



Photo by Hannah Eden

(From left) Nicole Adams, Nancy Archer, Sandra Gordon, Janet Daley and Anthony Crosby joined the festivities for Loyalist's Pink Shirt Day on Feb. 25 with the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dogs.

Anti-bullying...

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"Almost 10 per cent of LGBTQ students across Canada reported having heard homophobic comments from teachers on a daily or weekly basis," said Ogden.

As well as worrying statistics such as these, handouts were made available to participants about how best to support friends and colleagues who have come out as a homosexual.

The suicide of Jamie Hugh in 2011, a 15-year-old student who was bullied for being a homosexual, sparked outrage around the world. Many wanted to seek

justice for Hugh by prosecuting the bullies, however, without physical evidence; no one was brought to trial.

Issues such as homophobia, awareness about correct LGBTQ terminology and anti-bullying strategies are one of the reasons Pink Shirt Day exists.

"I think you have to get comfortable with being uncomfortable," said Ogden.

"I think it's important to push your comfort zone."

For those that just needed a moment of relaxation in the pre-exam rush of February, the St. John's Ambulance Therapy Dogs were seen lounging around the Link Lounge also wearing pink items in support of the college-wide event.

Dog owner, Janet Daley dressed her

five-year-old dog Winnie in one of her pink sweaters in support of anti-bullying. "Winnie is a very kind and gentle dog," said Daley. "All the dogs that work for St. John's have to be calm around people."

A calm and inclusive environment was the theme of the day as students, teachers and dogs alike, roaming the halls in silent support of the Canada-wide campaign.

Permanent limits could soon be in place for use by Long's quarry in Shannonville

By Micah Bond

Residents around Long's quarry in Shannonville are still concerned that their well water may run dry, but they are one step closer to having permanent limits placed on the quarry's ability to pump away ground water.

The preliminary hearing for the organization Citizens Against Melrose Quarry's appeal to revoke the permit to take water (PTTW) was issued to C.H. Demill Holdings Inc. took place late last month. The hearing focused largely on procedural matters.

In late October, Citizens Against Melrose Quarry was given full leave to appeal the permit issued by the ministry of the environment.

The permit allows the quarry to pump away up to 4,000,000 litres of water per day to facilitate deeper gravel extraction. However, a temporary hold has been put on the permit while the court case proceeds, said Susan Munro, the chair of Citizens Against Melrose Quarry.

She said it is her understanding that the

proponent is going to attempt to have the hold lifted toward the end of March.

The next hearing is tentatively set to begin May 19 at the Tyendinaga Township Recreation Centre and will focus on the arguments against the PTTW.

Munro said she believes there is a good chance the appeal will be successful. "How confident am I? Confident but not cocky."

Citizens Against Melrose Quarry has been fighting to have the Ministry of Environment place more stringent limits on the amount of water that Long's quarry can remove and to halt plans to open a second adjacent quarry referred to as the Melrose Quarry. The Melrose Quarry would also be operated by C.H. Demill Holdings Inc.

Munro said she believes council will not make a decision regarding the rezoning of the Melrose Quarry until there has been a verdict on the PTTW.

Long's Quarry, located on Shannonville Road, has been pumping water towards the bay since the mid-90s and members of the community are concerned that if it

'How confident am I? Confident but not cocky.'

Chairperson Susan Munro

continues, the water table could sink and cut off the water supply, said Munro.

The proponent has conducted geological studies of the area and concluded that this is not a significant risk, however, peer review done by Malroz Engineering has indicated otherwise. Malroz Engineering was hired by Citizens Against Melrose Quarry.

Munro said she is afraid that there could be a 'pop up' which is when the quarry floor buckles and water rushes up into the quarry. If this happens, she said it is possible that the surrounding water table would sink below the level of wells in the area.

This happened at a quarry near Kingston, she said.

"The water drained away and the city

of Kingston had to pipe water out to residents." She said it's a similar type of terrain in and around Long's Quarry.

In a statement to the Environmental Review Tribunal, John Pyke, an environmental geoscientist with Malroz Engineering, said:

"Despite the terms and conditions contained within the new PTTW, the large-scale dewatering activities at the existing Long's quarry and/or proposed Melrose quarry have the clear potential to cause unacceptable or significant impacts to local domestic wells and Blessington Creek. "The proponent's claims that quarry dewatering will not cause adverse groundwater or surface water impacts have not been adequately substantiated by scientifically sound investigations, and appear contrary to the proponent's own modelling, which predicts impacts upon nearby domestic wells."

