



Photo by Hunter Middleton

Pre-game fun

Amelia Spencer and her family enjoyed the Drag performance by Drag Queen Rowena before the Belleville Senators played the Laval Rockets. The performance was part of the activities for the Belleville Senators Pride night. Other activities included face paint artists and a booth from TRANSForumQuinte selling pride merchandise. For the story and photos of the Sens in action, see page 6.

Musician brings activism to her music

By Heather Waldron

Singer and songwriter, Naghmeh Shafiei is a Canadian Iranian artist who wrote a powerful tribute to Mahsa Jina Amini, a Kurdish woman who was murdered by the Iranian morality police on Sept. 16.

According to news reports, Amini was detained for not wearing Iran's mandatory hijab in the correct fashion. However, Amini's family disputes such claims, according to the New York Times. The 22-year-old's death has sparked outrage across Iran and around

the world, highlighting the country's systemic oppression of women and the need for change.

Naghmeh titled the song Jina in honor of Amini's Kurdish name. The singer's heartfelt lyrics and emotive vocals serve as a reminder to Iranians that

they are not alone and that they have support from communities around the world. The song shines a light on the courage and bravery of individuals who are taking to the streets and standing up for a better future.

Naghmeh says that many activists

have disappeared without just cause and they are being held captive, tortured, put into solitary confinement and some have been executed.

...See Musician, page 2

Feel the beat in downtown Belleville

By Nav Rahi

Downtown Belleville echoed with laughter and dancing at the ReMerge dance workshop hosted by Tamla Matthews on Saturday, Feb. 18, at She's High on Vibes, an Indigenous-owned art studio. People from varying ethnic backgrounds came together to get a taste of traditional Caribbean dance.

Tamla Matthews is the founder and owner of Rootz and Branches, a Caribbean Cultural Art school focusing on legacy, ancestry and Afro-futurism through traditional and contemporary creative expression, which is located in Scarborough, ON.

Matthews is Canadian born with Caribbean parents. She has been a dance artist for quite a long time. Her dance practice came to a halt when she lost access to studio space due to the pandemic. She saw February 2023 as an opportunity to initiate a series called ReMerge.

"The idea is to re-emerge. You know, since the pandemic, many of us haven't gone back to our daily activities. So, in Honour of Black History Month, I wanted to encourage people to get back out and get moving. The ReMerge program is really about focusing on skirt-based traditional dances from the Caribbean and the class today was a little sample of an extended four-week program that I deliver in the Greater Toronto Region," said Matthews.

Matthews described some of the traditions of Caribbean dance to participants. "Skirts as a costume evolved from the Victorian era when women used to dress in long, layered skirts with petticoats, giving rise to skirts becoming a part of Caribbean dance costume. To accommodate the motions of traditional dance, Caribbean people came up with inventive and expressive techniques to lift and change the layers of fabric in their skirt."

The Quinte Culture Innovation Committee (QCIC) orchestrated the



Photo by Nav Rahi

Jenny Lewis and others practicing the Caribbean dance move at ReMerge, a Caribbean dance workshop by Tamala Matthews.

collaboration between Rootz and Branches and She's High on Vibes. QCIC invited people from the region to share a taste of the Caribbean through Shango, Bélé, Piqué and Calypso dance forms.

"Our committee formed as a solution to support the needs of the Bay of Quinte region. We want to make it easy for B of Q to step up as rural leaders who exercise their hearts of allies to make space for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) voices and perspectives. Together, we can develop comprehensive Equity, Inclusion and Diversity (EID) policies, procedures

and practices using three key permaculture values (fair share, care for people, care for our planet) to write Quinte history in real time," said Dharmini Thirukumaran, co-founder of the Quinte Cultural Innovation Committee.

She also shared that because the committee believes that BIPOC art, talent, culture, and innovation shouldn't be segregated to any single month in a year, QCIC is in talks with leaders in this region to bring the Jalgua Peace Festival to Quinte in summer 2023.

Jalgua Peace Festival is a National

Truth and Reconcile-action initiative led by globally recognized peace activist, philanthropist, and recording artist, Emmanuel Jal. The intent of the festival is to support rural regions across Canada to be equitable and inclusive, treating all humans as one unified race of people.

