



Photo by John Boldrick

Randall Dempsey of Dempsey Farms in Prince Edward County unloads apples from his truck at the Belleville farmers' market on Tuesday morning. Apples took a hit this summer with early warm weather followed by frost.

Apple producers take a hit with poor growing season

By John Boldrick

Susan Manning of Apple Wolf Farm in Stirling is facing tough times after a spring that all but destroyed her apple crops.

Temperatures reached 30 degrees C by mid-March mixed in with a hard frost and there was even hail in one case. Some of the Quinte areas apple farms were hit with some unexpected weather that all but ruined their crops.

"The majority of them would probably be suitable to feed (to) domestic animals or wild animals. There were very little eatable apples in this case," said Manning.

The unpredictable weather also affected Apple Wolf's unofficial workers – the bees.

"It didn't affect bloom so much because a lot of the starting of the budding hadn't actually come out, but by the time the blooms themselves were ready, the bees had actually gone back into their, I guess, hibernation state, so of course they missed the blooming season, so a lot of our blooms did not get pollinated and that was one of the reasons we got very little apples this year," said Manning.

While selling apples for baking and human consumption is out of the question for the Stirling area organic farm, all has not been lost. Manning said hunters often buy up spare apples by the truckload for their hunts.

"We tried to get as much off the ground and off the trees as possible before the end of the season," she said.

Still, the less than stellar turnout this year is made even harder after a banner turnout last year.

"Last year was amazing, we had so many apples that we couldn't eat enough,"

said Manning. "The apples themselves were just incredible."

As it turns out, Stirling isn't the only area affected by the rapidly changing weather.

Randall Dempsey is the owner of Dempsey Orchards in Prince Edward County, an orchard that has been in his family for over 200 years. He said that

'It was hot mid-March – too hot, everything jumped out ahead of normal, and then when apples and pears and plums came into blossom, we got hit with a fairly hard frost and that varied from place to place in the county.'

Dempsey Orchards owner Randall Dempsey

weather had a large impact on his crops this year.

"It was hot mid-March – too hot, everything jumped out ahead of normal, and then when apples and pears and plums came into blossom, we got hit with a fairly hard frost and that varied from place to place in the county," he said.

The difference between this year's growing season and last year's is very sub-

stantial, said Dempsey.

"This year was different because it was hot, close to 30 Celsius, mid-March and then we had the frost when a lot of the stuff was in blossom and we had quite a drought period for a fair amount of time. Then of course this month I have had about 220 millimeters of rain so far, which is more than I require."

However, Dempsey said it could have been a lot worse.

"My season's not over yet, but overall it's going to be down. I got hit, but I think my crop is at around 60-65 per cent of normal," he said, "I know guys that only had 10 per cent."

Dempsey said his harvest isn't finished yet, certain varieties such as Ida Reds, northern spies and sweet apples are still to be picked.

"Most of your varieties kick in September, so September and October is the busy time for apples," he said.

For Dempsey, this year pales in comparison to the best apple-growing year he has never seen, 2009, which he described as the best growing year he has seen in his lifetime.

"We had good rainfall, we had the perfect climate for apples to get colour, so size and colour was very good that year," he said.

Clifford Foster of Fosterholm Farms in Brighton has had to deal with consistency issues as much as the weather. Foster, who picks his apples at Dunnett Orchards in Brighton, said he has been having problems with the amount of apples he has been harvesting this season.

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No fallout results from rugby party

First-year player taken to hospital after hitting his head

By Taylor Renkema

There will not be any consequences for the men's rugby team at Loyalist College after a party on college residence resulted in one player being sent to hospital.

A first year player said he passed out and hit his head after drinking from a bottle of vodka that was being passed around a circle of first-year players at the party almost two weeks ago. An ambulance was called and he was taken to hospital.

Loyalist's Athletic Director Jim Buck said he talked to some veteran players about what happened at the party.

"Obviously we'd like to see none of our varsity athletes drinking and partying, but let's be realistic," he said. "They're college age students and student athletes and that's going to happen. We just try and make sure that they make educated

decisions."

