



A group of Loyalist students dancing in a group at last Thursday's Silent Disco night.

By Nic Adam

Pub offers sounds of silence

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The Shark Tank Pub was packed last Thursday night for the college's third-ever Silent Disco night. An anticipated 475 to 525 Loyalist students came to what turned out to be a bizarre, yet fun pub night.

There were four DJs, three on the stage and one on the dance floor across from them, playing a choice of three different styles of music through the headphones provided. There was no need for students to sit through a song they didn't like. They could just hit the button on their headphones to switch to the next DJ.

If students opted not to wear headphones, something a couple did, you were left with quite the sight: a whole bunch of people singing and dancing to different songs, all at the same time, with zero cohesion.

"The students have been really happy about experiencing a silent disco for the first time," said Olivia Millard, Loyalist College's Student Experience and Engagement manager. "I think a lot of people's favourite part is that you can go to the bar, take off your

headphones, and order a drink at a normal volume."

Millard, along with the Student Experience and Engagement Team, were the ones to plan the event.

There's a lot of behind-the-scenes work that goes into planning, and running, an event of this nature and scale. The team wanted to make sure that every student in the pub during the silent disco could participate. That meant procuring 375 headphones, the same number of people allowed in the Shark Tank at once.

If you're ever in the market for 375 headphones, here are some words of advice: It turns out it's more worthwhile to buy than to rent. That's what Millard and the team figured out at least.

"I worked with our procurement team on that. That happened last year, so now we have them at our fingertips which is really nice.

'The students have been really happy about experiencing a silent disco for the first time.'

Student Experience and Engagement's Olivia Millard

"Without saying specific numbers, if we didn't purchase the headphones, the cost to rent the headphones was 70 per cent of the cost to buy the headphones," Millard said. "So, if I was going to run it even more than once, it was worthwhile to make the investment."

After running the event a mere two times after purchasing the headphones, they have already more than made up for that initial cost.

While you may think it was only students who were having a blast that night, you would be sorely mistaken. If anyone was having fun, it was DJ Dan Foote!

"This has been a fun night! There's no holding back really, especially when there's three other DJs. You can play, you know, like I was playing Blink 182 and stuff," said Foote, or DJ-D, as people were calling

him that night.

"So being able to play music that I'm kind of more into, which is more of the rock style stuff, like, "Oh yeah I'm on it, I'm doing it all night as much as I can."

Throughout the night, DJ-D had the crowd cheering and chanting out the lyrics to songs from requests ranging from artists like: ABBA, Slayer, and Taylor Swift.

"Basically, I'm trying to fill the gaps of what they're not playing. So, I've played heavy metal, I played rock, I played country, I played some generic dance songs, and some weird ones. I played the Chicken Dance! It's not something I normally do, but tonight I did."

Don't worry if you missed this last one, Millard is hoping to throw another silent disco soon.

"(We) would like to throw one on the field at convocation, after convocation for grads...like a daytime silent disco outside. That would be cool."

See the video link above for more on the story.

Lancers face Colts in tough loss

Next home game against Fleming College takes place Jan. 24

By Isidore Champagne

The Loyalist Lancers men's basketball team faced one of the hottest teams in the OCAA league, the Centennial Colts, at homecourt on Jan.10.

The Colts won the game 76-64 and improved their season record to 9-2. The low-scoring game was a battle in which both teams shot below 40 per cent from the field and below 25 per cent from the arc. The Lancers recorded their ninth loss of the season, dropping their record to 1-5 at home and 2-9 in total for the season.

The Lancers focused on rebounding and running the floor throughout the game. The game had two lead changes, with the Lancers taking the lead halfway through the third quarter and keeping it until halfway through the fourth quarter.

"At the beginning of the third, when we went on a very long run there, that was,

we felt like we had control of the game for sure," stated Alex Arseneault, centre for the Lancers.

In the third quarter, the Lancers caught eight more rebounds than their opposition, totalling 19 rebounds in the quarter. This was also their highest scoring quarter with a total of 28 points, compared to the Colts' 16.

