



Photo by Annie Duncan

Charlie the llama gives Donna Smith, co-owner of Land O'Lakes Rescue Petting farm, a kiss as she feeds him a carrot from between her teeth.

Rescue farm dedicated to animals

By Annie Duncan

Donna Smith walks through the front gate of Land O'Lakes rescue farm with a bucket of carrots tucked behind her back. Dozens of excited hooves run across the yard gathering around Smith.

She greets the curious farm animals with a laugh, giving them each a loving stroke. "Show me your smile" Smith says to a miniature pony handing him a carrot.

Smith and her husband Barry will be opening their petting farm dedicated to rehabilitating animals that have been abused and neglected for their 14th consecutive summer this May long weekend. Admission to the farm is \$10 per person and free under the age of two.

"Our mission, is to bring in abused and

neglected animals, doesn't matter if it's a dog, a cat or a farm animal and rehabilitate that animal, bringing them back to health" explains Smith.

The couple started their farm with some convincing from their five foster children, after a horse farm the family was volunteering at shut down. Originally, they used the farm as a therapeutic method to help heal their kids of their past trauma while also helping the animals heal. They had no plans to open to the public at the time.

Two years after starting the farm, their foster children noticed how much the animals had helped them and wanted to help others with their trauma through caring for animals. "Animals are very therapeutic," Smith says.

The animals come from a variety of dif-

ferent situations, but usually the Smiths are contacted about an animal in need and work alongside the SPCA to provide the animal a better life. "When they come here, the plan is this becomes their forever home," says Smith. "We never close our doors to any animal that's in need. We find the room somehow. We build onto our barn if we have to."

Preparing to open for this season has been a challenging one to say the least because of a decline in Barry's health, as well as dealing with the pandemic.

About five years ago Barry, sustained life-threatening injuries after a logging truck hit its ABS brakes while passing the farm, causing all the animals to rear up. At the time Barry was putting away a bull that pinned him up against a wall out of fear. "He nearly didn't survive, but he did"

says Smith.

The accident caused continuous health problems for Barry, leading him to being diagnosed with polymyositis and being in and out of the hospital every year since. Polymyositis is an auto immune disease that causes inflammation and weakness in muscles, according to an article published by the Cleveland Clinic. Currently, Barry is back in the hospital.

The farm is not-for-profit and before the pandemic relied on funds from auctions of donated items, charity dinners and admission fees. The Smiths also collect beer cans and bottles, wine bottles and pop cans to exchange for money and will accept any donations made by the public.

All of the proceeds get put directly back into the animals and are used for feed, vet

ills and maintenance. All employees that help keep the farm running volunteer their time. "We do it for the love of the animals" says Smith.

The Smiths are fearful that especially during this time that the funds just aren't there. They have been taking steps to gain charity status through the Canadian Revenue Agency but have put it on hold because of restrictions caused by COVID-19.

They recently have made the decision to sell their home to run the farm full-time.

"Our hopes are to continue on. Even if Barry doesn't survive all of this, our plans are to continue on our mission. It is important to us, and important to my husband for me to continue to do this," says Smith.



CORONA SCHEDULE

7:30: Rise + Shine! ☀️

8:00-9:00: BREAKFAST + MORNING CARICONS

9:00-10:00: CHORE O' CLOCK

10:00-12:00: LEARNING TIME! ✓ BOOKS ✓ MATH ✓ WRITING

12:00-1:00: WE'RE GOING OUTSIDE!

1:00-2:00: LUNCH

2:00-3:00: ARTS + CRAFTS OR BOARD GAME TIME

3:00-5:00: TABLET/TV TIME

5:00-6:00: DINNER! (mom re-gains sanity + does homework + don't bother me)

6:00-7:00: Shower/BATH TIME

7:00-8:30: Family movie time!

BE SILLY ♥️ * 8:00: Bedtime if you misbehave

BE HONEST * 8:30: Bedtime if you're good!

BE KIND

Photo by Cassie Williamson

Isabel Williamson, four, of Stirling gets ready for her outside time during her homeschooling while quarantined from the COVID-19 pandemic.

A look back at COVID

By Bec Gauvin

The last year of news has been predominantly featuring one headline, and before I've said it you already know what it is: COVID-19. For a journalist-to-be like many of our staffers, this year has brought some poignant and drastic changes that have more than prepped us to cover...well just about anything at this point! In honour of the last Pioneer for many of us, we'd like to take a look back at the last year of pandemic photojournalism.

Lockdown

On March 17, 2020, just over a year ago to date, Ontario Premier Doug Ford declared a state of emergency that shut down many businesses and schools alike. The day before on March 16, all students living on Loyalist College residence were sent emails asking them to withdraw and move out immediately, effectively emptying the campus by the week's end. This change forced a move for many young Ontarians as we shifted our lives and shuttered in with our families or friends. For our journalists, the beginning of the first wave meant a different community with a different set of stories, and almost no access as people were nervous and rarely available for photography. Now, a full year later, as we've experienced two waves of the pandemic and are warned of a third, we've become accustomed to these challenges, and as people are finding a way to continue their lives, we too have prevailed photographically to bring stories throughout the semester.

Virtual Learning

With the first wave came a sharp turn towards virtual learning. What had started as an extended March break for elementary and secondary students became a semester sequestered away from their peers.

...See COVID, pages 7-8



Photo by Ron Lavoie

Alex Fishbein offers the local chickadees some birdseed on his property north of Havelock. The birds recognize Fishbein and fly over when he offers them a treat.

Birds flock to Havelock man

By Ron Lavoie

Alex Fishbein's orange safety jacket sparkles in the Tuesday morning light. All the better for the chickadees to spot him. He has gathered up four different kinds of birdfeed, and he's stepping outside. He does it at least twice per day, year-round. He's been doing it on his property north of Havelock for eight years and, previously, in Toronto for over 20 more.

Alex loves feeding and watching birds. He also keeps meticulous records and counts of the birds he loves. And the birds love him back.

Alex maintains a bird feeder outside

his home, and keeps it stocked with treats for the many species that visit him and live with him. Some birds are just passing through, on their annual migrations North and South. Others share Alex's property year-round.

On a sunny Tuesday, I watch as Alex prepares to feed his fowls. Outside his dining room window, he maintains four birdfeeders year-round. In the summer, he maintains a fifth. Each feeder has food geared to groups of bird species commonly found in the Havelock area. The chickadees and finches favour niger seed (*Guizotia abyssinica*), from a flower originally found in Eastern Africa, but now grown in North America for the

birdfeed market. Blue jays and woodpeckers like good old peanuts. There are also suet squares for the woodpeckers. For the rest, there are mixed seeds.

In the summer, Alex put out a fifth feeder, containing sugar-water for the ruby-throated hummingbirds, the only hummingbirds found in this part of Ontario. Hummingbirds are migratory, so are not found in Ontario once frost hits. Winter birds such as juncos and American tree sparrows winter in the area and then fly north to nest at the edge of the treeline.

Alex walks outside from his back stoop, past the woodshed, and around to the front of the house, cradling the bowls

containing various food types for the birds. When he fills the feeders, Alex always carries a special treat for the chickadees. The chickadees know, and they are already flocking around him. After filling the bird feeders, Alex opens a container that used to contain hand cream. It is now full of seeds. He extends his arm, holding the seed container, and the chickadees flock in for a meal. Today, they are joined by a hungry goldfinch.

