

# The Pioneer

Vol. 47 · Issue #11  
 Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2014  
 Loyalist College · Belleville, ON · Canada



Photo by Amanda Cheung

Kids look out the window on board the Canadian Pacific Holiday Train in Belleville on Saturday. The train travels and makes stops across Canada raising food and cash donations for local food banks. For more photos, see page 4.

## Food bank gets boost at benefit

*Canadian Pacific Holiday Train arrives in Belleville for musical morning*

By Jeremy Mckay

The train arrived at Kiwanis Bayshore Park at 10 a.m. with live music performed by The Odds and Roxanne Potvin. The event was considered a success in raising money and non-perishable food.

The decorated train brought

smiles on the faces of children and adults as they enjoyed free hot chocolate and candy served by Gleaners volunteers.

"It's for the kids. Coming here shows Christmas through their eyes for me," commented Christina Brinklow, who has been supporting the event for a couple of years.

A \$7,000 cheque was presented by a CP rail representative to Susanne Quinlan, director of operations for Gleaners food bank. A further \$671 was collected onsite.

"This event brings families together to understand the issue of hunger

is not only in Belleville, but across Canada as well," commented Quinlan.

The donations will be distributed among all of the food banks in the Quinte region.

"Twenty-five per cent of the money will be spent on hearty, healthy food," said Quinlan. The hearty-healthy food will be coming from local farmers in the Quinte area.

Belleville residents donated a total of 1,056 kilograms of non-perishable goods at the event. As well, sponsor Medigas donated 210 kilograms of non-perishable goods alongside Kel-

logg's, who contributed 18 skids of cereal and granola bars.

The CP Holiday Train has been chugging across Canada since 1999, and has been stopping in Belleville for the past 11 years. Since the Holiday was started, over \$9.5 million and 3.3 million pounds of food has been raised for North American food banks to date. The train itself is about 1,000-feet long and a combined total of 14 cars.

"I've been coming to this ever since the train has been coming in," commented Armin Quickert, a retired business man and honorary colonel

at 8 Wing/CFB Trenton.

Quickert says he has shown support over the years for the event because he wants to help people get started since he himself was in such a position when his family immigrated from East Germany in 1951.

There are eight food banks in operation in the Quinte region. There are also food hampers for students at Loyalist College, made available at the financial aid office. More information can be found at the Gleaners website: [www.gleanersfoodbank.ca](http://www.gleanersfoodbank.ca) or contact them at (613) 962-9043.

## Youngster gets help in cancer battle

*Head shaving by Loyalist student Adam Strickland raises over \$2,000*

By Sarah Robertson

Friday was a big day at Loyalist College, as students and staff came together to support nine-year-old Thomas Martin. In June, he was diagnosed with gliomatosis cerebri, a rare form of brain cancer.

Lancers volleyball player No. 8, Adam Strickland, had been growing his hair out for over a year and finally decided he wanted to cut it.

"Adam came in with the idea of shaving his head and wanted to do something with it. Not just your average haircut. Jordan McConnell knew about Thomas and his family," said Amy Hoskin, the athletic assistant at Loyalist.

During half time at the women's basketball game, Martin and his family were greeted with loud cheers from the crowd. "Let's go, Thomas!"

"The gym was in an uproar. Adam and Thomas stood together in the centre of the court with the biggest, happiest smile on Thomas's face," said Gareth Martin, a friend and teammate of Strickland's.

"It was heartwarming. I think everyone felt that way. Seeing the happiness on Thomas's face when he got called out, to the time he was cutting Adam's hair. He was always laughing and totally stoked to be there with everyone's support."

To help with medical expenses, Loyalist sponsored a fundraiser selling Team Thomas T-shirts and held a spaghetti dinner, which was a huge success.

The goal was to raise \$1,000, but as everyone came together, they surpassed that goal and raised over \$2,400. Even rival team the George Brown Huskies got in on the action to help support the worthy cause.

"Seeing the crowd was overwhelm-



Photo by Bryan Eneas

Thomas Martin, 9, shaves Adam Strickland's hair during the Together We Are Stronger event hosted at Loyalist College on Nov. 28. Martin is battling gliomatosis cerebri, which is a rare form of brain cancer. The event raised over \$2,000, with proceeds going to the Martin family.

ing and very exciting at the same time. I knew that everyone was there to support Thomas through his time of need, which

made me feel really good about what I was doing," said Strickland.

"I really like my new hair too! It's a

huge difference obviously but it's a lot easier to deal with. Plus my mom loves it!" he laughed.

## Memorial tree campaign helps to remember loved one

By Michele Weisz

Dec. 1 marked the start of Hospice Quinte's annual memorial trees campaign.

The campaign, which occurs every year just before the holiday season, is celebrating its 15th anniversary. Each year, hospice volunteers and staff set up a booth and two large Christmas trees inside Belleville's Quinte Mall. For each donation made in memory of a lost loved one, a symbolic dove is placed on the branches of one of the two memorial trees. Hanging from each dove is a card with a name honouring a lost friend or family member.

"It's an opportunity to remember a loved one. Stories are exchanged. We keep a box of Kleenex under the table because people become emotional," says Hospice Quinte Executive Director Helen Dowdall.

Last year, the campaign raised \$5,000 in one week and Dowdall hopes to surpass that number this year. For the first time in its 15-year history, the campaign will run for two weeks instead of one. Eight Hospice volunteers per day will work in shifts at the mall from Dec. 1 to Dec. 14. According to Dowdall, the campaign is especially meaningful to the hospice's many volunteers and it was they who requested the extra week.

"We each wanted a chance to volunteer for this campaign," says long-time volunteer Sue Thoms.

Hospice Quinte is the largest visiting hospice in southeastern Ontario. A total of 70 per cent of its funding is raised through donations during the course of the year.

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