

# The Pioneer

Vol. 48 · Issue #14  
 Thursday, Feb. 4, 2016  
 Loyalist College · Belleville, ON · Canada



Photo by Nick Tardif

With only seconds remaining in the game, Loyalist Lancers head coach Ryan Barbeau (right) and assistant coach Jim Barbeau (centre) try to rally the troops for one last push in Kingston Wednesday night. The Lancers would lose a close game to the St. Lawrence College Vikings 67 – 60.

## Tough losses for Lancers in Kingston

By Nick Tardif

Coming off of two solid performances against Seneca last Friday, both the Lancers men's and women's basketball teams suffered demoralizing losses last night in Kingston, at the hands of the St. Lawrence College Vikings, leaving

the men's team fighting for their playoff lives.

The Lady Lancers got off to a rough start, turning the ball over often and falling behind. By the end of the first half, the Vikings had 14-point lead, which proved to be enough as the Viking bested the Lancers 71–62.

The men's game was a much closer affair with three lead changes and the game being tied at six other times. The timely three-point shooting of the Vikings was the story. Shooting at 35 per cent for the game, the Vikings made the important three-pointers when they needed them, halting a late game

rally by the Lancers to win 67 – 60 in an exciting game.

The top six teams in each division make the playoffs. With last night's loss, the men's team finds themselves on the playoff bubble as they sit precariously in the final spot. The Lady Lancers, on the other hand, with 12

points are still sitting comfortably, tied for third in the playoff picture.

The next games for the Lancers are an away game – this time at Centennial College on Saturday, Feb. 6.

For Friday's action, see page 5.

## Korean War vet describes pain of loss

*Eighteen-year-old didn't even know where Korea was when he enlisted*

By Zachary Prong

On the last weekend of June 1950, war broke out on the Korean Peninsula.

Hundreds of thousands of Korean men – half fighting for the American backed South, the others for the Soviet and Chinese backed North, had been amassed along the dividing 38<sup>th</sup> parallel for years. Both sought complete control of Korea.

Interneine clashes had been a regular occurrence since the end of the brutal Japanese occupation in 1945, but when soldiers from the South launched a small assault across the parallel on June 25, the North responded with a full-scale invasion.

The next three and a half years would see millions killed. The United Nations, lead by the United States, intervened on behalf of the South, the Chinese on behalf of the North. Massacres were committed by both sides and the North was reduced to a wasteland; 635,000 tons of bombs and 32, 500 tons of napalm were dropped by American planes over the course of the war.

Thousands of kilometers away, in Prince Edward County, news came through that Canada was once again at war. The country would send thousands of young men to fight under the UN banner.

Hundreds of young boys and men from the area enlisted. It was a chance to see the world and prove themselves as men, just as many of the fathers had done in the Second World War, their grandfathers in the First.

Eighteen-year-old John McIntyre was one of those boys. "I was excited," said McIntyre, "but who knew where Korea was? I didn't know. They didn't tell us nothin'!"

In total, 26, 000 Canadians would participate in the war. 516 of them would never come home.

Many of the dead and wounded were McIntyre's close friends. As a member of the Royal Canadian Regiment, he saw some of the worst fighting of the war. For weeks and months at a time, they would live and fight in the mountains. Huddled in trenches and bunkers, they were bombarded by artillery and fought off massive assaults by Chinese and Korean soldiers.

"I was scared, damn scared," said McIntyre.

To this day, he still isn't able to talk about the details of what he saw. He fought back tears when asked about his friends who were killed.

"You just don't talk about those things," he said.

A few years ago, the Canadian and South Korean governments paid for a group of Canadian Korean War veterans, McIntyre included, to travel to Korea to visit the graves of their fallen comrades.

"The spot they had, every grave site is nice. It was just awesome," said McIntyre.

Watch McIntyre tell his story:  
<https://vimeo.com/154200970>



Zachary Prong

John McIntyre, a Prince Edward County native and veteran of the Korean War, at his home in Belleville. McIntyre went to Korea at the age of 19 with the Royal Canadian Regiment. He saw some of the worst fighting of the war and lost many friends, something he still isn't able to discuss in detail to this day.

## With casino plans come concerns

By Elliott Gould

Belleville city councillors have placed their bets on a new casino in the area but along with the prospective spoils there is lingering trepidation.

"It's not a moral thing about gambling or not gambling, it's that I don't think the government has any right to setup a program that takes money from people," said Orland French.

French was a member of a now dissolved anti-gambling group that succeeded in putting a moratorium on previous plans to build a casino in the area.

"I don't consider myself a goodie-goodie or a moralist. I, just like a lot of people, don't think that the government should set up a system that systematically encourages people to throw away their money," said French.

Last Monday, council approved a casino for the city that will be operational a year from now. Great Canadian Gaming will be building and operating the casino.

Although the issue received unanimous support by councillors, they are also realistic about the potential effects.

"Well I think there are going to be some positive impacts and negative of course, like with most things dealing with gambling activity. But I think overall the community is supportive of the casino," said Coun. Mitch Panciuk.

In accordance to OLG regulations, 5.25 per cent of the first \$65 million generated will go to the city.

"I would like to see us put some of those resources towards helping people who have problem gambling issues," said Panciuk.

But with a police budget that rose 2.63 per cent over 2015 and the possibility of an increase in problematic gambling in a community, plus a child poverty rate that is double the provincial average, will that be enough?

"To be honest, I don't know at the end of the day," said Coun. Paul Carr. "Casino operations are set up so the province can generate revenue. So whether it is a tourist or whether it is a local, the majority of the money that is lost to the house will go to the province and not necessarily go back to the community."

...For Casino, page 2





Photo by H.T. Morgan

### On thin ice

Don McCrory, a Belleville resident of 25 years, was out on his first ice-fishing trip of the year recently. After an hour on the ice, he still had no bites. The ice-fishing season has been put into question with the arrival of above average temperatures this week, putting sportsmen and their annual pilgrimage to the Quinte region on hold. Temperatures are forecast to dip below freezing after a mild weekend, with the mercury expected to peak at 4 C Saturday.

## Mixed emotions about gambling here

### Casino...

Continued from Page 1

Belleville Downtown Improvement Area co-ordinator Erica Holgate believes it could provide a positive impact. "In terms of us downtown I think that we agree with the city in the sense that we'll tap into that market as well. If we have that initial drive then we will look at those opportunities to bring the people into our core as well."

Carr also expressed concern about its effect on the local economy.

"I asked a lot of questions from the proponents, Great Canadian Gaming, things like how much people were going to make. Clearly, if they are minimum wage jobs, it is not a living wage and also given the fact that Great Canadian Gaming owns Gananoque and Kawartha casinos, my concern was that there is a bit of market saturation so it'll be very important that they come up with a tourism strategy."

Questions have also been raised about the casinos location near Highway 401 drawing away business from downtown. The Quinte area has been struggling to rebrand itself and attract

new business and visitors.

"I thought at one time that if they really got serious about it in this town, if you want a casino to be an attractive location, to put it down on the waterfront, on the Bay of Quinte and turn it into a casino resort," said French.

