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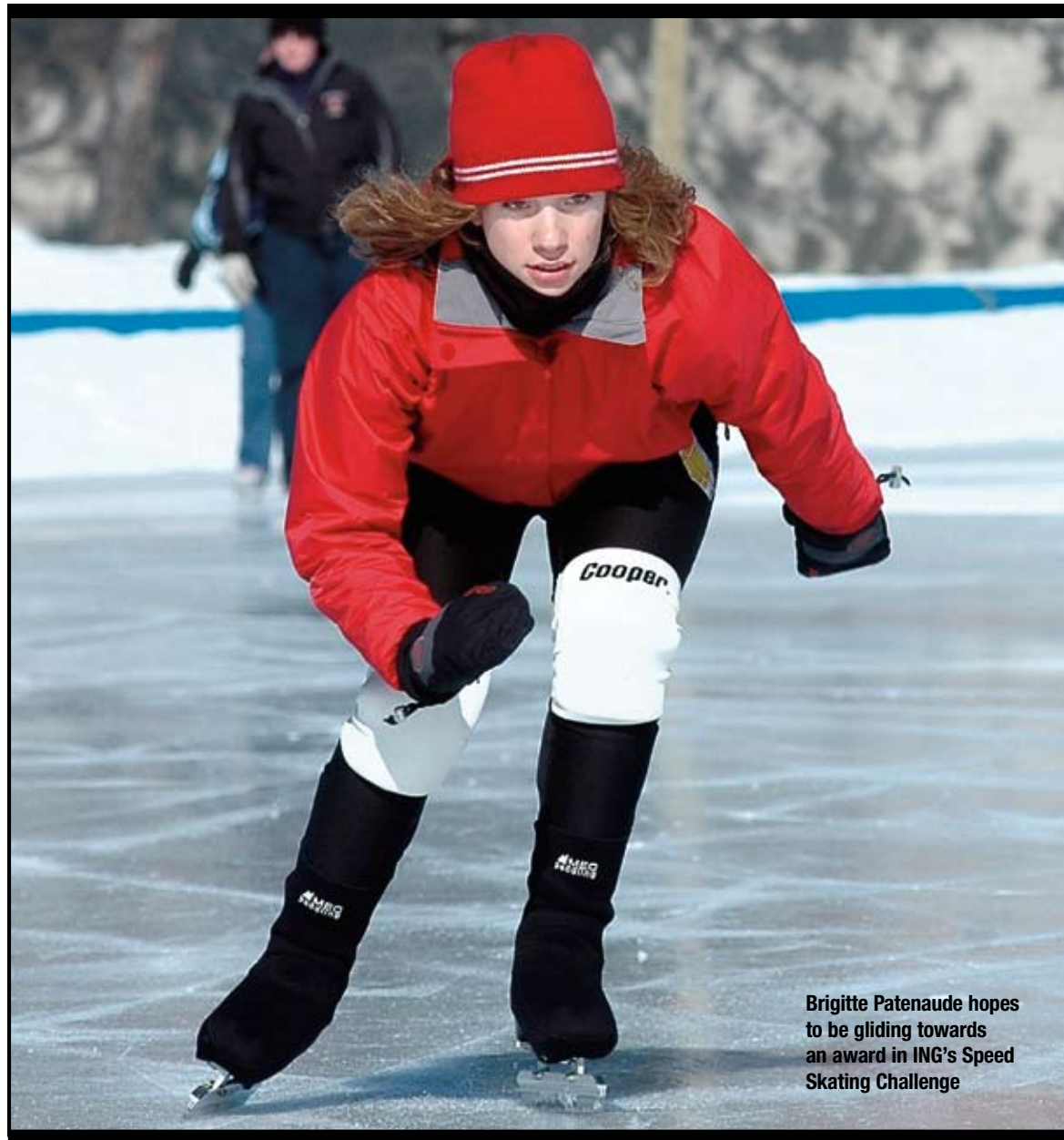
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KITCHISSIPPI TIMES

Volume 6 • Issue 9

The Spirit of Kitchissippi

March 5, 2009



Brigitte Patenaude hopes to be gliding towards an award in ING's Speed Skating Challenge

Combining her two loves A skater's video makes the cut

By Bradley Turcotte

A Kitchissippi high school senior says she is proud to have made it into the top eight in ING's Speed Skating Challenge to find Canada's best speed skating story.

