



QUEBEC HOME & SCHOOL

# NEWS

"The Voice of the Parent in Education"

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## Parent involvement: Just another 'restructuring fad'?

This article comes to us by way of the U.S. Parent-Teacher Association, a counterpart to our Canadian Home & School Associations. Parental involvement in their children's education and schools is essential in both our countries. Editor

Leaders from some 28 organizations met last April '92 with the goal to reach consensus on how best to involve families in children's education and to spark action in their own organizations to make this involvement a reality. The event was hosted by the National PTA in conjunction with the Johnson Foundation's Wing-spread Conference Center.

At the opening of the National Parent Involvement Summit, National PTA President Patricia Henry cited the challenges facing today's schools and the children they serve: increasing levels of poverty, a gap between skills taught and skills needed for work, burnt-out teachers, strained budgets, overwhelmed parents. Family and community involvement, Henry concluded, are a "critical part of the solution" to America's education problems.

Exploring the connection between parent involvement and school restructuring was keynote speaker Don Davies of the Insti-

tute for Responsive Education and the Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning. Despite considerable press, the idea of "school-family-community collaboration" hasn't made much of an impact on the everyday life of schools, Davies cautioned, and thus is in danger of being no more than "another restructuring fad."

But by examining models of "reading-out schools" that have made a working commitment to bringing families and communities into the education process, crusaders for parent involvement can make a difference — "especially if they are willing and able to join forces to advance a movement that brings together both the education organizations and the parent, community and advocacy groups," he said.

What can be learned from exploring available examples of parent involvement programs? David L. Williams of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory suggested that the best models go beyond cooperation and coordination to a true collaboration among homes, schools and communities. These collaborations are most often guided by well-defined expectations of all

parties involved and a joint commitment to remove barriers to participation. "Collectively, homes, schools and communities represent a largely untapped resource for improving our schools and increasing the success of all learners," Williams said.

The hands-on work of the summit was carried out through small- and large-group discussions over the three days. Participants in the discussions included representatives from teachers, principals, school boards, the black community (NAACP) as well as parents.

The summit groups developed a list of key roles for parents/families in the education process, from "their children's first and ongoing teachers" to "advocates for their children and themselves within schools," from "partners in school governance and decision making" to "resources for schools."

Participants also outlined a variety of ways that organizations, businesses, schools, homes and

government can facilitate parent/family involvement in education. These included broad recommendations such as parent-involvement training programs for educators and flexible work schedules for parents, as well as home-based ideas for parents such as trading TV time for reading time.

Summit participants developed a mission statement that calls parent/family involvement "essential for the positive emotional and social development, cultural growth and academic achievement of every child." Among the goals the participants agreed to advance through the work of their own organizations were the following:

- Heightened visibility for the importance of parent/family involvement, through public relations and recognition programs
- Development of legislation and policies to promote parent/family involvement, such as a joint resolution to Congress

• Ongoing collaboration to disseminate parent involvement materials

• Careful attention to the diversity of family backgrounds throughout all parent involvement efforts.

Citing the proverb that holds that it takes a whole village to raise a child, PTA President Henry concluded, "Our entire society must share in the responsibility for raising all of our children. This means parent, family and community involvement." Henry then called upon summit participants to carry forth the parent/family involvement crusade with "missionary-like zeal."

Participating organizations are expected to report to the National PTA by midfall on their progress.

Reprinted from PTA Today, Oct. '92 [magazine]  
by Mickey Revenaugh, Editorial Director of Sponsored Education Materials, Scholastic Inc.

## Parenting Across Differences



Keynote speakers Friday evening are Olivia Rovinescu and Clifton Ruggles, shown here with their daughters.

Parenting within the interracial family in today's society with rapidly changing values constantly challenges and enriches this close-knit family both personally and professionally. They will share their experiences and expertise on parenting in the 90's.

Olivia Rovinescu-Ruggles has taught at John Abbott College, College Marie Victorin and McGill University. With Clifton she has co-authored *Words on Work* and *Expressions of Montreal Youth*.

Clifton Ruggles teaches at the PSBGM as well as Concordia University. His many activities include: columnist with the *Montreal Gazette*, exhibited visual artist — painting and photography, past editor of the PAPT *Sentinel* and co-author with Olivia of *Words on Work* and *Expressions of Montreal Youth*.

## Focus on the Future: Keeping Teens Stimulated About Learning

In the fall of 1985, the Eastern Townships School Board gathered together leaders from business, education and the professional world who, motivated by a sense of community responsibility, were searching for ways to help students prepare for their future. These key persons formed an Advisory Council on Co-operative Education.

Since then, hundreds of high school students have become actively involved in participating in business-school partnerships which are designed to:

- link Eastern Townships Technical Institute students with 6-8 week co-operative education experiences in local industry.
- permit students to explore chosen fields of interest by job shadowing successful business professionals.
- facilitate the learning of key skills, such as work attitudes and ethics in a "Success in the Workplace" program, designed by the Eastern Townships School Board.
- facilitate the development of life skills for students with learning

disabilities.

Through school board commitment, enthusiastic teaching teams and community support, co-operative education programs have proven to be a worthwhile, viable and creative learning experience for students.

Ann Olney Belden, Co-ordinator of the Co-operative Education programs, and Dennis Wall, Chairman on the E.T. Advisory Council of Co-operative Education, will share their expertise with the delegates.

### QFHSA 49th Annual General Meeting

Theme: A LOT TO LEARN: Responding to Change

#### PROGRAM

Friday, April 23, 1993

QFHSA Offices, 3285 Cavendish Blvd., Suite 562, Montreal

3:00 — 5:00 pm

**Early Bird Special** — a broad range of topics to strengthen leadership in Home & School/School Committee — highlighting human and material resources — especially helpful to our out-of-town delegates, but open to all.

#### AWARDS BANQUET

PSBGM Building, 6000 Fielding Avenue, Montreal

6:30 — 7:00 pm Reception (in the atrium)

7:00 — 9:30 pm Dinner

Theme speakers: Olivia Rovinescu, Lacolle Centre for Innovative Learning, Concordia University, and Clifton Ruggles, PSBGM teacher and journalist.

Saturday, April 24, 1993

PSBGM, 6000 Fielding Avenue, Montreal

8:00 — 8:30 am Registration — in the foyer.

8:30 — 12:45 pm Annual Business Meeting

1:00 — 2:45 pm Awards Luncheon

3:00 — 4:30 pm Workshops

**Communication — A Look at One School's Educational Project**

Presenter: Leo Lafrance, Principal, École Primaire Harwood

**Hooked on Learning: All Year Round**

Presenters: Philippe Gendron, READ CANADA, Heather McDowell, NOMAD Scientists; Lorena Morante, Educational Services, The Gazette.

**Focus on the Future: Keeping Teens Stimulated about Learning**

Presenters: Ann Olney Belden, Co-op. Education Programs, Eastern Townships School Board; Dennis Wall, and Chairman, Eastern Townships Advisory Council on Co-operative Education.

on April 23 and 24, 1993

For information call: (514) 481-5619



## Letter to Anne Swettenham QFHSA Vice-President

Dear Anne,

Thank-you so much for your invitation to the Mid-Term Presidents Meeting. I always enjoy networking with other schools because we get to realize how widespread many of our concerns are. The reality of the recession and the ways in which we can help the children affected by cutbacks and layoffs certainly came to light. It has become even more difficult to identify who is in need and how those needs can be handled with empathy and discretion. Providing food to hungry children seems to be a common goal this year. Let us hope that times will be better when we meet again next year.

I was delighted to discover that I will not have to enrol in a three year law course in order to be able to submit a resolution! Though I am not sure if our school can meet the deadline this year, I certainly will not hesitate to put forward our concerns at the AGM next year. Your description of caucusing made the whole process behind the resolution sound very open, approachable, and tasty, too. I was amazed to hear that you are putting 3 resolutions forward this year and am looking forward to seeing which concerns you have decided to tackle.

I was curious about the new awards when I saw them listed on the agenda. I congratulate you on proposing awards which recognize two very different kinds of volun-

teers. The Golden Torch award is a very nice way of rewarding long term dedication and commitment. The Unsung Heroes award certainly touches the heart so it's very appropriate to see that the design for the pin includes 2 hearts.

I had anticipated sitting politely through a lecture about cooperative learning. But this was hardly the case. Jim Howden had us busy every minute, learning about learning. We learned things about our own style of learning and those of others, too. Look at how much more we were able to accomplish when we worked cooperatively together. The people in my group certainly enjoyed the challenge of solving a problem together — each person's contribution was different and exciting, and we learned more and more quickly as well. These must be the kind of people well suited to working in Home and School!

Thank you once again for a very enjoyable and informative morning and I look forward to seeing you again in the spring.

Sincerely,

Anna Marrett, Vice-President  
Westmount High Home and School



World Summit for Children

"No nation can be expected to build a sustainable future if its foundations - its children - are malnourished, illiterate, and lack basic health care."

James P. Grant,  
Executive Director, UNICEF  
International Annual  
Report 1992

## Free wetlands poster still available

The "Wetlands: Water, Wildlife, Plants, and People" poster that appeared in the September 1992 issues of *Science Scope* and *Science and Children* is still available free in limited quantities from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) for teachers who did not get copies or for anyone wanting an extra copy.

The poster offers classroom activities that help elementary and middle school students learn about the many values of wetlands. The poster is a cooperative venture by NSTA, USGS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the American Water Resources Association.

The poster shows various kinds of wetlands and how people use them. The back of the poster explains wetland types, defines important terms, and suggests activities. Three versions are available, including two in color: elementary level (K-5) and middle level (grades 6-8). A black-and-white version with no text on the back is also available for younger children to color.

For a copy of the poster, contact USGS, Branch of Distribution, PO Box 25286, Denver Federal Center, Denver, CO 80225; (303) 236-7477.



The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations is an independent volunteer organization dedicated to enhancing the education, health and general well-being of children and youth by encouraging public interest in education, promoting cooperative efforts among parents and educators and fostering public opinion favourable to the advancement of education.

## Quebec Home & School NEWS

Published by the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations, 3285 Cavendish Blvd., Suite 562, Montreal H4B 2L9, telephone (514) 481-5619.

**EDITORIAL BOARD:** Focus on the Locals: Diane Radu; Safety Scene: Donald Smith; Books on Review: Ken Radu; Layout: Joan Daigle, Stefan Baumann.

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# Opinion...

## We are more important than ever

Reprinted, with permission, from the *Canadian School Executive*, Nov. 91

**Naisbitt and Toffler have described a future that adds to the importance of the educator's role: knowledge worker. But changes in the administration of schools will have to occur. "Second Wave" or "Rustbelt" management techniques will not suffice.**

Ronald G. Macfarlane

Two recently published books have had a major effect on people who plan our society and the institutions which fuel it. They are *Megatrends 2000* by John Naisbitt, and *Powershift* — the last of the Toffler trilogy. Within the space of a few months, these two penetrating futurist books reached the Best Seller lists of the major industrialized countries.

Having examined both in detail, I have come to the conclusion that we in education are performing the most important service in our society.

### Ability to process information essential

If there is a common thread in these two books, it is that the undereducated or uneducated will but cope with life while individuals who have the tools to contribute will enjoy a life of both material and inner satisfaction.

In my youth, elders told me that education was the key to a "good" job. This is no longer the case. Education is the key to a job. Without the ability to manipulate a computer one cannot drive a courier truck, receive 911 emergency calls, respond to customer inquiries in a major firm, or hold an office job in any company. Without the ability to think and express thoughts, one is frozen out of an increasingly interactive workplace in which the quality of one's ideas and the depth of one's knowledge are more important than the formal position held within the company. "Knowledge is power" has never been as absolute a truth as it is now. The fewer layers of bureaucracy that separate the higher echelons from the lower reflects this. In many of the most successful companies there are only two or three such layers. This is based on the premise that all can contribute mightily to the success of the organization.

### Traditional options disappearing

What are the alternatives? There are few. Welfare and assistance are no longer options as our own society, like the rest of North America, is slowly turning away from this form of aid. Governments, more and more, are insisting, with the backing of the majority, that assistance be tied to self help efforts. Welfare instead of welfare is a law in each American state and the reforms in my own province have only followed this trend. This is a result of the knowledge that the unschooled and ill-prepared are destined to be lifelong drains. Social contracts are being renewed and the present mood is that welfare recipients must live by the same rules that govern the contributors.

### A better cure

In the past, unemployment was transitory, the government could prime the job market with the infusion of money — itself a problem in the present deficit situation, or the economy could simply improve and jobs again become available. This occurred when workers were doing mindless, transferable tasks, taught in days if not hours. The knowledge worker of today is not easily transferable nor easily trained. Without certain basics — a working knowledge of computers; sound general knowledge; a shared understanding of accepted modes of comportment; and the ability to access, share, and act upon information without direction — the worker of today is comparable to the illiterate and innumerate of the smokestack society.

Society, wanting to increase individual responsibility, now is saying that it will refuse to keep those who choose not to prepare themselves for the reality of the workplace. This is not an uncaring decision, for the children of welfare become the recipients of the future, and the chain, once broken, is broken for the future too.

And this is why education is so important. When we succeed we do not bandage an infection which will

fester on another limb; we heal the malady — lack of preparation to make a meaningful contribution to society. The difference with this cure is that it lasts for generations and both the recipient and society benefit from it.

The imbalances of the past which have caused such social turmoil — the division between the rich and the poor, the have and the have nots — are nothing compared to the chasms which we will experience in the future. The only difference is that these great divides can be crossed, and the schools are the bridges.

Schools are well placed to take up this challenge. Because we educators are knowledge workers, we took the lead (far before it was fashionable in industry) in involving workers in management decisions. The establishment, in the province of Quebec, of compulsory consultation with staffs about important and defined pedagogical decisions, while opposed by those who were steeped in the traditional Second Wave or Rustbelt management style, was a first tentative step toward enriching the educational system with the vast fund of knowledge its workers possess. When companies now boast that their efficiency has improved since they began to recognize the knowledge of their workers, I can take pride in the fact that the education sector recognized this formally twenty years ago.

### Changes required

#### Treating teachers appropriately

Teachers, like other workers in society, are becoming more and more specialized. We must build upon this. We must recognize that, as mind-workers, teachers are not replaceable in one hour; and we must adjust contracts which reflect the assumption that they are. The teacher who has developed a particular program for enriched students, who has created a computer program which fits the needs of a particular school, or whose personality or skill creates rapport with a group of students and allows them to learn as perhaps they never have before, cannot be at the whim of bumping procedure which was created to fit the pre-information era. We cannot be bound by the dogma of a previous era.

#### Organizing schools appropriately

No era has kept the rules of the previous age. Even forms of government have changed. The city states of the agrarian age gave way to the nation states of the Industrial Revolution. The nation states of the Industrial Revolution are giving way, in the Information Age or Third Wave, to even wider boundaries — the European Community and the emerging North American trading block. However, schools are still operated in the same basic way. They were organized to serve the more regimented needs of the factory. Innovation must be encouraged, and this must recognize the possible need for fundamental change.

#### Management of time

Perhaps the school day, virtually untouched since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, needs to be lengthened. Perhaps the school year, also untouched since the Industrial Revolution, needs to be lengthened. Japan has 240 school days, we have 180. By the end of Grade 11 a Japanese student has been in school 666 extra days or the equivalent of 3.7 additional years when compared to a Quebec student. As many states and provinces have more than eleven years of public schooling, this discrepancy is even greater for most of the rest of North America. Add to this the traditional Japanese practice of "juko" or tutorial classes for university entrance examinations, and the Japanese student has had easily 5 additional years of instruction by the time he or she has finished the equivalent of Grade 11. If education is serious business, we must treat it as such and be prepared for dramatic change.

#### Recognition of merit

Another fundamental change which must be considered if we are to go beyond the second wave, is the recognition of merit. The egalitarian contracts of the industrial revolution are reflected in our collective agreements. Everyone who has ever been in a school as a student, teacher, administrator, parent, or trustee

Continued on page 13

## Creating a Child Focused Society

Rix Rogers, C.E.O. and author of "Reaching for Solutions" (1990), Special Advisor's report to the Minister of Health & Welfare Canada

Building a nurturing and safe society for children is perhaps one of the most challenging issues facing Canada. In spite of our assumptions and often stated beliefs that we are a child centred society, we have learned that the facts do not support the belief. Thousands of adults now give testimony to a history of abuse and victimization.

