



Photo by Zachary Prong

Twelve-year-old Khan Mohammed's father was shot in the head and killed during fighting between Taliban and government forces in Sangin, Helmand Province, in early January 2016. His uncle says he cries at night because he's afraid the Taliban are coming. For more stories and photos on Afghanistan, see pages 2 and 3.

Refugees flee fighting in Afghanistan

Editors note: In December and January, two Loyalist photojournalism students spent over two weeks in Kabul, Afghanistan. They worked on various stories while there: the aftermath of a suicide bombing, a woman who runs a drug rehabilitation centre for heroin addicts, and young Afghans who advocate for non-violence and women's rights. The following story touches on the war that continues unabated across much of the country. Since the drawdown of international troops in 2014, the Afghan government has been struggling to maintain control in several provinces. The Taliban have been mounting increasingly effective offensives

By Zachary Prong

Rows of shipping containers turned shops ring the Charahi Qambar Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp just outside of Kabul, Afghanistan. This sprawling neighbourhood, with its view of the Hindu Kush, winding potholed alleys and walled mud brick homes, is home to hundreds of families who've fled fighting in other parts of the country.

Most of the residents here are Pashtuns from the country's south, the area where

the Taliban was born and continue to draw most of their support. Embittered by years of Taliban rule and ongoing attacks, many Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks and even more urban and educated Pashtuns look down upon Pashtuns from the rural south.

My Hazara friend and driver Aman, who lived in Kabul during the Taliban years, would often remark, "All Pashtuns are Taliban."

Just outside the camp we met a lanky middle-aged man named Sayed Mohammed who invited us to come inside and meet his family.

Sayed fled fighting in Sangin District, Helmand Province, only a few days before.

Helmand Province, which borders Pakistan and produces half of the country's opium (which in turn produces 90 per cent of the world's total) has seen some of the fiercest fighting since the Taliban's fall in 2001. Thousands of people, including more than 900 coalition soldiers, have died in battles, bombings and coalition airstrikes there in the past 14 years.

When coalition forces pulled back from their frontline role last year, the Taliban immediately set their sights on Helmand. For the past month, they have laid siege to

Sangin District, located not far from the provincial capital Lashkar Gah, and there are conflicting reports as to who controls the area.

British special forces and American warplanes have joined the battle, but according to Borhan Osman, a researcher with the Afghan Analysts Network, "Kabul can only claim full control of three of Helmand's 14 districts, including the provincial capital."

The litany of horrors described by Sayed and his family served as a grim reminder that while places like Kabul remain largely safe, despite frequent Taliban attacks inside the city, the war has only intensified throughout much of Afghanistan.

Sayed told of bodies rotting in the streets, relatives killed and wounded after being caught in the crossfire, and of a woman who drowned her children in a river because she could no longer feed them.

They said Daesh (ISIS) was also participating in the battles.

Sayed finally decided to leave Sangin with 11 of his family members after his uncle, a father of three, was shot in the head and killed. His 12-year-old nephew, Khan Mohammed, still cries at night because he thinks the Taliban will come again.

They took us to meet Kabeer, whose brother was also killed in Sangin. They said that since hearing the news he has had suffered some kind of psychological problem. He was sitting on the floor inside a dark and damp mud home, not speaking or paying us much attention. He stared out the sole window and from time to time would motion for someone to adjust his leg. Not long after his brother's death he lost movement in his left side, possibly from a stroke.

More residents of the camp gathered inside to share their stories. A man showed us his horribly disfigured hand, a wound he says he received after being caught in a battle between Taliban and government forces. A teenage boy played a shaky cell phone video of the aftermath of Taliban bombing in Helmand. The torn and mangled body of his uncle and at least a dozen others can be seen lying in the sand. All were members of a local militia paid by the government to fight the Taliban.

While this level of violence is no longer a daily threat for residents of the camp, they all expressed frustration and fear about what the future holds.

During the night, winter temperatures usually drop below zero. We were told

but unable to confirm that two young children had died from the cold the night before.

Water is limited and food scarce. Sayed told us that he and his family have been living off mostly bread and scant vegetables. He doubts he'll be able to find work to support them.

After arriving in the camp Sayed was paid 200 Afghani, about \$4 Canadian, for a day's work smashing rocks on a nearby mountain.

The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) said that they would soon be stepping up aid to internally displaced Afghans like Sayed and his family.

"As part of a coordinated response with the Afghan authorities and other aid agencies, the UNHCR plans to assist a total of 31,897 Afghan families – some 200,000 individuals – with relief items such as tents, blankets, plastic sheets, hurricane lanterns and jerry cans from the agency's stockpiles," they said in a Dec. 28 statement.

Sayed showed us a UNHCR card designating him as an IDP that he received just after arriving in the camp, but besides that, he said he has received no direct aid.

"Please hurry and publish this story," said Sayed, "We need more help."



Photo by Nick Tardif

Friendly feathered friend

A nuthatch feeds from a friendly hand at Lemoine Point Conservation Area earlier this month. The wildlife at Lemoine Point has become so accustomed to human interaction that many of its species will approach and take food from people. For more photos, see page 7.

Snow White would have loved it

By Nick Tardif

The Enchanted Forest from Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* may actually exist in Kingston, Ont.

Do you remember Disney's 1937 original *Snow White*? Do you recall the scene where a forlorn Snow White quietly sobs to herself in the Enchanted Forest, only to be rescued from the depths of despair by small forest critters flying and running about as if there wasn't a worry in the world?

As a child watching that movie, I dreamt of a place like the Enchanted Forest, a place where you could reach down, pick up a squirrel and rub his belly. That childish dream may not be completely unrealistic after all.

I don't know about Snow White, dwarfs or evil witches, but I know of some of the friendliest animals I've ever come into contact with. They live in a small conservation area called Lemoine Point, on the west side of Kingston.

See Lemoine Point, page 7



Photo by Zachary Prong

Spectators gather around a car destroyed in a Taliban suicide bombing on the Le Jardin Restaurant in Kabul, an eatery popular among foreigners. The attack left a security guard and 12-year-old boy dead.

Taliban attack targets popular restaurant

(Editor’s note: In January, 2016, two Loyalist photojournalism students spent two weeks in the Afghan capital of Kabul. The city of nearly 4 million has been plagued recently by a series of suicide bombing and gun attacks, many targeting guesthouses and restaurants frequented by foreign workers and embassy staff. The city is considered relatively safe compared to some of the country’s war-torn regions, but as peace talks are being conducted between regional powers towards an end to the war with the Taliban, many experts believe these attacks are a sign of the group’s efforts to destabilize and delegitimize what is largely seen as a corrupt and ineffective government, to make way for a better bargaining position at future peace talks. The Taliban have no interest in negotiating when they currently see themselves as having the upper hand in a conflict that has now lasted for over 14 years. In the meantime, more and more foreigners are increasingly unable or unwilling to work freely in Afghanistan, and more and more Afghans are being killed in the crossfire.)

By Andrew C. Johnson

On a relatively quiet night in central Kabul’s Taimani district, on a simple, unpaved road leading out to the main street, at around 5:30 p.m., a suicide bomber sitting in his car detonated his charge.

The blast shook the foundations of buildings hundreds of metres away and shattered all nearby windows in the neighbourhood. The bomber’s target, a French restaurant called ‘Le Jardin,’ was now crumbling and in flames. Its once imposing, metal front gate and seven-foot high bricked security wall now lay a blasted ruin.

