

## Hometown Hockey weekend

*Belleville welcomes weekend of celebration and fun*

By Wyatt Brooks

Ron MacLean, Tara Sloan, the TransCanada Highwaymen and PAZ with the Hockey Circus Show stopped in Belleville on the weekend for a celebration of music, comedy, and most importantly, hockey.

The community came together on the weekend to celebrate the culture of hockey with a live broadcast of the Edmonton Oilers and Anaheim Ducks, as well as a host of events from Rogers Hometown Hockey. The events were centred at the space directly across City Hall on Front Street. With 24 communities coast to coast, Rogers Hometown Hockey has been on the road since October, with five more cities to stop in after Belleville.

Born and raised in Belleville, former Belleville Bulls and NHL player Andrew Raycroft had nothing but good things to say about his hometown and what an event like this means to a city like Belleville in the live broadcast with MacLean and Sloan.

"Growing up in a town like this, we played hockey. That's what we did," said Raycroft. "It's a blast to have everyone here, and I know how much it means to the city and for me to be a part of it. It's very special."

The 2004 Calder Trophy winner and rookie of the year also spoke about his memories of playing the sport in Belleville, and his early morning practices at the Memorial Arena.

"The Belleville Memorial holds a huge place in my heart. That was 7

a.m. Sunday power skating lessons for me for a long time, from nine years old, up until I was 13."

Before the game on Sunday, crowds gathered to witness PAZ and his Hockey Circus Show as well as to sing and dance with legendary Canadian artists in the TransCanada Highwaymen. PAZ has been doing the circus show for nearly four years, and has been named the 19<sup>th</sup> most Canadian thing by BuzzFeed. PAZ has been a part of performance groups such as Cirque du Soleil for upwards of 25 years. Originally from the United States, PAZ discussed his amazement with the culture of hockey in Canada and how different it is not only from the U.S. but how it even varies from town to town.

"Every community is different. And the culture of hockey is different," said PAZ. "I'm an American who came to Canada. Hockey for us in the U.S. is a sport. So, I knew hockey from a factual place. But hockey in Canada is so much more than that. It's a culture and it's ingrained in the culture. The least knowledgeable Canadian knows more culturally about hockey than an American does, who knows a lot about the game."

PAZ has been on the tour from the start, and has been performing in town across the nation.

"My favourite part about the event is learning week in and week out the culture of hockey and in a sense the culture of Canada," he said. "It's really beautiful. And being alongside Ron MacLean and Tara Sloan and seeing what they know and how they interact with the community has been mind blowing. It's been the ultimate Canadian experience."

To see the video, click on the link: <https://vimeo.com/257923340>



Photo by Jonathan Ludlow

PAZ of The Hockey Circus Show entertained the crowd with his hockey themed circus show, juggling pucks, flaming hockey sticks and interacting with the crowd. For more photos, see page 8.

## An evening with astronaut Chris Hadfield

By Andrej Ivanov

As the room darkened, the crowd went silent. You could hear a pin drop in the Empire Theatre's auditorium as an introductory video started playing on the big screen. Scenes of outer space, of Earth, of space walks all flashed before the audience.

As the video ended, a spotlight turned on, as the speaker walked onto the stage. From space walk to stage walk, Cmdr. Chris Hadfield began his presentation in Belleville's own Empire Theatre last Thursday evening, during a stop on his Canada 151 tour.

Hadfield started his talk with a nod to Belleville. In his early days, when he was training at Canadian Forces Base Trenton, Hadfield said that he passed through Belleville quite often.

"This is where I first left the Earth. Here, in Belleville," said Hadfield.

Hadfield is best known for his various spaceflights and his work on the International Space Station. He was the first Canadian to operate the Canadarm in its first interation in November 1995 and, in April 2001, the first Canadian to do not one, but two spacewalks, according to his biography on the Canadian Space Agency's (CSA) website. He is best known for becoming the first Canadian to be the commander of the ISS in March 2013 until May 2013, during the second half of his five-month stay in space. On July 3, 2013, he retired from the CSA and has taken up new endeavors, including doing public talks.

The talk in Belleville centered on the history of Canada, the country's scientific advancements, and Canada's place in the world. The talk also tackled topics such as global warming, space exploration, and even a little bit of Hadfield's personal life.

The prevailing message was, however, "we have to build a better world for our little ones," Hadfield repeated.

He went on to deliver a three-hour-long talk about a very long history of Canada. Starting as far back as the Homo Erectus, Hadfield talked about the need for discovery, and how we used stones as tools.

Leading the audience hundreds of thousands of years, the Canadian astronaut explained that scientists have found signs of life in Canada as far



Photo by Andrej Ivanov

Cmdr. Chris Hadfield walks across the stage while a graphic of the Earth is projected onto the screen at the Empire Theatre.

back as 12,000 years, around a cave near Charlie Lake, B.C.

Hadfield localized his discussion when he explained that some 9,000 years ago, corn and tobacco farmers had already settled into the Bay of Quinte.

Hadfield also talked about Lanse Amour, a cove in Newfoundland that had a large grave built 7,500 years ago for a single teenager. With the remains, researchers found tools and a flute, believed to be objects valuable to the person in the afterlife. The researchers also found that the body was laid perfectly east to west and the head faced north.

"Even then, we had a developed send of self, art and religion," said Hadfield.

Pushing through centuries, and millennia, Hadfield told audiences about the various ways people "got lost" and discovered things — be it scientific discoveries in the recent years or the continent itself.

Hadfield also talked about notable (albeit lesser-known) Canadians, including: Laura Secord, who gave the British army the American's plans to invade — she only got remuneration many years later; David Thomson, the surveyor who charted the most detailed map of Canada in the 1700s and Graydon Nicholas, the first indigenous

person to hold office, as well as becoming the 30th Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick.

Naturally, no astronaut show would be complete without a mention of the Canadarm 2. Hadfield took the time to point out the less than creative name. He acted out his imagining that a naming committee pontificated on what to name "the Canadian arm. I know! Let's call it Canadarm."

Although music was sparse, Hadfield did delight audiences with three songs. The first one was the commander's take on the life and death of Austin Hadfield, a distant relative of his in Moosejaw. The second song he played

was an ode to Canadian Tire, which he wrote while he was in the United States and missing Canada.

The third song came at the end of the show. Hadfield gave the audience a choice for a song about Canada, or his claim to larger fame.

