



Photo by Annie Sakkab

Professor Larry Burnett along with his second-year students from the the construction and renovation techniques program, discuss plumbing issues at the new Habitat for Humanity home in downtown Trenton earlier this week.

Home sweet home soon for family

Volunteers working hard to finish the building of Habitat for Humanity house

By Annie Sakkab

Bayside family Dan and Melanie Coughlin are 252 sweat equity hours away from moving into their new home. The Habitat for Humanity home is currently under construction on Sidney Street in downtown Trenton. The Coughlins, along with their three daughters Jaqueline, Meghan and Gwen, is the latest partner family of Habitat Prince Edward-Hastings and are expected to move into one half of the duplex in April 2015. So far, they have completed 248 volunteer hours out of the 500 required into the building of their new home before they're able to move in.

The 500 hours don't necessarily have to be spent in the building site. It can also include other initiatives such as volunteering at Habitat events or at the ReStore, a building supply store operated by Habitat. Other family members can also contribute up to a 100 hours, Melanie explains. "It's so cool. How many people actually get hands-on (experience) building their own house. It's nice to be able to say 'I built that wall' over there. It's very neat and personal," Coughlin said. The application process took almost eight months before Habitat was able to deliver the good news to the happy couple last October. Families interested in applying in the Quinte area are required to attend the free information session that occurs on the last Thursday of every month at the Habitat ReStore office on Bell Boulevard in Belleville. Selection criteria for home ownership is set out nationwide by Habitat for Hu-

manity Canada (HFHC). Habitat offers affordable, sustainable, no-interest, no down-payment mortgages to low-income families, with monthly payments set at 25 per cent of gross income. "We provide a hand up, not a hand out," family selection and partnering committee member Johanne Hodgson explains. "They have to have a minimum income to be able to pay for their mortgage payments. There's a maximum amount, too. If they make too much, then they can really afford to get a mortgage at the bank," Hodgson explains. "We want to put people in there that we know are going to succeed in owning their new home," Hodgson adds. Other criteria Habitat looks for are the number of family members, families with special needs such as disabilities, debt load and families who are living in sub-standard housing. For the Coughlins, the process was long but well worth the wait.

The Quinte West municipality donated the land for the Trenton duplex, and for the first time in September 2014, Habitat for Humanity has partnered with the construction and renovation techniques program at Loyalist College to help the couple in building their new home. "It's a fantastic marriage between two different organizations," Hodgson said. "They've been in the construction site since day one – Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. They're getting actual job experience, and we are getting volunteers to build the house," Hodgson adds. The long-term partnership allows students to apply theories they have learned in class and gives them real world understanding of all the different aspects of constructing a home from the ground up, says program co-ordinator Tom Falcao. "A real world product like this really gives all the students a special connection to the project and to the homeowners themselves because they're building

a family a home who are obviously really excited and very happy they are receiving this home," Falcao says. For the students, they not only get to see the physical application of building, but also the positive influences and actions that their good workmanship has on someone's life. The need for volunteers and donations is instrumental in the growth of Habitat for Humanity. Over the past 25 years, Habitat for Humanity Canada (HFHC) has logged more than 10 million volunteer hours, contributing to the successful completion of over 2,200 homes for low-income Canadian families. Internationally, HFHC has helped build thousands more homes. For more information on how to apply, to volunteer or donate and more, visit www.habitatpeh.org. For a multi-media version of this project, go to: <http://www.qnetnews.ca/?p=50340>

Get ready to vote as student government elections take place at Loyalist

By Sarra Lalonde

With elections for student government coming up at Loyalist College, many students are preparing for the big day. For president, the candidates are Steph Barton in business administration, Michael Paradis in business sales and marketing, Jillian Robinson in recreation and leisure services, and Derek Buchanan in business administration. "I chose to run for president because of the impact people feel I would have on the school. I had thought about it before but I was never confident enough to run, until my coach came to me and said she believed I would make a great president," says Robinson. "I am comfortable answering ques-

