



Photo by Micah Bond

Brothers Andrew (left) and Adam Gray directed *Fly Colt Fly* and attended a screening of the film at DocFest on Saturday. They also attended a question and answer session at the end of the film. *Fly Colt Fly* tells the story of Colton Harris-Moore who was wanted by and eluded the police for almost three years.

Downtown DocFest a huge hit

By Suzy Willig

The third annual Downtown DocFest was a huge success in Belleville over the weekend, selling out the Empire Theatre for the gala on the first night.

"I'm totally blown away. I mean I had an inkling that we would have a good turnout, but Friday? No. It was a complete shock," said Gary Magwood, co-organizer of the festival.

Magwood had said that no matter how much advertising you do, word of mouth sells an event.

"We must have been doing something right in previous years."

Filmgoers readily paid \$30 for advance passes and \$40 at the door.

Festival attendee Brenna Macdonald said that the event intrigues local residents to come out and watch documentaries of real things that are happening instead of theatrical features.

"It's very general, from everything like social issues and humanitarian issues and environmental issues or just artsy fartsy type of videos...like you don't need to need anything from it, you can just watch it and go 'Hmm, okay, you know, or it can change your life.'"

"I watched three the first day, so seven so far. There's one today at four, Buying Sex and that's the next one I'm going to

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see."

Many festival-goers gathered ahead of time and lined up for films as others were

still showing.

Many were interested in the festival for different reasons, including Bohdi Talbot, who was volunteering at the event.

"This is my second year volunteering here and I got involved in it personally just because I needed arts hours for school, and this counts because it's to do with documentaries and filmmaking, so I thought it would be kind of a neat opportunity."

She did say, however, there were a couple of downfalls about the scheduling of the festival that she noticed.

"I was sitting in one movie, Inocente, and it was a really good film actually, and it only like half full so

it was kind of disappointing to think that they're only playing once so you don't have a chance to get to see it even if it's a really good movie. But I think overall it was a really good turnout."

The festival showcased over 50 films, and for the first time ever held a 'finale' – a film called *Watermark*, which was introduced by one of the producers, Jennifer Baichwal via Skype. A panel discussion on related issues followed the film.

To view a local contribution DocFest, go to: <http://www.qnetnews.ca/?p=34980>

Teen becomes advocate for cause which impacted her life

By Brianne Ste Marie Lacroix

Being an advocate for a cause, doing speeches and having a scholarship carrying her name, isn't what an average 19-year-old girl spends most of her time thinking about.

For Megan Chesney, this has been her life and she wouldn't want it any other way. At three years old, her mother noticed that her left side wasn't developing at the same pace as her right side and that she was always walking on the toes of her left foot. Shortly after, she was diagnosed with hemiplegia.

At six years old, she and her mother, Sarah Torrible, began organizing an annual walkathon in the month of May dedicated to Chesney's birthday and

also to raise money to help send families to the retreats hosted by the Children's Hemiplegia and Stroke Association, or CHASA.

She was living in China at the time that she started the fundraisers and when she moved to Singapore, she continued the hemiplegia walkathons there.

"I helped kids go to this retreat and see that there were people just like them," said Chesney.

There was one year when there wasn't a retreat and Chesney still wanted to raise money to help someone. CHASA then asked her if she would be interested in having a scholarship fund under her name to help young adults with hemiplegia go to college or university. Chesney receives letters and e-mails from people who have received her scholarship and she said she

feels great about being able to help people and make them realize they can do it.

She and her mother want to continue the tradition of Megan's walk this year and it will be the first time it's held in Canada. Chesney and her family moved to Belleville for her first year of television and new media production at Loyalist College. They are planning to host the walkathon in Port Hope and are excited to have a good way to meet new people and bring the community together.

Torrible joined the CHASA community online almost 17 years ago. She was able to communicate with other parents who had children with hemiplegia and was able to connect with them deeply. A small group of parents from the United States decided to organize a retreat where children and parents could all meet

each other. Chesney and her family were unable to attend the first retreat, but have now attended nine retreats that have been held all across the United States.

"I made many friends that were just like me. We would talk about things that were difficult and our challenges," said Chesney.

It started with only a few families when Chesney's family joined the community and has now grown to over 1,000. According to Torrible, CHASA has been like a second family.

"It has been so valuable for me and my husband to connect with other parents who are taking a similar parenting journey to us, and for Megan to see that she is not alone in her own journey as a child, and now a young adult, with hemiplegia," said Torrible.

Accounting program offers free tax clinic for students

Students taking advantage of assistance five days a week

By Michelle Heshka

Loyalist students have a leg up on this year's tax season.

The school's accounting program has opened their annual free tax clinic, and this year it's bigger than ever.

The 2014 student tax clinic opened on Feb. 25. It is open to students and the family members of students with less than \$30,000 in income. It is being advertised online at www.loyaliststudents.com/student-tax-clinic/ where students can find out exactly what they need to bring to file their taxes successfully. The website lists important tax documents geared to student life. The list includes T4 forms for income, T4A forms for scholarships and bursaries, T2202A forms for tuition payments, and residence receipts for on-campus students.

The clinic is being offered by Loyalist accounting students on a volunteer basis and is overseen by accounting professor Carol Coupland.

Coupland said the clinic has been a success for both volunteers and students participating.

"We are encouraged by the interest that has been shown in our first week of the tax clinic. Our students are excited



Photo By Michelle Heshka

Cassandra Gear is a first-year accounting student at Loyalist. She volunteers for the student tax clinic.

to have the opportunity to work with Canada Revenue Agency in providing tax advice and filing for Loyalist College students," said Coupland.

One volunteer, Cassandra Gear, a first-year accounting student, said the six-week clinic has already been busier than last year, and they're expecting even more

success.

Unlike last year, the clinic is in an office setting and is open five days a week.

"This year's the first year it's set up

like an office. Last year, they had one day a week for people to come in. This year, we're open all week. We've had a lot of people come in and ask questions throughout the week," said Gear.

According to Gear, the clinic has been a success because of the process.

"The process isn't long. You can come in and sit with us on Tuesdays, and it's done in about half an hour. We take half an hour because we're new to this. Once we get going it'll take about 15 minutes."

Many students are taking initiative and are filing with the help of the clinic. The convenience of the clinic being at the school and the short timeframe it takes to file make the clinic a go-to place for tax help and advice.

Dylan Geerts, a second-year animation student, said he wouldn't have done his taxes without the help of the clinic.

"It's a great thing to offer at the school," said Geerts.

"The tax clinic at the school helped me figure out how to go about filing my taxes. I wouldn't have figured out what to do or how to do it if I didn't go to the tax clinic."

As the clinic continues its success, Gear and all accounting staff and students urge students to capitalize on this free service.

"We know a lot about taxes. It's free! Come on in and bring your taxes. Why pay \$50 for someone else to do them?"

Visit www.loyaliststudents.com/student-tax-clinic/ for more information and clinic hours of operation.