Over the years, according to his records, Alex has spotted over thirty species around his property. When Alex is unsure of a particular specimen, he consults one of his many bird books. He can't look them up anywhere else, as he

has no cell phone, computer, or Internet. "That's why I have so many books and magazines. I am a Twentieth Century cave-man. I can get all the info in I need from books and magazines that I own, so I don't need the Internet."

During the winter, he stocks it twice per day – morning and evening. "In the winter, you don't have to worry about bears tipping over the birdfeeder, because they're hibernating. In the summer, I don't put food in the feeder in the evening."

For now, the birds are fed and happy. Soon, the birds will be hungry again, and Fishbein will repeat the ritual as evening draws near.

Masking up and moving in during COVID

By Bec Gauvin

Durham Region has seen soaring real estate sales in the last few months, in what is likely the first net migration trending away from the nearby busy city of Toronto.

Sarah Wollner, a realtor with the Royal LePage Connect realty brokerage, explains this trend as being motivated mainly "by affordability and the opportunity with infrastructure within Durham, and has just been accelerated, perhaps, by the pandemic." "In January, we were more than 24 per cent up in terms of Durham Region's price of a detached home than we were around the same time the year before. Houses that were selling for \$800,000 in November are selling for \$950,000 in December and January."

Because of the pandemic, there has been an incredible demand to get out of Toronto. Buyers are tending to want more space geographically the longer lockdown has carried on. They want parks

and greenspace. They don't want to be cramped in. They wanted to make sure they suddenly had enough space to live comfortably, because their homes have now become the coffee shop, the gym, the office, and the school. "I had one couple call me last May. I had been working with them for a long time and they were comfortable, they weren't very serious about moving. They were new and establishing expectations, so they left it. I get a call from them; I suppose it was a month into the pandemic and they say, 'Sarah, you need to find me a house; it's urgent.' Digging a little deeper I found out that they are both executives with two young boys that were now being homeschooled. Both parents are also working from home and have been renting a two-bedroom 900 square foot apartment in the city," says Wollner.

This is the nature of the calls many realtors in Durham have been receiving, as suddenly a smaller apartment becomes claustrophobic when a larger family is

forced to spend a surplus of time inside.

Durham Region has been and remains one of the most affordable places in the Greater Toronto Area, and the housing market in Durham has seen an undeniable and substantial increase in demand since the beginning of the new year, and with few perspective sellers wanting to put their houses to market at the moment, the result of this supply and demand shortage has been that the prices of houses in the area have been increasing rapidly and unpredictably. Because of this there has been a trend of houses selling for remarkably more than asking price, as buyers "bid up" homes with fierce competition.

Wollner, however, insists that this is nothing new. "You need to remember that sellers want to get the most amount of money for their home. This strategy has been around for a long time, it was very popular back in 2016. We have huge numbers of buyers coming out (from Toronto) because of low interest rates. We have always seen a trend towards moving

out here because of affordability and accessibility. Oshawa was as far as you could go a few years ago, and now we can go all the way out to Bowmanville, accessibility wise."

One of the dangers of this fast-selling market is that often buyers are forgoing cautionary measures, like receiving a home inspection, in buying houses to ensure that they are not dismissed by sellers.

Bryan Fheehey, a home inspector with the Pillar to Post inspection franchise, notes the differences in the work he is doing.

"A lot of really good relators will have a pre-listing inspection done on behalf of the seller, so the purchaser has an opportunity to review the inspection report and go in with their eyes wide open. In today's market, I am actually doing more of those than I am purchasers' side inspection."

The danger in this trend lies with the fact that it is not mandatory for the seller to have a home inspection performed,

and those that come in with such conditions are quickly kicked from the long list of perspective buyers simply because the market allows for selling without one.

"It's the wild west out there. Everything is going in multiple offers. In most cases, if you don't forego any restrictions or if you have any conditions, they won't even look at your offer. We went through a similar situation back around 2016 and afterwards there were a lot of people with buyer's remorse, because they had bought without inspection and then they ran into serious issues later," says Fheehey.

That being said, buyers will still want to put their best foot forward. "When I'm advising my own clients, I want to make sure they are protected. I have seen a trend towards removing conditions, and my own clients are counselled to understand the risks involved, and we obviously don't advocate they take any unnecessary risks unless we could mitigate them," says Wollner.

Two generations join together in craft business

By Bec Gauvin

In the middle of quiet Bobcaygeon, David Reid and his wife Sandy reside in a cabin-esque home that smells of firewood and fresh food. From the outside, the house looks like any other, but inside, it is revealed to be a loving space filled with artistic expression, warmth and enthusiasm.

David and Sandy Reid have been crafting for over 25 years, but the recent pandemic has caused their creative minds to find innovative solutions for their hobby-turned-business, Heritage Accents and Goods. Together with their three grandchildren, Caitlin, Ashley, and Taylor Spearling, The Reids have digitized their business, bringing in more customers and allowing for a loving collaboration between family members.

The Reids construct household décor made of wood and hand-painted, and the Spearling siblings handle custom mugs and wine glasses, able to be fit with infinite possibilities of vinyl imagery and words to fit the customer's wishes.

David self-proclaims his technological illiteracy as he applauds his granddaughters for their assistance, calling each of them "a whiz on the computer".

Caitlin Spearling, the oldest of the three granddaughters, handles the day to day of the Etsy-based store, taking control of the business end while her grandparents are hard at work creating. Spearling is looking forward to after the pandemic and hopes to expand back into in-person craft shows and conventions to showcase the brilliant work her grandparents do.

To find out more about the family business, click on the link:

<https://vimeo.com/loyalistphotoj/crafting>

Pandemic puts new spin on personal fitness

By Alex Bowman

With the pandemic closing businesses across the GTA, places that rely on heavy foot traffic like gyms, fitness centres and studios have been hit hard.

With this closure of gyms, consumers had to find a new way to workout, and it seems they have found it from the comfort of their own living room.

Looking back on 2019, we saw at-home fitness giant Peloton under backlash for its controversial Christmas advertisement, but now we are seeing a major boom in popularity.

According to the Wirecutter, run by the New York Times, Peloton had more than 4.4 million members by the end of 2020 and some bike rides on their platform have pulled in more than 20,000 riders in one session.

For Erin Elliott, avid gym goer and now Peloton junkie, she had to find a new way to workout.

"I started using Peloton exactly 39 weeks ago. I know because my Peloton app told me what week streak I am on. I haven't missed a week yet. I started

because I needed a workout to do at home since I wasn't able to go into the gym anymore."

Explaining how she tried Instagram live workouts and even Elle Fitness, a gym in Toronto that has since created an online platform called Elle on Demand, Elliott said that the most important feature she was looking for was the class-style workout.

"I am obsessed with the Peloton boot camp classes and would say they are very similar to my workout class pre-COVID. I worked out at a small cross-fit gym where we would have eight stations and move through them three times. The Peloton classes break it down differently, but I feel the workout is similar."

Although she may miss some aspects of going to the gym, she has found her new niche with Peloton at home and can still workout with one of her best friends Jade, online.

"I miss seeing my friends at the gym, my personal trainer and the smoothies, but that's about it. I personally will not go back, but I do think people will go back if they can't motivate themselves

at home or can't afford the equipment to make it worth it. I love working out at home and saving time commuting. Nothing beats a quick 45-minute workout and showering at home."

