



Photo by Gabrielle Smith

Rylee Tooley, 22 months, explores the lighting displays at Jane Forrester Park last Friday. It is part of the Foster Christmas display, which had its beginning at the home of Rita and Don Foster in 1959 in memory of their son, Billy, who died on Christmas Eve.

Light display has special meaning

Community support through donations supplements city funding

By Gabrielle Smith

Hundreds of people bundled up and braved the cold to witness the annual lighting of the Foster Christmas display at Jane Forrester Park on Nov. 14. Beginning in 1959, after the tragic Christmas Eve death of 19-year-old Billy Foster, his parents Rita and Don Foster set up a backyard Christmas lights display in memory of their son. Within a few years, the display had

grown to a feature in Alemite Park. Each year since, it has evolved as a tradition, with growing support from the community. The display continues to hold a special place in the hearts of Belleville residents, and continues to be supported, despite the recent deaths of the Fosters. The display currently takes the form of a large, brightly lit installation in Jane Forrester Park. Complete with a nativity scene and too many lit-up snowmen to take in all at once, the Foster display is the main feature of the park's full holiday breadth. Dozens of families spent the brisk

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Chair Garnet Thompson

Friday evening walking around, admiring the park's glitzy Christmas makeover, taking pictures and exploring the displays. Garnet Thompson, chair of the Belleville Christmas Lighting Display Committee, says that the hefty turnout

is proof of how important this event is to the city. "Every year, we have a very large turnout. People come down excited to see it. From now until Christmas, there will be large amounts of people coming out every night to wander around with their kids, getting their pictures taken. "This is important for the municipality. Our city needs to be very proud of taking this on." The display is partially city-funded, but it wouldn't be a fraction of the size it is without community support and donations. Companies and members of the community have stepped up to donate every year, and Thompson ac-

knowledges that their generous donations are crucial in keeping this tradition alive in Belleville. "People have very generously come out and given us money, sending us cheques, saying they want to be apart of it. Over the years, we've had a lot of big sponsors and we've had a lot of small sponsors, but it's all contributed to this happening here. "It shows the interest, it shows how important it is to the people when they want to give money to enhance the display. It really shows that our municipality is behind it. The people are behind it and they want it to continue."

Native community comes together in support of Red Cedars Shelter

Focus of event at Tyendinaga location emphasizes women's health

By Annie Sakkab

For the first time this year, Red Cedars Shelter of Tyendinaga hosted a fundraiser event in celebration of Women's Health & Wellness Day on Saturday, Nov. 15. The focus of the event was to encourage women to take control of their life through health awareness and promotion of regular physical activities. Women were able to attend presentations and have a one-on-one consultation with health professionals and specialists on urban poling, breast health, self-defence, naturopathy, chiropractic care, adoption and addiction awareness. The fundraiser event also included craft and health vendors as well as prizes and a silent auction with proceeds going to the shelter to continue providing support to women and children who are fleeing family violence situations. Unlike previous years, this year's event admission was \$2 and was limited to women ages 16 and up. "We have restricted the event to women 16 and up so women can actually get some free time to pamper themselves a little bit. Every woman likes shopping and looking around, and have some food or maybe get their hair or nails done," explained manager of Red Cedars Shelter Linda LeFort. "This year, we are doing it differently. We are making it a fundraiser with a lot of free things, but people get a chance to shop, community members and businesses, and people off territory as well who serve the community here, have also come in to sell their wares or talk about health and wellness and contribute to what women would like to know," LeFort added. November is also a health and awareness month for women. With the International Day for The Elimination of Violence Against Women coming up Nov. 25, this event was a great opportunity for community members and native women



Photo by Annie Sakkab

Mary Lynn Brant pampers herself with a haircut by hairdresser Kim Maracle during the Women's Health & Wellness Day at Mohawk Community Centre on Saturday in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory.

to get together and support each other in their fight for women's rights and freedom. "I just think it's an awesome time to include community and businesses to see how they can support each other. November is an awareness month for violence against women. It's also the month that CAS (Social & Human Services Organizations) in our local services are looking for adoption. It's also addiction awareness next week here in the community, so November is a really busy time for people to be coming out and finding what's going on," LeFort added.

Red Cedars Shelter is funded by Aboriginal Heath and Wellness, and while the funding is integral in the day-to-day operation of the shelter, it's not enough to keep it going. The shelter has been in deficit for the past three years and LeFort, with her team, continuously come up with creative ideas to support the organization. Women's Health & Wellness Day is a grassroots initiative and is an event that allows the shelter to fundraise while local businesses within Tyendinaga can showcase their services to their community. So it's a win-win situation, LeFort explained.

"I just think it's awesome. I hope this is going to raise awareness for the shelter and for all the other services that came out here," LeFort said. "I also hope this is going to be an annual and we're hoping to make some money today." Red Cedars Shelter has been in operation for over 17 years. It's a shelter for women and children where it provides a safe, secure, non-judgmental environment to enhance awareness of and healing after domestic violence. The shelter also offers men and women private counselling, referrals, court support, educational sessions and traditional teachings.

Festivities light up Picton

By Amanda Paulhus

Lanterns filled the street when the second annual Firelight Lantern Festival commenced in Picton last Saturday. The festivities began with a lantern parade from Bensen Park down Main Street to Crystal Palace, where more fun awaited. The evening included live music, baked goods, a black light tent and a shadow puppet performance. The festival was put on by The Department of Illumination, co-directed by Krista Dalby and Susanne Larnar. "In the 90s, I was in Vancouver and I saw a lantern festival there. I loved it so much and wanted to bring it back home," Susanne Larnar said, when asked where the inspiration for such an event came from. "I kept seeing if I could find anyone who could start one with me. It wasn't until I met Krista a few years ago and she said she'll do one so the two of us put our heads together and here we are." Krista Dalby is known in the community for Small Pond Arts, an artistic residency, gallery and arts centre, which she began in 2010 with her husband Milé Murtansovski. Dalby has a background as a playwright, puppeteer and producer of theatre, thus the perfect partner to begin an event like the Firelight Festival. "Our goal with starting the Firelight Lantern Festival was to 'light up' the community we love – essentially bringing art, music and theatre to the people of Prince Edward County," Dalby explained. The first Firelight Lantern Festival was held in spring of 2013, but was held in autumn of 2014 because of how early it gets dark out this time of year, which would show off the lanterns better during the parade. For about a month and a half prior to the event, lantern-building workshops were held at different locations across the region. "Everybody came out and made their own lanterns, or made lanterns at home, so it's all pretty well home grown," Larnar stated.

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