

Time flies when you're having fun

By Jake Storey

There's something particularly interesting about being a journalist in your hometown ? especially when that town is a small community like Bancroft. It almost goes without saying that everyone here has been immensely welcoming.

When I was working in Belleville, I swear that I met the mayor once a week for two years straight. I don't think he ever remembered my name or face once. It was like I was a totally different person, every time. When I walked into my first council meeting here in Bancroft, the mayor introduced herself and asked me how my grandfather was doing before I even opened my mouth. It seems her husband and my grandfather used to go fishing together. Councillor Mullet came up to me at my next visit and asked the same question. Apparently he's a former co-worker of my grandfather.

Then there's the peculiar matter of free food. I can't escape it. No exaggeration, every other story I covered, I was offered food through some means or another. Barbecues, lunches, council meetings, potluck dinners and any school event featured no less than eight pizzas. I tried to avoid taking any, but I was invariably offered by the hosts, who encouraged me to eat. Small town hospitality, or just dumb luck, I'm certainly not one to complain either way.

When I was writing in Belleville, I don't think a single person ever followed up with me after I did a story featuring them. Here, just about every one of them has contacted me through some means or another to offer their opinion on my work.

In my time here, I've interviewed multiple former teachers and classmates, family friends and cousins all in a day's work. Strangers have come up to me and complimented my work. It seemed most days I'd be attending an event or two with a close friend from school, a journalist, who is now my competition. As I said, there's something special about being a journalist in your hometown. It's been fun, challenging and at times, stressful. I've learned a lot in this position and these eight weeks have flown by. This is more than just my departure from *Bancroft This Week*, this is the final leg of my college journey as well. The past eight months are just one stretch of a three year effort for me. I already miss going to school and seeing my classmates and professors every day. I know I'll miss writing for everyone here and seeing my photos on the front page. I'm not going to miss being perennially broke.

While this is my last week with *Bancroft This Week*, I'm not done with Bancroft. I don't think I ever will be. I'd like to thank everyone who read my stories, everyone who sat down for an interview with me and everyone who told me they enjoyed my work. I'd like to thank Sarah Sobanski for putting up with all my little rookie mistakes. She gave me an opportunity here and her guidance has helped me improve greatly. From here, it's off to Nepal in the fall where hopefully I can grow even more.

So long, see you around and again, thank you.