The bomber was almost certainly the first to die, but he took with him a security guard, 40; and a young boy, Ahmad Baset, 12, who had just finished picking up groceries for his family from a nearby store when he was hit in the head by shrapnel from the explosion. He was pronounced dead at the hospital minutes later.

Their remains would lie in the street while the nearly 15 injured and survivors

tried to escape the scene while police and security personnel rushed to clear the area of further danger.

One of those survivors, who refused to give his name for security reasons, was a young man who worked in the restaurant’s office. He recalled what happened during the moments after the explosion occurred.

“I was in the restaurant, sitting with a friend and we were talking. There was a really big blast, a fire in the sky, lots of smoke and everywhere was shaking,” he said from the site of the blast, two days later.

“I started to run from the place. I thought at the time it was a rocket attack, I didn’t know it was a suicide bomber. I saw the emergency exit and three colleagues and I escaped outside through that way.

He went on to describe the scene outside. “Everywhere [there] was pieces of metal, lots of pieces from the car, pieces of broken glass. Everyone was really scared. I’d seen some women and children injured from the broken glass.”

The Taliban claimed responsibility

for the attack, one of a string of recent bombings and gun attacks targeting locations frequented by foreigners. While the restaurant received threats and was one of a dwindling number of locations that openly serve foreigners, the attack succeeded only in the killing and maiming of Afghans.

Who carried out the attack or why was of little concern to Ahmad Jowad, father of Baset, as he spoke of his son days after he was killed.

“He was a talented guy. Everyone loved him,” said his father through a translator in the living room of his home, windows still broken with sheets of plastic to keep the cold winter air out.

“He joked with me that he was top of his class and that I should buy him a bicycle, but later I found out he was actually 25th of 27,” his father recalled with a half-smile.

“He had just finished school (for winter holiday), and was going to study the Qu’ran. I told him to go to the store to bring some goods on his way back home. It was later that I received a call from my brother, who was with him, that he was

in the emergency.”

The family rushed to the hospital to be by his side, and at first couldn’t get any word on his condition or see him. At 8:30, three hours after the attack, they were told he was dead.

“Everyone is hopeless now, we’ve lost hope,” said one of the boy’s uncles, Muhammad.

The father would later go on to say that he hopes they can raise enough money to move away, and leave this all behind them.

This is the reality for many Afghans, trying to make a living for their families in the new Afghanistan, a place where suicide bombings, gun battles and assassinations are a regular occurrence as a result of its “opening up” to new ways and ideas. Even though most foreigners have all but left, and while many in the West have forgotten about this part of the world, ordinary Afghans have to live with the reality of what remains, every day. And a peaceful future for Afghanistan is anything but certain.

For a multi-media look at this story, <https://vimeo.com/152466326>

Afghanistan will no longer be silenced

By Andrew C. Johnson

Dr. Ahmad Naser Sarmast decided a long time ago he would devote his life to music, and since then he has come very near to sacrificing his life for its sake in his native Afghanistan.

“I was always surrounded by music,” he told me from his office on the grounds of the Ministry of Education in west Kabul.

Sarmast is the director for the Afghan National Institute of Music, or ANIM, the country’s first and finest institute for classical music. The son of a great Afghan composer, he began his studies in Kabul in 1974, then later Moscow, but was unable to return to his homeland after the war against the Soviet’s ended.

“They were afraid anyone who spent time in Russia was a KGB spy, so my door to return was effectively closed,” he recalled.

It would remain closed for over a decade, during the tumultuous years after the Taliban rose to power, following the turbulent civil war between the victorious mujahideen forces squabbling for power in the vacuum which followed the Soviet withdrawal of 1989. After living abroad and eventually receiving his PhD in Australia, he decided to return to Afghanistan in 2008 after the U.S.-led invasion toppled the Taliban government, and opened ANIM in 2010.

The Taliban, who famously banned all music along with the education of women, would have never allowed an institution fostering unisex musical education to ever exist. In recent years, the school, its faculty and students have seen great success, performing all over the world including at the White House and Carnegie Hall. But they have also become the targets of the renewed Taliban’s wrath, as the group has proclaimed that the school, Sarmast, and everything they are trying to accomplish, is an affront to their hard-line version of Islam.

On Dec. 11, 2014, the Taliban backed



Photo by Andrew C. Johnson

Dr. Ahmad Naser Sarmast, founder and director of the Afghan National Institute of Music, poses for a portrait in his office at the ministry of education in Kabul, Afghanistan is also the target of the Taliban, who have tried to have him killed on multiple occasions.

up threats with action. Students, teachers, journalists and politicians were watching a performance presented by the school at the French cultural centre in Kabul. Sarmast was seated near the front. Midway through the act, a teenaged suicide bomber sitting nearby detonated a charge in his underwear. The blast ripped through the crowd, killing a German man and injuring 20 others, including Sarmast, who now had shrapnel lodged in his head. He lost his hearing, and thought it would be the end of his career. However, with luck

and after many weeks of surgery and rehabilitation, he would regain most of his hearing, enough to distinguish varying sounds of instruments in a symphony orchestra.

An attack like that would have shaken any man to the core, and few could have blamed Sarmast for wanting to remain in the safety of Australia, where was recovering and where his family resides. But he was unfazed and, in fact, emboldened. He states that for Afghanistan to be a successful democracy it needs to embrace

and foster the arts, creativity, free speech and ethnic harmony, all of which can be encouraged through music. He dreams of an Afghanistan where bigotry and religious extremism are a thing of the past, and believes strongly in the ability of the “healing power of music,” to mend a nation ethnically divided and traumatized by decades of war and suffering.

“When students from various parts of Afghanistan are sitting in an orchestra, patiently listening to the melodic line of each other, supporting each other,

communicating and getting engaged in dialogue, in harmony and peace, it also teaches them that they can live outside of the orchestra, outside of the school, in peace and harmony and with respect for each other’s differences,” he told me in his warm, soothing voice, as teachers and staff busily rushed up and down the hallways preparing for the next winter academy.

Asked what his proudest achievement is, he stated that the real success stories are the transformation of students’ lives through music.

“I’ve got a wonderful flute player who used to sell boiled eggs on the streets of Kabul. (Students like these) are the real success stories,” he said.

He went on to highlight that the school’s international performances were also a success not simply because of the level at which they were performing but because it was an opportunity to show a positive side of Afghanistan, something, he says, that is often ignored in the West and in international media, who often only report about violence and terrorism. Putting the young orchestra of 62 boys and girls, poor and middle class, from different ethnic groups on stage served a much greater purpose than showing the school to the world, he said.

“It was a way to say, ‘This is the future of Afghanistan, this is tomorrow’s Afghanistan, an Afghanistan that promotes diversity, and which creates equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of religious, ethnic or economic background.’”

Asked if he was worried about renewed violence in the capital and the threat to his school and its students, just over a year after the deadly attack that left him nearly deaf he replied, sternly,

“We are more resolved than yesterday. We are not going to give up,” and then, speaking of the Taliban’s desire to institute Sharia Law, banning music, he proclaimed,

“The people of Afghanistan will not be silenced again.”

Woman brings hope to addicts

By Zachary Prong

The men were led into a small courtyard where others awaited with scissors, soap and razors. They stripped down to their underwear, their bodies shivering in the frigid winter air. First, they were sprayed down with cold water from a garden hose. They then scrubbed their skin clean with rags and rough sponges and shaved every strand of hair off their frail bodies.

