



Your link to the English-speaking community in Quebec



Minister responsible for Official Languages, Mauril Bélanger, speaks to VEQ First Vice-President Bob Donnelly, the Holland Centre's Toula Kourgiantakis and QCGN President Martin Murphy during recent visit to Quebec City. (Photo by QCGN)

Minister opens eyes to pressing concerns of Quebec anglophones

Federal Official Languages Minister Mauril Bélanger got up close and personal with Quebec anglophones during a recent visit to Quebec City.

On March 15, Bélanger made an impromptu visit to the provincial capital.

Over the course of private meetings, round table discussions, and school visits, Bélanger heard about the challenges, successes and what his department can do to improve the lives of

English-speaking Quebecers.

The day began with a private meeting with the QCGN executive to discuss broader issues including the need for more funding for English-language organizations including the QCGN.

"We felt very encouraged that we have an ally who is going to deal with our issues," says QCGN President Martin Murphy.

Later, representatives from the Voice of English-speaking Quebec (VEQ) presented results from its recently completed youth report.

VEQ First Vice-president Bob Donnelly drove home the point that the future prosperity of the English-speaking population in Quebec depends on working with young people and addressing their priorities of language, education and employment.

"We concentrated on youth as an

MINORITY REPORT

Research conference puts English minority under microscope

The first in a series of special research conferences was recently held in Montreal to help English-speaking Quebecers take stock of their challenges, needs and opportunities for the future.

More than 100 people took part in the revealing event held at *Université de Québec à Montréal* on Feb. 25 and 26.

Over the course of discussions, guest speakers, and symposia, the participants explored the existing research concerning anglophone communities in Quebec. They also identified the key themes for new research including new funding opportunities.

Speakers ranged from academics and government representatives to representatives from various community groups across the province.

They spoke about demographics, the evolving identity of anglophones, politics, institutions, services, and the English-speaking communities both in Montreal and outside the province's largest city.

"The conference helped put the phrase 'anglo-Quebec studies' into the spotlight, thus creating an awareness on the part of both researchers in the field and of the general public that this is a legitimate and growing field of studies," says research consultant Lorraine O'Donnell.

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*Executive Director's Message***Building a brighter future together**

Over these last months, I have enjoyed an important privilege that I'd like to share with you.

I was given a special seat to look through a window on the English-speaking communities of Quebec. I have been party to conversations, discussions and planning about these communities with volunteers, community-development association staff and experts consultants who have looked through the same window.

The most important observation I made is that volunteerism is still important, and, in fact alive, in our communities. For example, I worked with volunteers who gave up their time, taken days off from work, given up their weekends, and traveled important distances to work hard to improve the life of their fellow citizens. I also saw those volunteers who helped organize and get their fellow citizens out to community consultations we held throughout Quebec. Clearly, volunteers in the English-speaking communities do care and are willing to get involved.

I also observed that the staff of our

associations are very dedicated to the communities they serve. They are ready to go the extra mile to support our community endeavours.

Thirdly, it was apparent that our communities are in the midst of great change. Statistics and research paint a picture of communities in difficulty. Community leaders are dealing with shrinking populations, unemployment and poverty -- and the effects of these changes rang loud and clear through the community consultations.

People are passing this message on to their community development associations. In the late 1980s, our associations were focused on generalized community development meant to keep our communities stable. Today, these associations are committed to achieving tangible results which directly respond to the needs identified



Deborah Hook

by people in their communities.

In the year 2005, our communities still need support. It is not so much to keep our communities stable but rather to ensure that the "comfort level" of English-speaking Quebecers in their own environment enables them to live, work and see a bright and vibrant future in Quebec. Associations are now accountable and stay in close touch with those whom they serve. In the words of Bob Donnelly, a Quebec City resident and First Vice-president of the Voice of English-speaking Quebec, "Accountability is of the utmost importance where public dollars are concerned and community-based organizations and projects must be answerable for what they accomplish."

The Community Development Plan for the English-speaking communities of Quebec and the QCGN Strategic Plan reflect that same vision in addressing the needs of the English-speaking community. With these documents as our guides, I hope we can look out the window together and see a bright and solid future in Quebec.

*Guest Editorial - By Peter Quilliams***A community at the crossroads**

A sentiment among many English-speaking Quebecers has been that they are an endangered species of sorts.

Declining numbers due to out-migration and an aging population has threatened the survival of many English-speaking communities. By nature we are passive in terms of public demonstrations. The realization that something was wrong and that our own sense of belonging was questioned began to dawn upon us. There was much grumbling and finally the impact of the laws hit anglophones hard.