Sexual abuse of children is disturbingly common. Recent information indicates that there are at least 2.5 million women and over 1 million men in the adult population of Canada, distributed across the social spectrum, who were victims of sexual abuse in their childhood. Many children every day are deprived of their childhood innocence by an older person abusing their position of power to gain sexual gratification.

We also know that physical abuse, emotional abuse and neglect are serious problems requiring the intervention and support of professionals and volunteers at the community level.

For too many of these children, life is a series of tragedies. From an early age they are deprived of love and affection and even the basic necessities of life. They are beaten, or sexually abused, or both, by adults who don't know or care about the damage they are doing. Insults and emotional abuse destroy their self-esteem. Further difficulties may include eating and sleeping disorders, serious problems in personal relations, violent anti-social behaviour, dropping out of school, running away from home, teenage prostitution, and even suicide.

In spite of the anguish and horror, Canada has made significant advances in the last ten years in facing both the causes and outcomes of child maltreatment. A large array of community professionals are now addressing the trauma of victims and their families, and initiatives have been taken to treat offenders. Governments have launched community based programs; thousands of professionals and volunteers have received training, and our courts as well as our laws are gradually undergoing significant changes.

The recent ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child sets a new framework for us in Canada. But the challenge is prodigious.

Children who too often are viewed as commodities must become viewed as persons with dignity and responsibility. The socialization and sexual stereotyping of men and women must be radically altered so that equality between the genders can be achieved and every vulnerable person is provided safety. Nurturing must become the overriding pattern of relationships in the family and in the workplace. Dignity and respect must replace harassment and intimidation.

It is not as though we do not have models or a road map. Countless government studies related to children's well being have been conducted over the last twenty years and the conclusions always reinforce one another. What is lacking is practical application.

Let us help troubled families to become nurturing centres or help children find another nurturing environment. We need to ensure that schools and community influences all assist in the nurturing of children. Common sense approaches to services and intervention, public education and awareness can ultimately lead to a changed society where life long personal and societal suffering can be cut in half within one or two generations. Billions of dollars in remedial services would be available for more productive and enriching activity.

Do we dare trust common sense and make a commitment to build a child focused society? What a revolutionary idea!

*Reprinted from the Institute for the Prevention of Child Abuse "Connection," Summer '92*

**Ed. note:** Schools may be interested in carrying out their own effective parenting program using the Child Abuse & Neglect kit developed by the Canadian Home & School and Parent-Teacher Federation. The kit is a series of meetings (6) which examines all types of abuse — psychological, physical (negligence), etc. The kit is available in French or English and may be borrowed or purchased from the Quebec Home & School office.

## School Success and Single Parents

Tonight is open house at your child's school. You're a solo parent who has been on the go since 5:30 this morning. You bundled your child off to school, worked hard all day, and picked up your child at the after-school care centre. Now it's time to prepare dinner and frankly, you're worn out! But because you know how important it is to reinforce your child's education, you scramble some eggs for a quick supper, and the two of you are at school by 7:00 o'clock — with your youngster clearly delighted that you came along.

An increasing number of children under age 18 live in single-parent families, while fewer families include a working father and a mother at home. Parents may be so emotionally, physically and financially stressed by facing responsibilities alone that they find it difficult to become involved at their children's schools.

Why is school worth the diligent

investment of a single parent's precious time and energy? Because today, more than ever before, a child's future depends on education, and the future of our country depends on today's children — who will become tomorrow's leaders. Here are some strategies for success that parents can try to help schools meet their children's needs.

**Be open.** Inform the principal and the teacher about a family transition that may affect your child at school. The loss of a parent (due to death, divorce, or separation) and the ensuing home life changes are difficult for children of all ages. Keep the school aware of a close relative or care-giver who may be responsible for your child in your absence. Teachers should know what your child is experiencing at home so they may be appropriately supportive.

**Encourage co-operation.** Whenever possible, encourage the non-



## Co-President's Message

Jon Percy

### Our AGM – An exciting Event

It is rather difficult to focus the mind on thoughts of April, spring and the accompanying Annual General Meeting, at a time when snow is swirling across the landscape, icy winds confine one indoors and nightfall seemingly occurs in mid afternoon. However, hopefully by the time this message appears in the pages of the NEWS the warming winds of spring will slowly be rejuvenating all of us, days will once again be longer than nights and we will all be eagerly getting ready to attend the AGM.

This annual get together is an important component in the glue that binds us together as an effective federation of sometimes very independent local associations. All too often QFHSA is looked upon as something completely detached and distinct from local associations — almost a different organization. But it is important to keep in mind that the provincial body is, in fact, nothing more than the sum total of all the local associations acting in concert. It exists primarily to facilitate the work of the locals in doing efficiently and effectively together those things which they could not do alone. Its executive is chosen by, and is thus ultimately responsible to the locals.

The AGM is the formal organizational method through which the locals control and direct their federation. It is the time and place for electing those who will attempt to carry out the wishes of the locals in the coming year, for reviewing what has been accomplished over the past year (hence the thick book of reports), for giving guidance and direc-

tion concerning what needs to be done in the future and for debating resolutions dealing with issues of widespread interest or concern. These are all important functions and have to be dealt with regularly according to our constitution.

But fortunately the AGM is much, much more than simply an annual legally ordained exercise in organizational bureaucracy. It is also a coming together in a spirit of friendship and shared interests of the many dynamic and endlessly interesting individuals who make the local associations so successful and effective. It is a chance to exchange ideas with people who are bubbling with enthusiasm for all things pertaining to children and education. It is always an exciting and fascinating experience. It is also a chance to recognize and honour those who have devoted themselves to the improvement of education or to the work of the organization. Our several awards are an important way of saying publicly "thank you for a job well done, your contribution is much appreciated". It is also a chance to participate in stimulating and educational workshops led by knowledgeable and dynamic professionals.

All in all it is, to say the least, a thoroughly hectic, often exhausting but ultimately exhilarating and memorable experience that I know you will all enjoy. Plan to be there and encourage your fellow home and schoolers to come along too — it is open to everyone, not just executive members. I can guarantee that you won't be disappointed that you made the effort.

custodial parent to participate in your child's education, including parent/teacher conferences and special events. Urge the other parent to plan time for homework during weekend visitations, and keep in mind that, unless prohibited by court order, the noncustodial parent has equal right of access to student records. A cooperative spirit at school and home contributes significantly to the successful adjustment of children. Well adjusted, secure children do better in school.

**Keep accurate records.** Provide up-to-date records with the names and addresses of the student, custodial parent, noncustodial parent, and the home and work phone numbers of both parents (plus a trusted friend or relative) to contact in case of emergency. Make it clear who has permission to pick up the child at school.

**Establish priorities.** You may have to become a time-management expert, but be sure to let your child know that education is a family priority. Talk often about school and your child's work there. Provide quiet time for homework. Take care, though, not to overload your child or yourself to the point

of burnout or crackup. If parents show a genuine interest and concern for education, children will also. Remember, it doesn't matter how well educated you are, or whether you are rich or poor, you can be a booster for education.

**Don't hesitate to ask for help.** You and your child may need counselling or other support during a family transition and thereafter. Ask for a referral at school. There are many community agencies and support groups that offer parenting seminars, workshops, and classes for single parents and families under stress.

**Make your needs known.** The school system cannot respond to the needs of single parents, which often are the same as those of families with two working parents, unless it knows what these needs are.

Above all, don't assume that your child, because he or she doesn't have both parents at home, is destined to low academic performance at school. One parent can care as much, and transmit the importance of education as well as two.

*Reprinted from: Thorndale's Tiger's Roar, Feb. 93*



### Summer Institute in Integrated Education and Community July 5-16

A university-based program designed for professionals, parents and self-advocates interested in learning how to bring people with challenging needs into our schools, workplaces, and communities. This year McGill University is proud to host its eighth Summer Institute, and will be adding two new workshops: *Transforming School Culture: Strategies that Work!*; and *Leadership Seminars in Systems Change*.

For further information, call 514-398-7044, Marsha Forest or fax 398-7436.



# FOCUS on MEMBERSHIP



## To Our Membership Chairmen

A tip of our hat and a big thank you to all the Membership Chairmen in our local Home & School Associations for a tremendous job well done. Membership is running at about the same level as last year in spite of our having to increase the Family Membership Fee (the first increase in seven years) and the sad economic plight of many of our families.

Thank you for your dedication and hard work. We couldn't do it without you.

QFHSA Membership Committee

## Writing Newsletters for Parents of High School Students

Unlike elementary school where the notices are lovingly placed in the schoolbags and then unpacked by mothers at home on the designated day, reaching parents in high school requires a whole different approach. Here, one could spend a whole year grumbling about poor communication only to discover, on the last day of school, that the whole year's worth of notices was collecting at the bottom of the child's locker. That last day of school clean out and subsequent emptying onto the floor at home can lead to many joyous discoveries about missed events, unexpected and seemingly unexplained early dismissals, and school life in general. The Home and School challenge, at the high school level, is how to get news home to the parents.

The most likely times to see large numbers of parents at the school are at Meet the Teacher Night, Open House, and Parent-Teacher interview days. The thought of parents waiting in line to see teachers in the gymnasium where there is nothing to do and nothing to read is an opportunity crying out to be noticed. This is the ideal place to distribute newsletters.

### Keep them short!

My basic philosophy is to keep the newsletters short — only one page. There are several reasons for this. First, the size of the staff producing the paper. Unless the school has a well established paper with lots of contributors, it is a little overwhelming to try to produce a large paper. A one page paper only needs one person in order to get started. It could always grow from there.

A one page paper is easy to handle and more likely to be read from start to finish. Of course, there is no way such a short newsletter can begin to cover all the wonderful trips, events, programs, and prizes that a high school has to offer its students. On the other hand our children are now in high school. They are growing away from us — learning to make their own decisions, faced with opportunities and choices that they themselves should evaluate. Although we may want them to join the drama club, the basketball team, the volleyball team, student council, the chess club, and the photography club; to sign up to edit the yearbook, participate in peer counselling and tutoring, organize the dances and participate in an overseas student exchange program, there is a limit to what any one human being can do.

We may have to accept that we will know a little less about every aspect of our child's high school in the interests of our child's growing independence. (After all, otherwise there wouldn't be a problem in getting news home would there?) Adolescence is a time of wanting power and control over one's own destiny. The excellent programs high schools have to offer are a good place to learn to make decisions and we may have to learn to accept the fact that we will be a little less informed. Or, we can choose to get the best of both worlds by volunteering at the high school ourselves. It's a way to be well informed, and also to make a difference. In fact you could become so well informed you just may offer to help write a newsletter!!!

Anna Marrett

## APPLICATION — QFHSA

Supporting (Family Membership) . . . \$12.00

Affiliate (Group) Membership . . . \$50.00  eg. School Board, School Committee, Parents Committee, School Council

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

(Please do not forget to include post office box number or apartment number if applicable)  
Your membership card will be forwarded to you, immediately, upon receipt of your application by:

**Quebec Federation of Home & School Association**  
3285 Cavendish Blvd. #562, Montreal, Quebec H4B 2L9 (514) 481-5619

Membership includes the bi-monthly newspaper and affiliation with the Canadian Home & School and Parent-Teacher Federation.

## 1992/93 GROUP AFFILIATE MEMBERS as of March 1993

### SCHOOL/PARENTS' COMMITTEES:

Andrew S. Johnson's Memorial High School  
Asbestos-Danville-Shipton School  
Aylmer School  
Beechwood School  
Buckingham School  
Butler School  
Campbell's Bay & District School  
Centennial Park School  
Chelsea School  
Commission Scolaire Jérôme-LeRoy, English Sector Parents' Committee  
Dr. S.E. McDowell School  
Dorset School  
Ecole Primaire Beaconsfield  
Ecole St-Joseph  
Flemming School  
Franklin School  
Gault Institute  
Hadley School  
Harold Napper School  
Hemmingford School  
Heroes' Memorial School  
Herbert Purcell School  
Holland School  
Huntingdon Academy  
John Rennie High School  
Jubilee School  
Knowlton Academy  
Lakeshore School Board Parents' Committee  
LaSalle High School  
Lennoxville School  
Lindsay Place High School  
Margaret Pendlebury School  
McCaig School

Metis Beach School  
Mount Bruno School  
Mount Pleasant School  
Netagamiou School  
Onslow School  
Ormstown School  
Philemon Wright School  
Portneuf School  
Princess Elizabeth School  
Protestant School Board of Chateaugay Valley Parents' Committee  
Quebec High School  
Royal Charles School (St. Hubert)  
Royal Vale Alternative  
Ste. Agathe Academy  
St. Bernard School  
St. Joseph School (Huntingdon)  
Ste. Foy School  
St. Patrick School  
St. Willibrord School  
Sinclair Laird School  
South Hull School  
Souvenir School  
Spring Garden Parents' Congress  
Sunnyside School  
Three Rivers High School  
Valois Park School  
Wagar High School  
Westpark School  
Wilder Penfield School

### SCHOOL BOARDS:

District of Bedford School Board  
Eastern Townships School Board  
Gaspésie — The Islands School Board



Lakeshore School Board  
Laurentian School Board  
Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal  
Protestant School Board of Greater Seven Islands  
St. Maurice Protestant School Board  
Saguenay School Board "P"  
South Shore School Board  
Western Quebec School Board

### TEACHERS:

Aylmer School Staff  
Edinburgh School Staff  
Gaspésie Teachers' Association  
Lakeshore Teachers' Association  
Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers

### OTHERS:

Alliance Quebec  
Association for the Advancement of Jewish Education  
Chateaugay Valley English-Speaking Association (CVESPA)  
Kahnawake Education Center  
L.C.C. Parents' Committee  
Lee, Ellen  
Loyola High School  
Quebec Association of Independent Schools  
Queen of Angels Academy  
St. George's School of Montreal  
Stanstead College

## New Richmond High School



### NRHS burns to the ground.

New Richmond Elementary/High School (NRHS) in New Richmond in the Gaspé burned to the ground on Thursday, March 4. The fire started at about 11:30 in the morning on the second floor

and teachers and students (150 in all) only had enough time to leave the building — purses, boots and personal belongings were all lost. We are grateful that there was no one hurt or injured in the fast spreading fire.

At the present time the students are attending classes in various make shift locations. The Ministry of Education (MEQ) appears willing to rebuild NRHS, which attracts students from a 50 kilometer radius, but this will not be done before next Fall at the earliest.

If any school has spare textbooks, or families' spare children's

reading books, that they would like to donate to the school, you can send them care of **Sheila Campbell**, 340 Range 4, Box 9, New Richmond, ROC2B0 or to **Peggy Aitken**, Box 2029, New Richmond, G0C2B0. Sheila is the President of the New Richmond Home & School Association, and Peggy is a Past President, teacher at the school, and a Vice-President on our Board of Directors.

The students, their families, and the teachers would be very grateful.

Barbara Milne-Smith  
QFHSA, Co-president

### CORRECTION

*In the last issue we incorrectly showed Nancy Acton as the Beaconsfield High School Membership Chairperson. It should have shown Betty Yamaoka. Sorry Betty, it was our fault.*

Photo: Constance Brochat, SPEC



## Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation COMMUNIQUE

**Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission Hearings.** A brief prepared by Ruth Woodcock, Media Awareness Chairman, in consultation with Norma McGuire, President of Ontario Federation, and Maybelle Durkin, Executive Director, on television was deposited with the Commission. Mrs. Woodcock also represented CHSPTF at a workshop organized by the Friends of Canadian Television in Toronto to review the process.

**Reclaiming Childhood: Responsible Solutions to TV Violence and our Children.** Gordon Dalzell represented parents on the prestigious panel assembled by the Hincks Institute to address concerns identified on the first day of the two-day conference held in Toronto, February 19-20. CHSPTF was also represented by Robert Clow, Sandra Stayner, Ruth Woodcock, Joan Mansfield [Que.] and Maybelle Durkin.

