



QUEBEC HOME & SCHOOL  
**NEWS**  
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**BUILDING OUR FUTURE - TOGETHER!**

The 66<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting is fast approaching and the Board of Directors and staff have been busy getting ready. Reports from the various committees highlighting their accomplishments of the past year have been prepared and the designated auditor is completing the examination of the financial records, budget vs actual revenue and expenses. The fiscal year has come to a close.

The theme this year is 'Building a Future-together' and the logo chosen is one of an image of puzzle pieces, with the last piece being applied to complete the whole picture. As the April 24<sup>th</sup> AGM approaches, it becomes clear how much of our success in life depends on team efforts. The more hands involved in a project, the more likely it is to succeed. When only a small handful of people are responsible for a great

majority of the work, burnout is inevitable and the enthusiasm to do it all over again next year can be low. Volunteers start to drop off and the empty chairs become noticeable, thus the missing puzzle pieces.

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations experiences the same situation. Due to Board members completing their term of office and moving on to other challenges or concentrating more time at home, we now have a Board of 9 instead of a Board of 14 as in the past. That leaves more empty chairs around the Board table and yet, the same tasks still need to be done. Fortunately there are two new nominations for the Board and there is hope for a few more before the AGM is over.

2010 is the beginning of a new decade, and the QFHSA wishes to reflect that bright new future

with new projects and initiatives. The Olympic Torch Relay/REACH for the TORCH event was just such an initiative and, as a pilot project, was very much a success. The QFHSA hopes to hold a similar event again this year. It will depend on volunteers from our locals coming forward as well as financial support from the Government and Community.

Resolutions are a big part of our AGM agenda and this year's caucus sessions will discuss and possibly modify six resolutions. Four resolutions have been submitted by our Education, Rights and Public Affairs Committee, one on Wider Access to English Education: re Bill 104 and three resolutions regarding students with special needs which were originally submitted by the Education Committee in 1999 and then again in 2005. They will be considered for reaffirmation in light of the current teacher/government negotiations. The final two resolutions were submitted from local associations: one on a request to ban the sale of high caffeine energy drinks to minors and the other one on the need to have a budget to improve the indoor air quality in schools. It is a pleasure to see the local associations getting involved at this level and make an effort to change policies in schools and communities that affect their youth. We hope many more will follow their lead.

The QFHSA Annual General Meeting is a wonderful opportunity to network, discuss relevant issues and ideas and get a sense of what can be accomplished if enough motivated individuals come together. As will be mentioned in the President's message later in this edition of the NEWS, it is the obligation of the QFHSA to hold an Annual General Meeting for its membership, and, in turn, it is the responsibility of the local associations to send delegates to represent them. Together we will be the pieces of the puzzle that come together to complete the picture.

~ Carol Meindl

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 (78)

**HIGHLIGHTS**

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**QFHSA's 66th Annual General Meeting  
 Keynote Speaker**

**Serge Laurendeau**

President, Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers



The date for the current collective agreement has passed and the teachers of Quebec are looking for a new agreement that makes sense. "Our members are clearly telling us that students with special needs are not receiving the services they need to succeed. They are also clearly telling us that lack of job security has a negative effect on the quality of educational services. It is time for the Government to improve the situation, not to claw back resources," said Serge Laurendeau in February at a demonstration held outside the Ministry of Education building.

Serge Laurendeau, a native of Verdun, left his responsibility as President of the Pearson Teachers Union and became President of QPAT in July of 2008. Since then, he has recommended an action plan and publicity campaign, including delegates' meetings and general assemblies to give all members the opportunity to discuss the issues at stake. As far back as 1999, QFHSA has supported the teachers in the form of passing resolutions concerning students with special needs at various past annual general meetings.

We welcome the opportunity to have Serge Laurendeau as our guest speaker and also to have another member of QPAT participate in our Annual General Meeting on April 24th, and contribute to the discussion of the three QFHSA resolutions on students with special needs that we hope to have ratified. QPAT is looking for 'solidarity' in this round of negotiations. As always we welcome the opportunity to have Serge Laurendeau represent his membership and educate ours on the issues at hand.

**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.*



**AGM 2010**  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 24TH**  
**WYNDHAM HOTEL - DORVAL, QC**  
**11 am - 5 pm**  
**Awards Dinner to Follow.**

All registration info is available on our website  
[www.qfhsa.org](http://www.qfhsa.org)  
 or by calling 514-481-5619



## A Note from the PRESIDENT.....



An Annual General Meeting (commonly abbreviated as AGM) is a meeting that official bodies and associations involving the public are required by law, or by the constitution, to hold. An AGM is held every year to elect the Board of Directors and inform the members of previous and future activities. It is an opportunity for shareholders and partners to receive copies of the organization's accounts as well as reviewing fiscal information for the past year and asking any questions regarding the direction the organization will take in the future.

For the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations Inc., it is the biggest event of the year. We gather as many representatives from our local associations, together, in one place, as we can, and discuss the business of the QFHSA; what we have done, where we have been and where you, our members, would like us to go.

The QFHSA collects a membership fee from every local association family. That money is invested many ways, in terms of administration, insurance, communications and on going projects.

We strive to be good stewards of that trust and we must involve as many in the decision making process as we can. The QFHSA has room for 20 Directors on its Board, according to its By Laws, and it is ever searching for new people with new ideas to join us and move the organization into the future.

But in the short term, it is the obligation and the responsibility of each Local Association to send at least one delegate to represent the interests of their school at the AGM. It is the responsibility of the local association to find one person who will be the voice of their Home and School and vote according to the instructions they have received. The QFHSA does its part in encouraging participation by subsidizing the travel and hotel accommodation of the delegates who live far away. We cannot allow a situation to prevail where a Home and School could not participate on the grounds it could not afford it.

This year we will have 6 resolutions to consider, discuss, amend if necessary and pass. The participation of the membership is crucial. The Statement of Policy is a compilation of statements

based on resolutions passed over the years by the delegates at the AGM. It complements the purposes and objectives of our Federation. Following the AGM, it is updated each year and copies distributed to the local associations.

Apart from the business aspect of an AGM there is the social aspect to consider, a chance to network, share ideas, meet new people and honour the achievements and contributions of local associations through the Awards Ceremony in the evening. It is a time for the delegates to relax and enjoy themselves after the rigors of the business sessions.

We hope to see as many schools participate in the 2010 AGM as may be possible.

See you there!

*Carol Meindl*

*Wisdom is to the mind what health is to the body.*

~ Francois De La Rochefoucauld

Congratulations to:

C. Lefebvre - Jubilee Elementary School  
&  
E. Bourjeili - Gardenvue Elementary School  
for winning new books for their class libraries!

Send in your submissions of the back page for your  
chance to win!

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**Comments? Questions? Concerns?**  
**Send your letters to our editor....**  
**news@qfhsa.org**



# Letters to the Editor.....

\*\* The opinions expressed in these letters are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions and ideals of QFHSA \*\*

## Thanks from our photo contest winner

The student "cutest jailbird", sat at my computer and placed his order for our school library with the \$100 gift card. He was thrilled to order more books on horses and tractors and especially to see the online ordering process.

Thanks again!

Sandy Belanger  
Principal, Shigawake School

## **Kudoos to you**

I just read Carol Meindl's article on her experience of the Alfie Kohn's conference she attended. I feel there is a slow but positive movement towards less homework, especially for the elementary level students. I could not be more elated, not just for myself and my boys but the countless parents struggling at home at the end of the day with their own young ones. So much of what was alive and well in the past, like a hug, a snack and clamoring to get outside and play after school is becoming archaic. It really shouldn't. As much as we should have the opportunity to sit at dinner time all together and listen to our children's stories about school, so should

we be hearing about their creative & emergent play in the big outdoors with neighborhood friends in post-school time. I don't even want to begin with the strains homework imposes on parent-child relations which has a ripple effect on the teacher-child relations. I could go on...

Thank you so much for highlighting this important dynamic now being scrutinized more closely by both the schools and the parents. Thank-you not only for me personally but even more so for my clients who also sit on the same side of the fence as us !!!!

Debbie Oestreich  
LINC

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## **Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures exhibition extended by an extra month**

**Gatineau, Quebec, March 15, 2010** — Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures, described by visitors as 'amazing', 'magnificent' and 'exceptional', is being held over due to popular demand. The public now have until April 25 to enjoy the acclaimed international exhibition originally slated to close on March 28 at the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

The Museum of Civilization is the exclusive Canadian venue for this exhibition organized in collaboration with the National Geographic Society. It is the last chance for most Canadians to see the exquisite collection of gold and other precious antiquities from Central Asia.

"Nearly 60,000 visitors have seen Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures since it arrived in the National Capital, and interest is actually growing," said Victor Rabinovitch, President and CEO of the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation. "Thanks to the government of Afghanistan, we were able to make arrangements to extend the exhibition by four weeks. Now, even more Canadians will benefit from this unique opportunity to

explore the marvels and mysteries of Afghanistan's ancient past."

"Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures is much more than an exhibition of beautiful artifacts," said His Excellency Jawed Ludin, Afghanistan's Ambassador to Canada. "It is a window into the culture and history of Afghanistan, and a way to build bridges between our country and the rest of the world. The people of Canada have shown tremendous concern and support towards Afghanistan over the past years and I am pleased that, through the exhibition at the Museum of Civilization, they are able to see a truer, deeper image of a country they have supported."