"We always give three keys to the game. Our number one key for tonight's game, I was calling it five man box out, that we need boxing out from all five players on the floor," commented head coach Kevin McGuire.

Overall, Loyalist out-rebounded Centennial 58-48 and 29 of their 64 points were generated from second chance opportunities, despite Omar Nur, the 7'2" Colts centre clogging the paint.

"I didn't think he hurt us with his post ups," said McGuire about the Colts centre. "I thought he hurt us with his offensive rebounding and his defensive rebounding. If I look at the numbers here, he hit 10 offensive rebounds, and he catches it so close to the rim a lot of those offensive rebounds are going to lead directly to points. He ended up with 21 rebounds

and fifteen points."

Despite building a lead in the third, the Lancers went on to shoot 3-16 from the field in the fourth quarter, resulting in a 12-point loss.

The Lancers showed their depth with 21 points coming from the bench and hinted at a much higher offensive potential with the third quarter explosion, but weren't able to sustain their momentum for long enough to win the game. The team showed fight and have a golden future if they can replicate the success of their third quarter.

The team's next two games will be on the road against the Algonquin Wolves and La Cité Coyotes, returning to their home floor on Jan. 24 for a matchup against Fleming College at 3 p.m.

The women's basketball team started a two-game winning streak against the Colts, beating them by eight points, 79-71. They shot over 40 per cent from the field for the game and over 50 per cent in the fourth quarter, dominating in the last three minutes to seal the game. Their next game will be on the road against Algonquin, returning back to homecourt to play Durham on Jan. 26 at 6 p.m.



Photo by Isidore Champagne

Jayden Jack goes for his shot in a losing effort against the Centennial Colts.



Photo by Isidore Champagne

Devon Porter working in the Caribbean Jerk Spot in Belleville.

Belleville’s taste of Caribbean food

By Isidore Champagne

Palm trees can't thrive in Canada, and this will probably stay true for a couple more years. Yet along Sidney Street in Belleville lies a beaming mirage of white sandy beaches, blue skies, palm trees and two endlessly twinkling OPEN signs. This is the Caribbean Jerk Spot, operated by Devon Porter.

Walk in and you'll notice a conspicuous lack of nuisances, schmucks and buggers, because "jerk" is actually a style of Jamaican cooking. The hanging Jamaican and Canadian flags splash against the co-

lourful red walls like Christmas lights on a house, and over the counter there's an ever-playing TV that's often showing a cricket game. The corner hosts a custom-made Caribbean Jerk Spot grab-and-go cooler that has more varieties of coconut water than you knew existed and three crush cream soda flavours that you've likely never encountered before (peach, pineapple, and strawberry).

Porter himself stands out from this clamorous environment in his crisp white chef's uniform, thickly rimmed black glasses and black puffy hat. He greets his customers with ease and knows many of

the regulars by name. He learned to cook at a young age from his parents.

"They would send me to the shop to get the items I need. When I'd come back, I'd say, 'Here it is. They'd say, 'Well start getting it ready', so I started prepping and they would finish the cooking. So that's how I started."

Originally from Jamaica, he moved to Canada and took over the restaurant from one of his Seventh-Day Adventist Church brothers in 2020. The restaurant was first started in 2017. His mother, Gail, still visits him from Jamaica and when she does, she'll help out in the kitchen, pre-

paring and cooking food with him. The place is open six days a week, closing on Saturdays for the Sabbath. He starts working at 8 a.m. and the restaurant is ready at 11 a.m. He normally closes around 8 p.m.

Apart from the odd job here and there, he's spent most of his life in the kitchen, and his face lights up when he's talking about fish.

"A real Jamaican fish meal. Like an escovitch snapper, or a steamed snapper, a cup of fish tea that goes with that, maybe you guys don't know that. We make soup. We call it fish tea, from fish. It can be spicy or just mild and it opens your pallet,

your appetite for your main course." He's an avid fisher as well. "Fish. Yeah man. Any day. I like fish. I like fishing."

