



THE VOICE OF  
THE PARENT  
IN EDUCATION

# QFHSA NEWS

VOLUME 53 ISSUE 2

SUMMER 2015

## AGM: Mission and Vision

By: Carol Meindl

The QFHSA Board of Directors spent time this past winter engaged with strategic planning and re-considering the mission statement and drafting a vision statement that would apply for both the Provincial Board of Directors activities and the member association activities. Some of the preliminary work was presented to the AGM delegates by Joyce Shanks, Director and Carol Meindl, Executive Director, explaining the thought process behind the proposed changes and offering an introduction of the organization's new Vision Statement.



AGM Photography by Howard Kay

These statements spoke to the "what we do" and the vision statement addressed the "why we do it"

### MISSION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS/STAFF

*The QFHSA Board of Directors and Staff provide resources, information, support and representation to, and on behalf of, our local Home and School Associations and their member communities.*

### MISSION OF THE HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

*Home and School Associations promote the involvement of parents, students, educators and the community at large in the advancement of learning and acts as a voice for families.*

### VISION

*We believe that every student should have the opportunity to enjoy an enriched school experience.*

From there the Directors looked at the "how we do it" which included a list of services at the provincial level as well as the local level that work toward fulfilling this vision. The preliminary list of objectives will be available on the QFHSA website. Joyce and Carol emphasized that these lists are not exhaustive and there may be other objectives that the member associations would like to consider as part of their mandate. They invited the delegates to bring the document to their next Home and School meeting for feedback and possible additions. The entire membership is encouraged to review them, consider the relevance of the changes, and make suggestions. You can find them here: <http://www.qfhsa.org/documents/Mission-Vision-Draft-2015.pdf>

Make sure to visit our website regularly to get information about upcoming events. It is a great resource for membership forms & documents, constitution & by-laws, QFHSA Strategic Plan, back issues of the NEWS, past briefs written by the QFHSA and valuable partner links and resources.

Please visit [www.qfhsa.org](http://www.qfhsa.org) for all your association updates.

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....and much more!

## Save the Date!

### QFHSA Fall Conference

Date: Saturday, Nov. 7th, 2015

Time: 8:30 am – 4 pm

Location: Roslyn Elementary

4699 Westmount Ave.

# A message from the President

THANK YOU FOR YOUR VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

I would like to thank each and every one of the delegates who volunteered their Saturday on May 2, 2015 to participate in the QFHSA Annual General Meeting where the present QFHSA Officers and Board of Directors were elected.

We appreciate your vote of confidence and are getting down to work immediately.

Here are some of our suggestions for you:

Firstly, as you begin your local association's membership drive, do not forget to send membership application forms to your school board commissioner, school administrators, teachers, and support staff. Please encourage your School Principal (or Vice-Principal or Staff Assistant), Teacher Representatives, and Support Staff Representatives to attend and actively participate in your local association meetings. In these continuing times of austerity measures, their advice is very valuable as you will be receiving increasing numbers of funding requests. The QFHSA Board of Directors will try to help you deal with these funding requests by issuing suggested guidelines for local associations.

Secondly, encourage your members to attend and actively participate in your local association's annual general meeting. Be inclusive and welcome your new members enthusiastically – especially the parents of pre-Kindergarteners, of Kindergarteners, and of those students who have recently moved into your neighbourhood.

Thirdly, attend the General Assembly of Parents during the month of September which elects the Parent Representatives to your Governing Board, Parent Representatives to the Central Parents' Committee, and decides whether or not to establish a Parent Participation Organization (PPO). It is important that more parents know about your local Home and School Association, and its importance for the students and for your school.

We wish to continue our partnerships with the wonderful people at DM Family and School Services, Dynamix, and the Leading English Education and Resource Network (LEARN).

At the provincial level, we wish to continue the positive work done in the area of minority educational constitutional rights through our collaborations with: the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA), the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), the Linguistic Rights Support Program (LRSP), the Community Learning Centre Initiative (CLCI), and the Coalition For the Future of English Education in Quebec (COFFEE-Quebec).

Yours in education,

*Brian Rock*

**QFHSA President**



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*Thank you to the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) and the Ministère de L'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) for their financial support in helping us publish the QFHSA NEWS.*

## A message from the Executive Director Talking the Talk

At the AGM this year, you, the membership, adopted three (3) resolutions: **Diversity and Inclusion**, **History of Residential Schools** and **School and School Yard Maintenance**. Copies of these resolutions will be translated into French and sent to the list of destinations chosen by the delegates. Often we hear back from the destination, acknowledging receipt of the resolution and assuring us that it will be forwarded on to the proper person. At times we are invited to meet with a representative to discuss it further.

In the meantime, there are actions that can be taken by the membership to indicate that they are serious about these resolutions and not just indulging in wishful thinking.

In order to support the **Diversity and Inclusion** resolution, I encourage all local associations to take a good look at their parent population and determine whether there is full representation at the Home and School table. If not, I challenge you to determine why that is not the case and develop policies and activities that include as many parents as possible. Be creative! As an initial step, go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QFXGNQV> and complete the survey. Then consider some of the ways mentioned to improve communication and participation with your parents.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission will be presenting its final report in June regarding residential schools and their devastating impact on the generation of Aboriginal children enrolled in them. The nation will be challenged to keep this inconvenient truth in the spotlight and keep it from being buried again out of sight. I would like to suggest that Home and School associations consider buying a selection of books that celebrate Aboriginal history and culture as well as bear witness to the history of residential schools and donate them to the school library, as a way to support the **History of Residential Schools** resolution. It is a start until such a time as the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research incorporates a true history of residential schools into the regular school curriculum. QFHSA can offer you a list of suggested books to consider for purchase.

**School and School Yard Maintenance** is an issue that concerns just about every parent every day, whether they are dropping their children off in the morning or picking them up at the end of

the school day. Be it the state of the hallways, the classrooms, the bathrooms, the school yard play area, or the sidewalks and parking lots, poorly maintained premises affect everyone, not to mention presenting possible safety hazards and diminishing morale. School boards have standards for school cleanliness and preventative maintenance. Austerity and budget cuts cannot help but affect the unwavering adherence to those standards. Nevertheless, consider requesting a copy of the current standards and timelines for inspections from your School Board Commissioner, and keep track of where the upkeep falls between the yawning cracks.

Home and School has always been dedicated to the enhancement of education and the general well-being of children and youth. This year's resolutions continue that legacy. It is up to us to give the resolutions teeth.



*Carol Meindl*

**QFHSA Executive Director**

### QFHSA Mission Statement

**The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations Inc. is an independent, incorporated, not for profit, volunteer organization dedicated to enhancing the education and general well being of children and youth.**

**The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations Inc. promotes the involvement of parents, students, educators and the community at large in the advancement of learning, and acts as a voice for parents.**



## End of Year To-do List

### President's and Treasurer's Reports

Please get these reports into the office by June 30<sup>th</sup>.

#### President's report

Use the minutes of the Home and School meetings as well as the school newsletter to send out your activity report to the parents. The format is up to you. Use it to show the school community how much your Home and School achieved this past year.

#### Treasurer's Report

If all the large invoices have been received the report can be sent into the QFHSA office. Please list any allocations for the next school year on the bottom of the report. The Home and School president needs to sign the treasurer's report as proof that she/he is aware of the financial status of your association.

#### Outstanding Documentation

If you received a notice that documents are outstanding please send them into the office as soon as possible.

#### 2015-2016 Forms

The forms for 2015-2016 are on the QFHSA website. Have them on hand at the first Home and School meeting in September, fill them out and mail them in to the QFHSA office. If your executive is changing, please advise Marlyn as soon as possible. If you need membership materials for your Fall 2015 campaign, please contact Marlyn as some flyers may have to be reprinted.

#### Executive Workshops – SAVE THE DATE

Executive workshops will take place on Thursday September 24th. Please encourage your Home and School executives (especially new executives) to attend.

#### Passing the Torch

A big thank you to those dedicated volunteers who are moving on. Please pass along any information you have to your successor. Some Home and Schools are putting templates on Google Docs to facilitate the transfer of information.