Nathalie Bennett, who attended the event with her husband, said "This event helped me physically by getting me up and moving, what a workout!!! ReMerge helped me mentally by finding joy in connecting with others." She then added, "I would like to do events similar to this one

with dance and costume. I would also enjoy learning about cultural food and cooking."

Melissa Brant, who recognizes the need for cultural activities in this region, jumped at the opportunity to co-host ReMerge by sharing her studio space for this joyful experience. She also participated in the workshop and noted, "This space is intended for people to come together as a community and to experience new and unique classes and workshops. I am always looking for different, creative ways to bring more culture into our community."



Photo by Heather Waldron

A group of activists gather outside of the Montreal offices of adult entertainment company MindGeek Saturday, holding signs that say “stop non consensual xxx”, “stop exploitation hub” in French and “MindGeek & Pornhub live here.

Protesters picket outside adult entertainment business

By Heather Waldron

A group of activists gathered outside the Montreal offices of adult entertainment company, MindGeek last Saturday to denounce what they claim is the exploitation of adults and children on the company's popular website, Pornhub.

Stop Exploitation Hub founder Rafaela Diaz said that she and other activists began protesting every week in 2020 as a response to allegations of exploitation they were seeing in the media. She and fellow activists were concerned about individuals who had videos of themselves uploaded to the internet without their consent. Diaz alleged that victims have had to pretend to be lawyers and threaten to sue the company in order to have their videos taken down.

Stop Exploitation Hub website states that they are “A Quebec based non-partisan, non-religious campaign against

MindGeek and its pornographic website Pornhub for hosting and profiting content of non-consensual porn, trafficking, child-sex abuse and rape.”

During Saturday's protest, demonstrators held signs with messages such as “stop xxx non-consensual” and “no consent, no content.” With low attendance on the cold winter day, the protest was peaceful with no incidents of violence or arrests reported. Diaz said that the only contact that the activists have had with the company was with the building's security guard, who she said routinely calls the police on the group during each protest. She added that because the protesters stay on the footpath and avoid private property, the police will pass by, but do not interfere.

“We're not trying to bring down the whole of Pornhub. What we're really trying to target is this non-consensual

‘We're not trying to bring down the whole of Pornhub. What we're really trying to target is this non-consensual pornography.’

Rafaela Diaz

pornography. We want to demand from our government that better things need to be in place to make sure that every single content on the internet is consensual. We're also looking at age verification as well. So, making sure that everybody in the videos is of legal age,” said Diaz.

MindGeek has faced criticism in recent years over its handling of content on its website with advocates calling for

increased regulation of the industry. In December 2020, The New York Times published an article detailing how the company allows underage content and exploitation to be uploaded to their websites. Following the article's publication, Visa and Mastercard both suspended their services with MindGeek, effectively hindering their ability to take payments online.

In a statement to the New York Times, the adult entertainment company said: “Pornhub is unequivocally committed to combating child sexual abuse material, and has instituted a comprehensive, industry-leading trust and safety policy to identify and eradicate illegal material from our community.” Pornhub added that any assertion that the company allows child videos on the site “is irresponsible and flagrantly untrue.”

Among demonstrators on Saturday

was Azfar Adib, an electrical engineering PhD candidate at Concordia University, whose research involves age verification technology using heart signals. Adib said that his research will address concerns around the implementation of age verification laws in the porn industry because such laws could cause privacy issues. The goal is for the technology to enable anonymous age verification through a smart watch, so performers would not be required to provide an identification card.

“We still don't know how far we can go. Of course, we want to protect privacy and other stuff but we need to have age verification. That is the most important thing,” said Adib.

Protests continue to be held every third Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. in front of MindGeek's offices and Diaz hopes that more people will come out to support the cause.

Musician...

Continued from Page 1

“But none of this has prevented the folks in Iran to continue to show up in the streets and protest and chant for the demise of the regime and I think that this act of bravery and this sacrifice for future generations is really admirable. I think that everyone should be rooting for Iranians to win and to gain their freedom,” says Naghmeh.

Growing up in Iran, Naghmeh was captivated by music by Whitney Houston and Michael Jackson. She would stand in front of the mirror and mouth the words, despite not knowing the language. She and her friends would talk about watching Jackson's shows and how he danced.

“For me, it was always something that other people did. Because I never really saw anyone who looked like me play the kind of music that I listened to. I never even really thought about it,” says Naghmeh.

