



Photo by Brynn Campbell

Swagzig Provoost patriotically sits perched on top of a pile of snow on National Flag of Canada Day on Wednesday, celebrating the 47th anniversary of the Maple Leaf. Provoost moved to Canada from France six years ago after meeting the love of her life in Vancouver, B.C. Provoost thinks Canada is, "definitely a cool place to live, and has a great social history. The Pearson era, I found, was absolutely stunning." For more Flag Day photos, see Page 4.

## Food drive to help victims of fire

By Meagan Pecjak

Loyalist College will be holding a food drive this Friday for two students who have been driven from their home because of a fire.

Loyalist is pulling together Food for Thought, a food drive for the students who are victims of a house fire. They have lost their home, belongings and memories.

Catherine O'Rourke, director of student success, is helping get the event together.

The drive has been incorporated into Random Acts of Kindness Week. "We recognized there was a need, and typically we try and do something for community agencies," said O'Rourke. "However, this year, our own students are in need, so it is appropriate that we support them."

Rebuilding your life after a fire is not easy. Melissa Fougere, disaster management co-ordinator for the Belleville Red Cross office, said that "it's up to the person who lost their belongings how much help they need."

Fougere said that the Red Cross would provide basic needs that need to be met again.

But mostly they are there just to ensure that the victims have the proper contact information in order to replace items they lost in the fire, and help from the community.

The Red Cross will be called to the scene of the fire and will start helping by providing "food, clothing and shelter for up to 72 hours."

For friends of those in this situation, Rebecca Lazar, a counselor at Loyalist, said that the best thing you can do is ask how they are, ask if they are okay, and ask if there is anything they need.

"If you are a friend of a victim, don't be scared to go that way," said Lazar. "If you are the victim, don't be afraid to ask for that support."

Another way to help someone in need is to give them a sense of security.

"Sometimes it means getting them back into a routine as soon as possible," said Lazar.

Often someone just is not sure where to turn in a situation such as this.

O'Rourke said one way students could help would be "to come out, and to support the food drive. If they could make a small donation as well to helping these students get restarted, that would be really appreciated."

Having their name entered into a draw will recognize those who do donate either food or change.

The food drive is being held this Friday. Students who wish to donate can go to the Student Access Hub where there will be a spot set up to donate non-perishable food items.

# Canadians proudly wave the Maple Leaf

Special day to honour flag which began in 1996 marks the day it was raised

By Thomas Lee

Unlike holidays like Christmas and Valentine's Day, Feb. 15 goes on almost unnoticed by Canadians.

It is the day we celebrate our red and white maple leaf flag, a flag that universally represents peace, tolerance and unity.

National Flag of Canada Day started in 1996. It marks the day that Canada's new flag was raised over Parliament Hill in Ottawa at the stroke of noon in 1965. Until that day, Canada used a flag called the

Canadian Red Ensign. It was a flag that did its job whenever a flag was needed, but was never the official flag of Canada.

Ron Baldwin was with the Canadian military when the flag was being changed. Baldwin started out in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, a reserve unit based in Newfoundland. After spending time in the reserves as a medic, Baldwin joined the regular military. Baldwin was stationed in Germany with an armored unit when the flag was changed.

"A lot of people wanted to keep the old British flag, but it didn't matter to me. I got paid either way," said Baldwin in an interview.

After the flag was changed, Baldwin and a few of his army friends partied with the new Canadian flag at a German bar just outside of the camp. "It was nice to

**'I think there is something very original about the Canadian flag.'**

Johanne Seeger

have something to identify that was ours."

Johanne Seeger emigrated from Germany to Canada with her husband and daughter in 1954. Her husband had been a prisoner of war in Canada during the Second World War. Seeger's husband returned to Canada and was there for seven months before Seeger and her daughter came here by boat. In 1969 they became Canadian citizens.

"I think there is something very original about the Canadian flag," said Seeger in an interview.

"It was an important moment of our history," Rick Archbold, author of the book 'A Flag for Canada' said in an interview.

Archbold believes Flag Day should be a statutory holiday.

"It is silly it is not a national holiday. Instead we have family day when we already have a perfectly good reason to have a long weekend."

After writing his book, Archbold started a campaign to have Flag Day turned into a statutory holiday and to be recognized and celebrated around the country.

"I think if we honoured it, it would have a lot more participation."

# Animal-assisted therapy program marks 20 years

Volunteer takes her dogs on weekly visits to nursing home and hospital

By Michelle Cochrane

The St. John Ambulance therapy dog program is getting "pawsitive" reviews as it celebrates 20 years of service.

Dog handler Joyce Fowler has been volunteering within the Quinte division of St. John Ambulance for six years with her two Shetland sheepdogs. Fowler takes her dogs on weekly visits to Trent Valley Lodge seniors home and Trenton Memorial Hospital.

"Some patients or residents will respond to an animal when they won't respond to people," said Fowler.

Canines have been key members of the average family home for quite some time. St. John Ambulance is taking that familiar, comforting feeling of family pets into communities across Canada through their volunteer therapy dog program.

Volunteer visits provide happiness and companionship to people who are sick or in need. Dogs are unaware of human frailties and respond to physical and mental illness, confusion, tears, and have the ability to distract those in discomfort.

Many people are able to benefit physically and emotionally from regular contact with the unconditional love of a dog.

Volunteer dogs are not specially trained for the program but are required to pass an evaluation that tests temperament of the dog and the handler's control in various situations.

Heather Rodrigues, manager of life enrichment at Trent Valley Lodge in Trenton, believes it is important for the health

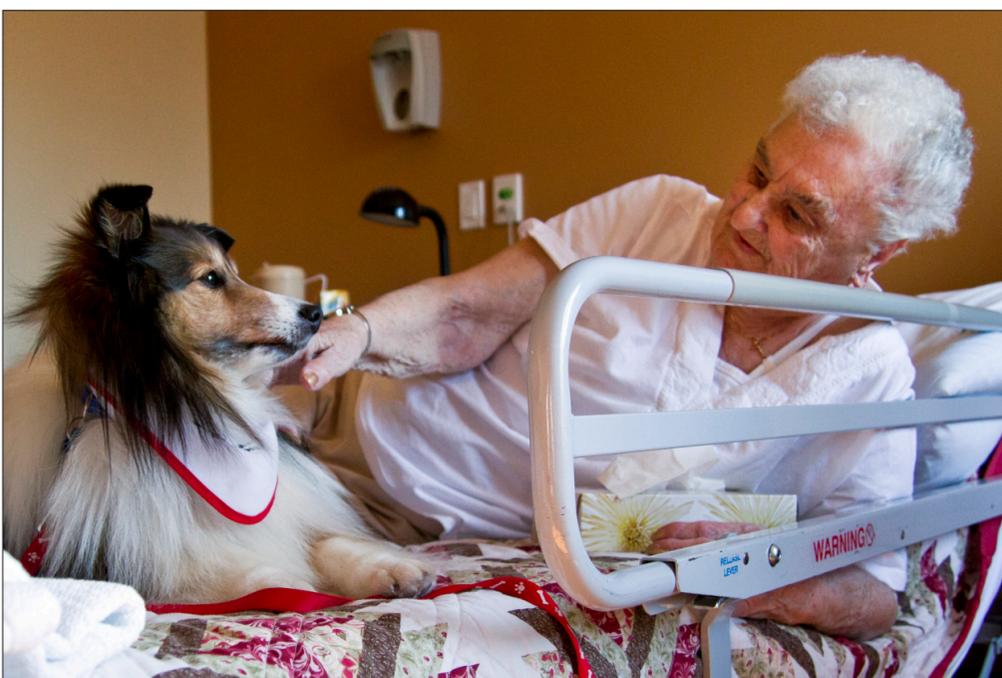


Photo by Michelle Cochrane

Trent Valley Lodge resident Marie Latimer is comforted in bed by St. John Ambulance therapy dog, Bandit. Bandit visits long-term care facilities and hospitals, offering companionship to those in need of comfort or emotional support.

of residents to have visits from therapy dogs.

"I think it takes residents back to when they had a pet at home and it's really good therapy for them. They come alive," said Rodrigues. "If they've been upset, you see a big change in them and they forget all their troubles when the dog comes in."