It seems that Elliott is not alone in this new workout regime.

According to dozens of articles written within the last year, studies show that most Americans will forgo the gym even after the pandemic has ended.

Rachel King at Fortune Media says that nine in 10 Americans say they will keep working out at home even after gyms are safe to return to. The New York Post wrote in July that three in five Americans believe that gyms will become a thing of the past. Hamza Shaban at The Washington Post even says that health and fitness equipment revenue more than doubled, and that Peloton reported a revenue of \$758 million this past year, which is a 232 percent increase.

With this sudden demand for at home, convenient workouts, what will happen to local privately owned gyms and are they in danger?

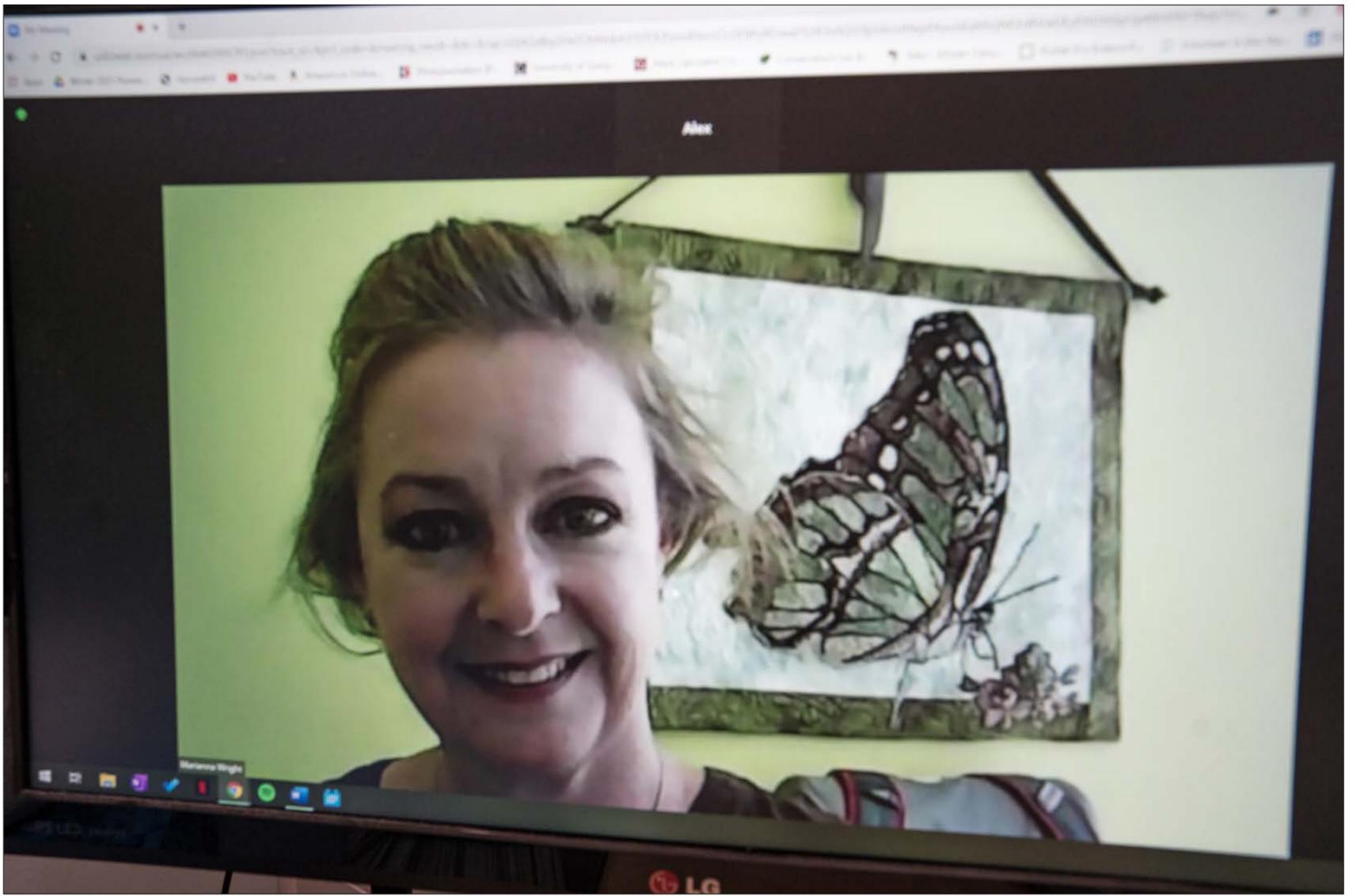


Photo by Alex Bowman

Marianna T. Wright, executive director of the National Butterfly Centre in Texas, discusses the snowstorm that hit the Longhorn state in February over a Zoom call in Bowmanville.

SNOVID 21 hits monarch migration

By Alex Bowman

The Texas snowstorm impacted a lot of Americans this past month with the deadly power outages and lack of running water, but it may have more of a lasting effect than initially believed.

Since Texas is on the border of Mexico, a place where migratory monarch butterflies go to each year for overwintering, we may see a negative impact on this species due to the snowstorm as they travel through the Longhorn state.

"Our milkweed has been wiped out. Because we are in a subtropical zone, it froze and there is no way it comes back to sustain the returning monarchs. We just hope to have enough nectar to sustain them," explains Marianna T. Wright, executive director of the National Butterfly Centre in Texas.

The centre is comprised of a 100-acre native botanical garden designed for the benefit of butterflies of all species. Essentially a breeding and feeding station for wild butterflies, the centre hopes that the monarchs can find nectar elsewhere.

In Texas, they would normally see them on their northern migra-

tion in the second or third week of March. According to the Journey North map online, which tracks recorded sightings, there have only been a few in southern Texas.

"We are hoping the monarchs are able to fly over and make it to central Texas, San Antonio north to Austin and beyond, where their milkweed species are hardier," says Wright.

These migratory monarchs rely heavily on the state of Texas as a port of entry and a crossing through the I35 corridor that essentially runs from south Texas all the way to Canada.

Karin Davidson-Taylor, education officer at the Royal Botanical gardens in Burlington, shares the same worry. She explained that we saw a similar event here in Ontario about three years ago and that scientists will rely heavily on reported sightings to see how these weather systems will affect the monarchs.

"The cold weather system hitting the United States may cause a problem for monarchs, especially with regards to finding milkweeds mature enough to lay eggs on and support the new generation of caterpillars. We had a similar issue about three years ago since we had a very cold,

late spring. The milkweed was so late that by the time the monarchs arrived, the milkweed was barely more than three inches tall."

But if climate change continues to effect weather systems, we may continue to see these issues affect in vulnerable species.

Wright explains that the number one reason for the decline in migratory monarchs is habitat loss, which will be exacerbated by the pressures of climate change.

"Species under pressure are playing a game of Jenga. Remove one block and that may be pesticides, then remove another that may be herbicides, remove another block which might be turning a meadow into a subdivision. You keep removing these blocks, doing these things and you have a species collapse. Climate change will be another block and may be the most prescient," says Wright.

Davidson-Taylor mirrored the same sentiment, explaining that climate change will affect an already dwindling habitat especially in agricultural areas like the United States corn belt.

