

# Photographer sees beauty on the fringes

**J.T. MCVEIGH**  
THE ENTERPRISE-BULLETIN

At a time when teens are thought to have more interest in selfies, 16-year-old Leah Denbok has taken a different path.

Social justice is more likely to dominate her attention than cat videos, and her work captures images of the faces of homeless people in New York, Kitchener and Toronto on her YouTube channel.

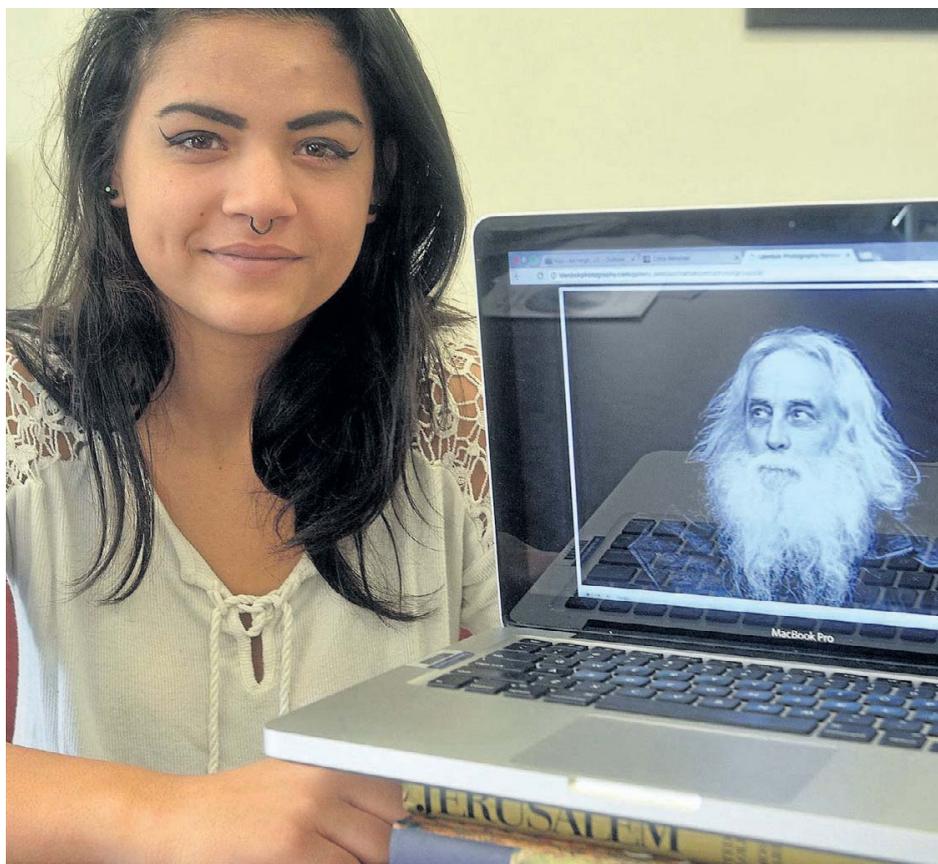
Denbok began taking pictures when she was 12; a cousin of hers, who is a few years older, was a photographer and influenced her enough to want to pick up a camera.

So, a trip to a local pawn shop and Denbok got her first DSLR.

Denbok credits her mentor, National Geographic photographer Joel Sartore, with directing her toward her work.

"I have been taking lessons from him, and lately over Skype pretty much since I started photography," said Denbok. "He has a project that he started called Photo Ark, taking photos of endangered species before they disappear. The idea interested me, so when I was showing him my pictures, the homeless series, he really liked the idea."

When she was researching photos of street people, Denbok came across a British photographer, Lee Jefferies, who is well known for his images of homeless people. Although the full-time photographer also works as an accountant, his work with the homeless, particularly his portraits, have created



Leah Denbok shows one of the images of a homelessness project she is working on. The 16-year-old Grade 11 student is being mentored by National Geographic photographer Joel Sartore. A YouTube video of her work, *Homage to the Homeless*, is gaining lots of views.

J.T. MCVEIGH/ENTERPRISE-BULLETIN

Closer to home and perhaps the most personal experience with social justice comes from her mother, Sara.

