

Young rock band impresses

Social Underground leads busy life as well as going to school

By Laura Boudreau

"I just don't like shoes. I feel so free without them," says Chantel Johnston, an 18-year-old singer/songwriter from Deseronto. When she was little, she never wore shoes anywhere.

"It is like my trademark. I don't wear shoes when I play. It is just my space and shoes get in the way."

The Social Underground is a young rock band that plays gigs at many bars in Napanee and Kingston. The band consists of Johnston, Tyler Wright and Cory Coles. Johnston is the lead singer, Wright is the guitarist and backup vocalist and Coles plays the drums and also does backup vocals.

The band started playing together five to six months ago and had their first acoustic gig at Loaf and Ale in Napanee. They still play there frequently. The young band leads a busy life while dealing with their band and going to school.

The band concentrates on creating their own sound along with playing the rock hits that everyone loves. They have so much passion for the art of music and they all play their own important role and personality.

Johnston is the lead and the boss. Coles is the 'beat' – rocking out in his signature bandanna and sunglasses and Wright is the goof and jokester in the band.

"I work the boys really hard, but they are usually good sports about the whole thing," said Johnston.

"She is a slave driver!" said Wright.

"But we love her anyway," said Coles.

Johnston goes to Loyalist College, and is taking the business administration human resource management program.

"I am currently at Loyalist College and I am loving every moment of it!" said Johnston. She takes part in a lot of the school's activities, such as student council and working for The Shark Tank Pub.

Wright does not do much when it comes to life without the band. He likes to play his PlayStation 3 in his spare time when he's not practising.

According to Coles, his whole life revolves around music and this band. He has always wanted to play, ever since he was little.

"I remember when I was six years old



Photo by Laura Boudreau

The Social Underground's (l-r) Cory Coles, Chantel Johnston and Tyler Wright have a real passion for their art of playing music. Not only do they play but they write their own original material such as songs like *Glass Houses* and *Fall Out*.

waking up in my father's bed looking around and there would be drums and guitar. It was like the whole band was ready to play at any time," said Coles.

"It is so difficult in this industry where

people have done everything twice. We're trying to put originality into it but we can only do the best we can," said Wright.

The Social Underground said they play simply for the love of music. They all

love making people dance and smile and said they would spend their entire lives doing what it is they are doing right now.

"I most look forward to the rush. Like when you go up on stage, the crowd

is rooting for you, you're playing your sound, you are putting everything on the line for these guys, and the feeling you get when they love it, it's a feeling that you can't get anywhere else," said Wright.

Latin American campaigner shares stories during Amesty International presentation

By Melyssa Gloude

"It's a message," a voice rings out over the silenced crowd. "A message that tells us how incredibly important action really is." The voice belongs to Kathy Price, Amnesty International's lead Latin American campaigner.

Price was the featured speaker at Sunday night's event in Belleville showcasing and featuring a body of photographic work by Juan Pablo Gutierrez depicting native indigenous people struggling to survive in Colombia.

"And the survival, the survival of people's dignity is in all of our hands."

"Our trip to Columbia enabled (us) to witness the enormous amount of strength and protagonism in Columbians."

Price, who is avid human rights activist, believes very strongly in her cause and said she was glad to be able to speak out and raise awareness at Belleville's Amnesty International chapter.

Price shared her images and videos from her recent expedition to Colombia and spoke about what Canadians can do to make a difference. A former journalist, Price believes in the "power of images to raise awareness and inspire action."

The photo exhibit that is being celebrated is titled "This is what we want to tell you: photo messages from indigenous people at risk of disappearance in Colombia." The portraits on display depict the native peoples of Colombia bravely making a silent plea for "cultural and physical survival."

Gutierrez visited Colombian indigenous communities on behalf of the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (NIOC) and Amnesty International Canada.

The event itself was hosted at the CORE centre in downtown Belleville, and sponsored by Belleville's own Amnesty Inter-

national chapter, Amnesty International Group 111. The photographs will remain on display until Dec. 6 at the centre.

The co-ordinator of the event, Anthea Weese, says she is pleased with the attendance.

"I'm very happy," said Weese. "I'm glad that this event was extremely well-attended and well received, it was a great turnout."

Weese said he believes that it's great to raise awareness on any scale.

At the end of the evening, attendees were encouraged to ask questions and to speak with Price about her work with the Colombian people. Pre-addressed postcards featuring Gutierrez' work were available for the people of the audience to sign and send to the president of the Republic of Columbia, Juan Manuel Santos, in regards to the current conflict and takeover of their lands.

The conflict in question revolves around the native peoples struggling to survive, thrive and protect their welfare, homes and land. The threat stems from armed conflict between government forces and their allied paramilitary groups against insurgents. This conflict ultimately results in killings, assaults, displacement and disappearances of thousands of Colombians each year. Canada has recently signed a free trade agreement with Colombia, and Amnesty International believes that this human rights issue is something that we as Canadians should be concerned about.

"Large scale mining has led to an escalation of conflict," says Mieke Thorne of Belleville Group 111. "Human rights abuses, forced displacement of indigenous people, loss of crops and traditional ways of life and environmental contamination."

There were also a few musical guest appearances during the evening; Ontario's favourite all-female choral group Shout Sister! led by Cheryl Thrasher, performed prior to Price. Jeanette Arsenault, a local recording artist, also performed. Her lyr-

ics were very reminiscent of the cause and undoubtedly evoked tears in the audience.