In an interview late last year, Tony Fleming, a lawyer hired by the company, said that in consideration of the technical data he's seen, the possibility of a pop-up is not an issue at Long's Quarry.

"The water that we're talking about is a very deep aquifer and it's also what they call a highly mineralized aquifer which means the water is not of good quality," he said.

Fleming said he was not aware of any, or very few wells, that actually tap that aquifer. "Most of the wells that are in the area are what are called shallow wells," he said.

Fleming added that if the aquifer was adversely affected, it would only affect a very small number of wells, if any.

An aquifer is a layer of permeable rock, gravel or sand that can absorb or contain water.

Munro said that in 1994, there actually was a small pop-up. Because of this, their permit was not renewed in 2005. The permit was not reissued until 2012, she said.

"If the MOE was doing their job and there was a pop up and they denied him a permit to take water, what changed? Did he come to them a number of years later and say 'Look I've got all these studies?' No, they gave him a permit to work while he got the studies. Is that right?"

Reaction comes after release of new curriculum

By Joel Watson

Premier Kathleen Wynne announced on Monday the new sex education curriculum that will be implemented in Ontario Catholic and public schools. This will be the province's first revision of the curriculum since 1998.

"That's a long time for a curriculum to be in place," said Kerry Donnell, communications officer for the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board.

"A lot has changed in the world during that time and this new health and physical education curriculum addresses some topics that are more current in today's world."

Donnell also said that this curriculum will apply to all public and Catholic school boards throughout Ontario.

"Ensuring our students are healthy, and are able to make good choices about their health and safety, is an important priority for us," stated Theresa Kennedy, superintendent of school effectiveness for the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board.

"As a Catholic school board, fostering in each student, a deeper understanding of their health, safety and development as a human person is supported through our Catholic graduate expectations."

The new curriculum is similar to the one that was removed in 2010 by former premier Dalton McGuinty. McGuinty pulled the curriculum because of a public outcry from religious groups, saying it was age-inappropriate for earlier grades, but that's not the case for all Ontario citizens.

"It's been five years of campaigning and collaboration amongst different public health professionals and educators in Ontario to try and get this curriculum released fully," said Sharon Osterhout, the school health co-ordinator of the Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Health Unit.

"Providing kids with good sexual



Photo by Joel Watson

Sharon Osterhout, school health co-ordinator of the Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Health Unit, displays the revised 2015 health and physical education curriculum for Ontario. This is Ontario's first revision of the curriculum since 1998. Some of the additions to the curriculum are safe Internet usage, sexting, and starting sexual education in the earlier grades.

health information helps prevent early sexual activity and any negative health outcomes. We know that some studies have shown that the vast majority of parents do want sexual health education provided in schools."

One of the bigger changes will be introducing sex education to the first, second and third grades. The curriculum wants to insure students know the proper

terms for individual body parts as well as healthy relationships. Some of the other updates include a concept of safe Internet usage, the concept of sexual consent, and sexting.

"I think that it's important that this curriculum is teaching the information that students need at an earlier age," said Osterhout. "Kids are so connected now and they're learning things at an

earlier age. The 1998 version was before the widespread usage of social media and smart phones."

Donnell stated that "There will be training opportunities for our staff to learn the new curriculum so they will be well prepared."

The new curriculum will be set in place at the start of the 2015-2016 school year in September.

Birds...

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The birds have to keep a very open eye. Along with the harsh winters and fishing wire, they can become prey to animals like snapping turtles and foxes. This issue is especially important to the baby swans by the shore. Last year, Lefebvre counted 33 babies.

Lefebvre has had an issue feeding the mergansers because they will only eat fish. "I tried to buy goldfish last year, but they wouldn't touch them," Lefebvre said.

Despite everything, Lefebvre said the birds are doing much better than previous years.

People in the community who were unfamiliar with the area, instead of throwing the feed for the birds by the water, would put it onto the road. Neighbours started complaining and eventually a letter made itself into the paper.

But this attention brought more people coming together to help out the starving birds.

One of the issues that was raised was that some people believed that by feeding the birds, they would grow accustomed to being human-fed and wouldn't leave once the ice melted away. Fortunately, this was not the case and the swans started leaving in the middle of March.

"They are usually completely gone around the beginning of April," Lefebvre said.

Very few of the birds stick around in the Barcovan area in the springtime.

Once the summer comes, they start to become very territorial and people should watch themselves around the birds.

For those people in the community who assisted in feeding the birds and keeping them alive, Lefebvre went out of her way to print out 8x10 photographs of the swans. She gave them to those who spent a lot of time and effort with her to take care of the birds.

"The bottom line is that it's nice when the community gets together," Lefebvre said.