Before coming to Gatineau-Ottawa, Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures captivated audiences in Paris, Turin, Amsterdam, Washington, Houston, San Francisco and New York. Next, it will continue its successful world tour in Germany and Britain. The exhibition will be on display at the Canadian Museum of Civilization until April 25, 2010.

Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures tells a tale of ancient commerce and conflict along the legendary Silk

Road, with a spellbinding sequel. The more than 200 objects on display are among thousands that were feared looted or destroyed during a recent period of violent conflict. Museum visitors will learn how, in 1978, as war and chaos threatened Kabul, a group of Afghans risked their lives to protect the precious contents of the National Museum. They transferred thousands of artifacts to secure hiding places, and kept their secret until the treasure trove could be safely revealed in 2003.

*The Canadian Museum of Civilization is the centre for research and public information on the social and human history of the country. Located on the shores of the Ottawa River in Gatineau, Quebec, the Museum is Canada's largest and most popular cultural institution, attracting more than 1.3 million visitors each year. The Museum of Civilization's principal role is to preserve and promote the heritage of Canada for present and future generations, thereby contributing to the promotion and enhancement of Canadian identity.*



## UNE ÉLÈVE DE L'ÉCOLE PIERRE-LAPORTE RÉUSSIT AVEC MAESTRIA LA DICTÉE HEC

(Montréal, le 5 janvier 2010) – Nadia Saritsky Ramirez, élève de 3<sup>e</sup> secondaire à l'école secondaire Pierre-Laporte (Mont-Royal) de la Commission scolaire Marguerite-Bourgeoys (CSMB), s'est illustrée lors de la première dictée trilingue organisée par HEC Montréal. Réunissant plus de 250 étudiants des niveaux secondaire, collégial et universitaire et des gens du grand public, le concours aura permis à Nadia de décrocher la deuxième place dans la catégorie Secondaire.

Surprise de ses résultats, Nadia n'imaginait pas que d'être multilingue lui mériterait honneurs et bourse. S'étant tout de même adonnée à quelques exercices préparatoires pour la dictée, il va sans dire que Nadia possède une aptitude marquée pour l'apprentissage des langues. D'origine uruguayenne, elle parle couramment l'espagnol et elle a également appris l'allemand dès le préscolaire. Arrivée au Canada il y a trois ans, elle s'est rapidement intégrée au chapitre linguistique : « Le français ressemble à l'espagnol et l'anglais à l'allemand, j'ai donc vite appris les deux langues officielles en arrivant au pays puisque je comprends logiquement comment elles fonctionnent. »

Quadrilingue et citoyenne du monde, maîtriser plus d'une langue est désormais presque indispensable et figure au cœur des préoccupations des élèves. Nadia n'est pas en reste, elle souhaite parfaire son allemand en additionnant cours et échanges interculturels. Voilà un exercice qui demande une volonté à toute épreuve, du courage et de la détermination pour entretenir autant de langues. Mais cette polyglotte n'en retire que du positif : « Parler le français, l'anglais et l'espagnol et connaître l'allemand est un passeport pour le voyage. Ces atouts enrichissent ma culture et m'ouvrent des portes sur le plan professionnel ». Cette volonté de s'exprimer en plusieurs langues est par ailleurs à l'image de bien des élèves de la CSMB, dont 53,5 % ont une langue maternelle autre que le français.

La première édition de la dictée trilingue de l'école des Hautes études commerciales (HEC) de Montréal comportait des textes en français, en anglais et en espagnol. Dans chacune des langues, la dictée a été séparée en deux niveaux, soit 50 mots pour les élèves du secondaire et 150 mots pour les autres participants. Trois prix ont été remis dans chacun des niveaux.

Accueillant près de 950 élèves de la 1<sup>re</sup> à la 5<sup>e</sup> secondaire, l'école secondaire Pierre-Laporte de la CSMB propose un cheminement régulier et des programmes diversifiés. On y offre une solide formation scolaire et la possibilité d'acquérir un enrichissement dans un domaine spécifique de son choix. Le programme Langues, littérature et sciences, incluant des cours d'espagnol y est offert en 1<sup>re</sup>, 2<sup>e</sup> et 3<sup>e</sup> secondaires.

## ST. CHARLES HOME & SCHOOL THANKS ALL ITS VOLUNTEERS

Thank you just isn't enough to express the gratitude to all the volunteers that make things happen at St. Charles. It is because of the generous donation of your time and energy that helps to make our school a better place for all students.

The month of December was a very busy month for our Home & School and included:

- **Holiday Shop** – The Holiday Shop is an opportunity for all students to purchase items for family, friends, and even pets. The students were delighted to have the opportunity to be "grown up" and participate in giving something back to their loved ones. The objective of this "fun" event is to allow all students the possibility to participate and because of this prices are kept at a minimum. We hope everyone enjoyed the purchases their children made as great attention was placed on all items purchased.
- **Breakfast with Santa** - What started as a novel idea has grown to be a long time favourite tradition. Santa, Mrs Claus and all eight reindeers landed on St. Charles roof and rushed down to hear what all the laughter was about. While the reindeers waited on the roof, Santa and Mrs Claus followed the chatter and to their wondering surprise found a gym filled with children just waiting for Old Saint Nick. After filling their tummies with breakfast goodies the children entertained Santa and Mrs Claus with their wonderful voices and filled the place with happiness.



A huge thanks to all the volunteers for everything...it was amazing to see everyone work so hard so that the students can enjoy a little "magic" before their Holiday break. Also thank you to Laura and all the daycare staff for putting together the most beautiful decorations and making sure the place was magical.

St. Charles is very fortunate to have many parent volunteers who help to enrich the children's elementary school years.

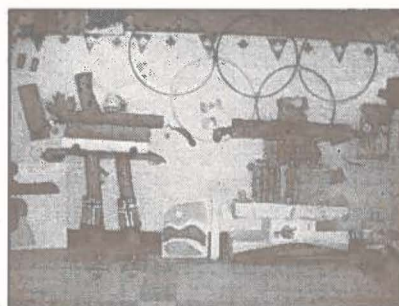
Colomba Monteleone  
President, St. Charles Home & School

### Olympic Fever Comes to Evergreen Elementary

February was a busy month for Evergreen! Staff Appreciation was celebrated during the week of February 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>. Home and School had lots of treats and surprises for the wonderful and dedicated Staff, including zipped hoodies with the Evergreen logo for all staff, administration, and support staff! The 2010 Olympics officially arrived at Evergreen on Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup> with an official opening ceremonies assembly. Each class represented a different participating country, complete with flags and country colours. An Inukshuk contest was held and students had to create an Inukshuk using only recycled materials. They were all amazing and Home and School had the hardest time judging the winner and two runner ups. Our two Grade 1 classes were the first prize winners of a pizza party lunch, second place went to Grade 3, and third place went to Kindergarten who won a 40 \$ gift certificate from Scholastic to purchase something for their classrooms. Congratulations to all, great job! During the assembly we had a very special guest speaker. Sue McLennan, an official torchbearer came to speak to the students about her amazing experience carrying the 2010 Olympic torch through Grenville, Ontario. The students also had the opportunity to have their picture taken with the torch!

The assembly ended with a beautiful rendition of the song "I believe" by our grade four choir. The next few weeks of February will be filled with Olympic fever as Evergreen celebrates this wonderful event with outdoor activities such as skiing, skating, and sliding, bingo, staff Olympics, and a raffle for Olympic mittens and plush mascots. A great way to end February and begin March break!

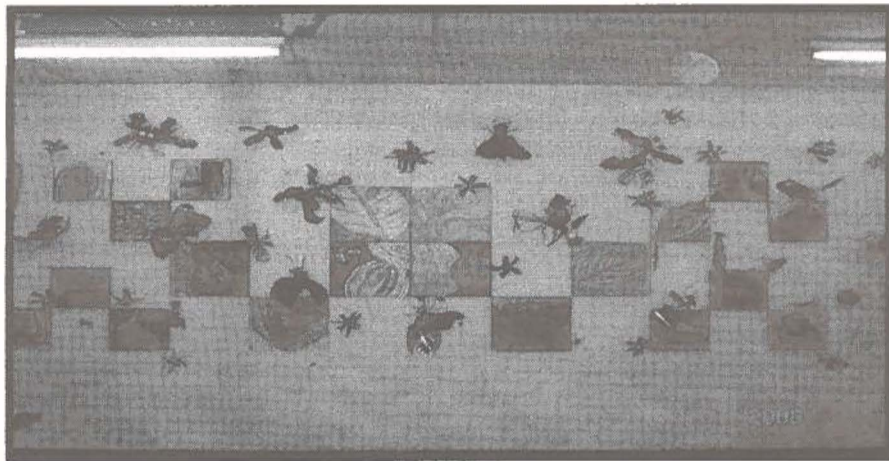
Karen Rassi  
Home and School Chair





## QFHSA Visits St.Gabriel's

In January, we were invited to visit St. Gabriel's Home and School in Pointe St. Charles. We were immediately given a warm welcome from the principal Ms. Tina Ottoni. St. Gabriel's struck us as being a very cheery and inviting school that receives lots of support from an extremely dedicated group of parents, staff and principal. It is a small school, with a population of approximately 100 students. We had a chance to meet with some of the H&S executives and share ideas and answer their questions. As we toured the school, what stood out was the beautiful artwork that adorned the walls, all created by students, staff and parents (many of whom have been volunteering for years, long after their children have graduated). Thank you to all at St. Gabriel's for a great visit and for showing us your small school with such a big heart!