"The snowstorms in Texas aren't the only things causing issues. For the Western population that overwinter in Califor-

nia, the forest fires last year caused severe losses in monarchs and their overwinter habitat," says Davidson-Taylor.

Wright explains that there are a couple distinct populations of monarchs in North America, one of which is the migratory population we see arrive in Ontario in the summer.

The Ontario populations that we see are multi-generational migrators, so the monarchs we see in late May are actually not the same ones that left Ontario back in the fall. It takes about two to three generations to make it to Ontario, explained Davidson-Taylor.

"The monarchs we see in the spring are the grandchildren if not the great grandchildren of the ones that left in September to fly down to Mexico. That last generation we see in late August and September are the super generation, the ones that will migrate to Mexico where they overwinter," explains Davidson-Taylor.

She says they are called the super generation because they are larger than any other generation and are sexually immature until they reach Texas eight months later. They are the generation that conserves all its energy to survive the trip

rather than produce offspring.

Although these fragile insects seem so delicate, Wright explains that they are actually incredibly resilient, in the sense that they are able to lay hundreds if not thousands of eggs. She explains that these larvae or juveniles that are produced are food for other life forms, but we have been actively working against them.

In fact, Wright says that migratory songbirds have been rapidly declining because they too are under tremendous pressure, and when the insects go, the birds starve.

"If we are actively creating environments and systems that depress the numbers and destroy the species, at some point rebound will become impossible."

But there is something all of us can do to help this species. Both Wright and Davidson-Taylor explain that we should all create, restore, and maintain habitat by planting native species and enhancing your outdoor space to support a wide range of wildlife.

"We have to have bugs! Insects are actually the base of the food pyramid for everyone on earth. When the bugs are gone, we will be too," says Wright.

Making Brighton more dementia friendly

By Natalie Cummings

In the fall of 2018, residents of Brighton held their breath as they anxiously waited for the unveiling of the new and improved, renovated library.

Since then, the Brighton Public Library has become a buzzing hub for everyone, from youth to older folks living in the community.

Located in the heart of Brighton, the library has held many programs and events. From guest speakers to recommending monthly themed reads, the library has something for everyone.

The newest program to hit the shelves at the Brighton Public Library is one that lies close to the hearts of caregivers and older residents alike.

The Cognitive Reader Program is comprised of a series of books targeted to meet the needs of those in the community living with dementia.

"The readers include large print, easy to read fonts, a simple design, and cues to turn the page," says CEO of the Brighton Public Library, Heather Ratz.

Plans for the program originally started in October of 2019 when staff at the library completed training about recognizing the signs and how to communicate with those living with dementia.

Staff were walked through library specific scenarios and given skills to better serve those living with age-related cognitive impairment.

Brighton, a small town rich with history, has truly become a place where the past meets the present. Over the years, the lakeside community has become a favourite place among the older generation to settle down and retire.

With three long-term care homes and a brand-new retirement residence under construction, the library has become a



Photo by Natalie Cummings

Heather Ratz smiles behind her mask as she sits among the countless number of books in the Brighton Public Library.

recognized voice in making Brighton a more dementia-friendly community.

However, the program doesn't end there.

According to Ratz, the next step is making more resources available besides the readers to members of the community living with dementia.

"The next phase will be the introduction of Cognitive Care kits that will include games, trivia, puzzles and other activities that help people living with dementia engage and enjoy meaningful activities," says Ratz.

As COVID-19 lockdown restrictions slowly lift in Brighton, the library has

since dusted off the shelves and welcomed the community back into the library.

With spring just around the corner, residents of Brighton can expect no shortage of continued online programming and updates from the staff and volunteers at the library.

With COVID-19 procedures in place, those that are interested in the Cognitive Reader program are encouraged to come in and take a look.

To learn more, click on this link: <https://vimeo.com/loyalistphotoj/brighton>



Photo by Sabah Rahman

After battling a long-time health condition and a concussion resulting from a blindside hit that made him go headfirst into the boards during a game in 2016, Wyatt Brauer, 22, was forced to give up on his dreams of competing in professional hockey. Playing hockey was all that he knew between the ages four and 18. His mental health journey, as he was forced to give up on these dreams, inspired him to begin the Cycling For Mental Health initiative in Belleville.

Former hockey player begins Belleville mental health initiative

By Sabah Rahman

Wyatt Brauer, 22, is on familiar grounds inside the Wally Dever arena in the Quinte Sports and Wellness Centre in Belleville.

Brauer, founder of Cycling For Mental Health, or CFMH, in Belleville, sits by an empty hockey rink. He reminisces about his professional hockey career ambitions that came crashing to an end after a concussion resulting from a blindside hit that made him go headfirst into the boards during a game in 2016.

Brauer played as a defenceman for the Picton Pirates from 2015 to 2016, which was at the time an affiliate team for the Belleville Bulls. Gifted with his height and a longer reach with his hockey stick than most other players, Brauer dreamt of being a professional hockey player supported by the encouragement of coaches, trainers, and an agent at one point.

At the time, Brauer was suffering from a gastrointestinal condition called Eosinophilic Esophagitis, which forced him to

be on a liquid diet to consume proteins and other nutrients. The health condition made it increasingly challenging for Brauer to gain or maintain a healthy body weight.

The concussion, along with existing health condition, forced Brauer to finally accept that his health was not improving to support his long-term dreams of being in professional sports.

In many ways, Brauer explains, he was dead set on his dreams of professional hockey. No one prepared him for the day he would have to make the decision to leave those hockey ambitions behind.

Brauer took the next three years to reflect on who he was outside of being a hockey player. Never considering himself to be strictly academic, Brauer's initial attempt at college studies did not pan out.

Brauer has been candid about the psychological impacts of walking away from hockey that plunged him into an outright identity crisis. Growing up in a German household, Brauer reflects that the men in his family were told to "man

'It forces you to slow down and pay attention to your surroundings. When you are paying attention to the surroundings, you are automatically enveloped in the beauty of the things around you.'

Wyatt Brauer

up" when it came to dealing with their feelings and depression.

Depression is the silent killer of men when it comes to mental health illness as more than 75 per cent of suicides involve men, based on Statistics Canada 2017 and 2018 reports.

Brauer bought a bicycle for himself out of whim right before the pandemic

began. Cycling has had many mental health benefits, explains Brauer. Being an athlete was in his blood, Brauer admits, as he experimented playing other sports. Brauer enjoys cycling for the sense of adventure it brings and equally as a past-time activity without participating in the competitive nature of playing sports.

The pride from the ownership of his road bike came to symbolize something new about himself to Brauer. The freedom of riding down empty roads in March 2020, as the country went into the first phase of quarantine lockdown, brought Brauer a new sense of calm.

"It forces you to slow down and pay attention to your surroundings. When you are paying attention to the surroundings, you are automatically enveloped in the beauty of the things around you," says Brauer.

Therapy, counselling and other mental health services can feel clinical and sterile, explains Brauer. Talking about shared mental health issues can feel reassuring.

Through CFMH, Brauer's aim is to bring people together who are passion-

ate about cycling and want to share their mental journeys with each other, as well as share resources on local mental health services.

The first CFMH event was No Shave Movember in 2019, raising awareness for men's mental health, where Brauer gathered cyclists from all over the Quinte region. Over the holiday season, CFMH donated up to 60 children's bikes to local families in need in Belleville.