Laila Haidari, the owner of Mother Trust, the NGO that operates this rehabilitation centre for Kabul's heroin addicts, watched silently as her newest patients began the first stage of their treatment.

It was the beginning of a minimum 30-day stay for these men. Many of them, homeless and disowned by their families, would probably choose to stay longer.

Huessein, a former addict who was there to welcome the new patients, has been there for seven months.

"If I go, I'm afraid what I will do," he said.

Haidari started Mother Trust in 2011 after her older brother Hakim's life and that of his wife and children were nearly destroyed by his heroin addiction.

Like many addicts, he was initially thrown out of his home. He ended up living under a bridge in the city centre with hundreds of other users. But Haidari, unwilling to give up on her brother, brought him into her home.

He eventually got clean, but Haidari was deeply troubled by knowing that there were countless others whose lives were being torn apart by the scourge of addiction. For her, it was the beginning of a new life. She founded Mother Trust, which operates a clinic using the Narcotics Anonymous (NA) system. They have treated more than 3,000 patients.

However, Haidari's work is not without its consequences. Her husband, whom she was married to at the age of 12 and had a child with at 13, was infuriated that she associated with other men, and addicts at that. He left her and took their three children. She hasn't seen them in years.

Her work has also brought her into conflict with many powerful people: Mullahs infuriated by a woman working with men; corrupt government officials seeking to treat addicts at their own clinics for profit, and gangsters angry that she is attempting to wean their customers off heroin.

In January 2014, unknown assailants cut the power to Haidari's home, broke in and tried to strangle her with wire. Haidari managed to fight them off, grab her shotgun and shoot one of the men in the leg.

They both escaped. She still doesn't know who sent them.

When asked why she continues to work despite the threats to her life, Haidari responded, "When I see the people, the mothers, the sisters, the daughters and parents suffering because of their loved one's addiction, I have to continue... Maybe we can't bring political changes to Afghanistan, but we can all try to change our humanity."



Photo by Zachary Prong

"Even if we can't bring political changes to Afghanistan, we can all try to change our humanity," replied Laila Haidari when asked why she continues her work despite the difficulties and threats of violence.

The Music Man wraps up season

By Emily Reeson

Auditions have already begun for the Belleville Theatre Guild's final production of the season, *The Music Man*.

Meredith Willson's award winning musical will be performed at the Pinnacle Playhouse in downtown Belleville from June 12 to 18.

Adult auditions began this past Sunday. The director of this play, David Kidd, is looking for approximately 35 adult parts to be filled. The auditions for the parts filled by children took place earlier this month.

These auditions are completed in a two-step process.

"We have the initial auditions, which are what we are doing today," said Kidd. The goal Sunday was to "trim down" the number of people auditioning. Also, Kidd was looking for vocal skills and the ability to move.

The vocal director Moira Nikander-Forrester will be listening for the style that she feels fits the two main characters of Maryam and Harold.

"We try to trim down based on what they show us vocally and movement wise. The vocal director will listen in particular to the singing.

"We will think about what the songs in the play are and what the characters are like and decide who is suitable for the parts. Some of those auditioning may not fit those particular roles, but they may be invited back to try out for more minor roles," said Kidd.

"The play is a 'two-hander', meaning there are two main characters with lots of other people around them. So Maryam and Harold are the two main characters. If we can find a really good Maryam and a really good, Harold it makes this job a lot easier," he added.

The main focus of the auditions was to find those characters and others that may be suitable for a second call back. "We find those two main characters and then we work down from there," said Kidd.

This Sunday, the second round of auditions will be held.

"By the end of these auditions, we try and end up with a cast of people who are capable, interested, enthusiastic, sing well and move around really well. They don't have to be dancers as such, but we have an excellent choreographer and she will work with them," Kidd said.

All actors will be chosen by next Sunday with the first read-through on Jan. 30.

At this first read-through, actors talk about what the characters are like and how different aspects of the play should work. The thinking and team work starts at this point. Kidd said that it is a long process, but everyone will be ready to start performing by the end of May.

Kidd brings a wealth of experience and passion to his role as director of *The Music Man*. He has had over 30 years experience in community and school theatre. He has directed and performed in several shows in the Belleville community. His first show was *Oliver* in 1973, in the previous Belleville Theatre Guild building, which has since been replaced.

Kidd is confident that through this audition process he will find the talent to make the show run smoothly and be entertaining for audiences.

"I'm not worried about finding the right people, I have been in enough shows here to know that this is all going to work out." *The Music Man* is described on the Belleville Theatre Guild's website. "The tale of the huckster selling band instruments to a small town and promising to start up a boy's band despite the fact that he can't read a note of music. It is a classic. The love story intertwined with the town's characters of every description and the lifestyle of a time past," according to the Belleville Theatre Guild's website.

Skaters take part in weekend competition in Stirling

By Emma Gardner

There was an air of excitement and nervousness as the last-minute checks for hair, makeup and skates were done.

Competition was fierce at last weekend's Shooting Star Interclub competition held by the Stirling Figure Skating Club.

Over 300 local skaters competed at this year's competition.

The event welcomes skaters from Fort Henry Heights SC, Frankford FSC, Loyalist SC, Napanee DSC, Quinte FSC, Prince Edward County SC, Skate

Kingston, Stirling FSC, Trenton FSC, Tweed DFSC and Westport Area SC. In order to participate in the Shooting Star competition, skaters must be eighteen years of age or younger and pay a registration fee of \$10.

Marina Guadagnin, 17, from Prince Edward County skate club, has been competing for nine years.

"I still get nervous being out there in front of all those people," said Guadagnin.

The event was divided into two sections. Section B kicked off this year's event on Saturday,

welcoming older skaters to the ice.

The competition started off at 8 a.m. with team elements followed by STAR 1 through 4 singles event, individual elements, couples' interpretive, creative skill, solo dance and showcase.

Katie Kissick from Fort Henry Heights was a force to be reckoned with, scoring a 15.86, taking home the gold medal in the gold solo pattern dance flight one category.

Section A consisted of the younger participants. They competed on Sunday in Canskate

challenges and introductory showcases.

Skaters took to the ice at 7 a.m. starting with the stars 1 though 3 singles event, allowing skaters two to three minutes to impress the judges. This event was followed by the Canskate challenges in the afternoon. The weekend was then wrapped up by the team elements competition.

"It's been going really well! We're having lots of fun," said Joanne Card, president of the Stirling Figure Skating Club. Card was busy making sure ev-

erything went smoothly, organizing the skaters and checking they were ready to go on the ice.

The Shooting Star Interclub competition was an action-packed, fun-filled weekend, full of laughs and friendly competition.

It was a great opportunity for local skaters to gain confidence and to present all their skills they have developed for friends and family.

For more information on next year's Shooting Stars Interclub competition, visit Skate Canada's website.

Cost of downtown revitalization has some merchants worried

By William Aciri

At least two downtown owners say the construction during the revitalization project has negatively impacted their businesses.

According to two business owners, Darla Miller and Gerry Bongard, whose businesses are located north of Victoria Avenue where construction took place, foot traffic declined sharply during phase one of the downtown construction in 2015. They also said they worry that it will continue to impact on them when the second phase begins.

In addition to this, they said there are rumours that the city is over budget or will be and that may result in a tax hike.

However, Karen Poste, manager of economic and strategic initiatives for Belleville, wrote in an e-mail as part of an interview, that the rumours are false.

"What impacts these projects will have on tax rates, has yet to be determined."

Poste also wrote, "Just over \$21 million has been budgeted for the downtown revitalization project and we have not spent close to that amount yet."