Trent Valley resident Bonnie Lynn Jones says the visits calm her down and brighten her day.

"It makes me feel a part of the normal world where they can have dogs," said Jones. "My blood pressure goes down when I pet an animal."

Many residents look forward to the

weekly visits of their four-legged companions and welcome their arrival with open arms and cookies in hand.

Leslie Jack, provincial therapy dog program co-ordinator for St. John Ambulance, understands the virtual walls and barriers people may put up in their lives, but finds it amazing what people can say

to a dog and not to people.

"We've seen a firefighter put his arms around a dog and just sob to the dog, where he couldn't talk to people," said Jack. "Dogs can help release that emotion and people aren't ashamed."

The therapy dog program dates back to 1992 in Peterborough. Jenny, a Bouvier des Flandres, and her handler were visiting local retirement homes and approached St. John Ambulance with the idea of a larger program.

The dog therapy program grew from there and now it includes 42 divisions across Ontario, which is nearly half of the national total.

Over the years, the volunteer service has grown from visiting seniors' homes and hospitals, to helping young children improve their reading skills, provide stress relief to university and college students during exam periods and aid in critical incident stress debriefings.

"We've been getting more schools and libraries on board. The reading program is really taking off," said Jack. "We can hardly keep up, but that's great."

Growing to meet the demands of local communities, program officials say they will provide visits in any way needed.

"It's all from feedback. If people call us, we try to meet their needs," said Jack.

In the near future, Jack hopes the program will be more involved in children's programs and would like to see the service branch out into play therapy.

"The nicest feedback is the amazement we get from staff, seeing people respond to the dogs," said Jack. "It's the little miracles; they aren't huge, they aren't going to make the news, but that's what keeps us going."



Photo by Melchizedek Maquiso

Tracey Julie Kennedy poses with one of her shamanic healing tools, a crystal, in her working studio at By The Moon. Before becoming a shaman, Kennedy taught for seven years at Loyalist College. She has been practicing shamanism for the past three years.

## From teacher to healer

By Melchizedek Maquiso

Tracey Julie Kennedy never expected to be a healer.

For most of her career, Kennedy has been a teacher, including a seven-year stint at Loyalist College.

It has been almost a decade since leaving Loyalist and several other jobs later that Kennedy found her true calling three years ago – as a shaman.

“I taught at Loyalist for a total of seven years. They have hired me to do some work at the college and so I was teaching in the arts and science program and the continuing education program,” the 38-year-old Belleville resident said.

Encyclopedia Britannica defines a shaman as “a person believed to achieve various powers through trance or ecstatic religious experience. Although shamans’ repertoires vary from one culture to the next, they are typically thought to have the ability to heal the sick, to communicate with the otherworld, and often to escort the souls of the dead to that otherworld.”

Kennedy said her formal introduction to shamanism happened at a desperate time.

“I was first introduced to a shaman when I was really sick to the point that doctors couldn’t figure out what was wrong with

me and I had many treatment options. My body was going toxic and wouldn’t recover in any way. It was heavily, heavily medicated and I was at the end of my rope and I didn’t know what else to do,” she said.

A two-hour session with a shaman led to another meeting and eventually, a life-changing decision.

“I saw her one more time and I was hitting full recovery. And at that point, she had said to me that part of the reason that I had become so sick and that I was having difficulty and treatment wasn’t working for me was that I was spewing medicine everywhere – that I was very powerful in being able to assist others and if I didn’t step into my calling, perhaps there would be further complications. So she told me to go to the United States to train under Alberto Villoldo and I haven’t looked back since.”

Villoldo is the founder of The Four Winds Society, which according to its website, is “an international research and training organization which is preserving a thousand-year-old tradition of knowledge to achieve personal and planetary healing.”

Kennedy was a student in the institution for a total of two years. Shortly after, she set up shop in Belleville. She has been renting the loft at By The Moon Studio, a holistic health and fitness centre on Dun-

das street overlooking the Bay of Quinte, for a year now.

Stereotypically associated with the occult and shunned by mainstream religious devotees, Kennedy said that religious leaders come to her to seek help.

“You wouldn’t believe the people who come here,” she said. “I have people who are heavily practicing in the church, who are also deacons and ministers and who come for sessions.”

Kennedy said that her clients are diverse.

“I have people of all ages. I have people right from being in the womb still. My oldest client is probably 80-something years old. It totally ranges. I never know who’s going to come in. It’s been very well received. I haven’t had any difficulties at all in this community. In fact, if I had to tell you exactly what my clientele looked like, it would change every two weeks as to who comes in. I get quite the mix of people.”

She said her clients also have diverse health and mental issues ranging from trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder, conception issues, night terrors or even people who can’t move forward emotionally. She also said she has clients who feel they are cursed or damned.

Kennedy clarifies that what she does is not a replacement, but a complement to

her clients’ individual treatments.

“Some people come in because they receive diagnosis from doctors and the treatment that they are given is not helping them, it is making them more sick. So I help to support them in whatever it is that I can do, to help support the system to go back into balance. Everything I do is a complementary service.”

The system ranges from medical practices and alternative medicine.

“I tell clients who come here – continue with your medication. But if you’re starting to feel high, please go back to your doctor because maybe you need to adjust your levels,” she said, referring to clients who are prescribed medication by their doctors.”

A typical session with Kennedy starts with tracking, where she sits one-on-one with a person to determine and explore their issues in-depth. Kennedy said she looks for the bigger picture hoping to answer what the client’s soul is wanting. At some point in the session, she takes one of her stones that have been used in the ceremony. Clients will blow these, which in turn, will charge them up into the stone.

At the end of every session, Kennedy performs a decoupling, which turns off the flight response, which eventually allows clients to relax.

## Footbridge may now get complete facelift

By Amielle Christopherson

A discussion about repairing the Catharine Street footbridge has now turned into a debate about replacing it completely.

In April of 2010, City of Belleville officials said the bridge required patch repairs to its deck top, the abutments and pier. Extensive repairs to the underside of the deck were required and the railing would need to be refurbished.

A total project budget of \$230,000 was approved by council during the capital budget process in 2010 and 2011.

However, in 2011, there was an inquiry about whether there should be lighting and aesthetic upgrades such as concrete moldings and decorative railings added to the bridge, even though there were no funds put aside for this additional cost.

On Monday Feb. 13, council met and estimates were given for both fixing and replacing the bridge. Replacing the deck could cost between \$870,000 and \$1 million. Replacing the whole structure could cost between \$1 million and \$1.2 million.

Councillor Tom Lafferty and Councillor Pat Culhane said that they are both in favour of having the additional lighting on the bridge. They both also noted the lighting on the Veteran’s Memorial Bridge and said they would like the lighting on the footbridge to reflect that.

“Lighting is expensive. The lighting on the Veteran’s Memorial Bridge was very expensive. However, it’s also functional, attractive and is going to last a long time,” said Culhane.

“The city has already put in over \$1 million into the downtown to try and fix it up and we’re going to put in a bunch more,” said Culhane.

“It’s small, but it can be attractive and we’re going to work on that.” Since the footbridge is a gateway between Catharine Street and downtown, Culhane said she would like to see it reflect all the time and money that they are putting into the area.

When refurbishing the bridge, the city might also look at making it wider as well.

“Biking on the bridge is a big deal,” said Culhane. “Having a biking lane would satisfy that.”

Lafferty agreed. “It can’t be used for other forms of transportation and it leads to the biking paths by the river.”

Widening the bridge would help continue the city’s plans for promoting alternative transportation and continue the long-term master transportation plan.

Whether the bridge is fixed or completely replaced, Lafferty said, “It needs to be done right away. Nothing’s been done to the bridge since the reports came out. We’re waiting for things to be approved.”

At the end of the discussion, the council agreed to defer the matter to operating budget talks, with the bridge being worked on during 2012.

## Postpartum depression robs woman of life’s pleasures

One in five Canadians experience mental illness in their lifetime

By Linda Horn

Staci Foote is a 24-year-old stay at home mom from Trenton. She was first diagnosed with postpartum depression after her daughter was born and she has suffered from the illness since. Foote said her one of her biggest symptoms of depression is extreme tiredness and sadness, which prevents her from enjoying a normal life.

