

On the street

We asked people at Loyalist College the following question:

What are your travelling plans for 2014?



Samantha Elliott, second-year protection, security and investigations, "My only trip will be in Oshawa for a four-week placement for school."



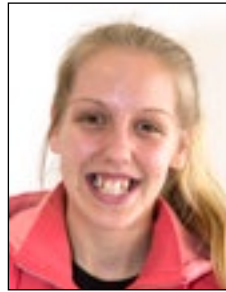
Erika Joseph, first-year social service worker, "I want to go back to Nova Scotia for two to three weeks to visit family and friends and have a big barbecue at my mom's house."



Shelley Kane, first-year social service worker, "I am planning to go on a trip to B.C. by train, to visit family. We need to make sure we travel through the mountains during the day though."



Andrew Ferris, first-year manufacturing engineering technician, "I will be going to Toronto for a weekend to visit my kids depending on my basketball game schedule."



Jodie Wells, first-year esthetics and spa management, "I will visit a friend who lives in the Bahamas during the reading week in February."



Nathan Burke, first-year TV and new media production, "I will go travelling with my family this summer. Probably to a historical site, because my dad loves history."

Editorial

Canada Post: The unfortunate but inevitable

In December, Canada Post developed their new business plan, which includes no longer continuing door-to-door delivery of our mail. This will be unfortunate but it is necessary for the company to adapt to the changes we as Canadians are making in our day-to-day lives.

We don't receive nearly as much mail as we used to. In 2012, the amount of mail Canada Post delivered was one billion less than in 2007. Sending emails rather than letters or connecting on social media instead of mail is faster, free and the way of the world in 2014.

Because of this, Canada Post is generating less revenue, which calls for a reform in the company's infrastructure. At this point, the company doesn't have a choice in reevaluating its business plan, but that doesn't mean it's perfect.

One of the company's biggest changes is cutting door-to-door delivery, therefore eliminating jobs for many in an economic climate in which it's difficult to get work. The immediate change cuts 8,000 jobs. The company forecasts 15,000 employees will retire or leave Canada Post in the next five years and it will also continue to scale down unionized employees by 10 per cent over the next 10 years. For the remaining staff, the corporation will be reevaluating wages, pension and benefit plans and the amount of time employees are working.

At the rate our society is going towards living in an online virtual world, services like door-to-door delivery aren't financially feasible in the long haul. One-third of households in Canada still receive door-to-door service, which isn't enough to support the budget needed to provide these services.

There needs to be a change but the reform plan could still be revised. There are feasible alternatives that could be made so it's not an all-or-nothing scenario.

The cuts will primarily affect senior citizens. It creates accessibility problems for this demographic. Some aren't driving anymore, some may live alone and some have difficulty, physically getting to the new community mailboxes. Canada Post could offer a weekly door-to-door delivery to accommodate these households and may not dip into the budget so much to deem as unaffordable.

Canada Post can't continue with the number of employees it has delivering mail door-to-door daily. There isn't a way to fund what now feels like a privilege.

The way in which companies have to cut back is unfortunate, but we are all adapting to the constant changes in the world. It is sad to think that so many traditional services from our history won't exist in our future, but we also have to consider our role on the decline in mail service. Our world is moving ahead and we all, companies and citizens, have to do so as well for our own livelihood.

To hear the reaction from a CUPW member, click here: <http://www.qnetnews.ca/?p=33585>

Sarah Taylor

Plan for the worst and hope for the best

Belleville council needs to step up their game in preparing for a train disaster.

Trains pass through Belleville every day. They carry passengers and cargos. Some even contain oil tanks and cargo daily between Montreal, Toronto and Alberta.

On Jan. 8, a 60-car train derailed in Plaster Rock, N.B., causing 150 people to evacuate their homes because of a fire from the spilling diesel and oil.

With the frequent passing of trains through Belleville, the risk of an accident happening is there.

According to the Transportation Safety Board of Canada, 1,023 railway accidents occurred in Canada in 2011.

Belleville is one of the cities with more than a dozen VIA rail, Canadian Pacific and CN trains passing through daily, many of them are transporting oil and are highly flammable.

It is unrealistic to cease the transport of all dangerous goods on trains, as accidents involving passenger trains can happen too.

Most of these accidents are preventable. Some are caused by human error, such as speeding on the tracks, or lack of maintenance in the railway systems.

Last July, a 74-car unattended freight train carrying multiple tank cars derailed and exploded, killing 47 people and destroying more than 30 buildings in Lac-Mégantic, Que.

That could have happened in our own backyard.

Although the City of Belleville has an emergency plan, there is not a particular action plan for a train derailment.

Currently, the 23-page 2013 Hastings County Emergency Preparedness Guide talks briefly about evacuations in the event of extreme weather, such as thunderstorms, tornados or floods, but not train derailment or any other accidents.

