

Correction

Incorrect information appeared in the June 30 edition of Yellowknifer. Lynn Brooks worked with the YWCA ("Lynn and Bob Brooks bid fond farewell to Yellowknife"); the Salmita mine airstrip was originally 5,000 feet long and about 1,500 feet have since been removed. Yellowknifer apologizes for any confusion these errors may have caused.

NEWS Briefs

Cops make drug bust at airport

A man is in custody, charged with possession of narcotics for the purpose of trafficking, after Mounties were called to the Yellowknife Airport Sunday evening by the airport tower.

According to an RCMP news release, the man was a passenger aboard an inbound Air Canada flight. RCMP stated about 300 grams of crack cocaine and drug paraphernalia were seized.

Robert Zukowsky, 38, was held for a court appearance Friday. He also faces a charge under the Canadian Aviation Regulations Act.

Police confirmed in an e-mail they were initially called to the airport in relation to a report that Zukowsky had been smoking in an airplane washroom.

- John McFadden

Astronauts revealed

Justin Trudeau announced the names of the country's newest astronauts this weekend during Canada Day celebrations in Ottawa.

The Canadian Space Agency chose Joshua Kutryk of Fort Saskatchewan, Alta., and Jennifer Sidey of Calgary, Alta., out of a pool of 3,772 applicants, according to the federal government.

Yellowknife's Capt. Nathalie Sleno was among 17 candidates shortlisted for the position in April.

Sleno is a medical officer, pilot, doctor, teacher and mother of seven.

- Kirsten Fenn

Want to build a robot?

Tamarack Training Centre is hosting a summer robotics camp as well as drop-in workshops for youth ages 10 and up. Participants will learn how to build a robot and code while working with mBots, which are described as the perfect entry level robots.

The camps run from July 24 to 28 and from August 21 to 25. Sessions are being offered in the morning and afternoon.

- John McFadden

Patio grant approved

Downtown businesses planning to build a patio can apply for a \$10,000 grant from the city.

The application is available on the City of Yellowknife website. Once the application is approved, businesses will have to show proof of liability insurance and a sidewalk patio licence agreement.



Robin Grant, NSI photo

The SideDoor Resource Centre for Youth held its Push for Change walk Sunday afternoon. City of Yellowknife homelessness co-ordinator Dayle Hernblad, left, Joe Roberts, Marie Roberts, Isabelle Rivard, Kyle Tuktimak, SideDoor executive director Iris Hamlyn, Tiffany Thrasher and Brendan Gully, front, posed for a photo after the event.

Walk raises awareness

'You have to create strategies that work,' says national advocate to end youth homelessness during Yellowknife visit

by Robin Grant
Northern News Services

The man known as the Skid Row CEO was in Yellowknife Sunday afternoon raising awareness about youth homelessness – and he did it all with a shopping cart.

Joe Roberts, a former heroin addict who lived on the streets before becoming CEO of a multi-million dollar website development company, could be seen pushing his shopping cart through the streets of Yellowknife in an effort to raise awareness for youth homelessness.

Joined by a handful of dedicated volunteers from the SideDoor Resource Centre for Youth, Roberts' five-kilometre walk around the city was part of the Push for Change, a national trek he began in May 2016. The 17-month journey will have spanned 9,000 kilometres and taken him across the country from Newfoundland to B.C. by the time it wraps up in September.

The shopping cart he brings with him is a symbol of homelessness, he says.

"In 1989, I was homeless on the streets of East Vancouver pushing a shopping cart collecting cans and bottles addicted to drugs," Roberts said on Sunday.

"I was one of those people you walk by sleeping on the park bench or accosting you for change."

He had aspirations to get out of that life, he added – but if it hadn't been for a street-based agency he might not have.

"I had systems and supports there for me to find the door out," he said.

And with the launch of the SideDoor's two new youth-oriented programs – Housing First 4 Youth and HELP4U – on July 10, Roberts shared some important words about the issue.

"You have to create strategies that work," he said. "There is no one brush that paints all. When we take a look at the adult homelessness population, the best place to reduce the numbers nationally – whether it is here in Yellowknife, Western Canada or the entire country – is to start with youth prevention."

Roberts said according to statistics, more than 80 per cent of adults who are homeless had experienced homelessness when they were teenagers. "When we know that statistically we can really put a dent in youth homelessness, we are actually talking about preventing and supporting adult systems as well," he said.

SideDoor executive director Iris



Robin Grant, NSI photo

Volunteers Steve Norn, left, and Kristopher Jennings barbecue hamburgers during the Push for Change event that took place at the SideDoor Resource Centre for Youth.

Hamlyn agrees. She said national research reveals addressing youth homelessness can prevent adult homelessness.

"We have a short window of opportunity whereby we can provide supports and services to youth while they are in a vulnerable state so they won't be entrenched in homelessness," she said.

Tiffany Thrasher joined Sunday's walk. She said she has spent many

of her teenage years homeless as she struggled with addictions. But she thinks youth homelessness is preventable – with the right help in place.

"If we can catch it while we still can, while people are young, we can end it as quickly as possible and make such a difference in our society that we'll just be great," she said.

"I really want to see a difference and that's why I'm here."

Friday in Yellowknifer

