

‘Queen of supernatural’ pays visit

Bestselling author Kelley Armstrong shares latest work

By Taylor Hermiston

Crowded with all ages, The John A. Parrott Art Gallery was buzzing with excitement as Kelley Armstrong, a #1 New York Times bestselling author, greeted the people of Belleville Saturday.

“We are very, very grateful to have a #1 New York Times bestseller in the library. It’s amazing, because of the generous sponsorship from the Canadian Council for the Arts, that we are able to host ‘the queen of the supernatural’ today,” said Cheryl Holland-Hughes, an employee from the Belleville Public Library.

The sponsorship was made possible because of Ontario Library Week, which is celebrated annually during the fourth week of October. Communities and schools are invited to celebrate the many resources and experiences that their public library offers.

The experience that Armstrong brought was uplifting and humorous. She discussed her newest novel *Omens*, about a woman who finds out her biological parents are convicted serial killers.

She read the first chapter of her first young adult novel *The Summoning*, of the *Darkest Powers Trilogy*. Armstrong confessed that she will be ending most of her series and starting all new projects over the course of two years and bribed the audience to ask questions about it.

“You may have seen me come in with books and bags, well those are my bribes. When I ask “Does anyone have any questions?” and I pick you, that’s when you get a prize. When my talk or my reading gets boring, please zone out to think of questions,” Armstrong laughed.

Eager fans waved their hands in the air to get their favourite author to pick them. One fan, Jemini Baragar, 21, won Armstrong’s novella, *Amityville Horrible*, after she asked if she was going to be releasing more graphic novels. Armstrong confirmed that there will be a few more.

As she waited with her suitcase full of books, during Armstrong’s signing,



Photo by Taylor Hermiston

An excited Victoria Kaiser, 18, watches #1 New York Times bestselling author, Kelley Armstrong, sign her collection of novels at the The John A. Parrott Art Gallery in Belleville. Kaiser has been a fan of Armstrong’s since 2003 and enjoys reading her books because they are creative and unique.

Baragar said, “I am very excited to get this book. They only published 15,000 copies and I have only been a Kelley Armstrong fan for a year and a half now and I own almost all of her books.”

Armstrong’s appearance attracted an unexpected number of fans to the gallery. People swarmed in for a chance to buy her

newest book and waited over an hour for their books to get signed.

Michelle Flaherty, 27, expressed to Kelley, as she signed her book, how her books got her through the stages of depression in her life. They helped her mind wander away from sadness and into a better place.

“The Stolen series is my favourite series by her, because of the supernatural in-

trigue it brings. I have been a fan since her first book came out and I haven’t stopped since,” added Janet Phillips.

Armstrong has been an avid storyteller all her life, and had her first book, *Bitten*, was published in 2001. Following the huge success of her debut novel, she has written a total of 12 novels and numerous novellas in the world of the *Women of the Otherworld* series.

Armstrong also has two successful young adult trilogies, *The Darkest Powers* and *The Darkness Rising*, which were inspired by her daughters because she didn’t want them to read her more adult novels. She is currently co-writing a new young adult series, *The Blackwell Pages*, with American author Melissa Marr.

Dairy farmers worried about EU agreement

By Christopher King

Twenty minutes before sunrise, Mike Kamink, 35, and his father Bill, 63, have already begun milking their cows at Kamink Farms Ltd.

The Kamink family has been in the dairy business since 1957 and their markets are being challenged by a distant competitor.

The European Union and the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement will help the EU to poise themselves on the Canadian market.

On Oct. 18, 2013, Prime Minister Stephen Harper made CETA official with ink, in Brussels, Belgium. The trade agreement covers many sectors of industry, some of which are automotive, chemical, forestry, mining and investment banking.

The dairy industry is included in this deal and groups like the Dairy Farmers

of Ontario (DFO) are feeling a little pressure.

“We heard about it in the papers... It’s kind of frustrating, I guess,” Mike said. “It’s going to translate into probably a 2.5 per cent decrease in our quota over time, which is 2.5 per cent less income. No one wants a pay cut so that’s kind of frustrating.”

Mike and his father work quickly and quietly while they milk cows and clean the barn.

The trade agreement increases the quota of tax-free cheese into Canada from the European Union by 17,700 tonnes, reaching a total of 31,971 tonnes of cheese sold in Canada. This amount will decrease the amount of Canadian cheese sold in our market by approximately 2.25 per cent according to the DFO.

Dairy farmers currently are stabilized by supply-management provided by the

‘I don’t know how many local cheese factories there were at that time, but all the communities had one and now there’s only basically one cheese factory in all the county for cow milk. It’s all a trickle-down effect.’

Bill Kamink

DFO, which was originally known as the Milk Marketing Board.

“In the ‘60s, when supply management started going, it helped the dairy industry

quite a bit.” Bill said. “Before that we were at the mercy of the processors, they could take your milk or leave it.”

