



Photo by Kristen Haveman

CAMPBELLFORD – Veronica Legge reacts to the cold water on Jan. 28. Legge was one of approximately 25 people that dipped into the icy water to raise money for a complete blood analyser for Campbellford hospital. Totals for the plunge won't be known until April.

Participants take frosty plunge

Cold dip in Trent River raises funds for Campbellford hospital

By Kristen Haveman

Approximately 25 people braved the cold to take a quick dip in the Trent River on Saturday to raise money for Campbellford hospital, in this year's Polar Plunge.

Pat Bannister, co-president of the Campbellford Hospital Auxiliary, said that they are trying to raise \$70,000 for a complete blood count analyser. Bannister says that she is fairly confident they will raise enough money for the machine by

April.

The auxiliary raised money through several events, including the Polar Plunge, the auxiliary gift shop and bingo.

Bannister said so far, the total raised from the polar plunge is \$8,000, but that more money will come in over the next couple weeks. She said that totals for the year would not be completely known until April.

"I'm really confident we are going to be close to having enough this time around."

Debbie Maki, lab manger at the hospital explained that a complete blood count analyser is an important piece of equipment used in a hospital daily. The machine analyses information about the blood, such as white and red blood cell

counts, hemoglobin and platelet levels. Maki said it could diagnosis leukemia, anemia, platelet disorders and infections.

"This analyser is used daily and almost every patient — inpatient, outpatient or emergency patient — has one ordered by their attending physician," said Maki through email.

Maki said that the hospital's current machine is old and frequently needs repairs. Bannister also said that it was a real necessity for hospital. Every year, the Auxiliary picks one project from the hospital's wishlist to support. She said it felt amazing to be supporting something that was so needed this year.

The temperature was down to -8 degrees C for the plunge but that didn't seem

to faze the participants while they waited to plunge in bathing suits and shorts and T-shirts.

Ginette Dehne and her husband Ken raised \$1,600 for taking the plunge. Ginette said the experience was amazing and that she didn't feel cold at all.

"It's a real adrenalin rush and it's for a good cause," she said.

It was the first time Veronica Legge took part in a polar dip. She said the idea of jumping into the cold water sounded invigorating. Legge waited outside in her bathing suit for the jump to begin. She said the cause was worth the cold.

"It feels really good to support the local hospital. I also just wanted to try something new for the new year."

Come 'cheer' for new trail to help it win funding

Top twenty projects with most 'cheers' will receive \$50,000 from Molson program

By Linda Horn

The Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance, Municipality of Tweed, and the Township of Tyendinaga need your "cheers" to move closer to \$50,000 to build a new trail connecting the communities.

The EOTA, in partnership with Municipality of Tweed, and Tyendinaga applied to Molson Coors "Community Cheer" project. The application was selected to move on to the next phase, in which the public can vote or "cheer" for their favourite project.

The project the trio submitted is to build a trail connecting Tyendinaga and Tweed.

The Molson Coors Community Cheer program is donating a total of a \$1 million to communities across Canada. Out of all the applications, 64 were chosen for the first stage. The projects are then posted at www.ourcommunitycheer.com and the public "cheers" for their favourite project by voting online. Voting is open on the site until Feb. 10.

A project needs to get a minimum of 225 "cheers" to make it to the last stage. The Molson Canadian community relations team will then select the 20 winning projects that each will receive \$50,000. Winners will be announced March 1.

The trail will provide a place for hiking, biking, walking, and all-terrain vehicle use. The direct route of the trail will be between the communities will be approximately 42 kilometres.

Mandi Buma, recreation co-ordinator for the Township of Tyendinaga wants to see the number of "cheers" to be higher than 225.

Joey Walsh, economic development officer for Tweed said, "We want more of a trail identity. It is important to have a marked route. To have maps and signs."

Walsh also said the trail will be great for tourism in the area. The trail would have a direct link off the highway 401, where people could park and use the trail.

"Trail traffic is much more likely to stop and spend money than car traffic," said Walsh.

Township of Tyendinaga officials said their municipality will also benefit from having the connecting trail.

"It will be a great resource for the health and well being of our community," said Buma.

Trial draws attention from across the country

Opinions offered by variety of spectators on its impact

By Justin Tang

They came to witness the end of a landmark trial in what prosecutors called a victory for the Canadian justice system.

