



County hunters help in cull

Photos and Story by Justin Tang

Greg O'Hara and his family have been running hounds in Prince Edward County for longer than he can remember but their efforts are now part of a cull of the coyote overpopulation in the region.

"We do it for the sport of it; it's a family tradition. We see who can raise the best hounds," said O'Hara.

With its agricultural land and livestock industry, Prince Edward County is a haven for coyotes. The County reimburses farmers who have livestock killed by coyotes — but only if a carcass can be found.

O'Hara and his group of hunters often receive phone calls from residents asking if they can hunt nearby. The coyotes have been known to kill dogs and cats in addition to livestock.

"They're a predator, they're constantly hunting. They'll take anything in their grasp," said O'Hara.

O'Hara isn't in favour of a bounty for the coyotes, fearing that payouts might lead to an increase in inexperienced hunters who also would also put his dogs at risk.

"We don't want the bounty because you'd get every Tom, Dick and Harry shooting in front of your dogs. You wouldn't know who's shooting anymore."



(Left) A coyote is moved off of an ATV following a day of hunting. The carcasses are brought to the Ministry of Natural Resources who are conducting studies on coyote demographics, diet and activity patterns.



Jeff Keenan looks out across a field for any sign of his hounds as they track a coyote near Ameliasburg in Prince Edward County.



Walker foxhounds yap after tracking and capturing a coyote during hunting on Saturday.

Community opposition fuelled by Quinte Health Care proposal

By Nam Phi Dang

Tensions are continuing to grow as residents of Belleville, Trenton, Picton and Bancroft as well as local politicians oppose funding cuts to Quinte Health Care.

Protesters are aiming their frustrations at QHC and the Local Health Integration Network future budget cuts, spearheaded by the Ontario Ministry of Health.

A goal to save \$10 million before the fiscal year is putting hospitals in Prince Edward and Hastings ccounties and a portion of Northumberland County at risk, including outsourcing certain health services and closing hospital beds.

The proposed solutions provided by the QHC fall under six key goals. They include: continuing to enhance the quality of care, ensuring patients are receiving their care in the right place from the correct care provider, ensuring the services delivered are meeting the health care needs of the patients within the region, making QHC as efficient as possible and maximizing revenue streams.

"It is not possible to remove up to \$10 million from our organization without reducing the number of staff positions, but as always our goal is to manage this as much as possible through avenues like attrition, retirements and offering different positions where possible so that we can minimize the number of staff who need to leave QHC involuntarily," stated QHC President and CEO Mary Clare Egberts in a news release issued March 6.

If the proposed cutbacks go through, QHC would be looking at an overall reduction of 85 positions including both full- and part-time jobs. QHC is saying, however, that there are 77 vacant positions "providing an opportunity for many of affected staff members to either apply for a different job or be reassigned where appropriate." The proposal also includes diverting some outpatient lab services to the community.

Dr. Dick Zoutman, Chief of Staff for QHC, said in a news release on Feb. 7 that the budget cuts are necessary.

"While we have heard from many people that would like hospital-based services to remain as they are today, the entire health care system in Ontario is under-

going a transformational change, more profound than most of us have experienced in our long careers. These changes are necessary to maintain the quality of care we all expect the health care system to deliver over the long term."

Although QHC officials promise to sustain and maintain the organization's quality of health care, most residents oppose the proposed changes.

Sally Freeman, Councillor for Quinte West, began her career in politics as soon a threat to close the doors of Trenton Memorial Hospital was made in the 1990s.

"When they original amalgamated the four sites that make up Quinte Health Care which are Bancroft, Trenton, Picton and of course, Belleville, we noticed right away that they wanted to take a lot of the services away from the three sites and put them all in the Belleville General Hospital site.

"At that point, they even threatened to close Trenton Memorial thinking everyone could use the Belleville hospital and that it would be sufficient. Luckily, we were able to stop that but since then, there has been a definite loss of services and beds to TM so we are trying to prevent more losses," said Freeman.

Freeman said the QHC's proposal will have a significant threat on the Trenton area, especially for a city with an aging demographic.

"The latest threat to the hospital would be taking away five beds, closing the lab, no more physiotherapy outpatients, which is a great loss for the community, and making it expensive for other people to go elsewhere for services. We've got an aging population that needs the hospital services, which is a great deal more than some other cities such as Toronto or Mississauga.

"The Ministry of Health does not look at that but instead, look at geography and decide what will and won't be here. They need to look at not just our population but also our aging population."

Along with Freeman, Mayor John Williams of Quinte West said he is concerned over the QHC strategy.

"Our concern is the strategy of the hospital is to push people out into the community and have them looked after by community agencies such as Red Cross. We are in favour for that. How-



Photo by Nam Phi Dang

Quinte West Mayor John Williams along with other council members oppose Ontario's Ministry of Health new funding cuts spearheaded by the QHC and LHIN.

ever, the services that would provide that are not in a position to do that properly yet. Our argument is that you have to get those outside agencies enough money to fund themselves properly. But until then, we don't think that should be happening yet. They need to slow the process down," said Williams.

Members of the community have been

expressing their opposition by writing letters and signing petitions to the Minister of Health office and participating in rallies.

"It is very upsetting that the community has to go through this and people won't know if the services are working properly. It affects people who need care," said Williams.

Fundraiser helps raise cash for food banks

By Tijana Martin

On March 23, members of the community will get a chance to help those in need.

Loyalist College will be hosting the Empty Bowls fundraising event put on by the Quinte Region Food Banks to help raise money for the Gleaners Food Bank and the Quinte Region Food Share Shelter.

Potters across the Quinte Region will be donating handcrafted bowls, which will be displayed at the college.

Loyalist College Chef John Schneeberger and Paul Dinkel, from Dinkel's Restaurant, will be creating the soups for the event.

"People come in, choose their bowl, look at the vendors and then mosey over and get their hot soup, dinner roll, coffee and dessert and sit down and eat," said Susanne Quinlan, chair of the Quinte regional food banks and director of operations of Gleaners Food Bank.

Folk music will also be provided for entertainment.

The Empty Bowls event helps create a positive impact in various different areas.

The event helps create a community project amongst potters in the area and allows them to market what they make.

"It's about people realizing how many food banks are in this region and how this event is helping them, said Quinlan."

The event also allows Loyalist College to showcase the culinary program she said.

A marketplace will also be set up with various different vendors and will include the sale of jewelry and handmade candles. There are still a few spaces available for vendors to sign up. Tickets can be pre-purchased online at gleanersfoodbank.ca for \$20.

The price includes a bowl and soup, but there is a limited supply of bowls.

"When people pay \$20 to buy their bowl and their soup, all that money stays in this region," said Quinlan.

QRFSS is a collective of the following eight food banks: Madoc, Marmora, Stirling, Belleville, Picton, Deseronto, and Northbrook.

Loyalist College is also included. "Gleaners Food Bank provides a satellite food bank for Loyalist College. Fifteen hampers are delivered to Loyalist College monthly to help those in need," said Quinlan.