**Exemplary Secondary Schools in Canada: A study of effectiveness.** CEA has been awarded a contract by Employment and Immigration Canada to carry out a major, Canada-wide, research study. The study will focus on exemplary schools and on alternative learning environments with particular reference to improved secondary school retention and achievement. Dolores Neil, President, has been appointed to the Advisory Committee which met for the first time in Toronto on February 5th.

**Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence in Science, Technology and Mathematics.** Kingston Collegiate and Vocational Institute (KCVI), the oldest school in Ontario, was the site chosen for the introduction of this important awards program for teachers on January 22nd. Astronaut Steve McLean held the audience enthralled with a presentation about his adventure in space, which included the performance of an experiment designed by senior students and their teachers. CHSPTF, one of the two educational organizations invited to attend, was represented by the Executive Director. Tom Hockin, newly appointed Minister of Science, together with his staff at ISTC, was in charge of the proceedings.

**Coalition of Leaders for Environmental Education.** The Executive Director attended a meeting held in Ottawa in early February when national organizations representing the institutions, professions and parents associated with Canada's schools, colleges and universities came together to review the Joint Declaration calling for further efforts in education to promote environmental citizenship.

**Scouts Canada.** In recognition of sixty-five years of co-operation and support of scouting programs, CHSPTF was presented with a plaque at an Awards luncheon held in Ottawa in late November.

**Matsushita Electric Company of Canada.** In recognition of the services of CHSPTF to literacy a television/video unit was presented to the National Project Director at the offices of Southam in Toronto, January 21st.

*Dolores Neil, President*

## West Island Association for the Intellectually Handicapped

W.I.A.I.H. is a non-profit organization formed to provide services to intellectually handicapped children and adults and support for their families. Our aim is to enhance the quality of life of the intellectually handicapped members in our community.

Our supports include information, referral, integration, bi-monthly publications and educational presentations.

The children's services program is an early intervention program for developmentally delayed children from birth to 5 years.

Special and integrated recreation programs answer the recreational, social and leisure needs of

the intellectually handicapped of all ages.

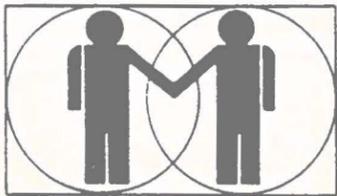
Our community residences provide permanent homes for intellectually handicapped adults who cannot live independently.

If we can be of service to you, or to anyone you know, or if you would like more information about our Association, please call Peggy Weaver at: 694-7090.

**A.O.I.H.I.**

L'Association de l'Ouest de l'Île pour les Handicapés Intellectuels est un organisme à but non lucratif formé pour offrir des services aux enfants et adultes handicapés intellectuels et du soutien pour leurs familles. Notre but est d'améliorer la qualité de vie des personnes handicapées intellectuelles de notre communauté.

Si nous pouvons vous être utile par nos services, ou à quelqu'un que vous connaissez, ou si vous désirez de plus amples renseignements à propos de notre Association, veuillez appeler Peggy Weaver au: 694-7090.



## John Abbott College Computer Camp

For the past eight years, John Abbott Computer Camp has placed a strong emphasis on the fact that learning and having fun are synonymous. Our high rate of returning campers ensures that we provide new and exciting programs every summer. The best of two worlds is obtained by captivating young minds with the marvels of technology while stimulating them with a large variety of physical activities. The blend is half and half, striking the perfect balance between computing and recreation. An excellent camper-counsellor ratio ensures individual attention from highly trained counsellors whether the activity be swimming, kayaking, tennis or computing.

In the computer lab campers learn to work together on thought-provoking projects ranging from easy to complex, depending on individual experience. (Computer hackers can use their talents for potential breakthroughs instead of illegal "break-ins".) Learning computer animation and multi media techniques (adding films, photos and sounds to the power of computers) ensures that campers learn how to use the

technology in creative and educational ways. This experience provides them with the self-confidence and the interest to continue learning and using new technologies — as essential today as reading and writing were yesterday!

### Special Program for "Teens"

In order to accommodate our growing number of teenage campers, programs of special interest to teens have been specifically developed for beginners, intermediates and hackers. They include introduction to programming, as well as a general introduction to the computer world for teenagers. In addition, our Macintosh curriculum offers computer artwork and exciting hypercard projects. Our high ratio of returning campers ensures that we provide new and exciting programs each and every summer.

Computer Camp will run from **July 5 to August 20, 1993**. Situated on the park-like campus of John Abbott College, access is easy by car or by bus from Lionel Groulx metro.

For more information call (514) 457-3063.

# DOUG ANAKIN SPORTS

A UNIQUE FAMILY-ORIENTED SPORTS STORE

AS YOUR CHILDREN OUTGROW THEIR EQUIPMENT TRADE IT IN ON NEW OR USED EQUIPMENT



WE CARRY HIGH QUALITY ITEMS  
NEW AND USED



**BIKES BIKES BIKES**



One of the largest  
selections of bikes  
(children and adult)  
on the West Island



Bike repair — We pick up and deliver

Want a bike? Trade your skates or  
old hockey equipment towards one!  
GREAT SERVICE — ALL THE TIME — KNOWLEDGEABLE STAFF

Great selection of:  
SOCCER SHOES — BASEBALL SHOES  
and EQUIPMENT.  
NEW and USED — WE TRADE  
IF YOU'RE A FIRST TIME PLAYER, SEE US



In-line skates by Bauer & Itech  
Tennis, backpacks, hiking boots, camping equipment  
Tennis racket stringing

GREAT RENTAL POLICY — INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS  
WE RENT EVERYTHING  
OUR PRICES — ESPECIALLY WITH TRADE-INS — CAN'T BE BEAT!

CHECK US OUT!  
COME AND SEE US!  
ASK AROUND — WE ARE WELL KNOWN!

454 BEACONSFIELD BLVD., BEACONSFIELD — TEL: 695-5700

# Social Affairs/Support Services Committee

by Pat Lewis

**CANADIAN TEENS:** A recent survey by the World Health Organization of 11, 13 and 15-year-olds in Canada and 10 European countries concludes that Canadian teenagers have healthy teeth, eat well, get a fair bit of exercise and don't watch too much TV. BUT many Canadian teens drink too much alcohol, suffer a high level of stress and have poor relationships with their parents. Canadian girls



are very likely to drink as much as boys, a change from the past. And Canada is the top country for stress-related problems. However, teens in Canada aged 15 and older did report the best relationships with their peers; usually other disaffected youths. Results may be neighbourhood gangs.

**CHILDREN & MENINGITIS:** Because of the deaths among young people last year from meningitis public health officials in the Montreal area will vaccinate 450,000 children on the island

against meningococcal infections. These vaccinations require written authorization of a parent or guardian for those under 18, and will take place in 979 schools and most health clinics in the area. The vaccine offers protection against type A and type C meningitis.

**NEW FOOD GUIDE RULES:** More than 4 million copies of a revised food guide were released in November by Health and Welfare Canada. It is supposedly based on nutrition and food science, according to a background booklet, but documents obtained under the Access to Information Act show that the food industry complained so much about the proposed changes in the old guide that the government backed off. Originally, the new guide proposed to recommend minimum servings of meat per day to be one. Eggs were to be reduced also, as was the amount of milk recommended for teenagers. BUT the new guide has now increased meat servings to two or three a day, eggs from one to two per serving and teens are advised to drink up to four cups of milk per day. The age limit now starts at 4 years, rather than 2 years, and instead of recommending "low-fat" dairy foods it was changed to "lower-fat" foods. What a difference a word can make!



**SMOKING:** Health Minister Bouchard wants a law passed to prevent stores from selling tobacco products to anyone under 18. At present anyone over 16 can buy cigarettes. According to a recent study, most teens misjudge the addictive power of tobacco. They want to quit but can't. Kids whose friends smoke are far more likely to become smokers themselves.

In the U.S. the Environmental Agency is releasing a long-delayed report that states that second-hand smoke is a carcinogen and kills about 3000 non-smokers a year because of lung cancer. Cigarette smoke increases the risk of pneumonia, bronchitis and middle-ear disorders in children. Asthma increases also. The Canadian Cancer Society said it favors a total ban on smoking in public places.

A survey of Canadians in September found that 56 per cent believed that smoking was addictive. Smoking causes the deaths of some 38,000 Canadians each year, but many smokers are still not aware of all the dangers. Smoking has increased dramatically among teenage girls, many of whom smoke because their friends do so or because they think it helps to keep them thin. The result is that Quebec females in their early-to-late 20s are smoking more cigarettes than men. In Quebec universities about 225 female students smoke for every 100 male students who smoke.

Canada's Health Minister Bouchard hoped for a ruling from the Quebec Court of Appeal on a federal law banning all tobacco ads that would declare the law constitutional. And he got his wish! From January 15th all cigarette ads are out. Bouchard now says the government will move quickly to

enforce the law and possibly expand it. Tobacco companies plan to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. On October 20-22, 1993, the first national conference on Tobacco or Health will be held in Ottawa.

**AIDS:** The Lakeshore School Board has updated its AIDS policy, and the materials for teaching about and for children are available for parents and teachers. The Baldwin-Cartier Board has now prepared a teaching program for Grades 5-6. As of January, revised statistics show that the AIDS epidemic is not going away. Many more data need to be collected. A vaccine tested on monkeys might be a tool in AIDS research. One study recently showed that HIV carriers in the Western Hemisphere will top 3 million by 1995. More women are now contracting AIDS. Please note resource materials listed below.

## POSSIBLE RESOURCES FOR PARENTS & TEACHERS:

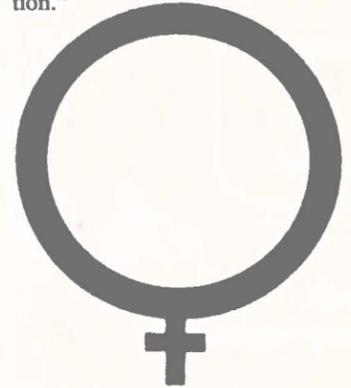
1. COME SIT BY ME, a picture book for children ages 4-8. Contact Women's Press, 517 College St., Suite 233, Toronto, ON M6G 4A2. Answers children's questions about AIDS.
2. WOMEN AND AIDS, pamphlet printed by Health & Welfare Canada. To obtain: Write to Minister of Supply & Services Canada 1990. Cat. No. H45-53/10-1990. ISBN 0-663-57211-4. OR, Write to: Federal Centre for AIDS, 301 Elgin St., Ottawa, ON. K1A 0L3.
3. AIDS — THE NEW FACTS OF LIFE, a pamphlet available from AIDS Education and Awareness Program, Canadian Public Health Association, 210-1335 Carling Ave., Ottawa, ON K1Z 8N8 or call (613) 725-3769.
4. WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT AIDS, a guide for Parents on Talking to young people about AIDS. Write to: Minister of Supply and Services Canada 1990. CAT. NO. H43-5319-1989E, ISBN 0-662-17330-9. There is a video & presenter's guide for this program. All school boards should have a copy of the video in either French or English. If your school cannot obtain a copy of the video, please call the QFHSA office. We have copies to loan.
5. AIDS, QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FOR KIDS, Grades 5-6: Contact: THE LEARNING WORKS? INC., P.O. Box 6187, Santa Barbara, CA, U.S.A. 93160.
6. For other materials, contact: NATIONAL AIDS CENTRE, HEALTH & WELFARE CANADA, Ottawa, ON. K1A 0L2.

## Sex Education: What Is Effective?

by John DeNora

The Dec./Jan. 1993 SIECUS Report (Sex Information Education Council of the United States) dealt with sex education curricula that work. In this article I offer brief outlines on the four programs along with supplementary comments on other aspects of sexuality education.

The first program, "Reducing the Risk: Building Skills to Prevent Teen Pregnancy," underlines abstinence and contraception knowledge. The evaluation of this curriculum shows, "significant decreases in unprotected intercourse among students who took the course before they were sexually active, either by delaying the onset of sexual intercourse or by increasing the use of contraception."



This program:

1. Delays the onset of intercourse among sexually inexperienced students.
2. Increases parent/child communication on the subjects of abstinence and birth control.
3. Gives information on abstinence, contraceptives, pregnancy risk and S.T.D. prevention.
4. Shows pupils how to recognize social pressure which might lead to unprotected sex.
5. Builds the required self-confidence pupils need to put

learned skills into real-life practice.

A second curriculum "Will Power/Won't Power," is directed towards twelve to fourteen year old girls.

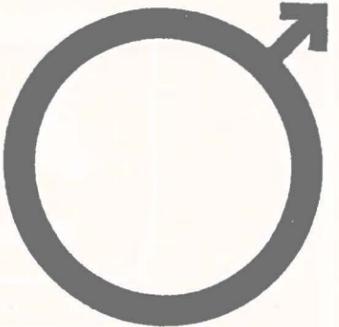
The four components of this program are:

1. Five 2-hour sessions involving parents and daughters. These ten hours are used to increase communication about sexual information and values.
2. Six 2-hour periods focus on assertiveness training to have pupils increase their refusal skills.
3. Nine 2-hour periods are given over to educational and career planning. These sessions are intended to provide motivation and goals to avoid pregnancy.
4. The program also creates a link with health services found in the community.

The study done on this curriculum showed it is more effective for younger girls (12-14 year olds) than for older girls (15-17 year olds). It is believed that the more components covered and hence the more hours spent in the program the greater is the impact on teaching preventive behaviours.

A third program cited by SIECUS is "Values and Choices." It is designed for seventh and eighth graders and promotes equality, self-control, promise keeping, responsibility, respect, honesty and social justice. Not only is abstinence an important part of the program, but it also attempts to have pupils understand that this behaviour is a decision they have to learn to make.

Teachers report, that by the end of the program, 51% of the participants show greater respect for each other, 45% have a more responsible attitude toward sex and 43% have increased their self-esteem.



The fourth program is, "Postponing Sexual Involvement," and it is designed for grades seven and eight. High school peer leaders are trained to lead participants through five sessions.

The Preteen Series found in grade seven has the following:

1. Becoming a Teenager
2. Handling Curiosity
3. Peer Pressures
4. Assertiveness Techniques
5. Using New Skills

As in the previous three programs this one also emphasizes abstinence.

Not only is human sexuality a complex subject to understand but becoming a healthy and responsible sexual adult takes time, effort, accurate information and support. This is not likely to happen if courses last between five to ten hours per year. It cannot be stated too strongly that young people need extensive discussions to develop what is referred to as ownership with the classroom material. When this happens there is a greater potential for positive impact among the pupils.

In schools where comprehensive sex education programs exist, teachers state the courses provide useful and positive dimensions to the lives of the pupils. The students in these schools tend to agree with their teachers regarding sexual activities and

## High School youth trained as peer educators

At Lemoyne d'Iberville High School, five boys and twelve girls in third year secondary school (15-16 years old) volunteered to participate in a training project on AIDS prevention aimed at their peers.

Lemoyne d'Iberville's High School is located in the urban area of Montreal's South Shore. This school is characterized mainly by its inter-cultural dimension. It is estimated that 40 different ethnic groups are represented in this school.

For four years now, the teaching staff at the school have been actively involved in AIDS prevention work through several projects implemented in cooperation with the Longueuil-Ouest CLSC's nurse.

While in the training segment of the AIDS peer project, the 17 teens learned group facilitation techniques, interpersonal communication skills around AIDS prevention and sexual education with a focus on prevention.

The themes covered during the training were: knowledge of AIDS, awareness of issues concerning persons with AIDS/HIV, homosexuality, condoms, options regarding sexual activities and

communication skills.

The mandate for the group called for presenting their peers with choices of behaviours around sex and HIV. Youth were invited to discover creative means to convey the information to their peers.

The South-Shore Regional Board of Education's Educational Development Fund granted a \$350 grant for all of the activities on AIDS prevention at the high school.

The program was aimed at youth who had already acquired some knowledge of HIV/AIDS issues through their participation in previous programs. It would not be appropriate to fully transpose this peer project to an uninformed or unprepared group of teens. Indeed, groups not yet sensitized to the problem of AIDS would find the program operating at too quick a pace for them.