He first explained the backstory of how the song was only published online a day before he returned to Earth from his "tin can, far above the world." Hadfield truly had "really made the grade" by regaling audiences with his rendition of David Bowie's song Space Oddity to close the show.

The show ended with the audience giving a standing ovation.

# Fundraiser helps the homeless

By Abigail Paquin

With 72 walkers and a numerous number of donors, the Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser raised about \$16,900 this past weekend.

The Coldest Night of the year is a nation-wide event that raises money for charities that work for the hungry, hurt, and homeless.

The Saturday evening walk started at the Victoria Avenue Baptist Church and had three different route options: two kilometres, five kilometres and 10 kilometres.

All the funds raised in the community from the walk are going to Nightlight Belleville, a drop-in centre for adults.

Nightlight Belleville opens its doors at the church on Monday and Wednesday nights from 6:30-9:30 pm. It offers coffee, snacks and a safe place for people to come while striving to build a community among the city of Belleville.

Right now, there are two drop-in centers; one in Kingston and one in Belleville. A third one is opening in Cambridge within the next month.

"We open up for three hours each night. People come in to get out of the cold, get something to eat, to make friends," said Amberly White, the events co-ordinator for Nightlight Belleville.

Volunteers serve refreshments, set up, and socialize with the visitors.

"We've volunteered here since the beginning, four years ago. We come here every week; we just love coming here," Volunteer Liz Halle said. "It's such a privilege. You go out to help people, but you come back and get so much more out of it. It's helped me grow in my relationship, helped me grow as a person."

"We do a lot of listening, play a few games. People just come to socialize because they don't have any other places to go," Halle's husband, Serge said, "We want this to be a safe place for them to come to and just feel safe to be themselves."

The volunteers have gone out of their way to improve the lives of people who need them.

White told the story of a deaf man that has a mental disability and has had many struggles with the law.

"He's been going to meetings with his lawyer and they never brought in an interpreter for him," White said. "So one of our guests took an interest in him. He built a friendship with him and went to the meetings with him and make sure he had an interpreter for him. He didn't know to ask for one, and he didn't have anyone to advocate for him."

The program also helped another man find an apartment and a part-time job.

Nightlight is in dire need of volunteers after dropping from 40 to nine volunteers.



Photo by Abigail Paquin

A group of 72 people and 15 volunteers walk for the Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser to raise money for Nightlight Belleville.

"We're looking to get more volunteers for sure and get back open on Friday evenings," White said.

After losing their permanent space, they moved to the church and that was hard on the volunteers and the guests.

While the church is letting Nightlight Belleville use the space for free, it's not their home. The volunteers must stay behind each night to clean up and that extends their time later into the night.

"We actually have a lease in hand to get a new space," White said. "Nothing is finalized yet; we need to do a lot of renovations first but we're hoping to get in there by the summer and that will be our permanent residence."

Nightlight Belleville wants to find a place to call home for their guests.

"We're making a difference in people's lives every day and it starts out as coming in on a Monday evening and you start making relationships and friendships. It just really makes a difference," White said.

Halle has witnessed the growth in a lot of the guests in their relationships and how they handle situations.

"It makes you realize how people have stories and struggles and I have such respect for them for coming out because they have a lot of crap happen to them and they come out anyways," Halle said.

Along with Nightlight Belleville, a

new homeless shelter is being created in Belleville.

Grace Inn homeless shelter will be a 21-bed emergency shelter for adults.

"I'm so excited that our guests will have a place to sleep at night. People ask if I'm nervous that the shelter will take away from us. But it's not like it's us versus them; our guests need all the services to thrive. They need food banks, they need us, they need Grace Inn," White said.

A lot of Nightlight's guests have no home to go to. They sleep on their cousin's couches, at the bus terminal, even in tents once summer strikes.

White explains how one man sleeps in a storage unit because it's only \$80 for it while it's \$800 for an apartment.

"If you want to live in Belleville, you should be allowed to live in Belleville. There should be services here and there isn't," White said.

"Anyone of us could be homeless. My husband and I both work. We have two vehicles, we have a house, two kids.

"If my husband lost his job we could maybe go six months on my salary," said White. "We have family, so I could move in with my sister or my mom and dad, but if we didn't have a support system, it could be us. Anyone of us could become homeless at any time."

# Students showcase their work at DocFest

By Abigail Paquin

The film and TV production program showcased their work at Loyalist College's alumni hall Wednesday evening to help kick off the seventh annual Belleville DocFest.

Helping to set up and promote the screening were the public relations students.

Nine films were submitted for critiquing. The students created their work in groups of four under the supervision of their professors.

Each team produced four documentaries throughout the year. Each documentary was produced in a five-week rotation, with four rotations over the course of the fall and winter semester.

The students rotated and took on the roles of director, camera person, editor and transmedia.

By the time DocFest starts, 24 documentaries in total were made, and nine of those were screened.

The films were critiqued by three professional filmmakers Braden Dragomir and Adam and Andrew Gray.

"It's scary but it's exciting to get critiqued because then you know how you can do better next time," FTVP student Chris Ashby said. "So, it's really exciting but at the same time, you put your heart and soul in it so it's hard."

The documentaries produced by top four winning teams was moving on to the downtown DocFest, to be showcases along with the other 60 films.

The four winning teams were Life in



Photo by Abigail Paquin

Film and TV Production Co-ordinator Paul Papadopoulos introduces one of nine student documentaries at Loyalist College's Alumni Hall. Four films were selected to represent the college at Belleville's annual DocFest.

Focus by Nick Cartwright, Sideways and Sliding by Ali Nardo, Colour of

Courage by Sara Phillips and Pursuit of Passion by Jarius Leeson.

"I'm so glad that we have the screening happening," chairwoman

Holly Dewar said, "Every year, the top four get shown at the DocFest which is happening on Saturday at the Core."

The videos produced are topics of local interest that the students picked themselves.

Directed by Sara Phillips, Colour of Courage was one of the top four films that made it into the DocFest. Phillips worked hard with her group, Sean Williamson and Cameron Frenken, to produce her heart-wrenching film about an artist in the Quinte region.

"I know that everyone who did docs this year worked really hard on it," Phillips said. "I don't want to tear anyone's down, because everyone did so good and even the nine that were shown here today had their triumphs and struggles."

"I think it's amazing that all these docs came from this and that I get to share this story with more people," Phillips said.