As a child in Iran, Naghmeh learned the Iranian translation of the Quran written in Arabic and she participated in competitions where contestants were made to recite its passages. She says that she didn't really believe in the story, so she wasn't as

focused on the message as much as she was excited by the singing. Naghmeh made it to the provincial level of the competition but grew disinterested when she found herself questioning the idea of reciting a book that was written thousands of years ago in a language that was not her own.

When Naghmeh moved to Canada in 1998, her father purchased a guitar for her, and she learned how to play Metallica and Nirvana. Her first performance in front of an audience was in high school. Naghmeh sang and played Hotel California by the Eagles.

In college, she pursued the sciences and pushed the arts to the side. Her guitar collected dust when she moved to British Columbia to complete her master's degree, but she would continue to bring it from place to place.

One day she sat down with a friend and felt comfortable enough to jam together. They would teach each other and sing cover songs. One day her friend played her a song that she had written herself. Naghmeh was so impressed that she says that moment changed her life. It made songwriting seem accessible to her and inspired her to try her hand at writing her own songs.

For more on Naghmeh, click on the link:

<https://vimeo.com/801444842>



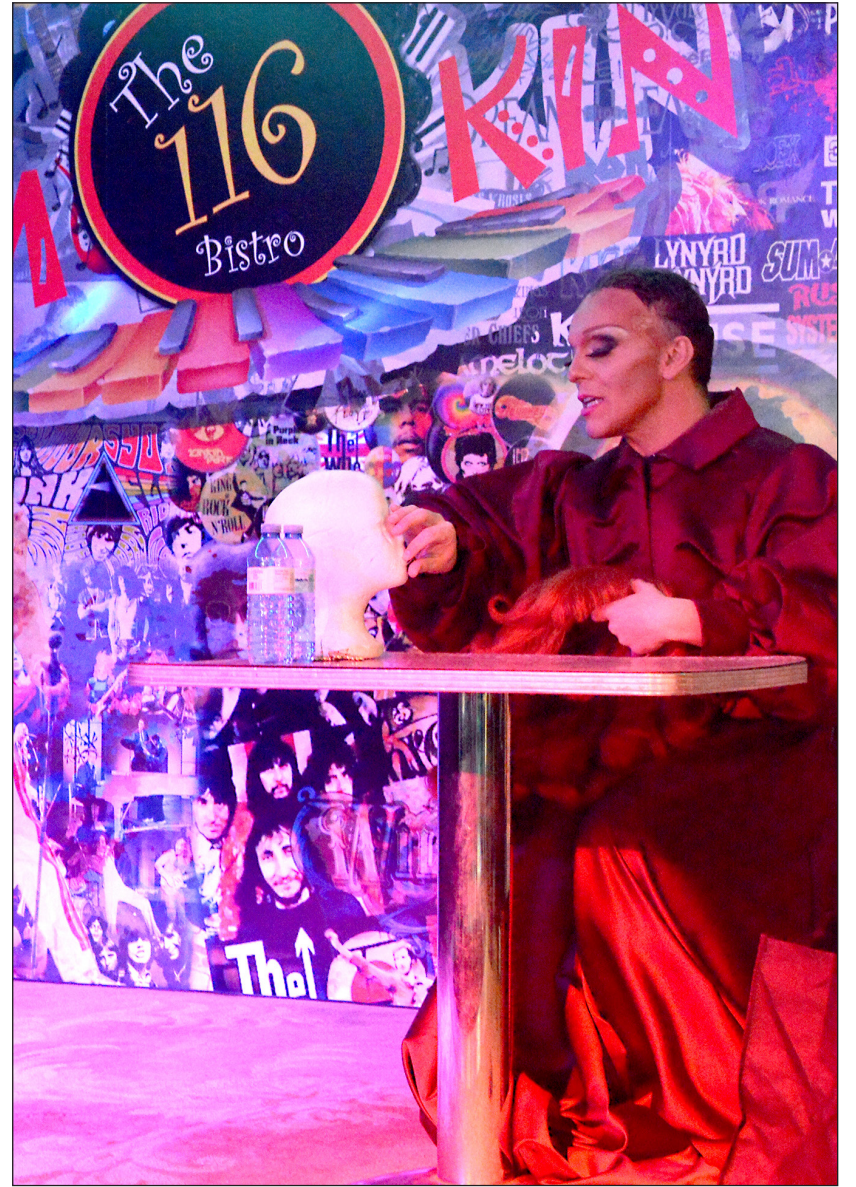
Photo by Heather Waldron

Canadian Iranian Singer songwriter Naghmeh Shafiei sits with her dog Whistler in her apartment. Naghmeh wrote a song called Jina that shines a light on the courage and bravery of individuals who are taking to the streets and standing up for a better future in Iran.



