

The Pioneer

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Dona Plumton participates in the draw for the \$2,900 pendant at the Cougars for Cancer fundraiser at Matt & Joe's Night Club Friday night.

Photo by Mandy Larade

Ladies only at cancer fundraiser

Cougars for Cancer raises funds for pediatric cancer

By Mandy Larade

Ladies, gold, and lingerie, all for a cause. The fifth annual Cougars for Cancer event was held at Matt & Joe's Nightclub in Belleville on Friday night.

This was a ticketed, ladies-only event, featuring fashion shows, local merchandise for sale, spa treatments, psychic readings, live and silent auctions and a guest performance by country singer Brett Kingswell. There were over 300 ladies attending.

Although October is known as breast cancer awareness month, this event was geared towards raising money for pediatric cancer.

It's a cause that Michelle Hunter feels is too overlooked.

Hunter has a daughter battling with cancer, and has been endearingly nicknamed a "momcologist."

"This is a call to action," she said in her speech at the event.

Hunter said she feels that there is not enough being done with research for better treatments for pediatric cancer.

"It is the year 2013. We have put a man on the moon. We've created technology beyond our wildest imagination. It is about time that we add 'cure childhood cancer' to our list of things that we have done."

September is the official month for pediatric cancer with the symbol being a golden ribbon. However, Hunter said there is a lack of awareness about the issue.

"Not once during this month did I see our ribbon on any merchandise, or on any advertisement."

Chair and treasurer of the event, Anya Deane Best, agrees that this is a worthy cause, and said she is grateful for the amount of work put into this event. Best said the committee has been planning this event since the beginning of 2013



Denise Arseneau, Christine McArthur, Danielle Latulippe, Arlene Ravensburghen, Sherri Cochrane, Rhonda Goodfellow, and Deanne Chafe are all dolled up for the Cougars for Cancer fundraiser at Matt & Joe's Night Club.

and that the teamwork this year has been incredible.

"Everybody just did their job and all I did was just oversee everything. And it made it so easy."

Best gives credit to the local Canadian Cancer Society branch in Belleville, applauding them for their help.

"I do want to say that the people at the local branch are awesome, and they care so much about what they're doing."

Local businesses set up tables of mer-

chandise with a percentage of the proceeds going to the cause.

Among the business owners was Le-ticia Siasat of La Maison d'Eva, a lingerie shop in Belleville and Kingston.

Siasat sees the importance and relevance of fundraising for this cause.

"I love the fact that it's a benefit for pediatric cancer. That's a charity that we rarely hear about."

La Maison d'Eva was one of four clothing companies to host a fashion show

during the event. Siasat had models come out wearing both bad bras and good bras, so that people could see the difference between the two.

Although the event was full of fun, Siasat acknowledged the importance of citizens, including business owners, becoming aware of the different causes to advocate.

"I hope that they become more aware – that there are other cancers out there and there are other charities that they can be putting their efforts into."

Advocate reacts to violence against women throne speech

By Natalie McMullen

Social inequities are the root cause of violence against women, and yet there is no recognition of that at the federal level, says a leading national women's rights advocate.

Provincial governments have recognized that social inequity plays a major role in this issue and have developed plans accordingly, but the federal government is lagging behind, says the advocate.

All of the provinces and territories have implemented strategies to tackle the issue of violence, but Lise Martin, executive director of the Canadian Network of Women's Shelters & Transition Houses, said a co-ordinated approach is missing on the national stage.

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'Most provinces have action plans, and recognize that violence against women is a result of social inequalities. There is no acknowledgement of that at the federal level.'

Lise Martin

recognize that violence against women is a result of social inequalities. There is no acknowledgement of that at the federal level."

For years, Canadian women's groups

have been calling on the federal government to develop a National Action Plan to address violence against women.

Martin said she was disappointed no concrete measures were announced during last week's speech from the throne, which opened the second session of the 41st parliament.

Governor General of Canada, David Johnston, who delivered the speech, mentioned the government would "renew its efforts to address the issue of murdered and missing Aboriginal women." But despite international pressure to convene a National Public Commission of Inquiry, including a recent call from the UN special rapporteur on the rights of indigenous people, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has failed to take action.

Between 2001 and 2006, Brian Vallée writes in his book *The War on Women*,

there were "101 Canadian soldiers and police officers killed." During that same period, he adds "more than 500 women ... met the same fate."

According to a recent press release by the Canadian Network of Women's Shelters & Transition Houses, "In 2010, there were 593 shelters for women survivors of abuse and their children operating in Canada with a total of 11,461 beds."