The exodus of the late 1970s and early 1980s also set off a significant change in the demographic situation of English-speaking Quebec. The first to leave appear to have been those between 25 and 34 years of age, now

commonly referred to as our "missing generation." They left in search of economic opportunity, in search of belonging, and to escape political harassment, taking the next generation of children with them (Jedwab, 1998).

Roll forward a quarter century. A sampling of the current views can be found in recent attempts to capture visions of our future. They refer to a richness of heritage, evolving cultural diversity, and the wish to have the English-speaking community flourish in all aspects of Quebec society. What a remarkable change in the sense of community and the vision of the future. Community leaders have chosen to move beyond being reactive and build a development plan for the English-speaking minority of Quebec.

The QCGN was founded in 1995 to co-manage the Canada-Community Funding Agreement between the minority language groups in Quebec and Canadian Heritage's Official Language Community Organizations and Institutions Program. This initiative had its roots in the issues and demographics of the 1980s and 1990s with very little knowledge of the situation as being portrayed in the various recent studies (Mississquoi, Jedwab and Floch).

The English-speaking communities of Quebec are approaching a crossroads in terms of demographics, identity, community infrastructure and continuing access to public services. The rationale for these changes enables a renewed QCGN to be, and be

Continued next page.

Bridging the language gap in the public service



Official Languages Commissioner Dyane Adam

“The Government of Canada must decide once and for all that dealing with the issue of under-representation... is a priority.”

- Martin Murphy, QCGN president

A major step was taken recently to bridge the language gap in the federal public service in Quebec.

For the first time, the Quebec Federal Council held a forum on improving the representation of anglophones in the federal bureaucracy in the region.

“It is a question of fair treatment to members of the minority community to give them a chance for a future here,” says QCGN President Martin Murphy.

The day-long meeting held on Feb. 22 was a unique chance for leaders of the anglophone community in Quebec to meet with federal decision makers including the Minister Responsible for Official Languages Mauril Bélanger and the Commissioner of Official Languages Dyane Adam.

There are close to 30,000 federal public servants in Quebec. However, only seven per cent of them have English as their first language -- far short of the percentage of anglophones in the general population in the province.

However, Murphy says improving the public service will take more than just hiring 1,000 more anglophones, as was recommended in the Official Languages Action Plan made public in 2003.

“The Government of Canada must decide once and for all that dealing with the issue of under-representation of the English-speaking minority in Quebec in its own public service is

a priority and assume the leadership, both political and bureaucratic,” Murphy told the forum.

Numerous studies over the years have raised the problems of under-representation including the 2003 Malloy Report. That report illustrated how some anglophones feel unwelcome in the federal public service in Quebec. The report also said some anglophones simply do not apply for jobs because they do not feel their French is good enough.

Murphy suggested the federal public service increase visibility in the English-speaking community of Quebec. Departments must show greater initiative, he said, to reach out to the community and attract more job applicants.

“Statistics tell us that while English speakers are interested in working in the federal public service, there is a perception that they do not have the same or equal access to employment as their French-speaking neighbours,” Murphy told the forum.

The QCGN also recommended the creation of a joint government-community committee to work on the issues in a collaborative way.

“There has already been follow up,” says Murphy. “That is the best evidence that they are finally taking the situation seriously.”

- By Kim McNairn

“Crossroads” continued

perceived to be, an autonomous organization that has an identified, community-based constituency.

By being responsive to a more inclusive membership, the QCGN needs to position itself as an enabler, supporting its members in their common desire to work together to serve Quebec’s English-speaking community.

- By Peter Quilliams,

Member of QCGN Strategic Planning Committee and Knowledge Base Chair of Townshippers’ Association

Minister visits schools and teachers

“Minister” Continued from Page 1

example of the overall situation facing linguistic minorities,” says Donnelly.

“The visit was eye-opening for him.”

A round table discussion followed with representatives from the QCGN, VEQ, Central Quebec School Board, Eastern Quebec Learning Centre, Holland Centre, Quebec City CEDEC, Quebec High School, St. Patrick’s High School and CEGEP Champlain St. Lawrence. Bélanger then hit the road *en route* to CEGEP Champlain St.

Lawrence. There, he met with second year students for a frank discussion about the English language in Quebec and the students’ own plans for the future. St. Vincent’s Elementary in Sainte-Foy was Minister Bélanger’s final stop of the day.

There, he met with teachers and administrators to talk about the experience of teaching in an English school in Quebec.

“He promised to come back, and come back soon,” says Donnelly.

- By Kim McNairn

Research conference: New agenda for “anglo-studies”

“Research” cont. from P. 1

O'Donnell's speech focused on the wealth of research that has already been done on Quebec's anglophone population, particularly in the area of “demolinguistics,” territorial identity, and on the history and contemporary role of institutions and services.