Regardless of the time or place, the message of the night, from each and every performer, speaker, co-ordinator and activist was this: "Action or inaction can lead to extinction in animals, and it can

lead to extinction of a people, and of a culture," said Price.

"All you need to do to make a change is raise your voice."

Information regarding Amnesty International Canada's campaign on Latin American can be found at www.amnesty.ca.

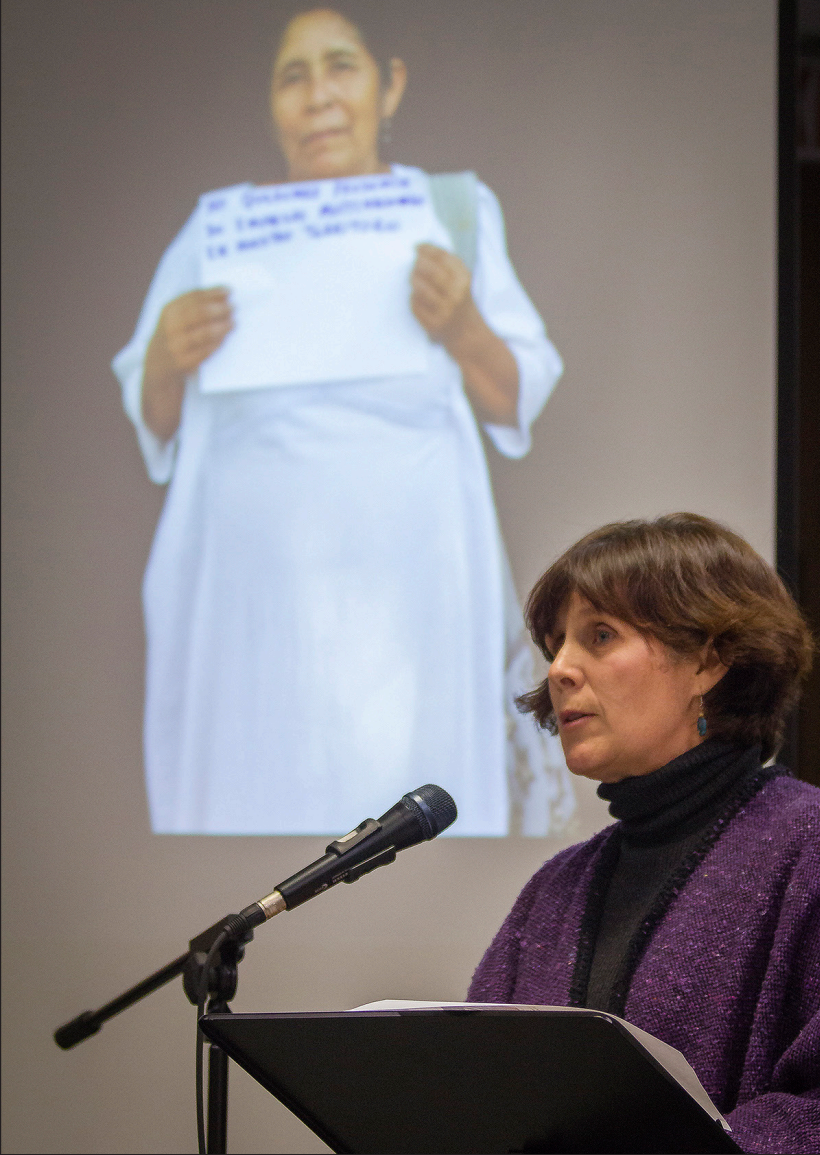


Photo by Melyssa Gloude

Kathy Price, Latin American campaigner for Amnesty International.

Young woman shares cancer journey

By Jenny Robertson

On Aug. 11, 2010, a 17-year-old girl beat the cancer she was expecting to have.

Lynn McBride, a high school student from Caledon, Ont. was diagnosed with papillary thyroid cancer earlier that year.

Even though cancer would come as quite an unexpected shock to most people, for McBride, it was something she sort of expected.

"I wasn't sad about it," McBride says, when she was first diagnosed. "The least worried person was probably me, because I knew that nothing was going to happen. I was going to be fine."

It is very rare to find a person who is as hopeful and confident once finding out they have cancer. McBride explained that the reason she was so calm and understood about having cancer, was because of her family history.

"My entire family has had it, different types. Everyone in my family has had a type of cancer. I had papillary thyroid cancer, which is stage one thyroid cancer."

Not only did several of her family members have cancer, but someone very close to her had it as well. Her mother, Wanda McBride, was diagnosed with breast cancer. She went through treatment for breast cancer twice in the past, six years apart. McBride found more hope for her own cancer by knowing her mother had been able to beat it as well.

Papillary thyroid cancer is the most common type of thyroid cancer, making up almost 80 per cent of thyroid cancer diagnoses. The procedure for removing the cancer consists of removing the thyroid completely from the patient, in a procedure called a thyroidectomy.

"It wasn't my first surgery, so it wasn't scary. My first surgery was when I was a baby. Before I was two, I had tubes in my ears three times," McBride said.

"About a month after, I had two weeks of an iodine-free diet before going into three days of solitary confinement for iodine radiation. I had to take two pills and had three days in the hospital by myself.

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