Leo Hayes High School student, Chantall Plourde, is collecting books by and about Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) people for her school library. Photo by Chantall Plourde.

By MARIE-CHRISTINE ALLARD

The NB Media Co-op’s Marie-Christine Allard interviews Chantall Plourde, a high school student at Leo Hayes High School in Fredericton, about her project collecting books by and about Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) people.

Marie-Christine Allard: When did you get the idea for your book project?

Chantall Plourde: It started in my World Issues class. I had to do a major project on something that benefits the community. I came up with the idea to put LGBT books into high school libraries. My Mom came up with the name—Literature Gives Belonging to Youth (LGBT).

MCA: Why did you think this project was important?

CP: LGBT issues are still very important in our lives. Books help people figure themselves out. I think it’s important for teens to read about LGBT issues, whether it’s fiction or non-fiction. Before, our community isn’t represented very much in libraries, I thought it would help.

MCA: How have people responded to the project?

CP: So far it’s all been positive. A group called Queer Theory Collective in Fredericton has been very supportive, I learned that Fredericton is a lot more supportive than I thought. The libraries at my school were very helpful. The librarian decorated everything purple during purple day (a day in support of LGBT teens).

MCA: How did you get the word out?

CP: I started to tell people about it on Facebook and I made an Amazon wish list with over 100 books on it. I also organized a jelly bean jar competition and raised $60. I raised $215 to buy books. I worked with Youth Pride last year. They had raised money that was never used, so they agreed to give money to the project. A lot of people donated $20, I announced it at school and sold tickets at lunch.

MCA: How is your project doing?

CP: I’m hoping to do a benefit concert and coffee house for the last push. After that, I will give the books to the library. I want to keep going with the project and give books to other high schools in the communities. I’d love to send them around the world, as there is a great lack of LGBT literature. Hopefully, some of the teachers will start their own LGBT Youth Project in their own schools; making the project go province wide. Bringing awareness and acceptance of LGBT people and their allies is the best thing people can do.

To contact Chantall about the book project, email gthyouthproject@gmail.com.

National Day of Mourning marked in Saint John

April 28th is the National Day of Mourning for workers killed and injured on the job. The Annapolis Valley Record documents the lives lost in the past decade.

Community Calendar

For details and updated event listings, visit nbmediacoop.org. To list your event or to receive the community calendar by email once per week, email community@nbmediacoop.org.

Protest the abolition of the Advisory Council on the Status of Women. 2016 Census data show that, despite the success the council had in raising awareness about women’s issues such as violence against women, poverty and discrimination, the government has decided to abolish it.

Penobscot Fund raiser Dinner. Join a dinner in support of the Concerned Citizens of Penobscot on Sunday, May 7 from 6-9 pm at the Hotel St. John in St. John. The meal will feature a beef smorgasbord (a variety of beef dishes), salads, dessert and coffee/tea. Adults $10 each. Children $5.

Ferris Wheel School Scale Tools for Community Groups. Volunteers, board members, and staff - Ferris Wheel Free School is the chance to get some fresh ideas for your organisation. All workshop themes are “You are stronger than you think” with Mark D’Arcy, UNB Woodlot; “Eco-rouse and the ‘National Sustainable Model” with Carla Gunn, writer, psychology professor, and board member with Conservation Council of NB, “Know the lay of the land - Aboriginal rights in NB” with A. Vermette, Assistant Professor St. Thomas University Native Studies department, and for information and to register, visit www.nbca.ca.

Literary History Workshop. Sun., May 29, 10am-12 noon. Charlotte Street Arts Centre, 732 Charlotte St., Fredericton. A variety of literary history topics will be covered. Simultaneous workshops for beginners. Registration fees (lunch included): $8 for low income and students, $15 for average income, or $25 for high income. To register or for more info, contact 506-453-4999 or email: hnnb@unb.ca.

In Brief...