~ Barbara Schnider and Marlyn Brownrigg  
QFHSA Membership Committee

Eugenia Reznik was the artist who worked with St. Gabriel's students and parents to produce this beautiful mural. The idea of the project was to create 3-dimensional imaginary creatures from recycled materials: wire, paper, sponges, kitchen utensils, branches, cords,... Some paintings also represented the living environment of various insects - a leaf, an ant-hill, a flower or a cloud....

## CHANGE FOR A CHANGE AT FOREST HILL SR.

Le 12 janvier dernier, nous avons tous été touchés par la catastrophe qui a frappé Haïti. À Forest Hill Sr, nous avons donc décidé d'amasser des fonds pour soutenir la Croix-Rouge dans l'aide qu'elle apporte aux personnes touchées par le séisme.

Vous avez répondu en grand nombre et cela nous a permis de récolter 2 537,33\$ en deux semaines. Nous tenons donc à vous remercier car nous croyons qu'avec ce don, nous ferons une différence.

Mme Montcalm et moi voulons aussi dire un grand merci à tous les membres du Leadership team qui ont donné leur temps libre à séparer la monnaie.

De plus, merci au Home and School pour leur don de 250,00\$ au nom des enseignants de Forest Hill Sr.

Marie-Josée Messier  
Enseignante de 6e année



Last January 12, we were all very touched by the catastrophe that hit Haiti. At Forest Hill Senior, we decided to help the Red Cross raise funds to bring aid to those touched by the earthquake. The Forest Hill community responded in great numbers to our Change for a Change drive and brought in \$2,537.33 in 2 weeks. We would like to thank everyone for helping. We believe that with these donations, we can make a difference. Mrs. Montcalm and Mme. Messier would like to give a big thank you to their leadership team, who gave their free time to roll and count the money. Thank you also to our Home & School Association for their donation of \$250 on behalf of the Senior campus teachers.

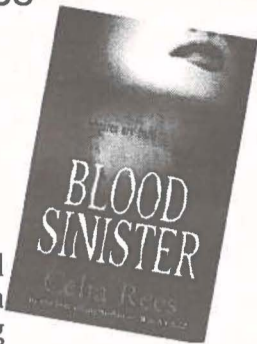
Mme. Marie-Josée Messier  
Grade 6 Teacher



# BOOK REVIEWS

**Blood Sinister**  
Author: Celia Rees

Genre: Fiction  
Age: 11-14  
Publisher:  
Scholastic  
Canada



The book "Blood Sinister" written by Celia Rees is an exhilarating story about a teen, Ellen, living in Britain with her grandmother near a cemetery, while trying to live her life with a mysterious disease. When she comes across antique diaries from her great-great grandmother, she learns more about her disease and is reunited with an old friend, Andy. The old diaries and Andy, together, help to save Ellen's life.

Ellen is very sick when she moves in with her grandmother, and has no idea what this mysterious disease is or how she developed it. When Ellen goes searching through her grandmothers house one day she finds her great-great grandmothers diaries from the 19th century. She begins to read them and a couple days later Ellen starts dreaming weird dreams of things (vampires) that happen in the diaries that she hasn't read before. Ellen wakes up one night from her dream sweating, the next thing she knows, she is in the hospital confused. Her nurse, Jenny, explains she had almost died. That night her doctor comes in claiming that he is the same dangerous figure from the diaries, a vampire. Ellen then finds out that her disease is genetic, and her great great great grandmothers had the same blood disease. Ellen knows the Doctor intends on drinking her blood. Jenny soon realizes that the doctor is a vampire and becomes friends with Andy and Ellen. With Jenny's chinese background, she, Andy and Ellen put together a plan to destroy the vampire with an old chinese remedy. In the end the Doctor, who was very weak from the chinese remedy, is crushed and dies in a freak accident, when his old house collapses on him.

The book "Blood Sinister" is a great book and I enjoyed reading it very much. It is full of mystery, action and suspense. I would recommend this book to teens of the age 12-14, who enjoy a good mysterious vampire story.

Book review written by Gabrielle Jardim,  
Grade 7, Westwood Jr. High School

## Mom, Will This Chicken Give Me Man Boobs? : My Confused, Guilt-Ridden and Stressful Struggle to Raise a Green Family

Author: Robyn Harding  
Genre: Non-Fiction, Adult      Publisher: Greystone Books

Robyn Harding addresses the issue that our inner environmental conscious seems to be struggling within this over-consuming society: how do we live our lives without guilt that we are contributing to its demise?

The book describes the author's struggle with living her life and raising her family environment friendly from eating green to having a green Christmas. Harding outlines the financial inconveniences and time involved in being completely green, resources most people seem to be lacking. However she does give insight on things that we should all be doing like unplugging our appliances when not in use. Ultimately, the author realizes that it may be near impossible to be a dark shade of green and that attaining a medium green is better than nothing. Written in a thoroughly humorous and light manner, it's a hard to put down book that does not leave you feeling guilty about the way you are living your life but through one woman's obsession to become green, we are able to see there is a balance that we can all attain. This book may be directed to mothers raising a family, but as a young adult, I was able to identify and relate with many of the problems that the author was facing. So it may seem to be geared towards a finite audience, but it really is meant for anyone who feels that internal battle with becoming greener and loves a good laugh.

Book Reviewed by Alexandra Jardim - Age 19 - CEGEP John Abbott

## Bubba and Giganto – Odds Against Us

Written by Lea Schizas

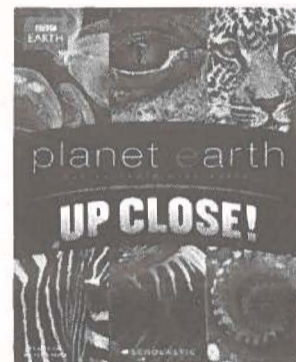
4RV Publishing Company LLC 2008  
Book Design by Vivian Zabel and Elyza-  
beth Eldering  
Suitable for ages 11 - 15

Bullying is a hot topic in schools today. BUBBA AND GIGANTO -ODDS AGAINST US shows the reader that a life or death situation can occur because of bullying. Take a new kid in a new school (Bubba has moved several times), a new friend with a well kept secret, and see what develops. Bubba is used to being teased in his former schools because of his name; David, his new friend has been teased because of his huge size. Bubba and Giganto (David) become good friends and help each other in school and on the soccer field. However, it is on the soccer field that Giganto's secret is found out. Will it be too late to save his life?

Could bullying cause death?---Students gave the following opinions before the classroom teacher read the book aloud.

- Some people could become depressed and suicidal.
- Some people can give in to peer pressure and do wrong things.
- Some people can be pushed to their limit and commit suicide.

Reviewed by Anne MacWhirter  
QFHSA Director



## PLANET EARTH UP CLOSE! BBC Earth

Genre: Non-Fiction  
Age: 7-11 years  
Publisher: Scholastic Canada

I read Planet Earth Up Close! by BBC Earth. I really liked this book. It was very interesting and had lots of neat facts. Each page tells you about something different about an animal, like The Gaboon Viper's venom or Polar Bear's feet. I really liked the page on the Blue Flat Lizard's skin and the Venus Fly Trap's hairs. The book divides up the animals by areas like deserts and rainforests. I found it easy to read but some words were hard to pronounce and I didn't always understand them. If you like to read books about animals you will like this one too!

Nathan Block, age 81/2  
Forest Hill Jr. School



WOULD YOUR CHILDREN BE INTERESTED IN REVIEWING BOOKS FOR THE NEWS?  
CONTACT NEWS@QFHSA.ORG FOR MORE INFO

Scrambler

orf etlh,eas eht siclymop rae hte meltuiat tets of hreit or.twh ayr~m oul toernt



## Learning how to make friends...

TEMECULA, CA—February 11, 2010 - An award-winning 10-year-old author says it's easier than most children think to make new friends. "You have to stop waiting for others to discover who you are," advises Natalie Tinti, author of *Sewing a Friendship*. "Start discovering your happiness and sharing it with others. It will help you create wonderful, long-lasting friendships."

Natalie offers the following tips for making friends:

- Always look for the positive, especially when interacting with new people. Put all your attention in every moment looking for what is positive, useful, and helpful. Simply said, be optimistic when dealing with people you are only just getting to know. You'll discover that you'll always find what you are looking for in your life - if you look for what is negative you will find the bad, if you look for the positive you'll find something to celebrate.

- Stop judging other people and yourself. When you judge in a critical way, you share your negative opinions about the situation, people, or even yourself. When you stop judging, you start accepting and understanding, and then with this greater understanding you become open to friendships.

- Have courage to include others. Are you waiting for others to have you as a friend? That may take forever. Be brave and open to include someone you want to have as a friend. In the story, all the girls had a choice to make, the four best friends could have been fearful of Kiki, especially when reacting to her snide comments. Instead, they gather the courage to ask their rival, Kiki, to be a part of their fashion show team. By accepting the girls offer, Kiki also summons the courage to open herself to the other girls. This is the moment which creates the breakthrough for a great friendship.

