



Photo by Cassandra Davidson

Marina Boretski, owner of Boretski Gallery on Front Street in Belleville, adjusts one of her mannequins on Tuesday, Jan. 10. The City of Belleville has been working to beautify the downtown and keep crime down to bring in more business to local merchants like Boretski.

Downtown improvements to help increase business

Mixed reactions to yellow jacket program in city's core

By Sarah Schofield

Despite the changes made to downtown Belleville, many retailers are not certain whether the efforts on the part of Belleville's police, mayor's task force and Belleville Downtown Improvement Area committee are enough to bring new customers into the area.

Carol Barratt, owner of Barratt's Office Pro downtown Belleville, had good things to say about the yellow jacket program.

"I think it's a good idea. A lot of people say, 'What are they there for?' You see them on the street and the seniors feel safer. The more bodies on the street, the better business. It's great."

Karin Belanger of Scalliwag Toys on Front Street had mixed opinions.

"I've only ever seen the yellow jackets once, maybe twice since the new year. I don't think Belleville has a crime problem. We've never had any problems. The most

we've had are a few thefts but whether we were located at the Quinte Mall or here, I believe we would have the same level of theft."

Sherry Rice, a Belleville citizen of five years, noticed the lack of activity in the area.

"The thing I find is that downtown Belleville is for the people who live there. No one shops downtown because it's known as a bad area. I've never had any problem but if I'm going at night I watch myself. I don't trust the people there."

Patricia Mitchell, owner on Front Street of the year-old The Studio, said the responsibility to bring business into the area is not the city's but that of the retailers.

"A lot of the merchants like myself have not been here that long but for the merchants who have been here slogging it on this street for years, I can understand them not really listening or paying attention because there are so many of us that come and go," she said. "I think the people down here are used to not being taken seriously in their concerns and there is definitely a lack of focused priorities."

"They can say they want more customers but when it comes to how they want to do it the merchants themselves never seem

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Belleville resident Sherry Rice

to be consulted."

Plans are in place by Belleville's Mayor Neil Ellis' task force to improve the construction and facade of stores over the next four to five years starting with Campbell Street to make the downtown more accessible.

"I think overall people want their downtown to thrive. It's a matter of waiting for the capital to pass the mandate and once

we do we'll go full steam ahead and make Belleville one of the best areas in Ontario," said Mayor Ellis.

Mike Malachowski, a board member of the BDIA and owner of Funk & Gruven A-Z on Bridge Street East, is satisfied with the changes that have been made so far.

"One of the big changes is the renewed sense of optimism, and strong sense of community building that is going on right now. There was a lot of community interest and then it kind of waned but now we seem to have recaptured it. I think it's owed in large part to the mayor's task force. It's attracting development and progressive thinking retailers."

Marina Boretski attributes the success of her shop, Boretski Gallery, to the advertising the city has done the past couple years and the hard work of the task force.

"I see interest in people coming from out of town and they become regular customers. So there are things in the Belleville downtown core that interest them that they don't have in their own city."

"I feel that with the mayor and also the revitalization committee there is a greater amount of interest and I think they understand now that a downtown is utterly important to any city."

Weather...

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Armstrong said that the bus drivers are friendly, and she doesn't feel unsafe while taking the bus in bad weather conditions.

However, Armstrong said that all in all she has no problems with the bus system. "I actually enjoy taking the bus."

Students say they will often be waiting at a bus stop for 15 to 30 minutes. Standing in the cold wind can cause students to be discouraged, and rethink using the transit system, they say.

"It's cold outside, so I don't want to stand and wait for the bus," said Devin Bellinger, a second-year radio broadcasting student.

Bellinger also said the shelter at the college is "small and usually cramped" and that it would help if they were larger, and there were more of them.

Armstrong said she believes "they should put shelters everywhere. At every bus stop, there should be one."

The number of shelters along the bus route is out of Belleville Transit's hands.

Livingston said that when it comes to the shelters they would be required to "take it to council."

Hodgson said "we've had shelters in the past. The problem is vandalism." He found shelters were being vandalized to the point that officials just decided to take them down.

The shelters tend to be in places where there is more traffic.

"We don't own the shelters," said Livingston. "There are really only four shelters that the transit owns." In order to get more, Belleville Transit would be required to take the issue to council. At that point, said Hodgson, it becomes a budget item.

Cafeteria hours disappoint

By Andre Lodder

"To increase the length or duration of; lengthen; prolong."

According to dictionary.com, that's the definition of "extend."

