

# Teacher

## INSIDE

Students fight  
school district's  
corporate agenda 4

PLAP contravenes  
ministry  
guidelines 5

The history of  
grading 5

Praise for school  
associates 6

Adult ed contract 6

New contract, new  
rights, new jobs 6

Celebrating 50  
years of activism 8

Treaty process  
awareness test 11

Conference  
reports 13

Traditions of  
Christmas 16

### CONTENTS

President's message	2
Readers write	2
Looking back	2
Top 10 lesson aids	3
Health and Safety	7
Retirement seminars	12
Classified	14
PD Calendar	15

## Corporations target captive audience



Jenn Ward, Whitney Borowko, and Liz Kreig  
oppose board's selling cola giants access to their learning environment (story page 4)

### PART I

## Classrooms as commodities

by Erika Shaker

As someone uninitiated in the business of education, I was surprised at the beliefs shared by the corporate community at the second Canadian Education Industry Summit, which took place on Wednesday, October 7 in downtown Toronto. The summit was presented by *The Financial Post* and Air Canada and sponsored by Gordon Capital Corporation, Heenan Blaikie, KPMG, PeopleSoft, and Smith Barney. Conference chair Charles Ivey explained that the event was "for the students, parents, teachers, and shareholders" because we need to recognize that "we have education in a networked world, a global community, and education with fiscal constraints." Education is being re-engineered—this is resulting in strikes, lockouts, and charter schools. "The system is changing," and with this change come "opportunities for the private sector to

complement the existing system...which leads, of course, to growth opportunities." The education industry, which includes products and services once provided by the public sector—from desks, to facilities, to teachers, to books, to computers, to transportation—is a \$60 billion market.

*If you can "get" children by the age of two and target them incessantly between the ages of three and eight, they become lifelong consumers of your product.*

The many presentations on business opportunities in public education shared these five assumptions:

1. If you can "get" children by the age of two and target them incessantly between the ages of three and eight, they become lifelong consumers of your product. The school market provides a particularly effective medium in which to pursue this.

2. On-line communication is as good as, if not superior to, "face-time."
3. If it's on the computer, parents think it must be educational. Many effective marketing techniques can be disguised—and therefore excused—with a thin veneer of technology: a colourful "interactive and educational" CD ROM, for example.
4. Teachers who promote the purchase of a particular product in order to assuage parental fears that their child's educational skills are lagging, and then receive a percentage of those sales, are not in a conflict of interest. They are merely demonstrating entrepreneurial initiative by playing on parental fear, and in light of "necessary" budget cuts to education, anything goes.

5. While it is inappropriate, even dangerous, for teachers to teach subjects they haven't a degree in (math or science, for example) it is perfectly acceptable for curriculum to be provided on-line by individuals who may have no teaching expertise at all.

These assumptions were evident in the presentation by Kevin O'Leary, president of The Learning Company, Inc., who gave an enthusiastic description of his company's interactive, educational CD ROMs. "Believe it or not, we're selling entertainment titles to schools to make learning fun!" Discussing direct-marketing techniques, O'Leary told his audience that once a brand is established in a school, it'll stay there forever and influence what parents buy for their children. So, while it's expensive to produce for schools, there are huge financial benefits in the long run.

Business must stay current, because there are changes in the curriculum every six months. Fortunately, interactive CD ROMs can simply be updated by overlaying on top of the original software. This itself has proved an effective marketing technique. Eleven different levels "locked" in prison on the CD have characters that come out and talk to and play with the child, but they'll stay on the CD "till Mom and a credit card set them free." The Learning Company, Inc. has been

See ACCESS page 4





## BCTF Web Site What's New [www.bctf.bc.ca](http://www.bctf.bc.ca)

- *First Nations and Métis Education* home page includes teaching resources, a workshop calendar, and links to related Web sites. The page will include activities and findings reported by the BCTF Task Force on First Nations Education ([www.bctf.bc.ca/social/FirstNations/](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/social/FirstNations/)).
- *Understanding the Treaty Process*, a teaching resource, helps teachers respond to questions and facilitate classroom discussions about the treaty process. The report was prepared by the First Nations Education Steering Committee, the BCTF, and the Tripartite Education Commission, with support from the B.C. Treaty Commission ([www.bctf.bc.ca/social/FirstNations/TreatyProcess/](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/social/FirstNations/TreatyProcess/)).
- *1998-99 Lesson Aids Catalogue* ([www.bctf.bc.ca/cgi/LessonAidsDb.exe/](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/cgi/LessonAidsDb.exe/))
- *Child Labour, a teaching resource* to help educators raise the awareness of their students on the issue of child labour. The online version

includes the introduction, Lesson One, and other resources. The complete unit, #LA2060, may be ordered from the BCTF Lesson Aids Service ([www.bctf.bc.ca/lessonaids/online/LA2060.shtml](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/lessonaids/online/LA2060.shtml)).

- *Who Are the Teachers of British Columbia?* an online presentation about the demographics of current and future BCTF members ([www.bctf.bc.ca/ResearchReports/98td01/](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/ResearchReports/98td01/)).

