

Victims of Taliban suicide attack return to CFB Trenton Wednesday

By Solana Cain

The bodies of two Canadian men killed in a Taliban terrorist attack in Kabul returned home in a military aircraft at CFB Trenton on Wednesday night. Two caskets draped with Canadian flags were carried off CC-177 Globemaster and transferred into separate hearses as a small group of family and friends watched.

Peter McSheffrey, 49, and Martin Glazer, 43, were killed by a Taliban suicide bomber and two gunmen who opened fire inside a popular Lebanese restaurant, La Taverna du Liban, in downtown Kabul last Friday.

Employees of Samson & Associates, a management consulting firm out of Gatineau, Que., the men were in Kabul performing audits of two Canadian aid projects for the Department of Foreign Affairs, according to a statement released by the company.

Both families released statements a couple days after the attack, expressing their sadness and asking for privacy from the media.

McSheffrey, an Ottawa area resident, is survived by a wife and two children.

Glazer, a Gatineau resident, was unmarried but had a partner and tightly knit family.

In all, 21 people were killed in the assault, 13 foreigners including the International Monetary Fund's top representative in Afghanistan and three United Nations staff as reported by Reuters. It is being called the deadliest direct attack against foreign civilians in Afghanistan since the start of the war in 2001.

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird issued a statement following the attack condemning the Taliban. "Acts of brutal terror cannot be allowed to go unpunished."

In a written statement, the Glazer family said Martin made "frequent business trips to the region" and that he took pride in his work "contributing to Canada's efforts to bring about peace and security in Afghanistan."



Photo by James Wood

Watched by friends and family, the body of Canadian Peter McSheffrey is carried down the ramp of a CC-177 Globemaster on the tarmac of CFB Trenton. McSheffrey was one of two Canadian auditors killed in a Taliban attack on a restaurant in Kabul, Afghanistan, while working in the country.

McSheffrey's family said Peter loved to travel and, "what makes this particularly difficult for the family is that Peter was a victim of senseless violence against inno-

cent people."

The Taliban took responsibility for the attack one day later, saying it was in retaliation for Afghan lives lost after a coalition

airstrike in a village north of Kabul.

Samson & Associates extended condolences to both families, calling the incident "tragic" and "devastating" on their

website.

"These individuals were much more than just colleagues, they were dear friends," the statement said.

Course brings attention to mental health issues

Two-day training course helps with education on dealing with issues

By Dayna Lefebvre

This week, Mental Health First Aid Canada is hosting a two-day, 14-hour training course to educate individuals on dealing with mental illness.

The paid course – which is focused on adults who interact with youth – is hosted by Darlene Maracle, whose background is in social work. It takes place at 223 Pinnacle St. today and Friday.

According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, 20 per cent of Canadians will experience a mental illness in

their lifetime. Canada also has the third highest youth suicide rate out of any industrialized country. Suicide accounts for 24 per cent of all deaths from ages 15-24.

The MHFA course teaches individuals to recognize the signs and symptoms of various mental illnesses, such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders and self-harm. The goal is to be able to provide initial help and guide the individual to a professional. Removing the stigma associated with mental illness and allowing it to be talked about is another major focus.

"I ask someone to give me a definition of health; they forget about the brain part," explained Maracle.

"It's how well we function in day-to-day life. We don't say someone is 'suffering

from.' I don't know if you are suffering. People function with it. People cope with it. There is such a stigma."

One of the aims of the course is to preserve life when an individual is at risk of putting themselves and others in danger. It also teaches people to provide comfort, hope and recovery to a person in need, and to listen free of judgment.

MHFA started in 2001 in Australia and has since branched out to over 18 countries. As well as Belleville, there are upcoming courses across Canada.

"People don't tell their friends. They feel like they are going to be judged – and oftentimes, they are," Maracle said. "We look for the signs and symptoms."

Signs of a mental illness include things you can physically see about a person –

changes in weight, dishevelled appearance and cuts or injuries are a few. Symptoms of a mental illness include things that you cannot see – loss of appetite, social withdrawal or a lack of interest in previously enjoyed activities.

Although the MHFA course teaches people how to deal with mental illness, Maracle is clear that this course is not aiming to turn people into therapists.

"You're not going to be trained to be a therapist or a counsellor, anymore than if you take first aid, you're not a doctor."

Maracle said the most important thing someone can do is reach out and ask.

"Most of the time, we ask people how they're doing but we don't even listen.

That's one of the greatest skills I want people to get," she said. "Ask questions. Be direct – as hard as it is to ask someone if they are thinking of taking their life. Try to instill some positive hope. Be patient and have lots of empathy."

"There is help. There is hope. People live with, people function with and people overcome (mental illness). This can be a time in someone's life. It doesn't need to be a life sentence."

Anyone interested in attending a MHFA course can contact Maracle at darlenemhfa@gmail.com.

Anyone who needs support or someone to talk to is urged to call Open Line, Open Mind at 310-OPEN or Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868. Both services are free and offer 24-hour support.

Public welcome to weekend ice fishing derby

By Guillaume Nolet

Merland Park Cottages from Picton is hosting its fifth annual ice fishing derby on the shore of Picton Bay this weekend with open public events on Saturday.

Saturday's on-ice games will be open to the public for a \$20 registration fee per participant. All proceeds will be going to the Picton Kiwanis Club Terrific Kids initiative.

The public events start with a barbecue lunch hosted by the Kiwanis Club on Saturday. The individual on-ice games will follow starting at 1 p.m.

This year's games will include the famous Shirt Off-Fish On competition as well as two new games; Minnow to Win it and Pitch & Release.

Prizes include a gas auger, golf clubs, trolling motor, fishing and goose charters, accommodation packages, etc.