Currently, their milk is picked up every other day for regular distribution, and twice every two weeks, milk is picked up specifically for Black River Cheese in Milford, Ont. Supply management has translated into a steady income and a steady life for the Kamink family.

Another aspect of CETA that is receiving a lot of attention is the increased quota Canadian beef and pork that will be exported tax-free to the E.U.

Canada will now have access to a total of 65,000 tonnes of tax-free beef that can be sold to the EU.

“They want our beef and pork, in order for us to ship it over there we have to give something up. So beef farmers are happy,” Mike said.

In 1957, the Kamink family moved

from Holland to Prince Edward County. Bill’s father moved to Canada in search of farming opportunities where there were none in Holland.

“My dad actually, he always wanted to farm, but the opportunity wasn’t there. He moved to Canada so he could have the opportunity to farm,” Bill said. “We started in dairy right away and it went to the local cheese factories.”

Mike said they don’t receive any subsidies from the government and are worried about how the reduction in Canadian cheese sold will affect the other economies involved in farming such as the cow feed industry.

“I don’t know how many local cheese factories there were at that time, but all the communities had one and now there’s only basically one cheese factory in all the county for cow milk,” Bill said. “It’s all a trickle-down effect.”

Amnesty International group taking action to help those who can’t help themselves

Local organization meets monthly for letter-writing campaign

By Suzy Willig

Amnesty International is an organization focused on human rights with over three million members and supporters in many cities in Canada, including Belleville.

The Belleville team, Group 111, writes urgent action letters for prisoners of conscience. On the first Friday of every month, the group gets a case to work on from Amnesty’s head office.

Jan Sosiak receives details about a new case each month, and then emails it to the members of the group. The group meets at the Belleville Public Library on the first Tuesday of every month to do their letter writing, as a drop-in type of event.

Some of the members do the letter writing on their own, however, and email them on their own, because some people can’t make it to a meeting mid-day during the week.. The members are sent contact information to send their messages to the appropriate authorities.

The group will often email or send their letters by conventional mail. Sosiak explained that the most effective method would be to fax, but it’s too expensive, and Amnesty members just don’t have the money.

The group will be celebrating International Human Rights Day, Tuesday, Dec. 10, at The CORE. The group has gotten together to do the greeting card campaign for around eight years on this day. This event is very touching, because of the kind, optimistic things that the event goers write to the prisoners, said Sosiak. “It’s really wonderful what they’ve written to these people.”



Photo by Suzy Willig

Jan Sosiak (standing) and Mieke Thorne go over a case at the urgent action letter-writing event. This event happens once per month, the first Tuesday of every month.

One prisoner in particular, Troy Davis, stuck out to Sosiak.

“We had written him two years in a row, sent greeting cards, and he wrote back a lovely letter in his own handwriting, thanking us and saying he was so happy so many people were praying for him and thinking of him.”

“This is a feel-good thing. You’re given a list of people who they are hoping will receive the cards, and they’re not religious cards because not everyone is Christian.

“We just send a greeting card, just to send best wishes from friends in Canada, and it’s just really interesting the way peo-

ple will write.”

The greeting card campaign not only makes the prisoner feel good, but also the card writer, especially when they receive a thankful response, said Sosiak. “It makes people feel really good, that they’ve touched somebody suffering in another part of the world.”

Comic-Con comes to city

By Micah Bond

You may see your favourite sci-fi or fantasy character around town next weekend.

The first-ever Quinte Mini Con is happening Nov. 9 and 10. The event is a local variation of Comic-Con, a collection of events that are held in many cities around the world.

“It’s basically a celebration of everything geek. Anime, Manga, video games, comics, science fiction, fantasy, steam punk, you name it,” said Gabrielle Wilson, one of the organizers.

One of the hallmarks of these events is costume design. Wilson said that while many guests will come in regular attire, there will also be a range of fantasy inspired costumes and props to see. She noted that the Belleville Police Service has requested that all weapon props be left at home.

The event will be held at the Quinte Sports & Wellness Centre on Cannifton Road in Belleville.

There will be several attractions including panels that will discuss topics like breaking into the fiction writing industry, costume design and even Japanese music, she said. There will also be gaming demos comprised mainly of tabletop card games.

She said there will be about 10 special guests coming for the weekend, she said. Among these will be Erin Cossar, a graphic designer and comic artist. There will also be two fantasy authors in attendance, Amanda Sun and Wanita May. In addition, there will be several skilled cosplayers—artists who dress and act as fictional characters—from Ottawa and Toronto.

Wilson said she is hoping that the event will help provide an accurate picture of what these art forms are really about.

“For people that aren’t in the geek community, I’m kind of hoping that they see that not everybody is insane because unfortunately that’s what they show on TV,” she said.

At least 150 people will attend the event, said Wilson, but added she would like to see an even higher turnout.