



Photo by Julia Karpiuk

Orland French is the recipient of the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award, awarded to 40 Ontarians every year for volunteering in their community. French has been recognized for his contribution to the Hastings Historical Society. French sits in his home, wearing his Caring Canadians pin on his lapel.

Volunteer honoured as Caring Canadian

By Julia Karpiuk

A passion for history and a love for writing has fueled Orland French's resume in volunteering, specifically his contribution to the Hastings County Historical Society (HCHS). And now, French has been recognized beyond his local community for his contribution as the recipient of the Caring Canadians award.

The Governor General's Caring Canadians award was created in 1995 to recognize individuals who contribute their time through volunteering in their community. Forty Ontarians receive this award every year.

Dr. Bruce Cronk and French's wife, Sylvia, were among the nominators and French was shocked when Dr. Cronk called him last June and told him he was the recipient of the award.

"You don't volunteer to get recognition, that just comes along as you get older in life, you're like a Christmas tree. They start hanging bobbles on you," joked French.

French started giving his time to the HCHS since he moved to Belleville almost 20 years ago. He contributed to numerous books through the HCHS, about communities throughout Ontario. His most recent book was published a couple of years ago. He's worked on 12 of his own projects and contributed to 25 others. Along with that, he was president of the HCHS for about ten years.

'It's the longest individual span anyone has been president for. When Orland took over, things were reasonably good, but he made them better.'

Volunteer Gerry Boyce

"It's the longest individual span anyone has been president for. When Orland took over things were reasonably good but he made them better," said Gerry

Standard followed by a colourful career in journalism. After covering politics on Parliament Hill for the Globe and Mail, French moved to Belleville after he received a teaching job at Loyalist College, teaching journalism. He worked at the college for seven years before leaving to take time to focus on his own ventures. These ventures primarily included writing.

French believes volunteering is an important part of any community. It is a cheaper more efficient way to get work done instead of depending on the government.

This isn't French's first award for volunteering. He was the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal last year.

Last Wednesday, French went to a Queen's Park ceremony to receive his award. The certificate and pin were presented by Ontario Lt.-Gov. David Onley.

Boyce, a volunteer at the HCHS.

Boyce also pointed out that French has volunteered in many facets of the community. French has been involved with Porch Fest, has organized tours in the summer and is on a few committees at the Eastminster United Church.

French started writing for the Kingston-Whig



This week's winner of our weekly Instagram contest is Justin Chin @justinchinphoto. Send your submissions to #pioneerpics.

Teens not buying book club idea

By Dayna Lefebvre

The first-ever Teen Book Club meeting at the Quinte West Public Library Tuesday night was met with a room full of empty chairs and uneaten snacks.

Hanna Poelman, the organizer of the event and part-time worker at the library, said she is not surprised at the outcome.

"I'm kind of getting used to it," Poelman explained, her attitude positive despite the turnout. "Tuesday night is tough, and it's just starting. It's a learning experience."

The library has been trying to increase teen participation by organizing various events and clubs, but they have been met with little enthusiasm from local teens. Poelman said a major reason for the lack of participation is the lack of knowledge about the programs at the library.

"Advertising is a big thing," Poelman said. "Getting the word out about these things is hard. And the number of teens who have never used the library is shocking."

The book club, which focuses on teens ages 12-17, will run the last Tuesday of ev-

ery month at no cost.

"Teens can relax and have fun," Poelman said. "They can enjoy an activity by themselves and come together with others who share similar interests and get just as excited over characters and books."

The Teen Advisory Group – a small group that started this year to help brainstorm ideas for teen activities at the library – suggested themed discussions to keep the choice of books more open.

"The library is so small, it can be expensive to buy multiple copies of the same book," said Poelman. "Plus the age range is so broad, it's difficult to find one book that appeals to everyone and is appropriate for the younger teens."

Romance, post-apocalyptic and protagonists with a gender opposite the reader are a few themes lined up for future meetings.

One parent stopped by to enquire about the club for her 11-year-old daughter, but decided that it might be best for her to wait until the fall when she might be able to handle more mature topics better.

Tuesday is the only night that is free

to hold the meeting, which competes directly with Scouts, Girl Guides and other youth and teen clubs in the area. Because of this, Poelman said many teenagers are already busy.

The library started its teen section about three years ago and has been trying to increase teen participation since. They have good enrolment in the various children's groups at the library, which include a Lego club, family gaming night and Paws For Reading, a therapy dog group for children with reading struggles.

According to a 2010 survey done by the Canadian Urban Library Council, libraries in over 45 cities in Canada, had 102,644 children's programs, but only 7,780 for teens.

Poelman said she is approaching school councils, hoping to increase awareness of the teen programs. She said she hopes that during the summer, participation will increase, when students are finished school.

Anyone ages 12-17 who is interested in participating can call the Quinte West Public Library or visit in person.

Photojournalism grad works at Dubai newspaper

By Sarah Taylor

It's nearing March and the snow keeps coming. It's been an exceptionally snowy winter; even Loyalist College had a snow day. Loyalist photojournalism graduate Sarah Dea has had the luxury of soaking up the 25 C plus weather on the beach with camels in Dubai. Now the summer countdown is on.

"Time absolutely flies by here, especially since the forecast is 365 days of sunshine," said Dea.

Dea, from Ottawa, worked for the Globe and Mail and freelanced in Toronto after graduating from the program in 2009. She also graduated from Carleton University in journalism before fast tracking at Loyalist.

"She was one of those students you knew was going to succeed. She had a drive and sense of purpose about what she

wanted to do," said photojournalism coordinator and teacher Frank O'Connor.

In 2011, she moved to Dubai to become a staff photojournalist at the National, a daily newspaper based out of Abu Dhabi. She, along with other Loyalist photojournalism grad Chris Pike, was the last expats to be hired by the paper. Many industries in Dubai are eager to hire expats, with 40 per cent of the city's population being locals.

Dea, 29, shoots similar assignments there as she would at a paper in Canada, however in a very different setting. She is often sent out to do portraits and news events.

Dea and her husband hope to stay in Dubai for a few more years before moving back home to Canada.

"I came here thinking I'd stay for a year, but so does everyone else. I'm enjoying expat life so far so I'll keep going with it," said Dea.



Photo by Sarah Taylor

Sarah Dea, graduate of Loyalist College's photojournalism program, moved to Dubai in 2011. She has been working as a staff photojournalist at a daily paper, The National. Dea is 29 years old and from Ottawa, Ont.