Other speakers challenged those gathered to think outside of the box.

Andre Pratte, chief editorialist at La Presse, spoke about the divide that still exists between anglophones and francophones in the province.

He encouraged a new dialogue in Quebec between the two main language groups.

“One common challenge is the survival of Quebec's regions,” Pratte told the conference. “Surely, this is something we can work on together.”

Pratte also argued that the leaders of the English-speaking community must be more

vocal in order to help francophones better understand the difficulties facing anglophones in the province.

As the conference drew to a close, the participants turned their minds to what issues to put under the microscope in the future.

They concluded with a common vision to focus on building a research agenda for the study of English-speaking Quebec, with the QCGN taking the lead to help develop a framework to make it happen.

The conference was supported by the Concordia-UQAM Chair in Ethnic Studies, QCGN, Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, and the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Future research conferences will focus on specific themes including education, health, demographics and language, ethnocultural diversity, municipal affairs, and social and economic development.

- By Kim McNairn



ABOVE: Hugh Maynard, at the microphone, addresses speakers at the research conference. BELOW: Marie-Odile Magnan (left) and Madeleine Gauthier, Observatoire Jeunes et Société, INRS Urbanisation, Culture et Société, Quebec.



New strategic plan sets course for QCGN changes

The Strategic Planning exercise undertaken by the QCGN to establish its future direction over the next five years is progressing well.

During recent months, the QCGN Planning Group has explored a number of issues about the future of the QCGN with over 75 representatives of member organizations, community leaders, Government of Canada officials and other stakeholders.

Issues discussed included current and future organizational constituency, needs identification and expectations, key results and activities to be pursued and organizational impacts of all of these considerations on the QCGN.

Input from this consultation has been very revealing with comments such as, “The QCGN has evolved

“The QCGN has evolved rapidly over the last five years...”

- Comment from consultations

rapidly over the last five years and consolidated itself as an organizational network that has built confidence and trust among members.”

Comments about the broad community noted that there are many English-speaking communities in Quebec, not just one. Increasingly, the issues for the English-speaking communities

of Quebec are not perceived to be so much about language *per se* but more about local and regional community identification and development.

Other issues include community collaboration across the province in specific sectors and enhancing relations between the English-speaking minority and the French-speaking Quebec majority. Many saw a need to broaden the QCGN beyond the group of organizations receiving funding under the Canadian Heritage agreement (the current requirement for membership).

Finally, there was wide agreement that knowledge development, evidenced-based community develop-

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Tuning in to anglo radio

More community radio development underway in Quebec

Communication has long been a major concern for the pockets of anglophones living outside Quebec's major cities.

A renewed initiative hopes to change that with the turn of a radio dial.

The community radio program, funded by Canadian Heritage, is helping to develop the existing network of community radio stations in the province while building up a new assortment of micro-radio stations.

"All of the signals out there have indicated people's need for access to information in their own language," says consultant Hugh Maynard.

"How do you break those barriers of isolation that many people face because they don't have the critical mass of people to access English language resources like newspapers, and radio and TV? You can't always respond to that in traditional ways."

During the past five years, various activities have taken place to develop English-language community radio in the province. Two provincial forums were held. An assessment was done on the needs of existing stations.

After a quiet year in 2004, renewed funding has allowed the initiative to pick up speed again this year.

"The whole thing is based not on competing networks, but collaborating for the benefit of all."

- Hugh Maynard, consultant

One area of focus involves linking some of the six existing radio stations through high-speed Internet.

Maynard envisions the stations sharing programming and material over a virtual network. He points out the potential using the example of the three Lower North Shore stations in Blanc Sablon, St. Augustine and Harrington Harbour. If one station airs a local hockey game, the other stations could tap into the broadcast over the Internet and air the game live in their own communities.

"The whole thing is based not on competing networks, but collaborating for the benefit of all," says Maynard.

The second aspect of the project involves micro-radio stations. Maynard

DID YOU KNOW?

Quebec has six English-language community radio stations



- ▶ Fort Coulonge, CHIP-FM (Pontiac)
- ▶ Blanc Sablon, CFBS-FM (LNS)
- ▶ St. Augustine, CJAS-FM (LNS)
- ▶ Harrington Harbour, CFTH-FM (LNS)
- ▶ Lennoxville, CJMQ-FM (Estrie)
- ▶ Sutton, Coming Soon (Estrie)

says these small stations with limited broadcast range can be easily and inexpensively set up in underserved areas of the province.