The contest invited young skaters to produce an original video related to the sport and 18-year-old Champlain Park resident Brigitte Patenaude's video, titled "Age is just a number" was selected as one of the initial 24 entries.

Patenaude's video was voted into the top eight, much to her own delight and that of her skating club, the Ottawa Pacers.

And even though she didn't win the top prize, the video may still win the award for the most inspirational story.

Patenaude's production details her experience joining the Pacers and how she feels about being the oldest member of her group, which is based on skill level.

"At first it was a little awkward being the oldest one there, but once I started talking with the kids and connecting with them it was fine," she says.

Patenaude first heard about the contest through her skating club and says it was a chance to combine two hobbies she enjoys.

"I love speed skating and I've always liked making movies, so this contest seemed like the perfect fit for me."

Patenaude and her mother, Sandy, took to the Rideau Canal to film her captivating movie.

Patenaude says she was *Continued on page 13*

God and Seymour the skunk Storytelling minister uses puppets to capture attention of kids — and adults

By Sonia Mendes

Reverend Christopher Dunn brings new meaning to the term "man of the cloth."

Dunn, who joined the ministerial team at All Saints' Anglican Church three months ago, has a collection of over 130 cloth puppets that he regularly incorporates into the service.

"From my perspective, Jesus was a storyteller," says Dunn. "But what I've noticed from using puppets over the years is that the adults are paying just as much attention as the kids."

Dunn says he fell into a pattern of telling children's stories with puppets about 14 years ago, although his first puppet, a skunk named Seymour, was purchased 27 years ago. The collection has since grown to

include jungle animals, dinosaurs and most of the Sesame Street cast, among others. His menagerie is housed in his church office, where they are well-displayed on large, wooden stands that span floor to ceiling.

Puppets have enabled Dunn to capture the attention of children and convey key messages in a compelling way. "I've used puppets in a variety of situations — even at funerals," says Dunn. "I have a caterpillar and a butterfly puppet that I use to talk about transitions."

He can also call on his little pals to back him up in difficult situations. "I refer to Butch as my alter-ego," chuckles Dunn as he reaches for a boy puppet sporting a large cross around its neck. "Sometimes I have him

Continued on page 11

After northern exposure, a change in focus

Photographer finds a new message amidst the beauty of Nunavut

Courtney Rodriguez

For Westboro photographer Michelle Valberg, inspiration lies in the northern landscapes of Canada... as does adventure.

While traveling and photographing the country for her latest book, Valberg headed to Nunavut and Baffin Island in June 2007. The book's concept,

previously about landscapes across Canada, changed direction up north.

"I went up north and my whole focus changed," she says. "It's very hard to compare the north to the rest of Canada."

Though landscapes will still be the main component for what will be Valberg's third published work, they have taken

a more environmental tone since her time spent in Nunavut.

"I want to showcase landscape work in a soft environmental message," she says. "Not about what is happening in our country but what we have to lose and in a beautiful way."

She has since partnered with Adventure Canada and Nunavut *Continued on page 12*

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Rev. Dunn and a few of his closest friends

Puppets help make difficult situations easier

Continued from page 1

make fun of situations, or I have him say the difficult things that might be hard for me to say.”

While most of his puppets are readily available at some retailers,

others traveled great distances to join the puppet clan. “Grover comes from Maine, and I brought Fanny the fox from St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands,” laughs Dunn. “I

remember on one trip getting on the plane from Vancouver with puppets hanging out of my bag and getting some funny looks.”

Dunn’s puppeteering skills are considered a great asset in reaching the youngest members of the congregation at All Saints’ Anglican Church. Each Sunday at 9:30 a.m., Dunn uses his puppets to tell a story in the sanctuary and set the tone for the children’s lesson. The children are then dismissed for their classes, which take place during the rest of the adult service.

“One of the goals in my coming here was to attract young families and young adults,” says Dunn. “We want the services to be something that’s meaningful for everybody.”

In moving churches last November, Dunn had to bid farewell to the staff and congregation at Trinity Anglican Church in Old Ottawa South where he had been for 11 years. His career in the ministry also includes 10 years of work with the Shepherds of Good Hope in Ottawa. Dunn was born in England and moved to Sarnia, Ontario at the age of six. He was ordained in 1981 in London, Ontario.

Now a proud grandfather of three, Dunn says they take the opportunity to play with his puppets when they come to visit his office.

“I also have some puppets that I have retired from my main collection who live at home,” says Dunn. “Thanks to my grandchildren, they still get played with regularly.”

SONIA MENDES

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