



Photo by Megan Voss

In an act of desperation, BJ Williams sprawls out at the bottom of the net, in hopes to save the shot coming from Brad Barriag at the tennis courts at Loyalist College on March 14, 2012. John Jackson (left) and Chris Cole (right) stand by, hoping for a rebound.

Journalists cope with technology changes

Speed removes buffer of time to review facts

By Sherry Tompkins

The world is changing – that part isn't news, but the way in which it's changing often is.

The way in which each generation takes in information is evolving and the process of reporting that information is evolving along with it. Today, speed is everything. The public wants to know, and they want to know now.

In journalism, this often creates some logistical dilemmas. One such dilemma is that speed removes the buffer of time. Time to review facts, time to decide which aspects are the most important,

time to evaluate ethical decisions, time to pare down the subject to its bare bones, what the public wants to know, the truth.

For many years, the news has been disseminated in the past tense. Although the very recent past tense, the past just the same.

Today with the use of social media, we find ourselves reporting news as it happens, in real time.

Our society has incorporated 'virtual experiences' into every facet of our lives and the news is no exception.

In the instance of high-profile court cases, when the public has a high degree of interest in what is happening, information must be passed along as if the reader was sitting in the courtroom themselves.

Enter social media and a new twist on reporting.

Bruce Urquhart, editor of the Woodstock Sentinel-Review, the hometown of

the current Tori Stafford murder case, believes that social media is a valuable tool for both readers and journalists.

"It does have an effect. They're wonderful tools," said Urquhart, who is a Loyalist College graduate in print and online journalism.

"It's a great way to discover stories, find sources, to get other content that we may not be able to get.

"In this particular instance, it's a little bit different, we're just funneling information. It definitely does have an impact on our readership."

Urquhart is referring to the reporting of graphic details from the trial of Michael Rafferty, who is being tried for the sexual assault and murder of eight-year-old Stafford, a Woodstock resident.

Urquhart had a plan ready to handle what many would consider extremely disturbing facts contained in the court

proceedings.

"If the details become too graphic we'll stop the direct tweets and send people to the direct news feed on our website."

This provides the buffer needed to allow the public to decide just how much detail they are interested in hearing, he said. On the direct news feed the readers can continue their virtual courtroom experience.

Urquhart is adamant that the Woodstock Sentinel-Review is first and foremost a news service.

"We're going to be compassionate but we're not going to censor."

Nathan Smith, news director at AM980 in London, has adopted a similar approach.

AM980 has a regular Twitter feed, with approximately 8,300 followers. On this feed, readers receive regular news updates. These updates would be written,

not with censorship, but consideration for the fact that not all of those 8,300 readers have a desire to hear every graphic detail. Once again, due to the sensitivity of this particular case, a separate Twitter feed was set up to accommodate those who were interested in the whole courtroom experience, featuring everything they would hear if they were there themselves. Approximately 1,500 readers have opted in to the optional feed.

"Our decision is that we will censor nothing on that dedicated Twitter feed," said Smith.

He describes this approach as an option way of reporting. People can choose to hear the summary, or go to a different site for the details.

"It's a bit of a relief to not have to choose what's in and what's out," said Smith.

Student leaders recognized

By Joanna Becket

Fred Pollitt admits he's a behind-the-scenes kind of guy.

But, as the director of student life at Loyalist College, Pollitt will be centre stage at this year's annual Student Leadership Recognition Ceremony luncheon as he hands out awards named in his honour to 25 Loyalist student leaders. The award acknowledges their exceptional contributions to student life in the 2011-2012 academic year.

The awards ceremony luncheon will be held at Loyalist's Club 213 on March 21, when Loyalist culinary students will get to showcase their newly acquired skills.

"I think the awards, whatever you want to call them, recognize that it's important to acknowledge students for contributing to the quality of student life and giving back something to the school," said Pollitt.

The awards were named for Pollitt because of his exemplary role as a leader and mentor to students throughout his 17 years as director of student life.

Chris Detering, 22, in second-year broadcast engineering technology, is one of this year's award winners.

"My time on student government has definitely improved my leadership skills because I feel like I'm bringing a voice to all of the programs in media studies," said Detering. "I was always trying to help people in one way, shape or form and I thought, 'why not run for student government and actually have the power to do so?'"

Introduced in 2007 to acknowledge the commitment and contributions of student leaders as members of the student government, the program was expanded in 2008 to include other outstanding leaders including class leaders, peer tutors, and student ambassadors.

"When students become engaged with student life, they see improvements that can be made. They want to leave a legacy," said Pollitt.