One Kingston resident following the trial has a unique view on the proceedings. Sikander Hashmi, an imam with the Islamic Society of Kingston, said the Muslim community has felt many emotions regarding the trial — anger, shock and frustration — but the overall feeling is now one of sadness.

A crowd of around 100 members of the public gathered at the Frontenac County Courthouse to hear a jury of seven women and five men deliver its verdict of four counts of first-degree murder to Mohammad Shafia, Tooba Yahya and their adult son Hamed.

Onlookers muttered to each other and reporters shouted questions at the convicted killers as they were escorted from the courthouse to begin life sentences, with no chance of parole for 25 years.

The trial is one that has gained increasing attention across the country, and even more so in Kingston where law students, seniors and curious community members have lined up outside the courtroom each day as the weeks went on.

Hashmi spoke of the urgency for a greater change in attitudes towards domestic violence.

"We need to make it very clear to people



Photo by Justin Tang

KINGSTON, Ont. – Mohammad Shafia looks back at reporters and members of the public as he is escorted from Frontenac Courthouse in Kingston, Ontario after being found guilty of killing first wife Rona Mohammad Amir and daughters Zainab, 19, Sahar, 17, and Geeti Shafia, 13. Shafia, along with wife Tooba Yahya and son Hamed are each charged with four counts of first-degree murder and for the deaths of the four women on June 30, 2009.

ple that this is something that is totally unacceptable, according to Canadian law

and Islamic teachings and we need to reach out to anyone who feels they may

be in this type of situation," he said.

Hashmi pointed out a number of ini-

tiatives his community has been involved in, such as the White Ribbon Campaign launched by the Islamic Institute of Toronto where Muslim men took a pledge against domestic violence.

Kingston resident Joanne Gunning attended court around 20 times. She said she felt utter relief upon hearing the ruling.

"I was just happy with the outcome," Gunning said. "I sat through enough of this trial to get a sense of what I felt the conclusion should be.

"I have to say that public opinion out there seemed to say that they wanted a murder conviction for all three people."

Second-year Queen's University political science student Irfan Tahiri said following the trial was a matter of personal interest.

A Canadian-born student of Afghan descent, Tahiri said he was satisfied with the verdict but stressed that cases like the Shafias' were rare occurrences.

"My fear is a sort of branding of all Afghans or a branding of all Muslims as barbaric... people who don't really have the shared values that we do," he said

Tahiri said he felt disappointed by comments made by prosecutor Gerard Laarhuis, who said that the verdict sent a clear message about Canadian values and rights and freedoms afforded to Canadians and visitors. Tahiri pointed out that the values upheld by the Kingston jury were universal values that should be afforded to all.

"These are not Canadian values," Tahiri said. "These are values that every society and culture has."

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Linda Mazur visits her husband, Jack, at Hastings Manor, a nursing home in Belleville, on Jan. 30. Jack was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2009 and has been living in Hastings Manor for seven months.

Stepping out for Alzheimers

By Samantha Cantelon

The Alzheimer Society of Belleville-Hastings-Quinte held their 17th annual Walk for Memories this past weekend at the Bay View Mall in Belleville.

A total of 400 people participated, of which 114 were registered walkers.

Alzheimer's is a progressive neurologic disease of the brain that can cause irreversible loss of neurons and loss of intellectual abilities.

The walk raised an estimated \$54,000 to

help increase awareness about Alzheimer's and related dementia. The money raised will also go to programs and support for people living with Alzheimer's and their caregivers.

Linda Mazur has participated with her husband in the Walk for Memories three or four times.

Mazur, whose husband, Jack was diagnosed in 2009, at the age of 68 said, "None of my friends really knew what I was dealing with. It is one of those things that you have to go through or have gone through

to actually know. The support I got from the Alzheimer's Society was crucial. I did not feel as alone."

Jack has lived at Hastings Manor, a residence home in Belleville, for seven months now.

The Alzheimer Society held their first walk in 1996 that raised \$3,272, and each year, the support for this event gets bigger.

According to the Alzheimer Society, one in 11 of people in Belleville over the age of 65 approximately 914 people are af-

ected with some form of Alzheimer's and dementia.