Owner of downtown restaurant and music venue Sans Souci, Greg Sheridan, shares mixed emotions as well. "It's another blow for people again with everything going up North Front Street or Bell Boulevard. Another reason for people to not go downtown you know, but you can't dwell upon it, it's going to happen."

Regardless of its location, council members say they still believe the casino will attract business to the entire city.

"I think that the only real negative impact that may happen downtown would be to the Empire Theatre and I don't know what the impact is going to be for that, but I do believe that there will be more people coming into town because of the facility and they will make their way all over the city including downtown," said Panciuk.

"I think there is a place for the entertainment that the Empire Theatre provides. Casino entertainment is different

as far as I understand... Not everyone is going to want to go to a gambling facility to see that so there will still be an opportunity for the Empire Theatre and others."

With the casino slated to be operational in 2017, Belleville will have for better or worse, its long awaited and at times, contentious casino.

"I know the casino was sold as a tourist draw but I am a little suspect of that considering again the heavy saturation (of casinos in the region)," said Carr. "I've read studies where it could have a negative affect from a social perspective. I guess time will tell."

## Walk supports families of Alzheimer's patients

By Lindsay Leveque

Human beings spend their entire lives creating memories that are made up of places travelled, life experiences and loved ones. The mere thought that one day that could all be gone can be terrifying.

Sadly, that is the reality for some. Alzheimer's disease is a condition where brain cells progressively degenerate causing memory loss as well as thinking and behavioral changes. Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia, accounting for 60 to 80 per cent of cases, according to the Alzheimer's Association.

The Alzheimer Society of Hastings-Prince Edward held its annual Alzheimer's Walk on Sunday, wrapping up Al-

zheimer's month. Upwards of nearly 50 people attended the third annual Trenton's Alzheimer's walk.

Lisa St. Pierre and her daughter Clarissa St. Pierre, 6, were among the participants, attending the walk with St. Pierre's girlfriend, Jane Clement.

"We're walking for Jane's mother today. She passed away due to Alzheimer's, so we're walking in her memory," says St. Pierre.

The walk was held at the Quinte West YMCA with registration and refreshments at 9 a.m..

The event was a fundraiser to help find a cure for Alzheimer's. There is currently no cure or any way to slow or stop the progression of the disease.

The walk raised over \$10,300, with

\$1,000 of that coming from sponsors. Earlier in the week, the Picton Alzheimer's Walk raised about \$7,000.

Board member Carol Sayeau said, "It's important to raise money for Alzheimer's because without raising any money, we only receive 40 per cent of the funding we need to provide Alzheimer's patients with the best care and support."

Sayeau says the Alzheimer Society has many different support groups for people with Alzheimer's as well as caregiver support groups. They also have a memory cafe for Alzheimer's patients to participate in which includes activities that help with memory stimulation.

The walk is the Alzheimer Society's biggest annual event and marks the end

of an important month.

Alzheimer's affects not only the patient, but also their caregivers and loved ones.

As of 2011, 747,000 Canadians were living with Alzheimer's disease, which is 14.9 per cent of Canadians 65 and older, according to the Canadian Alzheimer's Society.

With the aging baby boomer population, it is estimated by the Alzheimer Society that by 2031, if there are no advancements, this number will increase to 1.4 million.

Those statistics do not include how caregivers for Alzheimer's patients will be affected.

The Alzheimer Society also states that one in five Canadians aged 45 and up provides care to seniors living with long-term

health issues.

It is said that a quarter of all family caregivers are seniors themselves – with one third of them being over the age of 75, according to the Alzheimer Society.

In 2011, family caregivers spent over 444 million in unpaid hours looking after someone with Alzheimer's, and it is estimated that by 2040, that will rise to 1.2 billion unpaid hours per year, according to the Alzheimer Society.

Being a caregiver for Alzheimer's patients comes at a considerable cost. Up to 75 per cent of caregivers develop a physical or a psychological illness. It is documented that between 15 and 30 per cent experience depression, according to the Alzheimer Society.



Photo by Beatrice Serdon

### Planning for the future

Students of Loyalist College take part in the 19th Annual Career Fair in Belleville Wednesday. Almost 70 employers attended to talk to students about possible career opportunities. The employers attending the event ranged from Canadian Forces to GoodLife Fitness. There were employers based in Belleville but some came from far away places such as Clarke Surveyors Incorporated. They are an Ontario Land Surveyors company who drove six hours from Tecumseh, Ont., to attend the college fair. Students such as Scott Mitchell, a third-year civil engineering student, gave out resumes to possible employers.

## Be cautious with pets during early warm weather

By Will Acri

Belleville's dog park gets a lot of visitors when the weather gets warm, however, one local veterinarian advises caution when going to the dog park in the early spring.

Dr. Gurmit Lubana, who works at the Bell Animal Hospital said in a phone interview that he strongly advises attendees of the dog park to make sure, and check that their dog's vaccines are up to date.

Lubana also mentioned that diseases like parvovirus, and kennel cough, are not season-specific, but with the current wet and muddy conditions at the dog park, there may be an increased risk of a dog contracting one of those diseases.

It would seem spring 2016 has come early and although a lot of people embrace the warm weather, it also brings an onslaught of mud, flooding and stagnate pools of water. At the Belleville dog park, at East Zwick's Park, muddy and wet conditions are common in the springtime. During the winter, dog feces and urine that were frozen in the ice and snow have now all melted away and they are now a part of the stagnate pools of water, and mud that dot the dog park landscape.

Scott Clark, who sometimes attends the dog park with his golden retriever named Hendrix, remembers when the park had an outbreak of kennel cough.

"They all share the same water," Clark said about the dogs at the park.

The Belleville dog park is maintained by the Quinte Dog Park Association. The city of Belleville is responsible for issuing tickets relating to bylaw infractions and enforcing the Dog Owner's Liability Act.

The Quinte Dog Park Association and its volunteers help maintain the park and general grounds area. City officials were unavailable for comment about the dog park.

The dog park has been a part of the Belleville community since Oct. 20, 2001, when it officially opened. The city constructed the park for The Quinte Dog Park Association, which essentially paid for its construction.



# Young mom cherishes the moments

By Lindsay Leveque

“The best part about being a mom is when she wakes up in the morning and smiles at me. That’s when I know my baby is happy.”

Cassidy Mahoney, 20, is a teen who knows the struggles of becoming a mother all too well.

“Before my daughter Samara, I had three miscarriages. I had one a month prior to being pregnant with her. Each pregnancy only lasted about a month and when I got checked out at the hospital, they told me I didn’t have enough hormones for a baby to develop so I wouldn’t be able to have kids. But then a month later, I got pregnant with her,” says Mahoney.

Mahoney and her boyfriend Fraser Cowie were happy to actually be able to have a baby despite what the doctors told Mahoney. Cowie, however, has a child from a previous relationship so they worried about the finances of taking on another child.

“With the pregnancy I lost my job because I would go to work and I was so sick and puking everyday. It got to the point where they said they were going to fire me. Instead I quit so I wouldn’t have been fired on my resume,” says Mahoney.

“I didn’t have enough hours for maternity leave so I started a new job four months into my pregnancy and worked there until I had to leave to have Samara. They put me on an unpaid maternity leave so I would still have a job when I go back,” she adds.

