

## Leadership - for Environment and Development

by *Hugh Maynard*

So, what more is there to say about sustainable agriculture that hasn't already been said before? Starting back in 1987 with the Brundtland Report, "Our Common Future", the dialogue on sustainability has followed with two Earth Summits in Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg, all leading to the creation of Agenda 21 and the Millennium Development Goals. A search of Amazon.com reveals hundreds of titles on file with at least a mention of 'sustainable'; Google the phrase and 11.5 million web sites making reference to the term instantly appear in 0.28 seconds.

Much has been said about sustainability over the last twenty years but achievement remains elusive. The human population continues to increase even though 800 million people go to bed hungry every night. Each decade, human ingenuity matches the swelling populace with more food production, more 'growth' and emerging technologies continue to deny Malthus his prophecy. Only political ineptitude keeps the poor hungry, and no social system has yet figured out how to say that 6 billion people is enough.

But how much longer can we continue to produce more and more and more, and at what cost? The Industrial Revolution - the mass production of things not essential for sustaining life - is only some 200 years young and when the application of its technologies and techniques is unconsidered and unchecked, the result has been air pollution, soil erosion, chemical contamination,

water depletion and environmental degradation. In short, unfettered development chased by unlimited production is . . . unsustainable.

The term 'sustainability', however, is loaded with vagueness and ripe with contradictions. Much of the documentation refers to the term in an absolute context as if there exists a pre-ordained state, leading to rhetoric and open-ended statements. The daily reality of most people is closer to a relative paradigm - how far can you push the envelope of sustainability and still earn a decent living while ensuring food, housing and employment for 6 . . . 8 . . . 10 billion people. Taking a relative approach, however, means that sustainability lives on a scale of which everyone has their own interpretation. The current debate over biotechnology epitomizes the relative framework of sustainability, with proponents saying it's a 'sustainable' technology and opponents claiming it will lead to unsustainable food production. Even hydro electric power, once epitomized as 'the' sustainable energy technology, now finds itself charged with contributing to climate change from the gases bubbling up from sediment deposits at the bottom of the reservoirs.

Despite the muddy and swirling waters that surround the sustainability question, one thing is clear: if

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#### QAAL Board of Directors 2006-2007

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we are to provide a hospitable environment for 10 billion people without depleting the natural resources of this earth, then progress in terms of sustainability - however it's defined and applied - must be achieved, and quickly. There already exists a wealth of information on sustainable development; the challenge is to invoke actions that speak louder than words alone.

One such action is a program called LEAD (Leadership for Environment and Development), which is an international not-for-profit network that envisions a world where the leadership potential of people and communities is developed, where leaders are able to collaborate across sectors and cultures, and where leadership can deliver sustainable solutions at the local to global levels.

LEAD's mission is to inspire leadership for a sustainable world, and this is carried out by identifying outstanding people across sectors and cultures, developing their leadership potential and understanding of sustainable development, and mobilizing and supporting them as a network to achieve the change required.

LEAD Canada has been a part of this international network of currently 1,600 leaders in more than 80 countries since 1994. Through the innovative LEAD training program, LEAD Canada is once again mobilizing others through the launch of the Cohort 12 LEAD Training Program in August 2007 in Calgary. Hugh Maynard, QAAL director and LEAD Fellow, will provide workshop participants with an overview of the future for leadership and training in reaching for an world environment in which development can be sustainable.

And a bright future is possible: Inspiring leadership for a sustainable world demands a switch from focusing on the bad news about the state of the planet to focusing on where positive change is really happening and where individuals and communities can and are making a difference. This path, and the skills it will take to negotiate it, requires a renewed form of leadership - one capable of taking on the unique development challenges we are facing.

Join with QAAL on April 15th, from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM at 5035 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. to hear more from Hugh Maynard about how you can make a Canadian contribution to the realization of worldwide leadership in sustainable development.

## Attending the Canadian Commission for UNESCO's 47th AGM

*by Katharine Childs, Co-president*



*Katharine Childs & Arpi Hamalian*

I used to be an inveterate conference attendee. For years, I was in attendance at one conference or another every month, usually pre-

senting some part of my work or my research - or at least that was how it was until about two years ago, when I made the decision only to attend those conferences which I felt were "important" or "interesting" somehow...or were in different locations, mostly in Europe, Asia, or Africa.

Once there, I was totally amazed and caught up by the energy and enthusiasm that surrounded me. The delegates/members were friendly, acknowledgeable, and very supportive, willing to answer questions, make suggestions, and direct me to people in organizations with similar interests.

Probably one of the best things about this AGM was Arpi Hamalian, one of QAAL's Board of Directors and a very active member of the Commission. A former member of the Canadian Commission's executive, Arpi was cheerfully indefatigable in her efforts to introduce me around and to show me the ropes. A veritable force of nature, herself, Arpi was largely instrumental in helping me to connect with a number of people who expressed interest in possible partnering opportunities with QAAL: Arpi seems to know just about everyone there - and they all know and respect her, and they all know all about QAAL.