The money raised at the event will go towards expanding services to provide family support and public education for Hastings County and Brighton.

"Awareness is very important," said Laura Hare, executive director at the Alzheimer Society.

"When people hear our radio ads and see our media sponsorship, it causes people to take action and get support for themselves or family members."

Chowing down at medieval fest

By Linda Horn

The Stirling and District Lions Club went "medieval" Friday to raise money for the community.

As part of Stirling's Hogfest, the Stirling and District Lions Club held a medieval feast last Friday night.

The sold-out event raised money to support the Lions Club's effort to help those in need in the community.

"Funds go to the Lions Clubs and then finally to the community. We support anyone in Stirling that is having a really tough time," said Arlene Pollick, organizer of the feast.

Last year the club held the first medieval feast and it was a big success, so organizers decided to use that theme again this year.

The night included entertainment from the feast king and queen, Stirling Festival theatre actors Debbie Collins and Allan Gillespie, who provided many laughs during the night with their jokes and songs.

Guests enjoyed a meal made for royalty, jousting, a limerick contest and selling off the "serving wenches" who were men dressed up as women.

While organizers are calling the night a success, the final total of money raised has not yet been calculated.

Brain injury fundraiser

By Topher Seguin

Anyone affected by a brain injury is invited to learn about building strong relationships and coping with changes after an injury.

This is the first year both the "Mix and Mingle" and "Ripple Effect" conferences are being held together, said Pam Ferrill, the Brain Injury Association's office administrator.

The "Mix and Mingle" event takes place on Feb. 9, and the "Ripple Effect" conference takes place on Feb. 10. Everyone is welcome to attend.

The event is sponsored by Thomson Rogers and all proceeds go to the Brain Injury Association of Belleville and District.

Tickets for the "Mix & Mingle" are \$50, and the event runs from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Tickets for the conference are \$75, and it runs from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Tickets for both are \$100.



Heather Meeks shows her newly painted belly during the Baby Bump event held at the By the Moon studio.

Celebrating motherhood

By Melchizedek Maquiso

More than 40 people, mostly expectant mothers, participated in the Belly Bump, a free celebration event for expectant mothers held at By The Moon studio.

It was the first time that the studio organized such an event.

"My goal when I came first with the idea of the Baby Bump was to share the information that there are options out there that you may not even know," said Michelle Stroud, owner of By The Moon in Belleville, who is also a labour doula and practising maternity reflexologist.

Stroud is referring particularly to services her studio offers for expectant mothers such as prenatal physical fitness, birth pool rental and shamanic wellness services among others which fall under the studio's holistic health and fitness mantra.

Participants received a variety of services including belly painting and photography, maternity reflexology, dancing for birth class and despacho ceremony, a type of ceremonial offering.

Half of the expectant mothers went for the belly painting.

"Belly painting was a big draw. Women wanted to bare their bellies for art," said Stroud.

"We're planning to do this or at least a version of it, every three months," added Tracey Kennedy, the studio's practising shaman who also did the paintings.

Expectant mothers who had their bellies painted said they were happy to have a piece of art drawn on them.

"It is a different way to celebrate the guy inside," said Belleville resident Andrea Langille, who is expecting her second child in April.



Zackery Lowery, 12, Alex Roy, 13, and Hunter Storms, 9, race their way into first place at Stirling's annual Toilet Bowl Race Sunday afternoon. The race was organized and sponsored by Josh Skinkle of Skinkle Custom Manure Spreading.

Toilet bowl races make a splash

Competitors go head to head at Stirling's Hogfest

By Topher Seguin

Sitting on a toilet's never been this much fun.

Winding down the final days of Stirling's Hogfest and braving the winter chill, residents of Stirling took part in the annual Toilet Bowl race held on Mill Pond in Stirling on Sunday, Jan. 29.

Waiting behind the line painted delicately on the ice, the competitors exchanged smiles as they whispered different strategies between their partners. Muscles tensed and fingers were freezing as organizer Josh Skinkle shouted 'Go!' and everyone sprinted, pushing their homemade toilet-kart along with them.

Off to a slippery start, competitors then worked their way around a pylon at the

'...in the end it's all about the toilet. Some people choose to buy their toilets from second-hand stores; others use toilets from home renovations.'

