

The Pioneer

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New firehall to help improve response time

By Shelby Wye

Belleville's city council has approved the building of a new fire station, which the fire department says will improve response time in emergencies.

Deputy fire chief Bruce Greatrix says that Monday night's vote ends a process that has taken 15 years.

"We're looking forward to it. I came to the city in the amalgamation (with Thurlow Township and parts of what is now Quinte West) in '98 and it's been talked about since then," said Greatrix.

Mertrend Contractors Ltd., a Belleville company, will be starting construction in the empty lot across from the Via Rail station on Station Street as early as next week. The project is expected to be completed by March 2015.

This fire station will replace the one on Dundas Street, and possibly even become the primary fire station of Belleville. However, what is most important about this station is where it's being built, Greatrix said.

"The new location will still have good response time to the east and the south and will improve the response time to the industrial park area. That's the primary reason why that location (was chosen)."

Currently, Belleville's firefighters and fire-department administrative staff are spread across Belleville. This new firehall will be able to host the entire administrative operation, including fire-prevention officers, and be the site for prevention training. This will limit communication delays between crews.

The new building will boast a hose

tower, a safe, practical spot for hoses to hang when not in use, and will also give valuable training space to the firefighters.

"They'll be able to do additional training that they were previously unable to do. There's a staircase where they can practice high-rise training, and ladder training, and high-angle-rescue training," said Greatrix.

The tower will also serve as an antenna base for a communications centre.

The vote to begin construction on the new firehall was held last night, and passed 5-4. There has been heated debate about whether the project should be approved, since the cost kept rising. That is, until now. The project was finally approved Monday after Fire Chief Mark Macdonald assured city council that the project will be capped at \$7.4-million.



Photo By Shelby Wye

The new firehall will replace this building, Belleville Firehall 2, on Dundas Street East. The replacement can be found on Station St, across from Via Rail.



Photo by Shelby Wye

Gabrielle Wilson is one of the lead organizers of Quinte's Comi-Con-like convention. The 23-year-old is dedicated to creating cosplay costumes, reading comics and watching anime. Wilson and her friends figured they couldn't be alone in their obsession, so they made the motion to make Belleville's first Mini-Con.

Geeks rejoice: Mini-Con is coming to Belleville

By Shelby Wye

Belleville's geek flag is set to fly next weekend, Nov. 9 and 10, as Quinte's first-ever Comi-Con-type convention comes to town.

A dedicated group of anime, gaming, manga and comic fans have worked hard over the past few months to create Quinte Mini-Con, which is a much smaller-scale version of Comi-Con. It's being held in the Quinte Sports and Wellness Centre.

Gabriella (MDA) Wilson is one of the six event organizers for the Mini-Con.

"Belleville is in the no man's land of (this type of) conventions, between Toronto and Ottawa, so I was like, 'I want to change this,'" said Wilson.

This is her second time being involved in creating a convention: this past summer she helped create Frost Con in Toronto. That was an overwhelming success, with almost double the attendance that she and the other organizers had estimated. This success, Wilson hopes, will carry over to Quinte's Mini-Con.

"We definitely have the advantage of space here. The Quinte Sports and Well-

ness Centre has rented out the entire gymnasium and two meeting rooms for us," she said.

The Mini-Con will be hosting 10 guests, including masters of cosplaying – taking on the role of a popular character – such as Toronto Joker (a.k.a. That Joker Guy) and Melting Mirror.

The event not only gives fans the chance to dress up and act out, but also to get educational advice. Attendees can meet with fantasy writers, graphic designers and other panelists to talk about the business and, more importantly, how to

get into it.

Wilson says there's a lot of anime, gaming, manga and comic fans out there in Belleville, and hopes even those new to conventions will stop by.

"Try it. You might find you enjoy it. I was a little nervous the first time I went to a con or did cosplay, but I had fun, I made friends. It gives you the chance to meet like-minded people.

The cost is \$20 for the entire weekend, \$15 for Saturday only and \$10 for Sunday only. For more information: quintemini-con.weebly.com.

Nursing students insulted by new show

By Riley Maracle

MTV's new television show documenting the lives of a group of California nurses is causing a stir among nursing students.

Scrubbing In is MTV's latest attempt at recreating the success of Jersey Shore. The show premiered Oct. 24 and showcases the lives of nine nurses who work at Orange County Hospital in California. They live together in the same house for three months, working during the day and going out to the clubs at night.