Throughout the pregnancy, Mahoney was in and out of the hospital due to lack of nutrition and dehydration. She couldn’t keep anything down or take any maternity or sickness pills. For the majority of her pregnancy, Mahoney was hooked up to an IV.

“After Samara was born, we had to stay in the hospital for the whole weekend because I couldn’t breastfeed. I wasn’t getting any milk and when she latched on it was complete pain so we had to stay an entire weekend so they could monitor us,” says Mahoney.

Mahoney hasn’t received any child support yet from the government so she and Cowie have been taking care of finances for the past four months with just Cowie’s income.

“But I have a perfectly health baby. There’s nothing wrong with her whatsoever so that’s what is most important,” says Mahoney.

Although teenage pregnancy rates



Photo by Lindsay Leveque

Cassidy Mahoney, 20, holding her four-month-old daughter Samara. She loves her time with her young daughter.

have dropped since 1995, Hastings and Prince Edward counties still maintain the highest rates in Ontario. In 2011, the average rate of births for girls under 20 in Hastings-Prince Edward was double (6.7 per cent) the provincial average (3.2 per cent), according to Statistics Canada.

Young moms like Mahoney have found support in the surrounding community from a local group, Moms Helping Moms.

It is a Facebook group with almost 1,300 members and has been operating since 2012. Rose DesRoches is the administrator of this group.

“Ideally, pregnancy is a time of joy, but when a woman is faced with broken relationships, perhaps no family support, and loss of income and so much more it may leave them not only in need of items for

their unborn baby but also themselves. I wanted to create a group where women could come and ask for help without being judged,” says DesRoches.

“The Moms Helping Moms group is so helpful because they have a lot of help and advice and some moms in those groups post free formula, coupons and diapers which is really helpful because of our financial situation. You can get parental advice and they don’t judge you. They are open to helping others moms in the community,” says Mahoney.

Moms Helping Moms is a great way to get more involved with other mothers in the community.

“The main focus of the group is to provide an online group where parents can openly share their personal experiences,

feelings and wisdom in a mutual “comfort zone”, as well as a place for parents to sell or donate things their children may have outgrown,” says DesRoches.

On the group page, mothers can list items they wish to sell, from old baby clothes to cribs to strollers and much more. If you are looking for a specific baby item, you can also post on the group for help finding it.

The group is also used as a way to communicate and get advice and help from other mothers which can benefit new, inexperienced moms. A common example of this is moms will post questions about illnesses, breastfeeding or teething in hopes of getting some advice from more experienced mothers.

This group is used as a great support

system for mothers who may not have that support system in their daily lives says Mahoney.

DesRoches has also posted a list of common topics and questions mothers might have with easy to access to answers. Some of those topics include: places to take your children, infant choking, food banks, health for mothers and babies as well as a list of obstetricians, gynecologists and midwives.

“It is because of our members’ generosity that we have been able to provide a variety of free items to moms and dads in need. The need is still there and we always welcome new parents to join. Though the group is moms helping moms, dads and grandparents are welcome to join too,” says DesRoches.

## Gleaners benefits from event

By Emma Gardner

Gleaners Food Bank was the big winner Saturday night when they held their 4th annual Mexican-themed banquet, Down Mexico Way. Gleaners raised \$23,000 to go towards replacing their 14-year-old walk-in fridge and freezer.

In the beginning, Gleaners operated out of St. Thomas’s Anglican Church, but due to the overwhelming need for food they had to relocate to St. Michael’s Catholic Church, and in 2007 they moved to 25 Wallbridge Cres., where they reside now and continue to serve the community.

Over the years Gleaners has done some amazing things for the community, including planting an organic garden with a complete rain harvesting system which conserves 86,000 litres of water. In 2010 Gleaners installed 72 15-kilowatt solar panels on top of the Tri-County Food Net and was named “The Greenest Food Bank in Canada.”

Around 150 people gathered to celebrate Gleaners Food Bank and the people who have supported them through the years.

The guests were presented with local harvested food in the form of Mexican cuisine including, pollo loco (chicken), arroz rojo (rice), elotes medley (grilled corn) and for

dessert, margarita cheesecake in a chocolate cup or Mexican vanilla cheesecake in a chocolate cup.

After dinner, the production of Down Mexico Way was presented by the Belleville Theatre Guild. The production was based on a real story about how Gleaners got started 27 years ago. The production was written by Susanna Quinlan and directed by Lise Lindenberg.

“It went well, everything went according to plan,” said Lindenberg after the show.

Once the production came to an end, the award ceremony took place. Awards were presented to sponsors and donors who have had a great impact on Gleaners throughout the years. Some of the awards were presented to Sisters of Providence, the five year capital committee and Cheryl Blakely won the Telizon award.

Gleaners also held a live auction. The auction added some friendly competition to the evening as guests bid against each other for a chance to win great prizes such as a laptop valued at \$500 as well as a luxury pillow-top mattress and bed frame valued at \$1,600.

The gala also had door prizes. A donation of \$20 gave guests a chance to win a Samsung Galaxy Tab4 tablet and a day pass to Saint Anne’s spa valued at \$200.

## Deaf community enjoys a night out

By Emily LaFleur

Erika Stebbings is the president of the Belleville Association of the Deaf and has been volunteering with the group for four and a half years.

The Belleville Association of the Deaf, or BAD as it is known, is a nonprofit organization providing supports and organizing events for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafened, and hearing.

BAD focuses mainly on social gatherings at a variety of events because there are many people with similar experiences and they are able to exchange knowledge and support each other.

The association organizes different types of events like a children’s Christmas party, a Christmas sharing program, an adult Christmas ball, and others. The organization provides unity and partnership within the deaf community as well as the hearing community.

A chilli night and social was hosted by the BAD board last Saturday night. The purpose was for participants to meet and get out of their homes during the winter.

A total of 32 people attended the chilli night. They socialized and chatted, and enjoyed each other’s company, as they ate chilli and participated in a silent auction at Eastminster United Church.

“We get together and get to know others and each other in any kind of community, no matter who we are and what we are doing,” Stebbings said.

Upcoming events for the association include snowshoeing and a campfire on Feb. 27, a children’s Christmas party November or December, an adult Christmas ball

Dec.10 and other social events will coming as they will more maybe in spring time.

The organization’s goal is to serve the deaf, hard of hearing and deafened people of Belleville and surrounding areas. The group provides annual community-based events and activities for local deaf residents.

According to BAD’s website, the association works with local, regional and national organizations to provide learning, leadership and social opportunities for deaf individuals including children and youth. Members preserve and promote the history and merits of American Sign Language, or ASL, and deaf culture. They work to educate society as a whole on the positive contributions made by the community, past and present. They also advocate for accessible services and promote the general well-being of the individuals they represent.

According to the website, the six individuals making up the BAD board represent different segments of the deaf community – the culturally deaf, hard of hearing, oral deaf, cochlear implanted deaf, as well as deafened and hearing friends and families. The association focuses on topics related to culture, social dynamics, recreational activities, learning experience, affiliation with and serving with other local, regional, provincial and national organizations and making positive contributions to society as a whole.

The six individuals on the board work together in a group to represent the unity of the deaf community to remain strong now and into the future while protecting values of language, culture and traditional ties, the website states.

