

Colborne family living on the edge

J. LEBLANC
tleblanc@northumberlandnews.com

BRIGHTON -- Just over a year ago, a Colborne family lost everything. Today they live on the edge of poverty, struggling to make ends meet.

"We had a routine, get up, get the kids ready for school, he'd go to work, I'd clean the house, have dinner ready, it was quite comfortable, a nice little family situation," said Roberta Taylor-Doherty, a mother of three whose life was turned upside down one September 2009 afternoon.

"(My husband) Jesse came home and said 'I lost my job, they got rid of me.'"

The family of five had lived in their first home in Colborne for just over a year and a half when they received the devastating news that Jesse Taylor-Doherty would no longer be working.

For the next six months they fought the dismissal and eventually won a settlement.

"They just paid him out instead, but that wasn't enough for us to survive and keep the house," Ms. Taylor-Doherty said.

"We lived in the house for just over a year and a half before he lost his job and then managed to stay there for just about another year before we got our eviction notice."

According to Ms. Taylor-Doherty, almost 12 months after that fateful day, the family's heat was cut off, then the hydro, and then their only vehicle was repossessed.

Not long after, the bank reclaimed their home.

"We still drive by (the old house) and we're like, oh I remember when we used to have the bonfires out back and when

we would clean out the gardens in the spring with the kids, and trying to get everything ready and raking leaves... For me it's hard, because it's depressing. What did I do wrong? What could I have done better?"

"The day we officially moved the last of our stuff out, I was crying. It was the home we thought we'd live in, raise our kids in. It was comfortable for the five of us, there was always room," she said.

The Taylor-Doherty family is now living in what is technically a two-bedroom apartment, the second room has since been converted into two rooms for the children.

"It's kinda hard to sleep at night because my brother talks and stuff. I want my own bedroom," said Myles, 11, the oldest of the three children.

Although both have been looking for work, as in many small towns across the country, small town life doesn't come with a thriving employment sector.

"In this town there are not a whole lot of areas to work. I think about two months after the settlement we lost our vehicle."

"And that made it even more difficult because we are stuck in a little town with no vehicle," Ms. Taylor-Doherty said.

Diagnosed with diabetes, insulin dependent and unable to return to work due to neuropathy in his feet, Mr. Taylor-Doherty may soon face another hurdle even tougher than finding work.

"It's really hard for my husband to get a job, the doctors don't want him working, Ontario Works even told him to apply for disability, because he already has neuropathy in his feet."

"They said between five and



T.J. LEBLANC / THE INDEPENDENT

COLBORNE -- Roberta Taylor-Doherty stands outside of the house she and her family once called home.

10 years he's probably going to have amputation," Ms. Taylor-Doherty said.

According to his wife, at just 24 years old, Mr. Taylor-Doherty has already lost the feeling in his feet, resulting in broken bones and other foot injuries.

The neuropathy (loss of sensation) has now started in his hands as well.

"He's gotten really quiet over the last year. I try to be strong to hold it together for everybody. He's sick now right," Ms. Taylor-Doherty said.

As the Christmas season approaches, the Taylor-Doherty family is trying to figure out how they will provide for their family over the holidays.

Regulars at the Cramahe Food Bank, the family will turn to local charitable organizations for assistance over the holiday season.

"It's a little stressful. We applied last year for the food hamper so that was good to know that we

had a Christmas dinner, so we're going to do that again this year," Ms. Taylor-Doherty said.

"In our family, presents are addressed to a person, but we don't put who it's from. Whatever we've managed to come up with it just goes under the tree all as one."

For information on how to help a family in need in your area contact the Salvation Army Cobourg Community and Family Services at 905-373-9440.

THE BAY ZONE

- Seasonal Gifts
- Handmade Linens & Bedding
- Hooked Rugs
- Needlepoint Pillows

Lots more to see...

STOP IN AND TAKE A LOOK AT OUR HOLIDAY SELECTION ON DISPLAY!

180 Baldwin Street Brighton
Phone: (613) 439-9009 bayzone@live.ca

Death Notices
INDEPENDENT
DEC. 2/10

PUDDEPHATT, CHARLES EDWARD at the Moira Place Long Term Care Home, Tweed, on Saturday, November 27th, 2010, age 89 years. Charles Puddephatt of RR 1, Codrington, son of the late George Puddephatt and the late Lilly May (Woodbine). Dear brother of Jack Puddephatt, and Joan Smith both of Codrington. Predeceased by his sisters Joyce and Barbara, and his brothers, Jim, Bill, Bert, and Ted. Sadly missed by his many nieces and nephews and his extended family. The family will receive friends at the Walas Funeral Home, 130 Main Street, Brighton on Wednesday from 1 o'clock. Service in the funeral home on Wednesday, December 1st, 2010 at 2 o'clock. Interment Mount Olivet Cemetery, Codrington. As an expression of sympathy, donations to the charity of your choice would be appreciated. www.quintefuneralcentres.com