(Left) Lily Devine stands on stage during her performance at the Beers for Queers event on Saturday night.

(Right) Devine begins removing her wig and make-up during her final song of the night.



Singer offers revealing performance

Photos and Story
By Kenzie Friesen

It was a full house at the Smokin' 116 Bistro & Bar on Saturday night as Lily Devine took the stage and performed her one-person show at the bar's Beers for Queers event.

Owner of the bar and bistro, Al Ladhani sat proudly watching the bar's own resident drag queen in her element, smiling in the front row with his phone sitting in front of him on a tripod while he livestreams the night's event to the bar's Facebook and Instagram page. Devine stayed on the neon-coloured stage all night long, performing hit songs by Cher, Reba McEntire, Liza Minnelli, and many more

with the audience cheering her name. She made constant detours during the evening, walking into the audience to engage with the crowd and strike poses, dance, and belt out song lyrics with her fans.

"After 12 years of drag... this show was a major learning curve for me," said Devine after her performance. "How to pace a one-person show, how to change from one character to another, and the music. I have never performed a show like this before, and it just worked!"

After performing bi-weekly and doing a variety of different events for the bistro, Devine and her crew decided to put their whole hearts into the Beers for Queers event just to show the crowd something special. Devine also had numerous cos-

tume changes during her time on stage, earning roaring applause from the crowd each time.

After dancing the night away through her set list, Devine made sure to show those at the Smokin' 116 Bistro & Bar a final number that they wouldn't forget. It was an act where she performed to a song by Charles Aznavour called *What Makes A Man* but in this case was covered by Liza Minnelli. During her powerful rendition of the song, Devine emerged through the curtain to take the stage and remove her wig, her makeup, and her outfit to proudly reveal to the audience a t-shirt featuring a bright-coloured rainbow.

"Given the recent events throughout the United States, with trying to ban drag

shows and trans individuals... and even with the rise in protests against the drag community in general here in Canada, I thought it was fitting to use that song as a political message to show that we are just people," explained Devine, when asked about her inspiration behind the performance.

"There's no hidden agenda, it's just me. I/we are enough, and we don't need someone else telling us who we are because of their ideology."

Throughout recent years, drag shows across America have been targeted by people who want to prevent the shows from going on any further. These protests have been known to often spark violence and have led to many shows being can-

celled due to safety issues. These protests are what inspired Devine to put everything she had into her show, and put on the most passionate performance possible.

Devine says she remains inspired to put on her shows just by looking to the future generation of the drag community and therefore plans to keep performing more events in the future.

She then ended the night by thanking everyone in the crowd for their support and declared that she and Beers for Queers will be back soon. Devine often performs and shares the stage at the Smokin' 116 Bistro & Bar with fellow drag queens, performing comedy, musical, and more every other weekend.



Lily Devine takes off her makeup, wig and dress during her moving final song of the night, *What Makes a Man* by Charles Aznavour. Devine performed at the Smokin' 116 Bar & Bistro at their Beers for Queers event on Saturday night and declared she and the event would be back sometime soon for more Pride events.

Plenty to do as organizations start to open doors again

By Hunter Middleton

With the effects of the pandemic finally settling down, many people are thinking it's time to bring the community back together. Weekly drop-ins and events are on the rise in the Belleville area after the lack of community interaction during COVID.

Many Belleville and Quinte area businesses are planning weekly or biweekly events and drop-ins. Whether people are looking for card or board games, crafting, hands-on activities or sitting down for a drink, the businesses of Belleville have you covered.

With the wide range of drop-ins and events each week, it's hard not to find something you may like. For those who are looking for a fun social get-together, there are Drag shows, open mic nights and social mixers at the 116 Bistro and Bar in Belleville, and the Grind and Vine in Trenton are the places to be. These

events occur on Friday, Saturday or Sunday, depending on the act or the theme during the week. Their most recent events included classic open mic night, sip and slay with Rowena Whey, and ladies' wine night.

For the creative and crafty, the Belleville Public Library puts on free programs such as the drawing room. The program is open to all levels of artists and is a non-instructional studio session with a model.