"It's pretty exciting. We had a really great team and the directors really nailed it," said Ashby who was the cameraman for his film, The Pursuit of Passion.

"They do a lot of the work. We do the grunt work, the editor and cameraman but the director really pulls the story together and they nailed it, so it's exciting."

The four films by the students will be screened Saturday afternoon at 2:30 p.m. at the Core centre in downtown Belleville. Other screenings will be held at the Empire Theatre, Belleville Public Library, Pinnacle Playhouse, and the Bridge Street United Church.

## The Pioneer

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The Pioneer is produced by photojournalism students for Loyalist College and the surrounding area. In the spirit of the pioneers who settled our community and who were rooted in tradition, these pioneers always had an eye on the future. Our students strive to serve the public interest, seek the truth and uphold the highest standards of our profession.

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.

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Photo by Frank Moses

The band Broken practices earlier this month at CFB Trenton. Members are serving and retired members of the Canadian Armed Forces who use music as a tool in dealing with issues related to their service.

# Seeking harmony through music

*Canadian Armed Forces members and veterans play music together*

By Frank Moses

To the delight of their supporters, the rock band Broken, formed by five Canadian Armed Forces members and veterans in 2016, is now playing local venues. The band plays a mix of classic and new rock in easy-going sessions that focus on the enjoyment of getting together as friends while improving their musical skills.

Chris Teer, the band's lead guitarist and co-founder, says the band has provided an environment of trust and has helped him find himself after leaving the Forces in September of 2017.

Teer is a 47-year-old former army engineer who said the band has benefited him immensely after 17 years of service that included a dangerous stint in Afghanistan. Like many veterans, the physical and mental toll of his service left Teer angry and somewhat bitter. He said channelling his emotions in a positive and artistic way has been very healthy.

"It takes the right people in the right environment to be allowed to do what we do with no fear of judgement - and

it is a lot of fun!" exclaimed Teer in an interview describing the band and its formation.

With the help of 8 Wing Headquarters, the band found a space to practise in 2017. 8 Wing Chief Warrant Officer Darcy Elder, now retired, heard of the band's mission and offered the 8 Wing Band building for use after working hours. The practices are easy-going affairs where rank and military formality are left at the door in favour of a relaxed and creative environment.

Joshua Seppenwoolde, a 32-year-old former armoured crewman with 16 years of service, says the band is important to him because it is a support group for like-

minded people to come together and focus on music while helping one another as issues come up.

As for the band's name, Broken is a wry reference to the serious conditions suffered by the vets in the band which led to their release from the CAF.

"Music is a great connection," says Jay Fraser, a 37-year-old serving medical technician with nine years of service. Fraser says the band helps him get over social anxiety as a performer. "I needed to express myself and having a cohesion with other like-minded people has helped me become more comfortable with myself and surroundings," said Fraser, the lead singer during a Monday night practice

session.

Terry Gough, a 52-year-old with 27 years of service, finds music to be a great connection. He and Teer played at The Grind Café on a recent Friday night as a two-man show they call the Last Minutes. Playing classic rock with a Canadian bent, Gough and Teer stirred the crowd with their laid back style and easy skill with their instruments.

The band has no dreams of stardom. The positive creative environment they share is enough for them as they navigate their way to improved mental and physical health. Teer and Gough will be playing The Grind Café again in the coming weeks.

# Girls have chance to learn about trades

*School boards brings young women to learn about career options*

By Jonathan Ludlow

A potentially new generation of tradespeople got their start at Loyalist College last Thursday.

Loyalist was the site of the very first Skills Ontario Career Exploration Event for Young Women on Feb. 22.

The day, supported by the W. Garfield Weston Foundation Fellowship Program brought together almost a hundred young women in Grades 8 and 9 from the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board and Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board to learn about the education and career options available for people in skilled trades and technologies.

"The W. Garfield Weston Foundation Fellowship Program started in 2013, with support for 60 students in skills and technology programs," explains Jeremy Braithwaite, project lead for the fellowship. "It's been real successful in getting students in and helping them become successful."

"It now provides support for up to or more than 190 students."

The Skills Ontario Career Exploration Event for Young Women is an event geared directly toward getting young women interested in pursuing a trade.

Young women from surrounding school boards gather together at Loyalist to get some hands-on experience, participating in various group activities throughout the day. Included but not limited to a group building exercise, where other women currently enrolled in trades at Loyalist mentor and assist visitors.

A college tour as well as a panel including current students and alumni were also part of the day's events.

"This event is geared toward young women in skills. There's a huge need for skilled tradespeople in the economy in general and women are generally more of a non-traditional group to join in that discipline," said Braithwaite.

"We need to inflate the amount of people that are in that area due to the demand and retirement rate and the



Photo by Jonathan Ludlow

Loyalist College hosted the Skills Ontario Career Exploration Event for Young Women last Thursday, designed to get young women involved in trades. The day was hosted by the W. Garfield Weston Foundation Fellowship.

increase in work that needs to be done. So, certainly, we want young women to explore these opportunities just as a man would."

As this is the first time Loyalist has hosted such an event, there is already talk of pursuing it again next year.

"We're going to grow. we're going

to be bigger next year," Braithwaite added.

"We set our goal at a hundred participants this year, we got ninety-eight.

Next year we'll go bigger, we got the space to do it at Loyalist and the support to do so."



Photo by Agnes Finkle

(From right) Organizer and stylist Melissa Payton-Van Norman, volunteer Marna Skinkle and stylist Katie Skinkle (left) get busy cutting hair at the fifth annual Street Stylez Charity haircutting event.

## Hairdressers provide free haircuts

*Street Stylez teams up with Salvation Army to help others*

By Agnes Finkle

Saturday at the Salvation Army Church in Belleville saw seven hairstylists cut hair for free.

"A group of local hairstylists are coming together and offering free hair cuts to people in need in our community," was the motto for the event.

Started in February 2016, then again in August 2016, it has been held bi-

annually since. The dates were chosen to help people prepare for school and job hunting.

Not only is it a salon haircut, it's a destination day.

The Salvation Army church on Bridge Street opened its doors, including the lounge, kitchen and gymnasium where the salon was set up. A variety of foods, drinks and snacks were served all day including a hearty chili. Each client got an age appropriate goodie bag. Crafts and colouring pages were available for waiting clients.

Melissa Payton-Van Norman, owner of new Belleville business KOR Hair Studio at 14 North Front St., is a well-known local stylist formerly in Trenton. She created

the event out of a desire to give back to the community.

