

Just Getting By

Story and Photos by Sofia Rojas

It was March 17 2012, St. Patrick's Day, a day filled with perfect weather, green beer, parties and good times. But the good times came to an alarming stop for 19-year-old Jennifer Harding of Caledon East, Ont with one phone call. Hearing that her 14-year-old sibling Sarah Harding had been struck by a car was the last thing she wanted to hear.

"When I got to the hospital, my dad pulled me aside. He told me Sarah has passed away," said Harding. Her hands were entwined together, eyes glazed over lightly as she recalled the events that night.

She later found out that Sarah was walking to get ice-cream with her brother and friend when a driver, exceeding the speed limit, struck her while they crossed the road.

Harding explained awkwardly that previous to the event, Sarah had asked Jen to drive them to the ice cream parlour but refused, stating she had other plans because it was St. Patrick's Day.

After losing her sister, life at home drastically changed between family, school and friends. After dropping out of college and unable to find, Jen, admits her days consisted of lying around and smoking weed.

"It just kind of goes with what I do in my life. I guess you could call it self-medication but honestly, I just do it cause it makes me feel good," says Jen explaining why she smokes as much as she does.

Because of other family issues, Jen finds it very difficult to stay home for long periods of time so spends her week at her boyfriend's house, only visiting her family on weekends.

"I just do it cause it makes me feel good..."



Jen Harding visits her sister's memorial sight beside the road Sarah Harding was struck and killed by a speeding diver while going to get ice cream.



Harding stands in her parents' room glancing over the picture of her parents and the urn that holds her sister's ashes



Graduation photos of Jen Harding (left) Sarah Harding (middle) and Even Harding (right).



Harding sits in her living room with a peanut butter sandwich and some milk.



After an intense fight with her mother, Harding sits in her car outside setting up her favourite bong to smoke weed.