Bookmark the Web site's *What's New* page, ([www.bctf.bc.ca/WhatsNew/](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/WhatsNew/)), to keep up-to-date with current BCTF news and resources.

—Diana Broome

## The Daybook— An idea whose time has come

by Brian Hodson

[www.discoverlearning.com](http://www.discoverlearning.com)

The Daybook is a project of the Computer Using Educators of B.C. and BC Tel Interactive.

CUEBC gathers, edits, and posts resources and ensures that the design and content of the site answer the needs of educators.

BCTF Interactive provides programming, graphic design, site maintenance, and server space for free.

The Daybook creates an opportunity for sharing lesson plans online. Sharing resources with our colleagues is nothing new; sharing lessons over the Internet is.

As we become increasingly technologically literate, the Internet will become a forum for teachers to share and communicate. Our network of contacts will expand as we begin to meet and discuss issues with our colleagues by e-mail and listservs. The Internet will serve to create relationships between teachers who never expect to meet face to face, yet can provide support to one another.

The Daybook is useful for teachers and sensitive to the great demands on our time. Here are some of its teacher-friendly features:

1. The search engine can search multiple fields at once. The user can define the grade, subject, and keyword for a search. The results of the search are described in brief previews so that the teacher can make choices before selecting a specific lesson.
2. Each lesson, including handouts, tests, and student

work samples, is entirely downloadable and/or printable.

3. Downloaded lessons and worksheets are free of advertising.
  4. All lessons and resources can be used for free.
  5. Author/contributor retains all copyright privileges and identification appears on every lesson.
  6. The Daybook will offer quality lessons in all subjects from K to 12 and include active links to other Internet sites.
- The Daybook, "live" for about six months, currently has 160 lessons online. At this point it should be viewed as a successful pilot project. One hundred, sixty lessons (mostly for intermediate courses) is a great beginning, but to be a valuable resource to K-12 teachers in all subjects, it needs several thousand lessons.

During the next decade, a huge number of teachers will retire, taking with them their expertise and leaving the "newcomers" to reinvent the wheel. The Daybook project allows us to leave our best lessons as a legacy for incoming teachers and extend our helping hand to people we will never meet.

For the 20 years I have been a teacher, I have always known us to gladly share resources with one another. I believe that providing such assistance to our colleagues is simply an extension of our natural inclination to be supportive. Many of us chose to teach because we saw it as a way The Daybook from that perspective. It's a powerful and effective way to share your expertise with a larger number of colleagues.

You can demonstrate your support for The Daybook in a number of ways:

1. Visit The Daybook site

## CALM Web site award

The BCTF won the Canacian Association of Labour Media (CALM) award for *In House Production*, Web Site Division. Here are some of the judges' comments:

- Wow! This has everything. Excellent first page, well laid out throughout.

- Great news. Bargaining information. Great magazine. Unique databases, not only on resources but on resource persons.

- Excellent links from everywhere!
- Up-to-date. Great events calendar. Fabulous support section for teachers. Lesson aids.

- A parents' and public page! What a concept—a page for the public. I've not seen anyone else in virtual labourland do this. Congratulations.

- This is a site meant to be used! It's obviously only going to get bigger and stronger. It ranges beautifully from the big issues, to professional needs; training and upgrading opportunities, community efforts, and personal issues on pension and income.

[www.discoverlearning.com](http://www.discoverlearning.com), use the lessons, and encourage others to do the same.

2. Complete the survey form.
3. Participate as a volunteer to gather, edit, and/or post lessons.
4. Post your own lessons.

Brian Hodson teaches at Okanagan Falls Elementary School, Okanagan Falls and he is project manager for The Daybook. Your input is welcome at [daybook@bc.sympatico.ca](mailto:daybook@bc.sympatico.ca)

## Benefits for same-sex couples An employment right

As we move forward in dealing with the issues of homophobia and heterosexism in the classroom, we see progress on the tangible as well as the principled level. Members who live in same-sex relationships have the same coverage as any other member of their locals. You derive those rights from three sources:

- federal and provincial human rights legislation; and the decisions that have flowed from them
- changes to Revenue Canada regulations
- contractual non-discrimination language in local agreements.

Benefits were negotiated over the years, and securing improved benefits often involved trading off other monetary items. You have a right to benefit from the result of those negotiations.

If you, or someone you know, should be accessing these benefits, contact your local president for information about how to apply.