As I spoke with people and attended the workshops, I realized that many groups were quite taken with our involvement in the idea of learning circles, and our acknowledgment and promotion of the three sectors of learning (formal, nonformal and informal). Many people expressed interest in learning more about us and eagerly took our pamphlets.

I returned from Ottawa with a large number of business cards and contacts, a number of partnering possibilities for QAAL, and the conviction that QAAL could (and should) have a part to play in this organization.



**Message from  
the Co-president**  
*Leah Moss*

I'd like to invoke the tagline of our recent 25th year anniversary celebration "Looking back, Going forward" to describe what's going on now with QAAL. Where did the year go? Since our fiscal year end is March 31st we, at the QAAL office, are now busy making plans for our Annual General Meeting (see our notice!!! And get on the QAAL Bus!). This planning for the end of the year brings an odd sense of finality when in fact Spring time is around the corner with its infectious sense of renewal!

### Looking Back

What a year! Our Special Events Committee under the guidance of Chair Elizabeth Paulette-Coughlin, provided our members and the public at large with a diverse, thought-provoking and entertaining series. Within the workings of the special events committee is the Scholarship Committee, chaired by Leiba Aronoff, a diligent and dedicated Board member who continues to see this special project from its inception to our first awards ceremony at our upcoming AGM.

We once again celebrated and supported Quebec Adult Learners' Week with 3 events - one of which was our "Building Partnerships: The Community Learning Centres Initiative" (see more in our CLC Corner).

QAAL was there! At a host of conferences, partner events and their respective AGMs, meetings with Government officials and charity events. Among them are:

- The Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA) 6th International Conference in Fredericton, New Brunswick;
- UNESCO's Annual General Meeting in Ottawa;
- ICEA (Insitut de coopération pour l'éducation des adultes) events including their 60th anniversary celebration and AGM
- The Quebec Community Groups Network's Annual General Meeting
- MELS - Colloque for La reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences (RAC)

With great excitement QAAL attended the launch

of the Community Learning Centres initiative and pro-actively communicated to MELS that we have "Yes" in our hearts. We are so pleased that QAAL has been asked to sit on the Government's Advisory Committee to this important endeavor and you will find regular updates in our newsletter's CLC Corner.

We listened! You said our outreach programming needed some work and we set the goal of hosting our Annual General Meeting off island - so Get On The QAAL Bus! And join us May 26, 2007 in Knowlton, Quebec.

Lastly, we worked with Frances Ravensburgen from COCo ([www.coco-net.org/](http://www.coco-net.org/)) on revisiting and updating our strategic plan. The process has sharpened our focus of where we, as a Board, would like to take QAAL in the next 25 years.

### Going Forward

There is so much promise and so much to accomplish. We see the seeds of our partnerships beginning to take hold in the CLC ententes, we see more Board members and members-at-large contributing their ideas, papers and workshops.

We see the need to reinforce QAAL's role as an expert in the field of lifelong learning - How? By working within concepts that promote sustainability such as learning circles.

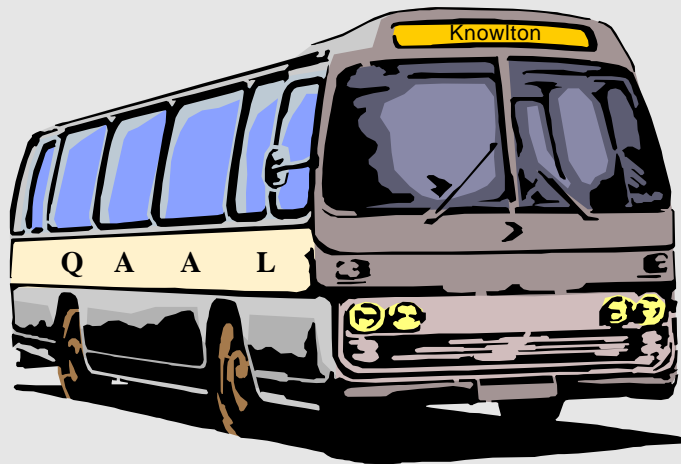
### Mission Statement

The Quebec Association for Adult Learning (QAAL) believes that learning is a lifelong endeavour and a human right.

As an English-language adult learning association that supports those who support learners, QAAL's mission is:

- advocating for a culture of lifelong learning,
- raising public awareness of adult learning issues,
- facilitating the exchange of information and resources,
- bringing together everyone for whom a learning society is a shared ideal.

