



Haley Sisler drives towards the basket during her game against the Centennial Colts Oct. 30. Sisler put 11 points on the board as the Lady Lancers played a close game for their season opener winning 51-48. The men didn't fare as well, losing 74-73. For story and photo, see page 3.

By Alicia Wynter

A ghostly, historic walk

By Gail Paquette

Dressed in a top hat seemingly plucked from the head of Ben Franklin, a cloak reminiscent of Jack the Ripper and the colour purple signifying the regality of eras past, Johnathon Boyd is a walking, talking and dressed accordingly, history lesson.

As Boyd winds his guests through the streets of Belleville hosting Shadowicc Ghost Walks, he uncovers what he calls "Belleville's best kept secrets."

Boyd has done his homework, something his mother, a teacher for 32 years, would approve of. Before he stepped out onto the darkened streets to give his first tour five years ago, he poured over facts, photos and newspaper articles for more than a year.

"Everything is true, that I talk about. There is documentation of it all. I am not a historian, I ride on the shoulders of those before me," he said.

Born and raised in the Belleville area, Boyd's personal ties to the area date back to his great-great grandfather.

Beyond that connection, Boyd makes no bones about being attached to the past and in a big way to the spirit world since his near death experience at age 2 ?.

Growing up, he said he wondered why he never heard anything in school about local history.

He scoured library shelves, newspaper archives and historical documents.

Now Belleville's past spills from his lips without abandon, leaving listeners wanting more.

Research is constant and he says the Corby Library, Hastings Historical Society and Belleville Intelligencer archives are his favourite haunts. "Information for the asking," he said.

On his search of publications and old records, very often he uncovers the strange and untalked about past including a visit to the city by the Ku Klux Klan and the last public hanging of a woman in Canada, Mary Aylward.

"It was December 8, 1862 and 5,000 people showed up on one of the worst winter days to watch. They left the bodies of Aylward and her husband hanging for half hour," said Boyd, "and then cut down the bodies and sold pieces of the ropes as souvenirs."

Every so often, Boyd has approached homeowners in wanting more information; some he said are very giving – others not so much.

Fear, he said, is the biggest factor for property owners not wanting to know of the past that eludes their doorstep, especially if it involves a death.

"Over in European countries, death is celebrated and wisdom from the wise men and women who live before is relished," he says. "Here in North America, we mourn the dead."

His insatiable curiosity and need to know was at first a curse in his life but over the years he has embraced that need. His curiosity is never ending.

Labelled as weird throughout his life, he kept his secret under wraps until embracing his psychic gifts and sharing them with close friends.

Shadowicc Ghost Walks, explained Boyd, is a step back in time. He says his life mission is to help people understand the paranormal, supernatural and the occult with intelligence, compassion and understanding.

Anyone could choose to do this, he said. The history on Belleville and surrounding area is in abundance if you are willing and wanting to know.

Dressed in attire indicative of the 1800s, Boyd's theatrics include humorous anecdotes.

"I don't want it to be too dry," he said. The evening is not to spook but to tell truths behind the walls and floorboards of Belleville's most historical buildings.

"It is not only about those who lived here but the buildings they occupied. It is an historical architectural tour as well," he said.

When he began his tours in Belleville in 2007, it wasn't as readily accepted as it is now. He said he believes that it is down to many things. The information highway lined with computer technology and recent writings like the Da Vinci Code and Angels and Demons have awakened people's curiosity.

"It is also because people are wanting to return to their roots and the simpler times of their ancestors. That means learning about their past," he said.

A past that harbours documented truths of the strange and unusual.

"People ignore the strange and unusual, I myself am the strange and unusual," quotes Boyd from a favourite movie, Beetlejuice.

Boyd enjoys the chance through his tours to get together with the open-minded to help them feel at ease with the spirits and answer tough questions most people want to ignore.

