

Children come out to meet favourite princess

By Dillan Cools

Local party business, Lee Lee's Princess Parties, hosted a charitable meet and greet and vendor sale at the Parkdale Community Centre this Saturday to raise money for a family who lost their home in a fire last week.

The family-friendly event featured a variety of fun activities including face painting, a magic show and the opportunity for children to hang out with their favourite princess character.

Parents were also kept busy as 19 vendors from all corners of the Quinte region and beyond came out to sell their products, ranging from kids toys to jewelry and everything in between.

"We thought a vendor show would be a great way to support small local businesses as well as help getting our party business going and make some money for a worthy cause," said Jayne Shakespeare, co-owner of Lee Lee's Princess Parties.

For Shakespeare and business partner Leeann Latendre, what started as joking around about dressing up, has grown into a fully functional entertainment and party business with an impressive track record of helping victims of house fires.

"We had done one sort of birthday event where we donated our earnings to a family that had recently experienced a fire," said Shakespeare.

"We thought it would probably be good to give back to the community once again, so we decided to make it a bigger event so we could make it a bigger contribution," she added.

Shakespeare and Latendre used the vendors' fees to offset the hall rental, allowing for 100 per cent of their proceeds to go directly to a family whose life was recently turned upside down.

"It is a family of five from the Wolfe Island area," said Shakespeare.

"Their oldest is 18 years old, their youngest being seven. Pretty much all of their belongings were lost in the fire," she added.

Families streamed through the front door for six straight hours, bringing the day's total attendance to a whopping 500. Adults were asked to pay a modest \$2 admission and kids were let in free of charge. Everyone was offered lollipops on their way in, which could be seen in the hands and mouths of countless excited kids scattered around the hall.

"For our family, we have raised approximately \$750. For a small venue,



Photo by Dillan Cools

(From left) Lee Lee's Princess Parties members Erin Probert, Rachel Reavie, Jamie Lee Fergusson, Leeann Latendre, Avery White, Jayne Shakespeare, Taylor Elliot and Jady Arsenal entertained at a charitable meet and greet and vendor sale in Belleville, on Sunday. Proceeds from the event were donated to a family from Wolfe Island who experienced a devastating house fire last week.

we're very pleased with that turnout... the response was absolutely amazing," said Shakespeare.

Shakespeare and Latendre first came into contact with the family on a yard sale website that was hoping to replace some of the lost everyday essentials like clothing and school supplies.

"They have to carry on with their everyday life so those are the things we wanted to replace first off... as much stress as they may be under, there is definitely some things that they've got to keep regular," said Shakespeare.

"We all buy, we sell, we're moms," said Shakespeare, speaking about the buy and

sell websites that she frequents.

"It's a great place for people who are looking for a helping hand to get in contact with people that are available and willing to help," added Shakespeare.

The success of the event can be attributed to the organizers diligent advertising efforts. Shakespeare and Latendre printed posters and flyers that they distributed throughout Belleville, Tweed, Marmora and Kaladar among other places. They also went online to promote the event, utilizing a handful of event listing websites and getting their announcements posted on the Facebook fan pages of local radio stations.

"Social media was our biggest advertiser. It's really easy to get in touch and to share the information that way," said Shakespeare.

Beth Primeau, who attended with her husband and niece, was one of many guests that had found out about the event on Facebook.

"We got to meet the princesses and we had some nice sucker treats...the princesses were interacting with the kids so it was really good," said Primeau.

"It's the smiles on every kid's face when they walk up and just the enjoyment in their eyes when they're meeting the princess for the first time and you see the smile spread across their

face. There is nothing that will ever beat that," said Shakespeare.

The highlight for Michelle Vance, a friend of one of the vendors who also helped promote the event on Facebook, was seeing a smile on the face of her daughter, Paityn.

"We're learning a lot. There are a few things we could have done better but overall we had a great day... We're really happy with the turnout and we're really thankful for all the support," said Shakespeare.

Shakespeare, Latendre and the rest of Lee Lee's Princess Parties are planning to host a similar event this summer that will take place outdoors.

Flu season starts early and has no signs of coming to an end

By Elaine Bombay

Not only has flu season come early, it is hitting hard this time around.

Flu season normally runs from November to April, although it doesn't have exact dates. This year, flu season started earlier, as early as September in some parts of the country.

Loyalist College's nurse, Lauren Deans, said students are coming in with different symptoms than what she usually sees. Normally the flu leaves students feeling achy, but this year they are coming in with a cough and are quite sick, Deans said. She said she is also seeing a prevalence of pneumonia among students.

Bill Sherlock, clinical services manager at Hast-

ings and Prince Edward Public Counties Health Unit, said the number of flu cases has risen this year, in part due to the vaccine mismatch this year.

The vaccine produced for the northern hemisphere this year is around 48 per cent effective against the dominant strain of flu this season, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Ga.

Each year, experts of the World Health Organization, along with other health organizations, choose three viruses to include in flu vaccine. They make their recommendations in February for the northern hemisphere vaccine and in September for the southern hemisphere.

If one of the selected viruses changes, or drifts, as happened this year with dominant variant of flu

– the H3N2 subtype of influenza A – the vaccine will not be as effective.

The flu vaccine is still one of the most effective ways to protect yourself against the flu, said Sherlock. While this year's vaccine isn't a perfect match against H3N2, it does offer good protection against the other two viruses it contains, said Sherlock.