- Appreciate your hidden talents. You have many different talents that are hidden, waiting to be discovered, developed, and enjoyed. Whatever you love to do, whatever makes you happy and your heart sing - that is your secret talent! Discover more talents, and appreciate them, and you'll be a magnet of happiness for other people.

- Be creative, don't give up. When you experience boredom or discover that you don't have supplies for your project, or start feeling that everything is falling apart how do you respond? These are the times when you need turn to the imagination and creativity you were blessed with at birth. Treat everything as a playground and find the right way for having fun like the girls in *"Sewing a Friendship"*: In the story, while planning for the fashion show, the girls begin to wonder what supplies they can use to be successful in the fashion show. Jonsy doesn't let the lack of supplies limit her imagination; instead she suggests "sharpies, crayons, paint, nail polish, flowers, food coloring, and fruits can be used as make-up". Remember that with a creative mind, one can use anything to build something spectacular. ☑

*Are you on Facebook?*

Become a FAN of QFHSA!

We're posting lots of new information about great new events and activities for your communities!!

Come get in on the conversation!



You can also follow us on Twitter : @qfhsa

## Students Listen Up about Literacy

Marion Daigle is a former Woman of the Year and long-time member of the Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations (QFHSA). Marion spoke on Nov. 20, 2009 about literacy and the Born to Read program to the students of the Information and Library Technologies (ILT) department. Giovanna Spadafora, a QFHSA director who will be taking over the Literacy Committee of the QFHSA, was also present.

Marion explained how she came to be involved with the literacy movement. After giving a definition of literacy, she proceeded to present the class with many facts and fallacies about literacy. She invited the students to guess about levels of literacy in Canada and Quebec, leading many to question what they really knew about those

rates. Once she had established the need to address literacy, she explained the history of the Born to Read program, a grass-roots movement to provide newborn babies and their families with a bag of books to promote early storytelling and literacy. Born to Read has been successful in many communities and has even moved to other provinces.

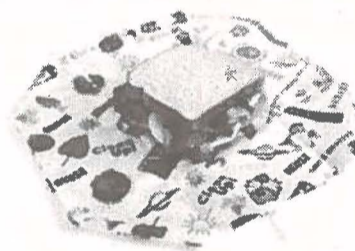
Having a speaker that is enthusiastic about her topic allowed the students to engage in conversation with her and Giovanna after the presentation. Angela Cameron, a second-year student, presented Marion with a cheque to be used to buy reading materials for a Montreal school library. This money was raised by the students earlier in the year during a Public Relations class bake sale.

~ Amanda Tweedie



Giovanna Spadafora (r) and Marion Daigle (l), accepting a donation cheque from the ILT Department of John Abbott College

## Fundraising with



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# Focus on the

## Beacon Hill School Raises \$2000 for Haiti

From January 22nd to February 5th, the Beacon Hill Staff and Home and School Association encouraged the school community to empty their piggy banks and bring in "Quarters for Haiti". Students and staff members generously brought in coins and deposited them in "Quarters for Haiti" banks in the classrooms. Teachers brought the banks to the school office and deposited the money into a larger till which was collected daily by Home and School volunteers. The results were amazing! \$2000 was donated to the Canadian Red Cross Haiti Relief on behalf of the Staff of Beacon Hill School in honour of Teacher Appreciation week. The Canadian government matched this donation; so thanks to Beacon Hill's generosity, Red Cross's Haiti Relief efforts received a grand total of \$4000. As one student stated, "I don't need my money, the people in Haiti do!" **Great Job Beacon Hill!**



## What's happening at Margaret Manson School...

As the mid-way point of the school year approaches, it's a great time to look back at what's been happening at Margaret Manson School over the last little while...

An annual tradition at Margaret Manson, our Christmas Basket campaign helped 8 local families celebrate the holidays. Each family received several boxes of non-perishables, along with fresh turkeys, fruit, vegetables, and dairy products purchased with donations from our school community. Holiday gifts were donated for the members of each family, along with warm clothing,



Secretary Annette Couto, Alouette Scott Flory, and Principal Lorna Aiken

boots, and baby accessories. H&S member Karen Grant led the campaign and our Grade 6 students were an enormous help, especially on delivery day with sorting and packing. Our Grade 4 students baked 15 dozen cookies to donate to the kids of Dans La Rue during the holiday season and will continue to do so once a month.

Mid-December saw the return of Jungle Sport to our school. This multi-purpose obstacle course took over our gym for the week and students were able to manoeuvre their way through the challenges several times during the week. This outstanding program was

made possible due to our Home & School Association's fundraising efforts during the first part the school year, with events and fundraisers such as Entertainment Book and Holiday Fair.

Our Home & School Association piloted a pizza and Subway lunch program right after the holidays and it was a huge success. Parents appreciated the timing of the first days back to school and the students loved



Grade 3 students enjoying Jungle Sport

the food! We plan on running this program again in the spring.

The Grey Cup was escorted to our school in January by Scott Flory, a member of the champion Montreal Alouettes. Mr. Flory spoke to our students about the experience of playing a professional sport and the pride in winning the top prize in Canadian football. Students were thrilled to take pictures with the Cup and Mr. Flory and to take home an autographed football card. Our amazing Phys. Ed. teachers, led by Kim Poirier and Meaghan Macro, are capitalizing on the Vancouver Olympics for several activities. They held an essay contest in



December and the 50 winners left school for the afternoon to attend the Olympic Torch Relay as it passed through Kirkland. Our students are also "running" all the way to Vancouver — more than 4000 km! — by doing laps during each Phys. Ed. and recess period. Each homeroom has been assigned a country and, along with learning the national anthem, will follow their country's results during the Olympic Games. We look forward to many more exciting programs and events for the remainder of the school year. Thanks to all of our staff and volunteers who make them all possible.

## A Macaroni Charity Lunch Exchange in Baie-Comeau

The local Home & School of Baie Comeau High School organized a macaroni lunch exchange on February 5<sup>th</sup> 2010. The event was to contribute to school spirit but to also make students aware of the importance of giving to the less fortunate. The students were asked to bring in canned foods and other non-perishable items in exchange for the H&S Macaroni lunch. The food collected was donated to a local charity called **Resource Famille** who distributes the food to less fortunate families in Baie-Comeau and its surroundings. We thank all our participating parents as well as all the students who donated!



Mr. Cluney Hurley School principal and Mark Kerr H&S Treasurer



# e Locals.....

## Beacon Hill School Honours their "Gold Medal Teachers"

In the spirit of the Olympics, the Home and School at Beacon Hill facilitated a fabulous Teacher/Staff Appreciation week when students and families could honour their "Gold Medal" Teachers and Staff. Activities started Monday, February 15th with a healthy salad and soup luncheon for all staff members. Food was graciously donated by Beacon Hill families and the event coordinated by Home and School volunteers. During the luncheon, staff watched a video showing randomly chosen students who were asked to answer the question "Why is Beacon Hill a gold medal school?" Answers included "because the teachers are so great!", "because we do fun stuff like skating, drama, gym and field trips!" and "because we learn a lot for education and math and verbs!". Students were asked to decorate gold medals and write something about their teachers. Comments included "You are great!", "Je t'aime!" and "Tu es très gentille!". The medals were hung proudly throughout the school for everyone to admire. Throughout the week, staff members were showered with health related gifts, including stainless steel Beacon Hill water bottles, toothbrushes and dark chocolate. The week ended with the serving of delicious Smoothies in the library during lunchtime Friday. It was a great week! We are very proud of the staff of Olympians at Beacon Hill!

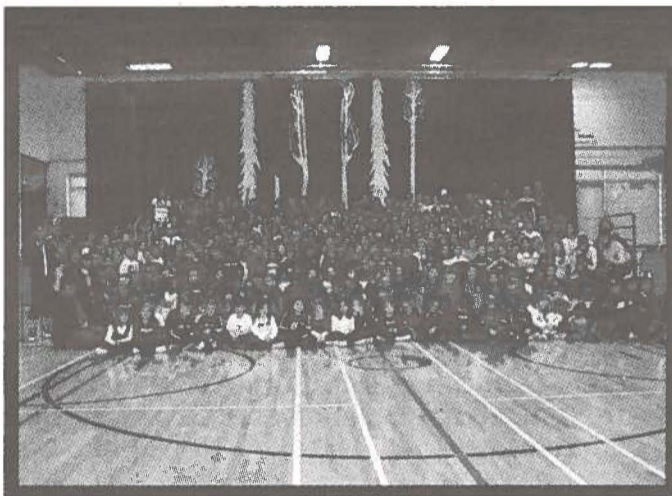
### P.E.T.E.S

P.E.T.E.S. Home and School have enjoyed a great ending to 2009 as well as a great start to 2010.

Our Second Annual Christmas Breakfast was as fun and lively as we had hoped it would be. The children enjoyed crepes with maple syrup as well as potatoes and sausages. Thank you to our community sponsors and all our volunteers.

Teacher Appreciation Week was celebrated over three days this month. Chocolate, International Cuisine and Traditional Tea Time were the themes. Our fun loving teachers had a good time with our Scavenger Hunt!