"I was going to Toronto with a friend to a women's shelter every month to give salon treatments Payton-Van Norman said. "Eventually I looked around and said "There must be something I can do closer to home."

After looking at options, Payton-Van Norman found Abby Mills, director of the Belleville Salvation Army.

"She's been so great. We started at the Pinnacle Street lunch room, above the store, and moved to the church when it got too big," said Payton-Van Norman.

"I love being part of this event. I think it's amazing that we can partner this way to provide such a needed service to the

community. It's so wonderful to see so many people willing to give their time and their talent to help those in need," said Mills.

There were 75 haircuts completed by the seven stylists. Those who donated their time were Payton-Van Norman, her sister Jessica "Missy" Payton, Katie Skinkle, Tiffany Palmer, Jessica Maracle, Brandon Hunter, Randy Hart and Kylene Lewis.

Client Michael Payne was a first-time visitor to the day. "I think it's stupendous, marvelous. My friend Peter, told me about it."

Peter (who asked not to use his last name) said, "I need a haircut and I know they have tons of food and I've come here

in the past, four out of the last five times." There is a need for a service like this in the community.

"I know for some we're it, we are their go-to haircut. We have people wait for us to have this event," Payton-Van Norman said.

She said that she couldn't have done it without the help of family and friends and all the people who donated time and money for the cause. There were around 30 volunteers helping to make the day more memorable.

For more information, or to contribute or donate to the next Street Stylez event in August visit <https://www.facebook.com/projectstreetstylez/> or <https://www.gofundme.com/streetstylez>.

## Entrepreneurs make their pitches for Dragon's Den

By Andrew Ryan

Nearly 15 entrepreneurs waited nervously in a student lounge at Loyalist College last Thursday to pitch their business plans and inventions to CBC producers down the hall.

The entrepreneurs have a chance to be featured on the 2018 edition of *Dragon's Den*, the hit series which promotes Canadian grass roots business ideas.

The makeshift green room inside the college's Pioneer building held a diverse group from already established business owners like Brad Leonard, who owns four retail businesses to inventors like Stan MacDonald, of Belleville, who pitched his idea to cre-

ate an ultra fuel efficiency prototype for his business High Mileage Vehicle Company.

MacDonald's idea came after speaking to several mechanics he knew.

"Many vehicles that are on the road today... three or four years from now, when you want to get parts for them, you can't get parts for them. So we want to make a car that's catered to the person that's not planned to fall apart."

The welder owns his own fabrication shop with over \$200,000 worth of equipment, giving him the capability of creating his own custom parts for his planned vehicle.

"I don't like paying for gasoline," MacDonald sim-

ply stated as his motivation for wanting to create the prototype.

He has already started applying many of his custom parts to an old Chevrolet pickup truck from the 1980s and believes that now is the time to begin to apply these custom parts to a purpose built vehicle.

The prospects were pitching their ideas to CBC producers Carly Klassen and Alicia Chirry, who said they are looking for more than just a good idea.

"Every business tells a story. Why did they come up with it, there's usually an inspiration," said Chirry. "It's always better to meet someone in person rather than reading an application because you don't really get a sense of who they are and you can really dig

deep into questions."

The two producers are part of a team who are on a six-month mission to find the best ideas across the country with dates scheduled until April 7.

More than anything, Chirry said, they're looking for entrepreneurs to demonstrate passion in what their pitching. "We're looking for passion. If they're not excited about their business, then how could we possibly be?"

Belleville has had its own success on the show. Heavyweight boxer Dillon "Big Country" Carman, from Madoc, convinced the investor panel to invest \$50,000 in his boxing career which lead to him winning the Canadian title in 2014.

## Trenton Golden Hawks hold fundraiser

*Pink in the Rink raises money to support cancer research*

By Wyatt Brooks

The Trenton Golden Hawks faced off against the Wellington Dukes on Friday for their fifth annual Pink in the Rink event. Each year, the Golden Hawks dawn pink jerseys and raise money with the Quinte Red Devils in support of cancer research with the Canadian Cancer Society.

Although the Golden Hawks faced a loss of 8-2 on Friday, it was a win in terms of cancer research. The event raised over \$38,000 and the Quinte Red Devils raised \$8,000 on top of that to go to the Canadian Cancer Society.

Before the puck dropped, Margie Burness took to centre ice before the game to talk to the crowd about her experience with cancer and the Canadian Cancer Society.

"The statistics are incredible," Burness said. "Sadly, it's one in two people who get some sort of cancer in their life. And unfortunately, cancer is a chronic disease. And it's not slowing down."

Burness was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2012, but she was also told that the cancer has spread to her spine. She told the crowd that receiving the diagnoses was really the second worst thing about the disease.

"Receiving that diagnoses was horrible. But having to go home and tell my family was worse. I've been with my husband for 40 years; he's my high school sweetheart. And until I got cancer, I had never seen him cry."

Although the news was devastating for the Burness family, and the battle with cancer was long and hard with Burness enduring six rounds of chemo-therapy, surgeries and then another 25 rounds of radiation treatment, there was a silver lining for her and her loved ones.

The area erupted with applause when Burness told them that the cancer hadn't spread to her spine and that she has come out with a better outlook on life because of her journey with cancer.

"Fast forward to February 2018, and here I am. My cancer did not spread to the spine. But as a cancer patient, I will never forget my journey. I look at my scars every day in the mirror. But that's okay, because it reminds me how lucky I am. "I have a deeper appreciation for everything in life. I love everyone and everybody around me. And I am so incredibly lucky to be here and I am so pleased with what we're doing here tonight."

At the end of the night, those attending the event had an opportunity to head to a silent auction to bid on the signed pink jerseys the Golden Hawks wore for their game. All the proceeds from the auction also went to the Canadian Cancer Society.



Photo by Wyatt Brooks

Margie Burness tells her story at centre ice at Trenton Golden Hawks Pink in the Rink event. Burness has battled breast cancer since 2012 but has come out on top through her journey.



Photo by Natasha MacDonald

Lilith Cain performs at the Renaissance in Kingston, Ont. for the post Valentine's Day-themed drag show. Cain is a local drag queen who has also performed in Toronto.

# Delightful drag dancing

By Natasha MacDonald

A post Valentine's Day-themed drag show had people pouring into a full house at the Renaissance venue in Kingston recently.