# Get on the QAAL Bus



SAVE THE DATE  
Annual General Meeting  
May 26, 2007  
In  
Knowlton, Quebec

Bus transportation provided for a nominal fee – please call the QAAL office for more information  
514-848-2424 ext. 2036

Dear QAAL Members,

## Call for Nominations

Nominations are now being accepted for positions on the QAAL Board.

The QAAL AGM is scheduled for Saturday, May 26, 2007

In Knowlton Quebec

If you would like to be nominated to the Board or would like to nominate a QAAL member, please contact the QAAL office.

QAAL  
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W.  
Room LB 614-3  
Montreal, QC H3G 1M8  
(514) 848-2424 (2036)  
Fax (514) 848-4520  
e-mail: [qaal@alcor.concordia.ca](mailto:qaal@alcor.concordia.ca)

### **Adult Literacy Recognition Awards & annual poetry challenge**

Join us for the second year for Adult Literacy Recognition Awards to outstanding Quebec teacher/tutors & students.

The Center for Literacy of Quebec, Laubach literacy Canada-Quebec-Literacy Volunteers of Quebec (LLCQ-LVQ) and the Quebec Literacy Working Group (QLWG) are the groups which best represent adult literacy throughout Quebec. The literacy awards will be presented this year at Dawson College, April 24th. 2:00 PM preceding the Annual Poetry Challenge.

As a partner, QAAL will contribute \$700 to this event from the Special Events budget for 2006-07 and an additional \$300 received from the Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCU).

This is a QAAL Special Event to help celebrate, with our partners, the 5th Annual Quebec Adult Learners' Week.

### **QAAL Special Events 2006-2007**

- November 1, 2006 "Learning with the Whole Mind" with Steve Gruber
- November 12, 2006 "Awakening Connections: Living in Literacy" with Rebecca Luce-Kapler
- December 8, 2006 "Evening of Poetry & Song of Leonard Cohen"
- January 21, 2007 "A Learning Circle on How we Experience Birth" with Kathryn Delaney
- February 25, 2007 "A Learning Circle on The Power of Awareness" with Steve Sims
- April 15, 2007 A workshop is being planned on "LEAD (Leadership for Environment and Development)" with Hugh Maynard
- April 24, 2007 Adult Literacy Recognition Awards & Annual Poetry Challenge



## QAAL Celebrates Adult Learners' Week



### QAAL at the Proud to Learn Contest

On March 26, 2007 I had the distinct honor and pleasure of accompanying our Executive Director Eunice deGruchy and my co-president Katharine

*Leah Moss*

Childs to the Lester B Pearson School Board to present three well-earned recognition awards to:

- \* Louise Chicoine
- \* Vakhtang Dumbadze
- \* Kamal Ennis

Also nominated for distance education by Ilze Epnens but unable to attend were:

- \* Lauri Lidstone
- \* Andrea Hill
- \* Asher Dodenhoff
- \* Vinoth Mahendlar
- \* Sophie Pelletier
- \* John Psallidos

Gloria Keenan, Director of Adult Education & Vocational Training (and a QAAL



*Larry Smith & Leah Moss*

member), opened the event with an uplifting message about how lifelong learning does change lives and how proud the LBPSB was of all their nominees. This sentiment was reinforced by Keynote speaker Larry Smith, President of the Montreal Alouettes, who addressed the group by first getting us all to huddle up! After his stirring address about how leadership is often a learnt quality that takes dedication - the kind of dedication exhibited by the award winners in the room - we were all ready to charge the field! (or at least enjoy the delicious offerings of the LBPSB's culinary arts - yum!) The most impressive speeches came from the winners themselves - stories about how going back to school is important to them and how it has changed their lives for the better. Congratulations to all nominees and bursary winners! For more information and pictures please visit [www.lbpsb.qc.ca](http://www.lbpsb.qc.ca)

*Leah Moss, Co-president*

Community Learning Centre



Corner

### QAAL celebrates La semaine Québécoise des adultes en formation - Quebec's 5th annual Adult Learners' Week

On Thursday March 29, QAAL hosted "Building Partnerships: The Community Learning Centres Initiative", an event to celebrate the 5th annual Quebec adult learners' week. Our keynote speaker Assistant Deputy Minister - Services for the Anglophone Community, MELS, Mr. Noel



*Noel Burke*

Burke encouraged the adult learner community to seek out CLCs to be a friendly voice "out there" for support. We were also fortunate to hear Mr. Linton Garner from LEARN who is the Community Development Agent for the CLC initiative talk about the more specific aspects of this initiative, its inception and the overall goal of recreating the way we look at "school" to a more community-

based response to education. Mr. Garner emphasized that a cookie cutter approach to implementing this project wouldn't work, rather the goal was to present the menu of options rather than the recipe for a quick solution.