The Olympics were front and centre at P.E.T.E.S. The entire student body was photographed as they formed the colourful Olympic Rings. Home and School was there to root on the kids as they enjoyed the Olympic activities and celebrated our great country. Go Canada!



### St. Patrick's H&S

St. Patrick's Home & School has enjoyed the active participation of the many seasoned and the many new volunteers that joined our ranks this school year! Without the creativity, initiative and dedication of these parents we could not have achieved the growth and development of the activities hosted by this parents' committee.

Annual events held in December were the Santa Store and Christmas Lunch. This was a really busy day! Over 30 parents came in to help—the majority were new volunteers..."Bravo!" To begin with, Donna Whitehall spent many hours examining, purchasing and transporting hundreds of items from local dollar stores to the school. A couple of H&S members purchased bags and bags of groceries. Many parents prepared the bulk of the food at home, which included roasting turkeys, preparing stuffing, mashing potatoes, chopping vegetables and baking cookies & cupcakes. Even more members spent the morning in the school kitchen heating, decorating, pouring and stirring. Many volunteers were available to help the students throughout the lunch-hour.

The Christmas lunch was magical. Thanks to Denise Bergeron and the St. Pat's "Lunch Ladies" for creating a winter wonderland in the gymnasium with soft-lighting, seasonal music and a display of sparkling trees & whimsical snowmen! It certainly was a festive atmosphere for the students to dine on their meals.



Our Santa Store was staffed with many volunteers who helped guide and assist over 300 students in selecting the perfect gift for their parents. The gifts were then wrapped by our grade 6 students.



The Christmas Lunch and Santa Store are not conducted as fundraisers. It has definitely been a means to generating and maintaining a sense of community within the school. Once again, the St. Patrick students enjoyed the company of the students of the Soulanges school during the day.

A new event for St. Pat's this year was "Comedy Night". A crew of professional comedians was hired to entertain parents and to battle the -30°Celsius winds! They definitely won the battle! Approximately 175 people attended the performance. With the exception of the comedians, the event was organized & staffed by parent volunteers. On the day of the event, many parents and students were on the scene to raid the classrooms for their tables and chairs. This time, the gymnasium was transformed into a comedy lounge ready to welcome parents for an evening of laughter, relaxation and socializing.

Teacher Appreciation Week and Movie Night were on the Home & School's February schedule. During Teacher Appreciation Week parents provided treats for the teaching staff. Cycle 1 was responsible for Tuesday's breakfast, Cycle 2 for Wednesday's recess snacks, Cycle 3 for Thursday's lunch and the Home & School prepared and served Friday's lunch. The staff members also receive some wonderful gifts throughout the week. On February 12, we welcomed families into the school for Movie Night where they enjoyed a film and snacks in the gymnasium. It's become a great way to expose the kids to fun events within the school environment while the parents have the opportunity to meet their children's peers and other St. Pat's parents.

Upcoming events include assisting with



the Winter Carnival, which will be held during the week of February 22. The Home & School has absorbed some of the cost for a Geordie Productions

presentation, will be assisting with the Olympic events in the backyard and will provide treats for the students on skating day.

Phew! Tremendous efforts that are rewarded with delighted students, appreciative staff and fulfilled parents.



# YOUTH Reach for the TORCH

Montréal, Stéphanie St-Pierre, mogul skier and guest of honour at the Youth Reach for the Torch event which took place at the Château Vaudreuil in February, was a source of inspiration for the over 250 youth on hand who watched her presentation in person or via the interactive videoconferencing link provided by local CLC's.

The event, which was organized by the Québec Federation of Home and Schools Association and prepared in the context of the Winter Olympics, also featured sporting events and projects that were conceived and delivered by students from various schools which are members of the QFHSA.

Moreover, the 150 youth present on site took part in various workshops and fun activities all relating to sports and the Olympics.

Following the opening ceremony where Meili Faille, MP for Vaudreuil-Soulanges, the QFHSA Executive Director as well as the Special Projects coordinator

spoke to the children. Alexandre Bilodeau, Chloé Dufour-Lapointe, Maxime Gingras and Pierre-Alexandre Rousseau, all members of the Canadian freestyle Olympic skiing team, delivered their exciting message using pre-recorded video footage. Stéphanie St-Pierre then delivered a stimulating message of determination and courage.

Ms. St-Pierre shared her experiences and enlightened those present regarding the path she took to reach her goals whilst elaborating on the attitude and the mind frame that are needed by young athletes who want to be successful in their chosen discipline.

The Olympian and two-time World Cup Gold Medal winner also reminded her audience that one should also arrange for alternative career paths and hence be prepared with a 'plan B'. Olympic Torch in hand, she then proceeded to visit the grounds and tour the many activities that were taking place outside at the Château-Vaudreuil Pavilion.

The event was made possible thanks to the support of Canadian

Heritage through the "Celebration and Commemoration Program". Youth Reach for the Torch also provided a platform via video presentation to local aspiring Olympians Caelyn O'Brien, a 12-year-old figure skater who is part of the Sports-Etudes program at John Rennie High School in Pointe-Claire; Xavier Grenier-Talavera, a 14-year-old triathlete who practices swimming, running and cycling; and Sarah Benkirane, a 13-year-old curler who spends at least 20 hours a week practicing.

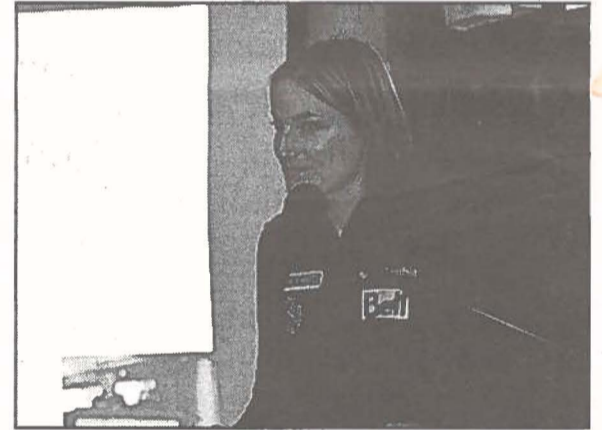
Additionally, Lailah Cowan, event coordinator, wanted to underline the support provided by the volunteers from both the Katimavik Canadian Volunteer and Macdonald High School leadership programs. "As if following the example set in Stéphanie St-Pierre's earlier allocution, these youth have demonstrated determination and leadership and have greatly contributed to the success of this wonderful day for the youth in attendance," she concluded.



M.P. Vaudreuil-Soulanges Meili Faille addresses the gathered students.



QFHSA's Lailah Cowan with Olympic hopeful Sarah Benkirane



Olympic Moguls skier, Stéphanie St-Pierre delivers an inspirational message.

## **BRAVO WILLINGDON!**

February was National Heart Month, and Willingdon Elementary school in N.D.G. knows a little about giving from the heart.... As an Ecole Vert Brundtland School, our students take the encouraged mission of "think globally and act locally" very seriously! We are a school that has a longstanding tradition of giving back not just to our community, but to charitable projects around the world. As well as raising funds for our school, our students, teachers and a large group of H&S parent volunteers have been involved in organizing many successful charitable fundraisers over the past few months:

- Over 100 boxes of non-perishable food items were collected for the NDG Food Bank at the school's Winter Food Drive and Carolling Nite.
- Over 10 huge boxes of toys were collected for CTV's Spirit of Giving, Toy Drive in December.
- Over \$1000 was raised for the NDG Food Bank during Winter Book Fair - 2<sup>nd</sup> hand book sale, Carolling Nite and Winter Concert.

Our spiritual advisor Catherine Cherry has been instrumental in exposing our students to the world of need around them through great programs such as the "Friends Across the

World", where for many years now Willingdon has been involved in sponsoring a little girl named Maria Isabel, whose life has changed for the better thanks to all the charitable contributions from our Willingdon families. This month, on top of treating our well deserving teachers to a fantastic Teacher Appreciation Week, our school raised over \$2000 for the Haiti Relief Fund with the Red Cross. On Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup> students and staff were encouraged to wear red and donate a loonie to the fund. Along with a raffle, we surpassed our goal of \$500-\$600 by a long margin!! We plan to have a similar day in March where everyone will be encouraged to wear green and donate a loonie for Haiti.







# YOUTH Reach for the TORCH

## Jeunesse aux Jeux

QFSA would like to thank the following for contributing to the outstanding success of our Olympic Sports' Fair - Youth Reach for the Torch.

### CANADIAN HERITAGE



Acro-Ski Laurentides



Château Vaudreuil

CLC - Community Learning Centers



Démocratie



Dynamix



Manulife One

Montreal Muscle Activation



Solutions Fides

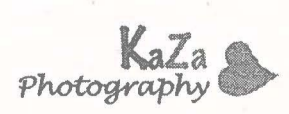
The Flag Shop



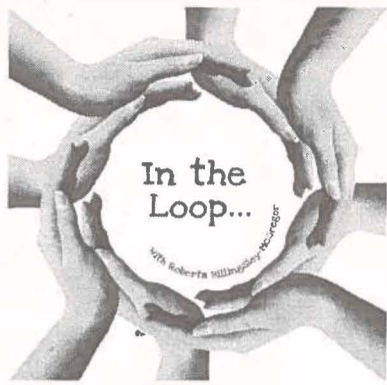
Ville Vaudreuil - Dorion



KaZa Photography







## IN SCHOOL: WATER IS COOL!!

Water is one of the most important basic nutrients required by the body. Unfortunately, many children do not drink enough water for their age or activity level. Some drink significantly less during the school day than on the weekend.