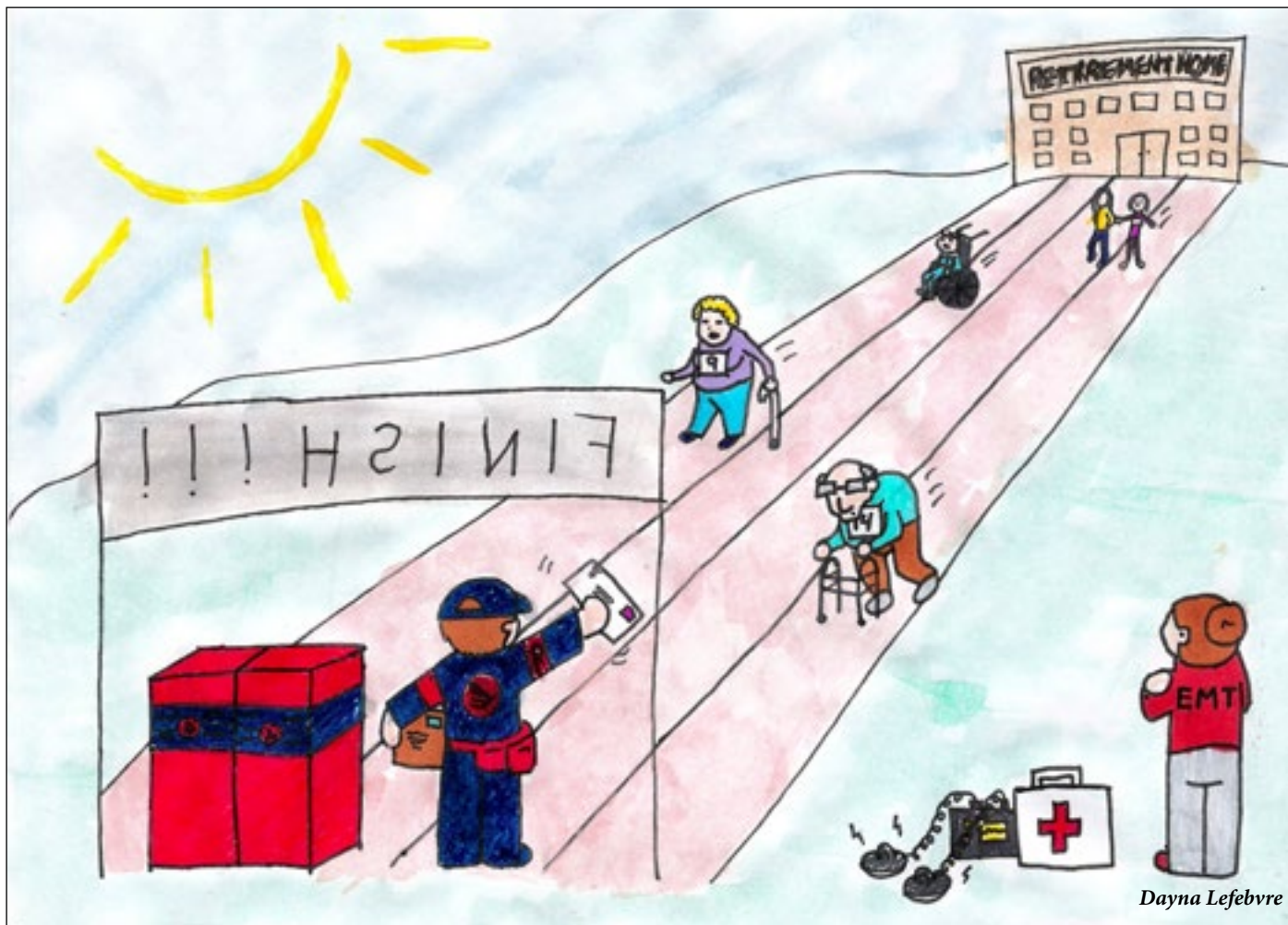
If an accident other than a train derailment were to happen with mass casualties, emergency crews would have to be called from other cities and counties, which are more than an hour away. The disaster may become uncontrollable and casualties could be huge.

The Hastings-Quinte Paramedic Service officials have expressed concern about the low amount of ambulances serving the Quinte region. It would be an enormous problem for such a situation to happen.

No one would like these accidents to happen near us, especially when the trains are passing through our own backyards.

However, we should plan for the worst and hope for the best by being prepared.

Justin Chin



Dayna Lefebvre

Opinion

Birth control not covered under student drug plan

By Kaitlin Abeele

Loyalist College's student drug plan is missing vital coverage for female students— compensation for birth control bought through a pharmacy.

A portion of every Loyalist student's total tuition goes towards something called health services, a yearly \$110 contribution, which pays for the services of the student health centre on campus, as well as the student drug plan.

The drug plan, like most college health plans, covers up to 80 per cent of the cost for prescription drugs and medicines purchased through a pharmacy, as well as covering insulin injections and supplies, hepatitis B vaccines, allergy serums, and acne preparations, excluding Accutane.

