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BY STEPHANNIE JOHNSON

**PARRY SOUND** – The debate continues, with no end in sight.

A number of familiar faces filled town council chambers Tuesday night reiterating the same stances – either for or against fluoridation - with one resident calling for a referendum.

North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit medical officer Dr. Jim Chirico returned to council with dentists, thanking council for its June 2 decision to keep its water fluoridated and urged them not to listen to those touting only negative studies and basing their opinions on fear, not, he said, legitimate science.

"When you voted in favour of continuing fluoridation, it showed leadership and courage in the face of a vocal minority," Chirico said. "You spoke up for those who do not have a voice, or a choice, you backed the most vulnerable in society – the poor, the children, and the elderly – those who do not have the same advantages as you and I. You chose to invest in prevention rather than pain and suffering and costly treatments that would be passed on to those who are least able to afford it. You showed compassion for those who are less fortunate. You made the right choice, supported by the best scientific evidence we have to date."

Growing up, Chirico said he and his siblings didn't have fluoridated water, didn't brush as

often, and suffered the "pain and shame" associated with having cavities.

"The anti-fluoridations will give examples of countries that don't fluoridate their drinking water supplies, what they don't tell you is it's not because of safety concerns and they won't tell you that over 60 countries and over 400 million people do have fluoridated water," Chirico said.

Closer to home, Chirico said Orillia has never fluoridated their water and their elementary school children have the most severely decayed teeth among the 10 largest communities in Simcoe-Muskoka.

"The anti-fluoridations presented their usual arguments based on unfounded fear, appealing to people's emotions, but not based on legitimate science. When you only select negative studies, the outcome can only be negative. They do this to try and prove a point. Their mind is made up before they start. This is scientific bias at its worst," he said. "By taking this approach, they simply choose to ignore huge amounts of data and valid systematic studies. This kind of approach should never be used to inform decision-makers. When systematic reviews of both positive and negative studies are analyzed, they have repeatedly concluded fluoridation is safe and effective in children and adults."

Moreover, Chirico said there is no substantial evidence to support the link between fluoride in

drinking water and a number of ill effects including lower intelligence, bone fractures, bone fluorosis, reproductive toxicity and genetic toxicity.

While moderate and severe fluorosis does occur, the Canadian Health Measures Survey oral health statistics from 2007 to 2009 concluded that so few Canadian children have moderate to severe fluorosis that even combined, the prevalence was too low to permit recording.

"This finding provides validation that dental fluorosis remains an issue of low concern in this country," he said. "The benefits of adding chlorine or fluoride to our drinking water far outweigh the extremely low risk of adverse affects, because chlorination and fluoridation processes are carefully monitored and controlled to ensure they are safe."

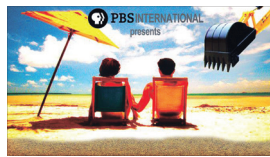
Although not challenging Chirico's credibility, Coun. Doug McCann said the issue is a difficult one for many to weigh in on. He asked what scientific proof the doctor could provide that the accumulation of fluoride inside the body is harmless.

"I think that people need to understand it's very difficult to really get a grasp of all the information that people download off the internet; they look at it, they see it and they think that it's fact," Chirico said.

See 'Group' page 2



Huskies net first win of the season  
Sports, page 6



Sand War sheds light on unknown issue  
page 14



Cadets celebrate change of command  
page, 17



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# Group calls for solution to satisfy both parties

continued from front

“That’s why you really have to have a panel of experts who are really knowledgeable about what they’re reading. I can tell you it’s no simple task. You have to have that expertise to look through all that literature and to intelligently figure out what the logic is, if these studies are well designed or not. I feel (those against fluoridation are) very well intentioned...but I think it’s a very dangerous thing to be able to pull things off the internet and feel that you’re qualified to be able to interpret it. It even takes panels of experts to be able to do that.”

Resident Andrea McIntyre, representing the group Parry Sounders for Progressive Water Management, said surely the town could implement some kind of program that would satisfy both sides of the spectrum.

“Remove the fluoride and do a fluoride varnishing program for the disenfranchised – the people who really are in need. We have a local dentist in the area who has volunteered himself and an assistant to implement a varnishing program if social services wouldn’t do it,” McIntyre said. “There would be initial outlay for equipment and ongoing disposable, but it would be less expensive than add-

ing fluoride to the water system and would probably be more effective, since it would be topical. The rest of the money saved could go towards toothbrushes and toothpaste for them.”