Dual-citizens ready to post absentee ballots from Canada

By Justin Tang

Jesse Cranin was 10 days from turning 18 when President Barack Obama was elected the 44th President of the United States on Nov. 4, 2008.

Now 21-years-old, the fourth-year

health studies student at Queen's University wasn't going to miss his chance to vote this time around.

Absentee ballots are hardly uncommon in the American electoral landscape – President Obama made history by being the first president to vote early through

absentee ballot this year. Americans go to the polls Nov. 6 to decide between Democrat incumbent Obama and Republican candidate Mitt Romney.

Being away from his hometown of Acton, Massachusetts has made following the election different, but not difficult for

the dual-citizen.

"The climate is just different," Cranin says, of following the campaigns from Canada.

"While it's easy to connect, discuss and share ideas, at the same time, there is an amount of disconnection because no one

is voting here."

The dual-citizen says it's not difficult to follow the campaigns, thanks to social media and the Internet, but the physical proximity has led to a feeling of disenfranchisement.

...See Election, page 2

Priest shares the story of his ministry

Editor's Note: As part of this documentary photo and feature writing assignment, photojournalism student Richard Barclay considered his own relationship with religion.

By Richard Barclay

In preparation for my meeting with Father Timothy Shea, local Catholic priest in Belleville at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, I found myself thinking back in time, trying to figure out when was the last time I had gone to church by choice.

It was then that I realized that I had never been to church by my own choice. I realized the last time I had even been inside a church was for my cousin's wedding almost three years ago, and the time before that was when I was in Grade 8 and getting confirmed as a Catholic, which was also not my choice.

So there I was, standing in the parking lot of St. Joseph's Church, realizing that this is the very first time I was going to church because I wanted to, and it wasn't even for a mass moreso for an inquiry into the life of a Catholic priest.

I rang the side doorbell and a woman answered the door. The first thing she noticed about me was all the lighting equipment and camera gear that I had slung around my shoulders. She looked at me and smiled as she said, "You must be here to take Father Shea's photo."

She led me towards the main part of the church where they hold all of the ceremonies. She said Father Shea would be out in a few minutes; he was just on the phone.

So I took this time to set up my lights and try to figure out what I was going to say and how I was going to make an interesting photo.

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Photo by Richard Barclay

Father Timothy Shea originally from Kingston, has been a priest at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Belleville for the past four years.

Holocaust survivor won't be silenced

Eva Olsson speaks to end the hatred and enforce change around the world

By Gail Paquette

When Eva Olsson took the microphone in hand in front of a jammed auditorium at Loyalist College Oct. 16, she was speaking for 11 million people who were silenced by hate.

Olsson recounted everything she can about the Holocaust with resilience and grace, from the eyes of a young woman. In 1944, at the age of 19, she and her family were taken in boxcars to Auschwitz – Birkenau, what we all now know as the Holocaust.

Olsson began her speaking tour 16 years ago at the age of 72. At a time when most would be retired, she conjured the courage to tell her story.

Her gentle grandma-ish nature enraptured the audience. Her message is what hate can do. Never say “I hate,” she said.

At 87, she travels the world and has spoken to over one million people in schools, churches, on armed force bases and at police force conferences. She said it is the audience that gives her strength. “How can I be tired when so many people love me?” she asked.

Her gentle voice that rose at poignant moments of her speech was accompanied by a slide show of images. Her eyes moistened with tears as her mother's photo comes on the screen.

“I never got to say good-bye and I love you,” she said, as she recalled losing sight of her mother when they were marched into Auschwitz. She never knew her mother was being taken to the gas chambers.

“I didn't see her and I didn't know where she was. I wished I could of put my arms around her and tell her I loved her and sorry I disobeyed her.”

“Do it while you can, for me it was too late,” she implored. “My mom was 49 and

I never saw my her again.”

One feels pain in the pit of their stomach but Olsson is not there to garner pity. She speaks to stop hatred and is there to enforce change.