At the beginning of the performance, the lights went out except for the main stage. Tyffanie Morgan introduced the marvellous madams of the show. An array of colour – blue, green, purple and red – lit up the performers throughout the evening during their “sad song sabotage” of the post V-Day feels.

Morgan hosted the night of four fabulous local drag performances, including Mercury Wilde, Lilith Cain, Fenny-Jean Rockefeller and Morgan herself.

Morgan started and manages the T-Show performance group, which officially began in 2015.

“T-Show is an entertaining evening

of the best drag queen performers, local and from neighbouring areas. We are bringing you vibrant and affordable entertainment in the heart of historic Kingston, Ont.

“If you talk to any queen, first and foremost, they are a performer. They want to be able to perform and entertain. They need that space; they need that venue, and not very often do they have it, unless we're organizing ourselves,” says Morgan.

Mercury Wilde is one of Morgan's local and reoccurring drag queens. Wilde has been doing drag for roughly three years.

A hairstylist by day, Wilde describes her drag look as fairly consistent throughout shows.

“Subtlety, I change the look. It's a lot of body suits and things like that, so that I can dance, because I'm a dancer. And

**'I describe my drag appearance as devilish, pretty, slim, and beautiful. My favourite part of the V-Day drag show was the audience applause as always!'**

Fenny-Jean Rockefeller

the wigs are normally what I change the most out of my look.”

“My favourite part of tonight was probably my second song, *Alejandro* by Lady Gaga, when I flipped the wig off. I was excited about that.”

Lilith Cain has performed hundreds of times over the past three years in both Kingston and Toronto.

“I started in Toronto, and then moved back to Kingston. I've been doing shows about once a month here. I was doing once a week in Toronto.”

Cain describes her drag appearance as different than many, pulling inspiration, “from the punk rock era.”

“I did drag in Toronto. And found my niche, because I'm a little bit weirder than the typical drag queen. Like what I did tonight is tame. I'm spitting blood, normally... My drag esthetic is a little too much for Kingston, so I've had to calm it down. I still like to be weird.”

Fenny-Jean Rockefeller is from Toronto and has been in about a dozen drag shows, over the past two years.

“I describe my drag appearance as

devilish, pretty, slim, and beautiful. My favourite part of the V-Day drag show was the audience applause as always!”

The engaged and receptive audience showed support throughout the show.

“At our shows here, there's always that stigma that drag shows are just for the queer community, but for instance today, there was a lot of straight allies, who are just here to have a good time,” says Morgan.

The venue, in the lower level of Renaissance, is an important part of T-show, the local drag performance group.

“The Renaissance is part of the heritage... They are supporters of the gay community, so I like to support them. And we do like the venue here.”

The next T-show is on March 10 at the Renaissance venue for a summer nights 3.0-themed drag show.

# Food banks benefit from fundraiser

By Agnes Finkle

Loyalist College served up its annual Empty Bowls fundraising event on Saturday to benefit seven area food banks.

Gleaners Foodbank hosted the 11th annual Empty Bowls in the college cafeteria, in partnership with the Loyalist culinary program and other community members.

For \$25, customers received a handmade pottery or wood turned bowl, or \$40 platter-sized pottery or larger bowl, and a homemade soup luncheon staged in an artesian fair with entertainment.

Susanne Quinlan, Gleaners Foodbank director of operations said, “We have lots of really unique materials this year. There's a silver and copper jeweler, clothes, candles, jams, soaps, crafts, and, of course, pottery.”

**'I come to help support the food banks and for the soup.'**

Phillip Fournier

This year's guest chef was Alexandria Feswick, formerly of Toronto, now executive chef at the Drake Devonshire Inn in Wellington. Her contribution was a beet soup garnished with sour cream and dill.

Volunteer Loyalist culinary students made African peanut soup, and cookies and cupcakes for dessert. Panera provided a selection of buns.

Music was provided by Colleen MacAlister, who can be heard on Apple Music and I-Tunes, and Murray Black. Both have performed in previous years.

Quinte Woodturner's Guild members held lathe turning demonstrations to show how to make bowls and utensils out of different types of wood. This is the third year they have donated bowls and shared their knowledge. Anyone is welcome to join the guild - they will teach you the art.

Alicia Bye of Whispered Secret Pottery in Stirling, again crafted over 30 signature commemorative bowls for this year's event.

Phillip Fournier, a former GGA alumni, attends the Empty Bowls event regularly, “I come to help support the food banks and for the soup.”

Mennonites have become partners with Gleaners. Quinlan said,

“We work with the Mennonites a lot and asked them to come to this.” They said, “We think we will,” and provided a rich sampling of canning and baking.



Photo by Agnes Finkle

Loyalist culinary students (from left) Alexander Powell and Andrea Johnston were among the many volunteers on Saturday for the Empty Bowls fundraising event held to benefit seven area food banks, including one at Loyalist College.

Gleaners Tri-County Food Network (Hastings, Prince Edward and Northumberland) distributes food through the Quinte Region Food Share Shelter (QRSS). This includes Deseronto, Picton, Marmora, Stirling, Wellington, Northbrook, and Belleville.

Their mission statement is “That everyone has the right to food security and an acceptable standard of living.”

Many volunteers from all over the area worked hard to make the day a success.

The concept of Empty Bowls is based on a grassroots movement began in the United States almost 30 years ago and then went worldwide.

This year, 175 bowls in both sizes were sold along with numerous single servings of soup, making it a fulfilling day for area foodbanks.

The next local fundraising event for Gleaners Foodbank is Ride for Hunger, on June 11, in Belleville Market Square.



Photo by Wyatt Brooks

Ramez Aljaseem gives a seminar at Loyalist College talking about his life in Syria and his transition to Canada.

# Syrian man calls Canada home

By Wyatt Brooks

A collaboration between the general arts and science and the general education departments at Loyalist College brought the sobering story of Ramez Aljaseem and his family to students last week.

The Aljaseem family of 14 have lived in Canada for three years now. Originally from Syria, the family fled the country to Lebanon because of the ensuing outbreak of war. The family left everything they had behind for safety, an ideal that may often be taken for granted in countries like Canada.

"When I lived in Syria we lived a simple life," Aljaseem said. "Everything was normal just before the war. We used to own a supermarket; I went to school; we had a farm with animals. We lived a nice life and it was simple. But after the war started, my parents decided to leave the country, to save us."

"People started dying," he continued. "And my parents didn't want us to die."