What is missing from this list is birth control. The drug plan doesn't cover everything. It doesn't cover over-the-counter products, anti-smoking remedies, first aid, surgical supplies, or experimental drugs, and birth control is also on the list of exclusions.

The student health centre does offer some forms of contraception. Free condoms are available to all students, and female students can purchase three oral contraceptives — Aleese, Marvelon, and Tri-Cyclen Lo — as well as the Evra patch and the NuvaRing from the health centre for \$10.

But this can be difficult if a student is away from campus, such as during reading week, and needs to purchase birth control but can't

afford to pay the full price at the pharmacy.

There are also common medical conditions that can prevent women from taking traditional contraceptives, and unfortunately the student health plan will not cover the purchase of prescription birth control from a pharmacy. Students who need contraceptive injections such as Depo-Provera or prescriptions for intrauterine devices (IUDs) such as Mirena must pay full price, which can be quite expensive. A single Mirena system, which lasts for five years, costs \$450 to purchase from a pharmacy.

Some students can qualify for coverage under their parents' health plans, which may cover birth control purchased from a pharmacy, but not every student has this convenience.

A number of other college health plans have similar lists of exclusions. Neither Algonquin College nor St. Lawrence College covers the cost of birth control. Humber College will cover 80 per cent of the cost for contraceptives to a maximum of \$60 from a pharmacy.

In contrast, Conestoga College covers the cost of NuvaRing, to a maximum of \$144 per year, and 80 per cent of the cost of oral contraceptives, the contraceptive patch, and IUDs such as Mirena that are purchased from a pharmacy.

So why is acne medication covered, but birth control is not? While severe acne can be emotionally and physically scarring, an unplanned pregnancy is certainly more detrimental to a

young student.

The student government at Loyalist decides the student health plan and the coverage included. They say that there haven't been complaints about the coverage offered, and think that there are enough options for students on campus that adding coverage for birth control through pharmacies is unnecessary at this point.

Students have access to the health centre five days a week where they can choose from five different contraceptive prescriptions. For students who can't use any of the contraceptives provided, the registered nurse on campus can try to source other options for students.

The student government feels that it is more convenient for students to buy their birth control on campus. They also worry that adding to the coverage of the student health plan would be an unnecessary expense that most students wouldn't want to pay for, since the ancillary fee for health services is mandatory.

However, students who live off campus might find it easier to purchase from a pharmacy, which they can do seven days a week, in any city.

A pharmacy can also provide a much wider range of contraceptives that the school might not be able to source for students.

Personally, I would be willing to pay a little bit more in health service fees if it meant I could purchase birth control anywhere, anytime, for the same reduced rate that is provided on campus.

Why the community needs the military headquarters

By Emily Cumming

Frank Meyers has been fighting to keep ownership of his Quinte West farm since 2007. With the Department of National Defence poised to demolish the expropriated property any day now, it's worth reflecting on what this seven-year battle has meant to Canadians and the Quinte community and how its conclusion will affect the future of this region.

As tensions mounted over the past few months, so did the national interest in this ongoing case. More than 40,000 people have shown support for the Meyers' struggle by 'liking' the *Save Frank & Marjorie Meyers Farm* Facebook page. In addition, there have been a dedicated group of protesters holding vigil at the Meyers farm over the past week in anti-

pation of demolition.

With so much public interest, it begs the question: Why has this story incited such an emotional reaction and sense of injustice in so many people across Canada?

The farm has been in the Meyers family since 1798 and has been the backdrop to Frank Meyers' entire life. The expropriation is taking away more than just his property, it is taking the context of his whole life. In this modern day David and Goliath battle, it is easy to empathize with Meyers and the personal tragedy he faces.

However, we should not lose sight of the economic benefits this private misfortune will bring to many jobless citizens of Quinte West. The Department of National Defence has argued that the new Joint Task Force 2 headquarters that will be built over the Meyers farmland

will bring an estimated 700 new civilian jobs to the area. After last week's cuts of 529 jobs at the Sears call centre in Belleville, the military expansion could be a welcome source of income to a tough economy.

In an ideal world, the government of Canada would invest in the food and agriculture industry, not the war industry. However, we don't live in a utopia. We live in Quinte and these misplaced priorities are not unique to the Meyers case, but rather reflect a shift in the wider world.

With the Meyers case soon coming to a certain conclusion, its time to start focusing on the role this land can play in the future development of our community.

To view the multi-media version, go to: <http://www.qnetnews.ca/?p=33577>

The Pioneer

The Pioneer is currently produced by photojournalism students for Loyalist College and the surrounding area. In the spirit of the pioneers who settled our community and who were rooted in tradition, these pioneers always had an eye on the future. Our students strive to serve the public interest, seek the truth and uphold the highest standards of our profession.

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