Enjoy the summer,

Marlyn Brownrigg  
 QFHSA Membership Services Coordinator  
 marlynbrownrigg@qfhsa.org



## The 2015 Executive Appreciation Dinner

*By Marlyn Brownrigg, QFHSA Membership Services Coordinator*

There was a great turnout for the 2015 Executive Appreciation dinner held at the Casa Grecque in Pierrefonds on March 19, 2015. Forty-eight (48) people from nineteen (19) local associations as well as some QFHSA board and staff members enjoyed a lovely meal and the presentation from Corey Szwarcok of Dynamix.

Corey spoke to the attendees about team building and had the group put theory into practice with a cooperative activity. Everyone overcame their initial reluctance and attacked the task at hand. It was an extremely difficult assignment and it required significant concentration (interspersed with laughter).

Thanks Corey for helping us to break the ice and get to know executives from other Home and Schools.



## PETITE SUITE QUÉBÉCOISE Virtual Choir

Canadian Parents for French-Quebec\* (CPF-Q), in partnership with Bishop's University, the Community Learning Centres and the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations, spearheaded the first French-Second-Language Virtual Choir in the province. This project linked 12 English language elementary schools, including Gaspé and New Carlisle, to bring a music program activity to their school, if only for a few weeks. The students learned a medley of French language songs and had their final performance recorded. The final product is a delightful video that links all the schools together in one large choir. QFHSA subsidized the travel of Chantal Gosselin, the music director, up to the Gaspé so the students could have the benefit of live rehearsals with her. The children all had such a wonderful experience that we will do all we can to see that this project is repeated next year and that more schools from our Home and School network participate. To watch the video: <http://qc.cpf.ca/activities/youth-activities/virtual-choir/>

# Letter to the Editor

*QFHSA values hearing the thoughts and opinions of all our members and volunteers. If you have something you would like to share, please send it to Christina Franc at [news@qfhsa.org](mailto:news@qfhsa.org)*

### Where do we fit in?

In the ever changing face of education, we often find ourselves wondering where we, as parents, fit into our children's schools.

I am a parent who has always been involved in the schools my children attended. There was always some need the school had, either physical presence or financial support. I first joined Home and School in 1999 and it was quite the initiation. There were fundraisers to organize and participate in, outings, class projects, field days, library visits and open houses, just to name a few, where parents were invited or pleaded with to help out. As time passed, the fundraisers became harder and harder to pass at governing board meetings and the in-school help requests became fewer and farther in-between. We, as a Home and School, adjusted and changed. We did things differently to match the changes in expectations from the school. Soon the number of interested parents started to dwindle, but the hard core parents marched on and kept things rolling. It wasn't long after all my children graduated from elementary school that I heard that the Home and School folded. The group where I spent so much time, energy, blood, sweat and tears was gone.

Here I am, still involved but in the high school Home and School. It is quite a different world to be involved in. Very few parents, or staff members for that matter, actually know what a Home and School is, let alone what its role is. We, the members of the Home and School, are struggling to find where we fit in with high school life. We recently decided to explore and figure out a mission plan for what we are and how we can be of support to the school. Fundraising is done for almost everything by the students and their mentors. Parents are not expected to participate in the in-school activities or outings. The school will always need financial support, especially with all the austerity measures being implemented by the government, but how can we fill this need if all the conventional fundraising ideas are almost impossible to execute. That is where we are now in our discussions. How do we fit in? How do we continue to support our children's educational needs? How do we get the word out to everyone about who we are and what we try to do for the school?

Only time will tell if we will continue or close shop. The discussions continue and so far it is quite an exciting and energized conversation. The world is changing and I often wonder if Home and School is changing with it or being left behind. It is a valid question and I think it is a discussion that needs to be had on a larger scale. What do you think?

Thank you for listening,

Jennifer Holmes, President, Beurling Home and School

# School Board Elections through universal suffrage

By: Brian Rock, President of QFHSA, Chair of QFHSA Rights sub-committee, Chair of COFFEE-Quebec

The English minority in Quebec and the French minority groups in the other provinces and territories of Canada have a constitutional guarantee for the management and control of their educational institutions through universal suffrage. In layman's terms, in Quebec, it means that everyone eighteen years of age and older on the English School Board voter's list (unless you are under a legal disqualification) has the right to vote by secret ballot to elect the English School Board Chairperson and local English School Board Commissioner of her/his choice every three years.

Recently, I had the opportunity as the QFHSA representative to the Linguistic Rights Support Program (LRSP) to participate at the Roundtable of National Dialogue held at the University of Ottawa. Discussions centered around the recent cases before the Supreme Court of Canada, in the Yukon Territory and the province of British Columbia, regarding the constitutional educational rights of the Francophone minorities in those two jurisdictions. Discussion also included the situation surrounding the Quebec Minister of Education, Higher Education and Research, Francois Blais, and his recent thinking aloud about eliminating French School Boards and doing something about the English School Boards. Even Mr. Blais' legal advisors should realize that the Government of Quebec must respect the constitutional guarantees under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Constitution Act, 1982) especially the minority language education rights regarding language of instruction under section 23 and the enforcement of guaranteed rights and freedoms under section 24.

I am also privileged to be able to sit at various tables, at conferences and AGMs, with their inherent opportunities to discuss the current political landscape. As you can imagine, discussion of recent political developments leads to interesting exchanges that touch on issues of austerity, teacher contract negotiations, minority language rights and guarantees, school boards, and management and control of educational institutions through universal suffrage, among others. These are issues that affect and concern many of our members. I will always strive to represent the parents' point of view at all these discussions and be cognizant of how these legislative changes may affect you, our members. It is very important for the



English-speaking organizations and communities to speak with one voice. The more opportunities we have to get together in dialogue, the better.

At one important table, the Coalition for the Future of English Education in Quebec (COFFEE-Quebec) which met on March 2nd and April 27th, 2015 and will meet again on June 15th in Montreal, you, the members of the QFHSA, will be particularly well represented by Lawrence DePoe, Immediate Past President of QFHSA, Rickhey Margolese, Quebec Representative of the Canadian Home and School Federation (CHSF), Carol Meindl, Executive Director of QFHSA, and myself, Brian Rock, as the newly elected President of QFHSA and current chair of the COFFEE-Quebec meetings.



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# Western Quebec Regional Council

On April 15<sup>th</sup>, a regional council was held for local Home and School Associations in the Western Québec School Board. All eight (8) local associations were represented. School populations range in size from 45 to 625 students with a variety of French as a second language programs being offered. It was gratifying to hear that some of the schools have a good partnership with and great support from their communities.

Following the presentation of QFHSA housekeeping items, the participants discussed the following:

- The Western Québec School Board postcard marketing campaign
- A bilingual Outaouais- themed board game that is in the works
- Successes (some examples): Breakfast with Santa/Easter bunny, craft fairs, visits from police/fire departments, social teas, home alone/babysitting courses, Christmas dinner for staff and students, collaborating with staff on their events, etc.
- Challenges (some examples): Finding volunteers, replacing graduating executive members, communication and revitalizing Home and Schools
- Other topics: grade six graduation, requests/allocations, sharing speakers/parent education, honouring the deceased and school board budget.

Thank you to QFHSA Membership Chair Rhonda Boucher for organizing this event and the Western Québec School board for providing the venue. We are looking forward to another meeting in 2016.

## What is a "Money Fair"?

By: Brian Smith

*Mr. Brian Smith, from Montreal, is the new Vice-President of Quebec for the Canadian Foundation for Economic Education. CFEE is a non-profit, non-partisan organization, founded in 1974, that works to improve economic, financial, and enterprising capability. CFEE works collaboratively with our funding partners, departments of education, school boards, schools, educators, and teacher associations to develop and provide free, non-commercial programs and resources for teachers and students – developed and reviewed by educators. CFEE also has a range of programs to assist newcomers to Canada as they look to settle and integrate into their new country.*

*Mr. Smith brings with him a wealth of information and experience in the field of financial literacy. One of goals will be to set up the Money Fair Project in the High Schools in the province of Quebec.*

A Money Fair involves pairs of students at any grade level (Secondary 1, 2, and 3 recommended) selecting a money topic that is of interest to them, undertaking

research to explore and learn about that topic, and preparing a display board that showcases the outcome of their research and what they learned. A list of possible topics that teachers can share with students for consideration is included in the [Money Fair Guide](#) attached – but students can select their own topic so long as it is approved by the teacher. We believe it is very important that students select topics that are of personal interest to them. Students are much more likely to be engaged and learn when they are focusing on something that they find interesting to them.

