

Despite setbacks, Capreol keeps on keeping on

A little town that could

'Everybody does know everybody and everyone is concerned about everybody else. That's simply because it's a small town'

By Rob O'Flanagan
THE SUDBURY STAR

An exceptional bowl of turkey soup. Meatloaf dinner, gravy on the mashed. Raisin pudding and a pot of tea.

It's lunchtime at the M & R Grill in Capreol and comfort food is being served to the legions of people who gather here each day of the week. A seat in the homey restaurant is hard to come by and parking space on the main street is equally dear.

The place is awash with conversation. Roars of laughter are exchanged between tables.

Everyone seems to know everyone else. People are relaxed.

"This is the meeting place in Capreol," says owner Carole Mayhew, when she gets a moment to sit down. She is the heart of the operation, and works her heart out in the kitchen.

"Yes, everybody does know everybody and everyone is concerned about everybody else," said Mayhew. "That's simply because it's a small town."

In a backroom, Mayhew proudly displays her in-progress "BS table" — a round table featuring the names of the most opinionated patrons who will soon sit there to spin their yarns.

"The thing about Capreol,"

"The thing about Capreol is it always seems to hang on, to bounce back."

— Wes Bridge,
a 36-year resident



Rob O'Flanagan/THE SUDBURY STAR

Capreol residents and people who work in the town say it has maintained its small-town feel, despite being part of a much larger city. Backing up this sentiment are Capreol residents Steve Johnson (back row, from left), Joe Currie and Rudy Mayhew; (middle row) Manon Miron and Carol Mayhew; and (front row) Tootsie Currie and Valentino Pagliaroli. One of Capreol's main tourist attractions, the Northern Ontario Railroad Museum and Heritage Centre, with its historic locomotive in Prescott Park, is seen in the background.

said Wes Bridge, a Canadian National railroad worker for 36 years in the town, "is it always seems to hang on, to bounce back."

"It's had its ups and downs," added Bridge, a model train enthusiast who is often teased for having worked all day with trains, and played all night with toy trains. "Human

beings tend to concentrate on the doom and gloom. But Capreol bounces back and I think it has a lot to do with the people that live here. There is a closeness here among the people."

There are no mammoth

shopping centres here, no movie theatres or electronic superstores. But there are

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pubs and cafes, a hairstylist and women's boutique, a grocery, hardware and drug store, a downtown beach and forest on all sides. It has all the

qualities of a self-sustaining, self-contained little town.

Despite being amalgamated into the City of Greater Sudbury, many in this community of 3,900 say Capreol maintains its small town identity, driven by local commerce and sustained by a pastoral mentality.

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