Bongard, who helps run his family's bicycle and hobby store called Stephen Licence Ltd., has seen many changes over the decades. Bongard said he remembers a busy downtown before the Bell Boulevard area was developed in north Belleville. He also added that

'What impacts these projects will have on tax rates, has yet to be determined.'

Manager Karen Poste

the construction has severely hurt foot traffic to his store.

Darla Miller, who owns That Special Touch, has a very different opinion about downtown Belleville's current financial woes.

"A lot of stores here are catering to a niche market and are not in direct competition with any of the development in north Belleville (businesses)," said Miller. She does, however, hope there won't be any tax increase now or in the future.

Looking back to 2014 when the construction started, Belleville began the long process of fixing up and revitalizing the downtown area.

The official website for the project highlights a great deal of improvements to downtown, from infrastructure such as the replacement of water mains to new urban design landscape elements such as: clay brick pavement to new retro street lights. The downtown revitalization and redevelopment plan is scheduled to be completed by 2017.



Photo by Will Aciri

Gerry Bongard stands in his family's bicycle shop on Front Street earlier this month. Bongard has been running his business in Belleville for many decades and he has seen a lot of change.



Photo by Chris Donovan

Nick Foley spends some special moments with daughter Brynn. Foley completed a bike trip across the country to raise awareness for people living with disabilities.

Trip across the country raises awareness

By Chris Donovan

Nick Foley asks all of his clients the same question he asks himself every day: How do you want to be remembered? For a man who bicycled across Canada raising money for various charities, his answer is surprisingly simple. He wants to be remembered as a good dad.

Foley, a native of Belleville, began designing self-esteem and inclusion initiatives following a conversation he overheard at a New York City bar in September, 2012. The two strangers, seated no more than three feet away, were lamenting that one of their children shared a classroom with a mentally handicapped student they referred to as “retarded.”

“They were using the R-word and other derogatory terms to describe children with disabilities. I knew I had to do something. I didn’t know what that something was, but I couldn’t just sit there and do nothing,” Foley said of the encounter.

What those two men had not realized was that four days earlier, Foley witnessed the birth of his first child, Brynn, who was born with Down syndrome. Enraged at the comment, but unsure of how to approach the situation, Foley considered his options. Rather than confronting the men and causing a scene, he decided to do something much more drastic: to cycle across Canada with no previous cycling experience to raise money for various charities that promote inclusion of those

living with disabilities.

Before beginning his journey in Victoria, B.C. on April 22, Foley set out for 500 days of intensive training. By the time he reached St. John’s on July 25, he had raised over \$50,000, mostly through online donations and at events that were held in various cities and towns along the way. However, the real victory was always about creating a more inclusive environment for his daughter and other children who often feel excluded because of a mental illness.

A few months after his encounter at the bar in New York, Foley, who was previously a school teacher, launched the organization Celebrate the Hero. He now designs inclusion initiatives and speaks about his experience through his organization. The ideology behind Celebrate the Hero stemmed from Foley’s time as a teacher.

“As a teacher, I was frequently listening to motivational speakers. They were all focusing on anti-bullying types of initiatives and telling people not to bully so I thought, ‘Let’s celebrate the individual and not focus so much on their negative behaviour of the past, but on what they’re capable of doing.’” Foley said of the organization.

One of the things that kept his feet peddling at the most difficult times was that he could not allow himself to let down his team back at the office who sacrificed so much and worked hard finding sponsors to make the journey come to fruition.

‘They were using the R-word and other derogatory terms to describe children with disabilities. I knew I had to do something. I didn’t know what that something was, but I couldn’t just sit there and do nothing.’

Chris Donovan

spirit.”

That anecdote stayed with Foley throughout his bike ride, and continues to inspire him to this day.

“You have that spirit in you,” Foley said. “All you have to do is follow your path.”

Just a few minutes later, he ran into another man who was curious about his endeavour, and the man said “Good for you, I did that ride in 2007.”

“So you can imagine what I’m thinking at that point,” Foley said. “Has everyone here biked across the country?”

He also asked this man for advice and he said, “Ride for tomorrow.”

“I understood that he meant ride to conserve energy, but it resonated with me on a deeper level,” Foley said. “I took it as a metaphor. With every pedal stroke that I took toward our destination, we are that much closer to implementing a more inclusive Canada.”

Foley said that he experienced that human spirit that the officer referred to all across the country, although there is one particular moment that stuck out to him. After giving a talk to a group of people in Brooks, Alberta, he was approached by a young boy named Michael Lindholm.

“Michael came up to me and asked me where the donated money goes,” Foley said. “I told him it all goes to charity, so he reached into his pocket to pull out a dollar and 40 cents and he said ‘Mister, I know it’s not a lot, but it’s all I got. Can you make sure it goes to charity so kids like me can feel included?’”

Choked up, Foley put the change in his pocket and replaced it with a toonie of his own. He still has the change as a reminder of the kindness that people are capable of. “In a time when there is all of this negative kind of terror happening, it really pales in comparison to the kindness that I’ve experienced. And with the exception of a few extremists around the world, this world is full of amazingly kind and compassionate people,” Foley said.

Ultimately the success of the trip was not measured in miles or monetary donations, but in raising awareness for the inclusion of all people without exception.

“I look at my daughter and I just don’t see the disability,” Foley said. “I think that we all have a different ability in all of us; it doesn’t matter what your exceptionality is, it doesn’t matter what your conditions is, your diagnosis shouldn’t matter when it comes to who you are.”

As for the two men in the New York bar who prompted his trip, Foley said that if he saw them today, he would have nothing but thanks to pay them.

“I’d say thank you because it was their ignorance that lit the fire in me that I needed to do this,” he said. “There is so much ignorance in the world and I understood that this needed to be ratified in some capacity. I’m just a dad, but at the end of the day, there are things that we all need to contribute to society. So if I saw those guys again – and I’ll never forget what they look like – I’d thank them, then punch them in the face. Don’t quote me on that.”

Walk raises money to cover costs for South Shore Appeal

By Callum Rutherford

“Don’t pave them! Save them!” was the popular phrase last Saturday during the Winter Wonderland Walk to raise money for the South Shore Appeal Fund.

The walk took place to raise money for the Ostrander Point and White Pines Environmental Review Tribunal’s legal bills. The ERT started after the Prince Edward County Field Naturalists, as well as other groups, won the initial hearings that stopped the Ostrander Point and White Pines wind turbine projects.

As with any legal system challenge, lawyers and other court fees need to be paid. People from different walks of life came together this weekend to fundraise for the cause, which has been ongoing for a number of years.

“We raised about \$1,200,” said organizer Johanna McCarthy. During the event McCarthy collected the registration funds and made sure that latecomers were not forgotten.

Gavin North, a local entrepreneur, was beating a bass drum during the march to keep everyone’s spirits high during the walk. A few others had also come up with songs to sing, talking about the bats, the bees, the birds and the trees.

“It was great, a little long. It’s been a while since I’ve played the drum for that long. But it was fun, a good crew and an enthusiastic bunch of people,” said North.



Photo by Callum Rutherford

Gavin North beats the drum to keep morale up while people attend the Winter Wonderland Walk. The walk’s goal was to fundraise money for the Save South Shore Fund which is currently fighting two wind turbine projects.

A number of local residents who participated in the walk are upset that the province hasn’t been acknowledging their concerns.