The library also offers demos and introductory classes to new skills or hobbies, such as 3D printing demos, beginner computer classes and Cricut mug press programs.

Another alternative hands-on class comes from the Artistic Quilts with Colours Social Club. They offer different classes, including sewing for kids, clothing making, and classes for learning the basics of quilting and are located out of

Fun with Stitches.

During the pandemic, many sports complexes had to shut down and many athletes were at a loss when it came to being active. While some were lucky to find alternatives, others had to wait patiently for places to open back up.

The Quinte Sports and Wellness Centre and the Belleville YMCA are back, offering weekly drop-ins and programs and there is no shortage of choices. There is something for all ages, including hockey, volleyball, basketball and pickleball, to name a few. The fitness and aquatics programs are also back in full swing as well.

Melissa Lopes, a member of Montana's Bearcats Tuesday night House league team, shared her experience with coming back after COVID.

"I was just in a woman's league Picton and then we got shut down for that whole next season after that, it kind of felt isolating because I had just moved to the

county and I had started making friends in that league. Then it got shut down and then the next season we didn't even play because of the pandemic so yeah when we finally came back to that it felt amazing you know to see everybody again. I just basically appreciate every game that we can play in that we all get together because it's just something that not only is it great exercise but it's fun interacting with everybody and playing the other teams like everybody's having a good time and it kind of just showed like what we're missing out 'cause of the pandemic."

Some of the newer weekly get-togethers in the Belleville downtown area include role-playing game nights, board game nights and even card game tournaments. These are offered by Scalliwag Toys, the 116 Bistro and Bar and Doki Doki, each night open to all different levels of players and offer a quieter, more laid-back atmosphere for those who attend.

2ManyBricks, located on North Front Street, has building classes for children to build Legos and socialize in the Bayview Mall most weekends on both Saturday and Sunday. Each day has different goals and themes for the children to participate in.

During the pandemic, the Belleville area suffered a hit to the community interaction that many did not realize was a large part of the city through social gatherings and events. The businesses downtown and across Belleville pulled together to bring back community involvement, and other businesses. Beaufort Pub and St Louis Bar & Grill are among some of the other businesses that host events.

A simple way to find out what's going on in the community is through the radio stations in the area, Facebook events, and websites like discover Belleville.

<https://discoverbelleville.ca/events/>



Photo by Nav Rahi

Avinash Soni, an immigrant from India, posing in front of his delivery van outside the warehouse. Soni is a 2021 graduate of Loyalist College.

Immigrant sets his sights on career in medical field

By Nav Rahi

Avinash Soni, a tall young man, works in the Quinte area as a delivery driver for Intelcom, a courier and package delivery company, but his ambitions are to work in the medical field.

He is an immigrant from India and has completed a diploma for chemical engineering technician at Loyalist College in 2021. He came to Belleville in 2019 to pursue higher education. He has not yet found a job in his field, but he wants to stay in Canada. He must complete at least one year's job experience under one employer to get permanent residence. He

started working as a delivery driver for Intelcom in mid-2022. Since then, he has been doing the same job.

Back in India, Soni completed his senior secondary school in the medical stream with 90 per cent marks at Vyas Public School, Bikaner, Rajasthan in 2018. He was a brilliant student and wanted to do something in the medical field. He tried to gain admission in good medical colleges in India but unfortunately, he failed to crack the NEET test (The National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (Undergraduate), formerly the All-India Pre-Medical Test). So, he decided to come to Canada for his higher education. He

received an offer letter in chemical engineering technician from Loyalist College.

Soni did very well in his studies at Loyalist, graduating with 92 per cent grades in 2021. He did not find a job in his field in the Belleville area, but he got a job offer from Winnipeg, but he did not want to move anywhere else, because he loved living in Belleville. "It is a genuinely nice, and peaceful city and I like the people around me."

He decided to refuse that job offer and started searching for a job in Belleville. Although it was not related to his studies, he got a job in Walmart in the e-commerce section. He did that job for eight

months, then quit because he felt it was not in the right place for him. He started searching for another job and he got a job in Bell Media as a technician, but this job did not last long as well because it was winter and there was snow everywhere. Soni was not used to this weather. "It was hard to work in that weather. I could not even stand for five minutes outside the vehicle, but they told me go up on the pole in the snowstorm," he said.