Foote said she feels people think she is making things up and that people don’t take her illness seriously.

“It makes me feel bad because I wish they would understand. I wish people would realize it is not easy. You don’t want to have it,” said Foote.

According to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, she is one of the one in five Canadians that will experience a mental illness in their lifetime.

Those who suffer mental illness find it hard to disclose that to people. The centre’s website states that: “Just 50 per cent of Canadians would tell friends or coworkers that they have a family member with a mental illness, compared to 72 who would discuss diagnoses of cancer or 68 per cent diabetes in the family.”

When people have a mental illness doing things like working or attending school can be difficult for them. The centre’s web-



Photo by Linda Horn

Staci Foote is a 24 year old stay-at-home mom. She was diagnosed with depression four years ago just after daughter was born. Foote tries to have a regular life despite the side effects of her illness. Foote said extreme tiredness and sadness prevents her from doing activities like attending school or work.

site states that “On any given week, at least 500,000 employed Canadians are unable to work due to mental illness, including ap-

proximately 355,000 disability cases due to mental and/or behavioral disorders plus approximately 175,000 full-time workers ab-

sent from work due to mental health issues.”

Natasha Sinclair, a 30-year-old culinary management graduate from Loyalist Col-

**‘It makes me feel bad because I wish they would understand. I wish people would realize it is not easy. You don’t want to have it.’**

Staci Foote

lege, said when she was first diagnosed with depression five years ago she had a good job that paid well.

Her illness progressed and when she was later diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, she found she was no longer able to work. She said the stress became too much to handle and she had to focus on her recovery.

She said her personal relationships also suffered.

“I believe people think mental illness is real but some have boundary lines, can help you for so long. Then they expect to you to be OK. They want a quick fix,” said Sinclair.

“Mental illness does not work like that,” said Sinclair. “You have to take the time to recover. You need to take your medications and get some type of therapy.”

“Stigma does come with mental illness but you need to stay strong and stay with your recovery. Stigma does not matter. All that matters is getting well,” said Sinclair.

## Letters of Hope helps raise awareness of mental illness

Loyalist students asked to take part in anti-stigma campaign

By Linda Horn

The Family Support Network of Hastings and Prince Edward Counties is asking Loyalist students to take part in their Letter of Hope contest.

Lorraine Pyle, chairperson of the Family Support Network committee, met with first-year social worker students on Wednesday. She asked them to take part in the letter contest she has created.

The letter of hope is part of a mental ill-

ness anti-stigma campaign called Out of the Darkness.

Pyle asked the students to write a letter or public address. In the student’s own words the student should say what needs to be said, done, or changed to alter people’s perception of mental illness and to offer hope that the stigma can be lifted.

The contest was intended for first-year social worker students, but after a meeting with Sandie Sidsworth, executive director of the Canadian Mental Health Association of Hastings and Prince Edward Counties, Sidsworth suggested that she extend it to the child and youth worker and community and justice service worker programs.

“We have people from those backgrounds working here and the students in

the programs now would benefit from this contest as well,” said Sidsworth.

Sidsworth said the CMH would provide a \$200 prize for those two programs.

“I think this contest is a great way to get a dialogue going, a dialogue about mental illness and removing stigma. It’s about letting people know it is OK to ask for help and support,” said Sidsworth.

Lori LaMorre-Slatyer, field placement co-ordinator and professor of the social services worker program said,

“This is one of first experiences the students are getting to advocate and put a face on being a front-line social worker while helping to end the stigma associated with mental illness. This is a great opportunity for our students to practice their advocacy

skills,” said LaMorre-Slatyer.

Social service worker student Misty Haggerty said “I think it is very interesting. It is a great way to get people involved and talk about mental illness. I am not a strong writer, but this contest does attract me to try to write something and enter.”

The family support network is a volunteer-run committee that provides support and programs for family members of someone diagnosed with a mental illness.

As well as with working with the committee, Pyle is also a social worker but it is her own life experience that got her inspired to run the letter of hope contest and end the stigma of mental illness.

“I lived the experience of stigma and I

have a daughter who has a serious mental illness. Many individuals who have a serious illness will step away or pull back from the stigma that is associated with it. They are met with ridicule, absurd remarks. It is not behavioral, it is an illness. Changing that perception is done through education,” said Pyle.

Entries must be submitted by April 1 and will be judged by a panel from the Family Support Network. The winning letter from the social service worker program will receive \$300 while \$200 will go to the winners from the other two programs involved. Winners will also be asked to be a guest speaker during Belleville’s Mental Health Awareness Week celebrations being held from May 7 to May 11.

# Warm winter weather affects our furry friends, too

By Samantha Cantelon

People might not be aware of how this warm weather is affecting the environment and wildlife.

According to Environment Canada, the area received 57.4 centimetres of snowfall in January 2011.

In January of 2012, the snowfall was an estimated 12.4 centimetres. These snowfall amounts show how mild this winter has been.

This warm weather is creating a sense of confusion for animals that usually hibernate or fly south for the cold winter months. Not only is this weather disorientating animals, it is affecting the water levels that we rely on for spring, said Terry Murphy, the general manager for Quinte Conservation.

"Normally we count on the amount of snow melting and that water running into rivers and filling up the ground water supplies, but now we're concerned that if we don't get enough snow in the north and spring rain, we could have a really dry summer," said Murphy.

**'Global warming is killing the animals up north mostly the polar bears and seals and stuff, but down in this neck of the woods it's people that are killing the animals and the birds.'**

Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre director  
Sue Meech

jay may have population declines because of the impacts from southern competitors and pathogens brought on by warm weather, she said.

"Many species are limited during winter for energetic reasons, so warm temperatures tend to remove this limitation. This can lead to higher survival in winter and higher reproduction in spring because of improved body condition," said Kowalski.

The Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre in Napanee, which has been in operation for 20 years and helps, rehabilitate animals that have been abandoned, or injured.

"With the warm weather, the water temperatures are warming and the water levels are falling, which in return is causing more botulism cases, which we typically get during the warm season, but now we are getting it throughout the year," said Sue Meech, director and volunteer at the wildlife centre.

"Global warming is affecting animals in a dramatic way and confusing them with their hibernation rituals," Meech said.

"As the human population grows, it's far worse a problem than global warming. People should stop breeding," she said.

"Kingston is moving out and they're taking up wetland, and driving animals to the point of extinction."

"Global warming is killing the animals up north mostly the polar bears and seals and stuff, but down in this neck of the woods it's people that are killing the animals and the birds."

Jolanta Kowalski, senior media relations officer for the Ministry of Natural Resources, said, that species like white-tailed deer, fishers and wild turkeys are benefiting from the warm weather because they expend less energy staying warm and travelling when snow is low.

Animals like the wolverine, marten and gray



Photo by Samantha Cantelon

Sue Meech, director and full-time volunteer at the Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre in Napanee, shows off a kestrel. The centre adopted the bird after being in the zoo for 16 years. The kestrel will be used as a "foster mom" in the spring when baby kestrels are usually brought in.

## SAY OutLoud gives gay youth an outlet

Thriving organization meets weekly to offer support to its members

By Manuela Garay-Giraldo

Belleville's Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) youth group SAY OutLoud is thriving and organizer Eric Hargreaves says it is mainly through the power of word of mouth.

There are approximately 30 members who currently show up on a regular basis to the group's weekly meetings. This is a significant increase over the 12 members who were attending the group at this time last year.

"I don't really know how it happened, but I'm happy it did," said Hargreaves. "We were questioning whether the group needed to continue, since most of the kids who were coming were in college and they don't really need that much help socializing."

According to Hargreaves one major factor that seems to have helped the group increase its numbers is that GSA groups were implemented in a few high schools in the Quinte area. Not all were successful, however young people learned through teachers and friends that a GSA group in Belleville exists.

"GSA groups in high schools are so important, even if the group is not successful and doesn't have a high attendance rate," said Hargreaves.

"Having them present creates a sense of safety in the school. It sends a message that bullying gay teens will not be tolerated and it significantly decreases violent homophobic incidents."

Many teachers at different high schools in the Quinte area have become aware of SAY OutLoud and directed students to the group.