“I am a local resident and I am concerned with the development of the protected areas, wildlife areas,” North said. “Areas that should be preserved as unspoiled wildlife areas. They should be left alone.”

After they walked approximately three kilometres, they arrived at Long Dog Winery where refreshments of wine and cider as well as hot chocolate for the young ones were served with food. Winery owners James Lathi and Victoria Rose have been very supportive of the cause.

Gilead Power and the Ministry of National Resources developed a plan that would address the concerns laid out in the previous trial. Those concerns are that the project would create serious and irreversible harm to the Blanding’s turtle, including loss of habitat and the fear that they might be injured by vehicles on the access roads that will be built.

The original plan was to have 29 wind turbines put in for the White Pines project and nine turbines put in for the Ostrander Point project.

Gilead Power also wants to put gates at the beginning of the access roads.

The current ERT had just heard final arguments last Friday. Final results into the matter will be released sometime in February.

For a multi-media version, go to: <https://vimeo.com/152469274>



Photo by Emma Gardner

Colourful art

Children from the Juniors club hold up their crayon art they made by melting crayons down a canvas with a hair dryer. The Juniors club happens every second Thursday at the Belleville Public Library. Every month they create new and interesting pieces of art.

Water levels on the move

By Emily LaFleur

Quinte Conservation is keeping an eye on area water levels and issued a high water statement late last week.

Rain that fell earlier this month has caused flows in local lakes, rivers and streams in the Quinte Conservation watershed to rise to above normal levels for this time of year, the statement says. Flooding is not expected.

The rain and melting snow have caused the flows and levels to increase in water systems across our region, says Quinte Conservation Water Resources Manager Christine McClure in the statement.

“We are not concerned about flooding at this time,” McClure is quoted as saying. “The cold weather in the long term forecast means the levels will gradually return to normal in the coming days and weeks.”

Quinte Conservation reminds residents to be extremely cautious about ice conditions because of changing water flows.

In an interview, General Manager Terry Murphy said areas like Foxboro and Stoco Lake in Tweed are carefully monitored for spring flooding. Two years ago, 700 houses were flooded in a week.

Quinte Conservation’s goal is to be the leader in environmental sustainability.

Quinte Conservation helps manage Ontario’s water, land and natural habits through its programs. It constantly balances environmental, human and economic needs.

Quinte Conservation now covers the areas of Napanee, Prince Edward County and the Moira River watershed, helping the 18 municipalities in the region work together and be effective, Murphy says.

Quinte Conservation is working to make a positive impact on the environment, he adds.

The organization also works closely with Loyalist College to provide experiences for students and sometimes would hire students after graduation.

Smokers offered help to quit smoking during quit smoking week

By Emma Gardner

Getting people to butt out and stopping people from starting is the goal of National Non-Smoking week, January 17-23.

The week was established in 1977 and is said to be one of the longest and most important events to try and control tobacco use.

“We do offer weekly counselling strategies to whoever wants it. We also give out the patches and nicotine gum,” said David Patterson, a health promoter at the Hastings and Prince Edward public health clinic.

The clinic also does outreach programs to the middle and secondary schools in the area, from presentations on the dangers of smoking to poster contests.

Quinte Secondary School collaborated with the Belleville clinic to create a 10-week program to help students reduce or quit smoking. The group, run by Patterson, vice principal Eric Fetterley and gym teacher Maren Edgett, meets every week for 10 weeks to help students quit smoking.

Patterson says the clinic doesn’t usually see a lot of younger people coming in to

try and get help. He says generally they want to quit on their own instead of seeking help.

At the Loyalist College clinic, free patches and nicotine gum are given out to anyone that needs it. They also give you a little box with little booklets on strategies to quit and smoking cessation helplines.

Weedless Wednesday is a day during the week that promotes a “one day at a time”

approach. This concept appeals to smokers who might get discouraged by the thought of an entire week without smoking but can entertain the idea of a single day.

The number of smokers is slowly dropping.

According to Statistics Canada, between the years of 2010 and 2014 the number of smokers across Canada dropped from 20.8 to 18.1.

Snowshoe race a budding tradition

By Nick Tardif

Seventy snowshoe racers from as far away as Kitchener and New York State braved the icy roads to compete at the annual Dion Frontenac Snowshoe Race at Frontenac Provincial Park last Saturday.

“They’re a tough bunch, they always give me a run for my money,” said Joseph St.Cyr from Paul Smith’s College in the Adirondacks, New York about his Canadian competition.

“He trailed me for pretty much the whole race, and then with a 1000 metres to go, he passed me. It was smart running from him, he stayed very strong up the hills, I couldn’t shake him.”

“Tactically, he broke down the race correctly. He used his kick when he had to, and made his move at the right time. It was frustrating to say the least, because you know there’s nothing you can do about it,” said St.Cyr, describing the moment Canadian born – Bernie Hogan passed him to take the lead.

Once in the lead, Hogan never relinquished it, beating St.Cyr by seven seconds in a dog-fight spanning 6.7 kilometers, with a final time of 31 minutes and 57 seconds.

Well known for his cross country, trail and road races, Hogan, from Bancroft Ont., is a relatively unknown commodity in the snowshoe racing circuits.

“Today was his first time snowshoe running. I don’t know if he’s ever done any hiking on snowshoes but he’s never run on snowshoes up until today. It kind of shows you that anybody can do it,” said Derrick Spafford, the race director and series co-ordinator for the Dion Ontario Snowshoe Running Series.

The American and Canadian women put on a very competitive race as well. Stephanie Lalonde from Mississauga Ont. made it a clean sweep for the Canadian’s as she bested her American counterpart Chloe Mattilio, from Paul Smith’s College by just over one minute, finishing with time of 39 minutes and 22 seconds.

“This is the fifth year in a row that I’ve brought the team up to the Frontenac race,” said Jim Tucker, the athletic director for Paul Smith’s College.

Asked how his American team usually performs, Tucker replied “Extremely well,” and with two second place finishes, that competitive spirit remains intact.

“We really enjoy having the races here at Frontenac Park because it’s such a gem for trail running. Trail runners are starting to discover it, and snowshoe racers are loving it here,” said Spafford.

Having the race at Frontenac Provincial Park is a real bonus for the Dion Snowshoe racing series as well as a great way for Frontenac Provincial Park to gain valuable exposure during the winter time.

“Today is likely going to be one of our busiest days of the winter. We’re expecting approximately 70 entrants into the race this year so it’s a very good turnout. It’s a very exciting day for us at the park. It really



Photo by Nick Tardif

Lauren Brieant, the only Canadian-born competitor on the U.S. Paul Smith’s Bobcats Collegiate snowshoe race team, leads her teammate around the 6.7-km trail in Frontenac Provincial Park, last Saturday.

ly helps us out in a number of ways. One, obviously with this number of people coming in, we’ll sell a lot of day permits, which helps us raise money to turn right

back into the park and provide a better place for everyone who comes to the park for a visit. But it also gives us an opportunity to help promote Frontenac in the

winter season,” said Frontenac Provincial Park Superintendent Ben Chabot.

The next race in the Dion Snowshoe Racing Series will be held on Jan. 30, in Brighton.

Schools to get solar panels

By Emily Reeson

Seven schools in the Belleville area are taking steps to become more environmentally friendly with the instillation of solar panels on school rooftops.

In 2011, the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board made a commitment to make changes to support clean energy sources and reduce the school board’s environmental footprint. The follow-through to that commitment started in early January when installation began on solar panel at several local schools.