"He is very hardworking and passionate about his work. He had a tough time here in Canada, but he never felt low," said Rohit Soni, his cousin and roommate.

He had been jobless for a month and then one of his friends introduced him to a sub-contractor at Intelcom. He started working with Intelcom in April 2022. He liked this job and decided to stick with it until he becomes a permanent resident in Canada.

Soni said the workload has been reduced for Intelcom drivers recently, due to a lower volume of packages.

Soni never thought he had to go through these times, and he wants to become a lab technologist.

"I will continue my studies whenever I got permanent residence and become a lab technologist," he said.

Group offers unique housing solution

Co-owned space offers proactive solution to living

By Nav Rahi

Seven X Acres is a co-owned housing solution that provides safe space for people to cohabit, co-work, co-think, co-heal and collaborate to generate proactive solutions that foster a community system that is equitable, inclusive, and diverse.

The group presented their idea to the City of Belleville before the pandemic and sought help from them. The proposal was well received, but they were asked to reframe the housing proposal as a tourism proposal, given the location of their land. After the COVID-19 pandemic declined, the group's members are planning to revisit the city with a housing solution for BIPOC+ families in the Quinte region.

"Our goal is to have our housing go up as soon as possible. We think the city and institutions in our region can really support this initiative to test out this pilot project and if it works, this is something that we can scale and replicate not only the Bay of Quinte region, but other rural regions in Canada," said Dharmini Thriukumar, one of the founders of the Seven X Acres.

The group wants to open the space for residency in three phases for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC+) to step into collective ownership. Practising group economics is key to overcome systematic hurdles faced by marginalized pockets of people, the group believes.



Photo by Nav Rahi

(From left) Karan Singh, Mohini Yadav, Dharmini Thriukumar and Marcus, posing at Seven X Acre residency in Belleville.

There is one house which has common space for activities, art skills practice, a community kitchen and private rooms for residence, but the group also wants to make tiny houses in the

backyard which will be open for all communities.

"We just moved here, and after a while, it just became a family. You can speak whatever you like, and there is no kind of stress about

anything," said Mohini Yadav, a resident Seven X Acre who is an international student at Loyalist College.

Seven X Acres is located alongside of Airport Parkway at Bel-

leville, on seven acres of land, which is how the group came up with the name. There is total 6 people from various communities living in the residency, including Dharmini Thriukumar.



Photo by Kenzie Friesen

Riverside Tattoo Co. has every room in its studio full of clients despite the snowstorm happening late Sunday evening in Belleville. Sam Trent sits with her newest client in the tattoo studio's farthest room in the back. Trent begins working on her client's forearm to start what she describes as "the biggest tattoo piece" she will have done in her career so far.



Photo by Kenzie Friesen

Sam Trent spends a snowy Sunday afternoon in her studio at the Riverside Tattoo Co. in Belleville, working hard while touching up a client's older tattoo with some new shading.

More than just a job for tattoo artist

By Kenzie Friesen

An endless number of printed stencils hang pinned to the graffitied walls of Riverside Tattoo Company, filled with different sketches of unique and creative tattoo designs such as mushrooms, anime characters, plants, skulls, animals, and more.

Sam Trent sits surrounded by these designs in the studio, creating more for the next day's appointments, as well as perfecting their shading.

Soon enough, black ink is being poured into small, circular containers by the sanitary gloved hands of Riverside Tattoo's newest apprentice, as she prepares her station for another day full of tattoos.

"I work on a day-before basis to reduce wasted time on reschedules, or cancellations. This also helps me get in the right headspace for the day."

Trent then begins printing a new stencil for her next incoming client, this one in the shape of angel wings with a bold number 13 in between them. Asked how many tattoos she currently has, Trent laughs, "Oh man, I have too many to count! To summarize I would say I have two patchwork sleeves started, an almost full leg, (which is my designated practice leg) and I also have my stomach fully tattooed. My favourite would probably have to be my lower stomach, which was done by an artist in Toronto who I

have looked up to for a long time, so it was very cool experience to meet him and finally get some of his art."

Before she got her apprenticeship, Trent was coming into Riverside Tattoo Co., in Belleville's east end, regularly as a customer. She eventually saw her opportunity and took it once the shop announced they had an opening for a new tattoo apprentice, knowing that having some of the shop's artwork already on herself may give her an advantage.