Contact: CLSC Longueuil-Ouest, 201 Curé-Poirier west, Longueuil, QC J4J 2G4. Tel.: (514) 651-9830. Fax: (514) 651-4606. Reprinted from Canadian AIDS News, Vol. V, No. 2, Jan/Feb '92.

Editor's Note: See other AIDS resources above.

# A New Museum... A New Learning Environment

A new museum, *un nouveau Musée... pour rire*, opens in Montreal on April 1st. This very different museum is dedicated to the humour of the world. It is a resource that will cement Montreal's growing reputation as the world capital of humour. In fact, it is more than a new museum, it is a whole new *kind* of museum, that will rapidly take its place alongside the other major cultural institutions of the city.

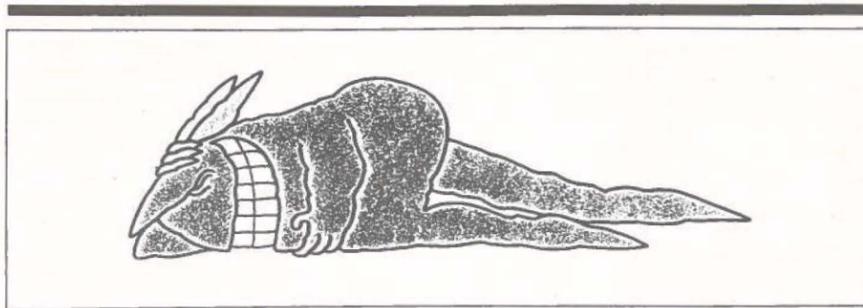
*Un nouveau Musée... pour rire* redefines the museum experience. The educational content of the first exhibition, *Laughing Matters*, is presented in a series of exhilarating, visually stunning displays that completely engage the visitor during a two-hour voyage of discovery — a voyage made thoroughly accessible through breathtaking state-of-the-art display technology. Video screens, infrared headphones and 35mm film projectors bring the visitors and the museum together in an unforgettable interaction that will have a lasting impact on their appreciation of the human condition. As a learning environment, *un nouveau Musée... pour rire* is unique, and the museum will pay particular attention to students, with group rates for school visits.

## Serious Students

But why a museum of humour in the first place? Isn't humour frivolous and unimportant? On the contrary: Humour is an essential component in the health and wellbeing of each individual and of every society, and yet, until now, its value has been largely taken for granted by all but a few serious students and scholars. (The few do comprise some well-known names: Sigmund Freud devoted an important work to the study of *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*).

By establishing a museum of humour, we are at last giving the subject the respect it deserves as a cultural, social... and very *human* phenomenon. And we are giving it a permanent home in Montreal, where it will be open and accessible to the widest possible public. *Un nouveau Musée... pour rire* occupies a superb example of industrial heritage architecture, a building that was originally the home of Ekers, one of Montreal's leading breweries at the turn of the century.

Literature, theatre, music, journalism, sculpture, cinema, radio and television have all been enhanced by humour, and *un nouveau Musée... pour rire* reflects this contribution in a rich, diverse, and of course, funny environment. The uses of humour in education are currently being explored seriously in a number of academic settings, and it seems certain that humour is an invaluable tool that aids memory and social skills. Humour provokes curiosity. It stimulates the desire to read and rewards the reader. It triggers an interest in theatre and art. Humour



encourages creativity and helps to hone a student's analytical skills.

If the museum is a voyage of discovery for visitors of all ages and all cultures, the destination is a greater understanding of the human spirit. And the vehicle is the art, the sociology, the anthropology, the psychology and above all, the *history* of the world and its inhabitants. In every important era, at every significant turning point, humour has found its own means of expression, and has sometimes even changed the course of history. Across the ages, humorists have been free to reflect society's tastes and have dared to influence public opinion. Governments have fallen, tyrannical careers have ended, thanks to the timely intervention of

humour. On occasion, satirists and cartoonists have been imprisoned — and worse — for daring to make fun of the authorities.

Humour has always served important social functions, whether in simple joke-telling between two people, or in reaching mass audiences. And the mass audience for comedy is by no means a 20th century phenomenon: Over 2,500 years ago, the plays of Aristophanes were regularly performed to audiences of 15,000 and more.

## Humour: A Shared Heritage

The heritage of humour we all share is due to the work of people with extraordinary talents. The museum celebrates all the men and women who have made the world a

funnier place. And at the same time, it points to the underlying wisdom that characterizes so much of the world's humour. Under one roof Groucho Marx and François Rabelais can rub shoulders and compare notes. Mae West can trade one-liners with Whoopi Goldberg while Stephen Leacock shares a dialogue with Jacques Prévert. John Cleese and William Shakespeare appear for England, while Archie Bunker and Mark Twain represent the U.S.A. Molière shares the stage with Coluche. Dominique Michel and Sol, Aislin and Girerd, Olivier Guimond, Paul Berval, Gilles Latulippe and Denise Filiatrault carry the standard for Montreal. Clowns from Switzerland, standup comics from Russia, the genius of Mack Sennett, the pathos of Charlie Chaplin, the acid pen of Ralph Steadman and the charm of Robert Lapalme... all now have a home in the museum that is dedicated to celebrate, honour, preserve and spread the world's laughter — *un nouveau Musée... pour rire*.

*Sandra Silvi* is the resource person responsible for the museum's school programme. She can be reached at 845-3155.



A learning environment like no other: *un nouveau Musée... pour rire* uses the latest display technology to make a museum visit a memorable experience for your students.

Photo by: R. Max Tremblay

# Teacher Appreciation We

TAW is sponsored by *The Canadian Home & School and Parent-Teacher Federation*; the week is designed to encourage parents to recognize the personal and professional contributions of their children's teachers.

While there is an Idea File to suggest ways in which you might honour your teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week (TAW), we are constantly amazed at the fertile minds at work out there in our schools! The following is a small sample of what some schools/parents were up to:-

**ALLANCROFT** had some unusual ideas. One Grade 3 class took their teacher, *Magdalen Georgiades*, to lunch at Pizza Hut. They all arrived extra early to have a tour of the kitchen and then made their own pizzas for lunch!

**ASBESTOS, DANVILLE, SHIPTON SCHOOL**, located in Danville, Quebec, gave out Certificates of Appreciation to their teachers. Their bulletin board was decorated with "Garfields" with a picture of each teacher in the middle. The Staff Room received a fruit basket on Tuesday, while Wednesday the Student's Council did the honours with cookies.

**AYLMER's** theme for TAW was "Just Say Thank You". Monday they rallied the students at an assembly and gave out buttons and TAW certificates. A contest was held for the children, "Guess the Hands". Photos were taken of each teacher and staff's hands and the students had to guess who they belonged to. Organizers of all the happenings were *Jane Bertrand, Claus Jobs, Cindy Paulin* and *Teresa Stanley*. A notice also appeared in the *Aylmer Bulletin*.

**A BEACONSFIELD HIGH** parent, *Linda Allison*, wrote to the local newspapers in praise of teachers and both the *West Island Gazette* and *The Chronicle* printed her letter, which appears on this page.

**CEDAR PARK** gave their TAW a new twist this year. As well as giving their teachers gifts of baking, love notes, and flowers, money was collected to adopt a whale in their name! Their principal wrote an excellent letter which appears on this page.

**ECOLE PRIMAIRE PERCE NEIGES**, in Pierrefonds, celebrated with a special dessert and coffee break on the Friday.

**EDGEWATER** went all out too! They sent flowers to the Staff Room and gave everyone a Certificate of Appreciation. This was followed up by red apples, home made chocolates, etc. Every day two Home & School members baked treats for recess — all organized by *Shirley McCallum*.

**JOHN RENNIE HIGH** baked muffins for each teacher, plus the support staff, while students gave out flowers and apples. Mini sacks of candies were also made up which had a happy face sticker saying "thank you". As a parent commented, when you have more than 100 teachers and staff in your school, you're talking a lot of candy!

**SEIGNIORY** also baked goodies for recess/coffee breaks. Plus other goodies were placed every morning in the teacher's boxes. All topped off by a luncheon on Friday.

**SOUVENIR** involved their student government in organizing

TAW. These students visited each grade level and suggested artwork, letters, etc., to their fellow students. They themselves made flowers for their teachers. Bravo!

**WINDERMERE's** activities were written up in *The Chronicle*. Banners, balloons and buttons were all featured. Parents visited the school on Monday and "pinned" each teacher with a corsage. Chocolate lollipops in the shape of roses, plus a catered lunch on Friday topped off festivities. Why do teachers deserve all this? Just ask the students. "She makes learning fun," says Grade 6 student *Brendan Stutt*, referring to his teacher, *Claudia Anzovino*.



*Lise O'Brien, French Immersion teacher at Beacon Hill, enjoying flowers and a special pen given to her for Teacher Appreciation Week by Home & School Ass'n.*

## BEACON HILL

The local Home & School organized and sponsored our annual Teacher Appreciation Week. The front hall was decorated with a mobile and mural of the outlines of students' hands signed by the boys and girls, showing their love for the staff.

On the first morning each teacher was presented with a special pen, flowers and Valentine "goodies." A huge basket of various fruits appeared in the staff room, and baked goods were part of the recess celebration each day. A very popular "gift" was the fact that volunteer parents took over all recess duty for the week.

H&S class mothers worked with students as they made gifts and greetings for the teachers and staff. Home & School continued its tradition of making a charitable

donation to an organization of the Teachers' choice.

Climax of the week was the delightful dinner at the Beaconsfield City annex, with a feast including a wide choice of food made by parents. Principal *Gregor Campbell* read an acrostic poem he wrote for the parents, showing the gratitude of the staff. *Liz Little*, President of Home & School, spoke of the appreciation that parents feel toward the staff. In addition, *Michael Brodeur*, a magician, had everyone laughing as he played his tricks for the audience.

Finally, *Norm Horner* presented a "Teacher Quiz" which involved everyone in cooperative learning, as they tried to remember answers for the questions. Then *Mr. Horner* paid tribute to both parents and teachers as the evening ended on a happy note.

*Pat Lewis*

## A Big Thank you to The Gazette

Coverage of Teacher Appreciation Week by *The Gazette* was outstanding again this year. During TAW they featured teachers who had made a difference in their pupils' lives. All the stories were excellent. What page you would find the day's article on was always shown on the front page.

*The Gazette* Educational Services ran a contest for students on, "I Like My Teacher Because". In a full page "ad" they gave us the three winners plus the runners-up.

The winners were:

**Leonard Karp-Friedman**, Grade 5, **JEWISH PEOPLES' AND PERETZ SCHOOLS**.

**Hanan Abraham, Shavon Fortune and Shevon Fortune**, Grade 11, **LAURENTIAN HIGH SCHOOL** [in Ottawa].

**Stephanie Lai**, Grade 1, **GOOD SHEPHERD SCHOOL**.

Winners each received a *Gazette* sports bag while their teachers received Newspaper-in-Education teaching packages. The lucky runners-up each received a *Gazette* pen and pencil set.

All the entries printed were super. Students are very perceptive about what makes a class fun and why they like a particular teacher. Our own thanks to all of them for taking the time to write in to this contest.

**JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL**, located in Chomedey/Laval, invited teachers for "Coffee and Croissants" in the school library which was decorated with posters and balloons. The serving table was appropriately decorated, with silver coffee and tea service. Teachers received white carnations and gift baskets. Since TAW is meant to be recognition of their teachers by students, they asked some of the students to assist in distributing souvenir pens and buttons. Organizers of the event were *Helen Berckmans* and *Deborah Fazina*.

**ORMSTOWN SCHOOL** really went all out on TAW. See their Publicity Release on these pages which appeared in *The Huntingdon Gleaner*. We especially liked their invitations to a party after school on Monday: NOTICE OF

DETENTION — DON'T BE TARDY! — You are required to remain after school. Clever!

At **STE. FOY SCHOOL** TAW is a BIG event. They hosted a buffet lunch for teachers and staff. Everyone received "You're #1" or "We Love our Teachers" buttons. Students were given apple cutouts and these were tacked on to a "thoughtful apple tree" in the front hall. Lots of local publicity given in the *Chronicle Telegraph*, CBC radio, local TV. Good for them.

**NORTHVIEW** parents take over both recess and lunch time duties for their teachers during TAW. Coffee awaited them every morning and goodies were provided for breaks. A special pot luck buffet was provided for lunch on Friday.

## Appreciating teachers at Elizabeth Ballantyne

For the past five years now, E.B. Home and Schoolers have organized Teacher Appreciation Week during February. It is always a challenge to think of new and innovative ways to surprise and thank the teachers — but quite often we find the simplest ways say it best! This year, Teacher Appreciation Week will be held from February 14 to 20 and we will not be alone in this endeavour because all across the country parents and students alike will be joining in this nationwide demonstration of support for Canada's schools and their teachers.

National Teacher Appreciation Week was launched in 1988 by the Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation. This year, at their annual meeting, they decided to change the name to National Teacher/School Staff Appreciation Week.

Many events and activities have been planned for the week at EBS, including special treats and certificates for the teachers and a scrumptious luncheon for both teachers and staff on the Friday.

We consider ourselves very fortunate at EBS to have such dedicated and caring teachers and staff. Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week gives us an opportunity to demonstrate our thanks and appreciation. (Not that we don't value the teachers and staff all year round, but this is the one week of the year when we can really go to town and clearly show our gratitude!).

So to all the teachers and staff at Elizabeth Ballantyne School — and all schools across the country — thank you and have a great week!

*from Ann Bishundayal*  
President,  
E.B. Home & School

## Principal's Comments

FEBRUARY 1993.

Dear Parents,

The month of February brings with it the Home and School Federation's celebration — Teacher Appreciation. As the Principal, I would like to share with you my heartfelt appreciation for the teachers here at Cedar Park.

The word "educate" comes from the Latin *educere*, which means "leading out" the student into a wider world of knowledge. The role of the teacher and indeed the school is to prepare the mind for life-long learning, to stimulate a zest for learning, a zest for life. The aim of teachers is to produce individuals able to think for themselves and not merely follow what someone else has told them. Quite an undertaking!!!

Teaching requires a cultivated ability. It requires a special talent and a sense of vocation. Teaching does not give rise to "stars", (I can't think of anyone winning a Nobel Prize for teaching achievements) but it is a creative act. There are individual styles of performing or teaching which are dependent on a broad and deep range of knowledge. Teaching requires an ability to sculpt, to mold a whole class of youngsters into a group of responsible citizens upon whom the well-being of our society depends. Teachers seek to ignite in their students an enthusiasm for life and learning. They do this by example and leadership. They are role models for their students. Teachers inspire.

We at Cedar Park are extremely fortunate to have in our school a group of teachers who are truly exceptional. Please join me in thanking them and supporting them in their most important profession.

Sincerely,

**Diana Patterson**  
Principal  
Cedar Park School.



# < 1993 — February 14-20

## Thank you from all of the Mount Pleasant staff

To all the parents who helped make "Teacher Appreciation Week" so wonderful — the staff at Mount Pleasant would like to say a heartfelt THANK YOU. Everything you did was greatly appreciated and we would like to acknowledge what a lucky group we are by having all of you to enrich Mount Pleasant.

### Letter of appreciation

Last week was National Teacher Appreciation Week. I hope that all parents took a few moments to reflect on how exceptional the teachers are in our community.

Having children in both Beaconsfield High School and Allancroft School, I am continually being pleasantly reminded of just how special these educators are.

Today, school is not a red-brick building that our children are sent to each morning to acquire the rudiments. It is an extension of the

life that goes on at home. Teachers devote so much of themselves to ensure that our children feel respected and acknowledged as individuals with distinct abilities and needs.

We should let our educators know how much they contribute to our lives.

Let's acknowledge our teachers, and let them understand just how much we value their commitment to their profession.

Linda Allison  
Kirkland



At annual Teacher Appreciation Dinner for Beacon Hill School, President of Home & School, Liz Little, thanks the staff and parents for all they have done for students.



NATIONAL TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK  
SEMAINE DE RECONNAISSANCE AUX ENSEIGNANT(e)S

"We ♥ our Teachers!"  
"Nos profs, on les ♥!"