Organizer Josh Skinkle

end of the pond, all the while weaving in and out of one another as everyone tried to be this year's toilet bowl champion.

While some competitors built their "poop machines" from scratch, many chose to spruce up a previous year's design and improve on past failures.

"Last year a team's wheel came right off," said Skinkle, "but in the end it's all about the toilet. Some people choose to buy their toilets from second-hand stores;

others use toilets from home renovations."

The rules are simple. Get a toilet, throw on some wheels, and get your friends to push you across the pond.

Last year's winners, the "Rawdon Rockettes," promised to put up a tough fight this year, but ultimately failed to produce when put up against some of the younger teams.

"The race is awesome," said Hunter Storms, 9, whose nameless team made it into the finals.

With approximately 50 spectators watching from the sidelines, and more than 30 contestants racing, the competitiveness slowly turned into a free-for-all for anyone willing to give the course a try.

Although there were no actual winners this year, everyone who participated walked away with a Stirling Hogfest Toilet Bowl Race t-shirt.

"I don't actually know who won," said toilet racer Jordan Gates. "It was fun while it lasted, though."

Trial...

Continued from Page 1

Kingston Police Staff Sergeant Chris Scott said the verdict is a testament to the dedication of the police and crown. Scott, major case manager for the inves-

tigation, had a strong word of warning for future perpetrators.

"If some evil individual decides they're going to undertake such an enterprise, we are going to put all our resources and we are going to do all we can and justice is going to be served," Scott told reporters.

Despite the victory for the prosecution, Scott was adamant that the focus should be on the victims, not the offenders.

"To me, it's Rona, Zainab, Sahar, Geeti. That's who we should be thinking about, that's who we should be talking about. Not these other people."



Photo by Melissa Murray

Rescue training

NAPANEE – A member of the Fire Service’s specialized rescue team throws a rope to a team member during their annual ice and water training Saturday morning on the Napanee River. Members of the 12-person team went through several drills for the first time this year in order to train four new members and go over past training. The practice seemed increasingly important as just last week, two snowmobilers were rescued from the Bay of Quinte, about a week after the Sophiasburgh ice rescue team did their own training on the water.

Students show creative side with lip dub

Colourful costumes and variety of props add to crazy party scene

By Stephanie James

Loyalist College students broke out into dance Saturday as part of College Lip Dub. They invaded the halls to participate in the school’s first official lip dub production, a video project of Loyalist television and new media production students. A lip dub is a music video taped in reverse and edited in post-production so the music plays normally while the visuals play in reverse. Given the chance to show their creative

side, 20 to 30 people showed up to participate and were asked to dress up in crazy colourful costumes and rock out to the song “Get Up and Dance” by Faber Drive. Participants were also given items such as Silly String, streamers and confetti to throw, to add to the colour and chaos of the party scene. “We were expecting anywhere from 20 to 200 people,” said Sydney Sheppard, the director of the lip dub and a third-year TV and new media student at Loyalist. Participants had only a few hours on the day of the event to learn dance steps and the main layout of the music video before they were asked to do several run-throughs, and finally, the final filming. Set up, rehearsals and filming took about nine

‘It was a lot more difficult than I anticipated but in the end it was worth it.’

lead singer Maeghan Etherington

hours to complete. With Sheppard coaching cast and crew through every take, the hallways were filled with laughter and students running every which way trying to keep up with the fast-paced filming processes. For some, participating in the lip dub was an opportunity to have some fun and say they got the chance to participate in

something new. For television and new media students, it was one of their course’s requirements. As the assistant director for the lip dub, Maeghan Etherington was in charge of learning the lyrics to the song backwards and teaching it to the other leads on the day of the event. “It was a lot more difficult than I anticipated but in the end it was worth it,” said Etherington, who was also a lead singer. Taping for the music video took place in several locations around the college, including The Shark Tank Pub, Alumni Hall, the TV studio and various hallways decorated by the crew with balloons and colourful items for participants to interact with. “I have never really directed much, so

I guess this is really my directing debut,” said Sheppard. Pre-production for the lip dub started in the summer of 2011 and took almost nine months to plan. Students from the TV and new media production program were able to get a feel for what a lip dub was and how it worked by watching high school versions online. The crew that assisted with both pre-production and helping out on the day of filming consisted of five to 10 people who were in charge of organizing the event, choreographing, decorating and producing in post-production. “I would absolutely love to have more experience directing, but it’s definitely the teamwork that makes these kind of videos happen,” said Sheppard.

