



Photo by Cole Breiland

A sport for all ages

School principal Robert McFadden instructs a student in parrying technique at fencing night class on Jan. 25 at Harmony Public School. McFadden started the class after getting back into the sport three years ago, after a 18-year hiatus. McFadden said the sport is for all ages, where a quick mind can compensate for an opponent's fast reflexes. The class has a wide array of ages in attendance, and roughly a third of the adult class is female. McFadden purchased all the equipment for the club to make it possible for anyone to try the sport. Classes run on Wednesday nights, beginning at 5:30 p.m. for youth and 7 p.m. for teens and adults. Those interested in attending can find out more at <http://loyalistfencingclub.wordpress.com>

Junior curlers sweep their way to Napanee

District Curling Club site of tournament starting next week

By Cole Breiland

Over 100 of the best Canadian junior curlers will be in the house in Napanee just over a week from now for the M&M Meat Shop Junior National Curling tournament.

The curlers and an estimated 6,000 fans will fill the Strathcona Paper Centre and Napanee District Curling Club over two weeks, beginning Feb. 4.

"I'm looking forward to seeing the first rock thrown," says Stephen Paul, tournament chairperson and manager of economic development of Lennox and Addington County.

Paul is excited about the level of competition showcased at the tournament. "To get here is not an easy task. This is the cream of the crop for junior curling."

'It is a bit of a rarity, a lot of teams are first timers, so it's been hard to get a handle on who are the teams to watch.'

tournament chairperson Stephen Paul

The winner will be difficult to predict, he said. "It is a bit of a rarity, a lot of teams are first timers, so it's been hard to get a handle on who are the teams to watch."

The calibre of players attending is high. Yukon skip Thomas Scoffin and Manitoba second Derek Oryniak claimed bronze Jan. 18 as part of the Canadian team at the youth Olympic games in Innsbruck, Austria.

Paul said the community has been very supportive, and that the tournament has a chance to show off the community to the attendees, and to the wider curling world.

The semi-final and final matches will be televised on TSN.

He said he has no hard numbers on the economic benefit of the tournament to the community, but estimates the tournament is responsible for 1,500 hotel reservations, filling the town's hotels and motels to capacity, as well as reservations in other communities, including Belleville.

To prepare for the guests, the Napanee District Curling Club had a \$72,000 renovation, paid for through a \$32,000 Trillium grant and proceeds from the Ontario men's championship which Napanee hosted two years ago.

Volunteer co-ordinator Sandy Eastlake has recruited 190 volunteers, largely from curling clubs in the area, to handle functions as varying as ice maintenance, game scoring, hospitality, security and transportation.

The Strathcona Paper Centre will be converted from a hockey rink to five curling sheets, a process that ice technician Frank Dunham explained will take

an estimated 40 consecutive hours to complete, after a Napanee Raiders' game on Jan. 30. A team of more than 12 will flood, paint and pebble the ice, as well as set up walkways and equipment for the teams.

Dunham, a curler for 15 years and ice technician for 14 years at the Napanee club, will be one of the crew pebbling the ice between games and making sure it is in top shape to play on.

Dunham explained the temperature of the building, temperature of the ice, number of spectators and even the particular set of curling rocks affects the way the ice must be prepared. "It's quite technical; it looks easy because you throw water on a cold spot and it freezes, but the technicalities are very involved."

The tournament begins on Feb. 4. Women's finals will be held on Feb. 11. Men's finals will be held on Sun. 12. Tickets are available from the Strathcona Paper Centre box office at 16 McPherson Drive or by calling 613-354-4423.

Stirling-Rawdon vying for Hockeyville title

By Sarah O. Swenson

"Everyone in the town, whether they be an 80-year-old person or a five-year-old kid, they all live for hockey."

It is that simple reason why Adam Haley believes Stirling-Rawdon should win the title of Kraft Hockeyville 2012.

The local Hockeyville movement began in spring 2011, after the passing of Barry Wilson, the longtime arena manager of the Stirling-Rawdon & District Recreation Centre. With more than 1,000 people attending the funeral, Wilson's passing served to clearly illustrate how important hockey and the arena are to the community.

Wilson had begun planning the expansion of an addition to the Stirling arena and winning the Hockeyville competition would help to make those plans a reality. Stirling is vying for the chance to win \$100,000 in arena upgrades and the opportunity to host an NHL pre-season game. So far, there are 144 communities that have qualified for the competition.

Stirling is using the motto 'Play together, stay together' as the centerpiece of their campaign.

"We used to go to church, take them to Sunday school, pack a picnic lunch, then go from the church to the arena," recalls Haley's mother, Bev, unconsciously referencing Roch Carrier's most famous line from *The Hockey Sweater*.

"If you're not playing hockey, you're at the arena, watching."

"The whole community, everyone's supports hockey," agrees Haley, who played in the Stirling Blues Minor Hockey League Association until he was 20 and now plays in a local recreational league.

The community has embraced the Hockeyville challenge whole-heartedly, hosting fundraisers and events such as hockey-themed scarecrows at Halloween, floats in Christmas parades, toque sales, and a Kraft Dinner luncheon.

