

Music and fellowship part of festival

Loyalist's End of Winter Blues Festival well-attended

By Dan Pearce

Mike Logan and Brenda Turcotte had the best seats in the house at the End of Winter Blues Festival.

They weren't afraid to show their affection as they kissed during a performance by the headlining act, the Johnny Max Band.

Mike and Brenda were two of the 200 to 300 people who came to enjoy the Loyal Blues Fellowship's eighth-annual festival at Loyalist College last Friday and Saturday.

"We're having a blast, man, and this is my woman and I love her to death. This is the best blues music," Logan said. "We've got the best table in the house and everybody's cool. This is just a great event."

Logan has been attending the festival since it began and said this year he was particularly impressed by the younger performers.

"The performances have been very progressive," he said. "I'm very impressed. I'll definitely be coming back next year."

Blues fan Paul Stacey was attending the festival for the first time and was very pleased with the local talent. He said the music and the performances were fantastic and Kim Pollard was his favourite performer.

"There are some very good acts. Kim Pollard is fantastic," he said. "I'll be coming back next year."

Loyal Blues Fellowship president Peg Voigt agreed the Kim Pollard Band was the standout act.

"Everyone was really impressed with her performance. She's a relative unknown, but she was our representative in Memphis, Tenn., for the International Blues Challenge," Voigt said.

Voigt said the festival has always been a



Photo by Dan Pearce

Johnny Max of the Johnny Max Band performs at the eighth annual End of Winter Blues Festival at Loyalist College on March 10.

great event to show off local acts and give them an opportunity to get some exposure.

She said proceeds from the event go back into the fellowship and support its

Blues in the Schools program.

Johnny Max, the lead singer from the headlining act, the Johnny Max Band, was really happy with the show, and in particular, the crowd.

"A great crowd, a very receptive crowd, a great Canadian crowd," Max said. "It's great playing to people who enjoy live music."

If you're craving more of the blues, you

can check out the fellowship's fourth annual Frankford Island Blues Festival this summer July 13 and 14 at the Frankford Tourist Park. For more information, visit www.loyalblues.ca.

Dancers strut their stuff at Canadian Legion

By Brynn Campbell

Legion members slip into their dancing shoes and bust a move.

Strobes and disco balls light up the room for all the men and women who have come out to support Belleville's Royal Canadian Legion Branch 99 on a Saturday night by dancing up a storm.

About 70 people made it out to this hip, happening dance on Saturday evening where Legion members decorated the hall with four-leaf clovers and leprechauns.

"Lots of people said they're coming back," said Legion first vice-president

and life member John McIntyre.

McIntyre and his daughter, Penny, decided they would start organizing dances at the Legion once a month to give people of all ages a chance to twist and shout.

"That's the way dances were when we were young. People kind of dressed up, mingled and had fun. I want it to be a fun night, a family and friend night. That's what bars used to be like, an event for everyone," said McIntyre.

This was the third dance put on by the Legion in three months after taking over the space where the monthly Romeo and Juliet dances once were. All

the proceeds from the monthly dances will support the Legion.

The dances are run by volunteers, including doorman Andy Anderson. Anderson has been a member of the Legion for 15 years and is glad to see everyone having a ball and mingling, although he did say that "the music was a little bit too loud."

Robert Hird, another Legion member and St. Patrick's Day dancer, has attended all of the Legion's dances so far. "My favourite part is supporting the Legion because without this there are an awful lot of things that don't happen," said Hird.

"Besides the memberships and the

drives and all that, this is a little bit of income. And it's a lot of fun."

The Legion and McIntyre hope to keep seeing more and more people coming out each month. During the evening, there are three spot dances, during which a set of tickets is given out for the following month's dance.

"The next time you use that ticket you can bring a friend," said McIntyre.

Next month's is the spring dance that will take place April 7. The dances will take place the first weekend of every month.

"We would like to see it build up and get bigger. It will take time," said McIntyre.

Artist opens up...and not just her vocal cords

Passionate love of music lead to successful career as singer-songwriter for Jeanette Arsenault

By Carleen Schmidt

"I can sing all I want to my living room walls," laughs Jeanette Arsenault, "but it's the interaction with people that makes the singing worthwhile."

Jeanette Arsenault is a singer-songwriter from Prince Edward County. She has achieved a number of awards, including the Leading Women, Building Communities award and the Prince Edward County Citizen of the Year award.

Arsenault began singing as a little girl. She remembers her first audition like it was yesterday.

"It was Grade 6 and I sang *Signs* by Five Man Electrical Band," said Arsenault. It was for a variety night at her school and she got the role.