Haggis and bagpipes part of Scottish celebration

By Rachel Psutka

If you were caught in a short kilt and long socks last Friday, then you were dressed for success in the eyes of Scotland’s favourite son. Some of Quinte’s best plaid and tartans were on display at Trenton’s Knights of Columbus hall for the 16th-annual local celebration of the iconic Scottish poet Robbie Burns’ birth.

Organizer Beth Cleaton was thrilled with the outcome of another year of the Burns supper, one of thousands around the world held in honour of the man who wrote such works as *Auld Lang Syne* and *Scots Wha Hae*, often sung as an unofficial national anthem in Scotland. “We’re chalking this year up as a success, for sure,” said Cleaton. “We had around 160 people showing up, which is a good turnout.”

Cleaton is also a pipe major in the 413 Wing Air Force Association Pipes and Drums, which provided the opening entertainment. She said Celtic heritage is strong in the area and many people like to show up to celebrate that, as well as take in a hearty meal. “We have a traditional Scottish dinner with roast beef, turnips – which in Scotland they call neeps – and mashed potatoes, or tatties, and trifle and shortbread

desserts,” said Cleaton. Of course, no Burns supper would be complete without a haggis. Dr. Bill Cunningham recited Robbie Burns’ poem *Address to a Haggis*, an important part of all Burns suppers, in old Scottish to the delight of many spectators. “The haggis was excellent,” Cleaton said. “People get scared by the tradition of the haggis, that it is cooked in a sheep’s

stomach, but nowadays it is prepared differently. It’s still an acquired taste,” she noted. Dinner was followed by a display from the McGilly Highland Dancers and musical entertainment from band Crazy Chester. The dinner is a joint fundraiser between the Trenton Scottish Irish Festival and 413 Pipes and Drums. All funds raised help promote Celtic heritage in the area.

Sleepy participants cope with cold in annual outdoor fundraiser

By Devaan Ingraham

As the clock struck 1 a.m. the steady rustling of tarps was a dead giveaway that the silent camp in the shadow of city hall was far from asleep. Participants of the fifth-annual Sleep Out! So Others Can Sleep In, a fundraiser for the Hastings and Prince Edward Branch Canadian Mental Health Association, hunkered down in Market Square from Friday night to Saturday morning. The good news for these “homeless” was that in another few hours, they would return to their cozy beds while others in Belleville are not as lucky. The event, which had already raised \$11, 150 on the day of the event alone, was created as a means to raise funds to maintain the three transitional homes offering tem-

porary housing to those in need in the Belleville area. Participants registered with the CMHA and collected pledges from the community to support their effort. Nancy Smith, a director of the CMHA branch, said that although the organization was able to offer temporary housing to nearly 200 people between April 2010 and March 2011 they were forced to “turn away 432 people because the houses were full.” Smith estimated 150 participants had come to the event in Market Square, including three city councillors who have become regular supporters of the event. Smith said she also admires the gusto of the young participants in the crowd, including an ambitious group of 34 from Albert College. One of these students, Gregory Stevens,

wandered around the camp sometime after 3 a.m. and took a minute to admire the “tent city” built by the female group from Albert College. “They built a pretty big fort as well!” said Stevens. Stevens, a fast-talking 13-year-old from Napanee, explained the technical difficulties he had with his dwelling. “Some of our walls collapsed. I originally brought a refrigerator box, but I gave it to someone else because they didn’t have anything.” Stevens and several other participants agreed their main reason for attending the event was to better help them empathize with those less fortunate in their community. “It was just to get a feeling of what it was like for someone else, to be in their shoes and understand what they go through every night.” With help from his sister, Stevens managed to raise more than \$200 as his contribution to the event’s grand total. But as Stevens, who later abandoned all plans of actually sleeping, climbed back into his shelter, a quiet voice emerged from the heart of Albert College’s “tent city.” “I can’t feel anything right now ... I’m so cold ...” Come sunrise, the nameless victim of the chill and his fellow sleepers won’t be the only ones left out in the cold on these frigid nights. When the tarps were folded and the cardboard made its way to the recycling bins, some of Belleville’s residents will be forced to take to the streets. Their pledges will not be made to sheets, but rather to their hats or cups as they wait out the cold in cardboard boxes they call “home.” Further donations can be forwarded to: The Canadian Mental Health Association 199 Front St., Suite 530, Belleville, Ont. K8N 5H5 (613) 969-8874.