Solar power is produced by panels that convert the sunlight into a useable form of energy. The initial cost is high, however, according to the website on solar panels, it could save the school board thousands of dollars in energy expenditures.

The benefits are not only financial, but assists the board in their fight against global warming. This energy source is not only renewable but is considered clean.

“This project supports creative renewable energy technology and it also builds on the school board’s work in environmental stewardship and energy conservation,” said Kerry Donnell, communication officer for the school board.

The solar panel installation will take several months to complete.

The initial part of the process, which includes the lifting of the equipment and solar panels onto the rooftops, has begun. Donnell said the work will be ongoing into late spring.

There are several steps to be completed once the panels are in place. According to the school board’s website, “Tie-in to the electrical grid is expected to be completed by the spring of 2016.”

The installation of solar panels is one in a series of efforts the school board has been making over a 15-year period to become more environmentally friendly and energy conscientious. The board has done work in several of the schools throughout their system to make them more energy efficient.

“We’ve done work in several of our schools, such things as replacing boilers and retro-fitting light fixtures, so upgrading or doing work on roofs as well seemed like a logical next step,” says Donnell.

The seven schools receiving the new rooftop solar panels are: Bayside Secondary School, Centennial Secondary School, Moira Secondary School, Prince Charles School, Prince of Wales Public School, Park Dale School and Quinte Secondary School. All renovations will be taking place after school hours and on weekends.

The Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board is well on its way to joining with several school boards across Ontario in supporting “the use of green and renewable energy technologies” throughout their systems.



Don Petruccelli of Kingston feeds a downy woodpecker at Lemoine Point Conservation Area near Kingston on Tuesday.



Joseph Migneault, a retired power plant engineer, feeds a young doe pieces of apple at Lemoine Point Conservation Area earlier this week.



Lemoine Point...

Continued from Page 1

Lemoine Point is a small 136-hectare plot of land that borders Lake Ontario and Collins Bay. Its terrain is made up of forested land, fields and marshes. This piece of land dates back to the war of 1812 when cannons were placed on this land as a defence against any possible invasion from the U.S.

The current inhabitants of Lemoine Point are in stark contrast to those of the fearful colonial days. The creatures living at Lemoine Point today appear to have all but lost their fear of man. There are squirrels, rabbits, deer, chickadees, woodpeckers and many more, and they'll walk right up to you and ask for a hand out if you have the incli-

nation to wait.

The temptation to feed these critters is almost overwhelming. They've gotten so accustomed to man that they see us not as predators, but as walking food dispensers. We are no longer viewed as the top of the food chain, we are instead seen as pizza delivery people who work pro bono.

That being said, the simple childish joy one gets from standing amongst these creatures as they walk about, sit at your feet, or land on your shoulder, is undeniable.

But the reality is these aren't our pets and it's probably not the Enchanted Forest. If we're not careful with how we treat them, we may discover we've been playing the role of the witch all along, feeding poison apples of destruction to our kind, furry friends.

As often said, "the path to hell is paved with good intentions."

Photos by Nick Tardif

(Above, left) A mourning dove sits atop of a tree branch as the sun begins to set on Lemoine Point Conservation Area in early January.

(Above, right) A small red squirrel munches on a pine cone.

(Left) A chickadee sits atop of a tree branch waiting to be fed.



Dianna and Jack put their hands together while watching TV. Love is still there; it never leaves. They don't have to kiss or hug each other to show it; it's in the air, it follows them wherever they go.

Waiting... Hoping

Story and Photos by Litong Chi

After seven years of caregiving, Dianna Patch has finally decided to sign the waiting list at Moira Place Long Term Home for her husband Jack Patch.

Jack has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease for almost eight years, making Dianna become a full-time caregiver ever since then. Jack is in the moderate stages of Alzheimer's which means progressive deterioration with the patient being unable to perform the most common activities of daily living.

In addition to these symptoms, speech difficulties have started. Dianna said she noticed that Jack's vocabulary has been regressed.

"And he may not remember everyone, stories will be changed, because he will make up his own stories and telling them in his tale," said Dianna. "Jack may not know what day it is, or what is happening in the world. He has lost the ability to deal with numbers."

Canada is aging.

According to the statistics provided by the Alzheimer Society of Canada 747,000 Canadians were living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias in 2011 making up 14.9 per cent of Canadians 65 and older. If nothing changes in Canada people with dementia will increase to 1.4 million and 60 per cent of them will be Alzheimer's patients.

Each case of Alzheimer's disease normally has an impact on two people's lives: the patient and the one who provides care to the patient (in most of the cases they are the patient's spouse or children).

Among these family caregivers, 40 per cent of them use their personal saving to survive. And three quarters of them are women, who are likely to have less personal savings and less wages.

Dianna is one of them, she spends money from her personal savings account to care for Jack. She does not receive any financial help from the government.

Life as a full-time caregiver is not only a financial and mental challenge. Dianna is also facing some physical difficulties.

"I'm not getting younger," said Dianna. She is 72 years old and has developed cataracts in both eyes. Cataract surgery will be done on her right eye in January 2016, and when it has healed a surgery will be scheduled for her left eye as well.

Jack took a walk after his lunch while Dianna cleans the kitchen. He walked into the woods, near Madoc, where the Patches live. After he comes back, he stands behind their house and looks up to the sky for few minutes. "Winter is coming, it's getting cold," he said.



"There's no caring that's coming from him, I cannot depend on that. So it's like being a widow without being a widow," Dianna sighed.

Caregiving means that you have to put your personal interests or passions aside. Dianna doesn't have much time for herself. She spends most of her time and energy taking care of Jack and their life together.

Jack is eligible for personal care and respite services. Dianna currently has a personal support worker who comes in to help her three hours per week. It will increase to five hours per week in January. This service is provided to Dianna and Jack for free.

The personal support worker helps with bathing Jack and respite time that allows Dianna to attend other activities. They are also on the waiting list for the SMILE program that will provide help with outdoor chores that Dianna can no longer manage.

The Havelock Adult Day Program that Jack goes to is one of the expenses that Dianna has to pay out of her own pocket, but because this program is subsidized by the government, the fee charged is affordable, at \$19 a day plus lunch.

The VON Canada (Canada's only, national, not-for-profit, charitable home and community care organization) receives partial funding from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to operate this service.

It goes without saying that the government's policy towards family caregivers has a huge impact on caregivers' lives. Before the Liberal government won the majority in October, family caregivers only received a \$309 tax credit.

A new plan was launched by the new government, investing \$1 billion annually in a new Family Care Plan, along with a new six-month Family Care Employment Insurance and a new Family Care Tax Benefit. The changes haven't been made yet, Dianna hopes all Canadians can witness these changes in the near future.

January is Alzheimer's Awareness Month. On Jan. 5, The Alzheimer Society launched this year's Awareness Campaign, called #StillThere. This campaign focuses on the fact that life does not end when Alzheimer's begins.

Link to: <http://www.litongchi.com/alzheimer>



(Above) Dianna Patch, 72, has been married to her husband Jack Patch (behind Dianna) for 54 years. After 45 years of ups and downs, Jack was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease on the 46 years of their marriage. This makes Dianna his full-time caregiver.

(Left) In Dianna's hands, is the photo of she and Jack when they were fairly young. Her mind goes back in time, but only for few seconds. Her eyes are, once again, full of exhaustion.

(Left, Below) Dianna is cooking dinner in the kitchen and Jack has the same hollow look in his eyes. Soon, dinner will be ready without him asking. The coffee will be served without him requesting and the kitchen will be cleaned without him noticing.