"Being a regular at the shop put me ahead of other applicants because they knew that I was committed, and I knew a bit about the industry already. It's an important step people now forget about, that is, simply getting tattooed to get your foot in the door," says Trent.

Born on March 3, Trent has had a passion for art for as long as she can remember, and this has always been reflected in her schooling. She took advanced placement art all throughout high school, and eventually went to college for graphic design. Then shortly after college, and getting some tattoos of her own, Trent finally decided that she wanted to be a tattoo artist.

"I love my job," says Trent as she wipes down the black leather tattoo chair with sanitary wipes for her next client. "The best part of my job is definitely being able to create art, and being able to help people feel more confident in their body."

In the studio, Trent begins filling up

her tattoo gun again with the jet black ink as her next client lays down in the tattooing chair, wrapped in plastic film.

"It is crazy what you can accomplish when you really push yourself to succeed," says Trent.

"So far just having the doors to this industry open to me and watching my growth over the year and a half I've been doing tattooing has been the most exciting part of my career I would say."

Trent defines her own tattoo style as illustrated blackwork, meaning that most of her work is done in black or grey, and all her tattoos are illustrations. She has recently started accepting some colour projects that she performs for a discounted rate, in order to gain more experience,

but she explains that she will always do illustrative designs as her heart belongs to art and drawing, and realism tattoos just don't excite her the same way.

Trent quickly grabs her phone to take a picture of her latest work, now sitting permanently above her client's knee, before posting it to her Instagram account.

After working at Riverside Tattoo Co. for over a year and a half as an apprentice, Trent says that she loves the new family that she has found at the shop, and is thankful to be given such an incredible opportunity to do the artwork she loves to do every day.

Young shutterbugs show off their talents at exhibition

By Kenzie Friesen

Brightly coloured photos captured by the youth of Quinte West from the ages of 7-14 stand out on the walls of the Quinte Arts Council gallery for the entire month of February for their student photography show.

Students from all around Quinte West were encouraged by the Bay of Quinte Regional Marketing Board to grab their cameras and go out to take their most creative shots of people, places or things within the region this past year.

The photos were submitted to the Quinte Arts Council between December and January to be showcased at the gallery for the month of February. The photos contained different shots of pets, siblings, friends, favourite parks, and many nature shots from around the area. With an overwhelming response of over 150 pictures submitted, the Quinte Arts Council was awestruck at the creativity and diversity of the photos taken by the young shutterbugs of Quinte West.

"We had such an amazing turnout," said Quinte Arts Council communications and media director, Kodie Trahn-Guay. "There was so much creativity from every participant, and they were all just so excited to be there," she says when asked about the opening ceremony for the gallery show.

"The whole point of the show was to spark that kind of creativity in the kids

around here, which I think is so important. And I couldn't believe their reactions to them seeing their own framed work. They all seemed so happy and so inspired, and it was really heartwarming to see," says Trahn-Guay.

The Bay of Quinte Regional Marketing Board put together the gallery to encourage artistic growth and expression in students of the area and to create a display of their photography that allows people to view different places around Quinte West through the lens of today's youth.

The right wall of the Quinte Arts Council has been laid out with different photos from the applicants that included action shots of local football players, a moonlit street, bees on sunflowers, and little brothers. A tall photo of a kind-eyed beagle wearing a plaid winter toque sits in the middle of the row of photos. It was taken by 11-year-old Colton B., who talks about his best friend in the caption. "This is my dog Daisy. She is my best friend. I have Autism and she helps me and always plays with me. She makes me feel happy."

Other detailed shots of pine needles in snow, rippling waters, rose gardens, beaches, cupcakes and more grace the left side of the building, and features a photo from the gallery's youngest participant, eight-year old Sierra S. Sierra's photo showcases a wooden stick fort that she found in the forest one snowy day. "Someone took some time to create this



Photo by Kenzie Friesen

Kodie Trahn-Guay, communications and media director for the Quinte Arts Council, looks over the photos done by children from all over Quinte West between the ages of seven and 14 years old.

fort, and I think it is cute," she says in her caption underneath her work.

The photography show will include

the 23 winning photos at the Quinte Arts Council gallery in Belleville and can also be found in the Belleville Public Library

until Feb. 28 for those wanting to catch a glimpse of Quinte West through the eyes of its future generation of artists.



