

# OFF THE GRID IN YUKON

For several weeks every year, residents of West Dawson and Sunnydale are cut off from the rest of the world

FOLIO, PAGES 6-7

# THE GLOBE AND MAIL

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## EDMONTON MASS MURDER

# 'She was self-sacrificing, she was joyful ... she was welcoming'

Family, friends mourn Cyndi Duong, one of eight victims of suspected killer Phu Lam



A woman and her son outside an Edmonton home Thursday where seven people were killed. She said she was a victim's ex-wife. AMBER BRACKEN FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL

JUSTIN GIOVANNETTI  
ANDREA WOO  
JEREMIAH RODRIGUEZ  
EDMONTON

Three days after the worst mass murder in this city's modern history, Cyndi Duong's friends and family struggle to understand why a bubbly, church-going, hockey mom is now dead. "She was self-sacrificing, she was joyful, she had a great smile, she was welcoming, she was sharp, witty and keen," said Kevin

Gartly, a long-time family friend who was at Ms. Duong's home on Thursday. "I have so many great memories in the house behind us."

Ms. Duong's body was found on Monday evening, hours after a man identified by neighbours as 53-year-old Phu Lam is suspected to have killed seven people in his home in north Edmonton. The next morning, Mr. Phu was found dead of apparent suicide in a Vietnamese restaurant in nearby Fort Saskatchewan, Alta.

As a bio-hazard crew continued to clean the home on a quiet cul-de-sac, Mr. Gartly tried to cope with the loss. A former pastor at Ms. Duong's church, he volunteered his time with her in the community. He spent part of New Year's Eve with the surviving members of the 37-year-old's family, including her husband, David Luu, and three children.

Across town, a slow trickle of friends and family brought flowers and stuffed animals to the snowy yard in front of Mr. Phu's

home. Along with the five adults found dead inside were two children, an eight-year-old boy and a 14-month-old girl.

On Thursday evening, a woman wept alongside her young son while standing in front of the house. She said she was the ex-wife of a victim and had only learned of his death earlier in the day.

Neither Mr. Phu's identity nor those of the other seven unnamed victims of Monday's mass murder have yet to be confirmed. **Edmonton, Page 4**

## GASOLINE SURVEY

# Canadians to save \$12-billion at pumps if oil stays low

SHAWN MCCARTHY  
GLOBAL ENERGY REPORTER  
OTTAWA

Canadian consumers spent a record amount for gasoline in 2014, despite the slumping prices in the latter part of the year. But they can expect a major break in 2015, thanks to lower crude costs that at current levels would deliver an estimated \$12-billion in annual savings to motorists.

Across Canada, drivers paid an average of \$1.28.1 for unleaded gasoline last year – the fourth consecutive annual record high, according to a survey released this week by Kent Group Ltd, which advises on Canadian petroleum markets. The higher prices came as demand for fuel edged slightly higher, though final figures aren't yet available.

But the motorists will be the big winners in 2015 as Saudi Arabia continues to pursue a price war in order to maintain its share of global crude oil markets. In its final survey of 2014, Kent reported an average pump price of 98.1 cents a litre – 30 cents below the 2014 average and down 43 cents from the peak of \$1.41.2 hit in late June.

The Saudis are refusing to cut production in order to prop up the market and instead are counting on slumping prices to force high-cost producers in the United States, Canada and elsewhere to slash investment and reduce supply.

As a result, North American crude prices have fallen by half from the summer high-water mark of \$107 (U.S.) a barrel to close the year Wednesday at \$53.27. **Gas, Page 8**

A make-or-break year for B.C. LNG  
Report on Business

## EGYPT

# Appeals court orders retrial for Fahmy, Al Jazeera colleagues

MAGGIE MICHAEL CAIRO

An Egyptian appeals court has ordered the retrial of Canadian-Egyptian journalist Mohamed Fahmy and his two Al Jazeera English colleagues held for over a year on terror-related charges, a ruling their lawyers hoped would help resolve a case that brought a storm of international criticism on Egypt's government.

Thursday's ruling by the Court of Cassation, rights advocates said, exposed the highly politicized nature of their initial conviction and heavy sentences of up to 10 years in prison in a trial that they dismissed as a sham

with no evidence.

Mr. Fahmy's brother, Sherif, said the family had expected a retrial would be granted, but were disappointed he was not released on bail until the new proceedings begin.

"We were banking on a retrial with a release," another brother, Adel, said. "I was expecting something better today."

The Canadian government welcomed the appeal court decision in a statement on Thursday and said it expects the new trial "to be conducted in a fair, transparent, and expedited manner." **Egypt, Page 8**

## BALA FALLS, ONT.

# When protesting a power plant, one can be a very lonely number

RENATA D'ALIESIO

When Peggy Peterson pitched a tent at the picturesque Bala Falls, in the Lake Muskoka region of Ontario, she thought that she'd camp out for a few days and that many would join her cause against a proposed hydroelectric plant.

Her insurgency, however, has become a long, solitary battle. Residents of Bala have provided her with food, an outhouse and a camper van, but no one has committed to joining her demonstration. For more than 100 days, it's mainly been just her and her sheltie, Lucy, and they're digging

in for the winter – and likely longer.