*Leah Moss & Linton Garner*





## QAAL Spotlight Shines on...

### San Miguel de Allende *by Patricia Delaney*

*Since my return from San Miguel, I have been remembering the taste of pale mangos, crema, (crème anglaise) cilantro, avocado, and the best margaritas and cappuccino that have ever passed my lips.*

*In my minds eye, I see bouganvillia spilling over stone walls and climbing over terraces. Lemon and orange trees in our neighbours' courtyards as well as two lonely pomegranates on a bare tree by the iron gate on the corner of our street. I miss the courtyard fountains, the flowers, cactus, and blue, cloudless skies.*

In the central plain of Mexico, six thousand feet above sea level and a four hour drive north west of Mexico City, sits San Miguel de Allende. It is a colonial city inhabited by approximately one hundred thousand residents of whom seven thousand are expatriate Americans and Canadians making their home in this pleasant environment. The numbers amalgamated seasonally, by flocks of "snowbirds."

The big draw for visitors is not only the weather, which is cool in mornings and evenings, warming up to between 20 to 28 degrees Celsius when the sun is directly overhead, until it sets at nightfall. Question: What is so exciting about foot wrenching cobbled stoned streets, traffic, narrow or non-existent sidewalks and steep hills? Answer: Everyone climbs with dogged self-assertion for the pleasure of the sights, sounds, and enchantment of being in this mountainous, cathedral town.

San Miguel de Allende (SMA) was the original home of the Chichimec Indians. When colonized by the Spanish in the mid sixteenth century, it became a strategic trade route to Mexico and other large gold and silver mining cities. SMA, considered a historic monument, reflects the vibrant colours of the architecture still radiates a colonial atmosphere.

#### **Continuing Education for Life**

This atmosphere started attracting visiting artists and writers in the mid-nineteen forties. Today, courses of study are plentiful. A visitor can study Spanish, while

Mexicans learn English either formally at an institution, or informally engage in a bilingual conversation group gathering at a café or at the Biblioteca Publica.

Drawing and painting, jewellery making, sculpture, glass designing, amateur theatre groups, music and writing workshops and courses in the various aspects of music or the written word, are easily accessible. Fitness centres, yoga classes, crafts, walking tours, house and garden tours, as well as visits to outlying communities; complement life for those who can get away from bitter winter weather.

My husband and I spent the month of February in this idyllic setting. It was our first visit to Mexico, hopefully not our last. As an artist he feasted on our surroundings and painted prolifically. I did a lot of writing: at the dining room table in our "casita," in the shade of a hidden garden at the Instituto Allende, on a park bench at the jardine under the box laurels, and at the library.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Mexican people are welcoming, greeting us as we passed on the street. One never gets the feeling that they are intimidated by the numbers of rich Gringos (white folk) in their midst.

They are engaged in selling their crafts, operating small enterprises such as a simple laundry facility or miniscule stores (sometimes in part of their dwellings) selling local produce, or at times, setting up instant lunch counters on the streets. Many work as maids, handymen and general cleaners. They seem an industrious group. The blue collar workers seem to be keeping the infrastructure up to code. They zip along in the open backs of pick-up trucks as do the police, children, and dogs.

The city is in no way a backwater: The University of Leon, Mexico has a campus in the town's centro. The latest model cars and SUV's, compete with patched up older models, and all terrain vehicles on the traffic gorged streets without a sign of road rage. The last word in fashion, furniture, and appliances, are there for a price. The more well-heeled Mexicans, I saw in the elegant shops, and art galleries. A lot of these citizens work hand

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*San Miguele Allende cont'd*

in hand with the Gringos for the betterment of those in need. There are scholarship programs to keep rural girls from dropping out of high school, as well as breakfast programs for hungry students, and more.

Paraphrasing an article I read in *Atencion*, the San Miguel weekly newspaper:

"In Jalpa, a disadvantaged small rural community not far from SMA live 400 forgotten children. These "forgotten children" typically live with their female relatives. The men are gone, scratching out a living north of the border. Some never return. The children are left in poverty and without the means to alter the economic and social cycle they were born into.

Working with community leaders to develop alternate paths towards economic, spiritual and educational well-being; volunteers of Forgotten Child International, work tirelessly to build sustainable culturally sensitive community projects. The teaching of English is a priority in order to provide opportunities for the children to compete some day, in the changing Mexican economy."

These types of programs abound as well as promoting social justice issues by presenting tours, lectures, and films. All are politically leftward leaning, pointing to "inconvenient truths."

Retirees, some youngish, some looking frail as they bend over their canes, stream in droves to these presentations. Lively discussions ensue.

The learning and exchange of ideas and opinions goes a long way to disabuse us of the notion that the old are irrelevant.

New friendships bloom as hopeful as budding roses. My husband and I met a couple from Hamilton, Ontario. We plan to meet in Ontario again soon and back in San Miguel de Allende next winter.

