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Katelyn Jay Photography photo

Magic on The Big Sound: A group of skaters enjoy a game of shinny at sunset on March 16 on Georgian Bay. "Nothing more Canadian than hockey on Georgian Bay in Parry Sound," said photographer Katelyn Jay. Skaters spent the last few days of winter on the glassy surface of The Big Sound, a sight that hasn't been seen in more than 50 years.

The big skate on Parry Sound's Big Sound

STEPHANIE JOHNSON

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PARRY SOUND - All it took was a little bit of ice to bring a community together.

Living here everyone knows the magic of The Bay; there's a reason why people travel a half-dozen hours or more for just a week in her presence.

And calling this area home, we often forget that we live in a majestic area.

Yet for a few short days, Mother Nature gave us a reminder providing the most spectacular ice that one local historian says he hasn't seen in more than 50 years.

"One time early in the 1960s the Big Sound offered similar conditions for skating, which I and my young family took advantage of," said

North Star columnist John Macfie. "Tiny figures could be seen far out on the Sound, and it was said their goal was to skate all the way to Killbear Park and back. I believe that was the only time I skated on the Big Sound."

Like an epic game of Telephone, late last week word travelled quickly of the wonderful

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POLICE

Education forefront of distracted driving campaign



Stephanie Johnson/Metroland

Kyle Ney, community safety/media relations provincial constable with the West Parry Sound OPP talks with a driver he stopped for talking on his cell phone the morning of Wednesday, March 15. The man received a \$490 ticket and three demerit points for the infraction.

Eleven charges issued during blitz

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PARRY SOUND - If your attention isn't on road, you're a distracted driver period.

Last week members of the Ontario Provincial Police across the province conducted a one-week blitz to promote safer driving, highlighting distracted driving specifically.

"It's anything that would take your attention away from the task of operating your vehicle," said Const. Kyle Ney, community safety and media relations officer.

"The more typical behaviours would be using your cellphone or other mobile device and it would also include fixing your hair, doing your makeup, changing a CD, eating."

During the campaign, members of the West Parry Sound OPP Detachment issued 11 tickets.

Ney said it's a popular misconception that fixing one's quickie, or choosing a playlist while at a red light or stop sign is perfectly OK.

"You're still operating your vehicle, even if you're stopped at a red light or a stop sign your atten-

tion is still required. You still need to be aware of what's around you," he said. "The best example I can give is you're at a red light and a fire truck or an ambulance or a police car is behind you with its lights and sirens on and needs you to move over; it's funny what you don't perceive going on around you when you're distracted. That can be a problem."

While Ney was looking for infractions on the morning of March 15, a pickup driver heading east on Bowes Street drove by his unmarked cruiser with a phone in his ear.

The man was stopped and given a \$490 ticket and three demerit points.

Ney said distracted drivers aren't thinking of the consequences their actions.

"Speaking specifically on cell-phones it can be challenging because (some drivers) put a lot of effort into holding (the phone) down below (the windshield). People are really focused on something else - they're answering a call, they pick up the phone and their mind is on that. They're not thinking about the legislation that's out there. They're not thinking about the consequences, both financially and if they cause

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Thomas Hennig's case goes to judicial pretrial

PARRY SOUND - Thomas Hennig's case is going to a judicial pre-trial.

Hennig, 23, of Whitesone, is charged with criminal negligence in the death of 56-year-old David Robb, of Ahmic Harbour after two vehicles collided on Highway 124 on January 16 in Whitestone Township. Hennig was released from jail on \$100,000 bail on Jan. 27.

On March 16 at the Parry Sound Courthouse, a judge set a judicial

pretrial for Hennig for April 24 and ordered Hennig return before the court May 4.

Pretrials are private meetings between the Crown, the accused's lawyer and a pretrial judge which look for ways to resolve the case, estimate trial length and clear up any procedural or evidentiary issues, according to the Ontario Court of Justice website.

Hennig is being represented by lawyer David Lakke.

Hennig's bail conditions, according to his recognizance, include living at the same Whites-

tone home as his surety Paul Hennig, and not leaving the home without his surety or Maryanne Hennig, or unless attending an in-house treatment facility; he isn't to contact four named members of the Robb family or their immediate family, or a list of 15 other named people; he can't have the keys for or drive a motor vehicle, motorcycle, or snowmobile; can't possess a cellphone except to "make and receive a call in the direct presence of his surety"; and can't access the Internet or any other digital network.

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