

Beauty queen shines brighter with age

From local pageants to the national stage

BY ISABEL MOSSELER

TRIBUNE

Pageantry has been part of Lynn Gauvreau's life since she entered her first Sturgeon Falls Winter Carnival Pageant when she was 13-years old and living in Cache Bay. Now she is 46 years old, is a mom of two young girls and stepmom to one older girl, lives in Montreal and she's entering the Mrs. Canada Globe Pageant in Regina. She's billed as Mrs. Eastern Ontario – acknowledging her local roots. The event is being held on March 17 and 18 and will be live streamed. Gauvreau has been advocating for the cultivation of inner and outer beauty for years, and she's got the photos to prove she has both!

What is it about pageantry that has inspired her over the years, while eating her celery sticks and working out with a personal trainer? "I think the number one thing is that when I participated in Miss Sturgeon Falls, when I was 13-years old, once you get on stage, it's exhilarating. If you've never done it, or had the experience, that's where you get the bug. I think it's because in the 80s, when Miss Canada was on the air I used to watch that and I was in awe of 'Barbies on stage,' and when they started speaking they were articulate, smart, and you could see the smile within. Especially back in the 80's. Now it's more about health, beauty and fashion, but I like the old-fashioned way even how I was taught at age 14 with a book on my head, to walk straight. They don't do that anymore."

She laughs and mentions how currently, necks are always bent over for texting and people rarely raise their heads up, and posture is suffering as a consequence.

Pageantry gets short shrift in an age where displays of feminine pulchritude on runways are often considered sexist and demeaning. But Gauvreau sees the activity through an entirely different lens, and she's graciously vocal, adamant, and very clear on what she sees as the benefits. "People don't understand pageantry. If you're passionate about something – for me it's like a sport – like golf when you have to challenge yourself. It's a self-challenge. I love the production of a show. That's why I always liked producing the West Nipissing Pageant. I did it for seven years. I created the West Nipissing pageant before the amalgamation of West Nipissing. I had to talk to every reeve and mayor to ask for permission for the West Nipissing Pageant." Lynn Gauvreau was the show producer from 1994 to 2001.

She talks about the effort, the challenges, the physical fitness goals, and the lifelong commitment of maintaining a routine and regimen that fosters confidence and health. "For the physical fitness, I'm fortunate. My trainer (Jean Pierre Beauchamp) is 70-years old, from Venezuela, and in phenomenal shape. He's a financial advisor who fell in love with nutrition and weight training. Whatever he's doing to train me [is working]. My body has changed since having two children in my late 30s. In my 20s, my sister Joanne (Gauvreau, owner of Femicinity Dance Studio) used to be the aerobics instructor at the Sturgeon Falls Complex, so she taught me about the physical side, and modeling taught me about the posture. With the scoliosis, I have one shoulder that slouches."

This beauty queen has scoliosis? "Yes. I was never put in runway because I stand crooked. I have scoliosis. I'm 45 degrees off my alignment. I had to have cesareans because my hips are crooked and I couldn't push the baby."

Gauvreau also sees pageantry as an entrée into assisting humanitarian efforts, particularly with this current pageant she's entering. Mrs. Canada Globe supports the cause of Sofia House, which serves to protect women and children from violence in Saskatchewan. "I always wanted to tie it to charity," she says. "That's what is nice about this one; it's to raise funds for Sofia House ... I worked for social services for 9 years in Sturgeon Falls and I've seen it. It's one of the reasons why there is a Miss West Nipissing pageant. I noticed the teen pregnancies. When you grow up in a small town, I wanted to bring awareness that there is a bigger world out there. It's about cultivating young girls, not just about beauty. It's the fundamentals: self esteem, how to present yourself, how to do interviews. A lot of times people don't want to do pageants because they can't talk in front of a large group of people. Now everyone texts, but no one is talking. [Many] don't have the social skills that we had to develop in our day. ... I'm a humanitarian and I'd do anything to help. I worked in a seniors' home for 6 years with Alzheimer's (patients), and the highlight of my job was pouring coffee in the dining room—the seniors loved me because I was always well dressed. I'm going to wear high heels until I'm 80 years old!"