The characters go out and party on worknights, get into fights and show up to work hung over. Their lifestyle is upsetting nursing students who have watched it.

Jessie Greve is a second-year nursing student at Loyalist College. She says that what is being displayed in the show is false.

"We are taught in school that nurses are not supposed to do everything that they have done," said Greve. "It's crazy that they put a show like this on TV and portray nurses in such a disgusting way."

First-year Loyalist nursing student Megan Tompos agreed that the show is inaccurate.

"They do more nursing I believe in the soap opera General Hospital than they do in that show," said Tompos.

It shines a negative light on the profession, she added.

"It's demeaning to nurses, because they party all the time and they fight a lot."

Tompos said she feels she and her fellow nursing students are more productive than the people in the show are.

"We are a lot harder-working than they are."

An online petition has been started by the Ontario Nurses' Association to try to remove the show from TV. Tompos said she has signed the petition.

But while Tompos is against what the show displays, she says she'll continue watching it.

"I am watching it to see how it goes. But I wouldn't watch it for fun."

Halloween traditions are a'changing

By Matthew Blair

There is a saying that old habits die hard. Halloween is one tradition that may become a thing of the past.

While most people over the age of 16 have grown out of trick or treating, a new trend has risen. It's not hard to find young adults – and even older ones – either throwing a party or going to one.

For many of them, going out and getting free candy has been replaced by a night of drunken memories and dressing up in sexy revealing costumes. If you go to any costume store, good chunks of the costume selection are things such as "sexy nurse" or "sexy maid" outfits.

One Trenton resident is not joining the majority.

"I wore a sexy Catwoman costume in high school and got weird looks," Becky Cocek said. "After that I decided I wasn't going to wear something like that again."

Cocek, who's 23, said she still enjoys dressing up for the sake of the Halloween tradition.

"I actually make all my own costumes. I love the thrill of knowing I'm walking around in something I did myself. It takes awhile but it's definitely worth it for me."

Cocek said she has seen a rise in people her age using Halloween as an excuse to dress in revealing clothing.

"I go to parties, but I don't go to get drunk or dress in something revealing to have fun for Halloween. Halloween is my favourite time of year. It's the one night

you can dress up and be somebody else, like your favourite superhero. I just don't see the thrill in dressing up slutty or, in most cases for girls my age, not really wearing anything."

Halloween City, a store that operates once a year in vacant spaces, opened up for the first time in Belleville this year. Store staff say many adults were in buying costumes.

"This is my first time at a Halloween store, and I'm surprised by how many adults are coming in and buying costumes for adult parties and adult themes," said manager Paul Stone.

"Teenage females tend to be more of our customer than males. I would say three out of four of our customers are young girls."

Another Halloween tradition that seems to be fading is decorating houses to look spooky and scary. A drive through several Belleville and Trenton neighbourhoods this week revealed that only a few houses had decorations.

"We see less kids every year," aid Jim Hutton, who lives in Belleville. "It's just not worth it to put the time and effort anymore."

A factor that has also had an impact on Halloween tradition is concern over the health of children. There were news reports this week about a North Dakota woman who planned to hand out letters instead of candy to children she... considered obese.



Photo by Matthew Blair

Becky Cocek sporting her homemade "Marvel girl" Costume Tuesday afternoon in Trenton. For more photos, see page 2.

New schools for the county

By Morgan Davy

Hastings County could see three new schools if the Ontario Ministry of Education agrees to grant the funds.

The Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board agreed Monday night to ask the ministry for the money for the new schools.

The first of the proposed new schools would be a junior kindergarten to Grade 8 replacement school to be built on the site of Queen Elizabeth Public School in Trenton, after the demolition of the existing facility. The existing Breadner Elementary School and College Street Public School would be closed, with their students joining Queen Elizabeth students at the new school.

The second project is a merging of two schools in Marmora into a new facility. It would house the JK to Grade 3 program that is now at Earl Prentice Public School and the Grade 4 to 8 program now at Marmora Senior Public School. The existing Marmora Senior Public School building would be demolished and the new school would be built in its place.

Finally, a third replacement school is proposed for the current site of Bayside Public School and Bayside Secondary School in Belleville. All grades and programs from both schools would be combined into the new facility.

The school board plans to submit business cases for building the new schools to the ministry by the end of October.

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