Poor hydration negatively affects a child's mental performance and learning ability. Classrooms of students who are not encouraged to have water bottles in class are probably not making any effort to keep track of their water intake per day, the result: mid afternoon complaints of headaches, fatigue and an obvious reduced alertness and ability to concentrate. Once thirst is felt, mental performance including memory, attention and concentration can decrease by almost 10 percent!

In order to keep properly hydrated throughout the day, children need access to water at school. Since students spend at least half their waking hours in school, they should be drinking at least half their daily requirement of water in school to stay healthy. The standard recommendation of water intake for children is at least 6-8 glasses or 1.5-2 litres a day, which breaks down to about 3-4 glasses while at school.

Dehydration is simply not having enough water in your body. It may result from inadequate water

intake and/or from losing body water and can develop rapidly or slowly. A lot of people don't even realize they are dehydrated because they have become so used to feeling below their best.

Symptoms of mild dehydration can be difficult for teachers to spot. In class some children may become irritable, tired and less able to concentrate. By the time they get home many children are complaining of tiredness or headaches and some may be too tired to do anything but slump in front of the computer or a game console. Although we may think of this behaviour as normal, it is now known that it may, at least in part, be due to the effects of dehydration.

Children can be taught to recognize when their fluid intake is too low as the urine becomes concentrated (small amounts of deep yellow, cloudy, smelly urine). If their urine's no darker than the color of pale straw, odourless and they have a lot of it, they're doing OK!

The key to boosting the capacity to learn is to keep well hydrated throughout each day (ideally from a personal water bottle within arm's reach). What teachers must remember is that it normally takes a few weeks for bladders to adjust to an increased water intake and that eventually the erratic frequency of having to excuse students to use the washroom will become manageable again!

Studies show that fifteen percent of preschool children consume just under half the recommended daily energy intake in the form of sugary drinks. These drinks are nutritionally poor and can reduce children's appetite so that they miss eating valuable nutrients at mealtimes. In addition, sugary drinks may not quench thirst as much as water, which encourages children to drink more of them. What comes of this? Children run a real risk of becoming addicted to sugar. As they get older, their choice of beverage may evolve into the energy drink craze. Certainly, we now see that students younger and younger who are addicted to caffeine and are drinking large quantities of energy drink products.

Of course once you stop having the product, you have a headache and the best way to get rid of that is to have more product. Believe it or not, that is the definition of dependency.

Essentially, what is becoming more and more common are students who are having no breakfast and are consuming an energy drink as a pick-me-up on the way to school. Teachers everywhere can recite a similar story about the effects that even the consumption of one drink by one student has had in class. It actually causes behavioural disturbances that they can easily recognize; now imagine a majority of students making this a habitual daily occurrence. When the stimulation goes away, the teacher is left with sleepy children that cannot listen.

A Red Bull energy drink has about 80mg's of caffeine per eight-ounce serving, and on top of that, it has 27mg's of sugar. That is like putting seven teaspoons of sugar in an eight ounce cup of coffee. Thus the energy rush, but unfortunately, it is not long-term energy.

All across the province, schools celebrate March as nutrition month; however, students must be encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle each month of the year. So why not let nutrition month be a time for resolutions and promoting long-term goals? Support ways to keep water in the classroom, and help increase our student's thirst for learning!

Roberta Billingsley, New Carlisle in the beautiful Gaspésie, I am a project coordinator for a regional non-profit organization, the Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA), I am also a parent commissioner for Eastern Shores School Board. I am the proud mother of 4 fantastic kids, all of them under the age of 12.



## Growing Greener Schools Plants Seeds For Healthier, More Energy Efficient School Environments

PBS Educational Media announces the DVD premiere of Growing Greener Schools, a multi-media resource that engages viewers while illustrating best practices for creating sustainable schools and integrating environmental education into curriculum.

Drawing on first-hand experiences of educators and green experts, the program showcases projects undertaken by schools around the country in urban and suburban areas, both large and small. Along with hands-on examples of how these institutions are incorporating sustainable practices and environmental lessons into their schools, educators and students discuss the effects on student health, attendance, test scores and preparedness for green jobs.

The program also includes a roadmap for administrators and school boards to examine how to build eco-friendly school buildings from the ground up; retrofit older classrooms to new green standards; and operate green campuses. Program participants also demonstrate how "going green" is helping schools save money.

Resources beyond the video include:

- 132-page downloadable Handbook and Curriculum Guide with cross-curricula lessons for grades 6-12
- Six interactive games related to lessons
- 46-page Appendix with step-by-step information on how to create a sustainable school; grant writing tips; a 21st Century Skills matrix, and more.

Produced by the Media & Policy Center (Going to Green and Eden's Lost and Found) and endorsed by the Earth Day Network, the program is the result of an extensive survey of resources and standards including more than 40 local, state, and national programs and organizations pledged to greening America's schools.

Growing Greener Schools is offered at a teacher-friendly price of \$49.95 and is available beginning March 8, 2010. For more information on this program visit [shopPBS.org/education](http://shopPBS.org/education)

## QFHSA WELCOMES THE CHSF!!

The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations was very pleased to host The Canadian Home and School Federation (CHSF) Annual Midterm Meeting which took place on Nov.12,13 and 14, 2009.

Over the 3 days, the Board of Directors, chaired by CHSF's President Janet Walsh who hails from Nova Scotia, put in full days of work to discuss and to make decisions about various reports. Committee work dealt with such topics as Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules; Resolutions and Policy; Communications; Finance and Budget. New Brunswick Director, Glyn Morgan made a presentation on the CHSF Annual Meeting slated to be held from May 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>, 2010 in St. Andrews by the Sea in New Brunswick.

On Thursday, I was privileged to sit in on the committee and group work dealing with Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules as well as Resolutions and Policy, subjects close to my heart. Many changes to CHSF's infrastructure were proposed and, with further work to be done, they will be presented to the 2010 CHSF Annual Meeting.

Thus far, one resolution from Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations on banning

the sale of energy drinks to minors has been submitted for consideration to the 2010 Annual Meeting. Coincidentally, QFHSA has received a similar resolution from New Carlisle Home and School Association. We will be reporting on the results of the voting on this resolution at our Annual General Meeting to the CHSF Annual Meeting.

For the past few years, Marlyn Brownrigg, Vice President of QFHSA, has been our representative on CHSF's Board of Directors. She has now completed her term of office. All of us truly appreciate the time and effort she has given to the National Federation on our behalf.

It was a good opportunity to network with people from all across our country. I was not surprised to see that they deal with many of the same issues as QFHSA. I found the experience personally rewarding in making a difference for our children and their parents. I was happy to do my part.





## DESTINATION..... HIGH SCHOOL!!

School transitions mark milestones in children's development. Watching their child march into the Kindergarten room by themselves can be one of the most proud yet heartbreaking moments for a parent as it symbolizes that first step towards independence. And while each transition brings more of that independence, we know that our children still need us to guide and support them through these life changes. As they grow and mature, the ways we support and guide must as well. This article will help you explore the needs of your soon-to-be high school student and how this transition can be eased with the right planning, preparation, and communication.

The transition from elementary school to secondary school is an exciting one, but one that can also bring high levels of stress and anxiety. The first step to offering support is to get a good understanding of what actually worries your son or daughter about high school. While many parents often jump to the larger issues like drugs and alcohol use, research has shown that kids are often actually focusing on the basic issues like how they'll find their classroom or if they'll remember their locker combination. Concerns about high school often fall into one of three categories: logistical, social, and academic. Understanding these concerns and addressing them in positive and motivating ways can do wonders in preparing your student to excel.

The most obvious difference between elementary school and high school is the environment! High school presents a much more complex atmosphere which can intimidate even the most prepared pupil. Logistical changes like the size of the building, the number of students, and the changing of teachers for different class subjects, are all factors that can be addressed with the right preparation.

### Summer Prep

Do your homework! Explore the school website, read the student handbook, and investigate the campus map with your child. The more accurate information your child has about the school, the better prepared he will be. Encourage attendance and accompany your child (when appropriate) on campus tours, orientations or events for incoming students. Take full advantage of any academic or recreational summer programs offered at the new school so that he can get used to the campus in more relaxed situations.

In the weeks before school starts, equip your child with a lock for his locker so he can practice and get comfortable with it. A watch is also an essential tool he should get into the habit of wearing. Once class schedules are distributed, make a minimum of 4 copies. One should be hung somewhere in the kitchen for quick reference. The second copy should be posted in his bedroom, the third in his locker, and the fourth taped inside his daily agenda. Encourage your child to color code the schedules, with a different color representing each class subject. This way, when in a hurry, a quick glance is all that is needed to plan the day. Addressing some of these simple logistical issues well in advance can help him feel more confident right from the start.