Once complete, students set up their display boards in a classroom or large open space, so that others can come, visit, and talk with them about their display and what they have learned. Ideally, the school will arrange time for other students to visit the displays and speak with students about the money topic they

chose. Also, a Money Fair provides an excellent opportunity to invite parents/guardians (as well as grandparents and other relatives) to the school to see the displays and talk with the students about their display and what they have learned.

A Money Fair can be an activity that draws attention from the whole school and can help get all students more interested in learning about money – and preparing for their financial futures. A Money Fair should be a fun, interesting, and engaging activity for students and at the same time they should learn about money and improve their financial literacy and capability.

For more information about the Money Fair Project or to bring a Money Fair to your local High School, please contact Brian Smith (514)817-3941 or via email at [bsmith@cfee.org](mailto:bsmith@cfee.org)

# Family Treasures Winning Essays

*The Family Treasures Essay Competition is a wonderful opportunity to combine the elements of both the English Language Arts program with that of History as an “in class” project where students can explore their own sense of self as well as their own family’s history. By researching, asking questions, and writing about what they learned creatively, they have an opportunity to share that history with their classmates and their community. We thank all the students who participated and sent in their essays. We enjoyed reading all of them as they are all well written and quite often heart-warming.*

## FIRST PRIZE

### The Gold Watch

Long ago, when my grand-mother was just a little girl, she lived in a small Italian village on a mountain. My grand-mother had five siblings that she loved very much. They were very close and took care of each other.

When my grand-mother was very little, life was a little more difficult because Italy was in a war. She was often scared, because planes would fly over them very closely. My grand-mother was very afraid of those planes.

One day, my grand-mother’s oldest sister Lydia was outside in the yard, hanging freshly-washed clothes on the laundry line. She was singing, and my grand-mother, who was sitting inside the house, was singing along with her. All of a sudden, they heard the noise of a plane. Lydia looked up at the plane passing over her head, and just at that moment, the plane started shooting in her direction. Lydia got scared and ducked, and the bullet grazed her.

Years later, my grand-mother grew up, got married and decided to move to Canada. On the day that she was about to leave for this new country, her sister Lydia hugged her really hard and told her to take care of herself. Lydia took off her gold watch and told my grand-mother that this watch had protected her years ago when she had been grazed by the bullet, and that the watch would now protect her.

Well, guess what? My grand-mother still has this watch today and has told me all about how it protected her sister long ago, and protects her to this day. She also says that one day it will be mine. I cannot wait to pass on this special item to my daughter one day.

Isabella Leo  
Gardenview Elementary School

## SECOND PRIZE

### Wilkinson Sword 7

### Day Empire Shaving Kit

My family treasure is a silver shaving kit. It’s made out of real silver! The brand is Wilkinson Sword. The kit comes with a razor and 7 blades.

This treasure has been passed down from generation to generation. It first belonged to my great great grandfather Georgui Sedra. He passed it down to my great grandfather Nassif Sedra. Then he passed it down to his son, my grand-father Chakib Sedra. Chakib took it from Egypt and brought it to Montreal. Now, my uncle Karim Sedra has the shaving kit. It’s always been passed down to the men because it’s a shaving kit.

A different day of the week is engraved on each of the blades. The kit also has a leather strop to sharpen the blades. The kit also has a small tube of oil to lubricate the razor and the leather strop. This silver shaving kit dates back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

This silver shaving kit is of sentimental value to our family. This kit means more than money to our family. My family would never sell this kit even for a lot of money.

In conclusion, I’ve never actually seen the kit but I have seen pictures and heard stories about it. I really hope that one day, I will get the kit. When it comes to me, I’ll pass it down to my kids. This kit is always going to be passed down to the next generation in my family.

Christopher Sedra  
Gardenview School

**Famous Family Recipe winning essays will be published in the Fall Issue of the QFHSA NEWS**



# QFHSA AGM Summary

By: Johnnie Belinda Cluff

The 71<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of the QFHSA brought representatives from schools all over Quebec to meet together, review and plan how to respond to the challenges perceived by the school communities. This year's AGM, held at the Novotel Hotel in St. Laurent on May 2, was privileged to receive Kathleen Weil, Minister of Immigration, Diversity and Inclusiveness as the keynote speaker.

Minister Weil recalled the brief prepared by the QFHSA to oppose Bill 60 at the national assembly and thanked the organization for promoting inclusiveness and diversity in their mandates and through their actions. She described the vision for the new policy on immigration and diversity and encouraged the continued relationship with the QFHSA. In echo to this year's theme "Together we are stronger" and reflective of the strides made by the QFHSA, Minister Weil offered an inspiring quote from Margaret Mead; *"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."*

The business session of the AGM commenced after lunch with new business arising and a bylaw passed to give the board of directors the authority to address time sensitive issues. The President, Executive Director and Finance reports were presented and accepted. Marion Daigle followed the reports with a passionate presentation of the QFHSA "A History of Achievement" document that covers the impressive span of 1920-2014. She passed on a special message and encouraged everyone to "take time to tell your story. These stories represent the hard work of the teachers, principals and parents."

Joyce Shanks and Carol Meindl took a few moments to explain that the QFHSA has revisited its mission and vision and has been working to make sure it is representative and solidified. Along with some strategic planning on an organizational level, the QFHSA feels that the mission and vision need to be reworked to emphasize the direction of their organization.

The Caucus divided into three groups to have working sessions on the resolutions and then voted and unanimously passed all three of the proposed resolutions: Cultural Diversity and Inclusion, History of Residential Schools and School and School Yard Maintenance. The full resolutions are available online at <http://qfhsa.org/resolutions.htm>

The group then, for the first time at an AGM, divided up and held Regional Councils with much interesting sharing and conversation around local issues.

After the swearing-in of the officers by Parliamentarian Sylvia Adams, the meeting was adjourned and the Membership and the Newsletter Awards were presented. An inflatable movie screen, the door prize, was won by Birchwood Elementary Home & School.

You can find photos of the event here: [http://www.qfhsa.org/photo\\_gallery.htm](http://www.qfhsa.org/photo_gallery.htm)



*New Board of Directors 2015-2016: Top Row (l to r): Carol Meindl (Executive Director), Brian Rock (President Elect), Linton Garner (Director), Wanda Leah Trineer (Treasurer), Rhonda Boucher (Director). Bottom Row (l to r): Ginette Sauv -Frankel (Director), Rosalind Hoenig (Executive V-P), Rickhey Margoiese (V-P), Lawrence DePoe (Past President).*

*Absent: Debi Brown (Secretary)*



*Brian Rock (President Elect) and Linton Garner (Director) with Marion Daigle, QFHSA Past President and current History & Archives Coordinator.*



*Brian Rock (President Elect), Minister Kathleen Weil, Lawrence DePoe (Immediate Past President), Carol Meindl (Executive Director)*

*Photography by Howard Kay*

**PAT LEWIS ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD—AGM 2015**

*For an individual or group, at the elementary school level, who has shown outstanding efforts toward an environmental cause.*

**DORSET ENVIRONMENT CLUB**

The Dorset Environment Club is headed by teachers Mrs. Laframboise (Mrs. L), Mme. Côté and Mrs. Harwood. They teach the students about the environment, wildlife, gardening and much more. Last year, the environment club received a visit from Mr. Manning, a council man in charge of the environment in Baie D’Urfe, who came to them with an idea to plant a community garden. He gave them gardening advice, and even explained how the compost they were making as a school could be used to help the plants grow bigger.

As a group they discussed which plants they should grow and started to plot out their garden. They started by making their very own individual-sized greenhouses! They took a bean seed planted it in some dirt on a brown piece of paper towel. Then they folded the paper containing the dirt and seed and placed it in a Ziploc bag, and filled the bag with some water. They then placed their bags in the display cases around the school where the entire school could see them grow!