Photo by Tom Hicken

A participant camps out in front of Market Square in downtown Belleville.



Photo by Dan Pearce

Stan Hart prepares his box for the “Sleep Out! So Others Can Sleep In” fundraiser on Jan. 27. Participants stayed overnight in Belleville’s Market Square to raise money for local homeless shelters.



BELLEVILLE – Joe Ash plows through the slush on Victoria Avenue in the east end on Saturday afternoon, as big wet snowflakes fell, leaving the roads slick and hard to drive on. Photo by Tophier Seguin.



CAMPBELLFORD – Driver James John of Norwood, Car #10, gets rear-ended during the 8th annual fundraising Winter Crunch-Off demolition derby in Campbellford on Saturday. Thirty-five drivers competed to become the last running automobile on the track. Photo by Mark Tarnovetsky.



STIRLING - Hockey participants battle for the puck during the town's 2nd Mill Pond hockey tournament. The tournament is part of Stirling's quest to be named Hockeyville for 2012. Photo by Melchizedek Maquiso.

Quinte's Whitewash Weekend



CAMPBELLFORD - Ginette Dehne triumphantly marches out of the cold water after taking a plunge to raise money for Campbellford hospital on Jan. 28. Dehne said that it wasn't as bad as she thought, that it was exhilarating. Approximately 25 people took the plunge. Photo by Kristen Haveman.



BELLEVILLE - Tiffany Taylor waits for the bus at Loyalist College with her daughter, Sophia Taylor on Jan. 27. Freezing rain left the region layered with slippery ice. Photo by Mark Tarnovetsky.



NAPANEE – Napanee Select Nate Dornekamp and NHL Alumni player Dennis Maruk take some time out of the game to pose for a photo during the NHL alumni game, Jan. 28 at the Strathcona Paper Centre. Both teams played an entertaining game and the alumni came out on top. The teams played two 20-minute periods and instead of a second period, the teams competed in a skills competition. Photo by Melissa Murray.



BELLEVILLE - Matthew Jaeger (left) helps brothers Josh and Jacob Carley (right) build a fort in the Carleys' front yard on Victoria Avenue in Belleville, Ont. on Jan. 28. The boys were taking advantage of the snowy afternoon. Photo by Rachel Psutka.

Athletes get on rugby fast track

Svoboda sisters well known for athletic abilities

By Amielle Christopherson

About 40 youth with a passion for 7's rugby tried out on Jan. 26 at Loyalist College for the privilege of playing for the provincial team at the Ontario Summer Games.

Among the group who showed up at the Sports Dome were Katie and Sara Svoboda, 17-year-old Grade 11 twins from Centennial High School.

"It sets you on the fast track," said Sara Svoboda as Katie rushes to add, "You know coaches from universities and colleges will be watching."

The sport is a newer version of traditional rugby, with seven instead of 15 players and a game time of 15 minutes (including halftime) instead of the usual 80 minutes. It's also the newest addition to the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

Beth Bartz, who is the co-coach of the women's team for eastern Ontario, as well as the rugby coach at Queen's University confirms that kids who are accepted onto the provincial teams do have a better chance at hoping for that Olympic team.

"There are coaches at these games, and kids start getting invited to summer camps, universities, and then the potential for Rio.

"There's a lot of talent in this area, and we know that," said Bartz.

Each of the four regions in Ontario will select 125 athletes, for a total of 500. From that group, 192 will be selected, with 48 from each region, half which will be male and female. They will then be formed into two teams of 12.

"The tryout tonight was fantastic," Bartz said enthusiastically. "We knew this was an area we wanted to come to. There are a lot of excellent coaches who put in a lot of time, and there are a lot of kids playing a lot of sports."