"When my mother was four years old, (she) was saved by Mother Teresa when she was found wandering the streets in Calcutta when she was taken to her orphanage," said Denbok. "My mother recently wrote a book and gives talks about her experiences back then."

Her father, Tim, agreed: "Leah has grown up listening to stories about Mother Theresa and we have a painting of her on our walls, so Leah has heard a lot of stories about outcasts and at least sub-consciously there is a pull."

The Grade 11 Collingwood Collegiate student is carrying on with her project as she has plans for another video of her work to be presented on YouTube, and like Jefferies, Denbok is hoping her work raises awareness and donations for the homeless.

"You look at their faces and their eyes and you can see that they have experienced a lot in their lives," said Denbok, "When people see them on the street, they just walk by thinking that they put themselves in that situation, but there is a beauty in a lot of them and you really can't blame them for being there; it's just what happens in your life that (makes) you end up there."

Denbok's photos can be seen at [ldenkphotography.com](http://ldenkphotography.com) and her video can be found by typing her name into the YouTube search bar.

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quite a following. Denbok was moved by a com-

ment about his photography when a critic wrote that his work is meant

to honour homeless people and not pity them.

## POLICE BRIEFS

### Seasonal RIDE program starts soon

WASAGA BEACH – On Halloween night, OPP ran RIDE checks in Midhurst and Wasaga Beach and found no violations from the nearly 100 cars stopped.

The OPP would like to remind all motorists drinking and driving is still a major cause of many preventable serious collisions. and as a reminder to all motorists in an ongoing attempt to make roadways safe, the OPP will be conducting its annual Festive RIDE from Nov. 21 to Jan. 7.

### Impaired by drugs

ELMVALE – OPP responded to a report of an unconscious woman sitting behind the wheel of a vehicle that was parked by a business on Yonge Street South in Elmvale in the early evening Monday.

When police arrived, they discovered the woman was under the influence of a drug that had impaired her ability to drive. The car had been left running at the time. Charged with care or control while impaired by drug is a 31-year-old woman from Springwater Township. Her first appearance is Nov. 22 in Collingwood court.

### More thefts from cars

COLLINGWOOD – More thefts from automobiles continues to plague neighbourhoods as a series of thefts took place sometime overnight from between Oct. 29 to Oct. 30 on Georgian Manor Drive in Collingwood. Someone entered several cars parked on private driveways and made off with loose change, sunglasses and a wallet with personal identification cards. If you have information about this crime, contact the Blue Mountains OPP at 705-445-4321 or call Crime Stoppers at 800-222-8477 or submit information at [crimestoppersdm.com](http://crimestoppersdm.com).

OPP officers would like to remind residents of "lock it or lose it" tips:

- Roll up your vehicle windows;
- Keep your valuables out of sight,

such as wallets/purses, GPS navigation units, any currency or better yet, remove them entirely from the vehicle;

- Lock your doors; and
- Pocket your keys.

For more information and crime-prevention tips, visit [opp.ca](http://opp.ca).

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Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> *christmas*

# Craft & gift sale

featuring **New Life Church**  
(28 Tracey Lane, Collingwood)  
**9 am - 2 pm**

Over 20 local vendors with a beautiful selection of gifts for everyone on your Christmas list.  
A light lunch is also available!

Presented by the **New Life Missions Team**  
For more information contact Rachel at [rlieferink@hotmail.com](mailto:rlieferink@hotmail.com) or 705-351-9141.




# ONE HUMANITY BAHAI FAITH

The South American Baha'i House of Worship in Chile was opened Oct. 19, 2016

"Every city in which, during the days of the Manifestation, a temple was raised up, hath created security and constancy and peace, for such buildings were given over to the perpetual glorification of God, and only in the remembrance of God can the heart find rest. Gracious God!"

'Abdu'l-Baha (1844-1921)

search - baha'i temple chile

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**Specific areas of interest**

**Fundraising 🐾 Event Planning 🐾 Finance 🐾 Major Gift Development 🐾 Board Governance**

For general inquires please call Executive Director Sonya Reichel at 705-445-5204 ex 225 or email [sonya@gths.ca](mailto:sonya@gths.ca)  
Please send your letter of interest and resume in confidence to board member David Garner at [jdgarner@bell.net](mailto:jdgarner@bell.net)



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