## A cold night outside to help the homeless

By Emma Gardner

Despite the freezing cold temperatures Friday night, over 200 people showed up to show their support for the Sleep Out So Others Can Sleep In event, with over 100 people sleeping outside all night in their makeshift cardboard houses.

The event was organized by the Canadian Mental Health Association Hastings and Prince Edward County (CMHA-HPE). A total of \$15,000 was raised this year, surpassing the \$10,000 target. Proceeds will go towards local shelters operated by the CMHA.

This event has raised more than \$145,000 since its inception nine years ago, including Friday night’s total and donations still continue to come in.

Most of the participants had a story of their own about why they were sleeping out. Some of them were Loyalist College students from the social service worker and justice studies programs and others were there because they had some connection with someone with a mental illness.

Debbie and Vic Podmilschak participated in this sleep out with the hope of making a difference in someone’s life. This past summer, their son had lost his life to mental illness.

According to the CMHA website, suicide accounts for 24 per cent of all deaths among 15-24 year olds and 16 per cent among 25-44 year olds. Twenty per cent of people will personally experience a mental illness in their lifetime.

The night started at 7 p.m. when participants built their own makeshift



Photo by Emma Gardner

Police Foundations students huddle in their makeshift cardboard house at the Sleep Out So Others Can Sleep In event that took place at Market Square downtown Belleville.

cardboard houses. Some of them were elaborate, with a roof and four walls, but others were just a circle of boxes taped together.

“We don’t really have a game plan,” said Emma Lee, a social service worker

student from Loyalist, “I was just told to tape these boxes together.”

After the box shelters were done, there were speeches and then dancing to keep warm, then off to bed.

Juliet Dewal, owner of Urban Escape

cafe stayed open all night to help support the participants, handing out free hot chocolate, hats, mitts and scarves.

“We got involved because last year with the Memorial Arena being closed there just wasn’t a space for available

for the participants to get warm.” Dewal said.

The cafe is also a big supporter of paying it forward. They have a board behind the counter full of things that people have already paid for so if someone comes in who can’t afford lunch, they can order off the board.

The Mowat Centre released a study called “The Hardest Places To Live In Canada” that mirrored a study that Time did in the United States. Their study looked at a couple of factors including median income, unemployment, disability, obesity, mental health, high stress, food insecurity and social assistance. What they found was an average for across Canada, the article goes on to explain that the data was difficult to find due to the long form census being replaced by the Household Survey.

If you look at the Hastings and Prince Edward County’s information, you will see that they are ranked 91 out of 100 of the worst places to live, based on those statistics.

In particular, Belleville has a lot of hidden homelessness. Some people don’t think that homelessness is a problem here.

Kristin Crowe, honorary event chairperson and master of ceremony for the Sleep Out event gave a very powerful speech about why she was participating and how homelessness is much more than the panhandler picture we paint.

“People don’t hear them or see them in our community. Sometimes the homeless are invisible, but the point is that they are human beings, just like you and I,” said Crowe.





Photo by Litong Chi

This is the first citizen passed by these memorial archway in three hours. People rarely look at these archways, and they don't attract many tourists like the government has planned.

## Opinion

# Behind a hundred million archway

(Editor's note: Loyalist photojournalism student Litong Chi is currently in her native China for the Chinese New Year holiday. She will be reporting from there this issue with stories from Hainan province, in the south of the country.)

By Litong Chi

One of the poorest counties in China spent 130 million yuan (four yuan equals to one dollar) on the longest memorial archway in the world.

At the end of August 2015, Lingao county's memorial archway project was finished with a length of 1.7 kilometre in total. There are 87 individual archways, the highest one being 37.7 metres. This project took Lingao two years to finish, with a total floor space of over 96,000 square metres.

In the initial construction plan, this grand project is only the beginning of the development of the Lanjiang Culture Park. However, nothing else in the plan

has been carried out until today. This long archway seems lonely and meaningless among barren villages.

Lingao county is located in Hainan province, one of the poorest counties nationwide. The Chinese government gives Lingao an appropriation of millions every year.

In Lingao, most people live up on their farms and lands. The younger generation tends to seek their employment in larger cities. A normal employee's average income is only 17,889 yuan per year (about \$4,500 per year). Over 100,000 farmers struggle to survive in Lingao, with their average income only 3,898 per year (about \$980 per year).

It can be hard for the public to believe this project is the best way to spend this amount of money.

"They spent too much money. Why not give this money to us? Our life is hard," farmer Yang Zhang said. "They occupied our land too. Land is our root."

Also, according to local farmers, they voluntarily gave up part of their land for the memorial archway project, but the government continued to levy their land without any financial compensation.

The Lingao government claims that they have a reason to invest their money and energy in this memorial archway project. They said it was all for a good future that could potentially benefit everyone.

"Our plan is to turn this entire park into a tourism attraction. This memorial archway project is the most important part. We wish to apply Guinness World Records for our project. It is going to be the longest archway in the world," said Bo Li, the subprefect of Lingao county.

However, if you dig deeper into this project, you will find many flaws in the original design and the construction process. The foundation of this project was shaky from the beginning.

For instance, traditional Chinese memorial archways were all built vertically,

but Lingao's archways were built horizontally. The purposes of memorial archways include commendation of loyalty, chastity and contribution -- Lingao's archways belong to none of them.

The government explained they want to use this memorial archway to display couplets and calligraphy, two important aspects of Lingao's traditional culture. But instead of inviting professional calligraphers from different provinces, the couplets on most of the archways are written by governors of Lingao.

Ironically, most of these governors were put behind bars recently, because of corruption. It puts these archways in a really awkward position, because no community wants prisoners to represent their culture. They don't want future generations to be educated by these negative examples.

Another mistake was made on one of the main archways. Four words in one phrase were written in two different fonts.

It is very confusing, and people have to guess what the phrase says.

Among these archways, there are also many duplications. Artistically, they are not exquisitely designed and not carefully engraved. It might be the longest memorial archway, but certainly it is not the one with the highest standard of quality.

Li reinforced that this project was approved by the local and provincial governments as well as congressional representatives. This project is legal.

The value of this memorial archway project still needs the public to examine and weigh. Time will tell people if this is worth it or not. It is not wrong to develop a cultural industry, but first, the government needs to know what culture is and what industry means to the community.

Is it smart to spend a huge amount of money on a low-quality and unreliable project? Those people who are still suffering from poverty all have an answer in their hearts.

# Chongzhen temple stands for 700 years

By Litong Chi

Two candles were lit in Chongzhen temple, 700 years after the first worshipper walked into this temple.

"We don't charge any worshippers like other temples do, we only want people to remember the Lin's," Xun Lin said.

Chongzhen temple is located in Lingao county, Hainan province. It was built in 1307 in remembrance of Daojiu Lin, disseminator of Taoism in Hainan. Now, the temple is guarded by two of Lin's descendants, Xun Lin and Yuan Lin.

In fact, the surname Lin is shared by most of the villagers in Lingao county, they may or may not know each other, but they all belong to the Lin's.

The temple is old and simple, there aren't many decorations, nor gorgeous statues, but you can feel the weight of history as soon as you walk in. For the last 700 years, people have come here to pray for their land, weather and their fortune.