"We have a mom that car pools and brings the kids home after the meetings, so that they can stay in town after school," said Hargreaves. "She even provides meals every second week."

The group meetings consist of three parts. The first is a 'check in', when those attending share one good thing and one bad thing they have experienced throughout the week. The second part is eating a free meal provided by the organizers. The final part of the meeting is a discussion on the different issues gay youth are facing today.

For Emma Khun, 18, a member since January, the best part of the meeting is the social aspect.

"I like that I get to meet new people that I wouldn't normally talk to," said Khun.

The group brings youth from all over the Quinte area together.

"We have kids who come from Belleville, obviously, but also Trenton, Stirling even Frankford," said Hargreaves.

Hargreaves said he believes that many factors came into play and the success of the group cannot be pinpointed to one specific reason.

"They talk about the tipping point, that when an idea has enough momentum it just keeps rolling," said Hargreaves.

"I don't know what brought that tipping point, word of mouth probably, but we are very happy to have the results we have."

The group meets every Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. in downtown Belleville. Visit [www.sayoutloud.ca](http://www.sayoutloud.ca) or contact Hargreaves at 613-689-5141 or through e-mail at [eric@sayoutloud.ca](mailto:eric@sayoutloud.ca).

## 'Yellow jackets' not as visible as they want to be

By Samantha Cantelon

The city of Belleville's recently launched a program known as the Volunteer Response Team or the "Yellow Jackets," but some people seem to be unaware of what exactly this team is doing and where they are.

"The only yellow jacket that I have seen is the one that I own and wear to work on a daily basis, and I'm not a member of any yellow jacket organization," said Richard Belanger, owner of Scalliwag Toys located on Front Street.

"We have been down there, so its possible they haven't seen us. We plan to be more active moving forward, but realis-

**'Lots of the volunteers within this team have full-time jobs and families, so when possible they go out downtown with their bright yellow jackets.'**

Const. Rene Aubertin

tically they're all volunteers so it's when they can," said Matt Palmer, who is one

of the team's lead volunteers.

According to Rene Aubertin, constable and community policing liaison officer, during the month of December, volunteers were downtown approximately 14 hours and in January about 26 hours.

"Lots of the volunteers within this team have full-time jobs and families, so when possible they go out downtown with their bright yellow jackets," said Aubertin.

The team is committed to being the eyes and ears for Belleville police in the downtown area. They are responsible for talking with storeowners about any issues as well as helping people walking on the streets of Belleville.

"All of the jackets and t-shirts were fundraised through the community policing group," said Aubertin. "The response team also carries with them a first aid kit and reports back to the police about any issues being brought up by citizens."

"The Belleville response team is one aspect of the community that greatly enhances Belleville police services by providing additional eyes and ears on our downtown core, enhancing the relationship between Belleville police service responses from the businesses downtown as well the community at large," said the chief of police, Cory McMullan.

*Will the sap be running?*

## Producers worried about spring production

Warm weather and little snowfall may affect tapping

By Rhea Munroe

With lots of warm weather and very little snowfall, maple syrup producers are wondering what tapping season will bring for them this year.

Since it's been such a warm winter, some producers say they have started to tap early because the sap is running sooner than expected.

Frank Haveman, owner and operator of Bata Maples Sugarbush in Frankford, explained that the ideal daily conditions for the sap to run are around -5C during the night and 5C during the day, a process referred to as freeze and thaw.

"In the fall, the sugar is stored in the roots, and in the spring, it heads back up to the buds," said Haveman.

Todd Leuty, maple syrup specialist for the Ontario ministry of agriculture, food, and rural affairs, said the sugar is converted and stored as starch and acts as food for the trees during the fall and winter season. By late winter, the freeze and thaw activates the enzymes and it is converted into sucrose. The root pressure pumps it back up the tree and it becomes food for the buds.

"Producers don't follow the calendar; they follow weather predictions to deter-



Photo by Rachel Psutka

John Nyman and his son Shea, six, show off the lines they will tap into their maple trees sometime in the next few weeks. The warmer weather this winter will likely negatively affect the amount of maple syrup produced by farmers like Nyman.

mine when the sap will flow," said Leuty.

Haveman predicted that it won't be the best of syrup seasons because of the warm weather.

John Nyman, owner and operator of JC Nyman Farms in Picton, said it's hard to tell what will happen with tapping season.

"We really have no idea yet. We really haven't ever had a year like this to compare it closely," said Nyman.

"Nature could decide that this could be another perfect year and we'll have ideal conditions and have a great season," he said.

Nyman said, however, that the conditions are great for working in in the forest.

"You can take your mitts off and get something done and not freeze to death."

"It's not a usual or normal season. There's been (little) snow cover in southern Ontario and the soil could dry out. We need lots of moisture in the soil," said Leuty.

Producers said they are worried about the uncertainty that some syrup season will bring. Despite the ideal working conditions, Nyman said he would much prefer traditional winter weather.

Nyman also expressed his concerns about global warming - that climate change will soon have a major affect on where maple trees can thrive and produce sap.

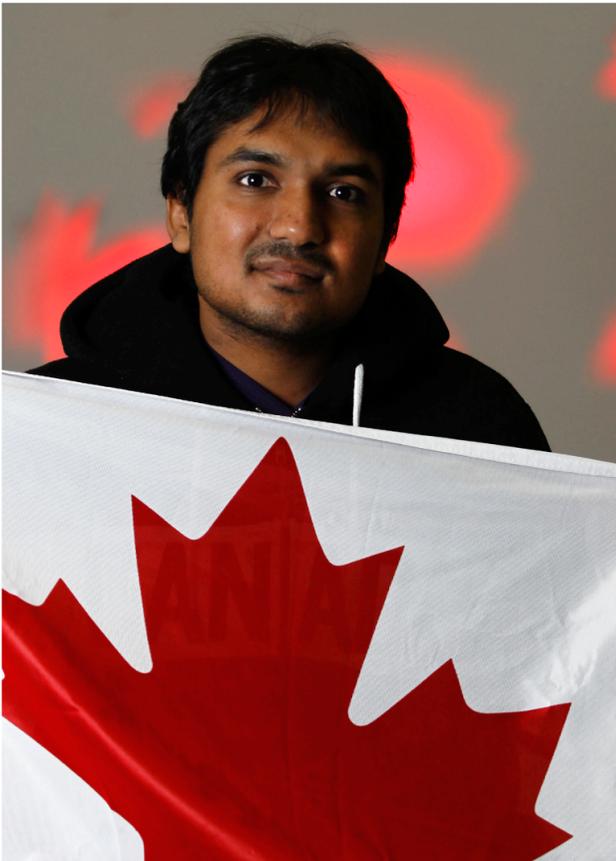
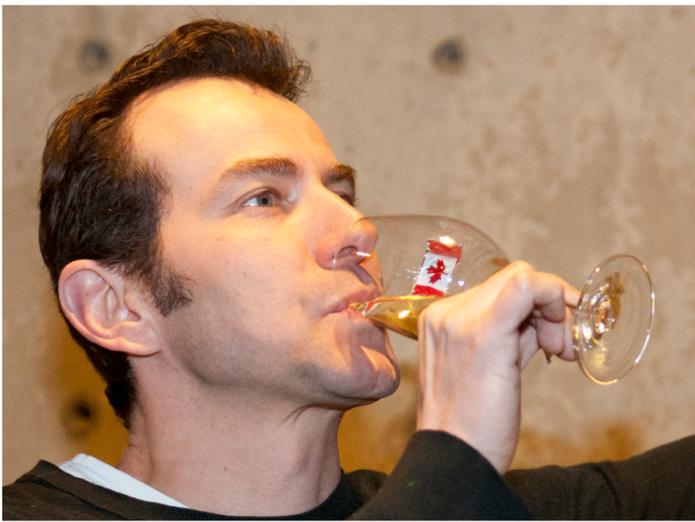
"It takes a 1,000 years and tons of data to see a change in the climate," said Leuty. However, he said that they are being cautious about the change in the climate that has been determined so far.

He is predicting a northward shift of sugar maples and areas where tapping will be done in the future.



# A People's Flag

February 15 was the 47th anniversary of the Canadian Maple Leaf flag.



Immigrating to Canada is an exciting opportunity for new Canadians to begin their new life and settle down.