“If all this suffering does not help us to broaden our horizons to attain a greater humanity by shedding all trifle and irrelevant issues, then it will all have been for nothing,” she said.

Olsson said she realizes that hate and genocide still exist in the world and the audience knowingly share her views. Unfortunately, she said hate and intolerance will always be with us.

She ensured the audience that she will continue to speak as long as she can so the voices that the Nazis so cruelly silenced will not be forgotten.

Racism and hatred are learned attitudes and can be prevented with compassion, she said.

“How can one feel good about putting one down? The only thing that lasts is the pain they cause other human beings.”

Olsson and her family were victims of the worst hatred but she never gave up.

“I refused to give up. I said to myself as I sat among the dead, ‘I can not die here, I will not die, who will take care of my sister,’” she said.

Olsson speaks up in hopes others will. “I cannot change the past and the future lies in your hands. What will you leave behind?” she asked.

“You will be the last generation to hear my message. Please tell your children. They need to hear the truth because only the truth will set us free.”

Olsson empowers those who experience hatred to speak up. A bystander is as guilty of hatred as the perpetrator, she explained.

If a less than five-foot tall, 87-year-old woman who has experienced the worse hatred in the world can garner courage, we all can.

“They murdered my family and I need to be here to tell you, never to take your family for granted,” she said. “Thank you from the bottom of my heart for allowing me to keep the spirit of my family alive.”



Photo by Gail Paquette

Holocaust survivor Eva Olsson shares a light moment following a Loyalist presentation Oct. 16.

Election...

Continued from Page 1

“In 2008, when Obama was elected, I was in Grade 12. They took us out of class and we watched as a grade on a mass projector.”

Nonetheless, Canadian interest in the American election makes following the election easier.

“Canadians are extremely well versed in American politics,” Cranin adds. “People care about the election here, but it's not the same kind of passion.”

“People don't really take a stance – there's no real backing behind the stance – more than opinion. There's no drive.”

While Hurricane Sandy forced the

presidential candidates to change their campaign plans, it also complicated plans for one eligible first-time voter.

First-year Loyalist College broadcast engineering student Paul Rocci, 20, was set to vote for the first time in the 57th elections but wasn't able to request an absentee ballot before deadline.

Absentee ballots are governed by state: Rocci's home state of New Jersey required eligible voters to submit voter registration forms by Oct. 16 and mail in absentee ballot applications by Oct. 30.

The Basking Ridge, New Jersey native found himself consumed by preparations for then-imminent Hurricane Sandy when he returned home for fall reading break.

“I was planning on looking into it, over the last two weeks. I was caught up, hearing about the storm coming. The storm

took my mind off [the election].”

The State of New Jersey was among the hardest hit by Hurricane Sandy, and Rocci's family beach home in Seaside Heights – a popular tourist and resort community – is expected to be among the casualties. The family's home in Basking Ridge will not have power for two weeks.

“I would have voted if I had the opportunity to. If I were back in the States I would have 100 per cent been voting. After everything that's happened, it's really the last thing on my mind right now.”

Rocci expects that the hurricane, and the candidates' responses will have implications on their election's outcome. Rocci says he's been impressed by Republican candidate Romney's reaction.

“A lot of people in New Jersey are focusing on it. This is going to be a big elec-

tion changer.”

Despite missing out on the 2012 election, Rocci says he values the significance of being able to vote.

“Turning 18 means I can go to war and I can vote – we take that with pride.”

Voting in the American election for the first time is significant to Cranin as well, who has voted in Canadian federal and provincial elections in the past.

“The importance of voting is democracy: it is being able to express your view in a manner that will actually make a difference.

“Of course democracy doesn't exist globally so by having the opportunity to cast a vote, you're participating in something that is much more broad and important than anything you can comprehend.”

Priest...

Continued from Page 1

Right after I had finished setting up, Father Shea walked in from the back of the church put out his hand and introduced himself then followed up with, “So, how do I look?”