Maynard envisions towns along the Gaspé coast starting up a series of these micro-radio stations, and then sharing programming over the Internet.

"Word is spreading. People think it's a good idea. People need only raise a few hundred dollars for the equipment to put up a radio station and get on the air," says Maynard.

For more information on the community radio project contact Hugh Maynard at 450-829-2636 or by e-mail at hugh@quanglo.ca

- By Kim McNairn

Members will vote on strategic direction

'Strategic' continued from Page 4

ment, policy development and organizational and professional development were vital areas for QCGN consideration and action in the years to come.

On April 15, members of the QCGN will be briefed about the work of the Planning Group.

At this meeting members of the Planning Group and representatives of Sussex Circle, the consultants on this project, will discuss the strategic planning methodology used, the specific results of the consultation and its implications for the QCGN, the recom-

mendation of the Planning Group with regard to the preferred strategic direction that the QCGN could adopt for the next five years and the organizational implications of pursuing the recommended direction.

At the upcoming May annual general meeting, after QCGN members have had an opportunity to discuss the QCGN strategic planning report with their respective organizations, they will be asked to ratify the organization's five-year Strategic Direction.

- By Deborah Hook, QCGN executive director

QCGN NEWS WANTS YOUR HELP!

Tell us about your success stories, new projects, upcoming events and people who are making a difference in your community.

We'll share the news!



Anglo youth want more say in decisions

Quebec 4-H focus groups travel Quebec to hear from younger generations

From the Magdalen Islands to the Eastern Townships, the message is clear.

Young anglophones participating in a new series of focus groups want a greater say in improving life for English-speaking people in the province.

"I think sometimes elders come from a different world, and sometimes when they speak on our behalf they aren't portraying our views," said one participant from the Eastern Townships.

The Quebec 4-H Association is carrying out the focus groups across the province this spring. The focus groups are just one part of a larger project which will also gather together previous studies and statistical data on young anglophones in the province and the issues that matter to them the most.

English-speaking people between the ages of 18 and 30 have been invited to attend focus groups in their own community. The project is financially supported by the Official Languages Support Program of Canadian Heritage.

Project consultant Stephanie Maynard says so far the focus groups have revealed some common concerns.

"They don't feel like they're being heard," says Maynard. "They would like to see their local organizations do more for youth, and they would also like to

see something at the provincial level."

Participants suggested setting up a web site for anglophone youth. They talked about holding a province-wide forum for all young people, not just those that speak English. They even spoke about the creation of a province-wide network or organization for young anglophones.

"I am 23 years old and I am a true believer in engaging youth," says Maynard. "I sincerely hope that this will be the first step in engaging those youth that are interested in making a difference."

Previous studies by the Voice of English-speaking Quebec, Townshipers' Association, QCGN, and the Megantic English-speaking Community Development Corporation have all identified the importance of youth issues for the larger anglophone population in Quebec.

"Youth are the link to future leadership and to future generations," noted the QCGN's Global Development Plan.

For more information about the project contact Stephanie Maynard at Qu'anglo Communications and Consulting by calling 450-510-3186 or by e-mail at steph@quanglo.ca.

- By Kim McNairn

LISTEN UP!

Here's what some young people had to say at the recent Q-4H focus groups:

► "Youth need to be involved to solve their own problems and organize their own activities. It helps them to develop leadership skills, and youth will only attend activities run by youth... Organizations need someone who knows how to work with youth or it (their initiative) won't work. Youth need someone to listen to them."

- Participant, Magdalen Islands

► "I think sometimes elders come from a different world, and sometimes when they speak on our behalf they aren't portraying our views."

- Participant, Eastern Townships

► "Anglo community - I can't stand that term because we're closing people off. Communities are judged geographically and should not be by language. We use the term 'community' so loosely to give ourselves higher numbers. We don't feel like a community. I don't know what is going on in Cowansville."

- Participant, Eastern Townships

YES launches paid internships for young workers

Youth Employment Services (YES) has announced a new initiative to promote youth retention in Quebec. The YES Internship Program aims to provide young job-seekers with valuable work experience and offers employers a chance to hire young talent in their regions.

The YES Internship Program matches young graduates with employers for a 20-week paid internship. This is a win-win situation for both employers and job-seekers, as the



wage subsidy allows employers to hire and train young graduates who have limited work experience at no cost to the company. Young workers have an

opportunity to gain valuable work experience and receive training that will allow them to move into permanent positions. YES will reimburse up to \$7.45 per hour.

For more information on the YES Internship Program, including eligibility requirements for employers and job-seekers, please contact Tara de Jonge at 514-878-9788 ext. 314 or visit www.yesmontreal.ca.