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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qaal@alcor.concordia.ca  
<http://doe.concordia.ca/qaal/>

*Views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinion of QAAL.*

## QAAL Special Events Series Presents

### Leadership for Environment & Development

*With Hugh Maynard &  
Jeffrey May on the bamboo flute*

#### So, how 'sustainable' can you be?

Much has been said about sustainability over the last twenty years but achievement remains elusive and the term is loaded with vagueness and ripe with contradictions. Starting back in 1987 with the Brundtland Report, "Our Common Future", the dialogue on sustainability has followed with two Earth Summits in Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg, all leading to the creation of Agenda 21 and the Millennium Development Goals. Even though Stephane Dion has recently given the term more currency, what more is there to say about sustainability that hasn't already been said before?

#### LEAD (Leadership for Environment and Development)

is an international not-for-profit network with a mission is to inspire leadership and change by identifying outstanding people across sectors and cultures, developing their leadership potential and understanding of sustainable development, and mobilizing and supporting them as a network to achieve the change required.

#### Hugh Maynard

is a LEAD Fellow (and member of the QAAL Board of Directors) and he will offer some perspectives on sustainability and the re-launch of the LEAD training program in Canada that has already created an international network of 1600 leaders in more than 80 countries since 1994. Through the innovative LEAD training program, LEAD Canada is once again mobilizing others to make a real difference to the future of this planet.

**Sunday, April 15**  
**3:00-5:00 pm**  
**5035 de Maisonneuve**  
**Bld. W.**  
**Corner of Clairmont.**  
**Metro - Vendome**

**Tickets:**  
**\$5 members**  
**\$10 non members**  
**514.848.2424 ext**  
**2036**  
**qaal@alcor.concordia.ca**

## Reflections on my work for the Quebec Association for Adult Learning

*by Eunice de Gruchy, Executive Director*

The 25th Anniversary Year of QAAL (2005-06) has passed into history. As this will be my final report in Linking for Learning, because I will retire June, 2007, I too will pass into history as executive director.

I will reflect on not just the past year but will try to touch on the highlights since I was invited to join the QAAL Board in November of 1996. At the time I was trying to join my husband in retirement, having just returned from wonderful, fulfilling work as the first Consultant in Professional Development for the Cree School Board in James Bay. My first "assignment" for QAAL was to phone all the members of QAAL to encourage them to attend the QAAL conference, "Adult Learning in the Global Village" held in February 1997.

In 1997 QAAL, along with other non-profit associations in English-speaking Quebec, was holding its own but struggling to survive severe financial cutbacks imposed during the early 90s as the federal government strove to tame the Canadian deficit. Alliance Quebec and 7 regional community groups had been brought together by the Department of Canadian Heritage with six sector groups to create the Quebec Community Groups Network. QAAL was one of the sector groups; this disparate assembly of English language associations was coordinated on a volunteer basis with great leadership skills by Hugh Maynard, Executive Director of the Quebec Farmers Association (QFA). It was a challenge then for Quebec Anglophones even to be recognized as an official minority under Canada's Bills 41 & 42 Official Lan-

guages Laws.

At the QAAL AGM in 1998, I was elected to serve as Vice President with President Fiona Clark. During the same time, the Urban Ecology Centre hired me as Education Consultant, both positions proving to be fertile learning experiences for me. Continuing a long tradition of dedicated expert volunteers supporting adult education, QAAL benefited from the work of Collette Corbeil as Editor of Linking for Learning, Paul Loftus as Workshop Committee Chair, Leona Grise as Membership Chair, Riva Heft as Treasurer, and Monica Karal as VP. Fiona proposed to submit a conference proposal to the Development Fund of Canadian Heritage. From my perspective, this successful proposal represents a turning point, the beginning of the subsequent years of long steady growth for QAAL. As key volunteer directors joined, gave their best, and then departed for other ventures, they often found others to replace themselves and join the board with new ideas and energy to devote to adult learning. I did the same, recruiting my good friend and talented adult educator, Patricia Delaney who has given so much, not the least in assisting as alternate QAAL voting delegate to the QCGN for the past 6 years. In addition she has contributed her literary expertise to the newsletter. She now serves on the executive as well as the Special Events Committee, which she chaired in 2005-06 and herself recruited dynamo board director, Elizabeth Paulette-Coughlin, chair of Special Events 06-07.

In 1999 I was elected Interim

President. The QAAL conference Sustaining our Communities through Learning and Development: the challenge for English-speaking Quebec, held April 30 - May 2 1999 was expertly coordinated by Fiona Clark who reported 121 participants.... 64 institutions, organizations and community groups, including 10 organizations that were members of the QCGN. Eva Ludvig commissioner's representative, Quebec Region, for Official Languages, agreed to be our guest speaker and generously supported QAAL down throughout the years. QAAL Vice President Monica Karal worked diligently with Fiona and myself as president to make this event a success and the beginning of many future fruitful QAAL partnerships. Throughout the organizing of this conference, QAAL part-time office staff person, Malka Benjamin provided reliable support and constant encouragement.