For more information on the event, go to www.merlandpark.com or call 613-476-6894.

For a insider look at the sport of ice fishing, make sure to watch this short feature that showcases Joe Pickstock and Dusty Craven braving -30 C weather, on the Bay of Quinte near Napanee, shot earlier this week.

<http://www.qnetnews.ca/?p=33575>



Photo by Hannah Yoon

Joe Pickstock sits in his fishing hut as he prepares for a morning of ice fishing on Hay Bay near Napanee on Tuesday. Pickstock is the owner of PB&J Charters where he provides guided walleye or salmon fishing trips on the Bay of Quinte and Lake Ontario.

Getting help to quit smoking

By Samantha Hobbs

Quitting smoking is a difficult task, but some extra incentives may help.

This week is National Non-Smoking Week in Canada, which has taken place for over 30 years. It was established by the Canadian Council for Tobacco Control (CCTC) in 1977.

Some of the goals of the organization are to educate people about the dangers of smoking, to help people who smoke to quit smoking and to help make Canada smoke-free.

This year's campaign is entitled Leave The Pack Behind, which is geared to help Canadians quit smoking.

Loyalist College is participating in the campaign for a second year. Nurse Lauren Deans is in charge of distributing the packages to students who want to participate. It includes Nicorette gum and information with helpful tips and resources.

"The packages are free to all students and 35-40 students have participated since it started," said Deans.

The nurse added she hopes it will help increase the number of students successfully quitting.

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Photo by Guillaume Nolet

Barry Silverthorn, built his home in the style of a Grand Trunk Railway Station, facing the current CN railway tracks on Geddes Street in Belleville.

Train house fulfills man’s dream

By Solana Cain

Barry Silverthorn wrote a list of what he wanted in his ideal house. He wanted to be in town, to be able to walk to the post office and the bank, and he wanted to be near train tracks.

“I’ve always entertained the idea of living in a train station,” said Silverthorn, who has only a railing and some trim to finish before construction on his dream home is complete.

Silverthorn lives in a Grand Trunk Railway Station replica home in Belleville. He built the house from the ground up and patterned it exactly after a model train station kit he has in his basement.

The low-pitched roof, wide overhanging eaves supported by ornate wooden brackets, the shade of red brick with stone across the lower third of the wall, separate entrances for passengers and baggage (leaving the house void of a proper front door), transoms above the doors and an antique cart once used to transporting luggage, are all historical features Silverthorn has designed into his house.

It’s supposed to give the impression of a well-cared-for train station that’s been around for many years and was possibly renovated recently.

In 2008, Silverthorn spent his weekends driving along roads that criss-crossed the tracks, looking for property for sale, with a tent in his backseat. The first trip he took was to Niagara Falls and he found nothing.

Then he went to London, and then out towards Kitchener. At night, he slept in his tent in a park or on the side of the road near the tracks. The steady chug of trains rolling by outside his tent might have irritated or scared most, but Silverthorn finds the sounds of engine chuffs, rail clacks and whistles blowing in the distance tranquil.

After viewing a failed prospect in Trenton, Silverthorn decided to drive through Belleville, a city he had never visited before. When he came to the train crossing south of College and Geddes streets he saw something: notice of severance stuck to a tree near an empty blue house.

“I’ve had an interest in trains since I was four years old and got a train set for Christmas,” he said from his dining room table surrounded by big bay windows.

While the train theme does not overtly continue throughout the interior of Silverthorn’s home, there are details such as the bay windows that are accurate to how the station would’ve looked hundreds of years ago.

Many mornings, Silverthorn will lift open one of the bay windows and stick his head out to watch approaching trains, sometimes he waves at the passengers and crew. In the mid-19th century, the bay windows in a train station would have served the dispatcher with a clear view of arriving and departing trains. Tickets might have been sold out of the window or telegraph equipment would have been housed there.

There are other details in and around the house that would surely be recognized by other people belonging to Silverthorn’s subculture.

He muses over the idea of having other hobbyists over to sit on the porch, have a drink and watch the trains go by. He likens the gathering to a Super Bowl party.

Recently, some neighbours knocked on his door to say they liked his house and from a historical point of view, appreciated the traditional architectural details he included.

“If you can get maybe a third of the details correct,” said Silverthorn, “then what happens is people walking by or visiting will fill in the rest themselves. In a way, it’s very theatrical.”

As an adult, Silverthorn has carried his enthusiasm for trains into a career as executive producer of TrainMasters TV and freelancer for Model Railroad Hobbyist magazine.

It’s only fitting that his abode should also be a reflection of this passion.

“Most people live in someone else’s idea of what a house is or supposed to be,” said Silverthorn, who doesn’t plan on living in a museum for trains.

He has several antiques he’s collected over the years from shades to mantels to lighting fixtures



Photo by Solana Cain

Barry Silverthorn designed his house to replicate an old Grand Trunk Railway Station, “I’ve always entertained the idea of living in a train station,” he said, but because there are so few of these buildings left, Silverthorn built his own.

and there’s a clock above the sink in the bathroom that once told time in his grandparents house. He believes the memories created in their home stirred his influence for older buildings.

“I think what makes it warm here for me is that feeling of visiting,” said Silverthorn about his home.

While he has no immediate plans to climb aboard a steam locomotive from his window, he welcomes the dramas his mind creates every time he hears the bells toll and sees the arm lower to mark a train’s impending arrival.

Winter or all-season tires: which are safer?

By Justin Greaves

Winter is here, and the decision to buy all-season or winter tires is an ongoing dilemma for residents in Ontario.

The name and the price of all-seasons lead many drivers to use them all year long.