In the end, McIntyre asked, if council chooses to keep its water fluoridated, how could the town compensate those residents who don’t want the chemical in their water. “You’ll be forcing us to either buy water that has no fluoride in it or get a filter system installed in our homes to remove it. Is council willing to give us a tax credit, or buy the filter system for us or give us a reduced water bill?” she said.

the Canadian Dental Association.

“We are vocal because we have a legal right to free speech. We aren’t overly radical, but maybe it’s time we should be. I assure you, we are not the minority. Lastly I would not claim to have any knowledge of what goes on in the business motives of industry unions or associations but their persistence in wanting a toxic waste dumped in public drinking water is to this simple man a rather perplexing and rather radical situation.”

This ongoing debate, said resident Jo Bossart, reminded him of those for and against vaccinations; some believing that vaccinations caused autism.

“I think it was proven to be discredited,” said Bossart, who has a PhD from the College of Pharmacy of Ohio State. “It turns out there were a couple studies that weren’t well done. It turned out that there maybe was a little motivation to do that. Once again you need to look at the body of evidence. As Dr. Chiricio said, it’s the body of evidence that’s important. From a professional standpoint, I don’t want to hear about toxic chemicals – all pharmaceuticals are toxic when taken out of their prescribed range. People willingly put toxic products into their bodies. I think in this case we’ve shown it’s not a particularly toxic – if at all toxic – when taken at those doses and it benefits a large population. I would support continuing to do the fluoridation.”

See 'Engineering' page 3

## Fluoride removal

Resident Joe Moloney called for the town to remove fluoride from its water.

“Environment Canada classifies (fluoride) as a hazardous waste,” Moloney said. “Transport Canada classifies (fluoride) as a dangerous good...you as council were honoured (at the last meeting) to have an independent researcher, Dr. Hardy Limeback, who has done peer-reviewed papers on the chemical’s long-term effects. He spoke specifically to the dangers to children – young children especially – the sick, the vulnerable in our community. He had nothing to gain and he actually put his career on the line by daring to speak the truth against powerful trade industries and organizations such as

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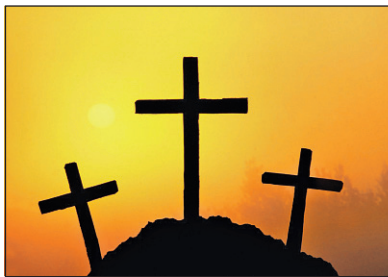
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## Step taken to prevent fluoride vote

BY PAIGE PHILLIPS

McDOUGALL TWP. – The ongoing fluoride debate from the Town of Parry Sound is trickling into the surrounding Municipality of McDougall.

At the regular meeting of council Wednesday, Nov. 18, Wayne Gilbert, member of the Parry Sound for Progressive Water Management group, presented a deputation to council, regarding the continuation of fluoridation of Town of Parry Sound water, which serves some McDougall residents.

Gilbert explained that when fluoridation was first introduced in the 1950s, no studies were conducted investigating and outlining its effectiveness or potential long-term health consequences.

"In Parry Sound many letters have been sent to our mayor and council asking them for this practice to be discontinued," said Gilbert. "Council responded with asking the district medical officer of health, Dr. Chirico, to address this question ...twice he has spoken with Parry Sound council, both times saying that we have done this for sixty years, he sees no problem."

Gilbert said the Parry Sounders for Progressive Water Treatment have provided town council with numerous studies, which outline "the serious health risk associated with the ingestion of this high toxic chemical."

Gilbert informed McDougall council that McKellar resident, former dentist and professor, Dr. Hardy Limeback has also spoken to Town council offering a different stance from that of Dr. Chirico – continuing to fluoridate the town's water is endangering rate payers' health.

"Because the Township of McDougall buys drinking water for its residents from the Town of Parry Sound this issue also affects your rate payers," said Gilbert. "A petition will be presented to our ratepayers asking if they would like this practice discontinued. If 10 per cent of ratepayers respond that they would like this removed a municipal referendum will be required."

In clerk Cindy Vankoughnett's report to council,

she explained the Fluoridation Act dictates that "because (McDougall and Parry Sound) are a joint waterworks system, each municipality must have at least 10 per cent of their total electors sign a petition prior to a referendum moving forward."

The Town of Parry Sound council voted in June to continue to fluoridate, which results in a necessary upgrade of \$250,000 to the water treatment plant.

In addition to the plant upgrades, it costs approximately \$4,500 to \$5,000 per annum to fluoridate the water.