She laughs, relating how her mother used to ask her why she was getting dressed up to go shopping. Gauvreau thinks that in some ways, she may be a throwback to the forties when "women used to vacuum in high heels". But she's also got a business head on her shoulders. She currently works for a prominent plastic surgeon in Montreal, Arie Bencherit, who is also her sponsor. Gauvreau relates that when one enters the pageant world, one also becomes an ambassador for the sponsors, and this is business. "I'm being sponsored by Frank Lyman for all my wardrobe – a Canadian fashion house (Frank Lyman Design) and Joseph Ribkoff – they are the main wardrobe supplier for Miss America. I'm a model for him now. He tailor makes clothing for women 35 to 70, very good quality, made in Canada, great fashion, flattering for every size. So once I do the show, he would use me for his campaign to promote his new collection. I would also be a spokesperson for awareness of domestic violence."

She adds that it's mostly women in the age bracket of 15 to 24 who fail to seek help when they find themselves in abusive situations. She feels she has a role to play in reversing that statistic.

Part of that entails relating her own story, including self-doubt in her youth. She recounts that as the young daugh-

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Lynn Gauvreau, originally of West Nipissing, is still rocking the pageant world three decades after winning her first crown as Miss Sturgeon Falls.



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Lynx battle Titans; add two stellar players

BY BRAD AUBIN
TRIBUNE

The West Nipissing Lynx hosted the Temiscaming Titans last Saturday, Jan. 14 in front of a packed house. Despite losing 8-4, the Lynx put on a great show for the home crowd and a huge effort on the ice.

As the puck dropped for the first period, it took no time at all for captain Nate McLeod to bury one past the Titans' net minder Veli Makinen from the left hash marks.

With this early the lead, the Lynx had two back-to-back penalties, which shifted the play to their zone for a big chunk of the first period. Despite a great effort by newly acquired goalie Maksim Kuteinikov, they were unable to stave off the Titan's relentless pressure from the power play and the game was tied 1-1.

When the Titans' numerical advantage ended, the game continued to see saw, with action shifting to the Titans zone as the Lynx played hard and tried to re-gain the lead. Field's own Thomas Farrell made that happen with another goal.

A late penalty once again put the action in the Lynx's defensive zone, but the home team stayed poised and avoided the danger. They kept the pressure on for the remainder of the period with a feverish back-and-forth that kept fans in suspense. As the dying seconds of the period were ticking, Ryan Erickson of Sudbury, another new player for the Lynx, got the crowd on its feet as he got on a breakaway. Erickson didn't miss his opportunity, scoring top-corner and giving the Lynx a 3-1 lead before the first intermission.

As the second period began, a unintentional high-stick by Lynx defenseman Lucas Nevrencan drew blood, which caused the Titans to go on a 5-minute power play. This only seemed to motivate captain McLeod, as he single-handedly stole the puck and skated end-to-end, earning a solid scoring chance as well as another power play, as he was held and thrown down on the way to the net.

The ensuing four-on-four went back and forth, but no team could bury a goal.

Later in the period, a bad defensive pinch by the Lynx enabled the Titans to score again.

With less than two minutes left, it was Sturgeon Falls' own Adrien Guenette who scored the tying goal for the Titans, making it 3-3 at the end of the second period.

The Titans rode that momentum throughout the third, scoring 5 goals in the period. It was a lead the Lynx couldn't re-take.

Saturday's game was the third loss in a row for the Lynx, but it wasn't without quality efforts – especially from the new assets of Maksim Kuteinikov and Ryan Erickson.

The Lynx organization is excited to have the two, stating that they are valuable to the team



Sturgeon Falls native Adrien Guenette helped his Temiscaming Titans overcome the West Nipissing Lynx with two goals last Saturday.

as they start for a playoff push.