"They become focused on projects and have it down to a science. They

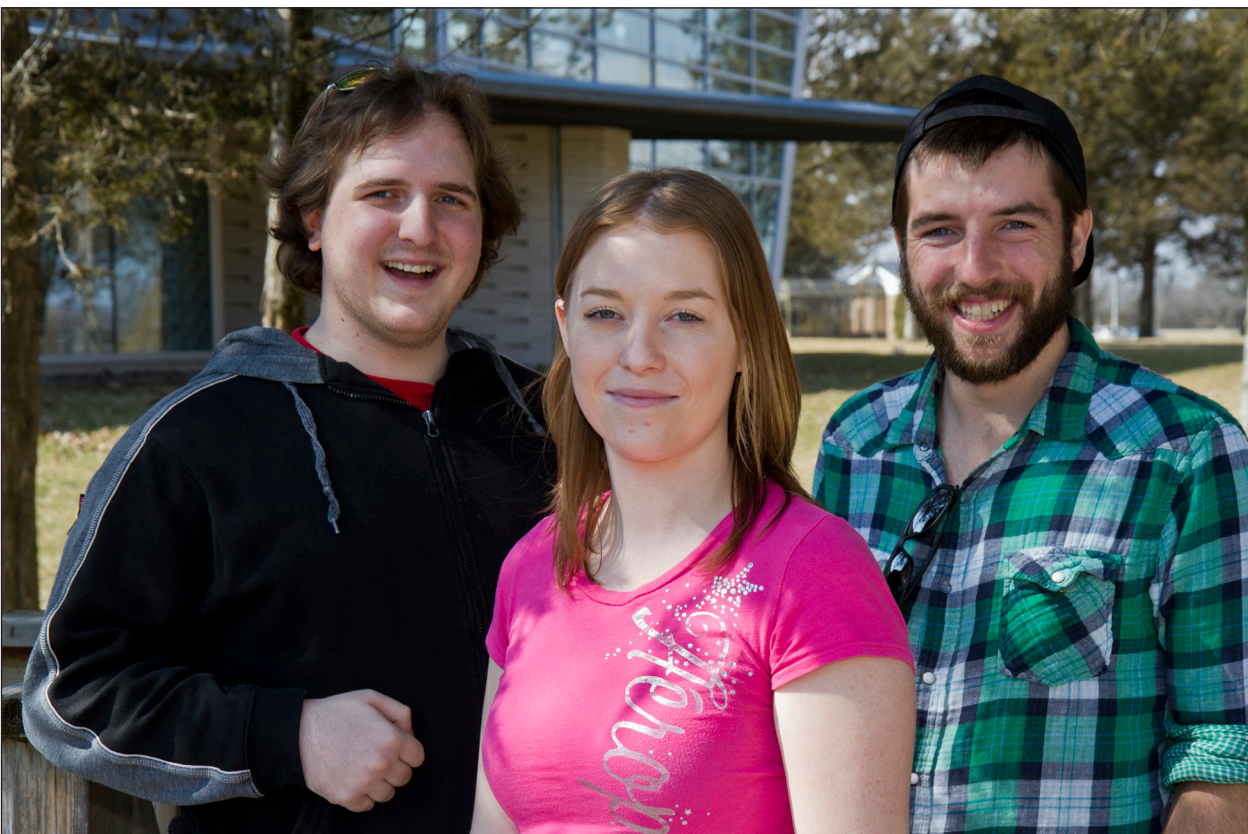


Photo by Joanna Becket

This year's annual Loyalist College Student Leadership Recognition Ceremony on March 21 will acknowledge 25 students for their exceptional contributions to student life. Among the winners of the Pollitt award are (left to right) Chris Detering, April Chamberlain and Andre Lodder.

send out surveys and get a huge response – maybe 1,000 responses. Then they'll look at the feedback from full-time students to find out what improvements they'd like to see made. Out of that, they'll develop a game plan."

"There's a real culture here at Loyalist," he said. "In this environment, students learn how to take the lead, go forward and complete projects."

April Chamberlain, 21, in third-year civil engineering technology, is vice-president of student life.

"It's been a really amazing experience. I've met so many great people. I've gotten to know Loyalist College President Maureen Piercy and she's very supportive of student government and each of us as individuals. I've participated in many big projects. It's helped my leadership skills and I now

take more initiative in my personal life."

This year alone, under the stewardship of the Loyalist student government, the school installed its 15th hydration station; six were installed in the month of February alone. They also made improvements to the quiet lounges that flank Alumni Hall, opened the new student space called the Link Lounge, and completed the expansion of the student fitness centre.

"It's a great fitness facility, and the students seem genuinely pleased to have additional space and better equipment," said Pollitt.

Andre Lodder, 23, a second-year photojournalism student, said, "It's a huge honour to be selected. I think student life is important at Loyalist College. Anything we can do to support it is a good thing."

Pollitt winners

Chris Barnim
April Chamberlain
Dan Vanden Broek
Lise Rouleau
Robert Hoekstra
Marcus Curle
Rebecca van Haarlem
Allyee Mulvihill
Dalton Sanderson
Chris Detering
Natasha Pereira

Susan Dorval
Jeffery Krampah
Christine Avery
Carlie Boor
Andre Lodder
Greg Dafeo
Matt Kerr
Kent Fleming
Charlotte Maschke
Merissa Hopkins
Martie Cannon
Garett Gruhl

KONY 2012 tells story through video

By Kelly Gagné

It's been about a week since Joseph Kony, leader of Uganda's rebel Lord's Resistance Army became famous, because of one viral video on YouTube.

The video that has been such a hot topic is the KONY 2012 video by the organization Invisible Children.

Invisible Children is an organization that uses film, documentary and the power of social media to tell the stories of Uganda and the atrocities committed by Joseph Kony and his army of abducted children whom he uses as child soldiers.

Invisible Children produced their first video, *Invisible Children: Rough Cut* in 2006, and it was then that the video had sparked some interest when director Jason Russell began to campaign and spread awareness. Showing the video to high schools and colleges across America, Russell was able to spread awareness and pick up his numbers in support to present the cause to the White House.

Once they had the mass numbers of supporters, Russell was able to get U.S. President Barack Obama to sign off on sending 100 elite American soldiers into Uganda to help supervise and mentor the Ugandan soldiers.

However, since last October, these numbers of supporters began to forget about Kony and the issue, and this is where the viral new video comes in, as it was to regain the attention of the Western people and direct it back on the issue of Kony.

Leona Hobbs, a Loyalist print journalism graduate and director of communications at Social Media Group, was able to speak a bit about viral videos.

"Viral videos are simply those videos that achieve mass popularity - typically, they gain so much momentum online, they cross over into the mainstream. It is every marketer's dream that a video they produce 'goes viral'," said Hobbs.

The Kony video had around seven million views within the first two days. By midweek, the video had about 31 million views, and after a week, the video has gotten over 75 million views, according to YouTube.

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