tion one-on-one because I feel that it is imperative to be approachable and honest. Talking to people that I haven't met before is exciting to me. Every day I try to meet new people, regardless of running for student government. Listening to people and engaging with them is just a part of my character. I am enthusiastic, confident, and not afraid approach and ask questions," says Buchanan. With the elections now open to students online, both Buchanan and Robinson have spoken about things they hope to change or improve. "I am not currently on student council, so I do not know exactly the changes that need to be made. But I plan to listen to the students and do

everything I can to make their college experience even better," says Robinson. "As for changes, I feel that I will have to gather more information about current programs and statistics on what current social programs students are engaging in the most. Evaluating the information further will be a major priority in the near future," Buchanan says. "I would like to increase the amount of local business and income opportunities for students, by meeting with local organizations around Belleville and surrounding area," he adds. "I have a plan to create a call centre in Loyalist for renewable energy products and initiatives for Bay of Quinte Region. I believe this will create in-

come for students with flexible hours, widen the global presence of Loyalist College, and help bring together course material into an activity that is profitable and educational – real experience to empower students," Buchanan says. Barton and Paradis were unable to be reached. Robinson's way of getting her name out there is through posters around the school and a Facebook page. Buchanan says he wants to develop a program through Blackboard for the students and faculty to get involved for discussions and directed concerns. Also running for vice-president is Andrew Chapman in civil engineering, Mary-Ellen Morris in developmental service worker, Stephanie Semark in

business sales & marketing and Mikaela Stacey in business administration. For student leader, Jason Tremblay in business administration, applied sciences, Emily Edwardson in biotechnology, business and marketing, Heather Williams in business sales & marketing, health science Leader, Sena Joyce in fitness & health promotion, human studies leader Melissa Van Roie in social service worker, media arts and designer leaders are running, Chris Meister in television & new media production and Quinn Wilson in television & new media production. For more details, candidates, and to vote, you can check out this website: <https://vote.loyaliststudents.com/login.php>

Local artists to showcase work at two community venues

By Michele Weisz

In the next few weeks, the community will get two opportunities to view the work of its local artists. Members of the organization Artists Below the Line will be showcasing their work at the Core Arts and Culture Centre from Feb. 27 to March 1. For the fourth year, they will also be teaming up with DocFest to bring great films and beautiful pieces of art to the Belleville community. Until March 25, the Parrot Art Gallery will be exhibiting the work of Artists Below The Line in a show called The High Cost of Living. Four years ago, local artists Lisa Morris, Peter Paylor and Kenny Leighton came together and decided that there should be a space for artists of limited means to exhibit their work. They agreed that lack of funds should not prohibit an artist from showing their work to the public. The result was an organization called Artists Below the Line. "We represent artists of limited income. If you identify as an artist with limited income, we don't say no to anyone," said Paylor. Paylor added that it was during a discussion with a fellow artist that he realized the need for an organization like ABTL. "One of the artists who first inspired us to find a way to do this was an artist named Jy Chiperzak," said Paylor. He tells the story of how the artist was show-



Photo by Michele Weisz

Lisa Morris hangs paintings by some of her fellow artists at the CORE gallery Feb. 24. Morris and other local artists are part of an organization called Artists Below the Line. They will be showcasing their work at the gallery during DocFest from Feb. 27 to March 1. They have been showcasing their working with DocFest for four years.

ing him some interesting, experimental, photographic work. Paylor said that he was moved by Chiperzak's work but saddened when Chiperzak told him that he could not afford to print and frame all of the pieces so that they could be hung in a gallery. "I thought, what a shame that nobody is going to get to see these images," he said. He went on to say that with the help of the organization Chiperzak was able to frame his work and display them at a gallery show. It turned out to be very successful. Normally an artist has to contribute a considerable amount of out-of-pocket expenses to launch a showing of their work. Costs could include materials, hanging fees and framing. The organization helps fellow artists with the costs so that 100 per cent of the sales of their work goes directly to the artist. "We give them a chance to show which is really cool to be able to be a part of that," said Morris. The work on display includes everything from bold, colourful paintings, mixed-media pieces, towering, carved wooden sculptures, jewellery made from found materials, and what, according to one artist, is a three dimensional representation of his ex-wife. There is definitely something for everyone. The Core gallery is located at 223 Pinnacle Street. The Parrot Art Gallery is directly across the street at 254 Pinnacle Street in the upper level of the Belleville library.