There are many reasons that people want to live in Canada. The possibility of a new life, job opportunity, better education or even escape from a war zone.

Top: Marlem power moved to Canada from Mexico City about 10 years ago. "There were not enough jobs and I was not able to go to university in Mexico, so I came over here to get more opportunities," Power said. Photo by Megan Voss

First right: Maha Majeed immigrated to Canada from Iraq in June of 1996. "I couldn't have what I have here in Iraq. Everyone has to have a vision and I made my vision come true," she added about her journey to Canada. Photo by Melissa Murray

Second right: Hai Vo, 35, is glad to have moved to Canada five years ago from Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam "I feel freedom here." Photo by Chloe Ellingson

First left: Frederic Picard immigrated to Canada from France in 2003 because he "followed a blonde here" whom he will marry in June of this year. Photo by Sherry Tompkins

Second left: Ankit Patel moved to Belleville from Ahmedabad, India to enroll in Loyalist's fitness and health promotions program. Photo by Sarah Swenson

# Prom Project helps students arrive in style

Public can donate gently used prom wear to help students who need support

By Stephanie James

With many dresses and suits already donated to the Prom Project, local students will be able to graduate in style.

Some households can find it difficult to purchase a dress or suit for their daughter or son to wear for their prom or graduation nights.

The Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board, through their Student Emergency Fund program, has been working hard to get the word out about the Prom Project.

The Prom Project is an opportunity for members of the public to donate their gently used prom dresses and suits, which will be sent to different high schools and elementary schools in the Hastings and Prince Edward County area. Students then have the chance to choose a dress or suit from the selection to wear to their prom or Grade 8 graduation, free of cost.

"It's about being inclusive. Everyone deserves to celebrate their prom," said Maribeth deSnoo, executive director of the Hastings and Prince Edward Learning Foundation and the main contact for the Prom Project.

In addition to donating graduation items to the schools, Glenda Tracey, the manager of Shoppers Drug Mart in the Quinte Mall, will be providing makeup kits, also free of charge, to all schools participating.

deSnoo says the idea of the Prom Project is to make it

feel welcoming for students, and that inquiries about the Prom Project have been tremendous from both parents and principals wanting to get involved.

The project does not just stop at public donations. Local businesses such as Trenton Clothing and Repair and Nan's Health and Wellness in Bancroft have opened their doors as places for people to drop off their used dresses and suits. Also, a number of clothing cleaners in the Trenton and Belleville area have offered to dryclean all of the items for free.

One major sponsor of the Prom Project is Dresses and Dreams Bridal Boutique, located in downtown Belleville. The store already has a count of roughly 40 dresses of different colours and sizes to pass on to the Prom Project.

Store owner Belinda Price-Hewton says her store wanted to get involved with proms in some way this year and that the Prom Project was the perfect opportunity.

With lots of last year's prom dresses still in stock, Dresses and Dreams will be donating a selection to the Prom Project if they are not sold by April and 10 per cent of the money the store makes from prom dress sales will go toward helping students to buy tickets to their proms and other proceeds for the project.

"I would rather donate them to a good cause," said Price-Hewton.

During its first year, the Prom Project is only accepting dresses and suits but hopes to widen the range of items that can be donated to shoes, purses and jewelry, and other items students could put to use to add



Photo by Stephanie James

**Maribeth deSnoo, executive director of the Hastings and Prince Edward Learning Foundation, shows examples of dresses donated to the Prom Project. Suits and dresses will be available to local students for proms and graduations who may be lacking the funds to purchase one on their own.**

## Outbreaks regular part of flu season

Gastric outbreaks a common occurrence in nursing homes

By Sarah Schofield

The Hastings and Prince Edward County Health Unit reports that there have been more instances this year of enteric outbreaks which leads to diarrhea and vomiting.

Stephanie McFaul, program manager of the department of communicable disease control at the health unit, described the most recurring diseases.

"The ones that we deal with the most in our long-term care facilities for instance this season is the norovirus, a gastro-enteric illness, which causes vomiting and diarrhea. It's highly contagious and spreads throughout the community. Usually what we see happening in our facilities is a reflection of what is happening in our communities."

Respiratory and gastric outbreaks are a common seasonal occurrence in nursing homes. There have been an estimated 10-15 outbreaks of flu this season in care facilities. This figure is an estimate involving long-term care facilities. Retirement homes and hospitals are not necessarily required to report to the health unit, said McFaul.

Carol Snell, media relations consultant of HPECHU, said that having an outbreak in a nursing home is not something to panic over.

"There is often something going on in an old folks home. If there are several people that have something they have to report it but it's not necessarily indicative that there is something terrible, it's just that it's a vulnerable population to keep a close eye on."

Susan Rowe, director of public affairs and community relations for Quinte Health Care, described the procedures used during an outbreak.

"We do have an infection control team here and we are continually monitoring for symptoms of a variety of infectious diseases."

"We see an increase in people coming into the hospital and the community with influenza so that's something we keep a closer eye on and we are impacted by in our emergency rooms and in patient units of our hospitals."

Hospitals and long-term care facilities employ precautions when dealing with outbreaks such as using personal protective equipment like masks, gloves and gowns, depending on which specific situation they are dealing with. However, the best way to help prevent the spread of diseases and viruses is to stop transmission before it has a chance, especially when dealing with the elderly.

McFaul explained the most effective way to prevent the transmittal of germs is to not to introduce them in the first place.

"It's important to instill in ourselves to stay away from homes like that because we don't want to introduce germs to those types of facilities. If you're ill and not feeling well it's best to stay home. Anytime you go out in the public you have the chance that you could be spreading your germs to the others. If you do need to go out, cover your coughs and sneezes with tissues and throw it out. Remember to wash your hands."

Health officials say no emergent infectious diseases are on the horizon.

"It's more just of the regular hand hygiene practices and preventative health measures to stay healthy during the winter flu season," said McFaul.

## Different issues to be highlighted at Docfest

Empire Theatre location for gala to kick off event

By Rhea Munroe

Belleville is presenting the first-ever Downtown Docfest, which will feature many films about different issues, both local and around the world.

The gala for the Downtown Docfest will be held in the Empire Theatre on March 2 at 7 p.m. It will feature music from the documentary *Music from the Big House*, which will be followed by a live performance by Rita Chiarelli.

Starting at noon on March 2, documentaries will be shown at the CORE at 223 Pinnacle st., followed by the gala at 7 p.m. Films will continue to be shown at

the Belleville Public Library and CORE centre starting at noon on March 3. Approximately 30 films will be shown during the festival.

Gary Magwood, co-director of Docfest, said that the documentaries will cover a variety of different topics, from poverty to sexual abuse.

"In the news you get 30-second blurbs about what's going on in the world, a documentary goes deeper into the issue," said Magwood.

The idea of Downtown Docfest started about a year ago with a "flurry of e-mails," said Magwood. By March, all the discussion and planning will take shape when Docfest comes to Belleville.

The committee wants to hold the event for the next three years, in hopes that it will flourish and the anticipation will build each year so that it can continue on past the set time-frame.

Magwood looked at the Peterborough

film festival and the eight years it has been running. He said he hopes Belleville will see the same success.

"It has potential," said Magwood. Magwood said he is hoping that the wide range of documentaries will spark a conversation within the community about the issues at hand.

There is also hope that Docfest will liven up Belleville's social calendar. He hopes to show people what Belleville is all about beyond the Quinte Mall.

The documentary festival will be screening approximately 30 films over the two days, using three theatres in the CORE, with a total of 600 seats, and a room in the Belleville Public Library. About three or four of the films are locally-made documentaries.

The Downtown Docfest press release stated that they have "very generous support from Pretsell Cavanaugh Davies Lawyers" for the gala.

"We are pleased to provide our support for the Downtown Belleville Documentary Film Festival," said Mike Pretsell in the release.

The law firm is also helping to bring the documentary, *Music from the Big House*, to Docfest. "As documentaries often expose and deal with issues around fairness and injustice, issues that lawyers deal with every day, was the reason we approached a law firm (for sponsorship). We are thrilled to have their support in bringing this award-winning film about truth, conviction and belief."