In return, I shook his hand and introduced myself and assured him that he looked more than presentable for the photograph. In between adjusting my lights and positions, I tried to think of a way to dig beneath the surface of the seemingly relaxed, nonchalant Father Shea.

I started by asking him what it was that drew him towards the priesthood and what it was that made him decide to dedicate his life to Catholicism. This, after all, was the main prerogative of me being there.

“Well, during high school, I really wanted to become a teacher,” replied Father Shea, “but that never worked out, so I decided to become a priest.”

Baffled by his response, that gave me more questions than answers. I struggled to come up with another way to phrase the question that I knew he did not want to get into.

Father Shea was not like any of the Catholic priests that I had dealt with from my past. He was cool, comical, relaxed and extremely patient with me, allowing me to have full range of creativity, even to the point of instructing him what to wear.

The priests that I had grown up around were strict, old and crabby. So I decided to take advantage of Father Shea's willingness to work with me, rather than trying to pry out some kind of truly open comment that would explain why it is he became a priest.

While we were moving to the confessional, another question popped into my head.

“What is the most stressful part of being a priest?” I asked.

Father Shea was surprised by my question and replied contemplatively, “Knowing whether I am saying the right things.”

I was very taken aback by his honest response, especially after his previous nonchalant answer. There it was – the most straightforward response I had gotten from Father Shea.

I asked him to explain more about what he meant. He said a lot of people come to him when they are in a time of crisis and they depend on him to give them an answer or a sign that will make them feel better.

This was the first time I realized the burden that a priest can carry could be very big as well as stressful.

After my meeting with Father Shea, I have found a new respect for priests and people who are able to fully dedicate themselves to something that in the end is of service to others.

I don't think it will have me running back to the church as a parishioner, but I feel that I have a better understanding of why it is they do what they do.

Men becoming hairy for cancer

Moustasche growing part of month's fundraising for prostate cancer research

By Kayleen Preston

Normally during the three o'clock break, the co-workers of Three-H Furniture Manufacturing in Haileybury, Ont., rush to take a moment from work. But things were different on Oct. 25.

Workers gathered around as they watched five of their co-workers who are participating in Movember, shave off the moustache of Norm Villneff. Villneff was encouraged by the co-workers in the Three-H plant, to participate with them for Movember.

Instead of being part of the group, he suggested to help raise more money. If they had raised \$500, he would shave off his moustache.

Many of the co-workers had never seen Villneff without a moustache.

“Ninety per cent of them haven't seen me without a moustache. The other ten percent don't remember what it looks like,” explained Villneff.

Even Andrew Willard, one of the men participating in Movember and Villneff's nephew, couldn't remember what he looked like without a moustache.

With the incentive to raise \$500, the five men went around both the plant and the office, explaining the situation and asking co-workers for donations. Within two days, they had raised \$585. Therefore, that day the men agreed that during their three o'clock break, the moustache would be shaved off.

As Villneff sat nervously in the chair, the five men from the “My Furry Friend” Movember group took turns shaving off the memorable moustache. They began with an electric razor to get off the thicker, longer hairs, with Villneff trying not to laugh the whole time.

As the men brought out an actual ra-



Photo by Kayleen Preston

After \$585 were raised by the staff of Three-H Furniture manufacturing within two days, Norm Villneff agreed to have his moustache shaved off on Oct. 25 by his co-worker and friend Jim Johnston.

zor to get the finer hairs, Villneff's lip wouldn't stop quivering.

After the shave had been completed, many of the co-workers offered congratulations, stating he “looked 25 years younger” and “I wonder if your wife will recognize you when you get home.”

Villneff later admitted to being a little worried, but said it was all in fun, and he wanted to help the men raise more money. The inspiration behind Villneff's idea of shaving off his moustache for fun was because in the past, his own father battled

prostate cancer and survived. He believes the Movember Foundation is a terrific idea.