"Ryan spent his Junior career in top junior leagues across Ontario including stints in the CCHL, OJHL, and most recently in the NOJHL where he served as their Captain and leading scorer tallying 25 G and 53 A for a combined 78 Points in 47 games! Ryan is also an 8th round (160th overall) draft pick of the Niagara Ice Dogs in the OHL," reads a Lynx release.

Team owner Bruno Vezina elaborates. "[Ryan's] leadership and elite level skill will help our club achieve its ultimate goal. Signing a player of Ryan's stature and experience, along with today's earlier addition in goal, truly demonstrates that we as an organization are serious about winning and are serious in becoming one of Northern Ontario's premiere Junior hockey destinations."

Those same sentiments were echoed for Kuteinikov, whom the Lynx acquired from the Niagara Whalers.

He is a 3rd round pick (103rd overall) in the KHL and has played 22 games in the GMHL this season, averaging outstanding numbers in both his goals against average and save percentage, they explain.

Coach Dan Tremblay says adding a player like Kuteinikov to the Lynx lineup is incredible. "He is a proven starter not only in this league but in other greater leagues as well. He was drafted in the KHL for a reason and we went out and got him for those same reasons. He wins games. He steals games. And that's what we want to do here with 10 games left. We want to make a push and show our great fans that we're very serious about putting forth the best product on the ice night in and night out and make a playoff push!"

The Lynx will be back on home ice on Jan 27th as they face off against the Orangeville Ice Crushers. Puck drops at 7:30pm.

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ter of Margaret and Jean Marc Gauvreau, she was an 'ugly duckling', but she blossomed thanks to encouragement from those around her. She's also learned that beauty comes in many forms and shines from within. "As I mature in life, I've been exposed to a lot of things and I have a good sense of what I want to be. Regarding beauty, there are a lot of models, beautiful young girls, but as soon as they speak... Then I meet a woman who might be overweight but they have the personality, the humour and they shine. ...Your looks can only carry you so far. If you have class, personality, intelligence... When people meet me there's always that first impression, but when they get to know me they also get the personality."

Gauvreau is now very comfortable in her own skin. "In pageantry you need to speak, wear the evening dress, grace the stage, know how to carry yourself and project. If you take that crown, you have take the responsibility that goes with it and be a good role model. You have to educate. You have to have something to give in order for people to mentor you. The biggest thing is how to carry yourself, walking, how to open the door when at a job interview, eye contact, how to sit; there's a lot of body language. I was lucky to learn a lot of that because of pageantry, and working with other international models. ...much of it is etiquette, and a lot of people are lacking those skills today?"

She adds, "Canadian women are very conservative. I live in Montreal so this is the capital of fashion, but everyone wants to look and feel good about themselves. They just need the tools. You can work and still look good.

We (women) always put ourselves last, and people just give up and don't bother because it's exhausting."

But in the end, it's worth it. And according to Gauvreau it never really ends, it just changes. "Right now I'm a director for Swimsuit Canada, [Swimsuit USA International Model Search Canada 2016] which is a model search. You are limited by age for pageants like Miss Universe Canada. By the age of 26 it's done; you have to be between 18 and 26 – can't be married, divorced, or have children."

But then there are the later category pageants, like this one. "The Mrs. Canada Globe is from age 20 to 50. I'm 46. Competing here, I'm one of the oldest contenders. We did webinar meetings with the other delegates. There are 22 women cur-

rently." The contenders include a doctor from Toronto, fitness models, two nurses, and more. "If I win, I'm off to China to represent Canada in Beijing. They are very strong in pageants in Asia, the Philippines. It's like an Olympic sport for them. And I get to meet all these women from Regina to Vancouver – we're diverse."

Talking to Gauvreau, you get the distinct impression that she loves diversity. She loves interacting with different people. She loves the challenge, the travel, the contact, and she's inspired to not only maintain a high standard but to also continually improve, and pageantry is the vehicle she chooses. She's representing Eastern Ontario for this pageant, and her part of Eastern Ontario is West Nipissing. She intends to represent us well.