

BEST FEATURE STORY

It was very difficult to choose a winner among the top three entries. All were excellent.

TYLER DAWSON

The Low Down to Hull & Back News

I love the lead. Description was great throughout and the writer did a great job of making the rescue exciting for the reader.

JESSICA DEER

The Eastern Door

Excellent piece on a fascinating subject matter.

1

Stranded loon causes flap, inspires daring early-morning rescue; goose deserts feathered friend

By Tyler Dawson

The plan may have sounded crazy - walk out on early-winter ice to rescue a stranded bird - and in the end, it was loon-acy that inspired the rescue.

"I'm ecstatic, this, for me, is the ultimate exhilaration," said Celine Perrier, who helped out with the rescue.

"This is a complete natural high for me, to be around wildlife, to witness a rescue and to see how everything went perfectly, to see people come together and to meet your neighbours out of something common like this, and to share that, it's amazing, it feels fantastic."

A mystery rescuer - he asked the Low Down to keep his name out of the paper - netted the frightened bird as he sat, trembling, on the ice, having, in an impressive feat of evasion, flung himself away from the first stroke of the net.

"If they nest too late, some of the nestlings can get..."



Community pulls together to save Lony the Loon. Top: Councillor Christopher Harris hauls the two canoes ashore following the rescue of the stranded loon. Right: Celine Perrier holds a line that was strapped to the canoes, so that they could be pulled back to shore. Bottom: Barbara Scott, who helped co-ordinate the crew, reflects on the rescue.

ordinate the rescue.

Carl Savignac, a bird biologist who runs Dendroica, a wildlife consultation business in Chelsea, said it was a bad year for loons, as many nests were lost from the rain. But, the birds attempt to nest again if this happens, and his speculation was that this loon had not developed enough to move on.

"If they nest too late, some of the nestlings can get caught, they don't have enough food, or they don't have enough time to develop, and they cannot make migration in the fall," Savignac explained.



company, scurried upon seeing trouble. "They sort of became mates, you know, they're the only two of their kind around here," said Perrier after the rescue.

2

Old-time photos honour the legacy of our ironworkers



JESSICA DEER
THE EASTERN DOOR

A new photography exhibit in New York documents the latest generation of Mohawk ironworkers, including several Kahnawakebrónon.

Skywalkers: the Legacy of the Mohawk Ironworkers at the World Trade Center is a project by New York-based photographer Melissa Cacciola.

The photo series features 26 portraits of ironworkers from Kahnawake, as well as four from Akwesasne, all of which were taken during the summer of 2012.

Jeff Morris, 25 at the time, was working on Tower 1 at the World Trade Center site when he was asked to be photographed for the series.

"I don't think any of us knew that it was going to be as significant as it has become. So it's being a part of history I think none of us were really expecting," said Morris.

Morris started ironworking when he was 21 and has not looked back, doing work in New York as well as Alberta.

"My father and uncles suggested I go to New York to work

and earn my way through the apprenticeship, which I did," he said.

Like many Kahnawakebrónon, ironworking runs in Morris' family.

"Both my grandfathers worked on the original twin towers and my whole family had roots working and living in New York so it felt pretty natural making that move," said Morris.

Adam Cross expressed similar sentiments.

"My father's a 35-year member of local 40. My grandfathers on both sides of my family were ironworkers. I guess it's kind of a like going into the family business," said the 33-year-old, who has been working in New York since 2006.

Forty-year-old Corey Marquis has been ironworking for 14 years and is a fourth generation ironworker.

With three older brothers also ironworkers, the trade runs in his family. "I wouldn't trade it for anything else," he told *The Eastern Door*.

which focused on military that had been deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq after 9/11.

As a continuation of War and Peace, Cacciola wanted to capture the disappearing trade among Kanien'kehá:ka people so that future generations know their legacy in building New York City's iconic skyline.

"They contributed so much to the rescue efforts at the World

"They contributed so much to the rescue efforts at the World Trade Center and the rebuilding, the project seemed like a natural progression for me"

-Melissa Cacciola

Trade Center and the rebuilding, the project seemed like a natural progression for me," said Cacciola.

"I think people are going to be more aware of how the skyline here was built and the faces that are behind the rebuilding of the trade center."

"The trade is definitely changing, slowing down, the glory days are over. As a Mohawk ironworker, I take in whatever the old boys can teach me. I think it's really important, you listen to what they say and do, and then you pass it down in the same manner," said Morris.

