



Photo by Nathan Zbeetnoff

A Carrying Place resident gives members of the community permission to come onto her waterfront property to feed cold and starving birds. The resident started this last year when Ontario's Great Lakes were 88 per cent frozen over, according to Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (GLERL), and the birds could not get the proper nutrients they needed.

With a little help from their friends

By Nathan Zbeetnoff

Cold and starving birds are getting some much-needed support from their human friends on Barcovan Beach Road this winter.

Helen Lefebvre and a close friend started a community gathering on the friend's property to feed the cold and starving birds since January 2014.

"Last year, over 200 birds died because of the harsh conditions and lack of food," said Lefebvre.

Many birds huddle along the shores of Lake Ontario on Barcovan Beach Road. Swans, Canadian geese, goldeneyes, American blacks, mallards, shovellers, and mergansers among the feathered friends making their winter home here.

Lefebvre went above and beyond by spreading the word about the suffering birds. She left a letter at a local restaurant that she created with Biologist Robert in hopes of bringing people in to feed the birds.

Lefebvre also headed to the local radio station a

couple of times to let the community know that she would be on her property between the time of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. each day feeding the birds.

"Normally nature looks after itself, but once in awhile, they need a helping hand," Lefebvre said.

Lefebvre has been helping for just under a decade feeding the birds. Its value became particularly important last year when the Great Lakes froze over 88 per cent and the birds were unable to find food for themselves.

It was then that they decided to spread the word to the community so people were more informed on the current situation.

It wasn't only the harsh winter that was killing the birds. Some fishermen would leave fishing wire in the lakes and the birds would become entangled and have it wrapped around their beaks, said Lefebvre.

"A lot of them do not survive ... a lot of them will die."

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Loyalist College looks for ways to deal with \$4 million deficit

By Joel Watson

Loyalist College is looking for ways to deal with a \$4 million deficit for the upcoming 2014-2015 fiscal year.

This loss is similar to last year's \$3.7 million budget deficit, however, Loyalist does not have the reserve funds to help offset the gap.

A number of factors have contributed to Loyalist's financial situation, the most significant being the size of the college. Loyalist President and CEO Maureen Piercy addressed the problem in a recent business plan update.

"Smaller, regional colleges such as Loyalist are challenged to achieve necessary economies of scale," she said.

The Loyalist board of governors is now looking for ways to help offset the deficit by being more vigilant on cost reduction.

"Everything is on the table," Piercy said. "Basically, we're looking at every opportunity to increase cost efficiencies. It's a big college with a \$60 million budget, so there are lots of areas to look at. We will be looking at everything in terms of increasing cost efficiencies or generating an increase in net revenue."

One of the many cost efficiencies that the board will be looking into will be the possibility of program and faculty cuts.

"Programs have a life cycle. Even the best programs sometimes don't attract enough and don't retain enough students and they can be great programs with great faculty, but we have to be able to make them sustainable," said Piercy.

"We always have to look at programs and services. We have to keep changing them. That's part of the life of a college and a post-secondary organization. So that will certainly be among the things we look at."

Bernard Belanger, the president of Local 420 of the OPSEU faculty union, said the college is currently implementing a "buy out program" for teachers looking at



Photo by Joel Watson

President and CEO Maureen Piercy addresses her fellow Board of Governors about Loyalist College's budget troubles. The college is predicted to have a \$4 million deficit by the end of this year's business plan.

the possibility of an early retirement.

"They have offered a buyout or a retirement package, and to my understanding 15 employees of Loyalist College have already taken that," said Belanger.

"The initial idea is to try and reduce the number of employees. If you were thinking about the buyout but haven't made up your mind, given the financial situation of the college, you might want to reconsider."

Belanger also said that the lack of communication between management and the rest of the faculty on what is yet to come has been poor.

"On the information regarding the budget deficit, management has said to us that 'We have lost funding here and here.' That's all we are told, but we are not told how we are going to get out of that," said Belanger.

"The onus of getting rid of the deficit

has been put on our backs and then I'm being told by the powers that be that we are all in this together, but it doesn't feel that way and it doesn't look that way, and I don't like what is happening here."

Piercy said that the college will do its best to make sure that the college financial situation will impact the students as little as possible without disrupting their learning.

Loyalist turns pink for anti-bullying

By Hannah Eden

Loyalist College students donned pink shirts in aid of Anti-Bullying Day on Wednesday. A sea of pink was seen college-wide as students and teachers wore items of pink clothing in support of a Canada-wide anti-bullying campaign for the third year at Loyalist.

Started in Nova Scotia in support of a bullied student who had chosen to wear pink, Pink Shirt Day has been a huge success in the past at Loyalist and this year was no exception.

"For me, it shows that the college is really trying to be inclusive," shares Sarah Ogden, mind and wellness practitioner.

"It's a very simple thing to put on a pink shirt, but it speaks volumes."

However, student involvement did not start and end with pink shirts.

A wellness workshop involving a mini spa with the help of esthetics and spa students gave participants a chance to focus on their own areas of improvement including physical and mental health. Chair yoga led by Ogden made for a fun twist on the afternoon, while other students looked on during a manicure and pamper session.

The day not only represented an important cause such as anti-bullying, but also gave the LGBTQ community at Loyalist a chance to raise awareness for their own campaigns.

Loyalist College's Rainbow Alliance, a group for members of the LGBTQ community at the college and in the local Belleville community, held a 'How to be an ally' workshop for all students and teachers regardless of sexual orientation or expression.

Led by Ogden, the workshop focused on how to support local LGBTQ groups and focused on four main courses of action. Awareness, knowledge, skill and action were talking points as well as a slideshow of facts relating to LGBTQ youth across Canada.

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