Brauer excitedly adds that someone from Kingston has reached out to him to duplicate the CFMH model locally in their region. Brauer's long-term vision for CFMH is that there will be local chapters in cities across the country someday and a network of ambassadors who will organize cycling events to support mental health.

If you are feeling suicidal, thinking about hurting yourself, or are concerned that someone you may know may be in danger of hurting themselves, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566.

Clothing depot gives back to community

By Natalie Cummings

When a train passes through the backyard and the wood floors boards shake and creak, it doesn't stop the hustle and bustle of volunteers sorting through countless boxes of donations left on the front step of the Brighton Clothing Depot.

Back in January 2020, before many businesses were forced to close their doors temporarily due to the pandemic, the Brighton Clothing Depot had just settled into their new home next to Brighton's infamous train tracks.

What used to be a cannery of a wealthy local businessman in the early 1900s is now a small hub for those in Brighton to look for new treasures, including a myriad of items from children's books to candleholders.

Organized and operated by a team comprised of a few men and several women from the Brighton and surrounding area, not only has the BCD become a popular store among those who live nearby, but it also is recognized for how the depot gives back to the community.

"After all operating expenses are met, all monies are returned to community organizations," says BCD volunteer and secretary, Hilary Handley.

The depot has given money to many organizations locally and across Northumberland County. The donations have ranged from supporting local students attending East Northumberland Secondary School, filling shelves at the Brighton



Photo by Natalie Cummings

A volunteer at the Brighton Clothing Depot sorts through a generous pile of baby clothes donated by residents of Brighton.

Food bank, to helping furry friends at the humane society.

At the time the BCD was moving into their new spot on Craig Boulevard, the depot was also congratulated for distributing a combined total of \$48,500 to local causes and organizations.

However, for the humble volunteers of the BCD, they pride themselves on making connections with those in their community.

"The best part of working in the community is getting to meet and know people and their needs and knowing we are helping them in a very big way to have things they could not otherwise afford," says Handley.

For some that volunteer, it's a chance to interact with others in their community. For others, it's a rewarding feeling knowing that they are helping those with a little less cash to spare.

Among rows of clothing and shelves of knick knacks and vinyl records, despite wearing masks, you can hear the smiles in the volunteers' voices as they cheerily assist shoppers as they hang up clothes and sort through an endless amount of children's toys.

As of today, the Brighton Clothing Depot is gearing up for longer and brighter days ahead.

Winter decorations have been replaced with the bright colours of spring.

With COVID-19 precautions in place, shoppers are encouraged to pop in during store hours and take a look.



Photo by Christie Leja

Award-winning textile artist, Hilary Rice, sits at her 60-inch Amish handmade 8-shaft Counter-marche loom and works on a piece she has been crafting. Known for her dyed cotton techniques incorporated into her quilting patterns, Rice is all self taught and ready to explore more textile creatives in her retirement.

Art helps woman connect with world

By Christie Leja

Nestled into the forest, down a tree-lined path, lives Mother Earth Studio and textile artist Hilary Rice. With the warmth from the afternoon light beaming through the windows in her converted horse stable, turned studio and office, Rice sits at her 60-inch Amish handmade 8-shaft Counter-marche loom and begins to weave.

The loom takes up a large portion of the room. Shelves arranged with an array of thread are the backdrop to her creative space and the flow artistry of that encapsulates her. A silent, relaxing and methodical practice, done with the ease

of a true master in her art, makes it hard to believe everything Rice creates is all self-taught.

The walls in her studio are lined with her work, which is mixed textile media art. Stacks of books overflow on a bookshelf and a whole section of the studio is dedicated to thread, some even spun and dyed by Rice. She takes pride in making almost everything she does from scratch, specifically her dyed cottons and threads she incorporates into her pieces. Known for her award-winning quilting style, along with the notoriety that comes from her textile art, Rice has spent the last 20 years teaching and creating in her home along with guest teaching and judging at

different events. Her process in creating her art has roots in her spirituality and takes inspiration from her journey and the organic materials of life.

“Art making, for me, is a way of connecting with the world, a way of connecting what is inside, with what is outside. My work touches and links me to the holy.”

With the purchase of a “pandemic puppy” limiting her from spending more than 20 minutes at a time in her studio, Rice has had to overcome some hurdles in her ability to find inspiration and create this year. Asked what has been her biggest inspiration this year, she speaks about the lack of human connection we have all felt

“To be honest, I like being on my own for long periods of time. So in a way, the COVID restrictions weren’t that big of a deal for me. But as the weeks turned into months, I find I miss being with the other creatives I’ve connected with.”

To battle this hurdle of lack of inspiration, she has turned to her Beginners Weaving Study group she started through the Belleville Weavers & Spinners Guild, during the past year. By sharing images and experiences via email, she and her creative colleagues have continued to figure out ways to be together. Whether it’s walks in the country or a few hours sitting in the sun or on hay bales in the barn, Rice has used this time to connect

and overcome any lack of inspiration she has.

Tightening the weft, Rice starts a new line of weave, and hums a song that’s been stuck in her head all day. The heddels of her loom, which she has stained rainbow, chug along as she passes the shuttle through her new stitch. Life in the afternoon at her studio is quiet, except for the light trill from the ceramic bells that hang outside her window and the distant cluck of her backyard chickens.

“I enjoy working with my hands. It doesn’t matter what I am doing, as long as I am creating,” Rice, smiles as she explains the secret to her happiness.

Fourteen-year-old crocheter keeps busy with her yarn and hooks to keep community warm

By Luke Best

Through the focused use of quick yet careful hook movements, colourful yarn wraps around hooks on a loom and a hat starts to form. With a large smile, one of Belleville’s youth is crocheting to warm the hearts of the city, and the heads of the residents, during this cold winter.

For the past month, 14-year-old Jay-Lynn Brooks has been making hats as quickly as she can and selling them, with a portion of the proceeds being donated to Belleville’s Grace Inn homeless shelter. “I thought it would be a good place to give, because there’s over a hundred homeless people in Belleville,” Brooks said.

Grace Inn is a 21-bed emergency shelter for adults in downtown Belleville, with a special focus on dignity, community and mentorship. Opening December 2019, the shelter is committed to meeting the emergency needs of as many as possible, and giving them the help they need.

Even with the addition of Belleville’s warming centre, many of the city’s homeless are still spending nights out in the cold. Last month, Brooks was able to donate her first cheque to Grace Inn for \$180. She has only been working for a month but has already crocheted over 80 hats, recently adding headbands and ear warmers into her repertoire as well.

The 14-year-old said it all started when her mother brought home a pack of wool and her aunt offered to pay her if she was able to make a hat for her.

“It just sort of turned into something,” Brooks said.

‘I thought it would be a good place to give, because there’s over a hundred homeless people in Belleville.’

Jay-Lynn Brooks

With a warm embrace from the community and a snowballing effect on her Facebook page, Jay-Lynn’s Cozy Creations has over 150 members already.

Brooks has had a lot of free time since her school closed due to pandemic, and because of that, she has been

spending as much time as possible crocheting. Almost overwhelmed with orders, she makes sure to take some time every day to bring out her loom and sit down to spend some time to focus on crafting out her creations.