The CANADIAN HOME and SCHOOL & PARENT-TEACHER FEDERATION  
La FEDERATION CANADIENNE des associations FOYER-ECOLE et PARENTS-MAITRES  
331 Somerset Street West, Ottawa, Canada K2P 0J8 Tel: (613) 234-7292



Studies show that schools with higher levels of achievement have considerably greater parent involvement.

## At O.E.S. — We Love Our Teachers!

National Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week is being celebrated at Ormstown Elementary School during the week of February 15th to 19th, 1993. Parents are busy organizing events in recognition of the personal and professional contributions of our teachers. It is just one way we can demonstrate our support to OES and our teachers for their contribution to strengthening our community, our province and our country.

The children have been busy making posters, drawings and valentines, writing stories and poems. You will find their posters decorating store windows around Ormstown this week. The Staffroom has been decorated with some of their work and also a beautiful floral arrangement, donated by Fleuriste Reve Fleuri for the occasion. More banners and artwork festoon the school hallways.

Monday morning, all teachers and staff discovered that they had been given a "Notice of Detention" effective that afternoon. Upon arrival at the Staffroom after school, they were treated to coffee and squares for good behaviour on the schoolgrounds!

The children thoroughly enjoyed the display of "teacher" baby pictures, trying to guess who was who. Thursday they will discover how good they actually were at picking their favorite and cutest teacher.

We all associate big, bright-red, shiny apples with the teacher's pet. Wednesday each teacher found exactly that on his or her desk. The students were each given a bright button to wear saying, "We love our teachers/Nos profs, on les aime!"

Friday afternoon the auditorium will be filled with 275 students, 17 teachers and 15 "other" staff members attending a "WE LOVE OUR TEACHERS" assembly. The students have found out that OES has its own school song written in the 1940's, by then principal, D.C. Munro, to the tune of "All Through the Night". They have been learning the song during Music Class and are ready to stand proudly and shake the rafters with their singing. There will also be readings by several students.

At the assembly, each teacher/staff member will be presented with a specially-printed "Certificate of Appreciation". As well, they will receive a gift of a home-made apple pie, which was made by a group of parents at a pie-making bee. The apples for the week's activities were donated by Bill and Mary Stevenson.

The committee in charge of Teacher Appreciation Week is grateful for the work by the children, the support and encouragement given by parents, and donations which were received during this special week of celebration. Let us not forget that by continuing to support our teachers all year, our children and society will benefit.



Frances McGregor and Hayley Reynolds present a greeting card they made for Teacher Appreciation Week at Beacon Hill to teacher Cathy Sheppard.

## Computer Day Camp

Campers between 8 and 18 love this camp because there's much more to do than just computing, including sports and activities ranging from tennis to kayaking.

We divide campers by age group and offer the right ratio for real education: one computer (IBM PC or compatible, or Macintosh) per camper, six campers per counsellor.



Our counsellors know how to make learning truly fun for the computer novice or pro. The camp is on our beautiful Ste. Anne de Bellevue campus. And it's easy to get to by car or by bus from the Lionel Groulx metro station.

Registration is coming up fast, so call today for more information or a free brochure.



Centre for Continuing Education  
John Abbott College • Ste. Anne de Bellevue  
Tel.: 457-3063 Fax: 457-6878

# FOCUS on the LOCALS

## Westmount High

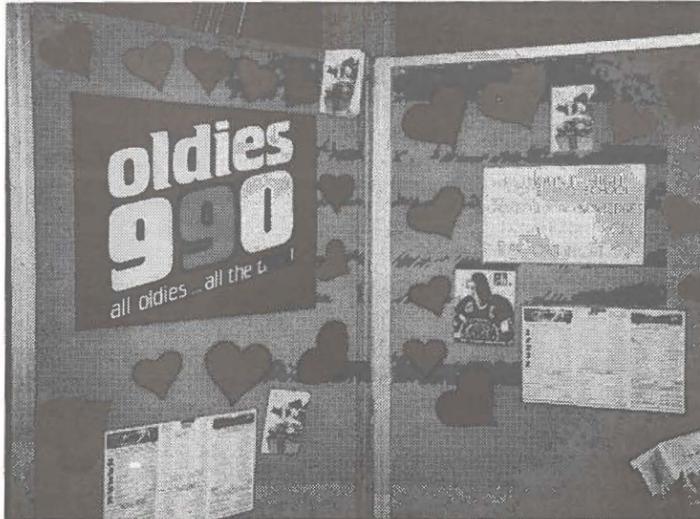
### Prometheus Foundation

Prometheus is being welcomed at Westmount High. No, it isn't the original benefactor of mankind, but a group of dedicated professionals who would like to share their knowledge of the arts of life with high school students. The Prometheus Foundation is a mentor group and the fire which they hope to spark in these students is one of renewed energy and direction. They will be sharing their expertise with the students and inviting them into their realms of expertise which range from law to operating a restaurant, from finance to social work. Westmount High was delighted to be approached by the group and we are looking forward to their involvement. Initial reports from the students involved with this project are very positive. These students, who generally have little or nothing to say about school once they arrive home, were monopolizing the conversation at the dinner table describing their mentors!

The first training session for the Peer Mediation Program has taken place. Six teachers and fourteen students stayed at the Woodshed Inn at Jay Peak in Vermont for three days. The report made by Mrs. McAulay at the January School Committee meeting was quite moving. She described the closeness that comes from being "en retraite", the incredibly full schedule of lectures and workshops the Freedom Group organizes, and the power of this experience where feelings and motives are examined. Students and teachers alike came into contact with the personal baggage we all bring to problems (whether as those in conflict or as mediators). The vocabulary of feelings, difficult for adults to address, proved easy for the students. Conversely, addressing everyone by first name, easy for the teachers, proved difficult for some of the students! The students, chosen for their leadership abilities, had the opportunity to put these skills to work. They learned how to become peacemakers and help resolve conflict. For some, this enhanced their current leadership roles. For others, it was a chance to shift from their usual role of creating unrest!



Principal Meades and his wife, Marie.



### A Valentine's Day Dance overshadowed by snow-storm!

At the same time, parents were busy preparing for the next event. Under the leadership of Finola Cournane, Home and School parents wrote, photocopied, walked, talked, worked, baked, carried, lifted, searched, and phoned. But every organizer of a major school event in winter has the same greatest fear — a snowstorm. Our Sweetheart Valentine's Day Dance on February 12th was overshadowed by weather forecasts about the impending snowstorm. Although the snow didn't start falling until well into the evening, most people decided to snuggle into warm blankets on the couch at home instead.

But the people who came out to party had a terrific time. There were glorious door prizes to be won and, if you didn't win one yourself, you certainly knew at least one winner. It was a chance for the parents who did come to get to know each other better. And then there were the costumes. They ran the gamut from romantic to rebel. Some of us chose to turn back the clock and "go 60's". Bel-bottoms, headbands, jeans, peace symbols, shawls, beads, and, yes, even wigs, helped to recapture youth.

Some of us choose to follow the Valentine's Day theme and dress "romantically". Elegant dresses and tuxedos swept across the dance floor. When the last people left, the city was being covered in a lovely blanket of snow. When we got up in the morning (I won't say how close to noon) the incredible mountains of uncleared snow proved that it was a very good idea to sleep in!

Now that the meningitis inoculations are over, Alice Smith can breathe a little easier. That's because she had skilfully and successfully handled all 565 students' forms and organized the parent volunteers. Expect the unexpected when you join Home and School! We awarded her with a special Volunteer of the Month certificate. The whole event ran very smoothly — the shots only took one and one half days instead of two. All the parent volunteers were surprised and delighted when they checked their mail a few

days later. Each of us received a special thank you note from Mr. Meades, the principal! Expect the unexpected when you join Home and School!

### Parent-Teacher Interviews

February 18th marked the date of the second set of Parent-Teacher interviews. I had asked to set up the Home and School information table right in the middle of the gym. I watched the students busy setting up the table. When I looked at where I would be sitting, I was momentarily seized with fright. Why does Mr. Meades always support us? But I had forgotten the prefects who would be there with us. We had a wonderful time adding stickers to our map of the world. The map showed the countries of birth of Westmount High students. At least 8 more locations were added during the evening. Considering that we started the day with over 50, students here really do come from all over the world.

We distributed newsletters which included paragraphs in French and Spanish. We sold tickets to our next event — Muffins, Mozart, and Meades. I must credit Meg Sheppard our School Committee chairman with her skill as a saleswoman, and plan to study her technique. School Committee is currently doing a survey of the staff, students, and parents of the school to evaluate the Challenge Program. The results will be compiled and workshops will be held in order meet new challenges. It is an ambitious undertaking and it is nice to see everyone getting involved.

### Clubs for Parents!

In order to address the some of the needs of our community, two new clubs are being formed. There's the Parent-to-Parent English Club for those parents who wish to practice their English. There's the Parent-to-Parent Coffee Club for those who would like to get together to discuss the challenges of parenting in the 90's. We are looking forward to sharing our concerns with other parents and getting a little more of that support which was so easy to get back in kindergarten when we all arrived at the school door together with our children.

by Anna Marrett

## Hopetown Shigawake Port Daniel

Hopetown, Shigawake, Port Daniel Home & School Association held a very successful bake sale on December 15th. Monies raised will be used for Home & School activities and go towards putting in a PA system in the basement/general assembly hall.

Tickets were sold on a Xmas Box and the drawing took place at the Xmas Concert. The winner was Elizabeth Major of Hopetown.

At our February meeting teachers of Cycle I students presented a program outlining Co-operative Learning and Language Arts. Parents and teachers all participated in this activity — an enjoyable experience for all. Parents admitted that their children would benefit greatly from this approach.

A co-operative learning lesson gives each child the opportunity to participate, to accept responsibility, to present questions for concern, and to enjoy what he/she is learning.

During March a casserole supper was held on the 13th and the monthly meeting of Home & School on the 16th. Specially invited guests were the parents of new kindergarten children. Anne MacWhirter, Area Rep for the Gaspé Home & Schools, and Bertha Hayes, President of the Hopetown Home & School, explained to the new parents a little about what Home & School does and what their school in particular is planning for the future.

Bertha Hayes

## Having a Ball

Where can you hear the sound of 250 basketballs all bouncing at once? At the fourth annual GMAA Mini-Basketball Jamboree, of course!

Sharing a school bus, students from grade 6 at Elizabeth Ballantyne and Edinburgh Schools travelled down to the Sir Arthur Currie Gym where the GMAA and McGill University joined forces to treat children from 12 different elementary schools to a day of basketball. Kept with children from their own schools, the children were divided into groups of 12. Each group toured a series of learning stations. At each station, 2 expert instructors showed the children how to improve their skills. The activities ranged from refining their shooting skills, — knowing just the right moment to release the ball and just the right arm movement to control the shot, to working in pairs where the goal was trying to step on one's partner's toes!

After lunch, teams were formed using children from different schools in each team. I think basketball must be the fastest way to demonstrate the power of cooperative learning. Without saying a

word, the children became team players — instinctively finding the strengths in their new teammates and using them to their advantage. Watching 8 games played at once, one could not help but marvel at Olga Hrycak's skill in coordinating this event. Every child had plenty of ball handling time and lots of individual instruction.

The bus ride home came all too quickly. We stopped at Elizabeth Ballantyne School first. As one student was saying his farewells, one of the adults pointed out to him that next year he could easily find himself together again with students from Edinburgh at high school. In fact, when you stop to consider it, the day at the gym will probably be similar to the first days at high school next year. There are at least 12 different high schools to which our neighbourhood children will go. There, they will once again meet students from all these different elementary schools. But given common interests and good direction like those shown at the day at the Jamboree, we see that not only can our children cope, but they can flourish!

Anna Marrett

The message below on education today was part of the Principal's Message in the "Valois Ventures" newsletter, Oct. '92 issue.

## VALOIS PARK

### Where Do We Go In The 90's? — Pat Mantle

A little more than one hundred years ago, the U.S. Patent Office was closed briefly because someone thought that man had exhausted his creativity and nothing new could be invented. In the past 60 years, man went from horse-and-buggy travel to the first manned space flight. Fifty years ago, trench mouth and whooping cough epidemics were commonplace — today, many adults under 50 years of age have never heard of these diseases. Thirty years ago, a computer filled a huge room — now, that PC on your desk has far more power and operates faster. We have adjusted to instant communication, cellular phones, fax machines, and the flood of information that inundates our daily lives.

Education, too, has changed dramatically. We now expect our students to think instead of merely memorizing. Things that many of us did not learn until college are now being taught to ninth graders. Schools have become responsible for more than the mere transmission of knowledge. Well-intentioned reformers, both within the education establishment and outside of it, have forced us to take a long, hard look at what we do and how well we do it.

Where we go in the 90's is dependent upon how informed we are about education issues and how committed we are to making a difference. What will be your role?

# SCIENCE FAIRS GALORE!

## DORSET

### ACTIVE PARENTS, ACTIVE STUDENTS

Issues related to parenting continue to be a focus for the H&S. On February 3rd, the H&S welcomed Ron MacFarlane to speak on the importance of our role as parents. In the fall, he spoke at the QFHSA's Fall Conference. Those who have heard him, recommend him highly to any group of parents. Mr. MacFarlane suggested several books which the H&S will purchase for the "Parents Section" in the school library.

Funds from H&S enabled the school to bring in the Youth Theatre play, *I Met a Bully on the Hill*. The actors and actresses kept the student body spellbound for the entire performance. Because the play deals with the issue of aggressive behaviour in children, parents felt that the H&S money was well spent.

The H&S has allocated funding for the purchase of a videocamera for the teachers to use as an educational tool in their classrooms. Also, in collaboration with the Dorset Performing Arts Committee, the H&S hopes to purchase a long awaited quality sound system.

A discussion regarding CPR training has resulted in H&S finding an instructor and, in co-operation with Macdonald H.S., there are now four courses filled by interested parents.

Questions about "whole language" instruction were addressed at a workshop given on February 11th by Grade 1 teachers, Heather McBride and Pam Irving. It was a very professional presentation and extremely helpful to all parents who attended.

Safety is an ongoing concern. All of our students participated in a bus safety program presented by the transportation department of the Lakeshore School Board. The program included a video and a discussion, via visual aids, of rules for bus safety.

The school's Open House was held on February 9th. H&S members welcomed parents with coffee and information regarding H&S.

On February 5th, the Lakeshore School Board offered a choral workshop in which 5 Dorset students participated.

Hockey Fest '93 allowed many of our Grade 4-6 students, under the supervision of Doug Wilson, the Physical Education teacher, to enjoy a day at the Palais de Congrès.

John Rennie H.S. hosted a volleyball tournament on January 18th. Dorset was represented by 2 teams. Sports continued with inter-mural bowling for Grades 1-3, inter-mural hockey for Grades 4-6, cross-country skiing and basketball!

Shirley Straughton

## MT PLEASANT

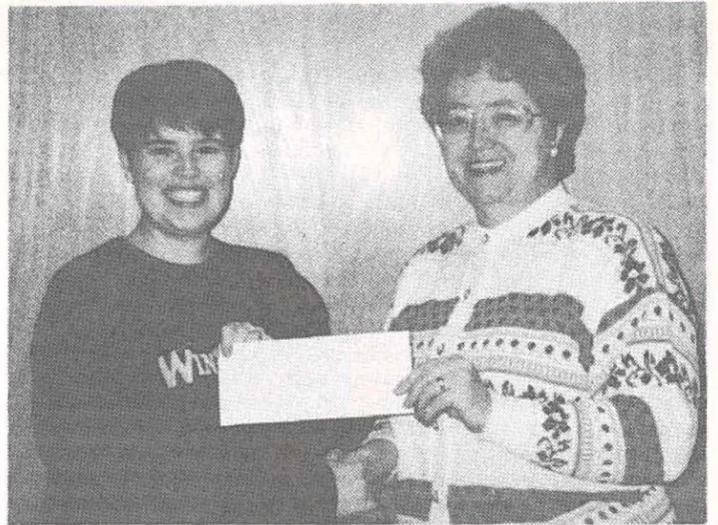
### EXCITING INFORMATION

With help from the H&S, the Library is installing an IBM computer with CD-ROM. Students can look forward to the most exciting encyclopedia they've ever encountered, as well as, some *National Geographic's* disks packed with information.

