planned.

For a schedule, check out the Bike Temiskaming Shores Facebook page.

For further information, see the Temiskaming Health Unit's Facebook page or call 705-647-4305 ext. 2253.



MARKET WINS

Riverside Farmers' Market manager Lynn Fielding displays the baskets of vendors' products that will go to one lucky market visitor. Shoppers typically enter the weekly draw. This season, names will be drawn from the COVID-19 screening forms that visitors to the Saturday morning market must complete. (Staff photo by Diane Johnston)

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SUMMERS ARE MADE FOR PICNICS

Summer is here and it's time to shake out those blankets, grab some snacks and get outside as this couple did. It was a beautiful morning for Isaac Story Korman and the New Liskeard Harvest Queen, Emma Browne, to enjoy a picnic together at the New Liskeard waterfront on Sunday, May 30. (Staff photo by Sue Nielsen)

Cast a line for free on Father's Day weekend

TORONTO (Special) – Are you looking for a special way to celebrate Father's Day?

On June 19 and 20, you can fish without having to purchase a licence or carry an Outdoors Card.

"Whether you're new to fishing or it's something you already do as a family, free fishing on Father's Day weekend provides a fun and safe way to bond with your family," said John Yakabuski, minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, in a news release.

"This is a great way for families to enjoy one of Ontario's greatest natural resources – our beautiful and abundant lakes, rivers and streams."

Whether participating in licence-free fishing or at other times of the year, the province reminds anglers to follow conservation licence catch limits; heed size limits and fish sanctuaries; and obey all other regulations.

Day use is also free at Ontario's provincial parks on June 20.

To guarantee access to 17 of the most popular provincial parks, book a daily vehicle permit in advance of your visit. Visit www.ontarioparks.com/dayuse for more information and a list of participating parks.

"Ontario parks offer so many opportunities for families to be together, get active and take in

the fresh air, and we are happy to provide another affordable way to do that with free day use this Father's Day," said Jeff Yurek, minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, in the release.

"I encourage all families to take advantage of the great weather and celebrate the day, while also being responsible and continuing to follow all public health advice, including physical distancing."

Families that take part in these activities are reminded that under step 1 of Ontario's Roadmap to Reopen, up to 10 people are permitted at outdoor gatherings.

The province adds:

- Ontario's recreational fishing industry generates \$1.75 billion annually.

- Outside of licence-free fishing periods, anyone 18 and older, but under the age of 65, must have an Outdoors Card and a fishing licence. All veterans and active Canadian Armed Forces members residing in Ontario can enjoy free recreational fishing in the province, whenever and wherever fishing is allowed.

- A valid permit is required for all vehicles within provincial parks, including on free day-use days. Permits must be visibly displayed on all vehicles and capacity will be limited to avoid overcrowding.




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Soutien à domicile de Timiskaming est un organisme de bienfaisance qui offre du soutien à domicile et en milieu communautaire aux aînés et aux personnes ayant un handicap physique qui vivent dans le district de Timiskaming. Comme notre vision *Vivre à la maison – votre choix, notre but*, nous voulons permettre aux personnes de demeurer dans leur milieu familial de choix en leur offrant des services accessibles, novateurs et axés sur la qualité.

Notre conseil d'administration est composé de dirigeants des secteurs sans but lucratif et à but lucratif qui se consacrent à la mission et à la vision de l'organisme.

Siéger au conseil d'administration de Soutien à domicile de Timiskaming est une occasion extraordinaire pour une personne passionnée par le renforcement du leadership et de la gouvernance dans un organisme sans but lucratif de faire une différence.

Soutien à domicile de Timiskaming est à la recherche de personnes expérimentées et bien branchées qui demeurent dans le district ou en dehors du district de Timiskaming qui ont à cœur les aînés et les personnes ayant une incapacité physique. Le candidat idéal est déterminé à soutenir et à avoir une incidence positive sur l'environnement stratégique dans lequel Soutien à domicile de Timiskaming œuvre.

L'expérience antérieure a siégé à un conseil d'administration d'un organisme sans but lucratif serait un atout.



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NPI and Stats Can look at pandemic impacts

By Natali Trivuncic

DISTRICT - On June 14 the Northern Policy Institute (NPI) hosted *Data and Ontario's Northern Communities: A conversation with the Chief Statistician of Canada* together with Statistics Canada.

NPI performs research, collects and disseminates evidence, and identifies policy opportunities to support the growth of sustainable Northern communities.

The event was an opportunity for Statistics Canada to promote the importance of the census and how information collected from it highlights areas that could be improved.

The event was hosted by Charles Cirtwill, president and CEO of NPI, and looked at how the pandemic has impacted many aspects of Northern Ontario from businesses to employment opportunities.

At 800,000 kilometres

squared, Northern Ontario is bigger than seven provinces - eight if you count the rest of Ontario. Only Quebec, British Columbia and the three territories are physically bigger than the combined regions of Northern Ontario.

Cirtwill said because of the region's large geography, the population is very dispersed, making it difficult to collect and release good data.

Anil Arora, chief statistician from Statistics Canada, was able to fill in the gaps of what they gathered about Northern Ontario communities over the last year.

Businesses all over the country and province have been greatly affected by COVID but Arora said businesses in Northern Ontario have bounced back faster than in the rest of the province, after an initial shock during the early weeks of last spring's shutdown.

Although businesses have



SCOOTER BOYZ

The Carter Antila Memorial Skatepark is a busy place these days since the provincial COVID-19 restrictions were lifted on recreational venues. Colton Flaxey, 7, left, Maverick Holden, 10, and Lincoln Tuinema, 7, were recently having fun on their scooters. (Staff photo by Sue Nielsen)

bounced back, Arora said this does not mean that they have been profitable. In 2020, four in 10 businesses in Northern Ontario saw revenues drop by 40 per cent or more from the year before.

Business challenges are often accompanied by employment challenges and Northern Ontario has experienced more than its fair share of both, Arora said.

"Total employment in Ontario has recovered 10 per cent since last May. But it's only

recovered four per cent in the northern regions. And looking more closely however, you'll see sharp variations in employment by sector."

Arora said the accommodation and food sector in Northern Ontario was hit particularly hard, with employment falling significantly during the initial lockdown. As of this May, employment in the sector has rebounded by 40 per cent.

The mining sector saw a 10 per cent jump in employment

between 2019 and 2020. Arora said this is due to the number of new mines and new training programs geared towards encouraging more young people from Indigenous communities to work in the sector, despite the gap in pay.

"Although the salaries of Indigenous people working in mining jobs are higher than the average for all Canadian workers, our data still show that they make five to 10 per cent less on the dollar than their non-Indigenous counterparts working in Ontario's different mining activities, and hopefully these programs will help resolve that wage gap," Arora said.

While Northern Ontario does have a larger aging population, Arora said it also has the largest number of children under 14 than the rest of the province. In the last three years, more people from Southern Ontario have moved to Northern Ontario which has offset population losses as more youth leave for other parts of the country.

One in six Northern Ontarians identify as Indigenous according to the last census, Arora said, while across the province it's fewer than one in 40.

"I think data is a really important commodity," Arora said.

"If used properly, in a transparent way, building in the kind of measures that protect privacy and confidentiality, I think it can open up some really interesting opportunities into the future."

Arora said in the near future, the legacies of the pandemic will be housing affordability and challenges related to mental health. He adds that these issues are also intensifying in other regions across the country.

(Natali Trivuncic is a staff writer with the Fort Frances Times)

JUNE 20, 2021

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