The five men of “My Furry Friend” (Andrew Willard, Kevin Lendt, Jim Johnston, Cory Garreau, and Andy Ethier) shaved everything off Oct. 31 and will grow their facial hair for the entire month of November with no trimming or shaving.

Movember started in 2004 in Australia, but has now become known worldwide. As proven by the men of Three-H Furni-

ture, this is not only an event for students in high school, or college, but also men of all ages.

Every November, people register to be a part of Movember online, and raise money towards prostate cancer research. In turn, the men do not shave their moustaches for the entire month. Last year, the foundation raised \$125.7 million.

For more information on Movember or to register, visit the website <http://ca.movember.com>.

Lancer basketball action

Women's team fights back while men lose close one

Men give up nine-point lead from the first half

By Taylor Renkema

Lady Lancers' head coach Chris Eligh had some spirited words for his players during a second quarter timeout.

After watching his team allow 16 unanswered points, he shouted at them to "show some pride in their G** damn team."

The women's team seemed to take his words to heart as they battled back from the 16-point deficit in the second half to win 51-48. In game two of the double-header, the men lost 74-73 after losing a nine-point lead in the first half.

Eligh said despite the win, he was not impressed with the way his team played. "There was no heart. I just told them to show some heart and pride, that's all they've got to do is show some heart," he said.

Haley Sisler, three-year veteran and guard/ forward, said the comments helped fire the team up.

"It gives us a reality check and it gets us back in the game," she said. "That's what we need, because we clearly weren't playing well together and it gave us a push and made us play a lot better."

The women were missing one of their star guards, Jenni Thompson, who had a recurring ankle/foot injury, said Loyalist's Athletic Director Jim Buck. Before the game, Buck said he thought it could be a tough game with a short bench of just eight players, but after the game he said the women found a way to make it work.

Martine Gauvin, a guard and two-year veteran of the team, said while she was glad they came back and won, the team could have done better.

"We absolutely didn't play at our standard, we definitely played at their standard," she said. "But it's a good thing we came back"

Sisler said even though they won, it was a poor start to the season.

"We haven't been practising very well together lately," she said. "We've just been very sluggish lately and that reflected on our game."

Centennial guard Kadeja Hughes said her team should have fought harder.

"Loyalist is a team that we had a lot of

back-and-forth with last year, so we definitely expected that this game was going to be a fight."

In men's action, a last minute three-pointer brought the Lancers within one point of tying the Colts. Men's head coach Rich Whitfield said he's not surprised his team lost.

"How can you win a game when you miss 14, 15 foul shots?" he said. "And then give up 20 offensive rebounds? You just can't win at this level doing that"

In the 2011-2012 season, Centennial won the OCAA East Division Championship, and Loyalist was in ninth place of the 11 teams.

Colts head coach Jim Barclay said Loyalist has improved each of the three previous games against Centennial.

"They shot the lights out in the first half, they had eight three-pointers, we only had two," he said. "So in the second half we had to step up our defense."

Natiel McKenzie, a point guard/shooting guard for the Colts, said his team had to keep pushing until the very last second.

"We've got to keep coming out each quarter hungry. We don't want guys getting lazy, thinking the game's over. To see 14 [Matt Miller] hit that three-pointer in the last seconds of the game, that just shows you that the game's never over until the buzzer rings."

The Lancers had a nine-point lead in the first half, and by the end of the third quarter the Colts had taken over, leading Loyalist 58-53.

Guards Matt Miller and Pat Kalala lead the Lancers with four three-pointers each. Kalala said it's not always easy keeping the morale up on the court.

"You try to lead by example," he said. "Through the pre-season, coaches have really stressed on me being a leader. I really didn't want it at first, but I'm pretty much used to it by now. You try to get everyone to pay attention to the game, and get them vocal."

Kalala said there's one major difference with this year's team.

"We have different personalities, but the best thing about being on this team is that everyone gets along, and everyone likes to hang around with one another."