Minister of Health, and former Minister for the Status of Women, Rona Ambrose, indicated she would make domestic violence a national priority, in a speech made at the annual meeting of the Canadian Medical Association in August.

"I am committed to working with all orders of government and organizations to lead change and gain momentum on the issue of family violence," Ambrose said.

Aboriginal women are three and half times more likely than non-aboriginal women to be victims of violence."

On Oct. 8, The Canadian Network of Women's Shelters & Transition Houses released a report calling on the federal government to develop a National Action Plan on violence against women.

"According to the report "in the absence of a National Action Plan, responses to violence against women in Canada are largely fragmented, often inaccessible, and can work to impede rather than improve women's safety."

The next step for Martin is to collaborate with other women's group, including the Native Women's Association of Canada, to develop a National Action Plan, and work with all political parties to integrate it in their platforms leading up to the 2015 election.

Bringing the Throwdown to Belleville

By Zachary Shunock

The stage at the Empire Theatre has been graced by the presence of many great acts, but none quite like this.

Three of country music's biggest names have teamed up as part of the Your Town Throwdown tour, aiming to bring the party atmosphere to towns across Canada.

Kicking off in the east coast and working its way west, the tour features country stars Jason Blaine, Deric Ruttan and Chad Brownlee. The Belleville stop of the Your Town Throwdown tour comes to the Empire Theatre on Saturday, Oct. 26.

All three artists have performed at different venues in Belleville in the past and say they are looking forward to their return to the area.

"The Your Town Throwdown tour will be my fourth time playing at the Empire Theatre," said Ruttan.

"The shows are always really fun there, and that's a beautiful venue." Ruttan's previous visit to the Empire was to film a Country Music Television special with Dean Brody and Aaron Lines.

"That's the cool thing about this Your Town Throwdown tour is that most of the venues are either theatres or clubs, so I think it's going to be a little more of an up-front and in-your-face experience, which is what I really enjoy," Ruttan added.

Brownlee has played in what can be considered the big leagues of music as well as sports, after being drafted in the sixth round to the Vancouver Canucks in the 2003 draft.

"I've learned a lot from the game of hockey, the difference being when I'm on stage I'm not getting slammed into the boards and fearing for my safety," said Brownlee.

"I've always had a good time coming to play in Ontario. I seem to have a growing fan base coming from there and Belleville is no exception, so I definitely had a good time," said Brownlee, who performed at the Quinte Exhibition at the Belleville fairgrounds in 2011.

The Your Town Throwdown tour is different than what may be considered typical for concerts. In this case, the artists say they are looking for each town across Canada to bring their own energy.

"Each tour you want to be unique and be its own thing. So there's definitely going to be elements people have never seen before," said Brownlee. "It's got kind of a party connotation to it. So, we're looking for high energy and a lot of fun at the shows."

Although all three artists have hits that are ballads, the Your Town Throwdown tour strays from their regular song list.

"We're focusing on our more up-tempo songs just because of the nature of what this tour is. It's more about the party and we're challenging each town as we move our way west to sort of out-party the town before," said Ruttan. "We're starting on the east coast, so the rest of Canada might be screwed because they know how to party, and will set the bar pretty high."

In the weeks preparing for the tour, the artists attended photo shoots, rehearsals and have been putting together a series of online videos featuring all three performers and some comical scenarios featuring their music and chemistry.

"Well, we're going to make sure we have enough beer on our rider to bring the throw down to yo' town," said Blaine, advising "Definitely bring your party pants people."

"Beyond that, all three of us are basically just going to gather up our biggest hits, what we think are the fan favorites and together with a new song or two, because we all have new music out as well," added Blaine.

Brownlee recently released his new single that fits the purpose of Your Town Throwdown tour called *Where the Party at*.

Blaine's latest single *Rock it Country Girl* recently made the top 15 chart on country radio.

Ruttan has also released his new album *Take the Week off*.

All new releases are available on iTunes. You can also visit the Your Town Throwdown site at www.yourtownthrowdown.com.

Food topic of grassroots rally

Event at Queen's Park draws attention to genetically engineered seeds

By Solana Cain

This past Thanksgiving, when many gathered with family and friends to feast on a variety of foods, the Toronto chapter of a grassroots organization called Millions against Monsanto held a rally at Queen's Park to draw attention to those very foods on your plate.

Protestors danced on the provincial legislature's lawn to improvised music from Toronto 10-piece big band Rambunctious. Lyrics like, 'Monsanto made a plant that don't make seeds' and 'What if there are no flowers for the bees, the honey bees don't want money please' bellowed out of speakers.