(Below) Dianna helps Jack get into his pajamas and tucks him into bed. She then turns the lamp off, the world is covered in darkness, and it is quiet and peaceful again.

"It is sad that he is going through this journey. It was not what I expected for us," said Dianna. "To the best of my ability, I will try to care for him and what he needs."



On the street

Lindsay Leveque and Litong Chi asked people at Loyalist College the following question:

What is your opinion on body shaming?

Editorial

When love needs to be investigated

Does it take an expensive ring and a grand wedding to prove your love? The answer from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) is yes.

If a non-Canadian marries a Canadian, they must now live with their sponsor in a genuine relationship for two years from the day they get permanent residence (PR) status in Canada.

This regulation is made by the government of Canada to prevent marriage fraud, because the purpose of this type of marriage for convenience is to become a Canadian citizen or gain PR status.

Marriage fraud is not acceptable as a practice. It is absolutely right to be aware of marriage fraud and prevent it from happening.

However, there's still a fine line between protecting your right and offending others.

Since 2012, the government of Canada has been publicly warning Canadian citizens about marriage fraud. A video was aired recently online, informing people to try to recognize and be aware of marriage fraud. It certainly had a negative impact on mixed-raced couples.

"I felt like everyone around me is judging me with the idea of 'married for citizenship,'" said Samantha Hu, a former Loyalist College student. She has been married to her Canadian husband for eight years.

Hu has worked as a daycare teacher for almost 10 years. She gained her PR status before she got married to her husband, Daryl Millar.

"It is not fair to those who work hard to survive in this country. They don't have to be judged by their life choices," said Hu.

Canada is a multicultural country that exposes Canadians to information and people from all over the world. It means Canadians are open to meeting and having a romantic relationships with non-Canadians.

Everyone has the right to choose who they want to spend their life with, and if this person is from another country, is it wrong?

When a Canadian and a non-Canadian decide to get married, they have to provide a list of proof to CIC. The list includes their texting history, plane tickets, photos and other things that can indicate their relationship is built on love. Along with a documents check, visits and interviews are required too.

CIC claims that their officers are trained to recognize real immigration applications. Here are some of the indicators of a 'non-genuine' marriage: a private marriage ceremony instead of a grand ceremony; an informal reception in a restaurant; the couple do not kiss on the lips in photos; there are no "diamond"(expensive) rings; photos of activities taken in the Niagara Falls area and Toronto; and if a university-educated Chinese national marries someone non-Chinese.

So, based on these rules and regulations, love at first sight is out of the picture. You have to hold a grand ceremony, wear an expensive wedding ring, and your life choices are limited.

Can love conquer differences? Sure, it can. But, can love contain suspicions?

Litong Chi

Being happy with who we are

It is wrong to hate someone because of the way they look. Despite this, fat shaming is a common practice used to criticize overweight people in order to make them feel embarrassed about the way they look.

Some people believe that making overweight people feel ashamed of themselves will motivate them to lose weight. These people try to convince others that fat shaming is a positive thing, and that they are only fat shaming others to motivate them to get healthy. You cannot judge a person's health by the way that they look.

Fat shaming does not help people lose weight. It has been proven to lead to eating disorders. People who are fat shamed are also at higher risk of depression and other mental issues.

Groups such as Project Harpoon – a group that suggests overweight people are whales and should be harpooned – and Thinner Beauty, which offers to "help women" by taking images and photoshopping them to show women what they could look like if they were thinner. Thinner Beauty states that they do this to show women how much "more beautiful" they could be.

In November 2015, women in London, England were fat shamed while taking the subway in the form of "fat cards". The cards read, "You are not a pig. You are a fat, ugly human."

A 2013 study from the Canadian Women's Foundation found that 21 per cent of Canadians know a girl who thinks she is fat while 17 per cent know a girl who thinks she is ugly and 18 per cent know a girl who says she is on a diet.

Body positivity is not fat-acceptance. It is not fat acceptance if you don't wake up every day and hate yourself, or if you like the way you look. You are not promoting obesity by posting a picture of yourself on social media. You do not have to hide. You can wear a bikini. You are allowed to be you.

Other people's health is not your business. Other people's bodies are not your business. You do not get to tell someone they are inadequate or unworthy of love or happiness or being able to just exist simply because you are not satisfied with the way they look.

Fat people are not disgusting. They are not less. They are not unworthy. What is disgusting is making someone feel like they are less and unworthy.

It is okay to love yourself, no matter your size or what a scale says as long as you are happy and healthy. It is so much more exhausting to hate yourself. So please love yourself. You are worth it.

Lindsay Leveque



Shilp Akhani, post graduate in human resources, "A person shouldn't be judged by how they look. People should be judged by whom they are, not how they look."



Courtney Rosebush, practical nursing, "I don't think body shaming should happen. I don't like it. It's not acceptable to body shame others."



Chelsea Overholt, child youth worker program, "I absolutely hate body shaming. When I hear negative comments, it reminds me why I'm in the child youth worker program."



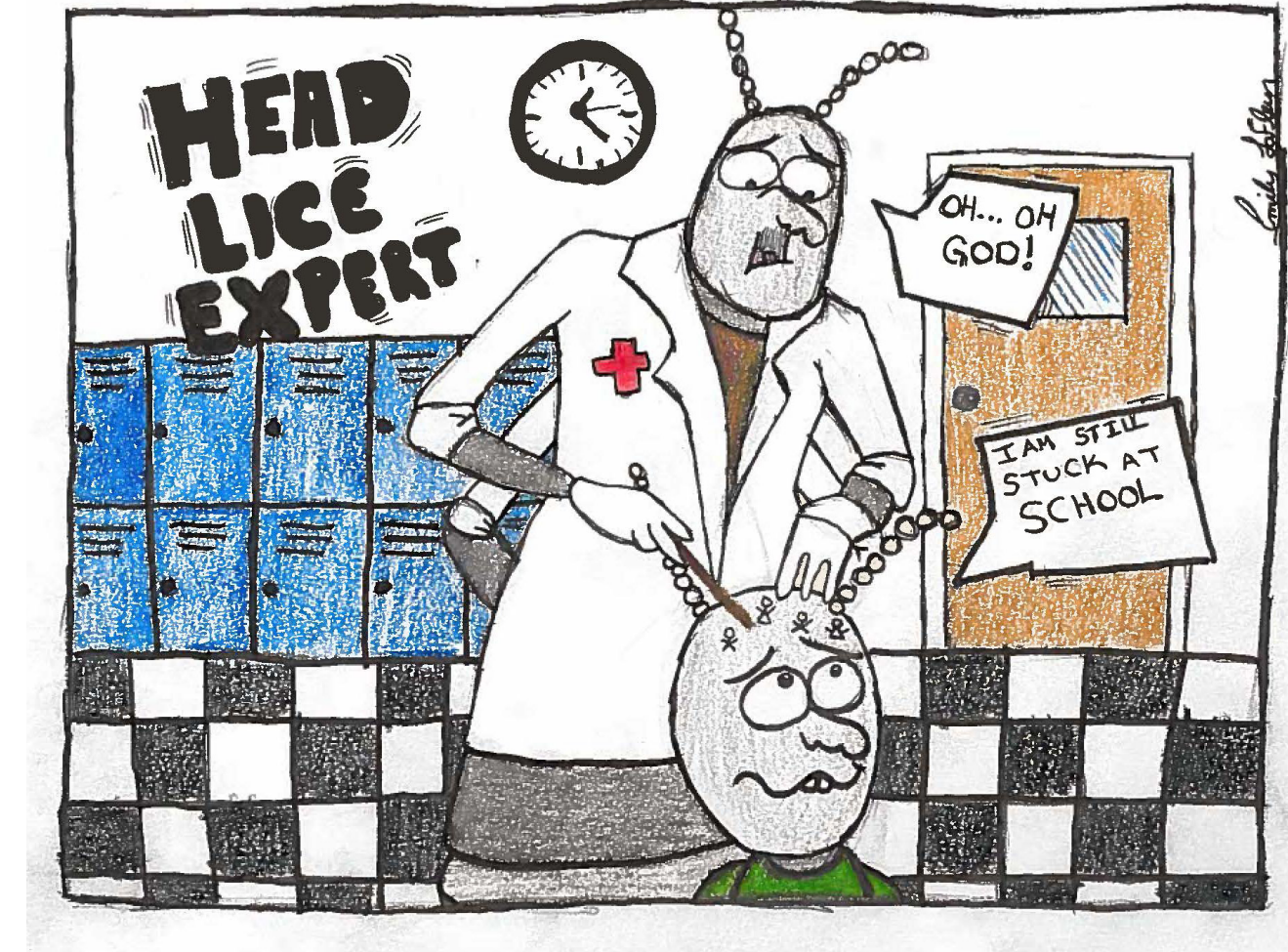
Amaka Onuah, personal support worker program, "I don't think it's right to judge someone based on their appearance. I don't agree with society thinking someone who is overweight is not as beautiful as someone who is skinny."



