

County athlete & coach to national & international stage

by Sam Morrison

The past two weeks have seen transient Victoria County residents figure prominently on both the international and national levels.

Baddeck Bay speedster Jessica Wong has been named to this year's Canadian National Under 22 Women's Hockey Team while Len Harvey was recently named Head Coach for the Nova Scotia Under 17 Girl's Basketball Team which will represent our Province at the 2012 edition of the Canada Games.

Len Harvey's ascension to the upper echelon of the Nova Scotia basketball coaching fraternity has been a rapid one. Two short years ago, he could be found honing his skills as the coach of the Baddeck Acade-

my's Girl's B-Ball team while also coaching the Bronco Boy's soccer squad. During that time period Len also began his association with Basketball Nova Scotia as he coached the Boy's Under 16 team for two years before taking over the reins of the Girls Under 14 program with that team forming the nucleus of the Under 17 Canada Games squad for 2012. Len also spent last winter as an Assistant Coach with the powerful Cape Breton University Women's team that returned to last season's CIS Championship Tournament where they represented our region of the Country as AUS Champions an honor which they look well on the way to repeating.

In discussing the challenge facing him-

self and his squad at the 2012 games (to be held in Sherbrooke, Quebec) Len stated, "The past few Games have seen Nova Scotia struggle as we have finished anywhere from 5th to 11th. We will be up against some powerhouse teams like Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta but we do have two years to prepare and our goal is to be very competitive in 2012. The team will head to Winnipeg for the Under-15 Nationals so that will be a litmus test for us as we will see how we compare to the other Provinces and what we have to work on."

When asked if the Games Team could feature a strong Cape Breton contingent Len answered, "In fact we had five Cape Breton girls on our Nova Scotia Under 14 Team this past summer with one player, Karina Kuchta, of Big Baddeck who played with us as we headed to the United States where we landed in the basketball hotbed of Indiana. Naturally these girls will all have to earn their spot on the team over these next three years but there definitely could be a strong "Caper" presence on the team."

For Jessica Wong the fall of 2010 has also been a successful one as she was recently named to Canada's Under 22 team which will enter this year's World Championships as defending Champions. Early January will see Jessica and the rest of Team Canada head to Switzerland where Jessica, despite being only 19 years of age, will no doubt be looked

to for leadership by her fellow players and Coaches as she hits the ice for this her 2nd World Title affair.

Over the summer Jessica was rewarded for her hard work and dedication as she was invited to the Women's National Team camp where she skated with the very best in Canadian Hockey. While this, her first camp, did not see Jessica snag a National Team spot (a feat rarely, if ever, accomplished by a 19 year old rookie) the experience was still a great one. Jessica said, "The Camp was a real thrill for me as I got to skate with players who were for me "Role Models" as I was growing up and competing. To be on the ice with players like Haley Wickenheiser and Jayna Hefford is something I will never forget."

In terms of regular season action Jessica skates on the defending NCAA Champions from the University of Minnesota-Duluth, the squad she led to last year's NCAA Title as she scored the Championship clinching goal in the 3rd period of overtime action! In terms of this year Jessica says, "We got off to bit of a rough start as our Coach introduced a whole new system of play and it took us a while to adjust. We are doing better lately and we look to contend for another National Title." Minnesota-Duluth currently sports a 9 win, 4 losses, and one tie record with Jessica contributing 8 goals and 12 assists to the team cause.

Festival of Lights delight



Providing seasonal tunes at Alderwood's Festival of Lights fundraiser on December 4th were L-R Walter Whitty, Cameron Brett and Brian Chandler.

Baddeck

This year, to celebrate its new location, Alderwood hosted "A Festival of Lights" fundraiser that featured a themed tour of each of its six residential home areas within the building.

"This is our first Christmas in our new home and we were very excited to share it with the community," said Arlene Morrison, Administrator of the 66,500 square foot facility. "We knew we wouldn't be able to decorate our new home with the decorations we had from our old facility, so for that reason as well to entice some of the community who may not have yet visited, to come and see our new home, we hosted this tour," Morrison said.

Each home area has eleven or twelve residents and is outfitted with a kitchen, living room, dining room and private bedrooms. In addition, each home opens onto a

courtyard all of which were decorated as well.

'Hillside Home' is decorated with a Santa theme; 'Unamaki' with traditional native decorations; 'Taigh Sona' (Gaelic for Happy Home) with Teddy Bears; 'Loch Bhreagh' with a Victorian era theme; 'Bell Isle' featured natural Christmas ideas and 'Bras d'Or' has a snowman theme.

In addition, the main lounge is decorated with a twelve foot Christmas tree and lighted wreaths line the driveway. "An army of volunteers helped us decorate," said Morrison. "We are so grateful to all those who have helped us in this huge undertaking. Residents also took an active role. Grandchildren too took part as did a number of new volunteers. We are creating new relationships with community members and we're really excited about that."

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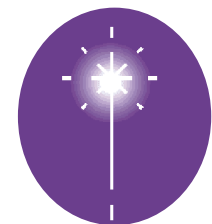
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