But information provided by Transport Quebec contradicts this decision.

“In 2005, 38 per cent of the accidents that occur during the winter involve at least one vehicle that is equipped with all-season tires.”

In 2008, Quebec introduced a law that states certified winter tires are mandatory between Dec. 15 and March 15 for owners of taxi or passenger vehicles registered in Quebec.

Fines in the province for not getting certified winter tires range from \$200 up to \$300 with no demerit points.

In Ontario, there are no requirements for winter tires.

Peter Cowan, owner of Arbuckle’s Auto Services in Belleville, knows the importance of winter tires.

“I always use winter tires, whether it’s going to work or driving to Quebec.

“People get frustrated in the winter, and with snow tires on, you won’t have that frustration level.”

“I’ve had friends in accidents that lost their lives and they didn’t have snow tires on. I’m pretty certain that if they did have snow tires on, the accident would have been avoided,” says Cowan.

A study by Transport Canada says that all season-tires are good until temperatures drop under -10 C.

Cowan said he suggests to all his clients that they get their tires on before Thanksgiving and off after Easter. Even

people who drive all-wheel drive vehicles are now coming in for winter tires, despite the extra traction that comes with them.

“There are many days in Ontario that all-season wouldn’t be suitable. Winter tires have large treads designed for wet

control surface and heavy winter snow,” said Kenny McBrien, mechanic at Arbuckle’s and coworker of Cowan’s.

There are varied amount of snow tires that meet the Quebec transit rules. Some types include Nordic snow and ultra traction winter. All of the

tires have to have the icon representing a mountain with a superimposed snowflake.

Cowan said that winter tires will still help prevent accidents, no matter how good a driver is, and that every vehicle should have winter tires.



Photo by Justin Greaves

Al Dussault grabs a winter tire from the back of Arbuckles’ Auto Service on Moira Street West. Dussault has been working at Arbuckles’ for over 10 years.

Smoking...

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Contest planned to help encourage giving up cigarettes

“There is help out there and people should take it. It’s a good program to help young people quit,” said student Phil Lawr. Lawr participated in the campaign and did not quit completely but cut back quite a bit with the free gum and patches provided.

The Leave The Package Behind campaign is also planning a contest called Wouldurather (WUR). It is six-week contest designed specifically for young adults, and is open to any individual between the ages of 18 and 29 who is living in Ontario as well as students in post-secondary schools.

This contest is not just for smokers who want to quit. There are also categories for people who smoke but just want to cut back, people who are non-smokers and want to stay that way, as well as a team category.

Prizes range from \$250 to \$2,500.

“I think that the contest is a good motivator,” said Deans.

The nurse said she liked the fact that you don’t have to smoke to win and if you want you can enter with someone else. Wouldurather registration is open now and ends Jan. 26. The contest runs Jan. 27 to March 10.



Photo by Dayna Lefebvre

Ruth Forget sits with Silas, the theraputic bunny that helps children overcome grief at the Edith Fox Life and Loss Centre in Picton. Silas becomes a tool to help the children express their feelings. “Often they might not talk about their own story,” Forget explains. “But when they’re holding the bunny they will say something.”

Bunnies help children to grieve

By Dayna Lefebvre

In a quiet little cottage along the shoreline in Prince Edward County, a very special bunny named Silas helps children overcome their grief after a significant loss.

The cottage, which is home to the Edith Fox Life and Loss Centre, housed generations of pigs before Kathleen Foster-Morgan, the founder of the program, acquired the property and transformed it into a snug studio environment.

“Everybody likes it, no matter what age,” Foster-Morgan says with a smile. “It doesn’t look like a pig house now.”

The program runs for eight weeks and offers clinical grief therapy for children and teenagers to share their emotions and experiences with grief. It focuses on creativity, physical activities and building an animal-human bond to encourage healing after a loss. The children do scavenger hunts, arts and crafts and other activities.

“It gives them an opportunity to tell their feelings when they can’t use words,” Foster-Morgan explains. “Some people can talk about their grief story, but a lot of people find it hard to get started.”

After the program, the children have learned how to express themselves creatively as a means of coping with their

emotions, or simply enjoyment.

Ruth Forget, a Loyalist alumni who began working at the centre for her placement in college, says it’s rewarding to watch the children grow.

“When they come they are often very quiet and shy, feeling like they are the only ones in this situation,” she says. “By the end ... there has been a transformation. You can see it in the way they talk, the relationships they’ve formed.”

The centre, which had always used dogs and sheep for therapy, began to use bunnies when Forget brought her pets into the program. Silas is now an important part of the healing process.

“The bunnies were really a perfect size,” says Foster-Morgan. “We wrap them up in blanket. There is a cuddle factor with the bunnies.”

Foster-Morgan and Forget say the bunnies provide a way for the children to express their feelings and needs without directly telling the adults. Silas becomes a tool for expressing the children’s need for intimacy and closeness.

“It’s a way for them to start getting their story out,” Forget says. “They might not talk about their own story, but they will say that Silas had a bad night.”

“They move from saying Silas had a bad night, to they had a bad night, and

they can talk about it.”

Silas is currently the only bunny active in the program. The second bunny, Hillary, passed away in December after working in the centre since 2009.

“That was a big group issue, when she didn’t come back to the next session,” Foster-Morgan explains. “Ruth shared her sadness with the group. It was a gift for those boys to see her tenderness and emotion, to validate what was going on in their own lives. It was very real and very honest.”

Forget has a second bunny that is currently being worked with for the centre, which will reopen once the weather warms up.

Quinte Ballet School has ‘50s theme for fundraiser

By Sam Quinn

This weekend will be an opportunity to get into a 50’s mood, put on a dress and a hat and have fun.