- By Angie Foster, YES

Listen and learn: Youth speak out in VEQ study

English-speaking youth in Quebec say employment and language are their top concerns, according to a new study.

The Voice of English-speaking Quebec (VEQ) recently completed a youth study in partnership with the Central Quebec School Board and CEGEP Champlain St. Lawrence.

More than 1,000 anglophone students from Secondary 4 and 5, the adult learning centre, and CEGEP 1, 2 and 3 were surveyed in 2004.

The purpose of the study was to allow young anglophones to express themselves on the pros and cons of living in the Quebec City area in addition to tapping into the reasons they may want to leave. The study also aimed to better understand the perceptions young people have of their community.

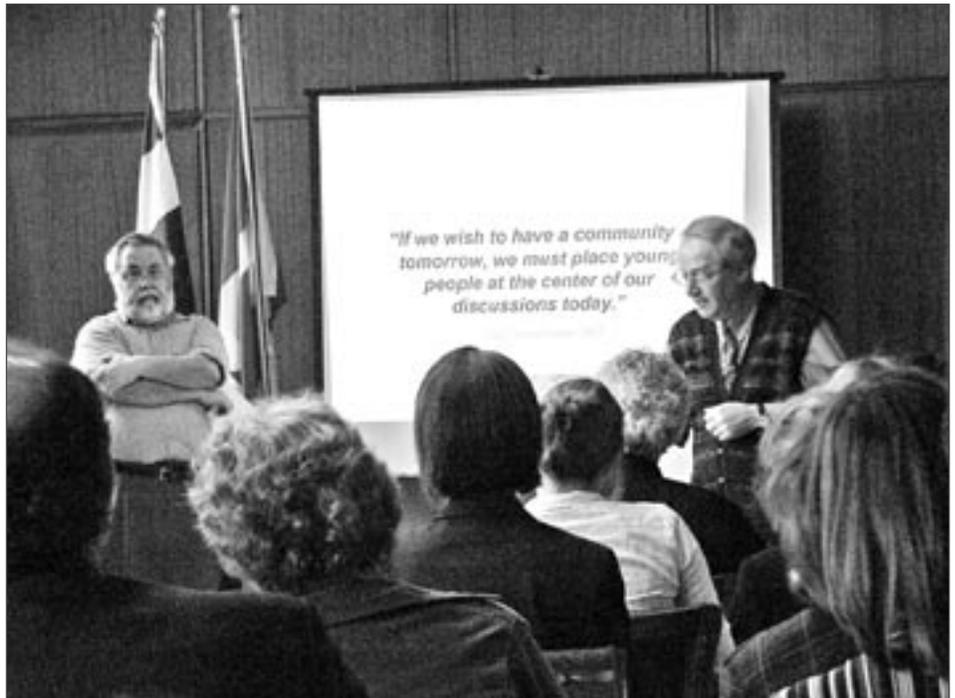
The two most important conclusions of this study concern language and employment opportunities in the region.

First, on the whole, anglophone youth consider themselves to be adequately bilingual. They say this skill is highly valuable locally when career considerations are made. Secondly, 65 per cent of the students who want to leave say they would stay if offered an interesting job. The study also clearly indicates that the youth believe job opportunities are better elsewhere.

“(The youth exodus) is a problem for the English community given our size,” says VEQ First Vice-president Bob Donnelly.

He was struck by the fact anglophone students gave similar reasons for leaving the province as francophone students.

“That is not something we would have presumed,” says Donnelly.



VEQ consultant and board member Dr. Edgard Pitre (L) and VEQ first vice-president Bob Donnelly present the youth report. (Photo by VEQ)

When it comes to family and social factors, the youth said their family members, friends and teachers are major influences on their future.

After reviewing the findings of the study, VEQ has proposed an action plan to attempt to stop young people from leaving. VEQ is currently applying for funding for Phase II which aims to build on initial progress achieved through a youth retention strategy.

A communications plan is also in the works to inform the students, parents, schools and businesses about the realities in order to start working more effectively towards retaining our community's youth.

The project would also enable VEQ to work in partnership with the groups

“(The youth exodus) is a problem for the English community, given our size.”

- Bob Donnelly,
VEQ first vice-president

interested in retaining our bilingual youth.

A mentoring pilot project with local businesses is also a possibility.

- By Helen Walling,
VEQ executive director

Mark your calendars! QCGN annual general meeting in May

Representatives of the English-speaking community will gather in Quebec City in May for the QCGN annual general meeting. This year's event will take place May 13 at 1:30 p.m. at the Chateau Laurier.