QAAL steadily gained credibility with our membership, with the QCGN, and with the Department of Canadian Heritage. Two important projects were funded: Face-to-Face and A Minority within a Minority: serving the needs of Quebec English language deaf (in partnership with the Dr. Jamie MacDougal of the Canadian Deafness Research and Training Institute CDRTI). Often piggybacking on QCGN meetings, these projects enabled QAAL to send 2 project coordinators out to the regions of Quebec to meet with both regional and sector groups, establish personal contacts and get to know the provincial situation for adult education. As

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*Reflections cont'd*

well, the Minority Deaf project conducted important research into possibilities for distance technology to serve the deaf. QCGN support was crucial. As a QCGN member we received a grant enabling us to update our office technology; another grant from Young Canada Works meant we could develop the first QAAL web site. Thanks to support from the Education Department of Concordia University, QAAL has always been able to do more than our funding would suggest possible.

Having served as president for 15 months, QAAL hired me as part-time executive director (ED) on April 1st, 2000. A steep learning curve for me, this major step forward for QAAL was made possible through the hard work of the board and staff of QAAL and the effective negotiations of the QCGN team, led by Martin Murphy. Our Canadian Heritage grant more than doubled, enabling QAAL to pay the ED position for 3 days a week and add additional time for QAAL office support. Gradually QAAL and I adjusted to the new structure. We continued efforts to strengthen our base in the greater Montreal area and reach out to the regions to fulfill our provincial mandate, mainly through partnerships with QCGN members who readily organized local workshops for 2 more great province-wide projects. They were Choices through Knowledge: training in palliative care given over 2 years by gifted nurse-adult educator Jo-Ann Jones who has rejoined the QAAL board and Empowering the Sandwich Generation developed and presented by a strong supporter and past president of QAAL, Kelly Howarth.

By the Fall of 2001 the decision was taken to hire Francine Free-

man, a new Molson School of Business marketing expert, to carry out a stimulating and successful membership and marketing campaign. Another conference committee was established, again chaired and coordinated by Fiona Clark, building on previous experience. As all committees, newsletter, membership, and workshop, continued their work, the next big QAAL conference began to take shape under the leadership of new QAAL President, Kelly Howarth. In November of 2002, Clearing the Hurdles: overcoming the barriers to adult learning took place at Concordia University. Once again, the proceedings were expertly edited by Riva Heft and compiled for the record by Office Manager, Malka Benjamin, then published by QAAL. This time QAAL could proudly announce both old and new sponsors: Canada Post, the Montreal Gazette, the Quebec Ministry of Education, and the Department of Canadian Heritage. In addition, with great delight, QAAL announced the distinguished patronage of The Honourable Lise Thibault, Lieutenant Governor of Quebec for this wonderful event. Several months later, Her Excellency became QAAL's Patron of Honour, lending her support, contributing an inspiring written message for all QAAL members and again gracing QAAL and Concordia University with her presence to mark our 25th Anniversary Gala.

Before going further I have to share with you how, by a fortuitous coincidence, I met QAAL champion Walter Duszara, Chargé de projet auprès de la communauté anglophone for the Ministry of Education for Quebec. I say champion because Walter provided so many crucial contacts for QAAL, not only with the MEQ but also to the Institut canadien pour l'éducation des adultes (ICEA), which was leading up the establish-

ment of Quebec Adult Learners' Week. We have enthusiastically partnered with the ICEA (now the Institut de coopération pour l'éducation des adultes) in this effort. QAAL has established a mutually beneficial and supportive relationship to the ICEA with an effective liaison being maintained by former board director, Teresa McGuire, another member who has made a positive difference.

As often happened during my work with QAAL, serendipity played a crucial role. Martin Murphy of the QCGN met Walter in the elevator at a Community Health and Social Services (CHSSN) health conference at the Crown Royal Hotel in the spring of 2002, quite by accident. These two men had worked together at the English Catholic School Commission and Martin learned of Walter's new role at the MEQ. He brought me Walter's card, recommending I give him a call, which I did. From this meeting flowed many wonderful results for QAAL, including provincial funding for QAAL projects and eventually the core financial means to increase staff time, first one extra day a week then 2, resulting in the two full time positions we have now and had so long sought.

Another crucial consequence of this chance linking was the invitation of the MEQ to QAAL treasurer Riva Heft and president, Kelly Howarth to accompany 13 other distinguished English language adult educators on a study mission to 4 European countries in May 2003. In turn, the results of that mission were shared with the English-speaking community partners, adult education administrators, and invited guests at a Symposium entitled "Lifelong Learning and Quebec's English-speaking Community" organized for

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the MEQ by QAAL February 13, 14, 2004. Assistant Deputy Minister, Noel Burke welcomed participants. Another event followed quickly, the June 12th, "Lifelong Learning Symposium: A Passion for Life - Cultural Communities" again for the MEQ. One of the lasting goals to come out of that initiative is the determination of QAAL to establish in Quebec Learning Circles on topics of interest to adult educators. Another important consequence is that QAAL can count Sam Boskey, Director of Projects & Policy for MELS, as a friend.