She was also very positive about the chances that the girls who tried out would



Photo by Amielle Christopherson

Sara (left) and Katie Svoboda recently tried out for the first Ontario Provincial rugby 7's team. Last summer they both played with the U-16 provincial rugby team, the jersey for which they're wearing. The Olympic dream of Rio de Janeiro seems a real possibility with the opportunities they've had this past year.

have. "I can say right now that there are athletes we're interested in, especially for the girls side. There's quite a few girls we're definitely interested in."

The Svoboda girls are well-known in the area for their athletic abilities. Between volleyball, soccer, hockey, track & field, cross country, and now rugby, the girls have tried almost everything there is

to offer.

Sara was on the provincial soccer team in Grade 8, while that summer, Katie made the all-star basketball team. Katie's also been to OFSAA with track and field, and last summer, the twins both made the U-16 rugby provincial team.

Their father, Paul, got them into sports and they've been doing rugby summer

camps since Grade 5. Sports are definitely in their future and the thought of not being active is something that they don't like.

Sara was out with a sprain for three weeks during hockey season and couldn't wait to get back on the ice.

"I always have to be doing something," she said earnestly and then added after a

moment with a smile, "We'll be those people playing rec tennis when they're 50."

Asked what being on this team would mean for them, both girls light up and start talking over each other a little faster.

"Being on the Olympic team," starts Sara, while Katie jumps in right over her.

"It's on my dream list, it's right up there. But now it's reachable."

Competitors take to ice at speedskating event

Quinte Blades plays host to Ontario Cup this past weekend

By Rachel Psutka

Belleville played host to some of the fastest youth on two blades this weekend as the Quinte Blades speed skating club held the season's fourth Ontario Cup at Yardmen Arena.

Competitors from across Ontario and as far as the United States took over the arena for two days to race on the short track for a chance to qualify for next month's provincial championships in Kingston. It was the last of four qualifying meets in which the young athletes could compete for a spot in the provincials.

The Quinte Blades had five athletes in

attendance for the meet: Helen Wismer, Maddison Wood, Ellie Anderson, Tristan Antoski, and Joshua Bateman.

Wismer ended up sixth in the open female category, while Wood and Anderson came in 16th and 19th respectively in the juvenile female category. Amongst the boys, Bateman came eighth in juvenile and Antoski rounded out the group with a ninth-place finish in pre-midget.

Qualifying for the meet is an achievement in itself, according to coach Laura Woodall.

"Every athlete has their individual goals. Attending certain events, like being able to qualify for an Ontario Cup, is a goal for many athletes," said Woodall. "Anyone here today has to have a certain time and ranking."

Woodall is hoping her athletes make the cut to go to provincials.

"We expect that at least three of the skaters are high enough on the points

list," she said.

With the season being well underway, Woodall praised the commitment of the skaters.

"The athletes are on ice three times a week, and that's just their on-ice portion ... A number of the athletes are also involved in school sports, which gives them cross training," Woodall said.

Several of the more competitive Quinte-area youth competing last weekend have had excellent seasons.

"Ellie Anderson attended the marathon skate in Ottawa on Jan. 14. She raced in the four-kilometre, 10-kilometre, and for fun entered the 21-kilometre, just to see how long she could keep up. She won the under-19 category, and she's 14, in a race she wasn't even going to enter," said Woodall.

"Another athlete, Josh Bateman, who is new to long-track, attended his first long-track competition last weekend in Ottawa and he won a silver medal in his

age category. We can't even train for long track because we skate inside an arena," she noted.

As for the Belleville meet, Woodall said the venue is well-regarded among skaters. "The city of Belleville is known for putting on a very good-quality event. The skaters like the ice at the Yardmen. It's fast and they tend to really enjoy coming to race here."

While the five athletes competing this weekend were holding their own and competing in A and B finals, the Quinte Blades is also host to a large contingent of both masters and young skaters who didn't have categories to compete in at this event.

"That's unique to the sport of speed skating, I think," said Woodall. "These young people that are racing today also train with all the masters. It brings a really different dynamic to training and you break down the barriers that way."

Volleyball teams both come out on top

Men's team sweeps both games in weekend action

By Tiffany McEwen

Pitted against both Algonquin Thunder and the La Cité Coyotes this past weekend, the Loyalist Lancers volleyball teams have come out on top again.

The men's team swept the weekend winning 3-2 against Algonquin on Saturday, ending the Ottawa-based team's 14-game winning streak, and 3-1 against La Cité on Sunday, bringing their season record to 11 wins and four losses.