March was Literacy Month. Everyone kept the reading worm, READ..Y, growing by doing lots of reading.

An Italian Dinner and Silent Auction was held on March 27th in the gym. Diners were able to bid (silently) while enjoying a deli-

## Day Memorial Bursary



Stacey Renouf, graduate of the Bonaventure Polyvalent receiving the Day Memorial Bursary of \$300.00 from the chairperson of the Bursary Committee, Mrs. Judith Gallan. Stacey is presently at Champlain Regional College in Lennoxville, studying in the Social Science Program. She plans to pursue a career as a lawyer. **SPEC Photo**

## NEW CARLISLE HIGH

The New Carlisle Home and School Association awards the bursary annually to a deserving graduate of Bonaventure Polyvalent. The amount of the bursary is based on the interest earned on the capital.

The Association would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported the fund in the past. Your donations in memory of loved ones, help to increase the amount we are able to

award a student each year. Receipts for income tax purposes are issued from Quebec Federation of Home and School Association for every donation.

Reprinted from SPEC, 21 Feb. 93

A book fair for all ages, Pre-school to Adult, was held at New Carlisle High School on Tuesday, March 2nd, during school hours. Proceeds were used to buy new books for NCHS Library.

Reprinted from: SPEC 28 Feb. 93



The New Carlisle Home & School Committee held a Literacy Evening on Wednesday, March 3rd at the New Carlisle High School. The event was sponsored by the Gaspé Literacy Council and organized by Sharon Doherty. The main objective of the evening being to instill in parents the importance of reading to their children. The highlight of the evening was a show put on for the children from Pre-K to grade 3, by Ron Christie, better known to the youngsters as Cou Cou the Clown, from Bathurst, New Brunswick. Mr. Christie spoke to parents about his experience growing up as a child with dyslexia, a learning disability.

Photo: Joan Imhoff

cious meal, scrumptious sweet table, good company and music too!

The Grade 5-6 students have integrated extremely well into the school. They feel comfortable, they have been given positions of leadership through Leadership Corps, peer tutoring, monitors on the playground and the school bus. Within class councils have been established and everyone is eagerly awaiting the formation of the Student Council.

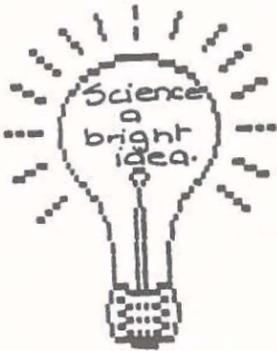
With the help of the community and school, resources have expanded extensively. The Grannie and Grandpa Programme has grown and, yes, now has a waiting list of helpers ready to become involved. The Hudson H.S. Men-

tor Programme continues with energy and enthusiasm.

Literacy and Computer Committees have been established, thanks to participation from staff and community. A Staff Safety Committee is continuously trying to up-grade the safety conditions both on the playground and the buses. The bus drivers have been meeting regularly with staff and the Transportation Department to try and improve conditions for the children. The students have also been involved in making suggestions to help in both of these areas.

There has been a big increase in the number of recipients of the Comportment Awards—last time a whole class won!

## HOWICK ELEMENTARY



After many weeks of hard work by students, parents and teachers the School Science Fair was held on February 12th.

There were 92 projects, by students from Kindergarten through Grade 6, displayed in the gym. During the morning each project was judged three times. Parents, friends and relatives were able to view the projects in the afternoon.

Twelve projects were chosen to be entered in the Board-Wide Science Fair, February 22-23 at Howard S. Billings H.S. in Chateaugay.

## FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY

Scientifically speaking, the Science Fair on February 23rd was a huge success.

The Co-ordinator of the Fair was Gordon Brown who was very pleased with the quality of the projects. Each student participated and parents, friends and relatives were able to view the exhibits

in the evening, as well as see the presentation of the awards.

Winning students went on to participate in the Board-Wide Science Fair at Howard S. Billings, where Franklin Elementary student Neil Ednie's project on Apples and Cold Storage was selected to go on to the Regionals in Cowansville.

## HEMMINGFORD

Students from Grade 3 to Grade 6 participated in the Annual Science Fair.

The judging of the projects was done on Monday, followed by class visits and demonstrations on Tuesday. The general public visited the fair on Wednesday night after a snowstorm forced the cancellation of the Tuesday evening session.

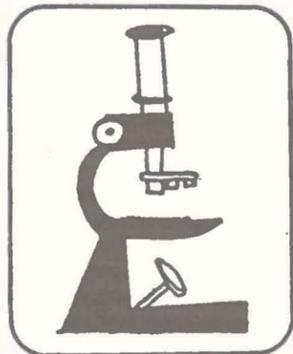
All the students were asked to do experiments rather than dem-

onstrations. They succeeded in producing a wide variety of high-quality projects. Topics ranged from the effect of ultraviolet light on plant growth, to the effect of colour on the heat-absorbing properties of insulation.

Science teacher and principal organizer, Fernande Montpetit, and teacher Donna Boychuk were impressed by the interest shown by the community. Large numbers of visitors attended despite the one day postponement.

## ORMSTOWN ELEMENTARY

Twenty student projects competed at the recent Board-Wide Science Fair. Some of the excellent projects submitted from OES were Ryan Allen and Bryan Cullen's experiment on Surface Tension (Grade 6); Catherine Hodgson and Stacey McClintock's on Evaporation, and Stephanie Struthers and Gabrielle Lessard's for their exhibit on Rabies (Grade 4). In the Grade 5 class were Elizabeth St-Armand and Catherine Aikman's Chocolate Chip Cookie experiment, and Karen Schirmeister's demonstration, Return of the Wolf.



(Reprinted from *The Gleaner*, March 3, 1993)

## EVERGREEN

### WORKING TOGETHER

As a result of the volunteer efforts of many parents, the H&S is proud to report that they have many programs and projects completed or underway:

A computer program, run by 22 volunteer mothers, ensures that computer class is now a part of every child's daily curriculum.

A school newspaper has been organized and is "up and running."

Volunteers help with cross-country skiing during gym periods.

An answering machine was purchased for the front office to assist in attendance checks.

Organized a Parent Information Evening.

Sponsored First Responder's Playground Safety/First Aid course for all lunchtime supervisors.

Purchased a CD-ROM for library which has virtually supplied every child with their own set of encyclopedias!

Organized and run English and French Book Fairs.

Offered 14 different extra-curricular activities over two 10-week sessions.

Teacher Appreciation Week was a busy week for the H&S. It was a pleasure to express the parents' gratitude to teachers and staff members during this special week.



# MORE FOCUS

## AYER'S CLIFF

We've been very busy at ACES since our last report. We've had many interesting activities and visitors.

*Mrs. Lebeouf*

Johanne Lebeouf is a blind person. She came to our school in November to teach us about handicapped people. She explained to us how to help a blind person cross the street. Mrs. Lebeouf also spoke about her life when she was a child. She told how other children teased her. Handicapped people have hearts and feelings just like anyone else.

*Mr. Coatsworth*

Also in November, Mr. Coatsworth, a student-teacher from Bishop's University, paid a visit to the grade 6 class. He visits elementary schools and explains how people used to use ancient medicines. He showed slides of medical facts and cases, keeping the interest of the class.

*Mr. Adams*

Again in November!, Chris Adams, naturalist, visited our school. He brought with him different kinds of animal and insect specimens. He taught us how to track and find many kinds of animals in the forest by observing different signs.

*Remembrance Day Service*

On November 11 a model cenotaph was placed in the middle of the gym. Grade 2 students placed their homemade wreaths around it and several veterans were present to answer all our questions.

*Fall Book Fair*

The book fair was very successful again this year. It was held during the week of Parent-Teacher interviews. The profits made were taken in books to add to our classroom libraries.

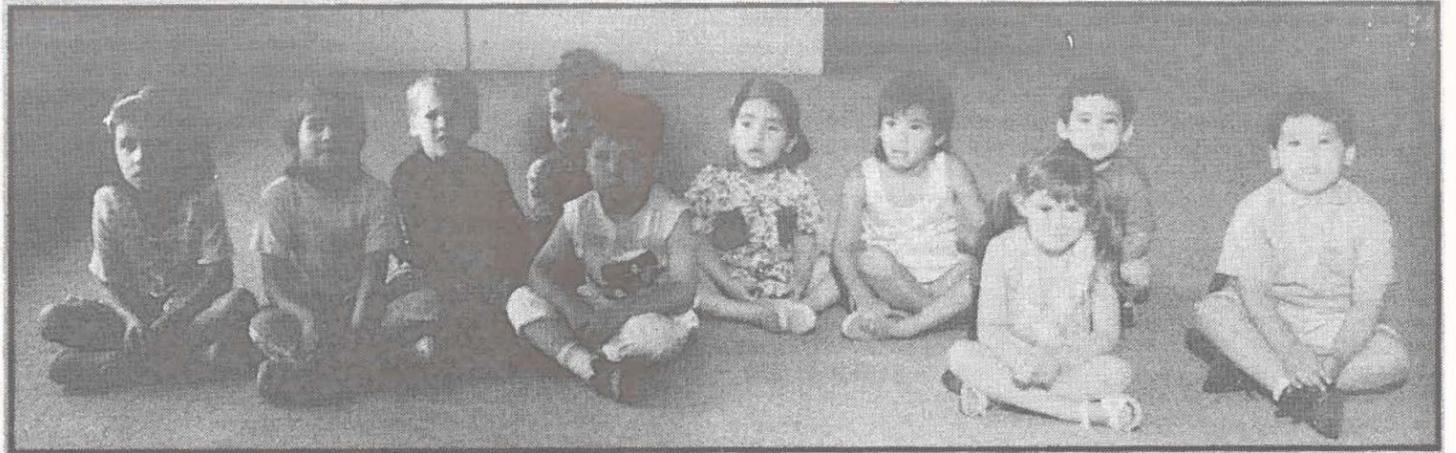
*Beachball Volleyball Day*

This was a fun day at Sherbrooke Elementary School. Instead of school teams playing against each other — groups were mixed — giving us a chance to meet and play with kids from other schools. It was a long day and we were all tired — but it was fun!

The Fall was topped off with a fantastic Christmas Concert. The school was packed with parents and friends (next year we may have to do two evening performances!). When Santa came the next day for his annual visit, part of the concert was repeated for the students from Ayer's Cliff French school.

*Tanya Paxton, Ingrid Cardyn,  
Kim Cloutier, Rebecca Loadenthal  
and Julie Dupuis, Grade 6.*

# DON'T LEAVE OUR FUTURE IN THE DARK!



UNFORTUNATELY, 52% OF OUR FIRST NATIONS STUDENTS MAY STAY IN THE DARK BECAUSE OF UNMET SOCIAL NEEDS. SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCES IS THE KEY.

## CEDAR PARK

The Cedar Park Home & School Association has been active in many areas this year. \$1,500.00 has been given to the teachers for discretionary use in their classrooms, \$1,000.00 has been spent on computer upgrading, two A.V. machines were bought for \$400.00, and \$2,000.00 has been given to the school library.

The Lunch-Time Activities Programme is currently offering 11 courses, with 160 children enrolled. These courses are run on a non-profit basis and include art, cartooning, tole painting, mad scientists, gym games, and eco-museum.

Noon-Hour Skating was organized every Friday up to the end of February, and many pairs of skates were laced up by helpful volunteers. A very well-attended and successful Family Skate Night was

held on February 12.

Vasanth, our Foster Child in India, whom we support through Families for Children, is doing well. Anyone wishing to donate goods or money to this active organization should contact Kathy Desmond, R.R. #5, Kincardine, Ont., N2Z 2X6.

Donations for Food Baskets continue to be collected. A different food group is designated for every week and is written on the calendar that comes home at the beginning of every month. At Christmas, nine food baskets were filled and money was also sent to The Tiny Tim Fund from donations collected at the Christmas Concert.

Teacher-organized activities include the very popular Family Ski Trips. We have skied at Morin Heights, St. Sauveur, and another trip is planned for after the break. Grade six students have enjoyed



participating in handball, volleyball and basketball tournaments, and have challenged the teachers and their parents in volleyball. A very successful gymnastics demon-

stration was held on February 3, with all the choreography done by the students.

Many teachers are working hard to produce a senior school production of Peter Pan in May. All the teachers are working to develop a different approach to conflict management involving peer mediation. Parents are welcoming this method for solving children's disputes which was proposed and researched by a Home & School member last spring.

Plans for the spring include a dance (organized by the same parent who ran our very successful Christmas bazaar!), the annual teacher banquet offered by the grade 6 parents, a pizza lunch and magic show, and two more issues of the Cedar Reader, to bring to five the number of issues for this school year.

*Esther MacLeod*

## OTHER GASPE AREA NEWS

In a contest organized by The Gaspesia/Islands School Board, students from English schools around the Gaspé and the Magdalen Islands illustrated their knowledge on school bus safety through stories and posters.

First place winners for the Art Contest were:

Grade 3 Amie Chicoine (Belle Anse)

Grade 4 Erin McKee (Belle Anse)

Grade 5 Johnnie Audet (Shigawake/Port Daniel)

Grade 6 Andrew MacWhirter (New Richmond H.S.)

First place winners for the Writing Contest were:

Grade 4 Steven Harrison (New Richmond H.S.)

Grade 5 Kara Syvret (Belle Anse)

Grade 6 April Touzel (Belle Anse)

## WESTPARK

During January and February, all classes from kindergarten to grade six enjoyed skating at Terry Fox Park with their teachers. On their return to school the children were treated to hot chocolate and cookies supplied by our home and school association.

The Lakeshore Dog Obedience School visited our kindergarten to grade two classes in January. The children saw a demonstration of well-behaved dogs being put through their paces. It was also demonstrated to the children how to protect themselves if attacked by a dog and never to approach a strange animal without the owner's permission.

A four hour course in babysitting is being given to our grade sixes. The course covers all aspects of babysitting from changing diapers to what to do in an emergency.

Constable Menard of the

R.C.M.P. visited the grade sixes in February. Constable Menard has visited a number of schools in the Montreal area with his drug prevention program.

Ian and Sally Wilson, outdoor adventurers and photographers visited grades 3 to 6 in March. They presented Arctic Adventures — based on a year they spent in the Northwest Territories. Through a

slide presentation they took the children across the arctic barrens, shared life with an Inuit family, plus a dogsled journey along the coast of Hudson Bay.

Following the slide presentation they constructed a full-scale model igloo!

*Tula Corber*

## THORNDALE

### DUNRAE GDNS.

#### Ten Commandments

(As written by the grade six students of Dunrae Gardens 1992)

1. Thou shalt love and trust your family and respect all of your fellow men and women.
2. Thou shalt respect the planet Earth and everything living in it.
3. Thou shalt respect and learn to understand all races and religions.
4. Thou shalt not kill or abuse, in any way, any living thing (including thyself).
5. Thou shalt not kill for amusement.
6. Thou shalt give food and clothes to the homeless and the needy.
7. Thou shalt not drink and drive or take illicit drugs.
8. Thou shalt not divorce, unless necessary.
9. Thou shalt work for peace in the world.
10. Thou shalt obey these commandments.



A big Tiger's Roar goes out to all the parents and children who were so generous in their participation of donations to the Sun Youth food bank. We are proud to announce that our total money raised was \$175\$.

The staff were pleased to receive the cards given to them by the children signifying that a donation had been made in their honour.

I would like to thank Michael Anderson for making the big thermometer for the lobby which we continued to colour in as our donations were received.

### "Celebrating our 50th Anniversary"

167 acres on Lake Massawippi in the Eastern Townships

- 6 co-ed camps for 6-15 years old.
- A One Week Pioneer Camp.
- English and French Second Language Camp.
- An English second-language Track Program for each camp.
- Special senior camp option program.
- Activities include camping, swimming, canoeing, windsurfing, sailing, hiking, out-trips, campcraft, archery, soccer, volleyball, photography, campfires, computing & much much more.
- Plus Christian teaching and personal development.

For more information or to visit the site, please contact: ▶

"Presently taking fall and winter bookings for our retreat centre."