For the Quinte Ballet School of Canada, this is the time of year for fundraising. On Jan. 25, the QBSC will be holding a fundraising event at the Greek Hall in Belleville.

In contrast to many of their other performances, the QBSC has put on such as their 40th anniversary celebration, the Frosty Fiddle Frolics and The Nutcracker, they are turning to a more mature spin on their routine for this year’s theme, Mad Men.

“It was an interesting process choosing the theme because even though I grew up in that time frame,

and I listened to it a lot in the daytime with my parents, I was a bit lost. I googled music from that age and it came up with a lot of Frank Sinatra,” said Catherine Taylor, artistic director at the QBSC.

“Then I saw Peggy Lee singing *Boy from Ipanema*, from the original Frank Sinatra version. Having to incorporate our male student into the dance, it was so appropriate.”

For \$125, members of the community can attend the Mad Men Gala and enjoy dancing, Frank Sinatra music, dinner and cocktails from 6pm until midnight.

“The Frosty Fiddle Frolic’s was more of a fun Irish step dancing, but what we are working on is much different. This dance tells a story,” said Marilyn Lawrie, executive director at the QBSC.

“Although it is not a comedic performance, it definitely puts a smile on your face.”

At last year’s fundraising event, The Frosty Fiddle Frolics, the school was able to raise \$4000, which they are hoping to reach again this year to raise money for the academy as well as their student bursaries and scholarships.

“Ballet is not as popular as many other things so we don’t draw in as much of a crowd and can’t generate enough money. Many of our students have a dream to study dance, and like all of us, they come from regular families and it is difficult to pursue,” said Taylor.

Despite the money the school is hoping to raise, a lot of it will have to be put towards finances to pay for the Greek Hall, dinner and drinks and the silent

auction, which is why much of the advertising has been produced in-house to save as much money as possible.

Like many non-profit organizations, the QBSC has to raise so much money to keep the organization running, which is possible due to the private funding they receive from the community’s generous donations.

“We receive donations anywhere from \$50 to \$1000. It takes my breath away how many wonderful people there are. We always send thank you notes individually,” said Lawrie.

To find out more about the Quinte Ballet School and its fundraising gala, go to: <http://www.quinetnews.ca/?p=33582>

Women’s clothing shop at Bayview Mall closes its doors

After 37 years of business owner decides to call retire from La Belle Femme

By James Wood

Thirty-seven years of history are coming to a close at the Bay View Mall this coming Friday, as women’s clothing shop La Belle Femme shuts its doors for the last time.

A longtime business at the shopping centre, the shop is being closed as its owner, Rita MacDermaid, wishes to have some time to relax.

Established on Jan. 24, 1977, the shop has been MacDermaid’s distraction from her day job for the past 37 years. A former nurse in the maternity ward at Belleville General Hospital, she had founded the store to give something to move on to after her planned exit from nursing, a job with regular hour.

A store location in the Belleville Plaza, now called the Bay View Mall, was a choice she never regretted.

“It’s just the right size for a boutique like I have,” said MacDermaid.

La Belle Femme is a small women’s clothing store with a big footprint. Even on the final days of business, a



Photo by James Wood

Rita MacDermaid is framed by a signpost outside her shop, La Belle Femme, in the Bayview Mall.

customers were frequently browsing through the racks.

“I’ve got loyal customers from 1977 till now,” said MacDermaid. “Everybody is very upset that I’m closing.”

Passersby couldn’t help but notice the signs placed outside the store, pointing towards the final sales.

MacDermaid hopes that her retirement will give her and her husband more time to see the world and their relatives.

“I want to enjoy travelling, and family and friends,” she said.

Her preferred destinations would be British Columbia, eventually making it to the Greek Islands, a goal she and her husband have had for many years.

Although the closing is bittersweet, it is final. The location will be stripped out, and space put up for sale.

“I’m not selling it, I’m closing it,” said MacDermaid.

With good foot traffic, the space could host a new store. La Belle Femme, however, will be gone for good.

“I’m retiring, and that’s what’s going to happen unless you want to buy it.”

The store will be closed by the end of this month.

Downtown facelift

By Mitch Ward

Belleville city council recently announced a multi-million dollar revamp to the downtown core and to city infrastructure. The city has laid out their proposal in a brochure, as well as on a new website, both titled Build Belleville.

Plans for the renewal of city infrastructure have been in the works for years, and multiple smaller projects have been completed. Others are already set to begin construction.

The overall project is broad in scope and includes improving major roads in the community, like the roads around the North East Industrial Park, Bay Bridge Road, and Maitland Drive, improving Bay Bridge, and revamping the police station and local fire halls.

The overall essence of the project can be divided into two parts. The first is the improvement of underground infrastructure, and the second is to do storefront to storefront streetscaping.

“Any renovation to downtown is welcomed. Anything that’s going to make it better and more inviting I’m all for it. It’s far better than it was nine years ago when I came here,” says downtown business owner, Alain Kechichian.

City council has been working towards the changes since 2006, when Mayor Neil Ellis began pushing the provincial and federal governments for more money to put towards improving the city, rather than simply doing regular maintenance every year.

The council’s wish for downtown is to turn it into a vibrant place that can be unique and serve as a viable city centre. Downtown, especially Front Street, is in rough shape. Walking along, a passerby will see multiple empty storefronts, boarded-up doors and signs saying a business has moved or closed indefinitely.

The vast majority of retail in Belleville lies to the northeast, with the hub being along North Front Street and Bell Boulevard.

The challenge is to draw businesses back to the downtown. Building more residential buildings close to the new core will help attract people to live, work and play downtown.