They watched and watched as their seedlings grew bigger and bigger and finally, they were ready to be planted! Along with their teachers and some parent volunteers, they planted their beans. They also planted tomatoes, broccoli, peppers, kidney beans, zucchini, squash, peas, carrots, celery, and some herbs. To the dirt, they added compost which they had made throughout the year as a school.

During the summer, Dorset families took turns watering and harvesting their yummy crop. In September when they returned to school, they were amazed to see how much their plants had grown. They had millions of tomatoes; unfortunately, their leeks had been eaten by flies.

Once the vegetables were harvested, they were divided into two piles. One pile was donated to a local food bank and the other was kept for the club. As a group they turned the second pile into yummy tomato sauce. Then one lunch they sat down for spaghetti squash with tomato sauce and a salad all made by the environment club from the vegetables that they had grown.

Along with the garden that they planted, they also do nature walks looking for animal tracks, clean up the trash around the school, take care of recycling at school and play environmental games.

Congratulations to the Dorset Environment Club on receiving the Pat Lewis Environment Award. Please continue your good work on improving the environment and protecting our earth.



**PAT LEWIS HUMANITARIAN AWARD—AGM 2015**

*For an individual or group, at the elementary school level, who has shown outstanding efforts toward a humanitarian cause.*

**JOHN KESSON & THE OLD BREWERY MISSION VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

This year’s winner of the Pat Lewis Humanitarian Award is Mr. John Kesson, who teaches English (9th and 10th grade) at Lindsay Place High School and has been fostering a partnership between students and the Old Brewery Mission since the year 2000. That’s 15 years of giving back to the community... and counting.

Through various fundraising activities, including bagging groceries, he and Lindsay Place High students have raised close to \$100,000. John's program has helped to raise awareness and develop leadership skills among the youth he has worked with by connecting them with the folks that benefit from the Old Brewery Mission and those who help make this important Montreal Institution something to be proud of. Every December Mr. Kesson and a group of students head down to the OBM to help serve holiday meals. They continue to do so periodically during the year. Over the years, John has helped students collect clothing, toiletries, laundry detergent and cutlery for the OBM. Money raised has been used to purchase Christmas dinner at the shelter as well as toys for a summer camp that was associated with the shelter.



In his down time Mr. Kesson spends his lunch hours organizing “Skipping Club” with LPHS students to keep them moving. He is also a staff advisor for the juvenile boys hockey team.

In a nutshell, he has spent the last 15 years helping students develop a sense of community in both body and mind. He remains an important reason why LPHS is a high school where great kids get to spend time with extraordinary adults on their way to becoming extraordinary adults. The QFHSA is honoured to award Mr. John Kesson with the 2015 Pat Lewis Humanitarian Award in recognition of the outstanding efforts of his students under his leadership toward a humanitarian cause. Thank you Mr. Kesson for all that you do!

### LEWIS PEACE PRIZE—AGM 2015

*For an individual or group making a significant contribution towards peace.*

#### Nathalie Swanson & OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Plan

Onslow Elementary School—The OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Plan was introduced by the Western Québec School Board and our French teacher, Nathalie Swanson who accepted to lead the initiative at the school. It is a comprehensive anti-bullying program that is backed by results. Its approach is one that requires all members of the school community to take part in training, assemblies and in-class activities. Students learn about bullying – What is it? What is it not? What is involved in a bullying incident? How can it be prevented? What impact it has on others and on us when it happens? etc.



Nathalie has focused on preparing one of the most important pieces: creating a positive school climate. She arranges groupings of students from Kindergarten to Grade 6 once a month and gives them a task to work on. She re-arranges all of the groups every month in order to ensure all of the students in the school have had an opportunity to work with every other student in the school at least once. It is harder to tease, bully or pick on someone you know and have worked with than to pick on someone who is nameless or someone you simply see in the halls from another classroom.

In March, the group activity was to come up with a plan and make a snowman. Due to weather conditions, they ran out of time to build their snowmen outside, so they took a different approach – they put their plan in action, but on paper!

This program, and especially Nathalie's leadership on the monthly activities, has led to an improved school climate. She is extremely well-organised and passionate about this program and has been asked by other schools to help them implement the OLWEUS program with members of their staff. Her leadership on staff with this initiative and with others makes her an invaluable asset to the team.

The QFHSA is honoured to recognize Nathalie Swanson and the OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Plan with the Lewis Peace Prize for their important contributions toward peace in the school and community.

### GORDON PATERSON AWARD—AGM 2015

*For long service to the education of children  
and for the encouragement of the involvement of parents.*

#### PAUL CAHILL

During his 30 years as a kindergarten teacher, most of those spent at Edinburgh Elementary School, Paul Cahill has demonstrated all the qualities of an outstanding teacher. First and foremost, he possesses an incredible ability to connect with his students, whether using humour, music, stories, or well-timed words of encouragement. He adapts his style to meet students' needs, finds ways of engaging their interests and quite simply inspires them to learn.

Many new kindergartners arrive at Edinburgh with a very limited knowledge of French. M. Paul believes in a full immersion approach to language acquisition. His ability to connect with each individual child using humour, facial expressions and gestures quickly overcomes any linguistic hurdles. The regularly structured days and clear expectations allow the students to successfully navigate their new environment.

M. Paul sparks a love of learning in his students with healthy daily doses of music and books. Perhaps his favourite work of children's literature is a well-loved copy of "Bobo Dodo", which he reads in instalments and, upon completion of the book, has the students write and illustrate their own story (starring, of course, Bobo Dodo) over the course of several weeks. His strong commitment to literacy is demonstrated by his serving as the school's literacy coordinator.

Music plays another important role in his classes. Daily sing-a-longs make learning French fun and enjoyable for young students. These musical pursuits culminate in an end-of year concert that is given in the classroom for parents. The pride and happiness on the children's faces is a tribute to how much they have enjoyed their year.



M. Paul welcomes parents into the classroom; he has at least one parent volunteer come into the classroom on a weekly basis to help with logic and math activities. In addition, his door is always open for parents who wish to talk about their child, and he has a caring and generous nature that extends to parents as well as their kids.

Over the years, hundreds of students and parents at Edinburgh have benefitted from M. Paul's outstanding energy, commitment, sense of humour and wisdom. He has instilled a love of learning in his kindergarten students that serves them throughout their elementary years and beyond. Loved by students and parents alike, M. Paul is truly an outstanding educator.

Congratulations Mr. Cahill on being the 2015 recipient of the Gordon Paterson Award.

## Schools that attended the 2015 AGM

- Beacon Hill Elementary Home & School
- Beaconsfield High Home & School
- Birchwood Elementary Home & School
- Chelsea Elementary Home & School
- Elizabeth Ballantyne Elementary Home & School
- Evergreen Elementary Home & School
- Flemming Elementary Home & School
- Gardenview Elementary Home & School
- Honore Mercier Elementary
- John Rennie High Home & School
- La Tuque High Home & School
- Lindsay Place High Home & School
- Macdonald High Home & School
- Onslow Elementary Home & School
- PETES Home & School
- Poltimore Elementary Home & School
- Roslyn Elementary Home & School
- Sherwood Forest Home & School
- South Hull Elementary Home & School
- Souvenir Home & School
- St. Charles Home & School
- St. John Fisher Elementary Home & School
- St. Thomas High Home & School
- Thorndale Home & School
- Westwood Home & School
- Willingdon Home & School

### 2014—2015 MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

#### HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES AS MEMBERS

- Beacon Hill Elementary (LBPSB) – Membership Chair: Sue Kennedy
- Evergreen Elementary (LBPSB) – Membership Chair: Christina Ambert

#### INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP

- St. Patrick Elementary (LBPSB) – Membership Chair: Liz Bertrand
- Westpark Elementary (LBPSB) – Membership Chair: Elizabeth Allen
- New Carlisle High School (ESSB) – Membership Chair: Jessica Main-Denis