The project is done in the tintype medium, which is one of the earliest forms of photography prominent during the 1860s.

Each photographic positive is on a lacquered metal plate using a larger format wooden view camera, period brass lenses and 19th century chemical formulas to create a portrait of an ironworker.

For Cacciola, tintype is the perfect medium for the image. "They're 12 to 15 seconds of exposure," said Cacciola.

Each person had to watch the portrait being developed.

"Old school photography was cool. To watch of the photo evolve product was even Marquis.

The portraits on exhibit at the Wagner College Art Gallery in Staten Island, New York, until January.

The exhibit will display at the Center in the Staten Island Museum fall of 2015.

Kids practice every school day for two hours after class. But it's not just about the music. The program is also meant to help students develop socially and give them the sense of pride that comes with playing music.

"Because we have to play together as a group, it involves children working together. It's not about competition, but instead support," said Nicola Leith Miller, who teaches the class with Kaia'lonon Dumoulin-Bush and is also an instructor at Kanonhiá:ka.

"Because they have to practice for long periods and master a skill, it helps with concentration, and it's obviously creative and expressive so it helps them to express themselves with emotion and become more secure and confident," she added.

The program is also supposed to help keep children in school and to discourage bullying.

After two years of music les-

sons, Kanenhtisá:ke Henlock, nine years old, says she's learned "to be gentle with the violin and be kind to other people."

"I feel like I'm free with the violin," said her classmate Loft, who often plays her favourite song, "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star," at home. "My grandma, grandpa, mom and dad - my whole family cries whenever I play it!"

Several smiling Kahnawake parents were at F.A.C.E. last Thursday to see their children play. Heather Diabo and Keith Hamelin said the violin has helped their daughter, Oriantaciwi, come out of her shell.

"She was always so shy so it's a big deal," Diabo said.

"It builds confidence to be in a program like this," said Hamelin.

"She has energy when she goes there. She feels good about herself. She always asks us, 'did you see me mommy or daddy? Did I do good? She loves it!'"

Montreal and Kahnawake's Viva! Sistema is an offshoot of a musical, community-building program, started in Venezuela.

Founded in 1975, Venezuela's El Sistema now has 500,000 students and has inspired

Young Kahnawake fiddlers find freedom in music

GEOFFREY VENDEVILLE
THE EASTERN DOOR

Before taking music lessons in the after-school program Viva! Sistema, seven year-old Lakota'itioio Loft had never picked up an instrument.

Now, she and 25 other Grade 2 to 6 students in the orchestra unpacked their violins and cellos, getting ready to play the folk song "Soldier's Joy" in a fiddlin' fiesta at F.A.C.E. (Fine Arts Care Education) School in Montreal - in front of a small, rapt audience of family and friends.

"I'm a little nervous," she said before the performance. "I was so scared I didn't even want to go in."

Judging by her cheek-to-cheek smile, she quickly changed her tune when the orchestra - made up of students from Kanari and Kanonhiá:ka schools, as well as kids from St. Gabriel School in Point-St. Charles - started to play.

Now in its second year, Viva! Sistema is a free program that puts violins and cellos in the hands of young students who might not otherwise have had the chance to play an instrument.

Kids practice every school day for two hours after class. But it's not just about the music. The program is also meant to help students develop socially and give them the sense of pride that comes with playing music.

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After two years of music les-



Some came in with confidence and some were a tad nervous but all of the Viva! Sistema violinists and cellists wowed the rapt audience at F.A.C.E.



"Music is empowering for anybody. There's definitely a feeling towards empowerment for First Nations people - I think it's about time," said instructor Nicola Leith Miller.

similar programs in more than 25 countries from Australia to South Africa.

The same night as the F.A.C.E. concert, a graduate of the El Sistema program, prize-winning conductor and violinist Gustavo Dudamel, led the Los Angeles

Philharmonic at Paces-des-Arts.

Kahnawake's is the only Sistema program in North America based in a Native community, according to Miller, who was invited to present an abstract on the place of El Sistema programs in Indigenous communities

at a conference in Brazil this July. "Music is empowering for anybody," she said. "There's definitely a feeling towards empowerment for First Nations people - I think it's about time."

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GEOFFREY VENDEVILLE

The Eastern Door

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Judge: Jason Magder, Reporter, The Gazette, Montreal, QC • Number of entries in the Best Feature Story category: 33