On this 10th anniversary of the QCGN in the province, various agenda items will focus on strengthening the

QCGN and revitalizing the English-speaking community for the future.

A vote will also be held on the ratification of the new five-year Strategic Direction.

For more information about the AGM call the QCGN office at 418-681-2112.

Arts groups band together under ELAN banner

The English Language Arts Network (ELAN) has only been around for a few months, but it has wasted no time in becoming a strong voice for artists across Quebec.

ELAN was born out of the Quebec Arts Summit held last November. The summit gathered together more than 100 English-speaking artists from across the province along with government and community representatives.

It was decided that the diverse arts community needed a new and inclusive organizational link between them.

ELAN was formed to bring together those artists, forge new alliances, build new audiences and seek new sources of support.

Guy Rodgers, who heads up the ELAN committee, says ELAN is a natural evolution of the English-language arts scene in Quebec.

"The theatre sector has been organized for decades so theatre people immediately recognized the potential benefits of a larger tent. The literary sector has been organized for a decade so the writers and publishers were quick to embrace the idea of ELAN," says Rodgers.

"It was a logical next step to create a meeting space for the disciplines that are more fragmented and not organized on a linguistic basis."

In the months since the summit, a committee has drafted mission and vi-



Guy Rodgers (Photo by Monique Dykstra)

sion statements plus a five-year development plan.

This year, significant energy will be directed towards building the network and providing support for the members.

Subsequent years will focus on strengthening and expanding ELAN itself, to have a voice even beyond Quebec's borders.

"We hope to have made ELAN known to all English-language arts by the fall of this year," says Rodgers.

He says elections for the inaugural board of directors will likely be held later this year. Each sector will elect its own director.

"At that point," says Rodgers, "ELAN will be truly representative of the entire arts milieu."

More information about ELAN

MISSION POSSIBLE

The English Language Arts Network's mission statement

ELAN is a meeting place for Quebec artists who use English as their first language.

Although most members are comfortable in both official languages, and have chosen Quebec as their home because they value its cultural richness, ELAN celebrates and promotes that part of our identity that is rooted in the English language.

ELAN also provides a forum to make common cause with the French-speaking community and our francophone colleagues by bringing together English-language artists from all disciplines and all parts of the province to forge new alliances, build new audiences and seek new sources of support.

and its members can be found at www.quebec-elan.org.

- By Kim McNairn

Arts take centre stage in YES contest and conference

Every spring, Youth Employment Services (YES) teams up with *La Fondation du maire de Montréal pour la jeunesse* to award a \$5,000 grant to help an artistic entrepreneur get his or her project off the ground.

Artists who are interested in participating in the Artistic Entrepreneur Grant Contest must meet certain eligibility requirements and submit a business plan for their project.

Deadline to submit an application is Monday, April 25 at 5 p.m. The grant

will be awarded at the annual YES Self-employed Artists Conference in June.

For more information please click on www.yesmontreal.ca or call Shant Kancachian at 514-878-9788 ext. 315.

Preparations have already begun for the Fifth YES Self-employed Artists Conference.

Set to be held on June 6 at the Centaur Theatre in Old Montreal, this annual event draws together artists from all disciplines for a full day of workshops, networking activities and

panel discussions that promote "Business Skills For Creative Souls." For more information on the conference, please click on www.yesmontreal.ca or call 514-878-9788 to be added to the conference mailing list.

Youth Employment Services is a non-profit, community organization that delivers English-language job-search and self-employment services to Quebecers.

- By Angie Foster, YES

Global development plan ready for action

The finishing touches are being put on the Global Development Plan (GDP), the document that will chart the future of the English-speaking community in Quebec.

After months of meetings and public consultations, the plan is almost complete. The steering committee met at the end of March to finalize the draft report.

Public consultations into the plan wrapped up in December of last year. Since then, consultants Susan Grundy and Hugh Maynard have been revising the plan to include the feedback received from communities across the province.

“The results of the consultation validated the work of the steering committee and the eight sectoral task forces, with some valuable comments on how to improve it,” says Maynard.

“The action plan is the living part of the document... It is a guide to move forward.”

- Hugh Maynard, consultant

The GDP will lay out the priorities and strategies to strengthen the English-speaking community in Quebec.

The goal is to make the anglophone community a stronger player in the future of the province as a whole.

The plan outlines strategies to improve and support everything from arts and education to health care and employment.

Particular attention is also paid to youth issues.

The priority now is putting the plan into action.

With the plan as their guide, Maynard says community groups across the province will be able to work in concert on common priorities.

“The action plan is the living part of the document. It will change from year to year, as needs have to be responded to in different ways. One of the things we are trying to underline is that this is not an unchangeable recipe, it is a guide to move forward,” says Maynard.