### Social Situations

The second and probably most important factor in your pre-teen having a positive high school experience is the social aspect. As your daughter walks into her new school, she is also stepping through the front door of her adolescence, a stage where peer relationships are at the forefront of importance. Being part of a group and fitting in will likely be essential in her mind, which means making friends is going to be a top priority. Open your mind to this and support her in her search to find her place in the social network, while at the same time encouraging her to keep grasp of and develop her personal identity. Remember

how self-conscious you felt at the beginning of high school, empathize with her, and reassure her that she will be more comfortable over time.

One of the best things about the large and more diverse atmosphere of high school is the increased opportunity to make new friends and find a place to fit in. Being in multiple classes with different students each day broadens the chance of your son or daughter finding a group they can easily become part of. Encourage your child to get involved in school and after school activities. Whether it's being on a sports team, involved in the drama club or singing in the chorus, students who are involved generally have a more positive high school experience.

It might be somewhat of a culture shock for a recent grade 6 student who was "king of the school" for the last 9 months to realize that he is now at the bottom rung of the secondary school ladder! Your son might come home flabbergasted at how "big" the older students are! He may have heard from others and be fearful of possible bullying by older students. Talk to your son about these fears. At this stage of the game, direct conversation might not be as effective as it used to be. Go for a car ride, walk the dog together, and work these issues into casual conversation through open ended questions. The more cool and relaxed you come across to your child; the more easily the discussion should flow.

### On to Academics

Once your child has settled into the logistical and social differences high school presents, the academic challenges will likely start to appear. More homework, faster paced teaching and learning expectations, and less personalized instruction might all be shocking surprises to your pre-teen. Your son might come home complaining that he has an English paper due, a book report to turn in, and a science test all on the same day! High school teachers don't have the time or ability to always coordinate who's testing or grading papers on the same day and this can often be a rude awakening to first year secondary students.

Organization, time management and sound study habits are the foundation of your child's ability to handle the academic pressures of high school. Encourage your child to develop an organization system that makes sense to them. Some methods that often work are color coding individual binders (to go along with the color coded schedule he's already made!). There is no sense in showing up to class without last night's homework or today's reading material. Binders should have pockets inside and have the class subject, room, your child's name and his teacher's name on the outside. If a binder is ever lost or left in the library, having a teacher's name on it is helpful as it is likely that the student who finds it will recognize the teacher's name and drop it by his or her room on the way to their next class.

Time management is essential to fitting in the increased amount of schoolwork, extra curricular activities and of course, socializing! The correct use of a daily planner will help your child stay on task with what needs to be done and when. Encourage the use of a planner for daily reminders to long term project planning. Help your daughter organize her time through creating a schedule and support her in sticking to it. Encourage her to use spare time (waiting for the bus or for an after school activity to start) wisely to get some reading in or review class notes. Support her in finding a balance between all that high school has to offer, as both academic and social aspects are important.

The study habits that your child developed in elementary school will be put to the test and need to be refined quickly during the first few weeks of secondary school. Acquiring good note-taking skills, reviewing material daily instead of cramming, and completing assignments on time are all essential to his success. Often times reading the text book is not enough to absorb enough information to bring home an "A." Encourage him to read the material and then teach it to you, a friend, or a sibling as when we verbalize what we've read; we're more likely to understand it.

### Steps to Success

Remember that high school is a chance for your child to grow and develop their individuality. As parents, we take great care in smoothing the paths of change for our children. And while that is important, it is also imperative that you allow your child to learn how to make mistakes, accept responsibility for his own actions and take control of his own learning. As your child matures, so must your parenting style. By guiding them while at the same time letting go you will be doing your job to prepare them not only for school, but for life.

**Melinda Atkinson**    **Sharon Klar**  
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*Bartimaeus, Inc. has been supporting schools and families experiencing behavioral difficulties throughout Québec and Ontario since 1988. Bartimaeus provides accessible, flexible in-school and at-home support for both private and public schools and their students. Bartimaeus also delivers a series of educational programs through in-class sessions covering topics such as study methods and organizational skills, transition to high school, and social development. The Transition to High School Program prepares students for the academic, logistical and social changes of high school. Call Bartimaeus to bring Transition to High School or one of our other programs or services to your school today! [www.bartimaeus.com](http://www.bartimaeus.com)*



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## A TEEN'S LIFE!

### J u d g e m e n t a l . . .

I am a fourteen year old girl with my own sense of style, with my own thoughts and own experiences of prejudice. Since neither I, nor any other person is perfect, and any perfect person isn't real, prejudice isn't an excuse for hatred. Hatred is an excuse for people who have already confronted and have been confronted about their differences. Those people who have been confronted have most likely been confronted by others who do not appreciate the way that that person composes him- or herself in their day-to-day life. Since they are not like the rest of those who are all alike, wishing to prove themselves to someone, when really, the only person you have to prove yourself to, is yourself. No body else. Break though barriers, cross lines, push yourself that little way further to prove to yourself that you can do whatever you wish is possible. It doesn't matter what your parents or teachers wish you to be, because in the end, they don't matter. You do. They're not going to live the life that you chose to live. You are. Let them be. Make your choices, live your life, it doesn't matter how you get to the place that you want to be, because as long as you have pride in what you've done, nothing matters. Whether you've been through hell and back, swam to the bottom of the ocean or climbed the tallest mountain, rather than staying with what THEY want you to be, what THEY would wish you to accomplish, instead of living your dreams, going out

there to see what there is to see. Live your life to the fullest. Break the rules, ignore the restrictions and if you get into some trouble, don't worry, you'll bounce back. Listen, what's the worst that can happen? Think of it. Sure you got yourself into a bit of trouble, who cares? Just let it be, what's done is done, and there is nothing that you can do about it, and if there was, would you want to go back to fix it? I know I wouldn't. As long as you had fun while doing it and live life to its fullest, the opinions of others do not matter. Memories whether they're good or bad make up life and you have to deal with it. As do people who are not accustomed to individuality. Divinity is something special that you cannot find in everybody, since most want to be someone that they're not. I'm just so sick of seeing the same people over and over again, everyday, it gets repetitive, boring, frustrating. It's almost like reading one magazine for the rest of your life, seeing the same pictures, the same articles, the same people with the same clothes day after day. Enough is enough. I've seen enough Jessica Alba's and Megan Fox's to last me a life time. Life isn't about trying to impress people with what you have, or who you're with. Life is a journey that you're supposed to enjoy. You only get one shot at it. Go in there assuming you'll blow their minds away, and you will. Be extraordinary, be super natural, be yourself.

~Tasha Maslen

## Why poor posture causes pain and what can you do to prevent this.

At one point in time, everyone suffers from some sort of or combination of, back, hip, knee, shoulder or neck pain during their life. Whether you call it sciatica, tendinitis, bursitis or any other name, they all can be linked back to one cause, and that is poor posture. What causes poor posture? The human body is an incredible and complicated machine. It is constantly monitoring itself to make sure that everything is working properly. Unfortunately, one of these systems, in an effort to protect itself, actually causes more harm than good. The body contains stretch receptors (Golgi tendon organ, muscle spindle, etc.) located in the muscles and the joint-supporting ligaments. The job of these receptors is to regulate the length and tension of muscles as well as the velocity of those changes. The muscles in our body are always in a tug of war with one another. The tension in all the muscles around the joints needs to be equal. When this is the case, the joint position is stable, the muscles work properly and the body is in balance. When the everyday physical stress surpasses the limits that the body can handle, the receptors in an effort to protect the muscles and joints from injury, (muscle pulls, tears, and breaks) will turn off the communication to the affected muscle or joint, thus removing all the tension generated by that specific muscle. In this case, because the tension around the affected joint is no longer equal, the alignment of that joint will move. This will not only affect that joint, but will also affect the position of other joints in the body because the body will re-align itself to continue to try to function. Muscular imbalances and weaknesses are created and that creates limitations in joint range of motion. When muscles are weak the joints that they support become unstable, creating collapse, compression, bone spurs,

stenosis, calcium deposits, tendinitis, bursitis, and often pain. This causes what is known as compensations. The compensations over time will continue to increase and more and more joint position changes will create poor posture which then creates pain. What can you do to correct this? The great news is that you no longer need to suffer pain of any sort due to compensations caused by poor posture or misalignment. A revolutionary technique now exists that re-aligns your posture and lets you function pain free. This technique is called Muscle Activation Techniques. It has been used by professional athletes in the United States for the last 10 years for accelerated rehabilitation, injury prevention and performance enhancement. Muscle Activation Techniques assesses and corrects muscle weakness and imbalances that cause limitations in joint range of motion and pain. By using a systematic method of muscle testing, MAT (Muscle Activation Techniques) creates stability in the joints and allows the body to re-align and heal itself.

For more information about this amazing technique, contact Wendy Kennedy at 514- 947-0196



**Wendy Kennedy is a** Naturopath, Muscle Activation Techniques Specialist, Post Rehabilitation Specialist, Sport Therapist, Sport Nutritionist, Master Trainer Personal Trainer, Certifying Instructor for Biomechanics: Posture & Gait Analysis, Exercise Technique & Correction, Muscle Testing & Function. Wendy also teaches children, the general population & senior's classes in Yoga, Pilates, Sports Skills & Drills, Boot camp and Aquatics.

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## Alberta students to acquire digital literacy skills through new online game

Ottawa – Media Awareness Network (MNet) announced today that Alberta Education has licensed its award-winning interactive game – Passport to the Internet: Student tutorial for Internet literacy (Grades 4-8) – making the resource available to 1,800 elementary and middle schools in the province.