Buck said he still has to talk to the injured first-year player, Kyle Fernhout, about the incident. Most of the controversy arose when Fernhout talked about "the peer pressure of doing that [drinking] with the teammates," and "trying to get accepted into the team."

Buck said he talked to some veteran players about the party and they assured him it was not a matter of hazing.

"They're pretty honest guys that have been with our program for a couple of years and they've assured me that there was no issue of hazing at all," he said. "They know as rookies before that that's been our policy for a long time and they respect that. It didn't happen when they were rookies and they're not going to let it happen there."

Fernhout's teammate Albert Cormier said the team has no animosity towards him.

"We brought him in closer than what he was before because it's not his fault, or anybody else's fault; it's just the way it happened," he said. "It's not wrong, it's not right, it's the way it was."

Dishwashers a washout for some students living in residence

Small issues have occurred with new machines

By Sarah Armour

New dishwashers installed in the apartment-style residence at Loyalist College are causing students some problems.

Since being installed in the summer, small issues have occurred with the new machines. A number of students in residence have experienced leaks and overflows due to misuse.

"We've had to bring in some contractors to do some under warranty, but (we) quickly fixed and are working on those," said Dominique Dawes, residence programmer.

Students weren't informed of the proper way to run the dishwasher or which products to use with the machine. Dawes said the machines did come with manuals, but she is unsure where they ended up after installation.

After taking a Facebook survey, giv-

ing students the option to vote on what they wanted renovated or added to residence, the decision was made to add dishwashers to all kitchens. Although there have been minor problems with the dishwashers, most students are happy the residence's money was spent on the washers.

"You can always bring your own TV to res. You can't bring a dishwasher, and it benefits the students to not doing dishes anymore and they can focus more time on their studies," said Davis Scheel, a second-year student.

"They could have used the money for a different thing such as a washer or dryer," said Lauren Haines, another second-year student.

Dawes said she has seen an overall improvement in the cleanliness of apartments. "Even during the room inspections, I found that the apartments are in a cleaner state. I've even opened the dishwashers to see dishes in them."

She said roommate issues about dishes have been eliminated because of the new dishwashers.

With better instructions and information on the machines, students could have avoided some problems, but for now, residence staff have the issues under control, said Dawes.

'We've had to bring in some contractors to do some under warranty, but (we) quickly fixed and are working on those.'

Residence programmer Dominique Dawes

Sound of music echoes through city's East Hill neighbourhood

Fourth annual Porchfest rocks Belleville with music of all genres

By Brandon White

The rain was pouring down Saturday morning in Belleville's east end but that didn't stop the community from showing up for the fourth annual Porchfest.

Crowds of people wandered the streets to see the various bands and performers. Musical acts were stretched out from John Street all the way up to MacDonald Avenue.

The festival is a unique experience for Belleville. Families can see what the community has to offer, said Ken Hudson, one of the founders and organizers of the event.

"We heard about a similar event in upstate New York a few years ago. And we thought this is our adopted neighbourhood, and we looked around and said we have a lot of great porches and houses, why don't we organize an event where people play on their porch?"

Hudson said an outdoor festival is appealing and it's something fun for the neighbourhood.

"Right from the beginning, I think the idea caught people's imaginations. It was free, there weren't a lot of family events in the neighbourhood, and it's also a great place to walk around. There isn't a lot of musical venues, and it gives musicians a place to play."

Hudson said that the event has grown wildly popular in the last year, with more than 100 individual performers booked for this year. Porchfest has grown and flourished since it was created, but Hudson thinks that it's still growing.

"It has pretty much been the same for three years, but this year it has doubled in size. That's okay with us, we're happy as long as everyone else is happy. You know, if it happens to grow to twice the size it is now, it'd be awesome for us and everyone else in the community," he said.

Hudson's wife, Lucinda Pritchard, also helped found and organize the event alongside her husband. She said that the festival offers a unique outlet for local talent.