Haley's contribution to the cause: painting a large Stirling Hockeyville mural on the side of a 38-foot long tractor-trailer.

In November, the Stirling Hockeyville Facebook page posted a want ad, looking for a local artist to come up with a design for the trailer, and Haley volunteered immediately. He began working on the project over the Christmas holidays and estimates that he has put in more than 40 hours of work. The trailer will display the logos of the Stirling Hockeyville bid and the Stirling Blues, as well as a message seeking public support for their campaign.

The trailer was donated to the Hockeyville cause by Choice Reefer Systems Limited, a local food industry trucking service, and upon completion of the mural, it will be parked for display near the juncture of Walbridge-Loyalist Road and the 401.

For further information on how you can help support Stirling's bid for the Hockeyville title, visit www.stirlinghockeyville.com.

Hockey player makes it to big time

Belleville's Andrew Shaw having great rookie season with Chicago Blackhawks

By Sarah O. Swenson

The new year couldn't have started out better for Belleville's Andrew Shaw. He is currently living out every boy's fantasy: earning a living playing professional sports.

Eleven games into his NHL rookie season with the Chicago Blackhawks, Shaw has tallied up seven points (five goals including one game winner and two assists), a plus/minus rating of one, and nine penalty minutes.

But the climb to the top wasn't easy or swift.

Shaw comes from a sporting family. Parents Doug and Darlene have been involved in coaching local clubs and brothers Josh and Jason both play hockey (Jason is currently playing defence for the Belleville Bulls), while his older sister, Alex, is an accomplished figure skater.

Despite being what many scouts would consider an 'undersized player', Shaw found success in the Quinte Red Devils AAA hockey program before moving up to play with the OHL's Niagara Ice Dogs.

Small stature may have been a contributing factor that led to being drafted so late, but Shaw has never let that hold him back.

"He's not very big but he plays like he's 6'6," says his father, Doug. "He goes to the dirty areas, fights in the corners."

After being traded from the Niagara Ice Dogs to the Owen Sound Attack in 2010, Shaw seemed to take the trade as a wake up call and stepped up his game.

"He just put his head to the grindstone," says Darlene, Shaw's mother. "He just decided he wanted to play a different calibre of hockey."

Shaw was named the 2010 recipient of the Robinson-Kelleher Memorial Award, for being the Belleville athlete of the year. He later went on to lead the Attack to their first OHL Championship and then on to



Photo by Sarah O. Swenson

Alex, Darlene, Doug, and Jason Shaw gather for a quick family portrait in their Belleville home on Jan. 21. Alex is holding a picture of her brother Andrew, taken during his first ever NHL game and gifted to the family from a Chicago fan.

the Memorial Cup, where, despite the Attack being knocked out in a tiebreaker round, Shaw led all skaters in scoring. Shaw was also awarded the OHL's Hardest Working Player Award for 2010-11.

And all of that hard work has finally paid off. Shaw was taken by Chicago in the fifth round of the 2011 NHL Draft, 139th overall.

Shaw started the 2011-12 season with Chicago's AHL affiliate club, the Rockford IceHogs, and had to adjust quickly to the level of play in a professional league. During a phone call after his first game with Rockford, he was advised by his parents that he needed to work on two things: "speed of skating and speed of thought." Shaw took the advice to heart.

"In about a month, we noticed a dif-

ference," says Darlene. "Just playing with that calibre of players, what a difference that made in bringing out his natural abilities."

And as his play improved, Chicago began to take more notice. During the Christmas holidays, with his parents in Rockford taking in a few IceHogs games, Shaw got the call and put pen to paper, signing a three-year entry-level contract and by Jan. 3 it was official: Shaw was finally a Blackhawk.

Shaw debuted Jan. 5 against the Philadelphia Flyers in a blinder of a game. In front of a huge crowd that included 36 family members and friends who had bussed down for the occasion, Shaw became the fifth Belleville-born player to take to the ice this NHL season. Skating

on Chicago's top line with team captain Jonathan Toews and Patrick Kane, he logged 12:29 minutes of ice-time, bagged a goal, and faced off in a wild tilt against the Flyer's Zac Rinaldo, a familiar foe from Shaw's OHL days.

As a reward for his agitating, high-energy style of play, Shaw has continued to see plenty of ice-time and earned his place as a central cog in Coach Joel Quenneville's hockey machine.

And as an unexpected bonus, Shaw has quickly become a fan favourite.

Shortly after his debut game, while on an outing with his folks, Shaw was accosted by an autograph-seeking fan just outside of their hotel, holding glossy 8x10's of his fight with Rinaldo. As an apology for interrupting their day, the fan gave Shaw's

parents a copy of the photo.

"It's a great picture," laughs Doug. "You can see the blood dripping, it's perfect!"

He has become so popular, in fact, that fans have taken to Twitter and created the hashtag #shawfacts, a sort of Blackhawks homage to the Internet meme of the satirical factoids about cult action star Chuck Norris.

Despite the seemingly overnight success, Shaw and his family are taking it all in stride. They say that he's enjoying the fame and the underdog status he has and they hope it continues for years to come.

"He's a crowd pleaser. He likes to entertain the people, that's what the people pay for," says Darlene. "The bonus is that he can put the puck in the net."