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The town tax debate - increase or not?

Grand Falls-Windsor released its 2007 Budget on Tuesday night and the good news for residents was no tax increases.

However in recent days word on the street seems to be otherwise. People are saying the headline in the Advertiser's Thursday edition stating no tax increases was misleading. Contrary to what some people might think, the headline is true: town taxes are not going up.

[\[FULL STORY\]](#)

Features:: »

Loeffler's lofty goal



TA Loeffler likes to be high in the literal sense of the word. She is a mountaineer who thinks big, trains hard, and embraces the world's highest peaks as her challenges.

Now she has committed herself to tackling the highest point on the globe – Mount Everest.

[\[FULL STORY\]](#)

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Eagles post first lost of season



All good things must end, even a no-loss record.

Feature::

Loeffler's lofty goal

Mountain climber sets sights on Everest

Jennifer Pelley
The Advertiser

TA Loeffler likes to be high in the literal sense of the word. She is a mountaineer who thinks big, trains hard, and embraces the world's highest peaks as her challenges.



TA Loeffler at the summit of Mount McKinley, the highest point in North America, in June 2005.

Now she has committed herself to tackling the highest point on the globe – Mount Everest. Located on the border between Nepal and China, Everest is the highest point on Earth. It is a giant that stands 8,848 metres tall above sea level – about 60 Signal Hills stacked on top of one another.

She came to Grand Falls-Windsor and Bishop's Falls from St. John's, where she teaches human kinetics at Memorial University, on Thursday and Friday to speak to youth and adults about her upcoming adventure and what it takes for her to reach such heights.

For Ms. Loeffler, 41, there are several attractions to the mountain.

"I wanted to climb it since I was a little girl, and I never actually imagined I would ever get there," she said. "Then in June of 2005, I climbed McKinley, which is the highest peak in North America. That kind of opened the door but at first I was thinking it was an awful lot of fundraising and I wasn't sure I was up for that part of it.

"But at some point, the internal puffer fish just wouldn't let go. It poked and poked and poked and I realized it was time to just give it a go."

Ms. Loeffler uses the puffer fish as an illustration of what it feels like when someone has a dream they want to accomplish. The puffer fish blows up inside of you, poking at you with its spines from the inside out until you begin making steps to realize your dream.

Ms. Loeffler's internal puffer fish grew so large she decided to mortgage her house in order to fund her Everest climb, which will cost about \$60,000 with permit fees, a personal Sherpa guide, plane tickets, specialized gear, and guiding company fees added up.

Ms. Loeffler also said she realized with the McKinley climb that she could reach out to youth – that the imagery and the tales of mountain climbing were things they related well to – and set out to inspire younger people to

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The Exploits Valley High School Eagles hockey team lost to Gander Collegiate on Friday night in Central High School Hockey League action.

The EVH squad had gone unbeaten in their four previous games this season. The only thing that was not uneven was the final 4-1 score. Shots on goal were 23-22 for the Eagles, and each team had four minor penalties in the fast-paced match.

[FULL STORY]

Entertainment::

»

Former Advertiser reporter launches magazine



A photo of a smiling girl clutching a handsome brown-eyed husky; headlines promising interesting features inside, and big letters proclaiming the name of a new magazine to hit the stands: Labrador Life.

The 44-page publication is a labour of love by a former Advertiser reporter and Grand Falls-Windsor native who's been living in the "Big Land" with his wife and family, specifically Happy Valley-Goose Bay, for more than 10 years.

[FULL STORY]

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dream big, be physically active, and be mindful of drugs and alcohol.

She highlighted all of these points when she spoke to students at Exploits Valley High and Leo Burke Academy about her mission.

And she peaked their interest, judging from the number of questions they threw at her following her presentation, which ranged from how does she go to the bathroom while on a mountain (a special urinary redirection device that allows her to go standing up) to did anything bad happen to her while climbing. They all agreed they wanted her to return after her climb to tell them about it.

PREPARING FOR EVEREST

Mountaineering is not an easy sport. It tests a person's physical strength and fitness, and mental preparedness.

Climbers have to contend with extremely high altitudes where they are breathing air that is only 12 per cent oxygen (in comparison to the air that is 21 per cent oxygen, which we breathe at a more regular altitude).

Severe weather conditions on a mountain face include extreme cold, avalanches, and bitter wind.

Food and water freezes, skin cracks, dangerous conditions are around every corner, and Baby Butt diaper cream (zinc oxide) has to be smeared all over a climber's face and nose to combat the glare from the sun off the snow.

Preparing to meet these conditions head on requires extensive physical and mental training. For Everest, Ms. Loeffler has been spending between 15 and 20 hours a week doing various forms of physical activity, which includes weight training, cardio while wearing her backpack, hockey, yoga and pilates.

Her mental training involves meditation and Ring of Fire challenges, which she takes on to practice being uncomfortable.

For example, in preparation for McKinley, she had a fanny pack filled with \$100 worth of quarters on her at all times. She had to make every purchase with those quarters for a week. On top of that, she had to count out the change while wearing her summit mittens, compromising her dexterity.

Her work colleagues gave her the challenge of coming to work everyday for a week in a dress. Being a phys-ed and human kinetics prof at Memorial, it was not the optimal garb.

But she finds the challenges helpful when she gets on a mountain.

"On McKinley, I drew on them sometimes when life got pretty tough," she said.

For the Everest climb, Ms. Loeffler will be one of two Canadians, along with eight Americans. She does not know any of the people she will be climbing with.

The group will set up base camp at 17,500 feet and will then begin making forays up the mountain, transporting food and introducing their bodies to the higher altitudes.

While the chances of summiting Everest are not great – only 20-30 per cent due to extreme weather conditions that occur that high up – and the group will be using sophisticated technology to predict the weather in order to hopefully reach the summit.

The last camp before the summit is in the death zone – above 8,000 metres where it is significantly more difficult for a climber to survive. Climbers will not go to that camp unless they are pretty certain they will

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have a window of opportunity to summit.

In total, Ms. Loeffler will be climbing for between six and eight weeks.

"About half of that will be actual climbing time and the rest will be rest and acclimatization time," she said.

She departs on March 17 and will trek for two and a half weeks into base camp before her ascent up Everest even begins. April and May will be spent on the mountain, with the hope of summiting between May 15-25.

But Ms. Loeffler certainly is not sitting tight in Newfoundland until then. She has already departed for South America, where she will attempt to summit the highest peak there – Aconcagua in Argentina.

Upon returning to Newfoundland after Christmas, she will continue to speak to the youth of the province about her adventures and will also aggressively fundraise to help cover the huge costs of climbing Everest.

She encourages everyone to follow her Everest climb from her website – www.taloeffler.com – as she will be making entries throughout the mission via satellite.

"I know it will be really helpful to me if I know that the folks in the province are behind me," she said. "Last year a couple of climbers on Everest said they were getting e-mails from around the world and it really kicked them into high gear when they needed it."

As well, if anyone is interested in sponsoring Ms. Loeffler's climb, you can find information on her website.

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