Joseph Moloney, also of Parry Sounders for Progressive Water Management, spoke to council, informing them of locations around the world that have taken action against fluoridation, including Europe, Israel, and cities and towns across North America, one of which being the nearby Town of Huntsville.

"Ninety-eight per cent of Europe has gotten rid of fluoride; Israel, their Supreme Court ordered it out of all municipal drinking water based on modern science," said Moloney. "In North America, 200 cities and towns have gotten rid of it from Vancouver, Calgary to Denver to Huntsville whose mayor at the time was a

dentist." Moloney said the group is pushing for a referendum now so money is not invested in the costly water plant upgrades and continued annual fluoridation costs.

"We've had experts come into council and they've chosen to listen to one person, unfortunately...and so we've been put in this position," said Moloney.

Moloney, speaking on behalf of the group, stated they do not want the referendum to occur at a cost to the Town of Parry Sound of \$19,000 plus staff time and approximately \$15,000 to \$16,000 to the Municipality of McDougall, but would rather see Parry Sound council end fluoridation.

Vankoughnett explained in her report, that there is a total of 345 connections to the town water system, concluding that fluoridation affects not all of McDougall's ratepayers.

In hopes of avoiding a referendum, which mayor Dale Robinson pointed out would cost approximately just as much as a regular election, councillor Peter Daleman suggested the option of surveying residents about their preference on fluoridation.

See 'McDougall' page 3



Library gears up for facelift page 2



Huskies take two weekend wins Sports, page 6



Supporting Santa to a Senior program page 14



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# Community invited out to build school identity

BY STEPHANNIE JOHNSON

**PARRY SOUND** – Who wants to meet Parry Sound Public School's new mascot?

Nov. 24 the school is hosting a community-wide event inviting everyone into the facility to capture the school's community voice and create its new wolf mascot.

For the last two weeks the school has had artist in residence, Josh Pawis-Steckley, visit the school to discuss the characteristics the students feel the mascot should embody.

Principal Laurie Payne said the artist took students' sketches and incorporated their ideas into a number of mascot renderings.

"The night of the event the different choices will be revealed and the students and community members will continue to have feedback," said Payne. "There will be opportunities to vote for different clothing on the mascot, different colours of the mascot itself and a name for the mascot."

The event itself is more than just choosing a mascot and colours for the new school – it's about bringing two schools together into one.

Payne said, "We all know that it is not just the house that makes a home, it is what

goes on inside, including the family. That is what we are doing here on a daily basis, and then ever more so throughout this process, we are building and developing the culture of our school. When we are bringing two school communities together, you really need something to make the new community feel special.

## Community voice

"This event is to ensure that we are capturing the school community's voice and that they feel as though we have created something that will represent our school community, which we will be able to use in countless ways."

The event was created by the Student Advisory Committee, also known as the Parent Council. The school applied for a Parent Reaching Out Grant from the Ministry of Education to fund the event, under the premise of building the school community.

"We are going to have an art station set up at the back for students to paint or draw the wolf. We will be using canvas, to ensure that we will be able to frame some of the paintings and display them in our display cases at the

entrance to the school and throughout the building to commemorate the night and the process," Payne said.

"Our artist will be showing and explaining the process of a graphic artist designing a logo. At this time, he will also make the changes that people in attendance that night will be wanting to make. We will even venture to name the mascot that night."

Electronic polling surveys will be set up to collect information quickly and effectively and light snack will be provided, though the school asks families to bring their own water bottles to use at their fountain/bottle filling stations.

"Involving the students and the community in the process of designing the logo was essential. A mascot/logo should accurately represent our school and school community. We simply would not have been able to capture the essence of the wolf and Parry Sound Public School without the school community voice," she said.

## Historic event

"This is a historic event for Parry Sound Public School as we have had the pleasure of opening a brand new school this September and now we are working on developing our school community and our identity."

Also on hand will be another local artist, Hailey Newton-Smith who will create an actual mascot costume.

"I'm pretty excited to make the mascot

for the new school," said Hailey, a Grade 9 Parry Sound High School student. "Costume design is a passion of mine. I am looking forward to working with another artist and younger students at the arts night."

♦♦♦

The event runs from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 24.



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# McDougall ratepayers to weigh-in on fluoride debate

continued from front

Daleman said he is not interested in referendum and that if it were to occur, voter participation would be extremely low due to the number of residents who are affected and who are interested.

