

One turn around the sun in Bancroft

Journal: June 6, 2017

Today is day 365. None of the people native to the Bancroft habitat have rejected me ? I think perhaps my disguise is working. My only hope is to continue observing them in their natural environment. More on day 366?

Today, as I edit away and fit the paper together, I mark my one-year with *Bancroft This Week*. I hadn't officially moved to town for another month yet, but I was clicking things and typing away and trying to look like I knew what I was doing. Next thing you know the June 10, 2016 paper was coming out and I was making bad Adele puns.

Excuse me while I indulge and reflect on my last year in the community.

I've said it once, I've said it 100 times: Bancroft is big for a small town.

Recently, while travelling up to the Fleming Quarry, I had the opportunity to sit beside a fellow Bancroft media person. We spoke about how between the media in town there isn't a real sense of competition. Yes, I'm always looking to have a better angle than the *Times* or *Moose FM*, but none of us can do it all. We discussed because there is so much going on in town every outlet is always covering something different ? which is fantastic. I joked that we should all be in one newsroom together and then we might stand a chance at being in two places at once.

The variety of coverage that's in Bancroft is phenomenal. I've covered the Ontario Health Coalition, plays, local people and business owners, music events at the Arlington and the Playhouse, community events, art galleries, electric car charging station pop-ups and cheque presentations ? so many cheque presentations! On the harder news side, I've become engrained in issues such as Hastings Prince Edward District School Board's continuing accommodation reviews, Social Justice Without Borders' fundraising to bring the Jarads to Canada, the water and wastewater rate increase and its impact, a local doctor who lost his right to practice medicine, the Freymond quarry proposal and many more.

We hear again and again that journalists must remain unbiased, but it's rare that people note how hard that can be when a place becomes home. We don't talk about the choice we have to make to ensure our opinions don't flow out into our writing. I've volunteered with you. I've faced the insane hydro bills with you. I've come to know your quirks as I'm sure you've come to know mine ? your faces, your families, your hardships ? I've not even brushed the surface, I'm sure. Sometimes you don't always like what I have to say but I'll do my best to tell it like it is anyways, because you don't deserve any less.

Anyways, before I joke too much or get too sappy, I'd like to extend my thanks to you ? the some-odd 10,000 of you ? that continue to read and support the paper. If you've ever reached out to me in a letter or email of support, thank you ? sometimes the days are long and knowing I've made a positive impact means the world to me. If you've ever reached out in a letter or email to disagree with me, thank you ? if I've got you fired up enough to contact me, that means I've got you thinking, that's all I can ask for. If you've ever reached out with a lead, thank you ? I'm still learning about the area, there's always more to know.

There you have it: 600 words trying to summarize a whole year ? don't start counting!