#### Welcome to New Home & School Associations

- Flemming Elementary (ESSB) – *Lisa Lavallee & Monique Mercier, Co-Presidents*
- Greater Gatineau Elementary (WQSB) – *Kathleen Caya, President*

### 2014—2015 NEWSLETTER AWARDS

#### Elementary 1st Prize

- Garden Views (Gardenview Elementary School)
- Editors: Elena Giatras and Jason Kontolemos

#### Honorable mention:

- Margaret Manson Messenger (Margaret Manson Elementary School), Editor: Renee Aspiotis

#### High School 1st Prize

- The Herald (Lindsay Place High School), Editors: Linda Roach and Lynda Arthur



### UNSUNG HERO AWARDS—AGM 2015

*Recognizes outstanding volunteers within a local school.*

|                               |                        |                      |                               |                     |                   |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Beacon Hill Elementary School | Dipa Mehta             | Rachel Martiniello   | Genesis Elementary School     | Lucy Guzevicius     | Mary Ann Di Iorio |
|                               | Stephanie Gartner      | Wanda Finch          |                               | Toni Di Maria       |                   |
| Birchwood Elementary School   | Alex DeLuca            | Lisa Fougere         | Lindsay Place High School     | Anita Catalani      | Lucia Alicandro   |
|                               | Nancy Amaral           | Shannon Pelley       | Lord Aylmer Elementary School | Philip Santos       | Pina de Luca      |
|                               | Swati Nafade           |                      | Macdonald High School         | Nancy Tellier       | Terri Hamelin     |
| Dorset Elementary School      | Andrea Hayden          | Andrea Menarik       | Pierre Elliot Trudeau         | Charlene Morrison   |                   |
|                               | Heidi Ektvedt          | Stacey Lazare Powell | Macdonald High School         | Wendy Ethier        |                   |
|                               | Valery Desmarais       |                      | Sherwood Forest               | Anne-Marie Hastings | Jessica Rawlings  |
| Dorval Elementary School      | Dianne Boucher         | Joanna Gritsas       | St. Thomas High School        | Shelly Neil         | Tara Brisson      |
| Edgewater Elementary School   | Athanasia Antonopoulos | Betty Ludwa          | Thorndale Elementary School   | Laurie Betito       | Sharad Bhargava   |
|                               | Jennifer Whiting       |                      |                               | Paola DeRubeis      | Maureen Harris    |
| Edinburgh Elementary School   | Paula Brodeur          | Vicky Princz         | Westwood High School          | Kim MacLaren        |                   |
| Evergreen Elementary School   | Jennifer Buraglia      | Karla Longford       | Wilder Penfield               | Pauline Breton      | Isabelle Fleury   |
|                               | Lynn MacDowell         | Susan Nowak          |                               | Nancy Armenti       | Nikki Arsenault   |
| Forest Hill Elementary School | Isabelle Fleury        |                      | Willingdon Elementary School  | Sandy Boudreau      | Josie Micciche    |
| Gardenview Elementary School  | Dominique Boucher      | Francesca Pennino    |                               | Nicole Yip Hoi      |                   |
|                               |                        |                      |                               | Catherine Lavoie    | Louisa Carpio Mak |
|                               |                        |                      |                               | Monique Dykstra     |                   |



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# Presentation to the Parents' Committee of the CQSB

On Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, QFHSA Executive Director, Carol Meindl; QFHSA Membership Chair, Rhonda Boucher; and Marlyn Brownrigg, Membership Services Coordinator made a presentation to the Parents' Committee of the Central Québec School Board.

The presentation included a brief history of the QFHSA, the 2015 draft resolutions, local associations' obligations to the QFHSA and the advantages of having a Home and School Association.

The QFHSA would like to thank Ms. Patti Moore, Secretary General and Ms. Shirley Straughton for the invitation and the warm welcome.

# Youth Exploring Science 2014 - 2015

Participating schools: New Carlisle, New Richmond, La Tuque, Laurentian Regional, and Pope Memorial

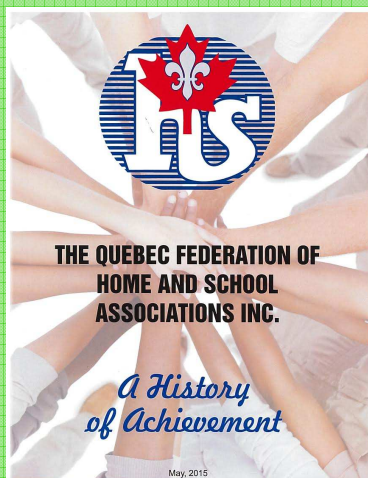
This project seems to continue to evolve, as different schools demonstrate an interest in participating and requiring some format adaptations. Originally, the interactive science program was intended to run on Saturdays as an "outside of school time" activity. Some schools, however, this year requested that the activities be available on a weekday, as many students lived too far from the school to have their parents conveniently drop them off on a Saturday to participate. The option to participate on a Friday afternoon was proposed, but the reality of

late bus runs required the activity to be offered from 1:00pm to 2:30pm to accommodate the kids (otherwise they miss their bus and can't get home!) This further shifted the activity to run during school hours and not as an after-school project. It is exactly in this way that Home and School must be aware of the needs of the community and how it differs from one to another, and how best to accommodate them. One size does not fit all.

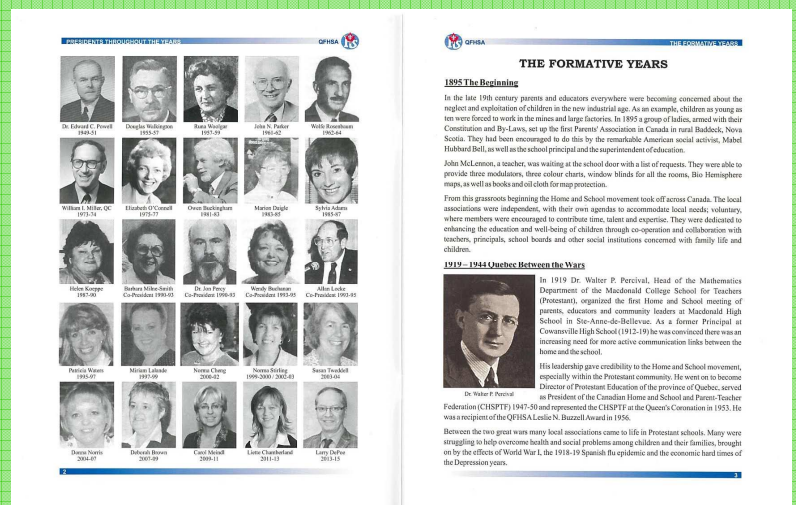
As is, the program ran on Fridays, March 13, 20 and 26 as well as Saturday, March 14, 22 and 28. We also offered an additional session on April 17 for the New Richmond students, so that they too would have an opportunity to participate.

This year, the kids learned basic chemistry by combining Borax with White Glue to create a chemical reaction that produced **Silly Putty**, a curious substance which is both a liquid and a solid at the same time. They also learned how to use chemical reactions to make real **Root beer** and could watch their product slowly continue to "brew" at home. Finally, the kids learned about **Hydroponics**, and were able to start their own garden without the use of soil, only water and fertilizer.

Youth Exploring Science in now in its fifth year and we look forward to continuing to bring this fun activity to English Speaking schools in the regions of Quebec.



The QFHSA History Booklet was launched at the 70th anniversary of the first AGM this year. Please note, each school will be receiving a copy in the mail, if they did not get one at the AGM. So check your mailboxes!



## The Spirit Parapan American Games Challenge Project: April to August 2015

The Toronto 2015 Pan & Parapan American Games - Community Celebration Fund (Department of Canadian Heritage) and QFHSA will be presenting **The Spirit Parapan American Games Challenge Project** to raise awareness of the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games and provide Quebec youth with opportunities to participate in the celebrations running up to the Games in August.

The goal of the **Spirit Parapan American Games Challenge** project is to introduce English-speaking youth to the spirit of the Pan American Games and to sensitize youth in Quebec to the history, challenges and triumphs of the Parapan American Games by giving them an opportunity to experience participating in sports with and without a handicap. It will serve as an introduction to the history of the Pan American and Parapan American Games, in a milieu where traditionally so much focus and attention is on the Olympics or, more recently, the FIFA World Cup.