Her family thinks it is a wonderful thing, and are a little surprised about how quickly everything ramped up. “The kids have been off school, so as a parent you’re worried about how productive their time will be. This was a way of making sure that they stayed busy and that they were doing the right things, and not just binge-watching Netflix. As soon as she suggested that she was going to donate to a local charity, I thought that was great!” said her father Jason Brooks. He makes clear that this is all her idea and he stands and encourages from the sidelines. “I picked it up for about five minutes and tried it and that was about it. I thought this is not necessary for me...” he added.

The Brooks family is no stranger to helping out in the community. Being regular attendees to the Pentecostals of Quinte, they have been active in giving back to the area. Jay-Lynn attends St. Theresa’s Catholic school and helps out with Sunday school and other similar programs.

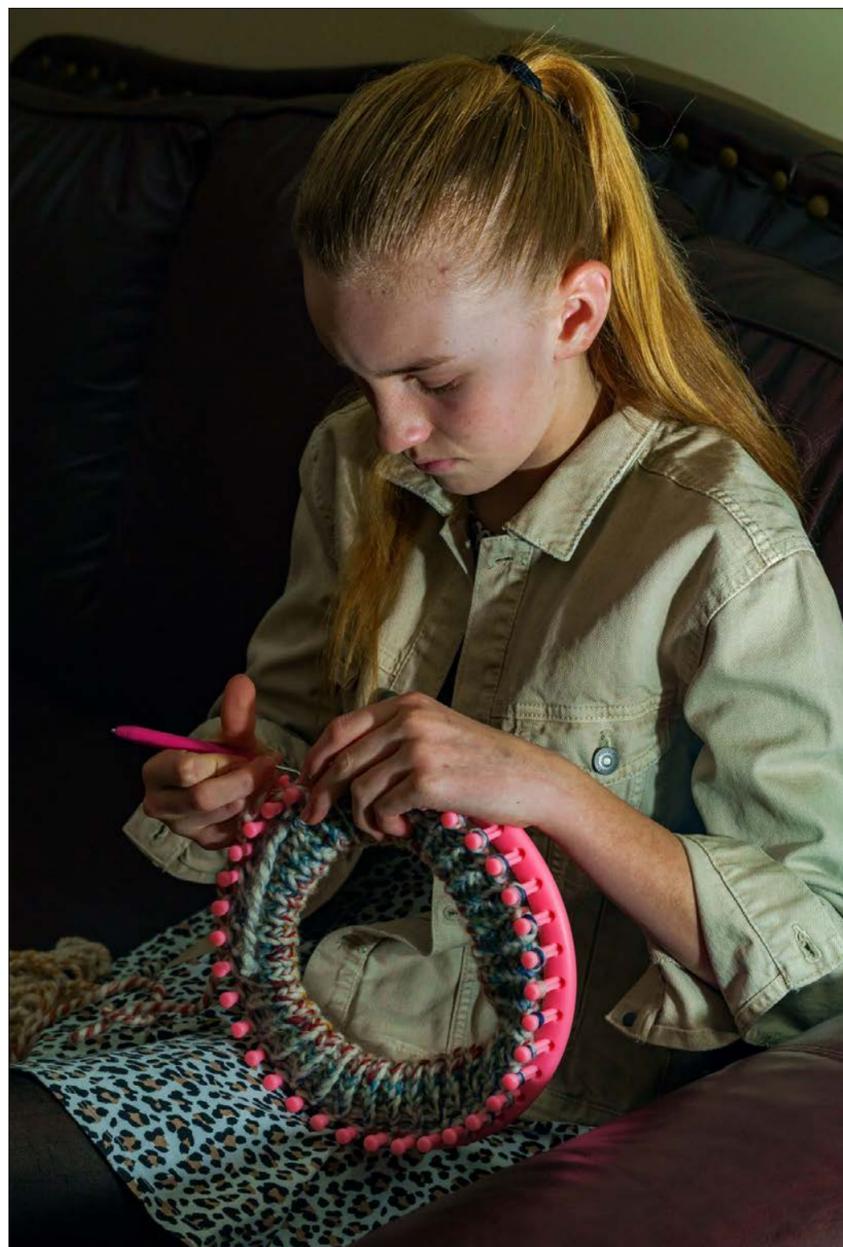


Photo by Luke Best

Jay-Lynn Brooks shows how she crochets a hat that is currently in progress at her family’s Belleville home.

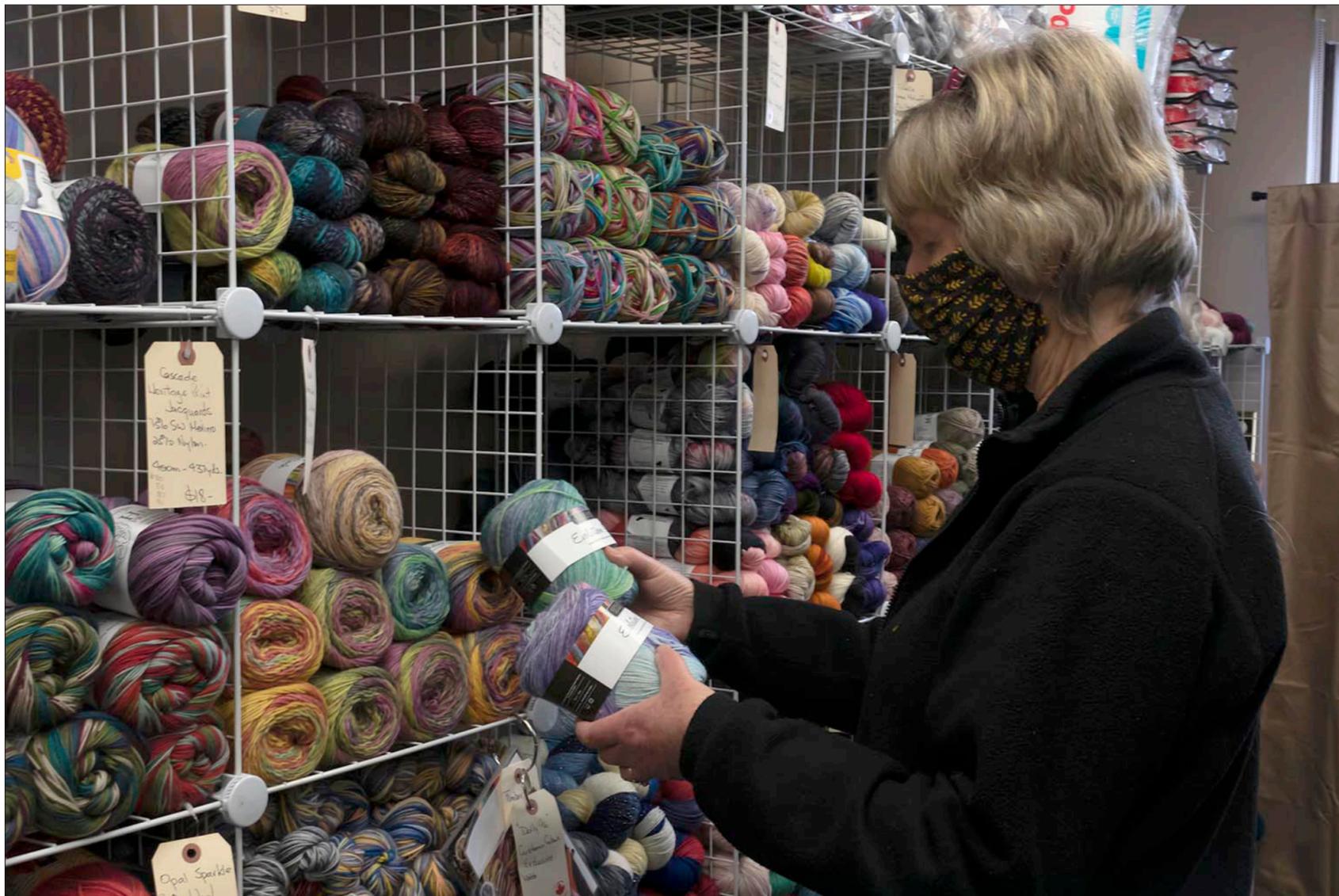


Photo by Olivia Ashopenace

At the Grey Heron Yarn Shop, Sheryl Moorhouse, a friend of Karen Farmilo, helps sorts and move things around the shop.