The Lady Lancers lost their game Saturday against Algonquin 2-3, but brought it back on Sunday by beating La Cité 3-1, bringing their season record to 10 wins, five losses.

Men's coach Dave Templar said his team has come to a realization this weekend, and stepped up their game.

"I think they played very well. We took a big step as a team this weekend. I've sort of been waiting for them to do this, but I think they proved to themselves that when they decide to play as a team and they decide to maintain a level of intensity and effort and cut down on their errors, then it's going to translate into forcing teams having to beat them, instead of beating themselves and giving away points.

"When they allowed themselves the opportunities, they started to see the potential of what they can do when we eliminate those errors," said Templar.

As for ending the Thunder's winning streak Templar said, "It's always nice to play spoiler. At the same time, Algonquin's probably still likely going to get first in the division, but it won't be an undefeated first, which is nice."

Templar said as long as his team keeps this up, they can win future key games.

While the ladies brought in one win this weekend, their coach, Tony Clarke, said they played an OK game overall.

"The ladies played an OK game... but they get too comfortable, and they lose focus."

The Lancers will play their next game at Trent University on Feb. 1. The women will play at 6 p.m. and the men will play at 8 p.m.

Bulls finally net win with first of the new year

Defeat of Sarnia Sting came after shootout at Yardmen Arena Saturday night

By Rachel Psutka

It took nearly a month, but the Belleville Bulls have finally won their first game of the year.

They left it until the last second, but the Belleville Bulls managed to avoid a winless January after defeating the Sarnia Sting 5-4 in a shootout Saturday at Yardmen Arena.

Despite being pummeled by shots during the first period by the higher-ranked Sting, 16-year-old goaltender Charlie Graham managed to keep the puck at bay, leading to a couple of goose eggs on the board by the start of the second period.

Less than two minutes into the second period, Sarnia's Ludvig Rensfeldt got the scoring going on an odd-man rush.

The Bulls finally managed to retaliate midway through the second period. A shot from Garrett Hooey rolled past the Sting's goaltender, J.P. Anderson, who overbalanced and toppled at the wrong moment.

The Bulls' joy was short-lived, though, as the Sting snuck in another two goals in the next two minutes, courtesy of Rensfeldt and Domenic Alberga getting one past a faltering Graham.

The Bulls pulled together and got one more past the Sting before the second period ended, thanks to the quick passing of Austen Brassard and the rebound-grabbing Jordan Mayer.

A defensive diving play by the Bulls' Jason Shaw at 22 seconds into the third led to Brendan Gaunce grabbing the puck and making a run to the Sting net, scoring only 10 seconds later to tie the game at 3-3.

The third period continued with the Bulls peppering the Sting with shot after shot. The shot clock read 20-7 in favour of the Bulls at the end of the third, with four goals apiece.

Graham's goaltending efforts continued to impress, especially on a breakaway shot from Nail Yakupov. Fans roared as Graham raised his glove triumphantly.

After a fruitless four-on-four overtime period, the Bulls faced a tense shootout with the Sting.

Sarnia's first shooter, Craig Hottot, beat Graham with a hard shot and Belleville's Jordan Mayer mishandled the puck, leaving the Sting ahead by a goal.

A combination of Graham's quick maneuvers and the accuracy of Gaunce and Joseph Cramarossa had fans in the Yardmen raising the roof with their cheers as the Bulls won their first game of 2012 with a final score of 5-4.

Another perk of the night for the fans: the game also featured a puck drop by Belleville native and new NHLer Andrew Shaw of the Chicago Blackhawks and Bulls alumnus P.K. Subban of the Montreal Canadiens, who were both off for the all-star break.

The re-energized Bulls get a bit of break and are next in action in Kitchener on Friday, Feb. 3 at 7:30 p.m. They return to the Yardmen on Feb. 11 at 7:05 p.m. to face the Guelph Storm.

After the recent win, the Bulls are now ninth in the eastern conference, just ahead of the Kingston Frontenacs.



Photo by Tom Hicken

The Belleville Bulls celebrate a 5-4 victory after Bulls' forward Joseph Cramarossa scored the winning goal against the Sarnia Sting in a shootout. The victory ended the Bulls' 11-game losing streak.