In partnership with Dynamix, students will experience a fun filled program that offers some background on the Parapan American Games as well as a taste of what “competing with a

handicap” can be like through some rather unique adaptations of traditional sports.

It will be an opportunity to promote inclusion and awareness in a province that has unique challenges at times to expose English-speaking youth to sports and cultural activities outside its provincial borders within the school system.

Home and School Association has a long history of encouraging parental involvement with education. Education is a two way street and what students learn in school they can also bring back to the home and, at times, educate their own parents.

By bringing these Spirit Challenge activities to the schools and day camps, we hope to increase the exposure of the Parapan American Games 2015 with the parents of students/campers as well as the students/campers themselves. The level of competition at these games is just as high as in the world championships, but knowledge of these games could be more accessible. These athletes deserve to be recognized!

The kids will have fun and learn something too!

Catch the Parapan-American Fever!

## Research on Language & Identity in Quebec

Dr. Ruth Kircher, who is the current Eakin Fellow at the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada, is conducting a study that looks at the relationship between language and identity in Quebec.

Firstly, the study aims to find out about the ways in which people in Quebec self-identify – for example, do they self-identify more strongly as inhabitants of their city, or as Quebecers, or as Canadians? And what other kinds of self-identifications are important to them?

Secondly, the study aims to find out what effects such social identities have on people’s attitudes towards English compared to French. The data for this study is collected by means of a questionnaire that is available in both English and French. Participation is completely anonymous and all data will be kept securely, in accordance with the McGill Regulation on the Conduct of Research. The findings from this study will not only be published in journals and books to advance academic knowledge, but they will also be written up in the form of research reports aimed at Quebec language planning agencies.

The aim of these reports is to present the language planning agencies with a contemporary perspective on social identities and language attitudes in Quebec, in the hope that this will serve to inform future language planning measures that lead to a satisfactory solution for all linguistic groups in the province.

Interested in taking part in this study?

Participants should be aged 18 years or older. It does not matter what their mother tongue is or what part of Quebec they live in, and it is not important whether participants were born in Quebec or not, as long as they are currently living in the province. Participation in the study is simple: complete a short online questionnaire, which should not take more than ten minutes. If you are interested, please click on the link for the English (<http://tinyurl.com/Language-Identity-Quebec-E>) or the French (<http://tinyurl.com/Language-Identity-Quebec-F>) version of the questionnaire. More details about the study (as well as the researcher’s contact details to ask her questions) can be found on the front page of the questionnaire. Many thanks for your time!

## How the QFHSA supports various Literacy Initiatives

Over the past year, the QFHSA has supported various literacy programs and initiatives across the province. Whether it was financial support to specialized programs, or boxes of books sent to schools, the results were always positive. The students greatly appreciated receiving or buying books of particular interest to them.

The schools that benefitted from financial assistance were: Beaconsfield High School (Lester B. Pearson School Board), New Carlisle High School (Eastern Shores School Board), La Tuque High School (Central Québec School Board), Entry Island School (ESSB - 2 students!), Lindsay Place High School (LBPSB), Westwood High School (LBPSB) and Gaspé Polyvalent (ESSB).

Other schools and organizations (including new Home and School Associations) received boxes of books that were generously donated by the NOVA bookstore in Ste. Anne de Bellevue, received books from Mount Pleasant Elementary's gigantic book drive or purchased at church and garage sales. Boxes of books were sent to: Flemming Elementary (ESSB), Greater Gatineau Elementary (Western Québec School Board), New Richmond High School (ESSB), New Carlisle High School (ESSB), Gaspé Polyvalent

(ESSB), Entry Island School (ESSB) and La Tuque High School (CQSB).

*Dans la Rue* (community organization), the Place Cartier Adult Education Centre (LBPSB) and the *Connections for Caregivers* program in Kahnawake also received books collected by the QFHSA volunteers.

Roslyn Elementary School (English Montreal School Board) and Edgewater Elementary (LBPSB) Home and School Associations have been supporting *Born to Read* programs for 9 and 10 years respectively. The QFHSA urges your local association to adopt this program that encourages a love of books and is geared to the newborn-toddler age group.

Many Home and School Associations provide funds for their respective school libraries. How about including literature for Aboriginal/First Nations peoples? If this interests your members, take a look at the spring 2015 edition of the *booknews* published by the *Canadian Children's Book Centre* - [www.bookcentre.ca](http://www.bookcentre.ca) where you will find books that will provide good resource material for your school library.

## CHSF's year in review

By: Cynthia Richards

It is amazing that the 2015-2016 school year is now on the last quarter and summer holidays are just around the corner. Canadian Home and School Federation will be meeting as a Board of Directors during the week of May 28-31, 2015 and we look forward to seeing all our directors. The Director from Quebec, Rickhey Margolese, is will be presenting.

At this meeting we will have an opportunity to look towards the future and prepare for our AGM which will be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, this November. At this meeting several Executive positions will be up for election.

During the past year CHSF has been working diligently with the new CNCA (Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act) regulations that require many changes to the constitution which moving forward will be referred to as Articles. We were very pleased to receive our Certificate of Continuance on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015.

A couple of highlights from this past year:

The Speaker of the House Reception—In November, CHSF had a reception that was

hosted by the Speaker of the House, Andrew Scheer, where we had an opportunity to meet with MPs from across Canada. Our President, Cynthia Richards delivered a short speech introducing Canadian Home and School Federation to those that attended. The Speaker of the House also brought well wishes to CHSF and those that attended this special event.

Senator Greene Raine requested a meeting with CHSF to discuss her Bill 21 declaring a National Health and Fitness Day. We met with the Senator and were pleased to offer our support for her Bill. Since that meeting we received an invitation to participate at a round table forum in Ottawa. Regrettably, we were unable to attend but we did receive an update from Senator Raine's office on the forum discussions and decisions. We look forward to future conversations about her initiative and how we can work together in the future.

In February, we followed up communication with the MPs from across Canada along with our Education Partners informing and inviting them to celebrate a



Susan Wilson BC, Deb Giesbrecht Vice President, Sandra Binns ON, Cynthia Richards President, Diane Power NS  
Front row: Rickhey Margolese, QC, Michelle Ercolini Secretary/Treasurer, Janet Walsh Past President

national event – Teacher Staff Appreciation Week.

Please keep your eyes open for a new Teacher Appreciation Store that will be coming to the global web for you and your members with easy shopping for such a special event during February and throughout the year. Even though the week of Valentine's Day is acclaimed as National Teacher Staff Appreciation Week, it is always fun and appreciative to show your THANKS throughout the year.

We understand your AGM went well, and we wish the new Board and Executive all the best in their future planning.





## DM FAMILY & SCHOOL SERVICES

### DEAR DM,

My son Evan is considered a "strong willed child". He's energetic, fun, and has lots of friends. The only problem is that he often has a hard time doing what he's asked, and then gets upset... and trouble starts there. I often find myself walking on eggshells, afraid to "set him off". I love my son very much, I just want to help him listen.

### DEAR "PARENTING WITH LOVE & LIMITS"

When a child is born, s/he cries... and everyone else in the room smiles. Thus begins a journey which is filled with pleasurable moments, as well as times when we are at a loss for words. When asked what they want to see more of in their children, parents often tell us they would like to see more respect, cooperation, and compliance. Often we hear about the strain that whining, temper tantrums and reluctance to follow rules has - on both home and school.

Some of you may remember "Magic 1-2-3", describing different types of behaviors. Some children badger (going on and on). Others intimidate ("this is so stupid" / "I'm not going to do any of my homework"). The common underlying dynamic is that the child is saying consciously or unconsciously to the adult: "you're making me uncomfortable by not giving me what I want, so now I'm making you uncomfortable... If you give me what I want I will stop". What's the problem with this? That by letting the youth decide when to start or stop the interaction, children are running our homes, not us. None of us would ever consider letting our children make financial decisions for the family as they are not up to the task developmentally. Similarly, despite their assurances, young people are not ready to make decisions that will have long lasting emotional consequences.