According to Google Flu Trends, the number of flu cases in Canada peaked in late December. Even though it is late in the season, "there is more benefit to risk getting the vaccine now," said Sherlock. The vaccine takes two weeks to become effective.

Deans emphasizes the need the wash your hands.

"Cough into your sleeve, shirt, or a Kleenex.

And then wash your hands. Get enough sleep, eat properly and get lots of fluids. Stay well hydrated and you'll be ahead of the game," she said.

The virus can live on hard surfaces for two to eight hours. If you are sharing computers or other equipment, alcohol-based hand cleansers are effective at stopping the spread.

"Maintain a healthy lifestyle to boost your innate immune system," Sherlock said.

"A healthy lifestyle is your immune system's first line of defence."

The flu vaccine is available on Wednesday and Thursday mornings at the Loyalist College health clinic. They are also available at pharmacies, doctors' offices and the health unit. Be sure to take your health card.

Volleyball weekend at Loyalist

By Graeme Murphy

The Loyalist Lancers took on the College La Cité Coyotes at two varsity volleyball games Sunday, resulting in a close 3-2 loss for the Lancers women's team and a triumphant 3-0 win for the Lancers men's team.

The Lancers hosted the Coyotes on Jan. 11 to play two games starting with the women's team. Despite the first two sets of the game ending strong for the Lancers, they were ultimately unable to fight the Coyotes for the remainder of the match.

Amy Parker, team captain for the Lancers women's team blamed the loss on general fatigue and lack of team communications.

"I felt like we played really well in the beginning, and then in the fourth and fifth set, we kind of just crashed and burned. We lost communications but again, I felt like we played well in the beginning. "We just need to keep the momentum going next time. We crashed a bit in our receiving and our offence. That is where we let ourselves down."

Despite a disappointing loss for the Lancers women's team, the men's team had a surprising turn-around from their last game against the Coyotes.

The Lancers men's team beat the Coyotes in a 3-0 win, recovering from their 3-0 loss to the Coyotes on Nov. 16. They stole the show with an aggressive play that took the Coyotes by surprise.

Adam Strickland, team captain for the Lancers men's team, praised his teammates.

"After coming back from the Christmas break, we played amazing. We came together as a strong team and everything we have been focusing on in practices is coming together and I think it showed on the court. This has probably been the most synergetic game we have had so far."

The Lancers take on the Durham Lords Wednesday, Jan. 14 at 8 p.m.



Photo by Graeme Murphy

Adam Strickland of the Loyalist Lancers blocks a spike made by William Robitaille of La Cité Coyotes during OCAA volleyball action at Loyalist. It was a 3-0 win for the Lancers on Jan. 11.

Pharmacists providing more services to customers

By Kayleen Preston

People are able to have more control over their health care; all it takes is a talk with your pharmacist.

Since 2012, Ontario has been easing some of the restrictions governing pharmacists, allowing them to provide more services to their patients.

Vaughn Galloway, a pharmacist who works at Kelly's Guardian Pharmacy in Belleville, who has worked in the field for over 30 years, has personally experienced these changes.

"We can administer flu shots," he said. "We can now modify a prescription if we feel that it's in the patients best interest, (if it) needs to be modified. We can renew certain prescriptions for patients, if it's a regular medication, without them having to go to their doctor."

Although it has been effective since 2012, most of the public is just becoming aware of it now.

"I don't think a lot of people have pharmacist education. They are not really sure what (pharmacists) do," explained Lauren Deans, the student health nurse at Loyalist College. "And I know certain of the pharmacies are really promoting their pharmacists, by radio and say, 'You've got this problem or this, come talk to your pharmacist and they can help you out.' So, it's getting out there."

Pharmacists have gained more control over certain prescriptions. This is in addition to being able to counsel people in therapies for stopping smoking, prescribing medications to help quit the habit, and demonstrating how to properly use injections or puffers for diabetic or asthmatic patients.

Brenda Sutherland, a substitute teacher for Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board, said she believes that pharmacists should have a greater impact on the health care system.

"I think they are more face to face with the actual people who are needing medication or needing some kind of assistance in a drug

store type of setting, and they're right there on the front lines. I think probably even more than maybe the doctors," Sutherland said. "And it's nice to be able to get to it so easily. You can just walk in, person's there, you can talk to them, and they can advise you."

Outside of a university degree, Galloway has had to complete methadone, injection, and smoking cessation training to be able to complete his current tasks at the pharmacy. Some pharmacists, depending on their location, may also need training to work with diabetic and geriatric patients.

Although there are more responsibilities for pharmacists, Galloway said he finds it rewarding.

"I think it's enjoyable to help more people. Sometimes it's challenging managing your time to do all of these things, but it makes the day go quickly."

The public and pharmacists alike are becoming more aware of generic and brand-name prescriptions. This gives pharmacists the opportunity to prescribe a more cost-efficient option of what the doctor has already given to the patient. Patients can also ask their pharmacist to give them the generic medication as an alternative.

Generic drugs are essentially the same as the brand name drug, but often made by a different company after the patent has expired. Health Canada mandates that both need the same amount of the same chemical that is used as the active ingredient, and they both work the same.

The biggest difference is the cost, since the brand name had to pay more for the original research.

"(That) certainly saves the health care system a lot of money, certainly saves people without drug plans a lot of money," explained Galloway.

Even if you have a drug plan, generic drugs can help save your company money. Some of the money saved in the health care system can then be used to help further research in other areas.