"We have such a wide variety of music. We have some metal and heavy rockers. We have a jazz trio, and some Celtic music. We don't set what people want to play. We put it out to the community, and let people come out and play what they want. It really shows the variety of the commu-

nity.

"Now that we have a son, it's really important we do this for him so he can see what it means to be a part of a community."

"I think it's important for us to be a part of the community and make the place we live, the place we want to be."

One of the acts scheduled to make an appearance was hard-rock band, Non-Existent. They couldn't make the show, but one of the group's members, Dan Foote, still appeared with some friends as backup. Foote said he wouldn't want to miss the event.

"This is my first year playing here at Porchfest, but I've been coming for a few years now, and it always blows me away how awesome the local music scene is," Foote said. "It's awesome that we can have a thing where I can be playing my music here, and then wander two houses down to go listen to a country group, or someone playing blues. It's just great."

Porchfest's creators said they believe the biggest success of the event is its approachability as a family event.

"I think it's important for us to be a part of the community and make the place we live, the place we want to be."

Porchfest is free and takes place around the end of September every year.



Photo by Brandon White

Laura Todd and John Bokenkamp of Caesar's Shift rock the porch of 302 Blecker Ave.

Wednesdays at the college's Fitness Centre:

Women only welcome on special night

Females get chance to workout without men around

By Megan Mattice

Loyalist College's Fitness Centre welcomed back the ladies with a night of their own.

Between the hours of 6 and 9 p.m. on Wednesdays, women take over the free workout facility – no men allowed.

Cory Mestre, fitness centre coordinator, created the 'ladies only' theme last year, after being approached by the Loyalist College Student Government. The request came from students with self-confidence issues, he said.

Wanting to create a sense of community among students at the college who were trying to get healthy, Mestre opened the doors to project "Ladies Night" last March. The results showed low numbers that just kept getting lower every week.

Convinced that the turnout was poor because it was the time of year students are usually focused on exam finals or are away at program placement, Mestre said the attempt deserved another shot.

"The second attempt focused on the beginning of the year, to avoid clashing with students schedules," said Mestre.

Having the second "Ladies Night" for the month of September last night, numbers are confirming to be consistent.

"I am very pleased. Our first week we

had 24 ladies, and last night 25 turned up," said Mestre.

The numbers are staying the same, but that could be with the help of the women's volleyball team. A number of those in attendance appeared to be members of the team.

Kristen Curtis, a second-year Police Foundations student and volleyball team member, said the idea of "Ladies Night" is a step in the right direction towards women working out and feeling free of judgement.

"The girls from the volleyball team usually work out here (the fitness centre) Wednesday nights before our practice, and having the feeling of similar goals from various students makes them easier to achieve," said Curtis.

Starting at 6 p.m., women are free to use any and all machines without sharing them with males.

Dominic Jones, the fitness manager from a women's only Good Life Fitness in Kingston, said the atmosphere involving only women really is different.

Similar to Loyalist's fitness centre, Jones' facility is a smaller gym, allowing a more intimate exercising experience.

"Feeling comfortable being surrounded by people at the same workout level as you will almost always put a positive spin on the experience of fitness," said Jones.

Mestre said he is really trying to make a sense of community by installing the ladies-themed night is for people, regardless of gender, to confront their personal issues in order to stay healthy.

"I focus my effort as the facility coordi-



Photo by Megan Mattice

The Loyalist College fitness centre is offering a Ladies' only night to encourage more women to use the centre.

nator into making this a welcoming and upbeat environment. This centre will not tolerate any loud or obnoxious behaviour. Our goal is to maintain a safe place that

people can feel positive about," he said.

If there is enough interest, Ladies Night is planned to continue every Wednesday.

Mestre's next step, after making the

Loyalist ladies more involved in physical activity, is to hopefully create a "Beginners Night" for both genders to come out.

Autumn colours may not be as bright

By April Lawrence

The summer's drought may affect the number of visitors who view autumn colours at provincial parks this fall.

The drought may have caused enough stress to the trees to cause them to turn and drop their leaves earlier and quicker than usual, said Brad Steinberg, chief park naturalist at Algonquin Park.