Olga Baskin, post graduate in human resources, "I don't think it's okay to make fun of differences in people's bodies. I think it's immoral."



Eva Potter, civil engineering professor, "It's not a fair way to judge people. How someone looks does not reflect who they are as a person."



Opinion

Body cameras on police raise some issues

By Callum Rutherford

Body cameras have become a popular idea in the past few years as a way of keeping police in check. On the surface, this might seem like a positive step, but there are a lot of issues that have to be addressed.

Negative aspects of the cameras include invasion of privacy and costs associated with the cameras.

At a time when everyone is concerned about privacy, it's surprising that a large number of people are in support of body cameras for police. These cameras will be recording a number of times a day. People's personal lives will be subject to being recorded by a camera. That visual document will have to be kept for a certain amount of time as well. The only way to get around this concern is to have an on/off-switch, which opens up another can of worms.

If the camera has an on/off-switch, that means it will be the officer's responsibility to

turn it on and turn it off when there is an issue. A force like Toronto Police Service, which has a 100 officer trial run of the cameras, might have rules on when it has to be switched on. It would also have punishments if an officer fails to do so. Nonetheless, that doesn't mean bad cops will follow the rules.

Now let's look at the project costs. As the Canadian dollar drops, is it really feasible to try and buy expensive equipment that has a rising price tag? The cameras Toronto police were looking at purchasing cost \$600-\$1,000 last May and the loonie's value hasn't improved since then. The project for Toronto police cost \$500,000 for 100 cameras and docking stations and storage systems. With the number of employees of 5,200 sworn Toronto police officers, at any one time there are approximately 1,300 on duty. Not counting those in a headquarters or administration role, you could say there are 1,000 officers at any one time on patrol.

If all those officers have a body camera even

with the cheapest option the cameras would cost \$600,000. That is still without, docking stations, storage solutions, and any infrastructure costs that potentially would be needed to allow for the cameras' storage and docking stations.

With police budgets being cut, how are police forces able to afford this new technology and manage their day-to-day operations effectively?

Anyone who has ever produced video will understand videos add up in storage size. The amount of storage needed to keep all those recordings will have to be a large, purpose-built solution. There would need to be multiple storage units, main/backups, on separate power solutions, unless they are able to throw it in with current data storage units. That means if more storage units are needed costs will go up again.

Police body cameras are an expensive and privacy-invasive option that needs to be reconsidered.

Stock market volatility being felt worldwide

By Nick Tardif

The world's stock markets have been teetering on the brink, and it now appears their plunge has begun.

North American markets are taking their cues from collapsing oil prices and a slowdown in the world's second largest economy, China.

In the U.S., The Dow Jones Industrial Average and the S&P500 had their worst five-day start to a new year in the history of either index. The Dow ended the first week of January down 6.2 per cent while the S&P500 closed fractionally better, at a six per cent loss.

The Canadian markets, which are heavily weighted to oil and financials, didn't fare much better. The Toronto Stock Exchange was down 4.3 per cent for the same five-day period. When comparing how the markets have performed over the last few years, these declines are quite staggering.

As of Jan. 15, the TSX is down 23 per cent from its peak in September 2014. The S&P500 and the Dow Jones Industrial Average have fared slightly better, losing 12 and 13 per cent respectively from their May 2015 highs.

The market volatility gripping the worldwide markets is beginning to draw comparisons to market crashes of the past, such as the "Dot-Com Bubble," "The Asia Pacific Crisis," and the collapse of the markets during the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009.

The causes of market upheaval are often well known in advance, but commonly ignored because of overly optimistic market sentiment. Market sentiments can remain overly positive or negative far beyond economic realities. Sometimes the realities of the economic situation are only obvious when the elephant in the room, is perched upon your chest. That's when the panic really sets in.

Oil, a leading economic indicator, closed at \$29.70 a barrel on Jan. 15. That's a 68 per cent drop from its \$93 a barrel high in July of 2014. As oil began its precipitous decline from \$93 a barrel, stock market participants and economists alike chose to perceive oils decline as a mostly "glass half-full" scenario. They were convinced that the decline in oil prices was simply a result of an oversupplied market, exacerbated by Saudi Arabia vying to maintain its market share, an not a demand issue. How-

ever, the realities are proving to be much more complex and troubling.

The markets pundits – in their attempt to maintain positive market sentiment – predicted plummeting oil prices would lead to increased consumer spending. However, in Canada, the decimation of oil prices has sent the loonie into a tail-spin, and raised the prices of imports across the board, only marginally lowering fuel costs as the majority of Canadian fuel is imported.

Market sentiment is now most decidedly negative. The world's economies are again struggling to grasp the consequences of an ever increasingly connected marketplace. Asia is experiencing slower growth, the U.S. dollar is appreciating at a record pace, Quantitative easing in the United States has come to an end, the Federal Reserve has turned "hawkish" and oil prices are in free fall.

Markets and economies will need time to catch their breath and adjust to these simultaneously occurring events.

When the dust finally settles, those who've made poor and untimely decisions will be left like the Emperor with his new clothes: fully exposed for all to see.

The Pioneer

Editor, Litong Chi
Photo editor, Lindsay Leveque
Multi-media editor, Callum Rutherford
Faculty advisers: Patti Gower, Frank O'Connor, Scott Whalen, Dan Williams, Linda O'Connor

The Pioneer welcomes your letters and comments. Please send material to the editor at the address below before Wednesday. We reserve the right to edit submissions for content and length. All letters must be signed and include a daytime phone number.

For advertising information, rates and placement, please contact Sandi Hibbard-Ramsay, at the college, 613-969-1913, ext. 2591; by cell at 613-848-5665; or at home, 613-965-6222.

Pioneer newsroom, 1N9, Loyalist College, Box 4200, Belleville, ON K8N 5B9 · 613-969-1913, ext. 2828.
E-mail: pioneer@loyalistc.on.ca