"Until it's stopped, I'm not leaving," Ms. Peterson vowed recently over the phone from the home of one of her new neighbours.

"How a downtown waterfall like this can be given away by the government to a private, for-profit company without any benefit to Bala? It's just cash-for-life for a handful of private individuals."

A 55-year-old permaculture educator from Huntsville, Ont., Ms. Peterson wasn't even aware of the Bala energy project until the Wahta Mohawks staged a protest in August. **Bala, Page 12**

## INSIDE



## Picture this

The Globe's Liam Lacey picks the Top 10 movie posters of the year. **Life & Arts**

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## Bala: To 'stop the hydro plant,' one woman digs in for the winter

» After listening to Chief Philip Franks' concerns, Ms. Peterson told him she would do what she could to help.

"The only thing I could think of was to pitch a tent," she recalled.

Ms. Peterson's one-woman campaign is among the latest barbs in a protracted battle against an Ontario government plan to resurrect a power plant in lake-studded Muskoka. Awarded to Swift River Energy in 2005, the 45-megawatt power-plant proposal sparked a grassroots movement called Save the Bala Falls.

"Stop the hydro plant" signs are everywhere in this small, recreational community north of Toronto — one of many green-energy skirmishes to flare up as the provincial government aggressively expands renewable power's footprint, offering to pay lucrative rates to developers.

Wahta Mohawk First Nation registered its opposition to the project in August, sending letters to Premier Kathleen Wynne and Prime Minister Stephen Harper. The aboriginal community contends it hasn't been properly consulted on the proposed site or on the closing of a historically significant portage.

Meanwhile, a documentary on the hydroelectric battle is in the works. Rob Stewart, director of the award-winning film *Sharkwater*, spent time in Bala as a kid, chasing fish and turtles in its waters. The trailer for his new documentary implores: "It's not a done deal."

But the power deal is inching closer. Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources is giving the project one last look and a change of mayor in the Bala region may smooth the path for Swift River Energy.

Former Township of Muskoka Lakes mayor Alice Murphy, ousted in the October municipal election, had expressed strong concerns about the energy project. Ms. Murphy, who owns property along the Moon River, supported the township's legal bid to have the provincial government recognize the public's right to portage a historic canoe route at Bala Falls — a move that slowed Swift River's progress and would have effectively quashed the power proposal, if successful.

The legal challenge failed. The



Peggy Peterson is camping to stop the Bala Falls hydro project; she is alone, but the community has been supportive. MATTHEW SHERWOOD FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Ontario Court of Appeal rejected the municipality's case in July, ruling that the protection of public safety trumps canoeists' access to portages and shorelines on Crown land. Newly elected Mayor Don Furniss, previously a councillor, supports the province's portage ban, saying there are other canoe-carrying routes nearby.

Mr. Furniss, who lives in another part of the three-ward township, "firmly believes" the hydroelectric power plant will be built. He said the municipality's refusal to negotiate with the developer has pushed Swift River Energy to a less-desirable building option for Bala. He wants to work with Swift River to reduce the plant's long-term impact on the community.

"It would certainly be easier on residents of Bala and the wallets of our taxpayers if there was no hydro development at this location," Mr. Furniss said in an

e-mail. "However, I believe it will happen and I want to work out the best solution for our residents."

Swift River Energy vice-president Frank Belerique is optimistic the company can forge a better relationship with the township. At a recent council committee meeting, he proposed forming a working group to re-examine construction options.

Although the project has taken a lot longer than anticipated, Mr. Belerique said Swift River Energy remains committed to building the power plant. A hydroelectric facility last operated in Bala six decades ago.

"We believe it's a good project," he said. "The environmental impacts are very low. You couldn't have asked for a better project from an environmental perspective. There's no flooding involved. The dam is already there. There is a transportation network in place."

The power plant's detractors, however, think the project will have a negative effect on the environment, recreational water users and businesses in Bala. The north and south falls are a major draw for residents and tourists.

"There are serious public safety and economic concerns and we just think the right people haven't heard them yet in the right light," said Mitchell Shnier, a member of Save the Bala Falls group.

The Ministry of Natural Resources is completing its review of Swift River Energy's application for approval under the province's Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act, spokeswoman Jolanta Kowalski said. The company received a land-use permit from the ministry in mid-November, allowing Swift River to occupy Crown land, move equipment to the site and install fencing. A building permit from the township is still needed.

Swift River Energy hopes to start construction this summer, Mr. Belerique said.

Peggy Peterson believes the project can still be stopped.

She camped at the banned portage site nearly day and night from September to the beginning of November before moving her demonstration to another spot in Bala. She heads home in the evening these days and was in Huntsville during the Christmas week to spend time with her family.

When she returned to Bala on Monday, flags donated by the Wahta Mohawks were missing, along with a small tent and other items. Their disappearance surprised her, but she believes she has the support of many in Bala.

"The community has been feeding me, visiting me and bring me firewood," Ms. Peterson noted. "This," she said of the power-plant proposal, "is a mistake that has to be fixed."