Steinberg said fall is a big season for them. There are programs such as a one-day fall foliage photography workshop in October that depends on the fall leaf change.

"The busiest weekends of the year are usually the last weekend of September and the first or second weekend in October," said Steinberg. "We'll have literally thousands of people coming through the park museum and hiking our trail and just experiencing the splendour of the leaf change."

Presqu'île Provincial Park may not be affected as much as others, said Lisa McPherson, the natural heritage edu-

cator leader at the park.

She said it's possible the drought this summer may cause a dryer, shorter period for fall colours this year and leaves may change sooner.

'We'll have literally thousands of people coming through the park museum and hiking our trail and just experiencing the splendour of the leaf change.'

Chief park naturalist Brad Steinberg

"With the high winds here (Presqu'île) there is a high possibility that the fall colours will be here one

day and gone the next," said McPherson.

There were over one million visits to Ontario Parks in the fall of 2011. In September, the total number of day and camping trips at the parks was 870, 859. In October, the total number of visits, day and camping trips included, was 294,842 for a total of more than one million visitors, said Lori Waldbrook, the senior marketing specialist with Ontario parks, in an email.

Laura Robson, an ecologist with Ontario Nature, said that the drought wouldn't have caused too much damage to the trees. She said the tree populations that would be affected most would be saplings and young trees.

Steinberg said that it can't be predicted how the change will affect the park. He said the leaf change at Algonquin Park seems to be on track. They are not at the peak of the season yet so he can't yet say if the drought will affect visitation.

Apples...

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"Lots of trees don't have anything on. You might get a tree that has half a bushel on and the next tree doesn't have anything on and even the ones that do have are pretty sparse," he said.

Foster hasn't had the problems with the quality of the apples, adding they are just as good as other years.

"There's been a dramatic decrease in the quantity of apples, not the quality," he said, "We got excellent quality."

Foster said there will still be enough apples to go around.

"We'll have enough apples to satisfy our local customers," he said.

Foster also grows other produce on his farm, such as tomatoes, beans, peppers, potatoes and broccoli. He said the weather conditions have not affected the other foods quite as badly as apples. This is not the case for everyone though, as Dempsey said that his pear crop suffered greatly this year.

Blake and Sandy Vader of Vader farms get their apples from Waupoos and then in turn sell them at the Belleville farmers'

market. They too have had problems with quantity.

"The sales have been good, the volume just isn't there," said Sandy Vader.

While sales are good now, the concern is that with the limited crop of apples around, the Vaders won't be able to continue to sell them throughout the rest of the year.

"Right now, I'm able to get the volume I want, but in a couple months the apples won't be there," said Vader, "Quality wise they're very good, but I probably won't have them till Christmas this year."

While the quantity means that the number of fresh apples for sale this year will be limited, it also means that several specialty treats, such as apple pie, juice and cider also will not be as readily available.

"There won't be apple cider, or at least local apple cider for us, the guy we deal with just doesn't have the apples this year," said Vader.

So what does next year have in store for the apple growers of the area?

"I wouldn't even wish to speculate, that's too tough of a call to make," said Dempsey.

Foster remains a little more optimistic about what the future will bring.

"That's a crystal ball question, next year will always be better," he said.

Lady Lancers soar, men stumble in volleyball exhibition action

By Taylor Renkema

A look of undeniable pride on her face, the new Loyalist College women's volleyball captain Kirsten Talsma beams while talking about the team's win against Fleming.

"I'm so psyched for this year," Talsma said.

The Lancers took the exhibition game in four sets, winning the first two with scores of 25-9 and 25-21 at Loyalist on Sept. 26. Fleming answered back in the third set with a 25-18 win, but Loyalist's energy was unbeatable in the fourth, which they won 28-26.

In men's action, Fleming took the game 3-2.

Talsma, who is in her third year with the

team, said sometimes things got confusing, and other times things worked out perfectly.

"We threw a lot of people into a lot of different positions," she said. "It was just a big learning experience – we wanted to see who works well where."