Crafters flock to Grey Heron shop

By Olivia Ashopenace

There is a Belleville arts and crafts store which inspires you to be creative and fills you with wonder with its splendor of colourful yarns, crafting materials and interesting tools used for knitting and crochet. It is the Grey Heron Yarn Shop. “We opened in Streetsville, Mississauga in 2004,” Karen Farmilo said as she shared how long the Grey Heron Yarn Shop at 45 Pinnacle St. South has been around. The shop first opened its door in Belleville in August 2017.

With the pandemic hindering social gatherings and changing the normalcy of in-person classes, restrictions have prevented the yarn shop from offering its usual knitting classes. “We do offer classes at various levels of experience. At this time, classes are suspended due to COVID restrictions,” said Farmilo. In an effort to protect herself as she works in the shop, Farmilo wears a plastic face shield and encourages social distancing when inside the shop. There are also safety protocols posted on the front entrance advising customers to

wear their face masks, use the hand sanitizer by the door and only two shoppers are permitted at a time. “We had a weekly group meeting up. Hope we will get back to that when the pandemic slows down,” Farmilo said. The Grey Heron used to have a social gathering called Drop in Knit Café, where people with a like-minded interest in knitting can connect and have also hosted a “KnitFest” Saturday workshop. “The KnitFest was a wonderful weekend event. I hired instructors to come to teach special technique classes. The

Knit Café was our name for the Thursday group. We always served tea, coffee and sweets. Gathering with like minded crafters was such a special time of friendship and learning,” Farmilo said, sharing what it used to be like when the Grey Heron Yarn Shop hosted gatherings of people. Inside the shop, there are assortments of yarns in all different colours, knitting notions, project bags and crochet notions. The yarns the store carries are: Shirley Brian Yarn, Cascade, Estelle, Opal, Regia, Lopi, Malabrigo, Universal,

Fleece Artist, Handmaiden, Patons Kroy, Zauberball, Lang, King Cole, Kauni, Comfort Sock, BC Garn, Ravenswood, Fibre Co., All Dyed Up, Ancient Arts, Briggs and Little. “We carry lots of natural fibres and acrylic blends. Many brands of needles, notions, books and buttons,” Farmilo said. During the pandemic, there has been a rising interest in knitting and crocheting, and Farmilo has noticed this. “Absolutely, many people rekindled their love for knitting and crocheting. Really helps to relax you and have fun.”

Cancer has huge impact on woman's life

By Cassandra Williamson

At the young age of 26, Jamie Birks was diagnosed with Aplastic Anemia on Dec. 23, 2016. Birks was working full-time as a personal support worker at the time while single parenting her son. “I was terrified. They told me I needed a bone marrow transplant and that I would have to be referred to another hospital in Ottawa to have said transplant. I had no idea what I was dealing with. At 26 years old, my bone marrow, the life-blood of my body was dead. It had caused my own body to kill itself. I thought about being able to be home for my son on Christmas morning. I had so many rushing thoughts about everything I had ever done in my whole life until that day,” She says. Physically, she had to start being more careful. Birks had to leave her job as her

platelet counts were so low, she could hemorrhage and die from the strain of attempting to lift something. While she was receiving care from Kingston General Hospital from December 2016 to March 2017, the treatments gave her platelets every week and blood transfusions every two weeks. “In the end of March, I went to Ottawa because I was dying. I had gotten a very bad flu and they could not get it under control, so Ottawa brought me down a week early. They cleared up the illness that I had and proceeded with the transplant. “Before the transplant itself, I had to have four rounds of chemo, and one round of total body radiation. They began the transplant and a certain medication gave me two seizures. I quit breathing during the last one, so they had to change



Photo by Cassandra Williamson

Jamie Birks that medication to prednisone. “Prednisone then made me gain over

60 pounds, my face and body was swollen. Four days after transplant, I had to have three more days of chemo to make sure that the new bone marrow would survive,” she says. That night she went to bed and put her long hair up for the very last time. When she awoke the next morning, her head left the pillow but her hair stayed. She says she had what was maybe 20 hairs left on her hair from the chemo she received. While she was being treated in Kingston, life was very much the same for her son. More sleepovers at “nannie’s house” than usual. Birks had the support from her parents and grandmother to help with her son, making sure his routine stayed as normal as possible, even when she had to be hospitalized for days at a time. Birks was in remission for almost three years before she was diagnosed again, this

time with Hodgkin’s Lymphoma on Feb. 20, 2020. She suffered through another 12 rounds of chemo (four different types per round), one every two weeks. It was supposed to be for six months but her chemotherapy ended up taking eight months because of complications with shingles. She lost her hair all over again. “It left me with a lot of mental scars. I am always aware that I and everyone I love will die. It gives me the feeling that “you’re going to get something else” constantly. You become more stressed out about wasting time, with that fear comes the positive of doing the things that I like immediately. It made me care less about what people think because it left me with the idea we will all be dead and our opinions won’t matter anyway, most of what we do now won’t matter in 100 years.”

Blood-splatter analyst juggles career and kids

By James McAlpine

Being a parent is hard. It’s harder when you’re a single parent, and it’s even harder still when you have three kids, and you are one of the leading blood-splatter analysts in Canada, of which there are fewer than 30. “My oldest son has had a favourite book for a long time, and it was a Lego book. And the bad guys in the book always are trying to break into the bank,” says Trudy Bennett. “And the bad guys always get caught by the police officers in the book. So whenever I have to work late, or I get called out in the night, and I have to call my mom to come watch them. I always tell them that the bad guys are trying to break into the bank again.” Starting from the University of Western Ontario with a BA in sociology, Bennett’s first foray into the industry was as a 911 operator, which she did for two years, earning a full-time position as a civilian doing that job. Following police assessment in 2001, Bennett was hired as a police officer with the Durham Regional Police Service. In 2007, Bennett was awarded a detective constable position in what is now called forensic investigative services. “When I first went in there, we were called forensic identification. And they eventually switched our name to forensic investigative services. That happened around 2016, when we moved into our

‘I’m the first woman to ever be promoted to the rank of detective in my unit.’