It's not unusual for young people to resist our rules — all children are noncompliant at times. In fact, children without a specific

behaviour problem do not comply with parental requests at least one third of the time. If our children are to stand up for what is right, or say no to their peers when they do not agree with what is happening, they need to learn how to use their power effectively. Power is a natural part of the developmental process. Depending on age, children can decide if they wear red or blue pajamas, and, later on, if their CEGEP choice is the one best for their future ambitions or the one their friends are going to. For the most part, the guidelines have suggested that the person responsible for the outcome (ie adults) gets to decide where the family lives, which school is attended, and even whether bad tasting medicine should be taken.

It's not all one sided though. Youth still have the power to irritate, irk us, and to make us adults crazy. We can always debate their intentions, but one thing we do not debate is that getting into a power struggle with a young person rarely leads to a positive outcome. As the leaders in the home it is important for us to understand the currency of power and to help our children learn to use their power appropriately.

At moments like this, we need to remember that arguments are not won based upon who is bigger or stronger. Rather, arguments are won based upon whoever is better at the game of controlling the mood of the other person and the direction of the argument. As parents we need to recognize that it's ok for the young person to test our boundaries while exploring their world. They are counting on us to keep the boundaries clear and the limits in place. They also need us to show them, by our own behaviour, how to behave when they are frustrated. After all, we're the first and most important role models they will ever have. Dealing with power struggles is the hard side of parenting, and it turns out that a good balance of both sides is optimal for success : The hard side, ie making the rules, telling them what they can or cannot do and enforcing it, as well as the soft side of parenting, ie listening

when you are tired and had a hard day, and soothing them even when they did not take your advice.

Enjoy your children and cherish every smile, and every moment of closeness. At the end of each day, gather up the memories, the frowns turned to smiles, and the life lessons we have passed on. But most of all, cherish the opportunities to share our values and beliefs with those we love the most. Together we can make a difference !

Best wishes for a wonderful summer !

Sincerely,

DM FAMILY SERVICES



CONTACT :

DM FAMILY SERVICES

514.483.9339 / [www.dmfamilyschool.com](http://www.dmfamilyschool.com)

# Digital Literacy for Preschoolers

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents read to their children daily from birth.

At the same time, the AAP suggests that parents avoid screen time for children under age 2.

Given these recommendations, how do we as parents, educators, clinicians, and developmental scientists deal with the case of electronic books? Should e-books be considered shared reading, or are they more accurately categorized as screen time?

Between June 26 & 27, 2015, McGill University will be hosting a conference entitled "Digital Literacy for Preschoolers: Maximizing the Benefits of eBooks for Emergent Literacy. On Day 1 of this conference, these questions will be explored.

Julia Parish-Morris, Post-Doctoral Fellow, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia-Center for Autism Research, United States, will review a recent study "Parent-Preschooler Interaction During Electronic and Traditional Book Reading: Similarities, Differences, Challenges, Future Directions", a study of dyadic reading between 3- and 5-year-olds and their parents in the context of electronic books and traditional paper books. She will talk about how parent language, child language, child story comprehension, and parent enjoyment of the shared reading interaction changes when parents and children read electronic books together. A new study using iPad apps will be described, and language implications of screen time for our youngest children will be outlined. Finally, she will present some new ideas for electronic applications that may be beneficial in certain early childhood contexts (but not all).

Gabrielle Strouse, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Language and Learning Lab at the University of Toronto, Ontario, will present a study: "With Infants, E-Books and Traditional Books May Not Be So Different". There is reason to believe that important differences exist in the way parents and children treat new technologies and traditional formats. In this presentation, she will describe the results of a study in which parents of 102 infants aged 17 to 26 months were randomly assigned to read electronic or traditional format books with identical content with their infant.

Kathleen Paciga, Assistant Professor, Education, Columbia College, Chicago, will present a study "Adult Supports for Children's Understanding of Interactive eBooks: A Cross-sectional Case Study" This study was utilized to examine an adult's use of supports for two siblings' (male, 54 months old; female, 30 months old) experiences with the same interactive e-book.

Finally, Kathrin Rees, Doctoral Candidate, School of Communication Sciences and Disorders, McGill University, Montréal, Québec, will

## Digital Literacy for Preschoolers



Maximizing the Benefits of eBooks for Emergent Literacy

June 26 - 27, 2015

McGill University  
Montreal, Canada



present "Story-related discourse by parent-child dyads: A comparison of typically developing children and children with language impairments reading print books and eBooks", which will address the linguistic engagement apparent in the extra-textual talk of two groups of parents and preschoolers reading a paper book and an interactive eBook (children with typical language development and children with impaired language).

With more and more children being introduced to eBooks and iPad technology at an earlier age, this area of research is both timely and important.

On Day 2, QFHSA will participate in the Round Table Discussions, which will involve 36 participants representing a range of constituencies including researchers, students, parents, educators, community groups and the digital media industry. The discussions will cover three themes broadly addressing the challenge of communicating science based information to the public about the use of digital media by children when the scientific evidence is still emerging. The outcome of this conference will be a better understanding of the state of the evidence and a new section of the Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development that will be useful for families, professionals and policy makers. These discussions will be of interest to anyone who uses digital media with young children or who communicates to lay or professional audiences about the use of digital media with children.

*Roslyn Elementary School (English Montreal School Board) and Edgewater Elementary (LBPSB) Home and School Associations have been supporting Born to Read programs for 9 and 10 years respectively. The QFHSA urges your local association to adopt this program that encourages a love of books and is geared to the newborn-toddler age group. The url to the born to read page is: <http://www.qfhsa.org/borntoread.htm>*

*The url to the PowerPoint document is: <http://www.qfhsa.org/Site/borntoread/Program.pdf>*

# Focus on the Locals

## Gardenview staff makes us POP with appreciation!

Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week at Gardenview was once again a spectacular success thanks to all of those who took part.

This year, the committee incorporated a back-to-basics theme and simply showered staff with tokens of appreciation. While the deserving staff was being spoiled indoors, a number of parent volunteers supervised during recess outdoors.

Here are some highlights of the week:

- Tuesday morning the teams prepared four breakfast trolleys and served teachers in their classroom and every staff member along the way.
- Wednesday morning a breakfast brunch buffet was awaiting them in the staff room, with a tapestry of mug shots of every Gardenview staff member super imposed on super hero bodies.
- Thursday, breakfast was served and an oversized blank canvas with paintbrushes and paint was set up at recess for teachers. This original and beautiful piece of art is now hanging in the teacher's room.
- On the last day of the event, while staff feasted on a luncheon buffet, they were surprised with a visit from

Claudia Marques of The Beat Q92 who came in with giveaway bags filled with goodies!

We would like to thank everyone who volunteered and contributed to making this year's event truly amazing. Thank you to all the parents who sent in donations, who volunteered for recess duty, as well those who prepared, baked and shopped for goodies.

The Home & School would also like to thank all the local businesses who donated many gifts for our deserving teachers and staff.



## How to survive your kid's homework

By Elena Giatras, Gardenv Views Editor

We all know the joys of struggling with our kids during dreaded homework time. Whether it is math, French, English or science, doing homework every night is not always fun, but must be done! How is a parent to cope? Most of us have figured out our own tactics to help get us through the crunch, but here are some tips collected from different experts that might give you some new ideas!

1. **Know the teachers — and what they're looking for.** Attend school events, such as curriculum night and parent-teacher conferences to meet your child's teachers. Ask about their homework policies and how you should be involved.
2. **Set up a homework-friendly area at home.** Make sure kids have a well-lit area to complete homework. Keep supplies — paper, pencils, glue, scissors — within reach.
3. **Keep distractions to a minimum.** This means no TV, music, or phone calls during homework time.
4. **Schedule a regular study time.** Some kids work best in the afternoon, following a snack and play time while others may prefer to wait until after dinner. Either way being consistent in your schedule will help.
5. **Help your child make a plan.** On heavy homework nights or when there's an extra special project to do, encourage your child to break up the work into manageable chunks throughout the timeline he or she has been given.
6. **Make sure kids do their own work.** You can be available but **without** taking over. They won't learn if they don't think for themselves and make their own mistakes. Parents can make suggestions and help with directions, but it's a kid's job to do the learning, and sometimes mistakes are required!
7. **Be a motivator and monitor.** Ask about assignments, quizzes, and tests. Give encouragement, check completed homework, and make yourself available for questions and concerns.
8. **Chart your child's learning.** Sometimes it's hard for the child (as well as the parent) to grasp progress being made. You can help by making a progress chart and plan an incentive at the end for completing a task.
9. **If homework problems persist, get help!** Talk about it with your child's teacher. Some kids have trouble seeing the board and may need glasses; others might need tutor.

