

Oakville girl is Indian Princess

Ten-year-old wins Miss Junior Wawaskinaga title

By Nathan Howes
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

For 10-year-old Stacey-Anne Bryenton, taking on added responsibilities can never come too early an age. She was crowned Miss Junior Wawaskinaga last weekend at the annual Whitefish River Powwow, which means she gets to play a larger role in her community.

The Oakville girl, whose native heritage is from her father's side, beat out eight other contestants on Aug. 22 to win the Indian Princess Pageant on Birch Island, near Manitoulin Island. Stacey-Anne's mother, Angel Patryluk, couldn't be happier. She knows what its like to be in the spotlight. Back in 1991, she won the Miss Polonia pageant.

"It just suits her so well. The princess is representing (a) kind, gentle (and) nature-loving person that appreciates life. It couldn't be more fitting for her," said Patryluk.

"When she got her title, she danced the whole day through after that. No one could get her to sit down and she's still very excited."

The pageant consisted of an interview with judges that ask the contestants various questions on family, school and native teachings. This is followed by a native dance with all eligible contestants dancing together. Being part of the Whitefish River First Nation band, the pageantry was a chance for Stacey-Anne to demonstrate what she has learned from family members.

"Every year she does native crafts with her great aunts. She listens to the storytelling they do along the campfires from her uncles and cousins," said Patryluk. "Just through spending time with them, the knowledge is basically learned through life experiences. You can't just pick up a book and learn

it, you have to be apart of it."

For winning the pageant, Stacey-Anne won just under \$100. But it's not about the prizes, says Patryluk. It's about the honour and prestige of being the princess.

"You wear your crown that represents the band, which is Whitefish River First Nation on Birch Island. You represent the native people. The person they've chosen to represent them is Stacey (and) her kind nature."

As Miss Junior Wawaskinaga, Stacey-Anne will travel to other powwows representing her native band and plans on attending various social events throughout Oakville and Burlington to lend a helping hand.

"(She) gets to teach other children what she has learned throughout the year and goes to celebrations and lend a helping hand wherever need be,"

said Patryluk. "She always loves to help if she can."

When Stacey-Anne isn't spending time with her tribe, the St. Matthews School student is involved with competitive dancing, and has been since she was three. She participates in ballet, jazz, tap, hip-hop and acrobat for Dancers Burlington Inc.

"Stacey-Anne loves to dance and live life with her very warm heart and gentle spirit. She is such a loving child both at home, to all her teachers and fellow students," said Patryluk.

Stacey-Anne has enjoyed this experience so much she would like to try it again in two years, says Patryluk. She loves being more involved with the elders, since she has earned a place at the grand table.

"Now that she has a place and she's met them, she is welcome back. She can pick up the phone and have a conversation with one, (elder) as if they were a friend of hers. She is ecstatic about that."

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Angel Patryluk, mother of Stacey-Anne Bryenton



ERIC RIEHL / OAKVILLE BEAVER

INDIAN PRINCESS: The newly-crowned Miss Junior Wawaskinaga, 10-year-old Stacey-Anne Bryenton at her Oakville home.

Mosquitoes test positive for WNV

Residents are being warned to take extra precautions against mosquito bites after a batch of mosquitoes caught in Oakville last week tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV).

It was the first batch of positive mosquitoes found in Halton Region this year.

The mosquitoes were collected from the area of Cornwall and Morrison Roads in the Town of Oakville.

"Positive WNV mosquito test results are the key indicator of increased risk of West Nile virus infection," said Dr. Bob Nosal, Halton Region Medical Officer of Health. "Several other GTA regions have reported West Nile virus activity already. It is important that Halton

residents keep taking precautions to prevent exposure to mosquito bites including covering up, avoiding peak mosquito activity times of dusk to dawn, and wearing insect repellent with DEET."

Mosquitoes can transmit WNV to humans after becoming infected by feeding on birds carrying the virus. The following are steps that residents can take to protect themselves and their families from mosquitoes:

- Cover up. Wear light-coloured, long-sleeved shirts and pants with tightly-woven fabric.
- Avoid being outdoors in the early evening to morning. This is when mosquitoes are most active and likely to bite, as well as at any time in shady, wooded areas.

- Reduce mosquito breeding sites around your home by getting rid of all water-filled containers and objects. Change the water in bird baths at least once per week.

- Use an approved insect repellent, such as one containing DEET.

Maps showing the locations of positive mosquito pools, as well as standing water sites that have had larvicide applied are available on the Health Department's website at www.halton.ca/wnv.

To report standing water or for more information about West Nile virus, dial 311 or call Halton Region at 905-825-6000, toll free 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866), TTY 905-827-9833, or e-mail wnv@halton.ca.

Four charged in rash of break-ins

Police have arrested four young Hamilton males following a summer-long investigation into numerous residential break-ins in Oakville and Burlington.

The investigation was dubbed Project Nighthawk and involved 34 break-ins at Oakville and Burlington homes in June and July. All entries were done through either an open window or door.

The Hamilton Police break and enter, auto theft and robbery unit assisted Halton police with the investigation.

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