Councillor Lynne Gregory added Parry Sound has voted for the more expensive option to continue to fluoridate the water – a cost that would in turn flow on McDougall ratepayers, resulting in a "trickle down" effect.

Council voted unanimously to direct staff to draft a letter to be delivered to McDougall ratepayers asking their preference on fluoridation. The intention of the survey process is

to avoid a referendum by making a decision as a council based on the responses received from ratepayers.

"There has to be some care taken in coming to the decision on it," said councillor Daleman. "When it comes to cost it's a no brainer but if there is a health benefit there then you need to take that into consideration."

An alternative to the referendum would be for the Town of Parry Sound council member on the prevailing side of the original vote (to upgrade the town's water treatment plant) to provide a Notice of Motion at a council meeting.

The motion would then come before council at the following meeting.



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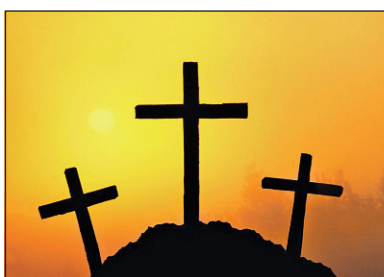
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# Fluoride is out

**At the end of the day it's not our opinion that matters, it will be the will of the people who decide whether we have fluoride in the water in Parry Sound or not,"**

**- Parry Sound Coun. Paul Borneman**

**BY STEPHANNIE JOHNSON**

PARRY SOUND – Fluoride in Parry Sound water will soon be a thing of the past.

After a seven-month battle, members of Parry Sounders for Progressive Water Management let out a cheer Tuesday night after council rescinded its June 2015 resolution approving upgrades to the Tony Agnello Water Treatment Plant; the upgrades were necessary to continue fluoridating the municipal water supply.

The upgrade would have cost taxpayers \$250,000.

The motion to upgrade the water treatment plant was brought back to the table by Coun. Paul Borneman.

Admitting he doesn't know any more scientifically now than he did in June, Tuesday night Borneman said there is a great deal of public concern.

"I think for council to continue on its current path, ignores the concerns, but puts us on a course to spend money either on a referendum in the near future and/or upgrades to the plant, which may or may not be required in the future," Borneman said. "I think what's proposed this evening is a compromise, it discontinues fluo-



**Coun. Paul Borneman**

ride in the short term."

Borneman said come the next municipal election in 2018, all of Parry Sound could have their say, with a question posed on the ballot, asking voters if they want their water fluoridated or not.

"I spoke to Mr. (Peter) Brown (director of public works) about the potential of limping along with this system through to 2018. I don't think that would meet with the approval of those that signed the petition and it certainly would be in question whether the safety of our staff and the safety of our water supply would be adequate in the interim. That to me is not an option," Borneman said. "This give is maybe not the best of both worlds, but I think it's the lesser of the evils....(I believe in) responsiveness to the public will. To simply ignore a grassroots, ground up organization that...far exceeded 10 per cent of the electorate required



*Beacon Star file photo*

**The Tony Agnello Water Treatment Plant won't be needing a \$250,000 upgrade after all.**

and effectiveness of fluoride.

"The extensive empirical data and peer reviews and findings and trust that is built when you have over 90 organizations around the world – including the World Health Organization and of course our own Health Canada and Ministry of Health and our own local public health and our own local medical and dental professionals - who came out and spoke and explained why the support of the fluoride and having it in our water and why it is a benefit."

Keith went on to say it is important to stay focused on what is best for the community and not let emotions dictate decision-making.

"I've heard different comments in the community that basically there's 90 per cent of the residents in the community support removing fluoride. Well that I think is wholly in correct."

**See 'A majority' page 5**



**Coun. Bonnie Keith**

to take this to a referendum, I think that's not a responsive idea. At the end of the day it's not our opinion that matters, it will be the will of the people who decide whether we have fluoride in the water in Parry Sound or not."

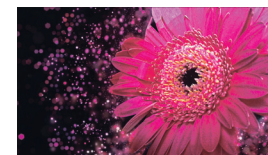
Coun. Bonnie Keith vehemently opposed the resolution saying council made its decision in June and it should stick by it and the scientific experts who vouch for the safety



Miller shares tales from his journeys  
page 2



Kelly Shires  
Cancer Snow Run  
page 10



Photography winners  
Panther, page 20



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# 'A majority of council made a wise decision,' Moloney

continued from front

I know that my telephone has been ringing recently regarding comments in both directions. There are many people that may not have come to a council meeting but are saying that they want fluoride to continue," Keith said. "After looking at all of this, if there's enough interest that we need to have a plebiscite, then I say let's have the plebiscite let's get to doing it. I want to hear from a majority of people, not from a small percentage."

