

JUSTICE

Assaults net house arrest

Hotel guest sentenced for drunken attack on other guest and night clerk at West Kelowna hotel

By Daily Courier Staff

"It's just shocking and totally inappropriate behaviour," said Judge Anne Wallace. "I'm glad it wasn't a fatality . . . at your own hands."

Urlacher, now 20, and his friend were staying at the hotel when they approached the night clerk

Urlacher held the clerk in a headlock, punching him, said Crown counsel Cory LaBoucane.

Urlacher, bleeding, approached the clerk behind the counter and spat blood at him, the prosecutor said. He then sat on the couch in the lobby and waited for police

because continuing to work the night shift terrified him, LaBoucane said.

Urlacher, who played football in high school, lives with his mother in a stable West Kelowna home, court heard. He and his girlfriend were injured in a fist fight

with the other man and has stopped drinking. He wants Day to know he doesn't need to fear him, she said.

The judge admonished Urlacher for attacking Day when he did nothing wrong except help the clerk.

The top three to six finishers from each school will be invited to attend the final round May 2 at UBC Okanagan. Finalists compete for top honours, cash prizes and, for the senior with the highest score, a cash prize of \$200 and a one-semester tuition scholarship to either Okanagan College or UBC Okanagan, to a maximum value of \$3,000.

Tax revenues up at Tourism Kelowna

Hotel taxes collected from tourists to Kelowna rose 6.5 per cent last year, city council will hear Monday. The number of people coming to the city for golf vacations and business conventions was up slightly compared to 2012, according to Tourism Kelowna's annual report.

The agency reports total revenues of \$2.7 million last year, almost 60 per cent of which came from the two per cent room tax applied to all hotel charges.

Women's group chooses executive

Olivia Hofer was chosen as chairwoman of the Central Okanagan Women's Resource and Education Foundation at the group's recent annual meeting.

Micki Smith is the treasurer. Sasha Johnston, Michele Rule and Sharon Shepherd are directors.

In 2014, the group will be working on such projects as the Gert Beadle award, a statistical portrait of women in the Okanagan, an art show tied in with the 85th anniversary of Person's Day, the annual Dec. 6 candlelight vigil and a spring women's leadership conference.

"It's essential to raise the profile of the foundation in the community as well as build our network with other groups, agencies and individuals," said Hofer.

West Kelowna cleaning streets

Spring street sweeping is underway in the District of West Kelowna, and the cleanup of sand and salt from the municipality's roads will continue until approximately mid-May.

Residents are asked to help with the cleaning process by parking vehicles off street while sweepers work in their neighbourhoods. Signs will be posted prior to street sweeping commencing in each area.

Sand piles will be temporarily deposited in each neighbourhood during the street sweeping process. They will be removed as quickly as possible once cleaning is completed in that area.

—The Daily Courier



SARY NYLANDER/The Daily Courier

Kelowna firefighters respond to a house fire in the 800 block of McKenzie Road on Thursday afternoon. Firefighters believe the cause of the fire was batteries charging in a hobby room located in the basement of the home.

Fire forces family from home

Fire department says blaze may have been sparked by battery chargers

By Daily Courier Staff

Battery chargers may have sparked Thursday's house fire that forced out a family on McKenzie Road.

An older man who builds model battery-controlled airplanes had been working in his hobby

room in the basement. Flames broke out, generating black smoke that filled the two-storey house at 869 McKenzie Rd. at 3 p.m.

The man was out getting his taxes done when the fire started. His daughter Tammy O'Rielly, in her 50s, told her adult son to call 911. She got the dogs out and used a fire extinguisher to spray the flames, she said afterward.

"There were flames all over, so I screamed at my son," she said. "(I) got a big dose of smoke and shut the doors and got out, grabbed my computer and my passport."

Firefighters noted black smoke wafting from the basement and found the fire in the back area. Inside the hobby room were batteries and chargers, said platoon Capt. Dale Calhoun.

"The fire was knocked out pretty good. There was a lot of smoke, quite a bit of damage in the basement and smoke throughout the house," he said.

O'Rielly was taken to hospital with possible smoke inhalation. The family slept elsewhere Thursday night and are under the care of Emergency Support Services, Calhoun said.

ENVIRONMENT

Events planned to mark World Water Day

Award-winning documentary to be presented Monday

Special to The Daily Courier

UBC's Okanagan campus and the Okanagan Basin Water Board have planned three days of events and activities in support of World Water Day, March 22.

World Water Day is a global event intended to raise awareness about a lack of clean drinking water around the world. It also highlights the misuses and importance of water, and serves as a reminder for people to take action.

This year's World Water Day keynote speaker is Jeannette Armstrong, who will give a free public presentation: A Syilx Perspective on Water and Energy in the Columbia Basin. Armstrong argues in favour of a co-operative and ethical approach to water management — one that would protect Canadian and regional



Armstrong

water sovereignty by incorporating indigenous rights and values in legislation such as the proposed B.C. Water Sustainability Act.

Armstrong is Syilx Okanagan and an assistant professor of indigenous studies with the Irving K. Barber School of Arts. The talk is at 7 p.m. next Wednesday at Rotary Centre for the Arts in downtown Kelowna.

On Monday, the award-winning documentary Watermark will be shown 7-9 p.m. at Famous Players Orchard Plaza 5 Cinemas in Kelowna. Watermark, named Best Canadian Film of 2013 by the Toronto Film Critics Association, brings together diverse stories from around the globe about our relationship with water. Tickets must be purchased in advance through EventBrite and will not be available at the door. The film

screening is sponsored by the Okanagan Basin Water Board, partnering with UBC Okanagan to organize World Water Day events, and by Okanagan WaterWise and the Fresh Outlook Foundation.

Also kicking off on Monday is the launch of the fourth annual Okanagan WaterWise Challenge. School classes and individuals throughout the Okanagan, from kindergarten to Grade 12, are invited to "map their tap" and submit multimedia entries describing where their water comes from, and why it's important to conserve and keep it clean.

Prizes include a two-hour boat cruise on Okanagan Lake for a private class lesson on Okanagan water, presented by the Okanagan Science Centre, as well as pizza parties and pool passes. For contest details, visit www.OkWaterWise.ca. The contest ends April 25.

Come to the central courtyard at UBC's Okanagan campus 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. next Thursday for the

World Water Day opening ceremonies, featuring music by My Kind of Karma, as well as free food, information booths, activities and performances.

World Water Day celebrations conclude Thursday with the free public forum WAVES of Change — emPOWERing Okanagan Residents for a Sustainable Future at the Laurel Packinghouse, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Kelowna broadcaster Phil Johnson moderates a panel discussion on the theme of water and energy. The event, presented by the Okanagan Basin Water Board and Okanagan WaterWise, is free, but seating is limited. Registration is required. Visit www.OkWaterWise.ca for more information.

Preceding the public forum is Splashdown, a short, fun and informative event featuring three-minute presentations by student and faculty researchers at UBC's Okanagan campus. Splashdown takes place 3-4:30 p.m. at the Laurel Packinghouse.