Photo by Natalie McMullen

Sharon Huckle is a stylist, spa therapist, and owner of The Cat’s Meow Salon and Spa in Belleville. Huckle has owned the business for almost ten years. She also helps manage her husband’s catering company. She says being an entrepreneur is rewarding, but leaves little time for anything else, even a cup of coffee.



Photo by Guillaume Nolet

Richard Courneyea, owner of Richard Davis, poses in his store located on Front Street. In the clothing business since he was 15, Courneyea said that there is a lot of accountability to be able to navigate a brick and mortar business in a new media world.



Photo by Sarah Taylor

Alain Kechichian owns eyewear store Essenzia located on Front Street. Kechichian has owned the store since 2004 and says he is very passionate about making people look and feel good.



(Left) David Cooney is one of the co-owners of Cooney Auto Sales in downtown Belleville. He and his brother Brian co-own the family business, which they inherited from their father Howard Cooney. The business started in Stirling before moving to Belleville. Photo by Adam Dietrich



Photo by Justin Chin

Belleville native Anne MacKinnon, 45, is the fifth generation owner of Barber’s Flower Shop on Front Street. She enjoys her work because everyday is different.



Photo by Solana Cain

Richard Belanger, owner of Scalliwag Toys, originally wanted to open a bookstore with his wife in 1985.



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INFOCUS

January 23, 2014

The challenges and responsibilities faced by an aging population.



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Judy Woodley takes a break on her stairs as her grandson, Noah Reid, 13, cleans up the kitchen after cooking dinner. Woodley was diagnosed with early onset dementia in February 2013. Though she has come to terms with the disease, she is most afraid of losing who she is and forgetting her family.

Don't Let Me Forget

Photos and story by Hannah Yoon

Judy Woodley always thought the Alzheimer's patients she cared for as a nurse at Belleville General Hospital were a bit crazy. That was before she watched her own mother battle with the disease as it stripped her of herself, bit by bit.

Then, she received her own diagnosis. Doctors told the 65-year-old retiree that she had developed early onset dementia.

"I spent two and a half weeks doing nothing but crying. Just bawled my eyes out. 'Oh my God, I'm gonna die,'" remembers Woodley.

Self-pity, however, was short lived for the matriarch who cares for her husband, adult son and 13-year-old grandson.

"I sort of thought about it, and I thought, 'Well shit, I'm 65 you know, and that's not so bad. I'm on my way out. At least I know what I'm dying of,'" Woodley says as she reflects on the diagnosis from early this winter.

It was her family who first noticed Woodley's forgetfulness and her personality change.

"She was quick to anger. She didn't understand things she used to and forgot pretty easy," says Woodley's husband Gary. The couple have been married for 46 years.

Gary, now 70 years old, slouches in his chair from the aftermath of a stroke and age as he speaks about his wife's dementia.

She glances over at him with a melancholy gaze. It's difficult for her to hear how she's losing it but she knows it's her reality.

Dementia is an overarching term for a range of brain diseases. According to the Alzheimer Society of Canada, the main warning signs are confusion, gradual loss of basic skills, and a decline in memory, reasoning and communication skills.

"They have more trouble with their short-term and their long-term memory tends to be stronger," says Kristel Nicholas, the education and support coordinator of the Belleville-Hastings-Quinte Alzheimer Society.

Nicholas explains an easy way to divide up the brain into three simple layers.

The bottom is instinctive, followed by a middle layer that deals with emotions. The top layer is the part of the brain that is responsible for thinking and logic. This layer is most affected by dementia and Alzheimer's—and subsequently affects the lower two parts.

"When that's impaired, all we really have left is our emotions and instincts. And that's when you start to see a lot of personality behaviour changes because we can't expect people with Alzheimer's to use the logic and reasoning. All they have is what their brain is telling them is going on around them, which is based on emotion and instinct," explains Nicholas.

"The philosophy 'use it or lose it' is really important. And that people with dementia are given the opportunity to continue to do the things that they're able to do that we don't take over for them too soon," says Nicholas.

This disease is Woodley's enemy as it attempts to take away the most important aspects of her life.

"Don't let me forget my children. If I forget them, what good was I? A mother is always supposed to be there for her children," says Woodley, as tears well up in her eyes.

However, for Woodley, she hopes being a victim to it won't happen so fast. She keeps herself busy with church duties, jewelry-making, knitting and meeting friends.

Woodley will not disappear without a fight.



Woodley checks her fingers before she checks her blood levels for her diabetes.



Gary Woodley, 70, grabs a sweater from his wife, Judy, as she helps him clean his room.



A shadow of Woodley appears on her cupboard as she prepares breakfast for her family.



Woodley, right, lies in bed with her grandson, Noah Reid, as they watch TV together.



Love sits alone in her home in Kanata, Ont. on a Saturday afternoon. For most of her life she said she felt different but was unaware of what was different.

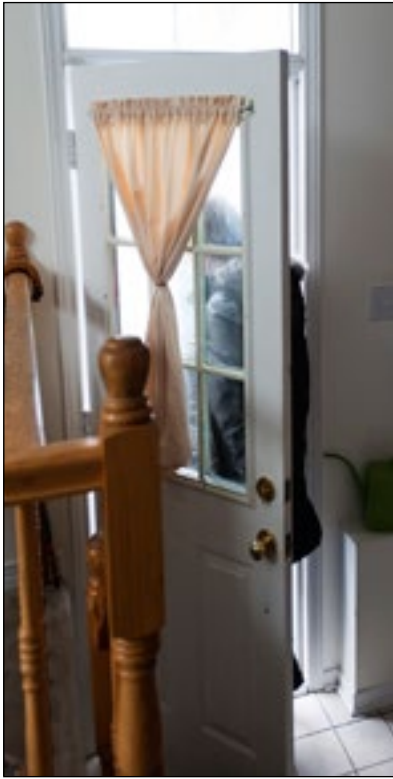


Love has a cross hanging from her rear view mirror in her car. Religion has come back into life in recent years and she attends church events frequently.