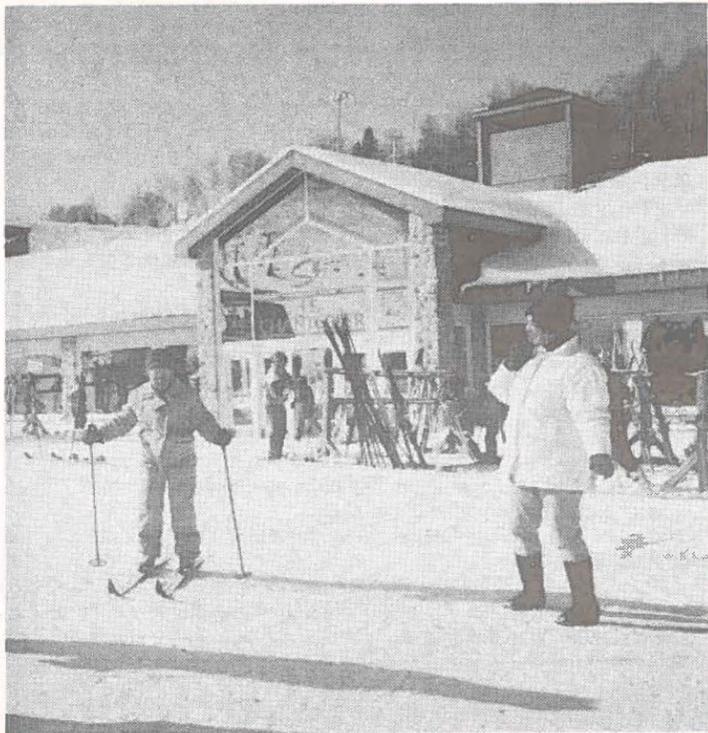
### QUEBEC LODGE CAMP

8105 chemin du Lac,  
RR3, Ayer's Cliff  
Quebec H0B 1C0  
(819) 842-2286



ACCREDITED:  
ASSOCIATION DES CAMPS DU QUÉBEC

## BEACON HILL



A Beacon Hill student gets ready to ski, with an adult watching, at Chantecler Ski Hill carnival day for the school.

Students at Beacon Hill celebrated a wonderful Carnival Day in February, with 115 Grades 4-6 girls and boys at Chantecler Ski Hill for the day, while the younger students had their fun at the school. At Chantecler the children did downhill and cross-country skiing. They also went sliding on Magic Carpets and inner tubes. Some went for a sleigh ride on the trails. Principal Gregor Campbell and staff members escorted the students. There was a special Bar-B-Q luncheon for the group.

Back at Beacon Hill the younger boys and girls were divided into groups and given the names of birds, with teachers and parents leading various activities such as snowshoeing, "Dog Team" toboggans, the Three-Leg Race, the Tug of War, a Spoon Race, Soccer, Broomball, sliding and skating. Home & School volunteers served hot chocolate to each group.

Home & School sponsored and organized a special CPR course on the evenings of February 8 and 15 for twelve adults, some of whom

were school volunteers. It was a very successful class.

At this time there is a committee chaired by Liz Little which is organizing some other activities for all parents, including a visit by Mr. Jim Howden to speak to parents on cooperative learning. It is a busy season for everyone.

The Foster Parent Program began as a project for the 25th Anniversary celebrations in the school year of 1991/92.

Our foster child is ten year old Therese Sawadoga from Burkina Faso, Africa. Therese lives in a small village with her parents and brothers and sisters. Her people are farmers and their total family income for last year was \$450.00.

The annual contribution of \$1.00 from each child at Beacon Hill (earned by doing a good deed) brings our sponsorship total to \$324.00. This money allows Therese and her fellow villagers to build and maintain latrines, wells for drinking and cooking water, and to update their educational facilities.

Pat Lewis



Students from Beacon Hill going for a sleigh ride, while at Chantecler Ski Hill for a winter carnival.

## EDINBURGH

### Japanese visit

On October 23rd Edinburgh School hosted a group of 23 Japanese Educators. The Study Team was composed of Directors, Supervisors, Consultants and Teachers from the island of Hokkaido in Northern Japan. Our visitors showed a particular interest in the administration and teaching methodology at our school. They also took the opportunity to interact

freely with our children. We were all honoured, delighted and impressed with the valuable exchange of information which took place.

Our visitors brought some lovely children's artwork from Japan for us, now exhibited at the entrance-way. We, in turn, also presented some children's artwork to them.

Our grade 6 students, in the Edinburgh School Choir, appeared on the annual Telethon of Stars during November.

Karen Donnelly

## JOHN RENNIE HIGH

This year at John Rennie our focus continues to be involvement with students, either by giving a helping hand during fund-raising (such as citrus sales), or by our financial aid for projects undertaken by individual students. We were able to contribute towards the costs of one student who was selected to attend Youth Forum of Canada, held in Ottawa for one week.

We recently hosted our 3rd International Food Fair; the proceeds are used to fund bursary

awards for J.R.H.S. graduating students. We look forward to convening, with students and our Community Office, our spring "Seniors' Tea" — always a pleasant social event.

Several of our members are involved on various committees, with representation on Secondary Language Arts/MEQ, Lakeshore Regional Council, Lakeshore School Board Calendar Committee, and the Executive and Board of Directors of QFHSA.

The members of the Home and

School committee are very supportive of all John Rennie activities. Their hard work and involvement show how the parents' role at the high school level can be maintained. We look forward to continuing our involvement and encourage new ideas and discussions at our meetings. John Rennie staff are also very supportive of Home and School; we were happy to express our appreciation, during national Teacher Appreciation Week.

Brenda Dewar



JRHS students attend the day long Science Education and Public Policy conference hosted by CHSPTF May '92. The students were sponsored by the JR Home & School.

## SEIGNIORY

Our Kindergarten Registration and Open House saw many new faces at Seigniory, as well as many volunteers who helped show new families around, tell them about our programs, and make them all feel welcome at our school.

Winter Carnival on February 4th and 5th was an active outdoor celebration. It was kicked off by the annual parade of floats made by the students. The senior students went downhill skiing, and everyone was able to go tobogganing at Beaconsfield Golf Course, as well as skating, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing in our own "backyard".

The weather was perfect, and a great time was had by all.

Vikki Kouri

## OPINION...

Continued from page 2

knows with absolute certainty that some members of staff are more valuable to the future of our students than others. They know with equal certainty that some members of staff are harmful to the learning process. While more progressive companies are moving more and more to the recognition of excellence, we in education continue to hide behind the contract as a means of avoiding the difficult decisions. Would the Apple corporation be in its present competitive position if all staffing decisions were made on the basis of one of our collective agreements? Would the private schools system be challenging the public system in popularity if it had to live by all of the collective agreements of the public system? The answers are self evident, yet we continue to be tied to the rules of an era which has passed. While we all use banking cards to access money, fax machines to send messages, computers to draft letters and record absences, and cellular phones to keep in contact, we run our schools within the same structures and the same contractual restraints as applied in 1960. Are we giving our students a fair shot at the next millennium? I think not.

### Re-training

Equally deficient in our system, at least in many districts, is the complete lack of upgrading requirements. It is possible to enter the profession, teach for thirty five years, and retire without ever having read a book, followed a course, or attended a seminar. If we have the most important task of the decade, the position I took at the beginning of this article, can we dare to approach it without demanding regular professional improvement? A teacher who does not subscribe to a newspaper or magazine, who does not read the types of books which inspired this article, who has not read a fictional best seller for years, or has not bothered to become computer literate, has no business being in front of a class. Our mission is preparing children for the world they will face. We cannot do this if we ourselves are ignorant of the developments taking place in that world.

### Educators distribute power

We are in an enviable position. No group of individuals has, in the past, been able to democratize society as we can. Toffler contends that power is based on three elements: violence, wealth, and knowledge. The first, violence, has had a limited and discredited history within schools. The second, distribution of wealth, is not our function. The third, distribution of knowledge, is our game, our very raison d'être. And as knowledge is distributed, so too is the power of the

future.

What should we be teaching our students to prepare them for the future, either Toffler's *Third Wave* or Naisbitt's *Information Age*?

Science. Japan, where 94% of the population stays in school beyond the compulsory school age, has the highest proportion of science degrees in the world, a total of 68% of all degrees awarded. In North America the share is approximately 25%. "The Economist" has compared the science of genetic engineering to the state of the automobile in 1900 or the computer in 1960. Are we preparing our students for this yet unimagined era?

Equality. Here I refer to both equality between the sexes and equality between the various groups which make up our society. As a society we have gone beyond feminism to equality of opportunity. Women have taken the majority of new jobs in the information sector. Using American figures, women now make up 40% of executive, management, and administrative positions. In cutting-edge companies, Apple for example, they make up 30% of the managers and 40% of the professionals. One third of graduating medical doctors are women. Schools are staffed by women who matured during the industrial era, when women did miss out. As a result we are failing to raise the sights of our young women high enough. Teaching was a largely feminine occupation and many practitioners likely aspired to another calling. Regardless of the mixed messages still being received from those who represent and resent the past, schools must emphasize the reality that every position, every job, is available to the person who is most able to fill it. We must prepare our girls for their rightful place in the information sector by encouraging them to study the sciences, computers, or engineering.

I have had the good fortune to work for a school board which serves students who represent 69 different language groups, with heritages from 126 countries. This is the future of our country and maybe, one day, the world. We should not teach tolerance — for tolerance is stimulated by charity. We must teach appreciation for the opportunity to benefit from this enrichment of our society. Hopefully we will acclimate our students to a new age, a global appreciation of individuals who can contribute. The quality of a country's human resources is essential to economic and social progress. Other countries are limiting immigration or continuing a tradition of homogeneity; in the meantime our society is benefiting.

The future is seen in the trends that Toffler and Naisbitt identify. And when two independent studies point to the conclusion that educators have the most important task in society, we should take great pride in our profession. We should also prepare to make the fundamental changes that are necessary.

Ronald G. Macfarlane is Principal of Royal West Academy High School in Montreal.



Home & School Presidents and future executive members, turned out in force February 6 to discuss new plans for this year's AGM.

## Mid-Term President's Meeting

It's early February and we've all got the blues. Attendance at Home and School meetings always dips at this time of the year — there's no end in sight to winter. That's why it's really worth attending the Mid-Term Presidents' meeting at the Quebec Federation office on Cavendish. It's a much needed source of energy and ideas. It's a chance to discuss what your school has done already this year — it's usually more than you give yourself credit for. There are lots of exciting ideas out there. John Rennie's combination of the annual Science Fair with a Home and School multinational dinner

sounded great. We all had a chance to describe our victories and our disappointments. We tried to help each other to find solutions.

After a period of discussion, we had the opportunity to hear about some surprising changes. Anne Swettenham and Rickhey Langlois told us of their exciting adventures down in New York State. The Caucusing Sessions which we will be treated to at the AGM reflect some of the innovative ways in which resolutions are handled *Down South*. The new *Unsung Hero* and *Golden Torch* awards were introduced. It was wonderful to bring news of the two new awards back to our locals and discuss who the recipients would be. Such a pity that we can only honour two people a year because there are lots of candidates!

Jim Howden then treated us to a practical demonstration of the differences between individual and cooperative learning. First, we experienced the familiar stress of writing a timed test on an individual basis. Then we got to solve the same sort of puzzles by working in groups. Although the clock was still ticking away, we could combine our efforts and even laugh occasionally! The final test (for marks) is still done on an individual basis — there are no free rides.



Jim Howden, an authority on Co-operative Learning, had his audience in a co-operative mood.

## Ready or Not

I confess that the idea of going outside on a cold evening and listening to a presentation about drugs at Elizabeth Ballantyne School did not appeal to me. But my son was insistent that I go, so off I went. Now I wonder how I could have thought of letting this opportunity go by.

First, Officer Richard Foglio from Station 15 was an entertaining speaker. Secondly, I didn't know as much about drugs as I thought I did and thirdly, today's prevention program, where the focus is to inform, was clearly explained. If the only information which our children receive about drugs comes from their peers, drug users, and pushers, the decisions they make may not be in their best interests. We are all affected by drugs, mostly as victims, because so much crime is drug-related. I left the meeting a little more informed and a little more nervous. After all, my son will be going to high school next year and I learned that there are drug problems at every high school, public or private.

Later in the week the same officer made a similar presentation to the students. (Gee, if they were going to hear it, why did I bother to go?) But the ensuing discussion at my dinner table that evening caught me by surprise. Because we had both been exposed to the same information, the lines of communication were already open and we talked very easily. It was easy to talk about "ice" because we both heard about it from the same well-informed source. With an talent for acting and drama, my younger son pretended to smoke marihuana. In order to tease him, my older son asked him where he learned that. "In the park" he answered, with ease and surprise. "You often see kids smoking up." At that moment I realized just how close to home the drug problem really is.

The police department has a follow-up program called "Ready or Not" which deals with many different aspects of parenting. I think it is worth serious consideration.

Anna Marrett

But learning together can be very rewarding. Synergy refers to the building of ideas in the group and the sense of achievement that this brings. It's a well chosen word, for I certainly left at the end of the morning feeling full of...Synergy!!

Anna Marrett

## Parents and "Book Buddies" Are Teachers Too! When Do I Teach Reading?

When you read to your child, YOU are teaching reading. When you introduce your child to different kinds of books, YOU are teaching reading. When you help your child to put his or her thoughts on paper, YOU are teaching reading.

When your child sees you reading for fun, YOU are teaching reading. When you take your child to the library, YOU are teaching reading. When you talk to your child about the stories that you are reading together, YOU are teaching reading.

When you read books together that are about your child's experiences and about new experiences, then YOU are teaching reading. When you provide a wide variety of books, YOU are teaching reading. When you have books and reading material in your home, YOU are teaching reading.

When you listen to your child read, YOU are teaching reading. When you encourage your child to read to others (even if he just reads the pictures), YOU are teaching reading. When you praise your child when he tries to read, YOU are teaching reading.

YOU WERE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST TEACHER, KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!

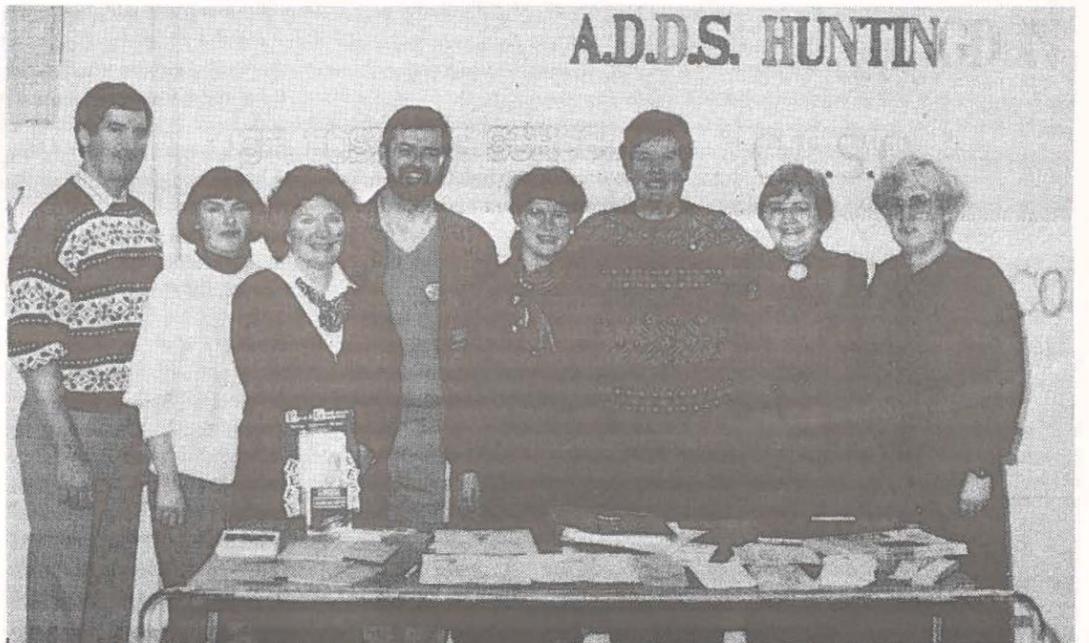
READING CAN BE DONE IN ANY LANGUAGE. ASK YOUR LOCAL LIBRARIAN TO HELP FIND BOOKS FOR YOU IN THE LANGUAGE YOU PREFER.