Coun. Doug McCann said initially he, along with all of council, wanted to keep fluoride in and has since changed his mind.

"Science is ever-evolving and I am here to support this not to save money – although that is important – but I firmly believe it should be removed," McCann said.

Although Coun. Jim Marshall said he hasn't been convinced that fluoride removal is necessary; he supported the resolution because he didn't want to hold a referendum.

"I don't want the resources of the town to be taken up with this debate any longer...every second email that I get during the course of the day is about this issue and I think we've got a lot of things to deal with...I'm quite happy to wait until 2018; we've got two-and-three-quarter years to debate the issues. ... with an election in 2018 I think there will be some excellent, open dialogue on both sides and in the end the people of Parry Sound and McDougall can make their decisions at that point and make a very informed decision.

This has been a gut-wrenching experience for everybody...I think we need to put this to an end tonight."

For Coun. Keith Saulnier, he saw this issue as an exercise in respect.

"While we may disagree on the science, you've respected my decision, as I've tried to respect yours – it's the Canadian way. What we can agree on is the democratic method and good for your group for exercising your rights," he said. It will be interesting to see your group battle Health Canada for the next 26 months for the voters hearts and minds. It will be really interesting to have it on the ballot, right under amalgamation."

## Draft bylaw

Town clerk Jackie Boggs said the next direction is for the town to notify the Ministry of Health of its intentions with two bylaws; one for Parry Sound, the other for McDougall Township. Once passed, fluoride will stop being injected into the municipal water system.

"Our notice policy indicates that a draft bylaw has to go out to the public for 21 days so everybody can have a look at it and comment on it," Boggs said.

Prior to the rescinded resolution's passing, Borneman said he wants the senior levels of government to become involved with fluoridation and requested staff contact Parry Sound-Muskoka MPP Norm Miller, Parry Sound-Muskoka MP Tony Clement as well

as the federal and provincial ministries of health.

"I think that the feds and the province have really hung people like us out to dry. Health Canada, the ministries at both levels have expressed an opinion that fluoride is a good thing," Borneman said. "Peel Region have been battling this for sometime and they expect within the next month they're going to be taking steps similar to what we took tonight. The federal ministry today basically said that the feds have no power to impose their will or authority in this area.

"Mr. Brown will tell you that since Walkerton the province has inundated municipalities with regulations with respect to water that govern how much chlorine and where it's being tested and how often it's being tested but they haven't seen fit to enter the fray with respect to fluoride. Send a letter saying it's time to deal with this in a well-thought out manner, step up and give us the expertise. It's time that senior levels of government get involved with this."

In a recorded vote, all of council voted in favour of the resolution, except Coun. Bonnie Keith.

Almost immediately after council approved the upgrades in June, a group of concerned citizens formed and began voicing their opposition through letters, phone calls and deputations to council.

By November 2015 the group suggested a referendum to let Parry Sound and McDou-

gall residents decide if they wanted their water fluoridated.

McDougall Township has been purchasing water from the town since 2007.

At a cost of \$19,000 plus staff time, a referendum would be held if 10 per cent of both Parry Sound's electorate and McDougall residents on the water system signed a petition wanting fluoride removed.

At the beginning of this month, members of the group headed out on foot canvassing the streets of Parry Sound soliciting signatures in support of removing fluoride.

More than 90 per cent of those polled in Parry Sound wanted the chemical out, while surveys sent to McDougall residents showed that 87 respondents wanted fluoride out, and 13 wanted to keep fluoride in the water.

Joe Moloney, a member of Parry Sounders for Progressive Water Management said he was pleased with council's decision and said it was thanks to the dedication and work of a powerful group that made it happen.

"We think that a majority council made a wise decision in listening to the electorate – the electorate has the final say. Maybe things are changing since the 1950s when the general population didn't have access to all of the information out there," Moloney said Wednesday afternoon. "It's funny that the electorate was asked not to go on the computer and do their research – and we do think it's great that people have done their research and came to their own conclusions."



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FREE for qualified participants

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**Program Length:** 24 weeks

**Date:** February – July 2016

**Cost:** FREE

There is a skilled worker shortage and General Carpenters are in high demand. Learn the latest installation methods along with the best practices and workplace safety relevant in today's construction industry.

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