Photo by Dave Leclair

Laval Rocket winger Joel Teasdale digs for the puck against Sens netminder Logan Flodell in Family Day action at the CAA arena. Laval took the game 7-2 after dropping the first two of a three-game series on the weekend.

Sens take two of three against Laval

Drag performance part of pre-game event during Pride night on Saturday

By Hunter Middleton

Last Saturday, Belleville Senators' puck drop against the Laval Rockets was accompanied by a drag queen death drop for the Senators' Pride night.

This was game two of three for the Belleville Senators against the Laval Rockets this past long weekend, with the last game being the Family Day game Monday.

In Friday action, the Sens defeated Laval Rockets 5-3.

As part of the evening, fans were able to purchase tickets to a pre-game drag performance and dinner hosted by Kingston Drag Queen Rowena Whey, presented by the Grind and Vine at the McFarlane Pub located on the top level of the CAA arena.

Magna Autosystems was the sponsor of the Pride night event.

"Magna Autosystems is proud to focus on diversity and inclusion of all, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or other aspects of who we are. We are proud to support this event and allow everyone to embrace their true self - #MagnaPride," said Leanne Shaw, Magna Autosystems human resources manager.

A full house attended the performance, with a wide range of ages coming to enjoy the food and show. The show included comedy, dancing and musical act while the food was made by the Grind and Vine.

After the performance, the arena flooded with fans waiting to see if the Sens would continue their winning streak against the Laval. As part of Pride night, the first 2,000 fans in the door received a free Pride drink koozie.

The top of the rink housed a wide variety of booths and activities presented by LGBTQ+-friendly and inclusive local businesses and organizations for all ages. Face painting, Pride merchandise from members of the Bay of Quinte Pride, custom name art from Christopher Bennett, and an informational booth from the Enrichment Centre for Mental Health were among the booths at the game.

Glenda Pinault, who was assisting at the Bay of Quinte Pride booth, commented on how thankful she is for the Belleville Senators supporting Belleville Pride and the event they put on and allowing them to do things like the Pride night.

Members of the Bay of Quinte Pride and Rowena Whey presented the ceremonial puck drop, and the game was under way. It was an intense and tight game that left many fans on the edge of their seats, with the Sens ready to continue the win streak after the previous night's game.

The Senators started the game hot, scoring their first goal at 10:35 in the first period by Egor Sokolov, becoming the Belleville Senators highest scoring point-getter in the history of the team.

The Rockets then picked up speed, scoring three goals in the first period. The first was made by Gabriel Bourque,

assisted by Anthony Richard, and Madison Bowey scored the second goal. The final goal in the first period was made into an empty net by Joël Teasdale with the Sens goalie out of position.

Hoping to gain the upper hand in the second period, the Senators set the pace, scoring a goal four minutes into the period. The goal was scored by Roby Jarventie, assisted by Angus Crookshank. Crookshank continued his streak from the night before, with two goals in the previous game and another two goals in the game before that.

The next attack came from Jake Lucchini, after stealing it from the Rockets' defenceman Nicolas Beaudin and going one-on-one with the goalie Philippe Desrosiers on the Rockets' power play.

The Rockets then scored with under two minutes on the clock, the assist coming from defenceman Tory Dello with the goal by forward Brandon Gignac.

Due to a facial injury during an offensive play, Brennan Saulnier of the Belleville Senators was taken off the ice to be treated.

With the score sitting at 4-3 in favour of the Rockets, the crowd cheered on the Senators in the close game. Closing the gap, Belleville Senators put in another goal during their power play by Roby Jarventie, becoming his second goal of the game and tying the game up.

With the game tied at four, Jake Lucchini, scored the winning goal in overtime with only 2:54 on the clock against their Quebec rivals.

During Monday's game, the Senators were defeated by the Laval Rockets 7-2.

The Senators currently sit in the seventh position in the North Division behind the Cleveland Monsters and 29th overall in the AHL out of 32 teams.



(Above) Laval Rocket Peter Abbandonato and Belleville Senator Maxence Guenette battle for a spot in front of the Senators' net during Saturday's game.

Photo by Hunter Middleton

(Left) Senators winger Jake Lucchini protects the puck against Laval forward Xavier Simoneau in Family Day action at the CAA Arena in Belleville. Laval defeated the Senators 7-2 in Monday's action, taking two of three weekend games against Laval.

Photo by Dave Leclair