However, this historical temple has been fighting for its existence value for the last two years.

Even though Lingao is a place that still suffers from poverty, but because of its beautiful view and nice weather, it has become a gold mine for real estate agencies.

All the developments and utilizations bring money and energy to Lingao, but they are also taking land and living space away from local villagers.

Chongzhen temple sits right on the road that Bigui Yuan Real Estate plans to reconstruct. The Lins have been fighting for their right to stay for two years, but the construction won't go any slower.

"Seven hundred years, what's more valuable than this?" Xun Lin said.

According to Lin, the temple was rebuilt in 2011, and the money all came from their prayers and Lin's descendants from different villages. They all hope the place that brings them happiness will stay alive.

On the other hand, Bigui Yuan Real Estate hasn't given the public a clear answer about how are they going to proceed their construction plan.

"We didn't say that we are going to demolish their temple, we are still consult-



Photo by Litong Chi

Xun Lin laughs and says: "Of course you can take a picture for me. Not many people visit our temple anymore, I have lots of free time."

ing with the local government and we will consider the historical value of this temple," said Lei Zhuang, the assistant manager of Bigui Yuan Real Estate Lingao Branch. "I can't guarantee though."

Lin thinks that this is not the only problem facing their temple, they are

concerned about how local villagers will live their lives and share their land with all the real estate agencies who are still planning to set foot in Lingao.

The real estate agencies levy people's land for an average of thirty thousand yuan per 600 square meters (equals to

about 50 yuan per square meter). And they sell houses and apartments to their clients from 4,000 to 8,000 yuan per square meter. A normal farmer's average income is only 3898 yuan per year.

"I'm afraid that one of these days, our younger generation will give up our land

for a minimum amount of money," said Lin.

Now, the issue of Chongzhen temple remains. The last answer from Bigui Yuan Real Estate is that they will try and come up with a settlement that could benefit both.



# Lancers close the door on Sting

*Men's team defeats Seneca Sting by a score of 90-80*

By Nick Tardif

A strong first half for the Loyalist Lancers was enough to keep the struggling Seneca Sting at bay, winning by a score of 90 – 80 on Friday at Loyalist College.

With a win over the Sting, the Lancers are at par, with seven wins and seven losses on the year. The Lancers, up by 18 early in the second quarter, closed out the first-half leading the Sting by 13 points.

"I feel we had a really slow start, some of that is to Loyalist's credit. They came out, they shot the ball really well, they were a lot more aggressive than we were, especially in the first quarter," said the head coach of the Sting, Darrell Glenn.

The first half saw the Lancers take a page from the Sting's playbook, scoring three-point field goals at a 30 per cent rate. The normally affluent three point shooting Sting shot at a disappointing 21 per cent pace. The Lancers, a much bigger team prefer to use their size to penetrate the paint, and do their scoring from inside. The Sting, a fast-moving finesse team, prefer to use their speed, quick ball movement, and passing to score from range.

"They're a quick three-point shooting team and we're a little bigger, so we can use that to our advantage," said Lancers head coach Ryan Barbeau.

The third-quarter was plagued by choppy play as referees got full use of their whistles, stopping play often and slowing the momentum of the game. As the pace slowed the three-point shooting of the Sting began to come alive. Shooting 8 for 22 in the second-half, the Sting were able to claw their way back into the game, tying the score at briefly at 50.

"We let down defensively for a little bit, we let their shooters get hot. They've got two guys on the team who're the best shooters in our league, so anytime you let that happen and you give guys open looks, they can get hot and start making them," said Barbeau.

As the fourth quarter wore on, the size and strength of the Lancers began to take its toll on the inconsistent Sting. The Sting, out muscled for ball possession in the scoring zones, saw the Lancers take control of the rebounds ending the game with 78 per cent of the defensive rebounds and 60 per cent of all rebounds.

"In the end I think the story is two things; A, we weren't able to stop dribble penetration, and B, I thought their post really hurt us tonight. We weren't able to do a good job of containing post touches and then post finishes. A lot of our problems started as I said in the beginning, one of our inconsistencies is our inability to stop penetration and defend. I thought we just did a very poor job of that tonight," said Glenn.

Coming off of a two game losing streak, the Lancers were desperate for a win. One of the main issues plaguing the Lancers this season was their inability to close out games late in the fourth quarter.

"Our guys played a gutsy last 3 minutes. That's something we haven't been good at this year, the last three minutes of games. So I'm glad they got that figured out tonight," said Barbeau.

The Lancers are off to Kingston on Wednesday Feb. 3 to play the St. Lawrence Vikings who are tied for first with Algonquin. In an earlier season match-up, the Lancers beat the Vikings in Belleville, 90-81.



Jayvon Grant-Lake, No. 8 of the Loyalist Lancers, takes advantage of a Seneca Sting turnover and slams it home during the third-quarter last Friday at Loyalist. The Lancers would go on to beat the Sting 90 – 80 improving their season record to 7-7.

Photo by Nick Tardif

## Lancers hang in for victory

*Women's team has late rally to win 61-55*

By Nick Tardif

A late fourth quarter run of five unanswered points proves to be enough, as the Loyalist Lancers hang on to a hard fought victory over the Seneca Sting on Friday, Jan. 26.

The Lancers, up 42 – 29 at one point in the third-quarter appeared to be well on their way to victory. However the Sting, gritty as ever refused to concede defeat and clawed their way back as the fourth-quarter drew on.

"We battled back trying to take it at the end, but their coach hung on, and their kids made some nice plays. They took the win from us," said the Sting's head coach, Craig Walker.

"We have a lot of clutch people, they work very hard, they're ready for that kind of pressure," said Alex Cleave, guard for the Lancers.

The Sting, in contrast to the Lancers are a fast moving team who prefer to shoot from the outside, while the Lancers like to use their size and strength and grind it out under the net, fighting for rebounds and hoping to draw fouls.

"Seneca has some great outside shooting, they've got some great shoot-

**'We have a lot of clutch people, they work very hard, they're ready for that kind of pressure.'**

guard Alex Cleave

ers, they have four girls who are over 25% from behind the 3 point line," says the head coach for the Lancers James McCourt. "We lead the league in getting to the line for free-throws, we also lead the league for most free-throws per game and most free-throws made per game. That's a big plus for us, we like to attack the basket and we like to try to get to the line."

Another key to the Lancer's victory was capitalizing off of some sloppy play by Seneca, scoring 28 points off of Sting turnovers.

"I thought our kids lost their heads a little bit. Their coach forced some turnovers on us, and found a way to get a lead on us," said Walker.

In this hard fought game the Sting and the Lancers were tied four times, and exchanged the lead three times.

"We found ourselves with the lead in the first half and then the coach battled his way back and they got a lead on us," said Walker.

Loyalist, a team more adept at "playing in the paint", did not shy away from taking their shots from the perimeter.

Using the Sting's own strategy against them, the Lancer's outscored the Sting from three-point territory nine to three.

As the differing offensive approaches played out, the score cards told the story. The three point shooting of the Sting was a dismal 1 for 13 or 7.7 per cent, while the strategy to grinding it out in the paint led to seven different Lancer's shooting from the free throw line, adding 14 points with a very respectable 70 per cent success rate.