If you would like to volunteer at the Downtown Docfest, e-mail volunteer@downtowndocfest.ca.

Tickets are available at the Loyalist Bookstore, the Empire Theatre, and Quinte Arts Council for \$30 per adult, \$15 for students.

See [www.downtowndocfest.ca](http://www.downtowndocfest.ca) for the full list of ticket locations.

## Sold-out murder mystery dinner a play to die for

Two-night productions of church members a community affair

By Sarah Schofield

A fake red fingernail, greasy mechanic's cloth and a leftover ring were some of the clues left at the scene of the crime at Friday's murder mystery dinner at Westminster United Church in Belleville.

The sold-out event, which ran for two nights on Friday and Saturday, was a big success with the audience.

Shirley Mullin, the kitchen manager and Westminster United Church member, said she was pleased with the event's success.

"We're sold out. We're sold out tonight. We served 97 people tonight and we're serving 100 people tomorrow night."

The murder mystery is in its second consecutive year. The play, titled *Fatal Reunion*, was written and produced entirely by Sue Demczynna, who also played one of the lead characters - Tina Stiletto.

The play follows a group of very different personalities who graduated from high school 20 years earlier. As the production progresses and we hear about what Fritz Charming, a cocky, prankster, used to be like years earlier, we learn that each character has a motive to do him harm.

All 10 actors, aside from one, attend the same church and have been working hard to make the play the best it can be.

Actress Debbie Schaap, who plays Jeannie Cash, a free-spirited new age hippie, described just how much work went into the two-night production.



Photo by Sarah Schofield

**Westminster United Church's murder mystery dinner production of Fatal Reunion got into full swing with the murder of Fritz Charming, played by Adri Boodoosingh on Feb. 10. Other members of the play include (l-r), Arthur "Squirrel" Knutzioli, Heather Cockerline, Steve MacKinnon, Shawn Legere and Chris Thompson.**

"There's a lot of energy that goes into the sets, all the props, all the costumes. All the actors were in charge of their own costumes but we had one person who did all the props. Another couple did the sets for us. It's been a real team effort from the church."

Mullin said the church group is a unique place to house a production like this.

"Everybody pulls together. Westminster is a community project-driven church. They like doing things together. They always have done the whole time I've been associated with the church and when there's something like this happening, they always support it in space, which is fabulous."

The hard work on the part of the production team and kitchen staff was evident multiple times throughout the night. In the basement of the church, the recurring colours of black and pink were visible in streamers, tablecloths and serviettes. The basement of the church was transformed into a high school reunion from 1977 with jukeboxes and even an old yearbook with all the play's characters.

Marilyn Sager, a member of the church who attended the event for the first time, had nothing but good things to say about it.

"My favourite part is the reunion itself and all the characters. It's amazing the talent that is around."

Not only was the event a success, but the dinner portion of the night was as well, Sager said.

"I had chicken and fruit. It was good. The ladies in this church are phenomenal cooks."

No doubt next year's murder mystery dinner, if held again, will once again be a sold-out, smashing success.



# Raising Ellie

by Chloë Ellingson

This Family Day, Margaret Claus will enjoy a much-needed day of rest. Claus has raised three generations of children. She raised six of her own, two grandchildren, and now, at the age of 75, Claus is raising her 7-year-old great-granddaughter, Ellie. Ellie has been in Margaret's care since shortly after birth, and was adopted by Margaret at the age of two.

"She tires me," says Margaret. "She's a busy girl. She's a normal kid with an old mother."

Recently, Margaret's lifestyle is nearly as active as Ellie's. Both are enrolled in full-time Mohawk language immersion programs near their home on Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. "Since she's gone to this school, she's so much more grounded," says Margaret, who has found learning Mohawk to be very challenging. "She's learning it much faster than I am."

Claus's experience bears resemblance to those of thousands of Canadians. According to Esme Fuller-Thomson, a social work professor at the University of Toronto, most grandparent caregivers in Canada are single women, and this group is disproportionately out of the workforce and of native heritage.

Fuller-Thomson notes that there has been a national trend of a 15 per cent increase in grandparents raising grandchildren in recent years. She cites mental health issues and drug abuse among parents as two major factors that have led to this phenomenon.



**Top left:** Margaret Claus looks out over the front deck of her home. **Top right:** Margaret cuts leather at the kitchen table as Ellie plays with chimes. Ellie's shirt reads "skén:nen kénhak," which translates as a call for peace. **Second row:** Ellie plays in the yard of the home she shares with Margaret. **Above left:** Margaret tickles Ellie on her bedroom floor. **Above right:** Ellie pretends to scratch Margaret with the claw of a bear. Within the Mohawk Nation, Margaret and Ellie are part of the Bear Clan. One's clan is passed onto them by their mother. Margaret explains that in the longhouse, people without clans sit with the Bear Clan. "The bears are the ones that adopt," she says. **Bottom:** Ellie and Margaret prepare a meal on a weekend afternoon.



# Bulls outshoot 67's but still come up short

By Thomas Lee

Despite outplaying the Ottawa 67's at Wednesday's game in Belleville, the Bulls lost 6-4.

The Bulls were the more aggressive team throughout the game. They managed to keep most of the play in Ottawa's end. The Bulls even had almost twice as many shots on goal, 43-25.

"I think we deserved a better outcome based on the numbers we put up shot-wise, and the chances we had against a first-place team," said Bulls assistant coach Jason Supryka.

"Anytime you make a significant error on the ice, a first-place team is going to take advantage of it and that's exactly what they did. We gave their key guys too much time and space," said Supryka.

When the first period started, the Bulls came out strong, handling the puck past Ottawa's defence and playing it hard in their end. Despite this aggression, Ottawa's Michal Cajkovsky scored the first goal of the game at 15:48. Less than two minutes later, Ottawa's Tyler Toffoli scored.

Unlike Sunday's game, being down two goals did not stop Belleville from fighting back. A season high attendance of 3,053 fans at the Yardmen Arena may have contributed to the confidence of the Bulls.

The game was at a standstill until Ottawa's Sean Callaghan was given a two-minute penalty for holding, followed by another penalty for Ottawa's Michal Cajkovsky for high sticking. Just seconds later, Daniil Zharkov scored Belleville's first goal of the night on a double power play.

After the faceoff, Stephen Silas tied the game. With the game now tied 2-2, the Bulls turned up their aggression in Ottawa's end trying to get ahead of the team that just a few days before shut them out. Despite outshooting and outplaying Ottawa, player Remy Giftopoulos managed to get another goal past the Bulls goalie Malcolm Subban.

Although the Bulls would turn up the heat once again, Sean Monahan scored another goal for Ottawa. Nicholas Foglia,



Photo by Marta Iwanek

**Sean Monahan of the Ottawa 67's scores the fourth goal for Ottawa in the 2nd period against Belleville Bulls goalie Malcolm Subban. The Ottawa 67's beat the Belleville Bulls 6-4 Wednesday night at the Yardmen Arena.**

who rushed out of the penalty box taking a pass from Mike Vlajkov, beat Subban on a breakaway to score Ottawa's fifth goal of the night ending the second period.

Coming into the third period, three

goals down was tough, but the Bulls came out with all they had in the third period. Two minutes in, Bulls player Austen Brassard scored, bringing the Bulls back into the game.

However that was short lived when Ot-

tawa's Steven Janes managed to score just three minutes later.

Jordan Subban managed to get one more goal halfway through the third period. For the remainder of the period, the Bulls played with all the aggression they

had. They kept the play in Ottawa's end and took every shot they could get. But Ottawa's goaltender Petr Mrazek managed to deny the Bulls any more goals, saving Ottawa from defeat.

## Fundraiser supports Special Olympics

*Police passed buckets at Belleville Bulls game to help athletes*

By Melchizedek Maquiso

Sixteen police officers rounded up the stands Wednesday night at the Yardmen Arena shortly after the opening puck drop between the Belleville Bulls and the Ottawa 67's.

They were not there to arrest anyone. Instead of guns, they used buckets.

The police passed the buckets to spectators in the hopes of raising funds that will go towards Special Olympics programs.

The fundraising is being done prov-

ince-wide in hockey arenas where there are Ontario Hockey League (OHL) teams.