Arsenault laughed as she recalled how years after that first audition, she actually met the bass guitar player from Five Man Electrical Band.

Continuing with her passion throughout her growing years paid off in 1994 when she released her first album.

"It was released the same year my daughter was born; in fact I found out that I was pregnant while recording the album."

Arsenault decided right then and there that she would not do any travelling away from her daughter; she chose to be a full-time mom and any singing she could do was a bonus.

Arsenault has continued to sing throughout the years, performing for the Canadian Olympic athletes both in Salt Lake City in 2002 and then in Athens, Greece in 2004.

She has also performed in four languages – English, French, Spanish and Italian – at the Business and Professional Women International World Congress in Helsinki, Finland, where 600 women from around the world, dressed in their native costumes, gave her a standing ovation.

The Quinte Arts Council has worked with and hired Jeanette Arsenault for many events. Carol Bauer, the artist and

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Quinte Arts Council's Carol Bauer

member services officer of the Quinte Arts Council, said Arsenault is very generous with her time and she supports many a worthy cause.

"The Quinte community is very lucky to have her," said Bauer.

"She is absolutely fabulous," exclaimed Bauer. "She's talented, not just as a songwriter, singer and musician, but as an all-round performer. She always lights up the stage."

Arsenault has performed for many community organizations and events. She has released six albums to date and has a seventh album to be released this summer.

"Each album represents a milestone in my life and each show has its own importance," Arsenault said confidently.

She is a very busy woman, but she is sure of what she does and the messages she wants to send through her music.

"Ideas for songs come from my emotions, not from my head."

Arsenault said she always gets her song ideas through something she has seen or heard somewhere that sparked her interest. She said you can never run out of song ideas: anything can be turned into a song; it's endless.

"I can't just sit down and say 'OK, I need to write a song now.' It has never worked that way for me. It has to come from something because if it doesn't have soul or emotion than it won't capture people," said Arsenault.

Arsenault loves motivational songs and is motivational herself. According to Bauer, she is very supportive of local young performers, helping to give them opportunities to show their stuff.

Arsenault said her favourite part of what she does is communicating soul-to-soul with people, when she is making connections through a show.

"When I give, the audience gives back."



Photo By Carleen Schmidt

Jeanette Arsenault of Prince Edward County is a busy woman, working on her seventh album as a singer-songwriter which will be released this summer. She has been singing since she was a young girl, auditioning for the first time in Grade 6 performing *Signs* by Five Man Electrical Band.

Pizza and music go hand in hand at fundraiser

Customers enjoy a variety of music at Pizza-cato Fest

By Jessica Corriveau

Great applause was heard as Quinte Symphony and the Quinte Irish Canadian Society Session Players played to their heart's content at Boston Pizza Monday, raising funds through the symphony's March Break Pizza-cato Fest.

"We raised \$407.56. It's our best year in the six years we've been doing this," said Linda Minty, principle cellist in the Quinte Symphony. "We were hoping to raised \$350 to \$400, based on previous years."

Boston Pizza donates 10 per cent of their profits from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., while the musicians play for their patrons.

"The turnout was phenomenal," said Christina Publow, a manager at Boston Pizza. "Everyone enjoyed themselves. The restaurant was full; a packed house."

The symphony is in its 52nd season, and fundraisers like this, along with community partnering and private and corporate donations, make up two-thirds of their revenue.

Minty, on cello, and Concertmaster Marion Stratton on violin, opened up the fundraiser with a handful of classical favourites, warming up the crowd that was quickly pouring into the Bell Boulevard restaurant.

Tucked into a corner, they played merrily next to each other, with friends and family stopping by between songs to give them quick words of encouragement and support, bringing smiles to their faces.

Following Minty and Stratton came Janice Ley, a cellist with the symphony, who picked up her accordion and began to play. Ley wandered up the aisles of the restaurant, to the delight of the patrons giving applause between bites.

After Ley came the first set of the Quinte Irish Canadian Society Session Players, bringing together Minty, Stratton, and Carroll Leafe on the fiddle, Bill Tucker on bodhran and whistle, Ed Fowler on bouzouki and vocals, Paul McAllister on flute and whistle and Bill McKim on concertina. Carrying peppy Irish folk tunes, they quickly had the restaurant tapping their feet, with a mother and her baby coming up to get a closer look and bounce to the music.

Following the lively group were Andrew Morgan and Shane Dunne, giving another lively handful of songs for the patrons.

To wrap things up, the Quinte Irish Canadian Society Session Players performed another set of songs, ending the night on a high for entertained diners.