



Photo by Brynn Campbell

Street nurse Doug Roy demonstrates care and compassion on Front Street in Belleville. "A street nurse is not very well received by conventional health institutes," says Roy. For more, see page two.

## Nurse offers non-traditional help

By Brynn Campbell

Word on the street is, health care should be provided to everyone.

From hospitals, to a street clinic in Kingston, to the streets of Belleville, there are no limits to where street nurse Doug Roy brings his compassion and medical knowledge.

Roy, a 1985 Loyalist College nursing graduate, now labels himself as Belleville's own street nurse.

"I had done 10 years of traditional-type nursing in the hospital, then I did nine years in a street clinic in Kingston, which

I loved," said Roy.

Meanwhile, Roy and his wife, who is also a nurse, longed to work as nurses in Third World countries. Their plans fell through once they discovered how difficult that work would be because of language barriers.

Over time, Roy came to a realization: "You don't have to go very far to find the Third World. It is right here at home."

"Really, health care should focus on the people in the greatest need, and that is not the case in our country," said Roy.

"It's the people who are usually in the greatest need who are cared for the least.

"You see a gap that needs filling and you have a set of skills and experience that can be applied so you go and fill a gap."

About six years ago, Roy voluntarily took on the role of the Belleville street nurse. It took Roy about six months to get things figured out with the help of a few "cool people," as Roy puts it. Eventually, Roy was capable of gaining the trust of the downtown area, and by word of mouth, clients started to appear.

"The Women's Christian Association had heard about me, got in touch with me and offered to pay me an honorarium for doing it. We have been work-

ing together for probably six years," said Roy.

"A street nurse is not very well-received by conventional health institutes," said Roy. In fact, many people have a stereotypical attitude toward Roy's clients.

"In terms of experience in working with the people downtown, there's a lot of stereotypes. There's the druggies; there's the sex trade workers," said Roy.

"So people say, 'Isn't that kind of dangerous?' So we send a reply wherever I am working and say, 'Look, I worked in the hospital for years, and was kicked, bit,

spit on, punched and sworn at on a pretty regular basis."

"It's never once happened on the street. Nothing even comes close to anything like that. "So that turns people's preconceptions upside down for them."

Roy's role of street nurse is giving the marginalized population of downtown Belleville access to health care. Roy works closely with several agencies located downtown: The Belleville Freedom Support Centre, Salvation Army, and parks and streets downtown.

...See Nurse, page 2



Photo by Sara O. Swenson

### Men out, women in

It was a rough weekend for Loyalist's men's teams. Both the volleyball and basketball teams found themselves bounced out of playoff contention. However, on the flip side of the coin, the women's basketball team earned itself a 'W' and is ready to start their playoff push. For story and photos, see page 3.

## Sweet dreams aren't made of these

By Carleen Schmidt

If you had to read this sentence three times because you couldn't concentrate, it could be from lack of sleep.

In a Pioneer online survey of 100 Loyalist College students, 34 per cent said that for four to seven days a week they are getting less than five hours of sleep. Forty per cent said that for one to three days a week they get less than five hours, while 26 per cent said they always get at least five hours.

"About four days a week I get less than five hours of sleep and I can never fall asleep right away because I have too much work going through my head," said Dustin Mahoney, a civil engineering student.

The survey also asked how many students turn off computers, cell phones and other electronics before they go to bed.

Eighty-four per cent said at least one electronic device is always left on. The brain has always been taught that blue light (the sky) means daytime thus time to wake up and become alert and darkness means time to doze off.

"My computer gets turned off but my cell phone is always on when I go to bed because it is my alarm clock as well," said Caitlin Anne Marie Martorino, an accounting student.

Exposure to blue lights, such as those on some cell phones, computers and iPads, can disturb sleep patterns and increase insomnia, according to Phyllis Zee, a neuroscience professor at Northwestern University. She states if you are using these electronics close to bedtime then "that light can be sufficiently stimulating to the brain to make it more awake and delay your ability to sleep."

Author Adam Knowlton, a doctoral student from the University of Cincinnati, said in a news release that, "The brain acts like a hard drive on a computer during sleep. It goes in and cleans up memories and makes connections stronger. It

gets rid of things it doesn't need."

He explained that if a student is sleep-deprived, it affects the whole process. The person can't concentrate, can't remember things and isn't able to learn, defeating the purpose of college.

College students tend to have different schedules than those working steady jobs, causing a difference in sleep patterns compared to the rest of the population.

The first step in helping a student who's having trouble sleeping is "breaking down what the problem(s) really are and where they are coming from," said Lauren Deans, Loyalist College's nurse.

About 15 per cent of students in the college go into the health centre for sleep-related problems every year. There are many possible reasons why students may have difficulty sleeping; a few most common ones are stress, workload and relationships.

"If students can't sleep at night then they are unable to concentrate on school work or they fall asleep in class and then start to sleep in and miss class altogether, putting their education at risk," said Deans.

One very important thing that can help students get their much-needed rest is "sleep hygiene," said Deans.

"It is important to keep the bedroom ... used only for sleep. Do your homework in another room, eat in another room and make a habit of only going to the bedroom when going to sleep."

By doing this you're telling your body that when you go to your bedroom it is time to sleep and your brain will begin to notice the pattern.

Other tips that sometimes help aid sleep are relaxation methods, warm milk and avoiding caffeine. You can also go to Valerie Geen, who is in charge of mind and wellness services and can help teach the mind to rest.

You can book an appointment with her through the Student Success Hub in room 2H4 or by calling 613-969-1913, ext. 2519.