The menu offers much of what you would expect such as jerk chicken, curry vegetables and various styles of fish, but also more exotic foods such as the cow foot entrée. He is a big Chef Ramsey fan, and loves watching reality TV cooking shows like *Chopped* or *Master Chef*.

His hope for the restaurant is simple. "Love man. The love for the food. Just the love. You don't have to go crazy, just love the food the way it is, and you can make it your own."

Dancing, rap and art passions for this artist

By Nic Adam

Work or play, Chris Bennett can't live without art. Whether it's dancing, rapping, or spray-painting, he'll do it all.

Bennett, who lives in Belleville, was born into a single mother household in Trenton with one brother and a distant father.

"I didn't really have too much of a father figure growing up as far as like an influence," said Bennett. "Rap music and hip hop became my influence and father figure."

He spent most of the first year of his life in SickKids Hospital due to an asthmatic lung development.

"I technically died twice in this life already. Which accounts for a lot of my stubbornness to literally do what I want to do to the point where it inspires others."

He credits his earliest childhood memory to having an asthma attack, being rushed to the hospital in his mother's arms.

"I just remember hearing her saying, 'Don't take him yet, don't take him yet!'"

After moving to Belleville with his family at eight years old, Bennett didn't have too many friends at school, but he did have art. He noticed people would give reactions to his work and continued to pursue it.

In Grade 2, Bennett was held back a year being labelled as dyslexic which he considers detrimental.

"It kind of put a chip on my shoulder. I felt like, 'What's wrong with me?'"

All his friends got to move on to the next grade while he was held back to learn English for the second time. Because of this, he learned to get pretty good with vocabulary and languages.

Bennett, or Dislexsick Serna as he goes by in the rap game, has been listening to rap music since the age of eight and started making music around the age of 22.

"Growing up through the nineties, I wanted to make rap music. So, when I got older, I started making and producing my own beats, writing my own rhymes."

He considers his dyslexia a superpower when it comes to writing rap songs.

"I write raps like I paint. I can just improvise and go all by feeling and



Photo by Nic Adam

Chris Bennett in the back room of his studio on Front Street in Belleville. This is where he stores all his paint cans and where parents wait for class to be over.

describe things to the most highest extent."

He thinks of his music like a diary. He raps about the things he's experienced in life. Listening to Bennett's music is like getting to know him,

"There's things in my music that isn't in my artwork, you know?"

He doesn't care if his music is popular, that isn't why he makes it. He does it because he loves to create it no matter what.

"It's such a part of me and ingrained after 20 years making music. It's just something I have to do regardless of

how it's accepted."

Bennett discovered graffiti writing at age 12 and started painting "both illegally and legally." He says that "Being from a very, I'd say, lacking environment, it created an opportunity for me to realize, hey, you know, that can be a route and can be the ticket key," and that's exactly what it was.

Since getting his first art gig at the age of 14, Bennett never stopped, later starting his company SeRnA custom Artwork, painting windows and murals among other things, making enough money to get by.

"I tell people all the time, the key to making money as an artist is versatility. The more services that you can provide, more opportunity you create for yourself." Bennett provides a lot of services, but one stands out over the others: teaching.

Bennett is also the owner of Art Works Studio on North Front Street in Belleville, the only studio in the Quinte area that specializes in "breakdancing, the original dance of hip hop culture," and art classes for children and youth. He wants to provide those artistic opportunities he never got as a kid.

"When I grew up there was no outlets for me to create or paint. ... You couldn't even go take a drop-in art class. And I think even the education system isn't covering it."

Now, Bennett runs weekly dance and art classes giving kids the opportunities he never had.

In the future, Bennett wants to get bigger jobs outside the Quinte area, maybe even overseas.

"I won't stop until I'm being put on planes. For real. ... That's what it's all about, is painting. I want to paint everything; I want to paint the world."