

T	FREDERICTON Free concert alert! Who? Downtown Blues. Where? Officers Square. When? 7:30 p.m.
F	OROMOCTO It's country night at the Hazen Ball Field for Pioneer Pubs. The show features Tristan Horncastle and Melanie Morgan. Doors open at 8 p.m., and the show runs from 9:30 p.m. until 1 a.m. There's music all weekend long so check pioneerdays.ca for more information.
S	SAINT JOHN The first two sites in the Passport to Parks series take place today. From 10 a.m. until 1 p.m., the fun goes down at Rainbow Park (205 Sydney St.). The second site is Rockwood Park (191 Fisher Lakes Dr.) with rock climbing, kayaking and a barbecue from 1 until 4 p.m.
S	GAGETOWN It's the last day of FeelsGood Folly Fest. It's \$65 for a day pass that will let you in on great music, live art, an artisan market and more. The music starts at 9:30 a.m. and runs into the wee hours of Monday morning.

M **SAINT JOHN** Why is the Canada Day party always on the night right before you go back to work? The Port City's does it right. There's non-stop music from 2 p.m. until 2 a.m., ringing in Canada Day right. Performers include Jill Barber, Rich Aucoin, Sherman Downey and the Ambiguous Case, and more. This free event takes place on the Market Square boardwalk. Fireworks take place at midnight.



T **SACKVILLE** Put on your red and white and do something active this Canada Day. Take part in the multi-K run and walk at 1 p.m. Register outside the Salvation Army thrift store. The course begins on Bridge Street. Choose between 3-, 6- or 9-kilometre distances.

W **MONCTON** The Gritty Book Club is picking up *On The Road* by Jack Kerouac – a novel about the author's travels across America. The book club meets from 7 until 8 p.m. at the Moncton Public Library (644 Main St.). Pick up your copy of the book at the front desk.

Former Saint Johner wins Emmy

Michael-Ann Rowe shows American audiences fishing in New Brunswick

KYLE MULLIN

SAINT JOHN – The wind howled, the sea heaved and the fishermen stubbornly cast their nets. When they scooped up a vibrantly red treasure, that sharply contrasted with the wintry, grey haze surrounding them, Michael-Ann Rowe captured the moment, as if her camera was fitted with a reel designed to haul in the mightiest of watery creatures.

“That was a real ‘wow’ moment for anyone watching my documentary,” said Rowe, a New York-based journalist who grew up in Saint John, as she described the lobster boat scene filmed a few kilometres out from her hometown’s harbour for her three-part *Off the Beaten Palate*, food and travel documentary series.

The hard work over the past four years paid off for Rowe, with the documentary winning an Emmy award on June 14. The project aired on PBS in the United States last June.

Rowe said she hopes to find a Canadian network that will air the series soon, and adds that the Emmy should help open doors for her upcoming cooking web series.

But for Rowe, the thrill of just being nominated for an Emmy was satisfying enough. She said she never expected to win as she sat at the June 14 ceremony in the Motor-City Casino Sound Board Theater in Detroit, Mich.

“During my acceptance speech, it felt like I was talking with a mouth full of marbles – I was so nervous,” she said.

Rowe said *Off the Beaten Palate*’s success is due to the cultural details it unveils.

“Most of the Americans watching the show thought all lobsters come from Maine ... They were shocked to learn that fishermen go out on the rigging in the bitter winter, and that is where our hard-shelled, sweet lobsters come from.”

In the series’ three segments, Rowe filmed cattle ranchers in Al-

berta, wineries in Ontario and fishermen in New Brunswick, among other restaurateurs and food purveyors in those provinces.

But her eye for detail and love of filming food is equally inspired by her sister Elizabeth Rowe, who owns Saint John’s Urban Deli. The siblings’ careers run parallel, as Liz (the elder by less than a year) became a master of readying fine dishes, while Michael-Ann shoots the process for documentaries. To top it off, Liz frequently visited her sister since she moved to New York 15 years ago, voraciously researching the Big Apple’s famed delis before opening one of her own in Saint John.

Liz said their affinity for fine cuisine stems from a deep childhood craving.

“We grew up in social services and government housing. We were quite poor,” Liz said. “It’s such a thrill for us now to indulge and explore food culture together.”



WATCH IT

Off the Beaten Palate can be ordered on DVD at offthebeatenpalate.com. Follow Michael-Ann Rowe on Twitter at @offthebeatenpal and @michaelannrowe.

UNB to research dermoskeletics

Grad students will work on new brand of wearable robotics

JON MACNEILL

FREDERICTON – The Fredericton campus of the University of New Brunswick is now home to the world’s first research centre in dermoskeletics.

B-Temia, a private medical technology company in Quebec, has partnered with the university’s Institute of BioMedical Engineering to conduct research on a new brand of wearable robotics for civilian and military use.

Dr. Chris McGibbon, scientific director of the new centre, said their work could be a game-changer for people with mobility issues or neurological conditions.

A dermoskeleton is worn on the lower body and resembles a high-tech leg brace. The device is attached near the thigh and calf and draws power from a motor at knee level, which provides the user additional force when needed (for example, lifting a heavy load) or

dampens the force exerted on the wearer’s joints in other situations (like preventing a person with weak knees from buckling when walking down a long flight of stairs).

McGibbon said the device is equipped with technology that allows it to uncannily predict what type of activity a user is doing, and therefore determine how it needs to assist them. Users can also adjust the level of help they’re receiving.

“So in occupational situations, if an individual was working in a loading dock where they’re bending a lot and using their knees, if they were just walking from point A to point B, they could turn it down to one, meaning they’re essentially walking themselves. But as soon as they get to where they need to lift a load, they could crank it up to five and it provides the assist.”

Dermoskeletics is a term coined by B-Temia to mark the distinction between their product and other variable assist exoskeleton devices cur-

rently in the market or undergoing development.

“The generic term is exoskeleton, and most people know what an exoskeleton is, if you’ve seen any Hollywood movies, *Iron Man*, you’re familiar with that idea,” McGibbon said.

“The reason they call it a Dermoskeleton is because the device is really low profile. And some of their concept designs for future models are so low profile you could literally pull pants over them.”

McGibbon said the device would be an invaluable resource for rehabilitation centres and could potentially afford those who suffer from conditions related to stroke, MS or other mobility or neurological conditions with a better quality of life.

The centre is also providing employment and training opportunities for 13 graduate students over the first five-year research plan, which is focused on determining



the long-term effects of using variable assist devices on the joints and limbs of the body.

Fredericton reporter Jon MacNeill may be reached at macneill.jon@herenb.com.