During 2005-2006, QAAL committees achieved notable success. The Membership Committee, chaired by Denise Llewellyn achieved a 21 % increase in membership and with the persistence of board member Marielle Green, completed the revision and reprinting of the QAAL Directory of Lifelong Learning Opportunities in English, Quebec. This very useful resource will be linked on the new QAAL web site and updated each year. I must pay tribute to Professor Arpi Hamalian for really doing double duty during that time in support of Malka and myself. With incisive powers of observation and broad, deep understanding of the field, Arpi saw the need and provided many of the solutions. QAAL owes her much.

2005-2006 was an outstanding year for networking. QAAL was fortunate to be represented by President Susan Oliver on the MELS Lifelong Learning Advisory Committee (LI-LAC) and by director Sima Brockstein on the MELS Advisory Board for English Education (ABEE). QAAL Treasurer Arpi Hamalian has connected QAAL to the Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCU). We have been

able to receive and distribute the beautiful UNESCO kit, international literature promoting Adult Learners' Week around the world, in Canada and Quebec. QAAL members attended the CCU 50th Anniversary Celebration and 46th AGM here in Montreal. The CCU is again lending their prestige and financial support to QAAL activities for Adult Learners' Week, including the Proud to Learn Contest and the Literacy Awards being presented April 24th during this year's annual Dawson College Poetry Challenge.

Board members have attended many important conferences/forums/symposia, too numerous to list. But a sample includes: The Ministerial Consultations in Ottawa held October 26th, 2005 (President Susan Oliver spoke on education), the Canadian Association for Prior Learning and Assessment (CAPLA) conference in Toronto, Nov. 05 (Arpi Hamalian & Leah Moss), the CHSSN Sixth Conference on Accessibility of Health and Social Services in the English Language, (Kelly Howarth, Jo-Ann Jones, Hugh Maynard, & myself), the Black Theatre Workshop Vision Gala, (Myself and husband-mentor-member, Walter), the Black Community Resource Centre (BCRC) 10th Anniversary Gala, (Michelle Bess, member and adult education student), the second province-wide MELS conference in early April, 2006 on the new adult education curriculum. (Denise Llewellyn, Marielle Green, Katharine Childs, Sima Brockstein, Susan Oliver).

In 2006, QAAL partnered with English language literacy groups, The Centre for Literacy of Quebec, the Quebec Literacy Working Group, and Laubach Literacy Canada-Quebec-Literacy Volunteers of Quebec to establish Literacy Awards for both teachers and students. The awards

were presented at the Blue Metropolis Literary Festival. This year they will be given preceding The Poetry Challenge at Dawson College.

Noel Burke gave a preview of the MELS/PCH initiative to start up school-based Community Learning Centres (CLCs) to QAAL at the 25th Anniversary Gala May 8th. On June 29th, MELS launched this innovative 3-year project to representatives from school boards, interested QCGN community member associations, and others. Newly elected QAAL co-presidents Leah Moss & Katherine Childs led a QAAL delegation. Board members Hugh Maynard and Sima Brockstein and myself as executive director rounded out strong QAAL representation. Now Leah is on the CLC Advisory Committee and is planning a QAAL symposium March 29th to promote and support this crucial project.

QAAL founding member and steadfast supporter, well known in adult education circles, Riva Heft Hecht completed a major project with long term consequences for QAAL. We owe Riva an immense debt of gratitude for *Evolution through Outreach and Partnerships: a History of the Quebec Association for Adult Learning*, launched at the Gala. Another fine contribution by Riva ensures that all the work of so many dedicated teachers, students, volunteers, and partners in Quebec English language adult learning will not be forgotten.

Of course, the most active committee of all over the 2005-06 year was the Ad Hoc 25th Anniversary Planning Committee with members Arpi Hamalian, Patrica Delaney, Susan Oliver, Sima Brockstein, Malka Benjamin and myself. The Special Events Committee gave crucial assistance and the Concordia Univer

*Continued on page 11*

*Reflections cont'd*

sity Rector's office, protocol and security ensured a warm and correct welcome to QAAL's Patron of Honour, Her Excellency Mme. Lise Thibault. A memorable evening was the gratifying result, all the more so now that in retrospect we realize we were saying goodbye to our Patron. I shall always remember her generous presence and encouragement of QAAL with personal pride and joy.