Talsma is one of six veterans on the team this season, along with LeeAnne Jeffs, Jenny Richardson, Kristen Curtis, Katie Glass, and Linette Melick.

Meghan Hering, a rookie on this year's team, got a surprise when her older sister from New Brunswick showed up to watch the game. Hering said the tight-knit team makes it easier to play as a rookie.

"We're all so close, on and off the court," Hering said. "It just helps us do better, play better and be better."

Fleming's coach Don Hart said that his team only has three returning players and the rest are straight out of high school.

"They have very little club experience, so yes, we've got some work to do," he said.

Hart said he wants to see his team improve on their serving, and their defense.

The men's team was up next, facing a Fleming team that had just gone through a thorough revamp, said Loyalist head coach Dave Templar.

"They've done a lot of work in the summer, clearly, and kudos to them," he said. "We've got some spots to build on, but it was pretty close, right from the start."

Fleming took an early lead, winning the first set by four points. The teams alternated set victories through the rest of

the game, with the Knights winning three of five sets. Fleming's Brandon Perry was given a yellow card in the fourth set when, according to the referee, he "inappropriately challenged a referee's decision" after a point was given to Loyalist. Fleming took the fifth and final set 15-9, sealing the win for the Knights.

Templar said because it was an exhibition match, he had different expectations.

"I have high expectations for the effort that they put in and for their attitudes and for their commitment level, but aside from that I don't put high expectations on them on the court, because I just don't think it's worth it really," he said, adding that the point of an exhibition game is to see what the team needs to work on.

Fleming coach Achebe Victorine doesn't buy into the exhibition game mentality.

"We don't take anything as an exhibition game," he said. "Everything is regular season intensity for us."

Josh Lappala is the new captain for the Lancer's men's team. He said there are only three returning players this year, so he has to step up.

"Taking responsibility for the players, and actually doing more than just my role on the court," he said.

He said that losing last year's captain and setter Matt Woods has had a particularly big impact on the team.

"Big shoes to fill," Lappala said. "Woods was always our loud guy, so I guess that's got to be me now. I've got to find a voice."

City transit aiming high for ridership

Aiming for one million riders for 2012

By Harrison Perkins

Belleville Transit has replaced its entire fleet of buses over the past eight years.

On Monday afternoon, Belleville City Council approved the purchase of a new bus to replace an existing bus, which dates back to 1998.

With the new addition approved on Monday, the benefit of having one model for all 15 buses will result.

Belleville city councillor Jack Miller said transit is going through an operational review and there will probably be an overhaul of the mobility aspect of the system.

Matt Coffey, manager of Belleville transit, said no additional money was spent on the new bus.

"We've had money in the budget set aside; it will replace our Orion bus from 1998 that is due to be replaced," Coffey said.

The new bus was purchased for \$465,000, below the \$500,000 budgeted.

Coffey said ridership for transit is high and transit is aiming for one million riders for 2012.

Rider Erin Sweet said she's relatively happy with transit in the city.

"I think it's pretty good, perhaps maybe another bus for Loyalist, they get pretty jammed packed in the morning," said Sweet, who is a student at the college.

Miller said there are extra buses at key times for the Loyalist route.

"When Loyalist isn't in, the number seven doesn't carry as many people obviously but at the same time we have extra buses on the Loyalist route at the key times in the morning and in the afternoon, we run two and even sometimes three to carry the overflow," Miller said.

While Loyalist student Jaclyn VanExan agrees with Sweet when it comes to the amount of people riding on the buses at once, VanExan is happy with the service overall.

"It's a nice way to get around," VanExan said, adding she takes the bus about twice a day and it's her main mode of transportation while going to school.

Emily Burton also takes Belleville Transit to and from school. She said scheduling is her main concern.

"Sometimes it's not on time and that can be problematic," Burton said.

In addition to scheduling, Burton echoed the thoughts of Sweet and VanExan when it comes to the amount of people, saying it is usually "busy" and "crowded."



Photo by Harrison Perkins

Students exit a Belleville transit bus at the Loyalist Kente building on Wednesday. City transit is aiming for one million riders this year.