Love still has photos of herself as a boy, such as this one of her at age seven or eight sitting on a horse.

FOUND LOVE



Three years ago Roger became Denise.

How do you imagine life at 70? Maybe it's looking back at all your accomplishments and fulfillments. Or is it starting a new chapter? Even starting a new life entirely. For Denise Love it was putting the pieces of her life together and finally taking a leap towards becoming the person she was always supposed to be.

Love, who is now 73 years old, began her transition from man to woman at the age of 70.

"It wasn't something that hit you like a ton of bricks, it just worked on you over time," says Love.

Love struggled for many years to identify what felt different about her. There were a lot of little things in her life that eventually combined into something bigger but it was hard for her to determine what they were at the time.

"You knew there was an inner difference and you weren't sure what," says Love.

Love was never married but had many friends and a close family. She had a very close relationship with her sister, Wilma, who died 15 years ago.

"The older we got, the closer we got together," says Love.

After her sister's death, it started to become more and more clear to Love what was different about her. She started to realize what she had never been able to explain before. Her identity did not match

her gender.

From then on, the mental and physical process felt very natural, a "natural progression" as she would call it.

In 2009, Love moved to Kanata, Ont. to begin her new life as a woman and came out full-time.

Love spent most of her life in Trenton and decided to move away to begin her transition. Ottawa was the perfect new location for Love to move on. She sold the campground her and her family had owned for nearly 40 years and felt she needed to get as far away as she could. She felt Ottawa was a more "accepting city", and it's medical facilities also had a huge impact on her decision.

"You've got good doctors, good therapists, good psychologists and that's the big thing," says Love.

After nearly two years of therapy, meeting with doctors and becoming as much of a woman as she could on her own, Love went through with the gender reassignment surgery.

"You have to live totally as a female for at least 12 months before they'll allow you to do the surgery," says Love.

This includes dressing as a female; hair, make up, clothes. Her life had to transition before her body physically could.

ze old you and become the new you," says Love.

This process felt very natural for Love and she began her surgery sooner than people typically do. She was ready to start her new life and was at ease with the significant changes that accompanied the transition.

Although Love notices she is much more emotional as a woman, she is very happy and feels herself. One of the biggest attributions to her happiness is being accepted by the people in her life.

Her friends and the people she's known for years as a man are very accepting of her transition. This is very important to her. She has also made many new friends in Ottawa at her church. She started off fresh when she moved to the Ottawa area and says those friends only know her as Denise.

In her new life she associates much more with the female crowd. She says this is one of the things that is different from her former life.

Though there have been many changes in Love's life, she is happy to now be the woman she was supposed to be.

For a multi-media version of this story, go to <http://www.qnetnews.ca/?p=33573>

Photos and Story by Sarah Taylor.



Love gets her service bill from service advisor Joe Pacheco. She has been coming to McCurdy's car dealership for many years and many of the staff members have known her as Roger. She says she has never heard one negative comment.

"You knew there was an inner difference and you weren't sure what."



Love looks through one of her photo albums in her living room. She has many photos of friends, family and some of herself over the years.



Hollywood often eats his meals alone in the dining room of his retirement home. On average, there are four times more widowed women in their eighties living alone in Canada than widowed men of the same age group.



Sydney Hollywood and Elizabeth 'Betty' Hewlett were married for 58 years.



Much of the decor in the Hollywoods' apartment has not changed since his wife passed away.



Hollywood looks through family photos and reflects on the life he shared with his wife.



Hollywood's desk is cluttered with mementos from different parts of his life.

Age of Loneliness

On a frosty Sunday morning in November, Sydney Hollywood, 89, sits alone in his apartment in Christie Gardens, a retirement community in downtown Toronto. He is smartly dressed, wearing a crisp, white, short-sleeved button-up, securely fastened at the neck with a tie.

Two large anchors tattooed on his forearms betray his formal attire and hint to his larger than life character. Despite his age, his health is stable and his ever-strong limbs are supported and balanced by a thin wooden cane.

Hollywood has the gift of gab. He will talk your ear off if you give him the time of day, and he is bound to recount stories with elaborate detail – such as his first job as a newspaper delivery boy where he earned \$7.50, about being arrested on the Don Valley while riding in (unbeknownst to him) a “hot” car and all about how he met his “little beaut” Elizabeth while working as a delivery truck driver.

Hollywood is never shy to start up conversation with whoever crosses his path. He goes out of his way to chat up his elderly peers and enjoys nothing more than putting a smile across their faces. He’s a ladies man. It is ironic that a man so socially outgoing and eager to interact is privately grappling with painful feelings of isolation and loneliness – something that affects many retired people.

“It’s the loneliness that is really getting me more than anything else.” Hollywood reflects, as he wipes away tears while sitting in front of his cluttered desk. Coupled with his struggle to develop meaningful relationships with his peers that go beyond simple small talk and the death of his wife, Betty, over four years ago, he is moving into a widow haze of his life that is normally populated by women.

“My kids are busy and I don’t bother them because I know they’re busy and they don’t got time for me. Every now and then the phone rings, I’m coming over to have some dinner with you dad’ and she comes over to have some dinner and that’s the last I see her for months and months.”

On a small whiteboard above the small kitchen table ‘Love you lots Grandpa Hollywood!’ is scribbled in childlike handwriting. The message has adorned the wall for over a year now – since the last time he saw his grandchildren who live in London, Ont.