I really have to sing the praises of a QAAL committee which has held outstanding workshops/learning circles over this, my last year. The Special Events Committee, Elizabeth Paulette-Coughlin, Chair, Leiba Aronoff, Patricia Delaney, and Julieta Machado-Bach worked together with me in an exemplary, collaborative manner to showcase gifted adult educators who presented to receptive participants on topics around the theme of the "Great Re-thinking." The direction and purpose of this theme can best be explained as "bridging modern life and spirituality" words taken from the front page article in the Gazette, March 15th describing the Templeton award given to McGill University professor Charles Taylor. One of these events, an Evening of the Poetry & Song of Leonard Cohen, sponsored by QAAL was conceived and led by Elizabeth and held at the Fraser Hickson Library Dec. 8, 2006. This inspiring evening of music and song raised over \$17,000 to fund courses in Nonviolent Communication for Dawson College professors and counselors in recognition of the tragedy that occurred there last September.

Special Events' results are apparent in the universal praise on the evaluation sheets from participants, many of whom joined QAAL because of the warm, welcoming and

collaborative learning atmosphere of these events. Leiba Aronoff, Chair of the Scholarship Committee, did an outstanding job of bringing the QAAL Riva Heft Hecht Scholarship for Excellence and Innovation to life. Leiba is the first to say she was always able to count on her colleagues for wise counsel and constant support, so much so that her committee folded into Special Events and the 2 became one. (Just a quick aside; if you ever need a delicious cake, ask Julieta's husband to make it for you...yum-yum!!)

Writing this brief goodbye memoir took me back to past volumes of QAAL's newsletters, *Linking for Learning*. I would be remiss not to comment on it. As Arpi Hamalian, whose numerous contributions to QAAL brought so much richness and depth to us as an organization, commented a couple of years ago, "Don't change it; it is one of the friendliest newsletters I've seen." Editors over my years have done great work and deserve to be named: Cllette Corbeil, Patricia Briand, Eleanor Cowan, Teresa McGuire, and Katharine Childs. Regular columnists Kelly Howarth for "Kelly's Korner" and Fiona Clark on seniors "Forever Learning" could always be counted on. And whenever we were missing an editor, Malka filled in and merits thanks for going beyond the call, then formatting and mailing too. Many of my reports are the result of her frantic phone calls requesting a write-up about this or that.

I must wrap this up or the editor will be forced to cut. There is so much more I could add, especially about the wonderful people I have worked with over the past 10+ years. There is simply not space to mention all of them and do justice. But I am confident that I leave QAAL in good hands. Strategic planning is under

way, guided by Frances Ravensbergen of COCo, herself an outstanding adult educator/trainer. President Leah Moss, young, smart, and dynamic has a steady hand on the wheel. With her unique expertise in prior learning assessment and recognition (a PhD is pending) and the support of executive members Katharine Childs, Will Penny, Vilnis Epnars, Patricia Delaney and a board of very strong expertise, I know that the future is strong and bright for QAAL. Riva's chosen title points the way: evolution through outreach and partnerships.

Thanks for the memories, the life-time membership, and the opportunities to combine my vocation with my avocation and learn on the job, to travel throughout Quebec learning all the way and meeting everywhere the leaders of English-speaking Quebec.

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## Thank you...

QAAL would like to thank all those who sent in their applications to the:

### **Riva Heft Hecht Scholarship for Excellence and Innovative Practice in Adult Education**

Applications are now being evaluated and the winners of 3 prizes of \$500 will be awarded at the QAAL Annual General Meeting on Saturday, May 26, 2007 in Knowlton.

## What does volunteering mean for me?

*by Teresa McGuire*

Webster's Dictionary defines "to volunteer"

- 1) To offer oneself as a volunteer
- 2) To offer or bestow voluntarily one's services

Being a volunteer at the Quebec Association for Adult Learning (QAAL) has meant much more than simply offering my services and expertise in the field of adult education. It has been a means of broadening my network in this field. I have also been fortunate to have made many friendships through various QAAL activities including Board and Committee work. QAAL has also bestowed upon me the privilege of representing them on the Board of Directors of the Institut de coopération pour l'éducation des adultes (ICEA). I was recently voted to the Executive Committee. This represents for me another great opportunity to work with a diverse and qualified group of people. In the past, I have also worked on the Montreal committee for Adult Learners' Week. I have also translated the Week's documents in English and the Board work.

Furthermore, through my volunteering I have gained experience as a translator and as a newsletter editor, found work as a second language English teacher to adults. In addition, it has been a privilege to work as a liaison between the English and French communities in Montreal.

Finally, to be a volunteer is a worthwhile experience! It is much more than simply giving...it is receiving quite a lot in return!

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Corporations/Businesses/Educational Institutions	\$75
Community/Nonprofit Organizations	\$35
Individuals	\$25
Fulltime Students (proof of status required)/Seniors	\$10

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of interest/expertise \_\_\_\_\_

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