

# Law Day exposes justice system to the public

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Mock trial among festivities  
Ashley Hall  
For The Herald

The Lethbridge courthouse was booming this weekend with kids and adults alike as they toured the facility and got a rare look into the provincial legal system and how everything pulls together to make it work.

Scott Harling, a local lawyer and organizer of this year's Law Day, says this is a great opportunity for the public.

"We open up the courthouse and the justice system for people who don't have to interact with it in a daily basis to see what we do here."

Harling explains there are many different booths on display at these events of all of the different people involved in the judicial system including the Lethbridge Regional Police Department, Victims Services Unit and the Court of Appeals.

The event included a mock trial in which The Muppets' patriarch, Kermit the Frog, was put on trial for the theft of the Stanley Cup from the Galt Museum.

Kermit was charged with three different charges including theft under \$5,000, break and enter of a non-dwelling house and taking of religious property, namely the Stanley Cup with Law Day organizers playing off the idea of hockey being a religion in Canada.

"The mock trial we try to keep very light for the kids but we do go through the same process that a normal criminal trial would go through in terms of opening statements, the order of the Crown and the defense and the calling of the witnesses," says Harling.

One of the other big showcases was the demonstration of the police dogs and how they are used to aid in the arrest of suspects.

Harling says it is important to show the police's role as they are an integral part of the justice system. Harling believes it is important to educate people on the legal system before they ever have to be involved in it, and senior judicial clerk for the Court of Appeal Kyla Hesse agrees.

"People need to know their options. A lot of people don't know what to do, don't know where to go and don't know how to help themselves, so it's important for them to come view the process," says Hesse. The Court of Appeal was celebrating its 100 anniversary while educating people that just because there is a verdict in a case it doesn't mean the end of the judicial process.

"For us, it's important for people to know there is another option once you've finished your matters in provincial court or the Court of Queen's Bench," explains Hesse.

For more information on the court system visit their website at [albertacourts.ab.ca](http://albertacourts.ab.ca).



Herald photo by Ian Martens A ribbit-ing trial Kermit the Frog, along with Miss Piggy coming to his defence in the background, answers questions from the prosecution during his mock trial on charges of stealing the Stanley Cup as part of Law Day activities Saturday at the Lethbridge courthouse. See Page A3 for the story.

<http://lethbridgeherald.com/news/local-news/2014/04/05/law-day-exposes-justice-system-to-the-public/>