But in Lebanon, life wasn't much easier for the family. With 14 mouths to feed and rent to pay it was hard to provide with only their father's (Abdel Malek Aljaseem) income of \$20 a day. So, the children went to work too. Ramez Aljaseem and his older brother Slieman Aljaseem were 13 and 15 at the time, and started to work cutting stone to help the family. And their youngest brother started work at the age of 10 at a butcher shop, wanting to help the family as well.

"Rent was \$300 a month on its own. If we all didn't work we wouldn't be able to get by with 14 people to feed. I would get up at 6 a.m. every day just to go to work."

After living in Lebanon for three years, Abdel Malek decided to sign his family up for a United Nations refugee program, putting them on a waiting list to get sent to a different country as refugees.

One year after signing up for the program the Aljaseem family was flying into Pearson Airport in Toronto to start their new lives in Canada. Although the transition wasn't easy, Ramez Aljaseem discussed how his father was glad to see his

**"When I lived in Syria we lived a simple life," Aljaseem said. "Everything was normal just before the war. We used to own a supermarket; I went to school; we had a farm with animals. We lived a nice life and it was simple. But after the war started, my parents decided to leave the country, to save us."**

Ramez Aljaseem

family make it this far, so his children could pursue an education -- an education in a safe, secure environment no less.

"We felt uncomfortable when we got here," Ramez said. "It was a big change. Different people, different language, a different culture. Everything was completely different."

"I was in school in Syria up until grade 8," he continued. "But after my Grade 8 graduation, the war had started, and when I went back to school the next year, we could hear bombs going off every day. We started to hear that in cities like Aleppo, they would target hospitals and schools, so my father took us out."

Although the Aljaseem family was arguably in a better place, the past still often came up among the members of family. Ramez discussed how he often reminisces about his life back in Syria, and his friends, family and life he has left behind.

"It's really hard for us to move forward. But my father always says, 'Just wait, and don't give up. Keep looking forward and don't ever look back,'" he said. "I miss my

family. I especially miss my friends. You can make friends here, but they're not the ones you grew up with."

Ramez lost contact with a lot of those friends he grew up with, saying that some were able to get out of the country and move to Germany and Turkey, but that some had also passed away.

"In Syria and Lebanon, there's no hope. There's nothing to look forward to when you live there. In Lebanon, they're not great to Syrians. You can't leave the house after 8 p.m."

After living and adjusting in Canada for a few years, things are looking up for the Aljaseem family. With the help of sponsors in the Prince Edward County area, Ramez and his family have been able to start a life here.

With plans of coming to Loyalist in the fall, Ramez Aljaseem is hopeful for the future. Going to school for police foundations, he wants to learn more about the laws of Canada and one day work towards becoming a member of parliament in the country he and his family now call home.

# Organ recipient shares message of donating

By Jonathan Ludlow

An important message was delivered Wednesday in Alumni Hall at Loyalist College.

One life can give many gifts. Sarah Marshall and Shillane Labatt are two individuals who have been given one of these gifts.

A student in business at Loyalist College, at age 21, Marshall is in the Guinness Book of World Records.

The record?

Being the first pediatric multi-organ transplant recipient in Canada as well as being the youngest person in the world to have four organs transplanted at once, when on August 7, 1997, she received a liver, bowel, stomach and pancreas.

Born five and a half months too early, Marshall spent the first five months of her life in a hospital. She was born with a syndrome called, megacystic microcolon intestinal hypoperistalsis, or MMIHS for short.

Discovered by doctors during prenatal ultrasound, Marshall was born with an enlarged bladder.

Unfortunately, as doctors dealt with the enlarged bladder, one problem became many, until the point arrived when, after screening, Marshall was listed as a candidate needing a liver, bowel, stomach and pancreas transplant.

Then on August 7, 1997, Marshall underwent the surgery required to save her life, receiving four transplants at one time.

This was a new beginning for Marshall. She is now an advocate of organ donation, travelling across Ontario, spreading the word about how important it is to be an organ donor.

"I have been doing this since the age of five," says Marshall. "I do a donor dinner in London, Ont. every year, which is this ceremony to represent living families and donor families."

"Every year, I get invited back to do my speech. My mom got invited when I was a



Photo by Jonathan Ludlow

Sarah Marshall and Janet Leavey converse following Marshall's speech on organ and tissue donations.

baby, and ever since that, I've taken it on and started saying bits and pieces here and there and now, I basically do it all and mom does the proud mom thing."

Marshall was joined by Shillane Labatt in Alumni Hall, another organ recipient who is an advocate of organ and tissue donation.

At just 18 months of age, Labatt was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis, or CF, a disease that currently has no cure and affects over 4,100

living Canadians.

The most serious complication caused by CF is progressive lung damage.

"By my teens, my lung damage had started to take its toll and I had a hard time keeping up with my friends," says Labatt. "I was 18 when I first required oxygen while in a hospital."

By the time she was 30, Labatt only had 30 per cent lung function. At 33, she was on continuous oxygen.

By fall of 2004, Labatt's lungs had deteriorated to the point that they would constantly hemorrhage. That fall, she was assessed for a double lung transplant, and in February 2005, Labatt was added to the transplant list.

But being added to the list still meant Labatt had a potentially three- to four-month wait before receiving new lungs. Merely a week after being put on the list, Labatt took a turn for the worse and ended up in the ICU on

life support until Feb. 24, 2005, when she was told there were lungs for her.

"By this point, I had come very close to giving up," says Labatt. "When the nurse told us this unbelievable news, I was overjoyed, but there was also a feeling of sadness. I knew for me to be receiving lungs, someone had died, someone's family member who was probably very much loved, someone whom I didn't know."

Ever since her transplant, Labatt too, was inspired to help others on their journeys and to become an advocate for organ and tissue donation.

As a Loyalist student herself, Marshall had been interested in speaking at the school about tissue and organ donations for a long time.

"I met Sarah a week before school started in August," explains Janet Leavey, one of Marshall's professors at Loyalist.

"At the point, Sarah was always kind of advocating that she wanted to do an information session on organ and tissue donor awareness, and ever since I met Sarah, it's been really important to get the message out."

"Sarah's birthday was Feb. 14; she's a Valentine's baby. I wanted to do the speech then because I thought, 'What better way to show your love?' but unfortunately, we couldn't coordinate it."

In a bid to spread awareness, present facts and dispel myths, Marshall and Labatt delivered their speech at Alumni Hall.

