This page was exported from - Bancroft this Week
Export date: Fri Mar 29 1:56:05 2024 / +0000 GMT

Celebrating Pride in Maynooth

By Jim Eadie



One month following the huge World Pride 2014 celebrations in Toronto, the annual Pride event was held in Maynooth at the Arlington Hotel on the evening of Aug. 2.

?We have been in this area for six years now,? said Jody Raven, ?but this is our first trip to Maynooth Pride!?

?We went to World Pride in Toronto last month, and we decided to go to the other end of the spectrum tonight,? said Henry Gordon.

?We wanted to experience a more small town, intimate gathering.?

Raven and Gordon are co-owners and facilitators of the Sacred Path Centre in Bancroft. They moved to North Hastings for the spectacular beauty, and to explore the wilderness.

?We fell in love with this place, and the price of land was within our range,? said Raven. ?This is the community we were looking for.?

Lea Kilter, a local Coldwell Banker real-estate sales representative and owner of Magnificent Hill organic farm near Highland Grove brought a friend, and neighbour Sheldon Lewis with her. Lewis is the owner/operator of HighlandMaples Farm on the Lewis family farmstead where he grew up.

?His farm is on the next hill over from mine,? according to Kitler. ?We are the two single gay farmers from Highland Grove!?

?We [gay community members] are farmers, regular folks living our lives,? said Lewis.

?I am out, and I am proud. We shouldn't be hiding in the hayloft any longer.?

Peterborough rock and new wave band Occam's Blazer entertained later in the evening.

?I love playing in this band,? said singer Alisha Embury.

?We play original music, it's about social injustice, we make cultural commentary with a very strong positive message.?

Community Pride events can range from solemn gatherings, to carnivals. The World Pride website notes that Prideevents are intended to celebrate the history, courage, diversity and future of the lesbian gay bisexual and transgender community, as well as making positive steps against discrimination and violence, and promoting dignity and equality.

Maynooth and North Hastings have a long continuous history of annual Pride events stretching back 21 years.

?There were a dozen of us there at the first one,? said Joe Shulman, ?and one pinwheel firework. We maxed out at 250 people in 2010.?