Mary Wilson, one of several outgoing community co-ordinators, said they are not expecting to raise a specific amount.

"If the fans here are generous, that's excellent. We don't put a dollar figure on it. We want them to know that Special Olympics is still alive and well and that our athletes are competing and they're going to higher levels of competition. It's putting the Special Olympics name out there into the community and keeping it out there in the community."

Organizers at the event did not want to talk about how much funds were raised in the past years.

"Every year is different. We're always happy with the funds that we get," said Rene Aubertin, Belleville Police commu-

nity policing liaison officer who has been involved in the Special Olympics for close to a decade and was in charge of manning the fundraising event at the arena.

Regardless of the amount raised, the organizers are confident that it will help athletes to go and participate in the games.

"Whatever the amount raised, the money goes provincially and it is dispersed to the local groups depending on how many athletes they have in each region," said Aubertin.

According to Sarah Hoover, another community co-ordinator, the province of Ontario has around 1,000 Special Olympics athletes and the Quinte region has 125. All would be able to benefit from the fund-raising.

The fundraising is in its sixth year.



Photo by Melchizedek Maquiso

**(L-r) Const. Adam Donaldson and Const. Rene Aubertin and volunteers Eric Kelly and Matt Palmer are photographed during the Law Enforcement Torch Run fundraiser event held at the Yardmen Arena. Aubertin is the community policing liaison officer in charge of the event.**

## Volleyball player says goodbye

*Leighann Bishop had major impact on Lancers team, says assistant coach*

By Meagan Pecjak

The sound of sneakers on a freshly waxed floor fills the gymnasium. The smell of sweat hangs in the air, like a gym bag that has been left open for far too long.

There are blurs of blue and white racing around half of the court players use to warm up on.

The blurs stop, and begin to form shapes of familiar faces. Leighann Bishop is one of them.

The announcements begin, starting with the national anthem. Moments after, the speaker starts up again, and the voice is crisp and clear.

Women's volleyball coach, Tony Clarke walks up to the microphone to take over, his red shirt making him stand out among the blue jump-suits.

Clarke is describing a player who was a big part of the team, who always pushes herself to the limit, and will be missed, because this year she is graduating from Loyalist College, which means she is leaving the team.

She will be leaving these years behind to make her way through the rest of her life, said Clarke of Bishop.

As she makes her way to her coach, she smiles at the family and friends who have come to support her. Clarke hands her a frame with a photo of herself during one of her many games as co-captain of the women's volleyball team.

Assistant coach Amy Hoskin says that the team will miss Bishop, and that she has a major impact on the team.

"She has this way about her on the court you can't teach. It just has to be found in athletes."

Bishop has been playing volleyball since she was in sixth grade, and said that there are a lot of different rules between those days and high school.

"They have different volleyballs then, so the rules are different, but I got into club volleyball during high school."

She is the only player from the women's team graduating this year.

"I think come September it is going to hit me that I am not in school anymore, and I am not in volleyball and that is when it is going to be sad to have left Loyalist College."

Bishop stands in the empty gym, volleyball in hand, describing how she feels about leaving the team.

"I don't ever want to give up volleyball, especially here at Loyalist."

"She has a really big personality," says Hoskin. "We are sad to see her go. She has been a great leader for our team."

Bishop is co-captain with Kirsten Talsma.

"We lead the team, we get motivation, we encourage them. They can come talk to us if they can't come and talk to the coach's about something. We are just there when they need us," says Bishop.

The team did not only benefit from Bishop being co-captain. "They just changed my whole attitude on the game, and they made me a better volleyball player," says Bishop.

The women's team has many successes, and Bishop admits that one of her favourite memories looking back would have to be "beating Trent twice," she says, with a smile working its way across her face.

"It's a great feeling to beat them considering how 'cocky' they've been the past couple of years."

Bishop said that managing volleyball, and schoolwork has been difficult, but she learned to manage her time well.

"I may not be dean's list but I am always 1 per cent off or something. I am really proud of myself and that I have been able to priorities and organize myself appropriately."

Graduating is exciting, she says, but also emotional in many aspects. For Bishop, she will not only be leaving behind a team, but a family as well.

She may be stepping off of the Loyalist College court, but she will be stepping into a much bigger game: life.



Photo by Meagan Pecjak

**Leighann Bishop is a second year Paralegal student at Loyalist College. Bishop is the graduating player, and co-captain for the Loyalist Lancers women's volleyball team. "I think come September it is going to hit me that I am not in school anymore, and I am not in volleyball."**

## Ice Drag race to happen in Marmora

*Fire Fighters Association plans event to encourage participation during winter season*

By Melissa DiNardo

The Snowmobiling Ice Drag race will be happening on March 10, 2012 in Marmora. The Marmora Fire Fighters Association is spearheading the event.

According to Amanda Morrison, wife of one of the organizers Josh Morrison, there are not many events during the winter season that encourage the community to come out and connect.

"Sled dog races are the only other event that happens during the winter," said Morrison. "Kids don't watch the whole race happen, just the beginning and the end. This event they can part take in."

With this in mind the Fire Fighters Association decided to organize the activity, where children are not only invited but also encouraged to participate.

The entry fee for competitors is \$15 per sled, per class. Registration starts from 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and races start at 11:30 a.m. Vintage sleds are welcomed.

The event is held at Crowe Lake, just off Booster Park Road in Marmora.

There will be a cash and prize table for the winners.

Admission for adults is \$10 and for students it is \$5. A banquet and presentation to follow the races will be held at Bunkers Hideaway.

For more information, contact Andy Reid at 613-848-5771 or Josh Morrison at 613-472-6624.

## On the street

We asked people at Loyalist College the following question:

**How do you think international piracy and copyright protection laws, such as ACTA, will affect you?**



**Mark Hanson, second-year radio broadcast,** "There are some shows I can't see on television here in Canada, but I can watch them online. If these laws come into effect, I would have to pay, and as a student, I can't afford that."



**Jaymin Batel, biotechnology technician,** "I don't think it will affect people as much as you think."



**Breanna Scott, general arts and science,** "Different types of research will be affected. Depending on our class assignments, we do a lot of research."



**Geoff Kirkland, culinary management,** "They're walking a dangerous line by trying to regulate something that's had no regulation at all before. It's a big balance of power."



**Kyra Groening, second-year animation,** "Google and Youtube will suffer. The entire Internet will go down."



**Kyle McMillan, second-year animation,** "It sucks. I don't like it at all. It's the first step to taking away people's freedom."

## Editorial

# Tax increase may be necessary evil

Say the words "tax increase" and right away the grumbles start.

It's time for the grumbling to begin in Quinte West after an announcement of a two per cent tax increase. This year, complaints may be a little more vocal as most of the increases to the budget are due to salary increases for city staff, professional firefighters and police staff. Are these grumbles warranted? Maybe not as much as we would like to think.

If you're like most of us, you may not remember the last time you got a raise. It's easy to get upset when we see people whom we perceive as already having a good job get a little more, especially when the economy hasn't exactly been terrific.

It gets hard to swallow a tax increase when we see increases to city staff salaries, however it should be noted that council actually decreased internal spending. Between 2008 and 2011, spending dropped by \$74,000.

A lot of us find ourselves with more money going out than coming in and officials of the City of Quinte West are saying that they are having the same problem. Last year, council voted not to give funding to Loyalist College, stating that the city was already spending too much.

The city has indeed had a few increases that they may not have been ready for.

Professional firefighters were awarded through an arbitrator a salary increase that is retroactive until 2008. The increase was reportedly more than the city had initially offered. Firefighters do a very important job and deserve fair compensation, but a higher salary does mean a higher city budget.

The city was also hit with a provincial mandate to increase contributions to its provincial pension plan.

Over the past few years, many cities have been the victims of municipal downloading. Basically, things the province used to pay for have shifted onto the backs of municipalities. While mayors and councillors grumble it is the municipal taxpayer who really pays. The buck always stops at the little guy who often doesn't know whom to blame. As voters and taxpayers we have to look at every level of government to see where expenditures are coming from.

The exact amount of increase is different across the wards. Trenton ward saw a decrease last year, while Murray Ward has seen the highest increases over the last couple of years. Based on an average residential assessment of \$177,000, the highest increase, which is 3.13 per cent in Murray Ward, means an extra \$55.73 a year, or \$4.64 a month.