Unfortunately, the student turnout to listen in was on the low end of the scale.

"I wished we had more students," says Leavey. "I've been begging my students to attend these things, but you can't get students out to universal break activities for some reason."

Planning on returning to Loyalist in September, Marshall is interested in continuing her studies in the public relations program, and continue to spread awareness on organ and tissue donations.



Photo by Hayden Morgan

Susan Lee and Frank Gielen work in the kitchen at Inn From The Cold. It is Lee's first year, and Gielen's second volunteering at the annual month-long program. This free dinner is open to anyone, run by volunteers and supplied by donations.

# Inn From the Cold welcomes those seeking a hot meal

By Hayden Morgan

If you are homeless or just hungry, Inn From The Cold welcomes all during the coldest time of the year.

Respite from freezing temperatures, a free meal and good company are available to anyone and everyone at Belleville's United Church at 60 Bridge St. E.

Bridge Street United Church has operated food ministry programs since 1997. Since then, they have filled the tummies and warmed the souls of many by providing free meals and fellowship to the community. The Food Ministry programs the church runs depend upon donated or discounted food, monetary donations and donations of thousands of volunteer hours.

"We serve a four-course hot meal to anyone who wants to come in and join. Normally, we serve anywhere between 80 to 100 plates a night.

**'It's a great program. It really helps out a lot of people and everyone is so nice and polite and very grateful!'**

Don Dore

Last night we served 141," Susan Catherwood, head volunteer co-ordinator said about the nightly volume.

This year's annual program ran from Jan. 18 through to Feb. 28, for a total of 42 days of meals. The doors open at 4 p.m.; soup, coffee and tea are served at 4:30 p.m. and the main course begins at 5 p.m. The program ends at 6:30 p.m. For those unable to attend during meal hours, frozen

meals are distributed between 2 and 4 p.m.

In 2017, the total of plates served/distributed was 14,436, making a total of 7,015 meals, just over two plates per person. Every year the statistics are recorded and posted on the church's website. It acts as a motivator to do better the following year.

"We've had over 200 volunteers in the kitchen this year and so far have counted over 5000 meals served in the course of the month," boasted Phil Hobbs, transitional lead minister for Bridge Street United. As every year, there is never a shortage of volunteers for Inn From The Cold. Volunteers can donate any amount of their time towards the food program. Once signed up, they are put into daily and weekly schedules. Some of the jobs the volunteers can expect are serving and preparing food, washing dishes, cleaning up or stocking.

Some don't take advantage of the free meal at

the end of their shift. Some are simply in it to do a good deed, like Don Dore, who drives in from out of town just to wash some dishes, or hold a door and shake a hand.

"It's a great program. It really helps out a lot of people and everyone is so nice and polite and very grateful," Dore commented on the mood of the atmosphere. Dore was initially taken by surprise at how nice everyone was, when he first started volunteering in January.

As numbers and awareness increase every year, the volunteers of Inn From The Cold hope to exceed last year's quota of full bellies. As the program wrapped up on Feb 28, others begin soon in March, including similar food programs Thank God It's Friday and End-of-the-Month.

The atmosphere is friendly and the people are welcoming. At Inn From The Cold, don't be surprised if you're asked if you want seconds, or thirds.

## Hungry Loyalist students have access to food

*Students and staff work together to create food cupboard*

By Makayla Jaring

Members of the Loyalist College community have noticed an ongoing issue with students going hungry, or not having access to a meal all the time.

A team of students and staff at the college have joined together to create the student food cupboard. Supplied by donations, and limited funding, all Loyalist students are able to access a variety of non-perishable foods, personal hygiene products and school supplies.

Before this program started back in mid-November, the college was trying to make food more accessible for students, however, the program was not very effective and would sometimes take a long time to restock with food. It was also harder to run and manage.

"We wanted to do something that was effective and efficient with people's time but was also providing a great and easy service to the students," says Ryan Stoness, co-ordinator of wellness programs at the college.

Students can access the food cupboard by signing up for a food card. Anyone can go and ask for a card at

**'We wanted to do something that was effective and efficient with people's time but was also providing a great and easy service to the students.'**

Ryan Stoness

student success, the student health centre, or the financial aid office. Students can then go to the residence commons front desk, show the card, which will allow access to the food cupboard.

"It's open to every student, there are no requirements. However, we want it to be more focused on the students who have a need for food," Stoness says.

Many people around the school have donated a variety of things and continue to supply food and other needed items to the food cupboard.

"We have had a couple of classes do academic projects and have come in and provided donations. There have been alumni groups who have brought in boxes of food, as well as many indi-

viduals have brought in bags of food, and the rest has been provided via school funding," says Stoness.

Students and staff are encouraged to bring in things that they feel they have extras of, have had it sitting in their cupboards at home for awhile and don't think they will use. The team encourages people to bring in something different that they wouldn't always see being donated.

"When we go out and purchase food, we always buy the same thing, so that there is a consistency, but it's actually kind of nice when people bring in something different or unique so that the students who use the service have something different to be able to eat," Stoness mentions.

Food can be dropped off at different locations around the school, however it is encouraged that larger amounts of food is to be dropped off at residence commons front desk.

"There are a few barrels throughout the school where people can drop off their donations. We are trying to encourage people to bring their donations to the front desk at residence commons," Stoness says.

Every donation helps, even if you don't have much to donate and don't know who it will be benefiting you may just be making one student's day by just providing a can of soup.



Photo by Makayla Jaring

Ryan Stoness goes through what is up for grabs for Loyalist students in the food cupboard. Although it is a new addition to the college, it has been a big achievement by helping students gain access to food.

# Belleville's Hometown Hockey



(Above) Steven Page joins forces with Chris Murphy, Craig Northey and Moe Berg to create Canada's own super group, the Transcanada Highwaymen.

Photo by Wyatt Brooks



(Left) Rogers Hometown Hockey arrived in Belleville last weekend. It was full of activities for children and hockey fans, young and old alike.

Photo by Jonathan Ludlow



(Above, left) Tara Sloan interviews former Belleville Bull and Toronto Maple Leaf Kyle Wellwood at Hometown Hockey.

Photo by Debbie MacNevin



(Above, right) Ron MacLean speaks to the crowd minutes before the live broadcast of Hometown Hockey in Belleville.

Photo by Wyatt Brooks

(Right) Children play in scrimmages in a miniature ball hockey arena wearing their Hometown Hockey jerseys.