- A book commemorating Canada’s longest running co-operative was released on April 5th in Sussex, New Brunswick. Determined to Prosper by historian David Bent tells the story of the Sussex and Stedholm Agricultural Society #21, which celebrated its 170th anniversary this year. The success is attributed to the continued growth of generations of farmers helping each other and their community.

- A 1.5 to 2 year open-pit gold mine is being proposed in an environmentally sensitive area near Bensford in northeastern New Brunswick. The Emtree Property Gold mine carries the potential of developing into one of the hundreds of an Atlantic salmon stream, uncommon white cedar swamps and black ash stands, causing acid mine drainage and affecting the water supply for the town of Petit Rocher as well as the water quality and quantity for nearby residents and wildlife. The Mining Watch Canada, the Belledune Citizens’ Committee, Bathurst Sustainable Development and the Sierra Club are monitoring the project. On April 18, 2011, the groups requested that the Environmental Impact Assessment for the Emtree Property Gold Mine be bumped up to a Joint Panel Review, which would mean greater public participation at federal and provincial levels.

- A throat swab of a sick seven-year-old girl in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, who tested positive for mould and asbestos, which she’d been inhaling at her school. Ceiling tiles began falling down in a grade 2 classroom at the Fundy Park Elementary School in early February. Mould was observed on the tiles and the presence of asbestos was confirmed. The Halifax Regional School Board moved students back into the classroom on April 1st after repairs were completed.

- A coalition of 61 First Nations and Inuit communities calling on Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s government to release Environmental Gateway Pipeline and National Energy Board’s 2007 report which would deliver oil from the Alberta tar sands to the British Columbia coast.

- Over 100 University of Toronto students held a rowdy party in support of a controversial pipeline project. Mayor Peter Munk’s $35 million donation to the university, spurred on by speeches by professor Naom Chomsky and journalist Peter Mansbridge. The party was held on the university’s reverse course on the corporatization of education. protestbark.ca contains information on Munk’s Barkerville gold operations.

- A new study by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has found that the Canadian government’s past decade did not in fact lead to job creation, a common argument for reducing business taxes. Of the 118 corporations studied, profits rose 50 per cent and taxes dropped 20 per cent from 2000 to 2009, with the number of jobs created by these companies rose only five per cent from 2005 to 2010.

- Despite $1.25 billion spent over four years by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada on “water and water waste” initiatives, little change has been seen. A file obtained from Health Canada revealed that one in five First Nations communities still lack safe drinking water.

- Environment Canada just reported that Canada has the highest commitment of military personnel in Libya: 65. A Canadian general was appointed to head NATO’s command of the no-fly zone over Libya while Canadian CF-18s took part in the enforcement of the zone, beginning the war in Libya.

- A group of 11 Guatemalan women filed a lawsuit for $405 million in damages against Canadian-based company Hudbay Minerals. The women say they were gang raped during forced evictions from their homes near the company’s operations in El Enfiador in January 2003.

- Over 60 people gathered over the noon hour on April 7th to protest the breaking of a 80 meter buffer zone set to protect wetlands in the University of New Brunswick Woodlot. Participants lined up along Fredericton’s new Maryland highway in front of the future Costco site and shouted chants in favour of saving wetlands and the UNB Woodlot. A week later, on April 14, dozens of protesters and university students from UNB and St. Thomas University, high school students and concerned citizens rallied in front of the UNB Board of Governors’ meeting, calling on the University of New Brunswick, the UNB Woodlot, delivered a letter to the UNB President Eddy Campbell requesting an explanation of the infringement of the 80 meter buffer zone set for the eventual construction of the UNB Woodlot store development. He also requested that the UNB Woodlot be declared environmentally protected land. The minutes of these meetings have been kept secret since 2004.

Participants at a rally to save the UNB Woodlot on April 7th, 2011 donated floation devices, a paddle and blue tarp to make the point that wetlands are essential for water retention and flood control. Photo by Kevin Macbeth.