# Beacon Hill

In February, Beacon Hill celebrated **Carnival Week!** The week began with the "coronation" of the king and queen, and a great winter triathlon for our grade 5 students who skated, snow shoed, and cross-country skied their way to the finish line. Tuesday, each student brought in a colourful ice block and 12 parent volunteers braved the cold weather to help build a beautiful ice wall in the school courtyard. Wednesday, all the students enjoyed a super bingo day with the chance to win fun prizes. Thursday, our teachers brought the students out on different outdoor adventure activities (base de plein aire, tubing, or skiing). And on Friday, the kids were treated to a big screen movie in the gym with snacks! Who said winter can't be fun?!

In March, H & S organized our annual **Foster Child Campaign.** Students "bought" school supplies which helped us "Build a School" to support our 6 year old foster child in Bolivia.

Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, Beacon Hill Elementary opened its doors to a great numbers of guests for our 7th **Annual Art Gala.** The school was literally transformed, with the art of each student being displayed. The primary goal of this, one of our H & S's primary fundraisers, is to let every child know that their individual creativity is valuable and that together they can bring about a positive change in their own school. Thanks to a large amount of volunteers, parents and students could stroll through sculptures and paintings in our transformed gymnasium, or in the library through an exhibit "From Van Gogh to Kandinsky", where the Kindergarteners, Grade 3's and Grade 4's got inspired by last fall's exhibit at the Montreal Fine Art Museum. A string quartet from Lindsay Place High School added a great ambiance to the entire evening. Raising just over \$6,000 for our technology program, the evening was a great success for the community.



## Light it up Blue at Flemming Elementary



Autism speaks..... Light it up Blue, is a very important day in our school as we are touched by several families with children on the spectrum. On April 2nd, all our friends at Flemming Elementary made a special effort to be wearing blue. We had one special parent in our Home & School and staff member who made sure all our kids were aware of what Autism really is. She took the time to answer all the students' questions, big or small. She found the students asked really good questions.

On this important day our Home & School made a special pizza lunch with blue cupcakes. All the profits raised from this lunch went back to our special needs children. We felt that the students could benefit from this funding to receive extra educational tools to help make their days at school more successful.

Once again we are very proud at Flemming Elementary to have helped raise Autism Awareness.

# Edgewater Elementary

The Edgewater community cheerfully welcomed spring with an inspirational music concert on March 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> and a gallant art show on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, bringing together marvelously our school's theme for this year "Hero's". Our spring concert was held over two nights with all classes participating. Our school gym was bursting with song under the direction of the remarkable *Mr. Howden!* Once more, the art vernissage was an astounding realization thanks to *Mrs. Antonopoulos & Mr. Friedman.* As always, much appreciation is presented to all our school's teachers and staff for their dedication & support in these significant school wide events.

Since the end of February, our Home & School's fundraising committee has been working determinedly on our spring fundraiser campaign. This year with the guidance from *La Montagne* fundraisers, we decided to approach this campaign contrarily to years before. We had popcorn, Belgian chocolates with & without nuts, tea and a variety of products from a catalogue of gifts & gadgets.

On the evening of Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, we held our Annual Family Movie Night. This year we showed "*Paddington*" and urged all attendees to come wearing their comfiest pajamas. We presented the movie on a large screen and transformed our gymnasium into what appeared to be a sizeable slumber party!

Next up, we will be hosting a pizza party during the evening of our school's open house on Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>.

On June 5<sup>th</sup> from 7:00pm until 11:00pm we will be hosting at the school a celebration in honour of our school's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the school. This adult-only event will be geared towards alumni staff & students of *Edgewater* to revisit the school & reconnect with old friends & teachers. Please see our school's website for a registration form for this event or for more information <http://edgewater.lbpsb.qc.ca/hsforms.htm>



Picture of Aidan Parker –Rumbolt with his art work during Edgewater Elementary School's 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Art Vernissage

# Mount Pleasant

Mount Pleasant Home and School is pleased to announce the arrival of iPads for teachers. Thanks to our wonderful community's generosity and with past fundraisers, we have purchased iPads for the teachers to be used in conjunction with the class set of mini iPads we purchased last year for our children. Everyone is very excited!



# Honoré Mercier

## Honoré Mercier Annual Family Dinner

The Honoré Mercier Home & School Association was pleased to have a successful Annual Family Dinner. This event took place Friday, April 17, 2015 at Le Carlton. Families and staff had a fun-filled evening with great food, musical entertainment by Ti Amo Productions, and at the end, fabulous gifts and prizes were distributed to the many guests. Thanks to our committee Adrianna Di Pardo, Antonella Costa and Lina Caci for their wonderful job! Teacher Appreciation

Week on February 9 - 13th, we at Honoré Mercier Home & School had a wonderful week of treats for our teachers and staff. We started the week with a breakfast, had a soup day and ended the week with a wonderful lunch. We asked the students to write thank you notes to their teachers and had them wrapped in jars. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors we were able to get a gift for all our teachers and staff. We couldn't have done it without our wonderful volunteers.



# Poltimore Elementary



Poltimore Elementary Home and School Association in the Western Québec School Board, began its campaign to raise money for a new sporting shed and a central air conditioning system for the school. The first of a series of fundraisers was a bottle/can drive that raised close to \$900.00! Being a rural school, we can always count on everyone pitching in. Thank you to all the organizers and participants!

# Lindsay Place

## At Lindsay Place we don't forget our CareTakers

LPHS's Home and School celebrated its first Annual Caretakers Appreciation Day on April 30th with a *Habs*-themed lunch complete with chicken wings, potato skins, pizza, dips and desserts. Pictured at the right are the day crew getting ready to dig in.

Some sage advice to H&S members: treat your Caretakers well. You never know when you will need a ladder, half a dozen garbage bags, duct tape or...



# Genesis Elementary

## Comedy Night

Over \$15,000 was raised at our immensely popular Comedy Night, held last March 27. Over 260 people were in attendance and shared an unforgettable night of laughter, good food and community spirit. Many thanks to our vast list of sponsors and especially to every Genesis parent who came out to support our fundraiser! The installation of the artificial turf will begin early in the next school year.

## Earth Day Movie Night

For Earth Day, Home and School was pleased to offer to all students, a night out to Colossus theatre to see the movie "Monkey Kingdom".

## I Love to Read Week

The last week of March marked I Love to Read Week, and the activities held at Genesis were a great success! H&S is very proud to have provided funds to cover the costs of some of the activities that were organized. A very special thank you to the dedicated team of teachers that made this week possible!

## A special thank you

Every year, outstanding parent volunteers are honored by QFHSA. This year's award recipients from Genesis are Lucia Alicandro, Anita Catalani, Pina Di Luca, Patty Marinelli, Tina Rosato, and Philip Santos. Each of these volunteers have demonstrated such passion and commitment to our school. We would like to thank all the members of Genesis Home and School for their dedication!



**“WHERE’S *MY* SCHOOL?”**

Disappointed that your school is not in the Focus on the Locals section? Please talk to your Home and School members to submit the wonderful things your association is doing for our next issue in August 2015 to [news@qfhsa.org](mailto:news@qfhsa.org)

 <https://www.facebook.com/QFHSA>

 <http://www.twitter.com/QFHSA>

**Dates to Remember**

**Next QFHSA News Deadline**

August 14, 2015

**Executive Workshops**

September 24, 2015

**QFHSA Fall Conference**

November 7, 2015

Roslyn Elementary



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