



Laura Mayo prepares a scarf for sun-dying during demonstrations at the Valley Artisans' Co-op on Saturday afternoon. The co-op held a day of demonstrations outside their storefront on Highway 17 as part of the celebrations to mark their 25th anniversary.

Photo: Terry Myers

AECL, union hope for deal

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"If a fair agreement is not possible before the strike deadline, the Professional Institute is fully behind the members of CRPEG and is committing significant resources to ensure CRPEG members are not forced to take a bad deal."

In a press release issued early last week, CRPEG chair Vince Frisina said AECL is attempting to achieve a three-year contract "with significant concessions on salaries and benefits."

"Our members would see salary decreases in real terms over the life of this agreement."

Pat Quinn, director of corporate communications for AECL, said the company is still

hopeful a deal can be reached.

"We're available for further discussions up to and including mediation," Quinn said.

"It's a case of where the door is always open."

Quinn noted that the company has reached agreements with six other bargaining units in Chalk River and Whiteshell, and said AECL is looking for a "fair and balanced agreement" that addresses issues like compensation, productivity and efficiency.

CRPEG says talks with AECL originally came to an "impasse" in March.

Members held a strike vote June 4 and gave the negotiating team an "overwhelming mandate" to take job action if terms could not be reached with the company.

Conciliation talks were held June 5-7 and again June 21-22.

CRPEG says that at the end of those discussions, the two sides still had "fundamental differences on key issues."

Arena contract

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The retrofit work is part of the town's efforts to bring the arena in line with the Ontario Fire Code, after a number of deficiencies were found to exist in the building following inspections made as a result of recommendations from the Ontario Fire Marshal's office.

The work, estimated at \$324,800, was split into two parts - the first to supply and install a sprinkler system and the second for the construction work that was awarded to Bellemare.

The contract for the sprinkler system was awarded earlier this year to Drapeau Automatic Sprinkler Corp for \$149,000.

Last week's letting of the construction work brings the total budget for the project to \$281,500, including contingencies - well below the original estimate.

The work is expected to begin sooner rather than later, and will be completed in time for the 2012 ice season to start.

"I'm very happy that we're getting the work done and under budget," Mayor David Thompson said after the contract was awarded. "It allows us to re-open our arena on time in September."

St. Anthony grads

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Shaddick, meanwhile, who takes creative curriculums to a whole new level with his teaching, shared the wealth with all the staff at the school for how the graduates turned out.

"I can't take all the credit for how they turned out, nor can I take all the future blame for their high school teachers," he joked.

And, like Sicoli, Shaddick also had some solemn words for the students.

"Thank you for making the class a fun place to be over the last couple year," he said.

"And while you focus on your studies, never forget to look at the bigger things out there,

and things you can change in the future."

Vandepol, the valedictorian, promised her teacher to do just that.

"He always encouraged us to do our best and never give up," she said of Shaddick, noting that his perseverance never more evident than during the school's Terry Fox fundraiser, when Shaddick had his legs waxed "and screamed like a little girl".

Students, staff and their teachers waxed sentimental right up until the end of the ceremony, when awards were handed out.

Searle received the Science and Technology Award, Coulas, the Music Award and Vandepol the Catholic Education Award.

Vandepol and Searle, meanwhile were the male and female athletes at the school.

County officials report "positive" meeting with transportation minister

BY KAY MCQUADE

Last Wednesday, Renfrew County Warden Bob Sweet, Armprior Reeve Walter Stack and director of public works Dave Darch travelled to Toronto to meet with Ontario's Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Bob Chiarelli and his staff to discuss the extension of Highway 417 throughout the county.

They were accompanied by MPP John Yakabuski who has been "non partisan and very supportive of county efforts," according to Sweet.

At Thursday's county council meeting Stack remarked that the meeting was "positive" and said he "came away with the sense that Chiarelli understood what needs to be done, including the safety issues" of the highway.

Stack reported that an accident on Highway 17 at the Haley Road intersection claimed the life of Pembroke resident Jessica Fitzgerald on the day of the meeting and expressed condolences to her family and friends.

Darch said Chiarelli made it "absolutely clear we need to do a business case to get funding."

FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Chiarelli reported that there was no funding for the 417 expansion in the province's five-year plan and in order to have the project considered a priority for the province, it was necessary for the county to prepare a business plan/economic development impact study in support of their arguments.

He stated that the business plan/economic development impact study should project economic development requirements and speak to increases in jobs, etc. within the next five to 10 years.

Stack said the Minister "offered to see if his office could find funding for the environmental assessments necessary to expand 417 to Pembroke."

Sweet said the business plan will include "county-wide economic development, including Pembroke, because we are all affected by that highway."

The Armprior reeve noted the increased economic development enjoyed by Armprior since the expansion of 417 to his community.

"Housing starts are up and the industrial base is better than stabilized and the 417 has played a major role in industries staying and expanding," he said.

Sweet said, "now is the time for us to get our ducks in a row for a shovel ready project when the funding becomes available," which he has a sense might be 2014.

"NOW IS THE TIME FOR US TO GET OUR DUCKS IN A ROW FOR A SHOVEL READY PROJECT"

In order to commence the business plan, councillors unanimously passed a resolution directing county staff to proceed with a request for proposal (RFP) to select a consultant to undertake a business plan/economic development study for the expansion of Highway 417, with a maximum of \$45,000 allocated from the economic development reserve fund.

In other Highway 17 news, Sweet reported that Highway 17 west of Pembroke is now under the control of the Ministry of Transportation Kingston office.

He feels that Kingston "understands our area quite well and is familiar with the highway."

He said, "the Kingston office wants to work with us to improve safety, taking interim measures until highway twinning takes place."

Sweet credited the work of Petawawa Councillor Treena Lemay and the local police service boards and police services for highlighting the safety issues.

SCOTT FIREFIT CHAMPIONSHIPS

10:30, July 7 & 8, 2012
Laurentian Hills Fire Dept
Chalk River

AECL is pleased to host the SCOTT FireFit Championships and the TopCOP Challenge. This free, family event is open to the public and kids are welcome!

A portion of the proceeds from this event will be donated to the Heart & Stroke Foundation.

For more information about Firefit and TopCOP please visit www.firefit.com or www.beatopcop.ca.

Activities at FireFit/TopCOP

- FireFit Race
- TopCOP Race
- Petting Zoo
- BBQ
- Pig Roast Dinner (\$10)

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