Hollywood’s compact and tidy apartment is littered with treasures and mementos of his late wife. She smiles down at him from a framed photo above his desk. A decorative wooden panel in the hallway leading to the bathroom reads “Betty’s Powder Room.” The apartment is still just as much hers as it is his.

“I know he’s lonely, I know he misses his wife a lot, but he’s not much of a joiner [of social programs], even though he gets invitations,” says Barb Rebelo who co-ordinates activities for the men’s club at his retirement home.

“He’s always talking to people, always interested in getting people’s stories and telling his own stories, so I am surprised that he doesn’t join the men’s group activities, but he never gets involved. Sometimes he’ll walk by the games room, and I’ll ask him to join, and he’ll say ‘no.’”

For a multi-media version of this story, go to: <http://www.qnetnews.ca/?p=33570>



Hollywood keeps a message from his grandchildren on a whiteboard. The message has been there over a year - since the last time he saw them.



Sydney Hollywood, 89, sits in his bedroom in the apartment he used to share with his wife Betty until her death in 2009. He lives in a retirement community near Christie Street and Dupont Street in Toronto and struggles with feelings of loneliness.



Hollywood often watches television by himself in his small apartment.

Photos and article by Emily Cumming

FOR MYSELF



For five hours a day, three days a week Arthur receives dialysis.



Arthur has had both his legs amputated due to poor blood flow caused by his diabetes.



Arthur sits inside his Bridge Street Retirement Residence apartment. After his second leg was amputated, Arthur needed to be in a place with around-the-clock care.

“I didn’t want to be there, I wanted to be here.”

Independence is something we all strive for. When I first met Arthur Gough, he was living in a retirement home, a place he did not want to be. Independence for Gough would come only when he would leave Bridge Street Retirement Residence and make his way back to Foxboro, where he has been living since 1963.

Diabetes has played a big role in Gough's life. Living with the disease for some years now, it has affected him in the worst ways possible. Poor blood circulation to his feet has forced Gough to have both his legs amputated below the knees. The left leg was amputated four years ago, and the right one was amputated in June of 2012. With just his left leg gone, Gough was still able to live in his home in Foxboro, but it was when the right leg was removed that he was forced from his home and into a place with around the clock care and easy accessibility for someone in a wheelchair.

While waiting for prosthetic care, Gough was confined to a wheelchair, making his home in Foxboro unfit for him to be living in.

“I didn’t want to be there, I wanted to be here. Because here I do as I want to do, not what they want me

to do. When you’re in a retirement home you have to follow the house rules. I like to do what I want to do, so I’m here.”

Gough would spend 11 months, from July to May, living in Bridge Street Retirement Residence.



“I had to go to some place I could get around in a wheelchair. But as soon as I got a leg on the right side, I came home.”

Gough bought his tiny, one-story house in Foxboro back in 1963. Having grown up in Foxboro, it was only right that when he got married he bought his own home in the small town just north of Belleville. Gough raised his family at 143 Ashley St., and as his kids got older they went their own way. After losing his wife about 10 years ago, Gough would find himself alone in his quiet Foxboro home.

“I had my wife and kids then, but now I’m all by myself. It’s better than being in a retirement home anyway. I’m living here by myself because I want to be here.”

Now you might think a 76-year-old man that doesn’t have any legs below the knees would want to be living in a place with around the clock care and assistance and a place with people, but not Gough. Being at home in Foxboro is more important. It may be more dangerous and demanding, but home is where he wants to be.

To view the multi-media version of this story, go to: <http://www.qnetnews.ca/?p=33599>

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MATTHEW DESOUSA



Arthur uses his back scratcher to relieve an itch.



Arthur gets ready to eat a home-cooked meal.



Lynn Stephens never thought she would be raising a child again at 48 years old, but when the Children's Aid Society threatened to seize her grandson, Stephens and her husband fought for him and were awarded final custody. Stephens is part of a growing trend of grandparents across Canada who are raising their grandchildren.



Stephens' grandson points at the trees outside the Ontario Science Centre.



Stephens and her grandson look at a human skeleton on display at the The Human Edge exhibit.



Stephens hangs back to let her grandson explore by himself.



Stephens worries about what kind of childhood her grandson will have but she's determined to do all the same things with him that she did with her children.

Where's The Village?

Photos and Story by Solana Cain

Lynn Stephens never got the chance to be the grandmother she wanted to be.

Stephens, a mother of two, was just getting used to having an empty nest after recently sending her youngest child off to university.

She enjoyed going to concerts at the ACC with her husband, taking trips to Las Vegas with friends and treating herself to the occasion designer purse - a Coach bag was on the top of her wish list.

Her child-rearing days were supposed to be behind her. "I had a wonderful childhood," said Stephens, "and my children had a good childhood as well."

Two days after her grandson was born, his parents were served with court papers in the hospital. They were told the baby would not be going home with them.

That day, Stephens and her husband went to Children's Aid Society and told them they wanted to keep their grandson. A month and \$11,000 in lawyer fees later, a crying newborn came home with them.

Today, Stephens has given up her basement to an onslaught of toys, she organizes play dates between two year olds and on the top of her wish list now is a durable backpack.

An estimated 75,000 children across the country are being raised by their grandparents, according to 2011 census figures.

"People will stop us and say, 'Oh you're out with grandma for the day, aren't you lucky,'" says Janette Anderson, administrative assistant at Family Space in Belleville.

"Never ever do they think that this is a permanent situation. It's not for a day, not for a week, not for a month. In certain cases it's forever," said Anderson, who leads an information group for grandparents raising their grandchildren the second Monday of every month from 6 to 8 p.m..