More than 400 demonstrations took place in cities all over the world on Saturday, Oct. 12 to condemn biotech corporation Monsanto, a leading producer of genetically engineered seeds.

Peter Mehren, who attended the rally with a sign that read: 'I disapprove of Monsanto's activities: poisoning, domineering, exploiting, short-sightedness,' said he believes Monsanto is displacing traditional farmers.

"They are replacing farmers with a system in which they become essential... Monsanto's in it for quick gains and not worrying about the long-term consequences," he said.

According to its website, Monsanto, a St. Louis-based company, states it is dedicated to helping farmers produce more food by "selling seeds, traits developed through biotechnology and crop protection chemicals."

One of several speakers at the rally was former Health Canada employee now a whistleblower, Dr. Shiv Chopra, who was instrumental in Canada's decision to bar Bovine Growth Hormones in 1999.

Chopra says the pesticides used in cultivating genetically modified organisms are toxic and therefore should not be put in grocery stores.

In a statement released by Monsanto following the worldwide protests, the company said that, "17.3 million farmers worldwide have made the choice to grow crops with seeds enhanced through biotechnology." Monsanto claims farmers are making this choice because GM seeds allow them to "farm sustainably."

The statement went on to say that they respect each individual's right to express their point of view on Monsanto, "but we prefer to engage in a respectful manner that encourages dialogue and discussion."

Genetic modification, or engineering,



At the Millions Against Monsanto Rally held in Toronto on Oct. 13, Samantha Urrutia, 12, signed teenager Rachel Parent's petition to get labelling of GMOs on all food products. "Say no to GMOs," wrote Urrutia, who attended the rally with her family.

is the human manipulation of an organism's genetic material using biotechnology. New DNA may be inserted into the host genome or genes may be deleted, or removed.

Fourteen-year-old activist Rachel Parent, who also spoke at the rally, called for labelling on all GMO products. She said the biotech companies that produce such products have become corporate bullies.

"Most of you may think that bullying only happens in schools but think again," said Parent. "These companies use their power and political influence to persuade our governments to accept their untested and unregulated genetically modified crops and then they force us to eat it because they don't label it."

In Canada, labelling of GMOs in food products is by and large strictly voluntary. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency,

in association with Health Canada, leaves the decision up to manufacturers to indicate genetically engineered ingredients.

The CFIA does have the power to require each manufacturer to list GMO foods if consumers' health is at risk or the product has been changed too severely.

Only in eighth grade, Parent has been a guest on the Lang and O'Leary Exchange where she debated Kevin O'Leary on why genetically modified foods need to be avoided. During the debate, O'Leary, a software entrepreneur and dragon on CBC TV's *Dragon's Den*, conceded his position, admitting that we are all apart of a long-term experiment when it comes to companies intervening in farmer's crops.

At the conclusion of her speech, Parent challenged Minister of Health Rona Ambrose to have a discussion with her on the

issues of GMOs here in Canada.

GMOs now have a firm place in our everyday consumption since the first genetically modified food item, a tomato, appeared in the United States in 1994. Today, they are present in upwards of 30,000 different food products, making them nearly impossible to avoid.

This interference with food at crop level is believed by some to have caused "the hive collapse," which refers to the current dire state of the bee population.

According to Ontario Beekeepers' Association and Health Canada studies, controversial pesticides have been linked to the widespread loss of hundreds of bee colonies in various locations throughout Ontario and across Canada.

Neonicotinoids, insecticides that act on the nervous system and are chemically similar to nicotine, have been found lath-

ered on corn and soy seeds.

According to the Grain Farmers of Ontario, crop science companies Bayer and Syngenta have coated virtually all corn seeds in the province with it. This is the cause of the acute bee poisoning, they say.

"You can't grow your own food if the flowers aren't being pollinated naturally," said Chris Laxton, 28, who rode his bike to the rally.

"So if they [the biotech corporations] control the food supply, then they control who has what when, who can be part of the better society and who is left in the margins," he said. "It's just this level of control that is unprecedented and very scary."

The rally finished with a march through Toronto's downtown streets with signs held high condemning Monsanto and demanding freedom of food.

Farmers live sustainable and healthier life

(Photojournalism student Guillaume Nolet writes about his experience of purchasing his first-ever Thanksgiving turkey.)

By Guillaume Nolet

Where did my Thanksgiving turkey live?

And what better place to get my first-ever Thanksgiving turkey than the tiny hamlet of Moscow?

