



Guelph Mercury **monday**

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Blogging from Gaza

Fergus woman has on-the-spot perspective

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GUELPH — As Muslims in Guelph this weekend strongly condemned Israel's military incursion into the Gaza Strip and

other groups here defended the Israeli action, a human-rights activist originally from Fergus finds herself in the thick of the conflict.

Eva Bartlett has been in the Gaza Strip for several months working for the Palestinian-led International Solidarity Movement (ISM). She spent much of 2007 in the West Bank. A freelance writer and occasional commentator for international media, Bartlett posted harrowing



on the web

Eva Bartlett's blog can be found online at <http://ingaza.wordpress.com>.

details and graphic photographs on the ISM blog over the weekend.

Bartlett, who also condemns the Israeli action, wrote from Gaza yesterday that an emer-

gency medic she had met two days earlier had been killed by Israeli fire and that medical workers appeared to be systematically targeted. She posted photographs of victims of the assault.

"From the news office in central Gaza, I cannot believe the sounds of bombing, though they are targeting the area from which I've just come, as they did throughout the night," Bartlett wrote in her blog yesterday.

► SEE **GAZA** ON PAGE A2



ROB O'FLANAGAN
analysis

Hasenfratz meets crisis with spirit

Linamar Corporation chief executive Linda Hasenfratz donned virtual shining armour over her power suit in the final weeks of 2008. The 42-year-old took on the characteristics of a heroine as an automotive disaster unfolded with catastrophic velocity in the last months of the year.

The hundreds of Linamar workers laid off in 2008 might not see their boss in such a bright light. But from a journalist's perspective, Hasenfratz's ascension to the role of spokesperson for, and champion of, a floundering industry had a dramatic and courageous quality to it. Journalists appreciate scrappers and straight-talkers, and she was both in the waning weeks of the year.

One can only speculate on the familial and corporate, perhaps even governmental, encouragement that spurred Hasenfratz to be the unofficial voice of the wounded automotive sector. Maybe a family member coaxed her into becoming outspoken. Maybe she spoke to Guelph MPP Liz Sandals or MP Frank Valeriote — or other politicians higher up the ladder of power — who insisted that someone had better rise above the fear and intimidation of the moment and issue a resounding cry for help.

More likely it was Hasenfratz herself who realized the company her family had built up over four decades, one that had made them wealthy and given thousands of workers in Guelph and elsewhere a good living, was getting sucked into the vortex as the bigger ships of the industry sunk.

► SEE **HASENFRATZ** ON PAGE A2

A PUCK AND A POND



Skaters move the puck during a late-afternoon game of pond hockey Saturday near the Ignatius Jesuit Centre.

NICK IWANYSHYN, GUELPH MERCURY

Landmark Elora building ready to take on a new role

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ELORA — Elora's picturesque beauty is the backbone of the community's tourism trade, and the transformation of the former Dalby House at 143 Metcalfe St. has the potential to draw more visitors to the town, according to Marty Van Vliet, owner of Mermaid Antiques.

Local merchants like Van Vliet say the 143-year-old flatiron building's exterior facelift and interior rejuvenation are a vast improvement over its former incarnation.

A pub, restaurant and rooming house up until early 2008, the Dalby House had fallen into disrepair. Its faded yellow outer walls hid elaborate brick work that has now been restored.

"I think the building will be one of those rare showpieces for the town," said Van Vliet, whose business is on the same main street as the former Dalby House. "It is incredibly important to have buildings like that. The principal draw for Elora is our historic and natural beauty.

"They are the lifeblood of what

we do for tourism here."

Dalby House was sold early last year by owner Shane Curry, a retired teacher who ran the establishment as a sideline.

The historic building had long been a popular venue for live music, particularly in the folk and Celtic genres.

But the pub business had become sluggish and Curry decided to sell the building to a Windsor-based real estate developer with plans to restore the 19th century structure and convert it to medical offices.

► SEE **DALBY HOUSE** ON PAGE A2



The former Dalby House in downtown Elora has had a facelift.

NICK IWANYSHYN, GUELPH MERCURY



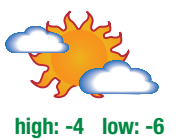
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FULL FORECAST, PAGE A2



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