Whitfield said the team has a lot to work on, including foul shots and rebounding, but echoed Kalala's thoughts.

"We're a team, we're a family. It really is one for all."



Photo by Taylor Renkema

Lancer Brayden Gohn slam dunks the ball after a breakaway pass. Centennial edged Loyalist 74-73.

Theft at Resource Centre 'hits close to home'

By Sam Normand

The Aboriginal Resource Centre at Loyalist College encourages an open-door policy for students, but over reading week, someone decided to open the doors for themselves.

Two iMac computers, a video camera and several laptops were stolen from the centre. Those responsible left marks from pry-bars used on the doors. Staff rooms were left in chaos, file cabinets rifled through, even keyboards and mice were taken.

Paul Latchford, coordinator for the centre, said he is confused why someone would break into a facility designed to help.

"It becomes personal. This centre is open to each and every student," said Latchford. "We've seen a mix of students come through, so I think people take it on a personal note. Most students in a college that have come this far, I don't think you would take something that you use. It's kind of cutting off the hand that feeds you."

The theft occurred during the weekend between Oct. 19 and 22, after the centre was closed. Latchford said he normally stays after hours, but had instead gone home for the weekend. When the center opened at 8 a.m. on the 22nd the break-and-enter was discovered. Police were in the building an hour later.

The centre hopes to have the missing equipment replaced, but it's too early to tell at this point whether they'll be able to replace every stolen item.

College officials did not return calls requesting an interview.

While the break in is an unexpected shock, Latchford said that it wouldn't discourage the open-door policy that is the hallmark of the resource centre.

"That's our style, the doors always open, always will be open. I don't think this will change anything," he said.

"I don't see any big changes for us other than, you know, maybe the existing stations that we have we may need to look at a better way to secure them."

Belleville police are currently investigating the incident, according to Sgt. Julie Forestell.

This isn't the first time that equipment has been stolen from the college. In 2011-2012, 13 iMacs were stolen from the college from various media facilities. Replacements were valued at \$2,300 each at the time.

In 2010, \$150,000 worth of equipment was stolen from the Loyalist school of trades program.

In both instances the equipment was never recovered but was replaced by the college.

Belleville city council looks at approving fair-wage policy

By Miller Reynolds

Contractors in the Belleville area may soon be working on a more level playing field.

Belleville city council will have to decide whether or not to approve a fair-wage policy, which would ensure that non-unionized and unionized workers will receive the same amount of wages for the same work being done on city projects.

Union representatives presented a

power-point presentation about fair wages at last Monday's council meeting, and council is now reviewing the policy.

Mike York, president of the Carpenters Local 27 in Toronto, said the fair-wage policy has been in place in Toronto for over 100 years, and would benefit the City of Belleville.

"It's been a very effective mechanism to ensure that workers are paid appropriately and accordingly to a standard rate within the industry," he said.

"It establishes a level playing field for all contractors wishing to do business with the city."

York said this policy would force contractors to rely on other qualifications to stand out from the crowd to be hired by the city.

"Once the decision making is based on who has the most productive workers, who has the safest workforce, whose workers deliver a quality project on time, then it's all driven by a more level playing field," he said.

"Why should one contractor have an advantage over all the contractors in the sector just because they exploit their workers to a greater degree?" he said.

Joel Neville, business manager for the Local 397 carpenters union, said the policy would attract contractors to work in Belleville.

"You're attracting a better tradesperson, people who are more inclined to go and work somewhere where they're getting a good wage, and if they don't than they're going to go elsewhere."

City councillor Pat Culhane, who has about 16 years of union work experience, said she needs more information before she can decide whether or not this policy is suitable for Belleville.

"Of course, I want to see reasonable, decent wages paid to people, and I see the problems in society today with people working two and sometimes even three part times jobs at minimum wage," she said.

"I have to have more information," she said.