This little village of less than 75 people in eastern Ontario, 30 kilometres west of Kingston, is where Andrea and Justin Hilborn helped raise my beloved bird.

For the last 14 weeks, they have taken care of my protégé along with 30 other large poultry birds.

Both in their mid-twenties when they decided to buy 80 acres of land a couple of years ago, the Hilborns wanted to get away from the city and live a more sustainable and healthier lifestyle.

"To live off the land, and grow your own food is a great feeling," says Justin.

Oct. 11 was turkey pickup day. I arrived in mid-afternoon at the farm, excited to get my prize. The sun was shining and a bunch of loose chickens greeted me as soon as I got out of the car. Some of them were more intrigued by my tires, while others followed me nervously towards the Hilborns' house.

The house was made of a nice, brown-coloured wood. It was built from scratch by Justin, who during the day, works as a carpenter in the city.

"It's a work in progress," he said. He had just recently covered the base of the cabin with new panel board.

You could tell he was not an office worker by looking at his rugged hands, his dark tan and his long slim build.

Andrea was chatting with another customer. It was a busy day for the Hilborns. Justin was running back and forth between the house and the barn with an apple in his mouth. I assumed he didn't have much time to eat -- since the turkeys were killed and prepared fresh that day for pickup.

Andrea also works in the city during the day as a naturopath. Her slim build, with long curly red hair and glasses made her look like the businesswoman of the two. But like Justin, she is not afraid to work hard on the farm.

"Getting out there and working with what the land has to offer is tough but rewarding," explains Andrea.

The Hilborn runs a mixed farm with an emphasis on pasture-based farming. This means their chickens, pigs, turkeys and cows live outside and get rotated to fresh pasture daily, in a way that improves the land and allows the animals to express their natural instincts.

"Our turkeys eat GMO-free (genetically modified organism-free) grain in addition to legumes, grasses, weeds, insects and probably small frogs out in the pasture," says Andrea.

"Right off the bat, ours are raised outdoors. We don't inject butter into the carcass such as other big industrialized turkeys. We don't medicate. Like people, animals who exercise, eat well and get plenty of fresh air, thrive."

Managed pastured-based farming not only improves the soil and all the things that live above, be-



Andrea and Justin Hilborn carefully picking one of their fresh turkey they raised for the last 14 weeks at their farm 30 kilometres west of Kingston.

low and in it, it is better for the environment and the quality of the soil.

"There is no chemical runoff and no soil erosion. Instead, the land increases in fertility year after year," explains Justin, who started this type of farming just a couple years ago.

Turkeys wake up in the morning and wait for one of the Hilborns to show up. When one of them arrives, they move the pen ahead one length, and the turkeys immediately start eating a fresh breakfast of legumes and grasses.

"When they get their fill, usually when it's all gone, they turn their attention to the grain feeder."

"Then they take time to lay in the sun and do whatever turkeys do to socialize with one another. Then we show up in the afternoon and they do it again. Turkeys are quite curious and learn quickly. They pick up really fast on the twice a day moves and are always waiting for us when we get home or get up in the morning. They love to peck at shiny objects and like to snap at our wedding bands," says Andrea.

'Right off the bat, ours are raised outdoors. We don't inject butter into the carcass such as other big industrialized turkeys. We don't medicate. Like people, animals who exercise, eat well and get plenty of fresh air, thrive.'

Andrea Hilborn

I saw a big white cooler behind the Hilborns. I thought it was where my bird was resting. Sure enough, Justin opened the cooler and reached for my 12-pound bird. I saw a fresh turkey that, up until

a couple hours before had a beautiful and a happy life.

This happy life would certainly continue with my family and I later that weekend, when we enjoyed it with a side of creamy mashed potatoes, parsnips, gravy and perhaps, a glass of wine.

Before I left with my turkey in hand (I really needed my two hands to carry it to the car), I asked both the Hilborns: "What's the best way to cook it?"

"We've yet to try one deep fried and that may change our opinion, but for now, the best way to cook a turkey is the plain old way and that means, 325 degrees for a couple of hours, with stuffing inside and basting every half hour."

One day, the Hilborns hope to live on the revenue from their farm, but for now, they are managing their busy lifestyle – working in the city and managing a farm.

Next month, is pork pickup day.

I cannot wait to get my hands on my pork. I will probably need a trailer for that one.

Picture autumn in Ontario



Photo by James Wood

Brothers Zuvann and Zumeel Hamilton race along the boardwalk at Lynde Shores Conservation Area near Ajax. The warm afternoon weather brought out many families to the park, and the boardwalk into the marsh proved the main attraction, both for footraces and bird-watching.