"On the road sometimes you have those off shooting nights, and they don't fall as well as you want it," said Walker about the Stings' shooting woes.

Along with outscoring the Sting, the Lancers offense boasted a much more diversified attack. Four different Lancers scored nine or more points, while half of the Sting's offensive production came from just two players.

This all important win gives the Lancers 12 points in the standings and a record of 6-3, which is good enough for a third-place tie with Seneca, who also has 12 points and a record of 6-4.

The Lancers will now put their two-game winning streak on the line as they move on to face the Vikings of St. Lawrence College, in Kingston Ont. on Wednesday, Feb. 3 at 6 p.m. The Vikings with a record of 5-5 and 10 points are tied with George Brown for fourth, only two points behind the Lancers.



Leticia Lopez, No. 10 of the Loyalist Lancers advances the ball against the Seneca Sting, on Friday January 29, 2016 in Belleville Ont. Lopez was the highest scoring player for the Lancers, scoring 14 points helping the Lancers to beat the Sting 61 to 55 in a hard fought battle.

Photo by Nick Tardif



# Taking care of business

By Lindsay Leveque

In the past, second-year Loyalist photojournalism students have been tasked with photographing small business owners. This year was no different.

On some of the coldest Tuesdays January had to offer, aspiring photojournalists took to the streets on assignment to photograph small business owners in the surrounding area.

Students scoured the area going to downtown Belleville, a classic location for small business owners, with some even going as far as Trenton and Picton in search of someone interesting to photograph.

By noon, everyone was back at Loyalist plugging in their memory cards and printing off their photographs.

At 1 o'clock, it was critique time.

Students photographed countless small business owners, some familiar faces and some new.

Some of those businesses include O'Connor's Jewel Box owned by John O'Connor, Emerald Studio owned by Erin Meiklejohn, Tony's Barbershop owned by Claudio Dramisino, Twisted Anchor Tattoos owned by Jon Ricci and ClearWater Designs owned by Michelle Laframboise and her husband.



Erin Meiklejohn recently opened up a custom intimates and swimwear shop called Emerald Studio in downtown Belleville. All of her bras are custom made in store to fit the woman perfectly. "You get to do what you want everyday and know what you're creating is entirely for yourself," Meiklejohn says. "The heart of my business is helping women. Every woman is so unique and there is a challenge when it comes to sewing to serve each woman, but it is rewarding."

Photo by Nakita Krucker



Michelle Laframboise has owned ClearWater Designs with her husband Ian Crerar for the past 21 years. They started with one homemade mold and oven and every year they have added a new design. "He's the visionary and I'm the detail person," she said. "We complement each other." They paddle their own boats at their cottage in the Kawarthas. She said the best part about working for yourself is making your own decisions. "You're accountable only to yourself and your customers," she said.

Photo by Marissa Tiel



Jon Ricci, owner of Twisted Anchor Tattoos, prepares for another day of tattooing in Belleville. Ricci opened Twisted Anchor Tattoos less than one year ago after building a client portfolio at Wild Ink Studios.

Photo by Nick Tardif



Peter Reedyk and his wife Annette have been operating Chumleighs Belleville for 13 years. As a second branch of Chumleighs Peterborough, they buy and sell CDs, DVDs, video games and more. They said their dog Oscar also counts as part of the store. He is 9-1/2 years old now. "The best part about owning this business is we get to meet all different kinds of people," said the Reedyks.

Photo by Litong Chi

(Below) O'Connor's Jewel Box in downtown Belleville. Owner John O'Connor describes the business, "This is a family business my father opened in 1955. I started working here after school in 1970. I've always loved rocks and minerals. My favourite are gem stones. I have an extensive collection of gem stones, raw rocks and minerals uncut, so people can see what they look like in their natural state."

Photo by Robyn Hertz







**Kyle Weare takes a dip in the frigid Trent River in Campbellford last Saturday. The Polar Bear Plunge is an annual fundraising event for the Campbellford Memorial Hospital.**

Photo by Andrew C. Johnson



**Participants and spectators in the 2016 CFB Trenton Pond Hockey Classic look on during a friendly afternoon charity game. The annual event is expected to raise up to \$50,000 toward the Military Families Fund to help support those left behind when soldiers are called for duty.**

Photo by Chris Donovan



**(Above) Liam Govier, 20, the youngest member of the Campbellford Fire Department, participated in the annual Polar Bear Plunge in Campbellford.**

Photo by Noah Park

**(Right) At last Friday night's Sleep Out So Others Can Sleep In event in Belleville's Market Square, people were dancing to the music to keep warm in the frigid -11C air.**

Photo by Raven McCoy



**The 24th annual Polar Plunge saw 29 plungers brave the icy waters of the Trent River in the name of charity. The funds raised are put toward the purchase of new hospital equipment.**

Photo by Chris Donovan





# Postcards From Kabul



## “Life is very hard for us...”

For two weeks in January, at the beginning of a new year, I tried to understand first-hand what life is like for a handful of the Kabul's approximately six million inhabitants. The Afghan capital is a cosmopolitan patchwork of the country's varying ethnic groups. People come from all over to live and work here, or to seek shelter and safety from the war still being conducted in some of the country's more rural provinces. The city is, however, hardly a safe place. Violence erupts on a regular basis, and for the two weeks I was there, there were several deadly bombings and gun attacks. There is also an influx of refugees from provinces like Helmand where fighting between the government and Taliban has flared up. Jobs are scarce and many unemployed men try to make a couple dollars a day breaking up rocks in the mountains around the city.

These photos are snapshots of some of the men I met who had

stories of the hardship of living in this unforgiving city. I met a young man who, earlier that day, had been one of the city's thousands of heroin addicts, squatting under the Pul-e-Sorta (Bridge of Smoke) until he found his way into a rehab centre run by volunteers. He hopes to get better and make a living through embroidery.

I met two young boys on a hillside slum in the middle of the city. They described how their family ekes out a living making sewing machines and umbrellas to sell. They have never been to school. “Life is very hard for us,” one of them told me.

I met a group of men who escaped the fighting in Helmand, some had been injured physically, others mentally. They described bodies lying in the open for weeks with no one to bury them. An elderly man in the group had heard of his brother being killed in

the fighting, and apparently suffered a stroke as a result. He lives with others who escaped Helmand in an internally Displaced Person's camp in Kabul, with no hope for returning or for their future.

We have forgotten Afghanistan. We see stories in the news, stories mainly of bombings and death, and we see statistics, ‘a young boy and a security guard were killed when a suicide bomber exploded his vest’, but we rarely hear about who they were, who they left behind, let alone see them. When we hear about refugees, rarely do we get to put a story to a face. We partook in a war that was meant to end with the beginning of a stable and prosperous Afghanistan. We've left, forgetting we were ever there, while the war is still smoldering, and the future of this scarred country is as uncertain as ever.



Qoorban Ali, 26, sits in the Mother Trust drug rehabilitation centre in Kabul, Afghanistan, days after leaving the street and his heroin addiction. He had been using heroin since age 20, and hopes to one day get well and work in embroidery.