Is an extra \$5 a month worth two new police sergeants and happier firefighters? That is the question, it seems.

The answer, two per cent, is fairly minor and if you really don't like it, let your councillors know. Or you can just wait until the next election rolls around.

Kristen Haveman

# Use of oil an individual choice

The fossil fuel-burning business has divided society into two polarizing spectrums but people must consider the individual choices they make.

Canadian use of oil for transportation dominates all other modes of transportation, therefore we have acted on our decision that we do need and depend on oil. A surge of individual consumer choices will decide that oil is no longer needed, and a free market will react to our purchasing habits, rendering that business obsolete.

That's the way economic freedom works.

Don't like the oil business? Then don't buy oil.

A recent trip to China by Prime Minister Stephen Harper put U.S./Canadian relations, oil and environmental concerns in the spotlight.

During Harper's visit to China, he met with the general secretary of the communist party of China, Hu Jintao, to discuss business relations between the two countries, focusing heavily on energy security.

"Canada has abundant supplies of virtually every form of energy, and you know, we want to sell our energy to people who want to buy our energy; it's that simple," Harper said in the city of Guangzhou.

If only it were that simple.

In January an application to expand the Keystone pipeline into the United States was rejected by U.S. President Barack Obama, essentially manipulating the natural supply and demand of the energy markets.

The Keystone XL extension would provide Alberta oil to the state of Texas through the Gulf Coast Expansion, as well as Nebraska through the Steele City Expansion.

Construction of the pipeline has also met criticism in the form of environmental concerns, the possibility of spillage, property disputes and greenhouse carbon emissions in particular.

TransCanada CEO Russ Girling said the extension would implement 57 improvements above standard US Regulatory requirements. Girling said the XL extension would be "the safest pipeline ever built."

TransCanada also agreed to change the route of the pipeline to avoid areas of environmental concern such as the Sandhills in Nebraska and the Ogallala Aquifer, a major source of fresh water.

Joe Oliver, Canada's minister of natural resources, responded to climate activists, saying Alberta's oil sands account for 0.1 per cent of global greenhouse-gas emissions. Coal plants in the U.S. pump out 40 times more.

Oliver says "celebrity protestors" ignore these facts.

Celebrities such as climate-alarmist Al Gore, whose documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* met an inconvenient verdict when a UK High Court in 2007 ruled it was riddled with scientific errors.

"The errors were made in 'the context of alarmism and exaggeration,'" High Court Judge Michael Burton said. Burton ruled that the screening of *An Inconvenient Truth* in British secondary schools violated laws barring the promotion of partisan political views in the classroom.

According to the US department of energy, Canada is the world's 15th largest importer of oil. Canada's exporters include Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Iraq, which are notorious for human rights abuses and conflicts.

While we are still dependent on resource-based energy, let us cleanse the blood oil from our existence, and at the same time whet our purchasing appetite with our own resources, companies, and jobs.

Mark Tarnovsky



## Opinion

# Deaf community tired of society's labels

*Have own language, culture, values and behavioural norms*

By Tristan Kong

Enough is enough.

It's time to end confusing labels for people in the deaf community.

You probably have no idea how to refer to deaf people, but there are some labels that are insults to the deaf community.

"Deaf-mute," "dummy," "hearing impaired," "deaf and dumb," "hearing handicapped," are hurtful names people in the community are called.

Deaf people are like you. They are annoyed when they are labelled by you. Deaf people struggle when they face ignorance every day of their lives.

Stop and think before you label them. Deaf

people do not view themselves as people with "disabilities."

They have their own language, culture, values, behavioural norms, arts, education institutions and organizations.

- They use sign language (American Sign Language, British Sign Language, French Sign Language, Langue des Signes Quebecoise in Canada, Spanish Sign Language, Russian Sign Languages, Australian Sign Language, etc.) as their first language.

- There are deaf schools and one deaf university e.g. Gallaudet University.

- There is deaf theatre, poetry, jokes, writings, and paintings. There are magazines, journals, books, video/films and television programming by deaf people about their interests or concerns.

- There are organized deaf groups in every community as well as national organizations in roughly 125 countries.

- There are "peripherals" such as TTYs, caption decoders, flashing alarms and so on.

The list proves that deaf people are part of a cultural and linguistic minority group. We share a common history, experiences and language.

"Deaf" is the correct word to reflect their identity and culture.

The deaf community disagrees with hearing society's view on deafness. The public thinks being a deaf person is a medical deficiency that needs to be "fixed" to restore hearing, so that people can be put in the "right place" with hearing society. Negative terms like "hearing impaired" or "hearing handicapped" define the deaf community as having a problem or difficulty.

People in the deaf community do not feel damage in themselves because they already have their language, culture or identity. They have many reasons to be proud of being deaf.

So no more labelling for the deaf community. Show respect. Just say "deaf."

Discloser: Tristan Kong is deaf.

# Discrimination shouldn't be part of airport screening

*Modifications to Aeronautics Act might have impact on transsexual community*

By Rémy Legé-Jovian

Big Brother has moved in.

Over the past 10 years, air travel security has slowly tightened the noose, sometimes without us even noticing. In August of 2011, the Canadian Aeronautics Act made modifications to its protocol, which somehow eluded Parliament for overview. You might not get on your flight if you're not girly or manly enough.

Under this new act, it is stated "5.2 (1) An air carrier shall not transport a passenger if ... (c) the passenger does not appear to be of the gender indicated on the identification he or she presents."

The major concern with the new regula-

tions is the obvious difficulties it imposes on the transgender community and its reliance of personal judgment on behalf of the screener.

I would like to think these regulations were put in place because of our increased paranoia and not an attempt to segregate the transgender and transsexual community. You would think that in this day and age, in a country that we would all like to consider "open-minded," it would find a better way to deal with its fear.

In its current state, this regulation greatly impacts transgender and transsexual people who wish to fly. The sex on the passport can be changed permanently only if gender reassignment surgery has occurred or will be in the coming year. A two-year temporary passport is also an option if proof of reassignment surgery is presented.

It's really time for our country to stop hammering down and trying to bury minorities. There must be a better way to keep us safe and yet still have people retain their right of freedom of expression. The rules are simply too

constraining to allow proper and comfortable travel for the people who are affected by such regulations.

I understand that some level of scrutiny is needed; however this type of screening is not effective. The simple fact that the screening process is dependent on the screener determining whether you look masculine or feminine enough allows too many people to be caught in the crossfire. What if you're a woman and just have masculine features? What if you like wearing big, comfy, baggy clothes? What about the woman who wears her niqab or hijab; will she be turned away too? Could it go as far as simply not liking your face?

A step in the right direction might be to add a third, non-specific-gender option for transgender and transsexuals. A note from a doctor or psychologist confirming the lifestyle choice of the individual would work just as well too.

We have to get over this hyper-paranoia and stop persecuting the people caught in the crossfire in the name of security.

# The Pioneer

The Pioneer is currently produced by photojournalism students for Loyalist College and the surrounding area. In the spirit of the pioneers who settled our community and who were rooted in tradition, these pioneers always had an eye on the future. Our students strive to serve the public interest, seek the truth and uphold the highest standards of our profession.

**Editor, Kristen Haveman**  
**Photo editor, Mark Tarnovsky**  
**In Focus editor, Tristan Kong**  
**Faculty advisers: Patti Gower, Luke Hendry, Frank O'Connor, Scott Whalen**  
**Managing editor, Mike Beaudin**  
**Publisher, Jane Harrison**

The Pioneer welcomes your letters and comments. Please send material to the editor at the address below before Wednesday. We reserve the right to edit submissions for content and length. All letters must be signed and include a daytime phone number.

For advertising information, rates and placement, please contact Sandi Hibbard-Ramsay, at the college, 613-969-1913, ext. 2591; by cell at 613-848-5665; or at home, 613-965-6222.

Pioneer newsroom, 1N9, Loyalist College, Box 4200, Belleville, ON K8N 5B9 · 613-969-1913, ext. 2828.  
 E-mail: pioneer@loyalistc.on.ca

**ocna**  
 Ontario  
 Community  
 Newspapers  
 Association