Read with a child today.



New Westminster Home & School Council

## Huntingdon Literacy Exchange



Huntingdon community evening on Self-Esteem, sponsored by "Networking for Youth", The Huntingdon Literacy Exchange. From the left, John Ryan, St. Joseph's School; Debbie Rennie, Huntingdon Literacy Exchange Steering Committee; Judy Brooks, ADDS Huntingdon; Neil Wallace, Boy Scouts; Donna Erskine, Huntingdon Academy; Margaret Mitchell, MRE Consultant, Lakeshore School Board; Marlon Dalgle, QFHSA Literacy Director; and Pearl Fennell, Chateauguay Valley Reading Council.



A big turn out of parents listens to Margaret Mitchell talk about Self Esteem.

**Book Review  
of Paul Kropp's**

# The Reading Solution

(Random House, \$20.00 paperback, 228 pp., 1993)

Imagine yourself with time to spare, a nice cup of coffee, and your favourite chair just waiting for you. This is an ideal moment in which to read a good book. So settle comfortably into the chair and reach for — *The Reading Solution!*

Then pause for a moment to assess your mood. Are you ready to concentrate? Do you want to investigate the reading skills teenagers need in order to succeed in high school or how to revive your grade four child's enthusiasm for books? Then the main text is waiting for you. Sink your teeth into chapters with titles like *Reading in Canada: Illiteracy, Aliteracy, and the Twenty-first Century* or *Nurturing the Gifted Reader*. Both very readable, by the way. This book was designed for parents!

Paul Kropp, who is both a parent and a teacher, has a basic three R approach. Read with your child every day, Reach into your wallet to buy books and magazines, and Rule the TV. Mr. Kropp believes that every child can learn to read and remain an enthusiastic reader if given good support.

But perhaps you are feeling a little more frivolous and just want to relax. *The Reading Solution* is still the book to choose. There are little nuggets of information scattered throughout the margins of the book — great for a few spare moments or just browsing. Like the page forty test. Open a book of fiction to page forty and read it. If you like the writing style and find that you want to read on, buy the book. If not, put it back. Of course, no one can read something like this without checking page forty of *The Reading Solution*. What's printed in the margins of this page? The names and addresses of all the Provincial Home and School Associations across Canada. That proves it. This book must be a winner!

**Mini Booklists**

For the curious, there are lots and lots of mini booklists located on page margins. Want to know the results of a reader survey taken at the Sleuth of Baker Street Bookstore in Toronto regarding the All Time Top Ten Best Mysteries? How long has it been since you've read some poetry? Why not try one of the seven Canadian poets Mr. Kropp recommends? There are short lists of children's books with award winning illustrations or children's classics or books to capture the imaginations of children who won't read anything. This book lends itself nicely to a field trip to the library or a bookstore.

All in all, this resource book is a lot of fun. And I'd like to close by quoting Paul Kropp as he quotes Benjamin Franklin who was asked "What human condition deserves the most pity?" And the answer is "A lonesome man on a rainy day who does not know how to read."

by Anna Marrett

# The Reading Solution

**An interview with Paul Kropp**

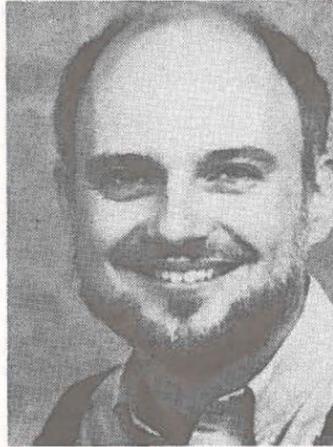
Armed with the tools of a professional reporter: press kit, pad of paper, a copy of the book, and a list of questions, I set off to *The Gazette* on the evening of Thursday, March 4th, to listen to and then interview Paul Kropp. I had spent the previous three days reading his newly released book *The Reading Solution*. I also read every children's book he wrote which I could either find on my children's bookshelves or borrow from the library. With 35 titles to his credit, I'm glad the library didn't have them all!

Paul Kropp is a charming speaker. After his presentation, there were several of us who rushed up to ask him when he might be returning to Montreal. Would he like to address our particular parent body? Then we began networking with other schools to see how we might share the costs.

After some practical advice on how to motivate children to read, we were treated to a wonderful demonstration. With the help of a volunteer from the audience, Mr. Kropp showed us how much more than just "reading" is involved when we read with a child. Mr. Kropp's assistant, Michael Primiani, played the part of the father and Paul Kropp the role of the child. Mr. Kropp's questions, asides, and comments — all typical of young children — kept Mr. Primiani very busy. But Mr. Primiani handled all the questions with such skill and expertise, we all felt that he could give advice on parenting! Mr. Kropp was also quite impressed by his performance and we all applauded several times.

The demonstration certainly brought a number of issues to light. What really happens when we read with a child? Are we taking advantage of this opportunity? For here is a chance to communicate, to explore our values, and to relate other experiences of our own to those of the characters in the book. It's a chance to explain difficult vocabulary to a child, to laugh together, and to see how our children think. This shared experience should start in infancy and continue, on a daily basis, right through the teenage years. What better way to discuss difficult issues like puberty, divorce and death than through a well chosen book?

Mr. Kropp also has a very deep conviction that every child can learn to read. As a teacher with 20 years of experience, he has worked with a wide spectrum of children, from those with serious learning



disabilities to the gifted. He has used a wide range of reading aids some of which sounded more like medieval weapons of torture. Thank goodness many of these tools have been cast aside. We really have changed our approach over the past fifteen years.

In an attempt to reach reluctant readers, Mr. Kropp has written many books which are high interest, easy reading books. Some have a grade 3/4 reading level but the themes are suitable to senior elementary students. Others have a grade 5 reading level and appeal to high school students. I read a few of these myself this week. They are real page-turners. Thank goodness they are fairly short or I would not have had any sleep!

In talking with Mr. Kropp after his discussion, I found that we agreed that a good book need not be lengthy or use difficult vocabulary. Mr. Kropp pointed out that there are some terrific stories which are 60 pages long and which use easy words.

He also confessed that the idea for the book came to him because people constantly asked him to recommend a few good books. These people certainly enjoyed his selections: many of them returned and told him that he should write a book. Making the choices for the book lists was not easy. At one point he had seventeen different lists!

Our talk ended with me pulling several Paul Kropp books from my trusty totebag in order to have them autographed. (What else???) In order to help you get started on a booklist of your own, I highly recommend *The Reading Solution!* With more than 250 recommended books in this reading guide, I expect to be quite busy for the next few months and well prepared for the moment in the summer when a child's voice says "I'm bored!"

Anna Marrett



Harold Spanier, NOMAD Scientists, and Jane Toward, Children's Librarian, Fraser Hickson Institute, are seen here packing used books. These books and magazines are sent to communities along the Lower North Shore of Quebec and the Gaspé Peninsula. The QFHSA Book Drives are part of the ongoing Canadian Home & School and Parent-Teacher Federation's Literacy Project to provide books, for children and adults, to far flung communities that do not have ready access to libraries and bookstores.

# Books on Review

by Kenneth Radu

Contemporary children are more familiar with the Prince of Bel-Air than they are with Gilgamesh the King. Thanks to the recent Disney version (typically overblown and trivialized as most Disney versions of traditional tales tend to be), they now know the story of Beauty and the Beast, or think they do.

The latter tale, according to some folklore anthropologists, originates in the Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh. One of the oldest stories in the world, it was imprinted in cuneiform on clay tablets by the ancient peoples of Mesopotamia, specifically the Sumerians and, later, the Babylonians.

In the stunning first picture book of a proposed trilogy, *Gilgamesh The King*, (Montreal: Tundra, 1992), Czech born artist Ludmila Zeman retells and illustrates the opening segments of the ancient epic and makes available to young readers and students one of the glories of narrative literature.

Half-man and half-god, Gilgamesh becomes a tyrant king over the city of Uruk. Partially crazed by loneliness and his inability to connect with humanity, he enslaves his people and orders them to build a wall around the city. Clearly a manifestation of his own sense of isolation and incompleteness, the construction of the wall leads to misery and deprivation.

The people appeal to the Sun God who takes compassion and sends down Enkidu, half-man and, to all intents and purposes, half-beast, to come to their aid. Before he is able to accomplish the task of liberating the people of Uruk and saving the soul of Gilgamesh, however, Enkidu has to learn love from the animals of the forest.

Ultimately, he confronts Gilgamesh, thanks to the assistance of the singer Shamhat who had been ordered to the forest to "lure" Enkidu out "with her songs and charms." The two fight on top of the wall. As it turns out, Gilgamesh falls and Enkidu saves him, thereby teaching the tyrant something about friendship, self-sacrifice, human values and decency.

In the relationship between the beautiful singer Shamhat and the half-animal Enkidu who is to some degree transformed by her humanity and her art, we see a variant of the Beauty and the Beast tale.

Zeman is economical in her choice of language and incident so her retelling moves quickly and gets to the dramatic point with a minimum of fuss. Occasionally, the writing could do with a bit more in the way of colour and drama in order to avoid the summarizing method which consists mostly of bald assertions. When Enkidu first sees the city of Uruk, for example, he is "dazzled," not having imagined "how beautiful a city could be."

Readers would have trouble understanding his daze over the urban splendour if all they had to go by were Zeman's lacklustre writing. But, as in most Tundra books, the beauty lies in the illustration and not in the prose.

And here, Zeman's *Gilgamesh The King* moves onto distinctive and memorable terrain. The pictures are breathtaking in scope and fascinating in detail. Having studied and been inspired by ancient Mesopotamian artifacts, tablets and bas reliefs, Zeman vividly "creates" the ancient city, chariots, hair styles and clothing so convincingly that one unidentified Assyriologist, according to the publisher's press release, was amazed that the artist "even got the color right."

Awash in gold like the ancient sands presumably, tinted with shades of blue and green, the panoramic pictures will engage children's imagination and possibly encourage them to investigate the strange and distant world of ancient Babylonia, as well as introduce them to the great epic poem itself.

Kenneth Radu's most recent novel is *Home Fires*, published by Véhicule Press.

## FAIR PLAY FOR KIDS

The Commission for Fair Play has available a manual prepared by a team of teachers from across Canada. *Fair Play for Kids* is a program for students in grades 4 to 6, and is based on the belief that physical activity and play, and playing fairly in sports are important for personal growth and for the development of valuable life skills in all children. The activities in the manual emphasize this in a variety of subjects: physical education, art, social studies, language arts and science. Some of the activities encourage team effort; others foster a respect for the rules or for other participants. They all offer the opportunity for teachers to have fun with their students while promoting the principals of fair play, honesty and respect.

The project has been supported or endorsed by the Canadian Association of School Trustees and by the Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation. In the autumn of 1990, the Commission for Fair Play sent out hard cover copies of the resource manual directly to principals of elementary schools across Canada. If your school is new or has not yet received this manual, limited cop-

ies are still available in hard cover version. If your school wishes to have additional copies of the resource, soft cover versions are available for \$10.95. Both editions may be ordered from the following address: Ms. Lise George, Director of Communication & Marketing, CAHPER, 1600 James Naismith Drive, Suite 606, Gloucester, Ont., K1B 5N4. (Tel: 613-748-5622)



# SAFETY SCENE

# SAFETY SCENE



Bring safety into play!



Accidents leading to injury and death are the biggest single threat to the well-being of our children. It's estimated that more than a quarter of a million children are treated for accidental injuries in Canadian hospitals every year! And, tragically, about one thousand die from those injuries. That's more child deaths than from any other cause.

A new national awareness program on child safety related to consumer products, launched by the federal Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Pierre Blais, is aimed at reducing the number of accidents causing deaths and injuries to children. Called KidsCare, this program reaches out to children, parents and caregivers with useful as well as colourful information.

### Our role in child safety

Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada has traditionally placed a high priority on

vulnerable consumers, especially children. The Product Safety Branch of the Department has a mandate to provide information and adopt preventive measures to reduce the number of injuries and deaths from hazardous products. Legislation, safety standards and safety information are measures taken to ensure safer products and to promote safer use.

Unfortunately, no matter how much safety is built into a product, children continue to die or suffer injuries from consumer products. Many of these tragedies are caused by a lack of knowledge of the potential hazards, the improper use of otherwise safe products, or inadequate product maintenance. That's where KidsCare has a vital role to play.

KidsCare is a program of education and awareness. It involves media and public relations, public service advertising, participation programs,



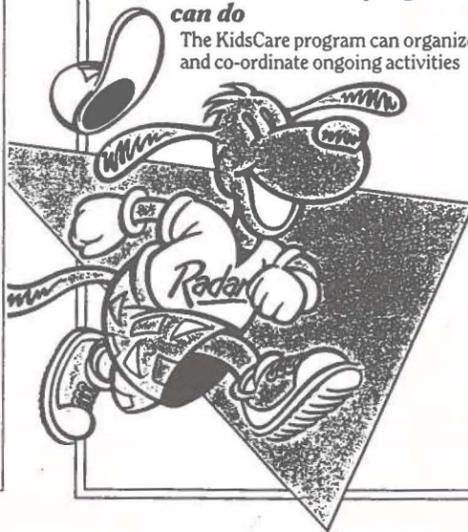
information materials, a national office and a mascot named Radar.

### Child safety is a shared concern

There are many organizations actively working for child safety in Canada. By providing communication and co-ordination among everyone involved, the KidsCare program offers a common focus for concerted action on child safety, beginning with consumer products. We want to reduce the number of accidents involving children by working together with medical and safety organizations, with businesses and governments, with children and parents, and with teachers and caregivers.

### What the KidsCare program can do

The KidsCare program can organize and co-ordinate ongoing activities



and programs that deal with the urgent issue of child safety related to consumer products. These activities and programs focus on specific areas of child safety throughout the year.

The KidsCare Safety Hunt is a good example of a KidsCare activity. It is co-ordinated with fire services across the country and focusses on certain products that are potentially hazardous to children. A national media and public relations campaign in support of the program informs the general public about these products and urges them to consider bringing these products to their local participating fire station for disposal.

There will be more KidsCare activities and programs developed to spread the important message of child safety. Children are our future. We must protect them.

For more information about the KidsCare program, write to:

KidsCare National Program  
50 Victoria St.  
Hull, Quebec  
K1A 0C9



## A Sad Day in The Gaspé

One of the Regional School Board of Gaspesia's school buses was hit from behind at lunch time on Thursday, March 4. Two of the children from New Carlisle — Kyle Bourgaize and Jill Starnes — were injured, but not seriously. The school bus appeared to be stopped at the time of the accident when it was hit from behind by the Orleans Express bus.

At the same time as the bus accident was occurring near New Carlisle, the New Richmond High School was burning to the ground. Luckily there were no injuries to any student. (For NRHS picture see p. 4.)

Left: School Board bus driver, Kenny Garrett, surveys the damage done to his bus.

photo by Stephanie Giroux, SPEC

### Birds for Tomorrow...Funds for Today! THE ENVIRO-BIRD FEEDER

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## Eddy The Eco-Dog Creates Planetdemonium in the Classroom

After scouring their homes from top to bottom for any available piece of plastic, grade four pupils arrive at the local elementary school, arms full to overflowing with everything from plastic soft drink bottles to milk jugs. In a short while, "planetdemonium" is about to break loose in the science room.

Why? Because the class is about to embark on an eco trip with Eddy The Eco-Dog, an environmentally hip canine who is making his way into classrooms across North America with the message that it's cool to recycle and take care of the planet.

Hands-on activities, which come with a teacher's kit of instructional materials, encourage children to be proactive in discussing and coming up with new ways to recycle and utilize recycled materials. The display is targeted to school children K-6.

Teachers may obtain information about Eddy The Eco-Dog\* display by contacting: Desert Rose Productions, 1775 Corydon Avenue, Winnipeg, CANADA R3N 2A6. Telephone/Fax (204) 489-3400

Eddy The Eco-Dog is a registered trademark of Desert Rose Productions Inc.