For more information on the Global Development Plan, check out: www.englishspeakingquebec.ca.

- By Kim McNairn

New look, new content on-line at QCGN web site



Looking for the latest information and developments on projects affecting Quebec's English-speaking community?

Log on to the redesigned QCGN web site at www.qcgn.ca.

It's the same address as before. However, the new site will soon be more interactive and informative.

You can keep up to date on the Health and Social Services Networking and Partnership Initiative, the new QCGN strategic direction and other projects.

Check out the information section for valuable statistical data, documents and information about Quebec's English communities.

Sign up to receive e-mail notices of upcoming events and participate in online surveys.

It's all at www.qcgn.ca.

Adult learning group celebrates silver anniversary



Lifetime QAAL member Riva Heft has been instrumental in the history project. (Photo by David Shoheit)

The Quebec Association for Adult Learning (QAAL) is excited to share with you news of a special project, entitled "The History of QAAL."

The project will capture for the story of QAAL from its origins, to its evolution to its major accomplishments over 25 years.

The silver anniversary will take place in 2006. Printed copies of the history will be made available to libraries and to the membership as a 25th anniversary commemorative piece.

Eventually, QAAL plans to turn the project into a multi-media document and include it on the QAAL web site.

And here is the best part: QAAL lifetime member Riva Heft is carrying out this project as a gift to association

through the donation of her time and effort.

The document will also include a bibliography and addendum with a list of founding members, past presidents and board members, and important events.

Anyone with information, anecdotes, photos or memories to add are invited to contact QAAL for possible inclusion.

QAAL is located at 1455 de Maison-neuve Blvd. W. Room LB 614-3, Montreal, QC H3G 1M8.

You can also send an e-mail to the attention of Malka Benjamin at qaal@alcor.concordia.ca

- By Eunice de Gruchy,
QAAL executive director

Thetford Mines group joins the QCGN family

A community development organization in the Thetford Mines area is the latest group to join the QCGN family.

The Megantic English-speaking Community Development Corporation (MCDC) is a non-profit community organization whose mission is to provide community animation and help improve the delivery of social and health services to the English-speaking community in the region.

The group serves approximately 1,000 people living in the Amiante, l'Érable and Lotbinière regions.

The community itself is a small, rural and isolated one that goes back to the 19th century.

For many generations, the English-speaking community was strong and populous enough to provide community services to all of its members through various community or confessional groups such as the Masons, the Oddfellows, the Orange Lodge, and the Anglican, United, Catholic and Presbyterian churches.

However, during the last 25 years, the population has decreased significantly. The mining industry has been

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19th century.*

in decline and youth are leaving the area. As a result, the community and health services took a hit and eventually disappeared.

A group of community volunteers was determined to change the situation. They created the MCDC in November 2000 to revitalize the community and to provide much needed community and health services in English.

Since its creation, MCDC has been implementing new social programs and activities for all age groups. Strong partnerships have also been created in both the English- and French-speaking communities. Support among anglophones is strong.

The current membership is 300 people.

Since September 2004, the MCDC has focused on two major projects in addition to core operations.

Thanks to a grant from Health Canada's Health and Social Services Networking and Partnership Initiative, MCDC and its partners have been developing a program to improve access to health and social services in English.

The second project aims to archive the valuable, historical documents and photographs that tell the story of the community. The archiving project is being made possible with the financial support of Canadian Heritage and in partnership with community members and local/regional organizations.

In the year to come, the MCDC will be hard at work on its health program and developing its volunteer base.

For more information about the MCDC, please call 418-332-3851, send an e-mail to mcdc@bellnet.ca or visit www.mcdc.ivic.qc.ca.

- By Suzanne Aubre,
MCDC executive director

Fun and games enjoyed by all at Home and School presidents' dinner



Hobnobbing at the Presidents' Appreciation Dinner are QFHSA Past-Presidents Susan Tweddell, Norma Stirling and President Donna Norris. (Photo by QFHSA)

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations (QFHSA) recently held its annual Presidents' Appreciation Dinner to recognize the volunteer contribution of local home and school leadership. The dinner was also a wonderful opportunity for people to share ideas and have some fun.

The QFHSA has 87 local associations working hard across the province to enhance the educational and general well-being of children.

But it wasn't all work for the people who came.

The evening's light-hearted entertainment including a Mix & Mingle Bingo Card where participants tried their best to locate a person who would satisfy one of the slots. Participants had to find someone who had visited

every Canadian province, someone who had never flown in an airplane, and even someone who did not like chocolate. The game proved to be a great ice-breaker.