By Guillaume Nolet

Fall reading week is the perfect time to recharge your batteries, spend some time with family or just catch up on school assignments.

Autumn, for some, is synonymous with vibrant colours, maple shacks, Halloween, beautiful sunsets and foggy mornings. For others, it rhymes with melancholy: shorter daylight hours tainted with cold and wet weather conditions.

However you look at it, it is a great time for outdoor photography, especially feature pictures.

With its dramatic forecast, constant tree colour changes and amazing skies, there is no reason why your camera should be staying indoors.

Here is a selection of photos taken in the last three weeks from all across Ontario, highlighting the beauty of our province.

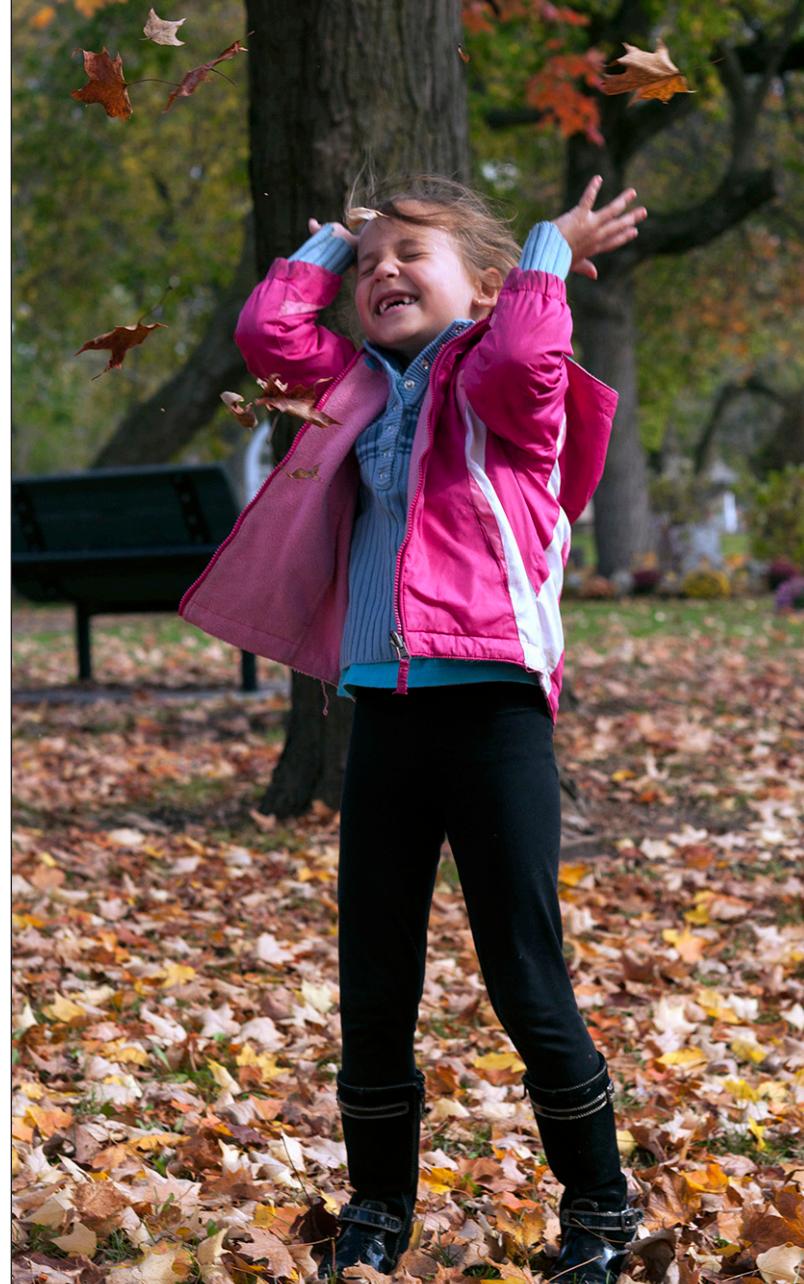


Photo by Mitch Ward

(Above) Tourists rush through Nathan Phillips Square on a bleak and rainy Saturday afternoon in Toronto.



Photo by Brienne Ste Marie Lacroix

(Left) Edward Gower, eight, runs through Belleville's Zwicks Park on a overcast day.

Brooklyn Baker-Chapin plays in the fall leaves in Elmwood Park in Trenton Friday. She enjoys the beautiful mild weather at the park with her family.