Photo by Amy Walton





Laura McLean speaks to the mother of a resident who left the house with no notice leaving behind his medication and possessions. The resident was later located having relapsed, but returned to Jessie's house.



McLean leads a house meeting where residents are encouraged to discuss their recovery and safety air grievances.

**"I still believed that I could help change things. More people just kept coming in... I still have hope, less now, that people can get better." - Laura McLean**



Devon Blair is a parolee who has taken a strong leadership role in the house, and began completing renovations on other homes for McLean.



Isaiah Turner grew up in foster care and moved into Jessie's House nearly a year ago after committing to stop abusing marijuana.



Tim Evans got food from the basement of Jessie's House has spent the last 27 years in and out of jail. Growing up he was often locked in a basement.



Jill Widdifield was in a hospital bed during the 2015 Nepalese earthquake and began abusing alcohol to cope with her PTSD.

# An Overwhelming Need for Support

Words and photographs by Andrew Ryan

When Laura McLean started Jessie's House in 2014, she wasn't anticipating the sheer difficulty of starting, supporting, and running an independently funded sober living house aimed at helping those recovering from addiction.

Within her first year of operating, McLean was assaulted by one of her boarders—left with a black eye and an infection from a bite that took six months to recover from. After being overwhelmed by demand and having the spectre of relapsing residents creeping into the house, McLean shut down the operation and placed the house on Moira Street up for sale.

"You have a vision, and when you have a vision for a goal you really want to go for—you go for it," she said in a September interview. "I still believed that I could help change things. More people just kept coming in and some I helped...I still have hope, less now, that people can get better."

McLean started the house in memory of her son Jessie Borris who died on February 18, 2014 of an opioid related overdose in their home in Brighton.

She recalls, that day, having a nagging feeling as she watched her checked luggage zip away on the conveyor belt at Pearson Airport. It was a stormy day in February and her son Jessie helped her get her luggage into the car not three hours before in Brighton.

It wasn't the first time the owner of Island Salsa, in Cobourg decided to pick up and go backing packing in Guatemala, but on that stormy day, she felt something wasn't right, and this time, couldn't walk past the security gate.

"So in the morning I'm at the airport," says McLean who paused. "I just felt it. The bags were already in the plane and I couldn't go through the gate so I called Maryanne [Burley]," she continued, referring to her daughter-in-law.

McLean immediately told Burley that she couldn't get hold of Jessie by phone.

In an interview Burley said she was used to the drill, but felt compelled to check on her 28-year-old-brother-in-law. She had seen and helped Jessie through his overdoses before and went across the street to the McLean farm where she found him lifeless.

At the airport, connected by phone, McLean said all she could hear was Maryanne's screams and pleas for her not to get on the plane.

It took Laura 5 hours to get to her son that evening from Pearson Airport in the middle of a snowstorm.

Now over three years later, sipping grapefruit juice in her kitchen, which opens up into the forests of Spring Valley in Brighton, McLean struggles in recounting why she decided to leave her 28-year-old, fighting a losing battle against opiate addiction.

In the three years the house was in operation, McLean said she was able to raise just over \$1,000 towards running the house, which was often barely breaking even.

McLean estimates that she's had about 50 boarders come through Jessie's House, which became more than just a place for recovering addicts to move forward. After opening, McLean said she became acutely aware of the need for housing in the Belleville area and began accepting parolees and those in need of emergency shelter. "As time went on, I had to turn down more people because they are so mentally challenged and aggressive, that with just myself there, I can't handle them."

Although McLean has lived through her own addiction problems and lived through trying to get her son Jessie through his, she is not an experienced mental health counsellor nor is she being supported by one.

After three years of overseeing Jessie's House McLean said, "I've always asked: 'Just give me one full-time person.'"

She used to visit the house every day, and spent most of her time there fielding calls from prospective boarders, running house meetings, writing letters requesting funding, dealing with the administrative side of the house, and managing as many as six different recovering personalities at once.

She held weekly meetings with residents discussing their recovery and allows the boarders to safely air their grievances with each other. Acting as counsellor, friend, landlord, and director doesn't come without its toll.

Last December, McLean became aware of a growing problem brewing inside Jessie's House. Another resident made McLean aware of the fact that methamphetamine was being smoked in a shed on the property of the house.

McLean's regular protocol was to immediately dismiss anyone caught using or in possession of illicit drugs. But the problem had spread without her noticing and began to affect several residents at once. She served the offending culprit his notice to vacate. He had until the end of 2017 to find a place and leave Jessie's House. McLean then found out something even more shocking.

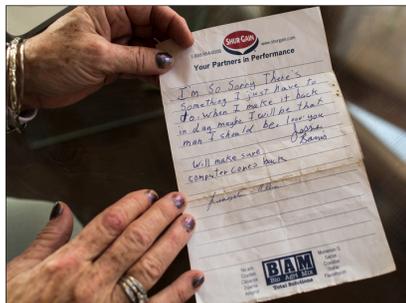
Someone she had hired as a helping hand, someone who came through Jessie's House after being released from jail, had begun to sell Percocets and abuse one of the boarders he was tasked to look after.

This was the ultimate straw that pushed McLean over the edge. She had been thinking about shutting down the organization since reaching out to media at a town hall meeting in September.

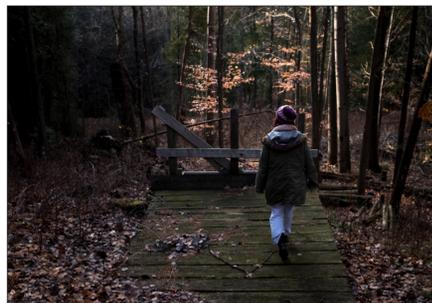
In December of 2017, McLean decided the house was not worth running any more and emptied the mansion on Moira Street and tapped in a For Sale sign on the lawn. On January 14, she drove to Pearson Airport with three Jessie's House residents to leave for three months to Guatemala.



McLean weeps while looking over some her son's primary school work.



McLean's son wrote her a letter before he tried to commit suicide by a river in Trenton in 2013.



McLean walks to the edge of a walkway she and her son never finished building on her home's property in Brighton.



McLean hugs Jill Widdifield good by at Pearson International Airport before flying to Guatemala. McLean put Jessie's House up for sale in December after the spectre of drug use began rearing its head in one of her homes prompting her to shut down the operation and rethink her strategy for helping those with addiction.