"These grandparents have stepped up to prevent their grandchildren from being placed into care and are frequently already struggling to make ends meet on limited incomes."
NDP MP Claude Gravelle

Anderson relates personally to the grandparents because she has been raising her two grandchildren for almost 20 years since her daughter's death.

She said the biggest concerns are related to finding childcare and financial assistance. Many grandparents don't know where to begin.

Betty Cornelius has seen grandmothers take out reverse home mortgages eventually losing the house to afford raising their grandchild.

Cornelius, founder of Cangrands, a not-for-profit organization to help support grandparents and other kin who raise their grandchildren, believes the government isn't doing enough to help Canadians in this situation.

Cornelius, who spent 17 years raising her granddaughter Ashley with her husband, remembers that after bringing Ashley home people commended her. She would reply, "I don't need a crown. I need some coin to raise this kid."

In 1995, Cornelius took out a small ad in a local newspaper in Bancroft, Ont. where she called out for other grandparents raising their grandchildren.

"I knew I wasn't the only one who had a drug addict for a son," said Cornelius.

There are 21 Cangrands chapters across the country. The most, 15, are in Ontario.

"They need support, and to realize that they are not alone," said Cornelius, "literally some cry when they feel that connection."

Cornelius is actively involved in getting more assistance for grandparents raising their grandchildren.

"Our freedom 55 plan went out the window and it's still out the window even now that she's gone," said Cornelius. "Financially we will never recover from raising a child we didn't plan on."

NDP MP Claude Gravelle is pushing a private member's bill aimed to financially help grandparents in this situation through more tax credits and deductions.

Gravelle said he would also like to see grandparents receive Employment Insurance when taking parental leave for raising a child under five.

"These grandparents have stepped up to prevent their grandchildren from being placed into care and are frequently already struggling to make ends meet on limited incomes. The least we can do is recognize this and afford them the same benefits biological parents would receive," said the Nickle Belt MP before the House of Commons on Mar. 26, 2013.

Most weekends, Stephens drives an hour and a half into Toronto to bring her grandson to the Ontario Science Centre. They have a membership for the season. Before the Science Centre they had a membership to the ROM, but Stephens says there wasn't much for the two-year-old to do there.

For the next three hours, he'll run around the KidSpark area playing with a variety of educational toys for children. It's a busy Saturday and Stephens' grandson has little hesitation approaching other children.

Stephens hangs back to let him explore by himself. Occasionally, he takes off and she has to run and bring him back.

By 3 p.m. the little boy is cranky and Stephens is tired.

After a small struggle to change his diaper before the drive back to Cobourg, Stephens is on the road with her grandson dozing off in the backseat.

She plans to bring him back one Saturday in the near future for a moon and stars exhibit because she knows how much he loves staring at the moon in their backyard.

"I would do it again," Stephens says about taking her grandson in, "and I will fight to keep him safe for as long as I have."



Barbara Walczak stands in the kitchen with her daughter, Anna Walczak in Hamilton, Ont. Anna was adopted from the Philippines in 1996 and later diagnosed with Autism.

GROWING PAINS

In 1996, Barbara Walczak, along with her husband, adopted a baby girl from the Philippines. Only past a year old, Anna was swooped up into the arms of two loving parents and along she came to Canada. A year later, Anna was diagnosed with autism.

On a Sunday afternoon in a cozy living room sits Barbara Walczak. With a light Polish accent hosting her words she smiles as she holds a photo album of last summer's photos.

"Here is Anna. She's riding a bike with a friend she made on the street."

Flash forward to Barbara on her couch, recalling memories of their most recent vacation. Anna is now 19 and Barbara is single. The marriage between Barbara and her husband fell apart. Although her ex-husband still helps out with parenting, Barbara is the main caregiver. Barbara has built a life with Anna nurtured by love and an immense amount of patience.

Autism is a spectrum of neurological disorders that range in a variety of functioning conditions. Individuals with autism can be classified as high functioning or low functioning and the umbrella of autism is complex and multi-faceted.

Now edging on 60, for Barbara is facing the reality that she won't be able to take care of Anna forever.

There are options in Ontario for children with autism. A child is eligible for therapy, they can be enrolled in Intensive Behavioral Intervention therapy. IBI is practiced 25-40 hours a week with a therapist, working one-on-one

with a child in a private space or at home. Over the last decade Ontario has increased its spending services to \$186 million according to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

Unfortunately, this doesn't come close to the demand. As of last June there were more children on the waiting list than in treatment.

Once autistic children turn 19, they lose all privileges of being a child with autism in Ontario such as pediatricians, publicly funded speech and language services, and behavior therapy. By age 21, they are no longer allowed to attend public school.

Anna is non-verbal but recently has been enrolled in a multitude of therapies in hope that someday she will be able to be more self sufficient, aiming to improve her communication skills. The main goal is to stimulate certain parts of the brain. This is known as neuroplasticity - the brain's ability to rewire itself and change the way it processes information.

Along with that Anna has been enrolled in dance and swimming so that she stays busy while also helping improve her co-ordination.

It's all about working with Anna and trying to let her the ability of her brain flourish.



Anna Walczak does puzzles at home everyday to further promote her work towards stimulating certain parts of her brain, with the help of her mother, Barbara.

Photos and Story by Julia Karpiuk.



Barbara does daily exercises with Anna to help her identify emotions. The exercise consists of flash cards with different expressions and emotions on them, Anna's is expected to identify the emotion.



Anna and Barbara sit in the waiting room while waiting for Anna's therapy. Barbara is observing Anna while she plays with a toy she found in the waiting room.



Anna attends therapy every week. The focus of her sessions is to work on her comprehension of letters and numbers.