Give some thought to choice of costume

Aboriginal Ronald Leaman offended by image created by Pocahontas costumes

By Tyson Leonard

Halloween is a holiday of fun and laughter for most, but for Aboriginals like Ronald Leaman, it can be frightening for the wrong reasons.

Leaman, from the Magnetawan First Nations, said he is offended when he sees people dressed up in cheap Pocahontas costumes with fake moccasins and head-dresses.

Leaman, a second-year student in the custom border services program at Loyalist College, works in between classes in the college's Aboriginal Resource Centre.

Leaman said not everyone who dresses up as a culture is being offensive, though. He said it's an issue of respect.

"I do think it can be offensive for people that are portraying the culture wrong," said Leaman.

"If they portray the culture in a half decent manner, then it could be acceptable."

If they're doing it as an attempt to get to know more about the culture and to educate others, Leaman said it's acceptable.

To Leaman this means more than just picking up a package costume from the store.

"The people that are just going and buying the Indian suit, I find that can be quite offensive," said Leaman.

"To me it just seems like they're making a mockery of it."

Leaman said even if costume stores got rid of offensive costumes, people would still make them. As for stopping people from dressing in offensive costumes, he



Photo by Tyson Leonard

Ronald Leaman from the Magnetawan First Nations said he is offended when he sees people dressed up in cheap Pocahontas costumes with fake moccasins and headdresses.

said people have to take responsibility themselves.

"It's kind of hard to say no to certain costumes because it is Halloween. It's supposed to be fun, and you're changing what you normally do to be something different. So to say that people can't wear a costume it seems a little bit authoritarian, but I guess there would have to be limits," said Leaman.

Kelly Cooper, owner-operator at Costume Castle and Ballooniebin in Belleville, said she would never sell offensive costumes.

Cooper has been selling and renting Halloween costumes and balloons for almost 15 years.

"The Ku Klux Klan would not be acceptable, or anything else racist," said Cooper.

She said she doesn't consider dressing as a culture for Halloween to be automatically offensive.

"Different cultures have their different fashions, and I have no problem with renting Mexican sombreros and ponchos, because that's what they actually wear," said Cooper.

Cooper also sells costumes meant to resemble Aboriginal and Chinese dress.

Cooper doesn't see it as a race issue because people can dress up as a stereotypical German in lederhosen.

Halloween is all about having fun, just not at anyone's expense, said Cooper.

"As long as you're not making fun of somebody, and not putting down their culture or their traditions, it's fine," said Cooper.

Dr. Pamela Palmater, the chair of Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University, said cultural costumes are discriminatory no matter what the intent is.

"Discrimination has nothing to do with intentions, and has everything to do

with the impact it has on the individual," said Palmater.

Palmater works as a professor at Ryerson and has written several books on the First Nations and aboriginal identity. She was the runner-up in the last Assembly of First Nations leadership elections.

"What people are doing when they dress as KKK or as slaves is showing a profound acceptance of the horrors that different cultures have gone through at the hands of European colonizers or settlers," said Palmater.

The same goes for people who dress as stereotypical perceptions of indigenous people, said Palmater.

"It's more than just offensive, it actually promotes a negative attitude towards indigenous people, which is harmful," said Palmater.

There are more than enough different costumes ideas to choose from that won't offend anyone, said Palmater.

Palmater said there is a big difference between dressing as an indigenous person or a slave, and dressing as a European culture. She said the historical context of genocide and slavery can't be ignored.

It's everyone's responsibility to stop the practice of wearing offensive costumes, even storeowners, said Palmater.

"If you engage in a public activity, you have to respect the rights, human rights, of all the people you serve," said Palmater. "I think more and more as people raise these issues they will be addressed."

One of the most widespread campaigns against offensive costumes is the "We're a Culture not a Costume" poster campaign started by the Ohio University's Students Teaching About Racism in Society. The campaign features 11 posters with people from different cultures showing examples of offensive costumes.