Trudy Bennett

new building in Bowmanville,” and with that change came a few other changes. “Now we have more than just us. So under our umbrella, we also have the electronic crimes unit, video analysts, and cell phone analysts. And there’s also the internet child exploitation department. They all fall under the forensic investigative services umbrella.” In 2020, Bennett was skilled and fortunate enough to be promoted to detective. “I am one of two working detectives in the unit,” of which each detective has their own team of investigators. “I’m the first woman to ever be promoted to the rank of detective in my unit,” says Bennett. But additionally, Bennett was the first woman to be board certified in blood stain pattern analysis with the Durham Regional Police. However, even more than that, she says, “I was the first female to be board certified in the history of the interior police college — so for the whole province of Ontario.” For a long time, Bennett didn’t think she could be a detective until she started

working with police services as a civilian. “I was working with the other officers and I met other female officers that weren’t that much bigger than me, or any older than me, and it wasn’t until then that — it almost wasn’t an option until I met other people like me,” says Bennett. To which she realized, “Oh, well, if they can do it, why can’t I do it? Find those sorts of possibilities, and open those doors.” Everyone in Bennett’s unit are trained as generalists. “So all of us are trained in processing crime scenes, crime scene photography, exhibit, seizures, continuity, processing things for fingerprints, processing them for DNA, things of that nature. And we’re also all trained to compare fingerprint impressions to try and see if it’s a fingerprint identification or an exclusion. “But then some of us, after you’ve been there a few years, branch off also into specialties. So currently, we have one person trained in human remains recovery and anthropology. We have someone else who does footwear comparison, people who do shooting scene reconstruction. So my particular specialty is called blood stain pattern analysis,” says Bennett. There’s only been one other person in the history of the Durham Regional Police Service who has completed that program besides Bennett, and according to Bennett, there’s only around 30 in the entire country.



Photo by James McAlpine

Trudy Bennett is not just leading blood analyst, or a mom - she’s also an avid Jays fan and loves playing baseball, capturing bases when she’s not capturing bad guys.

A COVID-19 timeline



Photo by Alex Bowman

The playground at St. Elizabeth Catholic Elementary School in Bowmanville is closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic on March 25, 2020. In the following days since this sign placement, the city wrapped the playgrounds in caution tape, to further shut down the play areas.



COVID...

Continued from Page 1

Post-secondary students also became online learners, and the switch tested our adaptability as media professionals and as people. Sheltered with our parents, partners, or children, we all had to become accustomed to our new lives. Now though, we have become professional online learners... If there were a blackboard skill to have, trust that we've mastered it.

Social Limitations and Public Changes

Journalists are, by nature, social people and so this change was hard on many of us as we only saw socializing via screen. It was especially trying as a photographer considering the key to good storytelling is emotion. With half of our faces covered, how were we supposed to be able to convey anything, or expect the subject of our stories to? On a larger scale, everyone was experiencing the lockdown blues, as we finally

realized what was taken from us: each other. Strict limitations on social gatherings were set, and we saw this tested during the boil over on social justice issues like the Black Lives Matter Movement, which prompted more than 4,000 people to fill the streets in Toronto alone.

Vaccines and other shortages

Because of the demand put onto the medical industry during a pandemic, provincial training in the medical field has spiked as hospitals still continue to report staffing shortages. Murmurs of vaccinations have been heard since mid-last year, but the province has finally begun to administer COVID immunization shots, with our own Loyalist College becoming a municipal Vaccination Clinic.

If this past year has made us anything, it's grateful. We as staff of the Loyalist College Pioneer would like to thank our wonderful teachers, the Loyalist College community, and you, our faithful readers. Here's to a better (and maybe calmer) future.

(Left) The day the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the pandemic, March 11, 2020, Loyalist College was holding its Career Fair at the school gym. Little did we know at the time that just two days later the college would essentially be closed for in-class learning for the next year.

Photo by Daniel Geleyn

(Below) On Jan. 17, 2021, things are very quiet on Front Street in Belleville due to the province-wide stay-at-home order to combat a second COVID-19 wave. The second lockdown happened on Dec. 26 in Ontario.

Photo by Ron Lavie

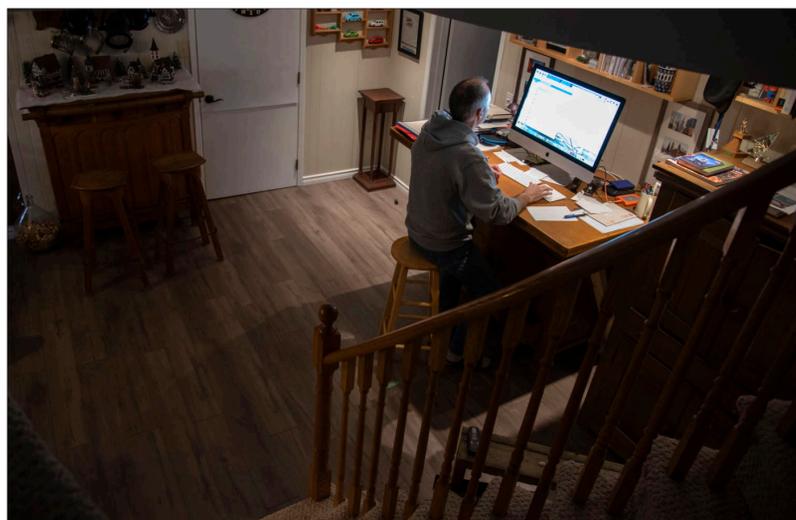


Photo by Daniel Geleyn

On March 31, 2020, many people were working or attending school from home. Daniel Geleyn from Kingston, Ont., a photojournalism student at Loyalist College, took advantage of videoconferencing technology to attend online classes with his fellow students. The new rules resulted in many classes moving online.

(Right) Even throughout the COVID-19 pandemic Toronto's Chinatown was still in full force with their storefront markets on Nov. 12, 2020. Mimicking China's own outdoor markets even more now, people can be found with masks and gloves on while going through the produce at food storefronts which have remained open as essential services.

Photo by Luke Best



(Above) Owners Stacy Kerr and Stuart Long wear masks on Sept. 20, 2020 while attending to a customer. Masks have become commonplace in businesses as they became mandatory indoors.

Photo by Olivia Asphopence



(Right) David Dossett is shown in front of his Kingston business on Jan. 12, 2021. Dossett has been the owner of Martello Alley since July 2015. His unique store, located in the back of an alley, features art from local artists. "The shutdowns definitely affected us as most people want to see the pieces of art before they buy," he said. But he added that he had a very successful summer in 2020. Most tourists that summer were from close to Kingston and buying from local artists was very important to them.

Photo by Daniel Geleyn



(Above) On March 1, 2021, Kingston Frontenac Lennox & Addington Public Health Officer Dr. Kieran Moore discusses the opening of the new mass vaccination centre at the Invista Centre in western Kingston while Kingston Mayor Bryan Paterson looks on. The opening of vaccination clinics, including one at Loyalist College, brought a great deal of relief to the population as they wait to be vaccinated.

Photo by Daniel Geleyn

(Right) On March 10, 2021, Trudy Milne, a personal support worker at a Durham Retirement home, poses in front of her Oshawa residence wearing her personal protection equipment and displaying her vaccination cards from the Ontario Ministry of health. Trudy is one of the front-line workers who have recently received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccination in accordance with phase one of the provincial vaccine rollout plan.

Photo by Bec Gauvin



On March 3, 2021, EMS student volunteers (from left) Maddy Moyer and Brittany Roberts watch patients in the "observation room" set up in Loyalist College's dining hall as part of the vaccination clinic.

Photo by Calder Siedley