Men who fled fighting in Helmand province sit in a dwelling at an Internally Displaced Persons camp, Kabul, Afghanistan. They spoke of bodies lying in the streets for days and a mother who drowned her own children because she couldn't feed them.



Rahimullah, 13, and his brother Atiqullah, 3, pose for a portrait near their home on TV Mountain, Kabul, Afghanistan. The boys' family makes sewing machines and umbrellas to sell. They have never been to school. “Life is very difficult for us,” said Rahimullah.



Kabeer's brother was killed during fighting between Taliban and government forces in Helmand province of Afghanistan. He sits here, half-paralyzed from a stroke in a dwelling at an Internally Displaced Person's camp in Kabul, Afghanistan.



## On the street

Emily Reeson asked people at Loyalist College the following question:

**Do you feel safe on campus?**



**John Blair, welding,** "Yeah, except on pub nights because people get scary."



**Jamal Virani, welding,** "Yeah. There's no reason to feel threatened."



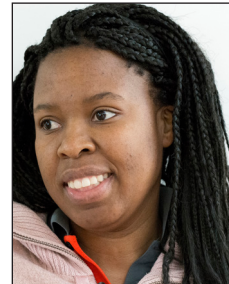
**Liam Sinclair-Dempster, TV and new media:** "Yes I do. I think security actually does care and are generally looking out for our well being. They do their best but accidents can happen. But I do feel safe."



**Janeen Campbell, social service worker,** "Yeah, I live on campus actually. It's not bad. I think everyone is friendly and I've never come across any situation where anyone ever said anything to me. Yeah, it's pretty safe."



**Melanie Plebon, ADMC,** "I definitely feel safe on campus. The security here is amazing and when you need help they are always there to assist you in it."



**Nancy Kuzanga, pre-health,** "Yeah, I feel safe because there's security around."

## Editorial

# Afghanistan in state of insecurity

After enduring a most unpleasant episode of air travel – one that I felt could only be bested by the plane making an emergency landing in a volcano -- I would finally arrive in Kabul.

On the plane, I shared a row with an immovable, sleeping 400-pound Turk, surrounded by a troupe of babies whose crying made me question my desire to have children. One wailed with so much force, I thought it would turn inside out.

Luckily, a film was playing, director Michael Bay's thought-provoking modern masterpiece, "Transformers: Edge of Insanity," or something like that. The piercing cries of the babies would be drowned out by the theatrics of a recreational steroid user pretending to be a geeky inventor while protecting his stripper daughter from evil space robots.

Sometimes we need to turn our brains to mush to weather the insanity of this world.

And insane it is. Because while I complain about what is, in reality, an inconvenience, I am travelling to a country where many have been traumatized by decades of war and terror. Many have fled, but most of those didn't have the luxury of flying through the sky in a chair, high above all the danger and woe.

Most had to pick up their lives and move, on the ground, sometimes through dangerous territory, to another land, where they might not even be comfortable or accepted. Many more still might not have even had the means to leave the country at all, and have been forced to live in makeshift camps with little hope of returning home, and less still for the future.

I had come to see for myself, and to hear from Afghans living in the capital, Kabul, about their prospects and hopes for the future.

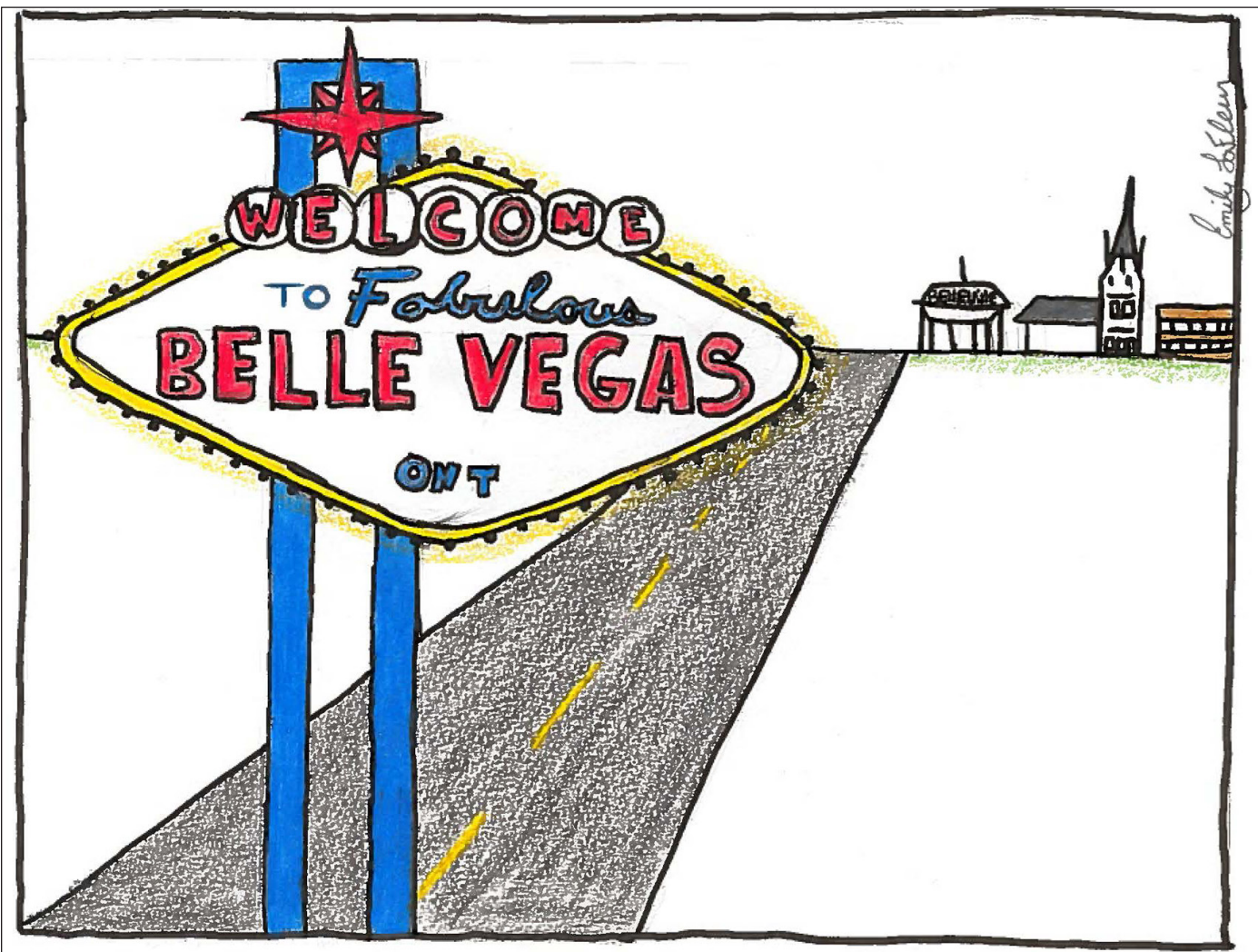
While I write this, I can take comfort in knowing that I can come and go as I please, free at any time to return safely to my home, free from war, terror, or the kind of abject poverty and the misery it. I am one of the fortunate few, who all too often tend to forget that it was only by blind luck that they were born into a life of comfort.