“MNet applauds Alberta Education’s recognition of the importance of media and digital literacy in the lives of young people,” said Jane Tallim, MNet’s Co-Executive Director. “Youth in Alberta now have access to a first-of-its-kind interactive resource that will help them gain essential critical thinking skills to better understand the digital landscape that is their world.”

Passport to the Internet was modeled on the same digital environments young people use every day. It was created to meet the growing demand for

a digital literacy tool to help young people develop skills they can apply to their online experiences. The Web-based flash tutorial teaches students how to authenticate online information, recognize online marketing ploys, protect their privacy, manage online relationships and cope with cyberbullying.

Passport to the Internet is the complimentary classroom resource to MNet’s professional development Web Awareness Workshop Series, which Alberta Education also licenses. The Web Awareness series helps teachers of Grades K to 12 understand and address cyberbullying issues, online safety, marketing and privacy, and information authentication.

Training and/or promotion for the resource will be available through the 2Learn.ca Education Society and the Alberta Regional Professional Develop-

ment Consortium. Teachers interested in using Passport to the Internet in their classrooms can contact the Learning Resources Centre by e-mail [lrc.support@gov.ab.ca](mailto:lrc.support@gov.ab.ca), phone 780-427-2767 or toll free 310-0000, or their Web site [www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca](http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca) <<http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/>>

Passport to the Internet is made possible through financial contributions from Inukshuk Wireless Learning Plan Fund and TELUS.

Media Awareness Network (MNet) is a Canadian not-for-profit centre of expertise in media and digital literacy. Its vision is to ensure children and youth possess the necessary critical thinking skills and tools to understand and actively engage with media. MNet’s programs are funded by its public and private sector sponsors and partners, who include: CTVglobe-media • Canwest • TELUS • Bell • Canadian Internet Registration Authority • CTV • National Film Board of Canada • Government of Canada. (<http://www.media-awareness.ca/> <<http://www.media-awareness.ca/>> )

## Diverse or Adverse? Is your organization reaping the rewards of a diverse workforce or are your efforts to promote diversity impotent or, worse, counterproductive?

The surest way to relegate your organization or your career to mediocrity is to pursue goals without truly understanding either the goal or your means to achieve them. This is particularly true of diversity efforts, which have the power to create unintended consequences, like alienation, by focusing on differences rather than commonalities.

The business case for diversity centers on the benefits of multi-perspective thinking. We encourage the inclusion of people with different backgrounds or experience because doing so allows an organization to understand problems from different angles. In theory, this affords a more thorough analysis of any issue, even if it complicates the decision by lengthening the process. In order for this to work, however, the voices of diversity must be heard. This means that simply giving different people a seat at the table is not enough. Instead, it means encouraging input and, indeed, leadership among divergent and even contrarian thinkers. This might be uncomfortable, but even small steps towards these goals can reduce polarization and enhance inclusiveness efforts.

1. Be Values-driven. Respect and integrity in business and social interaction are important not only for inclusiveness, but to external stakeholders. No matter how far you delve into contrarian thought and action, it’s important to adhere to your organization’s values and principles in your experiments with diversity. News travels at lightning speed and your

personal and organizational reputation is crucial to retaining and motivating employees. Having and respecting your organization’s values is not a limitation, but an advantage. It allows you to anchor your explorations and maintain your unique identity.

2. Seek input in unlikely places. Sometimes the best leader is the reluctant one. For cultural or personal reasons, some people might be timid about sharing opinions. They may be embarrassed or unaccustomed to being provided a role other than listener, or order-taker in a particular forum. They may have a different way of doing things than your more vocal team-members. Find a forum for capturing their thoughts. E-mails, smaller or more focused group brainstorming sessions, or even methods of anonymous contribution might be in order.

3. Encourage contrarians. A different style or mannerism can often affect the perceived value of a person’s contribution. This can be a fatal mistake. After all, you’ve sought out diversity: now leverage it to discover where it provides value. A fashion mistake or disrespecting a social tradition by, for instance, wearing jeans where senior management will be wandering, doesn’t reflect an inability to think critically. Look past the obvious rituals and abandon personal biases to focus on what really matters. Don’t let different mean wrong and don’t let people be anything but willing to share thoughts. Explore instead of dismissing. At worst, it will bolster confidence in your position.

Ideally, it will improve the thought processes of your entire team.

4. Enable leadership. Make championing an idea as easy and natural as commuting to work. When a good idea is explored, encourage its owner to help it evolve. This is critical, for it creates ownership and investment in everyone along the path to fruition, no matter what the finished product looks like.

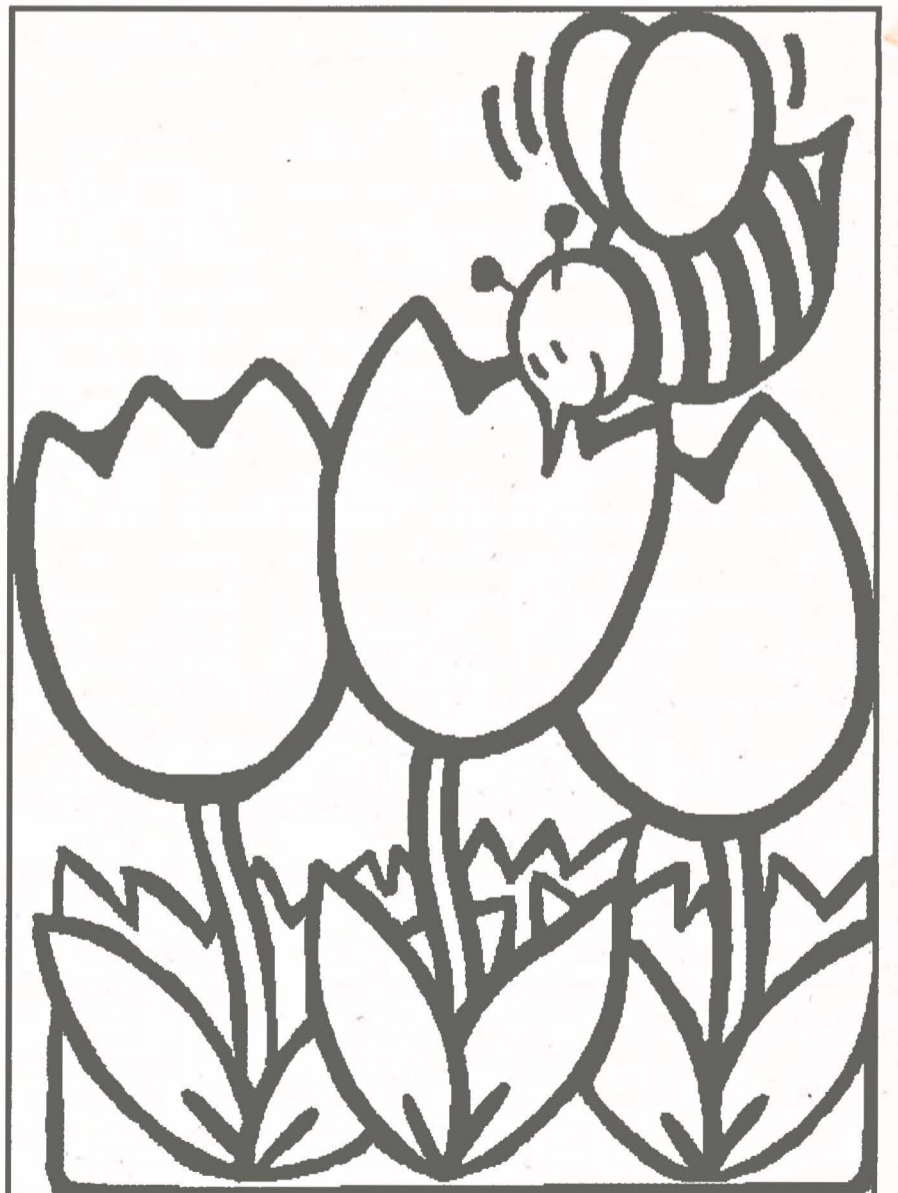
5. Share information. Great ideas, discoveries, and revolutions are built upon predecessors. Share information and allow it to catalyze further innovation. This is the great advantage of our modern world- the ability to find and share information on almost any subject. Your organization’s progress should capitalize on the ease of information exchange.

Introspection is often forced upon us (as it is now by a slow economy). Take this opportunity to analyze your current organization and, if you dare, permit yourself and your peers some discomfort. You may find that simple ways to utilize your diverse workforce and leverage the multiplicity of thought inherent in heterogeneity can help you create a legacy of excellence.

*About the Author:* R.S. Basi is a self-proclaimed contrarian. As an attorney and scholar, he writes about different ways of looking at legal and social institutions. His most recent work, *The Black Hand of God* (ISBN 9780984147403, published by The Marked, LLC 2009) is the fictionalized account of the life of Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita, often called the “African Joan of Arc” and one of Africa’s greatest religious leaders and contrarians. He can be reached at [rbasi@themarkedproductions.com](mailto:rbasi@themarkedproductions.com) and via the book’s website at <http://www.theblackhandofgod.com>.



# COLORING PAGE



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