Another activity involved each person writing brief biographies of themselves -- with two true items and one false one. The biographies were then read aloud at random for participants to guess the identities. Who would have guessed that your charming dinner companion was a sex therapist in real life, or that the gorgeous blonde 30 year old was a step-grandmother!

Everyone had a great time and loved the evening's concept.

- By Glenna Uline,
QFHSA executive director

West Quebec parents share education ideas

The Western Quebec Regional Home and School Association recently hosted the third annual conference on issues of concern to parents. The meeting, held at Lord Aylmer School, Aylmer (Gatineau), was a collaboration between several home and school associations.

The Regional Council was brought together three years ago at the Quebec Federation of Home and Schools Associations annual general meeting in Montreal. At that time, representatives from nine schools met and shared ideas, worked on community projects and assisted each other with school issues and events.

This year's parent conference took place on March 19. Many helpful workshops were held to deal with various issues. Sociologist Terri Neate spoke on how to raise your child's self-esteem with physical activities, while Dr. Rich McCendie spoke about dealing with challenging children. Const. Marc Simard of the Gatineau Police addressed the drug and alcohol problems facing so many of our children and youth.

This conference was offered free of charge to all parents within the Western Quebec School Board.

- By Glenna Uline,
QFHSA executive director



Funny man Lorne Elliott swings into Saguenay

Comedian and musician Lorne Elliott is coming to the Saguenay on Friday, May 13. Elliott will put on his 90 minute show entitled "The Collected Mistakes 2005." Everyone is welcome to attend. For further information, please contact the Community Association for Saguenay-Lac St-Jean (CASL) office at 418-548-5333 or by e-mail at casl@qc.aira.com

QWF's Writers Out Loud

The Quebec Writers' Federation (QWF) presents one of Montreal's top investigative journalists, Daniel Sanger, author of "Hell's Witness," in discussion with Derek Webster, Publisher & Editor-in-Chief of *Maisonneuve Magazine*.
Monday, May 2 at 7:00 p.m.
Café Delifrance
350 Sherbrooke St. West
Admission is free, but you are expected to purchase food &/or drinks. The QWF is grateful for the support of the Canada Council for the Arts and CBC Radio One.

Making history, Quebec Style

QAHN invites students to pitch ideas for their best hometown history videos

Ever wonder what makes your hometown or neighbourhood special? What it was like before you were born? Who were the first settlers? How did they live without TV?

The Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN) is on the lookout for hometown history and needs your help. The QAHN is offering students cash prizes for true stories about remarkable people from Quebec's past.

Tell us your story.

Maybe you've already watched Heritage Minutes on television. Each 60-second movie tells about a special person or event in Canadian history. This year the QAHN is inviting high school students to submit Heritage Minute stories about their own communities.

Entries will be judged in two classes: stories from students in Secondary 1-3, and those from Secondary 4 and Secondary 5 students.

First prize in each class is \$250.

Second prize is \$150.

Deadline for submissions is May 30.

You don't have to make a real movie to participate in the 2005 Heritage Minute Contest, but your entry must show how you would use moving pictures and sound to tell your story.

Send a copy of your Heritage Minute on CD, DVD or video tape. Otherwise, submit a storyboard. A storyboard is a shot-by-shot plan of your Heritage Minute video that you draw and write on paper.

Entries will be judged according to content, clarity of presentation and creative merit.

Learn more about the Heritage Minutes television series at the Historica Foundation's web site at www.historica.ca/minutes.

For more information contact the QAHN at 819-564-9595 or 1-877-964-0409 or www.qahn.org.

- By QAHN staff

Make your pitch!

STEP 1 ► BRAINSTORM a subject by yourself or in a group. Ask your local historical society for ideas.

STEP 2 ► RESEARCH. Visit your library, municipal office or historical museum.

STEP 3 ► CREATE. Let loose your imagination. Think about how to act out the story in front of a camera.

Send your entries to:
Quebec Anglophone
Heritage Network
400-257 Queen Street
Lennoxville, QC J1M 1K7

Correction

Quebec's newest heritage webmagazine can be found at www.quebecheritageweb.com.

An incorrect address appeared in the Winter 2004-05 edition of the QCGN newsletter.

We apologize for the error.

Got an idea?

Got an opinion?

Got an event?

**Let us know about it
for our next issue!**

Send your ideas to
qcgnet@qcgnet.ca

GET IN TOUCH!

The Quebec Community Groups Network is a non-profit network of 24 English-language community organizations in Quebec.

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Martin Murphy

Executive Director:
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Denise Giguère

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QCGN staff (left to right) Deborah Hook, Denise Giguère, and Sandra Vallée

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