Canada, like a number of other countries in the happy hemisphere, have both come and gone in Afghanistan. We have withdrawn our military from a conflict that was begun, in part at our behest, with the goal of creating a stable, democratic government; one that would guide its people out of the dark age of Taliban rule. That mission ended in more or less a stalemate, leaving much of the country not much better off and with the Taliban threatening the future of a democratic and open Afghanistan.

At the same time, much of the international aid which had for the past decade or so been propping up the country's economy, as well as funding its often ill-managed institutions and poorly conceived programs, has rapidly receded, as the once benefactors recoil from economic uncertainty at home.

The West is forgetting about Afghanistan, the current incarnation of which we helped create, and whose people are looking towards a future that is as uncertain as ever.

Andrew C. Johnson



Opinion

## Women should be encouraged to breastfeed

*Time for society to support those who choose to breastfeed*

By Emma Gardner

In this day and age, it seems that a woman's breasts are used for everything except what they are meant for.

In this sort of "Americanized" culture, selling non-related items like cars or beer with a woman's breasts is seen as normal or okay, but when a woman breastfeeds in public, it is seen as disgusting.

I am not a mother so I can't talk about my personal experience with breastfeeding, but as a woman, I feel that there is nothing wrong with breastfeeding in public.

Women are getting thrown out of malls or are having to feed their babies in public bathrooms.

They are getting dirty looks and being called disgusting by people just passing by, who feel the need to voice their opinion.

Healthy Mom & Baby is a website featuring healthy information on your pregnancy. Nurse advisor for the website, Charlotte Wool, PhD, RN says, "Women should be encouraged and supported to breastfeed exclusively for the first six months of an infant's life and to continue to breastfeed for the first year and beyond."

Depending on who you are, and how your body reacted to having a baby, you will be able to breastfeed for a year, maybe even more. That means if women were not allowed to breastfeed in public, they would have to stay at home, and not go to food courts, because no one wants to eat in a public bathroom.

Regardless of your thoughts on breastfeeding, that baby is not yours, you do not have a say in how they get fed.

A really good article on breastfeeding

in public is titled, "What's so hard about covering up to breastfeed in public?" on Motherhood and More's blog. There, author Annie Reneau talks about some of the comments made on social media posts about feeding in public.

On her blog, Reneau talks about why it is actually hard to cover up to feed a baby, why women don't just pump before going out, feeding modestly with kids and teens around, feeding in a public bathroom and the appropriateness of baring breasts in American culture.

The breast is not an organ. It has no significance other than holding milk. A woman's nipple is no different than a man's nipple. At some point, we're going to have to stop and ask ourselves, 'Have we really sexualized a breast to the point that we can't even use them for what they were put on a body for?'

You can say that breastfeeding is inappropriate or disgusting, but all it is, is a mother trying to feed her baby.

## Canadian Armed Forces came calling

*Photojournalism student takes his leave to join the military*

By Callum Rutherford

"Callum Rutherford? This is Canadian Forces Recruiting Detachment Toronto calling. We have an offer for you."

It begins with the call. It's the conversation that you have been waiting and hoping to get for months. For me, when that happened, I was not sure how I was feeling. Nervous, anxious, excited, all of these and more. This was it.

The next two weeks before my swearing-in became a flurry of thoughts. Plans were cancelled. Others were made. It still

didn't feel real for me.

The morning of my swearing-in, I started to meet some of the gentlemen I would be going on basic training with. There were forms to be filled out. Next of kin, emergency contacts, and a very basic will.

But this phone call was the first time it felt real.

That afternoon of my swearing-in, my name was stated out loud. I raised my hand and said my solemn affirmation. I was now a member of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Since then, my life has consisted of going to the gym, packing my apartment and saying goodbye to friends in Belleville. I have also been looking forward to the basic training. While it will be a large life change, it will definitely be a good experience for me.

As an imagery technician with the military, I have the potential to go anywhere

the Canadian Forces go. I think about all the things I might get to see. All the places I will hopefully get to travel to. All the chances to do different activities in the Forces will be amazing. All this is ahead of me.

With the uncertainty in the world, every change in Canadian foreign policy affects what I will get to do and where I will go.

My five years will go by quickly, and maybe it will become 10 years or 20 or more years. Maybe this will be my career that I retire from at 60.

As the last week begins, I prepare for basic, run a few more kilometres, lift a few more pounds, pack my small amount of civilian clothes, as well as spend time with my friends and family from my hometown.

It will be the last time I will see them, for a few months at least, as I head off for basic military qualification.

## The Pioneer

**Editor,** Andrew C. Johnson  
**Photo editor,** Emily Reeson  
**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



Ontario  
Community  
Newspapers  
Association

## Affluenza no reason for exoneration

There are many questionable defences used in courts to try and exonerate individuals who commit crimes from petty theft to murder. One of the most bewildering of these defenses is "affluenza". This has been defined as a mental state of mind in which individuals are so privileged and wealthy they commit crimes without the understanding of consequences.

In 2013, a youth in Texas, Ethan Couch, successfully used this defence to avoid reasonable and unprecedented consequences. He was charged with intoxication and manslaughter causing the death of four individuals. His lawyers argued he was unable to understand the consequences of his actions because his wealthy parents spoiled their son to the point that he had a sense of privilege, irresponsibility and being above the law. This prevented Couch from developing "a sense of right and wrong." He never had to suffer the consequences for his bad choices and behaviors. His lawyers were successful in their defence, which resulted in a sentence of 10 years probation, as opposed to the maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.

Would it not be arguable, then, that drunkenness inhibits one's ability to make choices with the clear understanding of consequences? This "drunken defence" is no longer acceptable in the court system, but having been privileged stands up in court.

Maybe by having to face the consequences individuals like Couch would start to think before acting, especially when the consequences are extreme, like the death of innocent people. Does this not send a strong message to other wealthy youth? Go ahead, drink, drive and kill! There are no extreme deterrents if someone suffers from affluenza, so isn't the message that it is acceptable to do whatever you want, as long as you have money?

Affluenza is seen as an increasing social problem, however, it is not recognized as a mental health diagnosis by the American Psychiatric Association. According to the APA, affluenza has "similarities to the clinical diagnosis of narcissistic personality disorder. A person with that disorder feels entitled and doesn't care about other people's needs." Just because a person has money does that mean they are not accountable for their actions? Part of the judge's decision was based on the fact that Couch's parents could afford private therapy and rehabilitation for their son. What about the "poor" underprivileged individual? They have to face up to 20 years in prison, because mommy and daddy can't take care of the problem.

Couch was sentenced to 10 years probation but fled to Mexico, breaking many of those conditions. He still seems to be acting as if he is above the law.

Instead of learning from these deadly decisions, the message to society is that wealth and privilege can stop you from having to face the negative consequences of any criminal behavior. Are we not setting a double standard between the poor and middle classed versus the rich?

We all need to follow the letter of the law or face the consequences. Laws are in place to prevent individuals from acting in a way that negatively impacts the "quality of life" of those in our communities. It is widely believed that the consequences of breaking our laws will fit the crime, therefore creating a deterrent. This is not true in situations where defences such as affluenza are used. The consequences of the law in the Couch case definitely did not fit the crime.

Emily Reeson