The Loyalist College cafeteria has extended its hours for the winter semester. The new hours mean that the main cafeteria will be open later, but there will be no food available after 6:30 p.m.

The previous hours saw the main cafeteria close at 3 p.m., making Subway the only dinner option for the school.

The new hours mean that the main cafeteria, which consists of Pizza Pizza, Miso and the Burger Studio, will now be open until 6:30 p.m. giving students a larger dinner selection.

The main cafeteria wasn't the only establishment affected. Subway, which was previously open until 8 p.m., is now closed at 3 p.m. The change means that the hours of food accessibility have actually been reduced rather than extended.

While the change is welcome to some students, others have cause for concern.

"I would rather have Subway open. I think it's a healthier choice. Either way someone is going to be upset," said Sheawna Lorch, a Pre-Health Sciences student at Loyalist.

The changes also mean that the "Res Express," a program that helped deliver food to students on residence, no longer exists.

The changes mean that any student at the college past 6:30 p.m. no longer has an on-campus food option available to them.

The Loyalist Student Government has put together a committee to help raise any concerns that might arise. The committee's existence is already giving students hope, while putting their minds and their stomachs at ease.

"The student government is usually pretty good about stuff like that," said Lorch.

Loyalist's food services manager, Pierre Overvelde was unavailable for comment.

Massage...

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"It was quiet, they pay their rent." Despite hearing rumors about illicit behavior, Legality kept a healthy relationship with

her neighbour.

In 2007 the municipality of Quinte West passed a bylaw to regulate massage parlours strictly. Under the current guidelines, no more than two massage parlours are allowed to operate concurrently. In addition to this, a mandatory licensing fee of

\$1,500 for owners must be paid, as well as \$250 for operators and \$100 for each attendant.

Trenton Mayor John Williams has condemned the bawdy houses.

"It's not something we want in our city," Williams focused on the need for a

"proper investigation."

"You gotta have your homework done," he said.

Williams approved of the business suspensions of both the Silver Star Studio and the Sunny Health Spa, hoping "that's the way they stay."

Don't put it off – get back to work

By Manuela Garay-Giraldo

It's that time of the year again, the holiday headspace is out and school is in.

It is time to study... right after watching that funny video on YouTube that your friend posted on your Facebook wall.

Suddenly a two-minute video has turned into a funny video marathon lasting an hour... or two.

According to Debra O'Shaughnessy, a student success mentor at Loyalist College, procrastination and poor class attendance are the most common reasons students are not successful in their studies.

"Procrastination is a big issue for students," said O'Shaughnessy. "They just think they have more time than they actually do."

"Especially for kids coming out of high school, they are used to longer semesters, but we only have 16 weeks," said O'Shaughnessy.

So what can be done to improve? O'Shaughnessy said that the most important tip she can give is that every student should use some sort of time management tool, such as a day planner, a notebook with to-do lists or even a cellphone. The latter is recommended for students who already are good time managers, and O'Shaughnessy believes that writing things down on paper is a more effective method for most people.

Environmental science student Kalvin Marshall said his motivation to keep on track and to do all his schoolwork is to look at his past.

"I just think about the past and I know

that if I don't want to go back there, if I want to get a good job that pays more than \$10 an hour, then I have to put effort into doing my schoolwork on time," said Marshall.

A biotechnology student, Hower Blair, agreed.

"I took some time off to really think about what I wanted to do with my life, and I finally found something that I really love. So I don't want to mess this up," he said.

Both students said that generally they leave their assignments to the last possible minute, which adds unnecessary stress.

O'Shaughnessy said another tip is to set goals to finish assignments well in advance of their due date. This way, when life happens, and another funny video finds its way to you, you actually have time to enjoy it.

Rebecca Lazar, a counsellor at Loyalist College, said "there are several resources for students, but sometimes students don't come because they feel embarrassed."

"What you need to know is that if you are facing an issue, there are many others who have gone through what you're going through, and coming to speak to a counsellor can make things easier," Lazar said.

At Loyalist College, there are counsellors, mind and wellness services, student success mentors, an international centre, academic centre for testing, grocery services, disability services, peer tutoring and an academic skills centre.

To connect with any of the above, go to the student success hub in room 2H4 or call 613-969-1913 ext. 2519.



Photo by Manuela Garay-Giraldo

Pre-health student Cheyenne Snider browses Facebook at Loyalist College. Most students procrastinate by going on social network websites and/or watching television. According to student success mentor Debra O'Shaughnessy, procrastination and poor class attendance are the most common reasons students fail academically.