—Don Briard

## Top 10 BCTF lesson aids

**1** *Creative Writing for Senior Secondary Students*. Dan Lukiv. 100p. ©1997. This introductory creative writing program for Grade 12 exposes the student to all major literary genres. It offers the teacher a simple, methodical program that offers each student individual attention. The assignments and concepts can be teacher-delivered through the lecture format or a simpler teaching method involving distributing the course to students, encouraging them to get started, and answering questions personally or through group discussion. Grade 12. LA 1007—\$8.95

**2** *Living in Space: Book I*. Developed by Science Weekly, Inc., Washington, DC. 48p. 1987. This book was written to support the NASA's education program—"Operation Liftoff." The objective of this material is to enhance the teaching of aerospace concepts. This book contains information and activities on food, clothing, health, housing, communication, and working in space. Grades 1-3. LA 8525—\$12

**3** *Living in Space: Book II*. Developed by Science Weekly, Inc., Washington, DC. 48p. 1987. This book was written to support the NASA education program—"Operation Liftoff." The objective of this material is to enhance the teaching of aerospace concepts. This book contains information and activities on food, clothing, health, housing, communication, and working in space. Grades 4-6. LA 9569—\$12

**4** *Great Canadian Political Cartoons: 1820 to 1914*. Charles and Cynthia Hou. 240p. 1997. This resource book contains more than 330 historical cartoons, which trace Canada's political, economic, and social evolution up to the outbreak of WW I. The cartoons provide some revealing insights into present-day issues such as national unity and international relations. The cartoons in this collection cover a wide range of topics—from Canada's colonial beginnings and growing independence to regionalism, immigration, trade, and foreign affairs. Many deal with social issues such as labour, women's rights, prohibition, poverty, and racism. Grades 8-12. Teacher. LA 2013—\$39.95

**5** *The Art of Decoding Political Cartoons—A Teacher's Guide*. Charles and Cynthia Hou. 71p. ©1998. This guide presents a structured approach to using political cartoons in the classroom. The material in the first half of the guide illustrates various features of political cartoons and the devices cartoonists use to deliver a message. The material in the second half of the guide allows students to practice identifying and analyzing the various cartoon devices, detecting bias, and interpreting historical and contemporary cartoons. Grades 8-12. Teacher. LA 2013A—\$14.95

**6** *The Secret World of Og*. Teresa Haughn. 21p. 1985. A Grade 5 novel study package of questions and activities. Grade 5. LA 9071—\$3.80

**7** *A Program to Foster Literacy: Early Steps in Learning to Write*. Marietta Hurst, Joy Nubich, Lynda Stickley, Gwen Smith. 20p. Rev. 1993. A program for teachers working with young children in process writing. This book provides an in-depth look at the first four stages of writing development typically found in the primary years. These stages are described in the Primary Program, Foundation Document (1990) as the Pre-Conventional, Emergent, Early, and Fluent stages. This program is based on the premise that young children can independently learn to write by writing if they are immersed in an appropriate social and linguistic setting. LA 8094—\$4.50

**8** *Using Eric Carle's Books in the Classroom*. Darlene B. Davis. 98p. ©1997. This theme unit is designed to explore the books and art work of Eric Carle. The resource package outlines a four- to six-week study of Eric Carle's books that relate to themes such as insects, animals, self-esteem. The unit also includes suggestions for art or math lessons. The package offers a variety of activities to enhance Eric Carle's books from lesson plans, worksheets, pocket charts, and a reader's theatre. Grades 1 and 2. LA 8090—\$8.75

**9** *Kids' Shop Smart Tours*. Laura Kalina. 51p. ©1998. This package of resource materials has been designed from input received from dietitians, teachers, parents, and primary students. The aim of the Kids' Shop Smart program is to enhance the child's food and nutrition knowledge in a fun, easy-to-deliver format for teachers. The kit includes a teacher's overview, supermarket tour preparation, the tour, classroom activities, playing with your food recipes and activities, and a program evaluation sheets. K-3. LA 2383—\$3.50

**10** *Outline Maps*. Alice Tiles. 68p. 1980. For use in Grades 4-7 to facilitate the implementation of the prescribed social studies curriculum. Includes outline maps for the world, the continents, and numerous countries. LA 9270—\$6.25

For a complete listing of over 900 BCTF Lesson Aids, consult the catalogue in your school library or the Lesson Aids online catalogue, [www.bctf.bc.ca/LessonAids](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/LessonAids)

To order any of the above lesson aids, enclose a cheque payable to the BCTF or authorized purchase order to BCTF Lesson Aids Service, 100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2. GST and postage/handling are included in the prices. Orders are sent by return mail.

ACCESS from page 1

finding the names, ages, addresses, phone numbers, and gender of children using the software. The information is put to good use. Parents are phoned two weeks before the child's birthday between 06:30 and 08:30 in the morning with interactive and educational "gift ideas."

As the definition of education changes, products like these can become an integral part of that definition—both inside and outside the schools. The trick is for The Learning Company, Inc. to balance the needs of teachers (who want dry, specific information) and students (who want fun).

The Learning Company, Inc. also plays a part in student evaluation. Thanks to its software, some 85% of teachers have students' test scores on their computers. Now, muses O'Leary, how much would a parent pay for that information? The Learning Company wants to link the home to the school server with cable connections so parents can look at their child's scores and decide whether they need supplemental software—provided by The Learning Company, of course. In return for suggesting The Learning Company, Inc. software, the school would share corporate profits. O'Leary assured the audience that "profit-sharing will become a prominent economic model, and it is a marvellous way to pay for the costs of having technology in schools."

He also pointed out that these products serve to sharpen teacher performance because teachers would be under surveillance. We will have "performance-based comparison" between educators. Would you let a doctor operate on you if he hadn't graduated from medical school? Yet there are math teachers out there who don't even have a degree in mathematics!

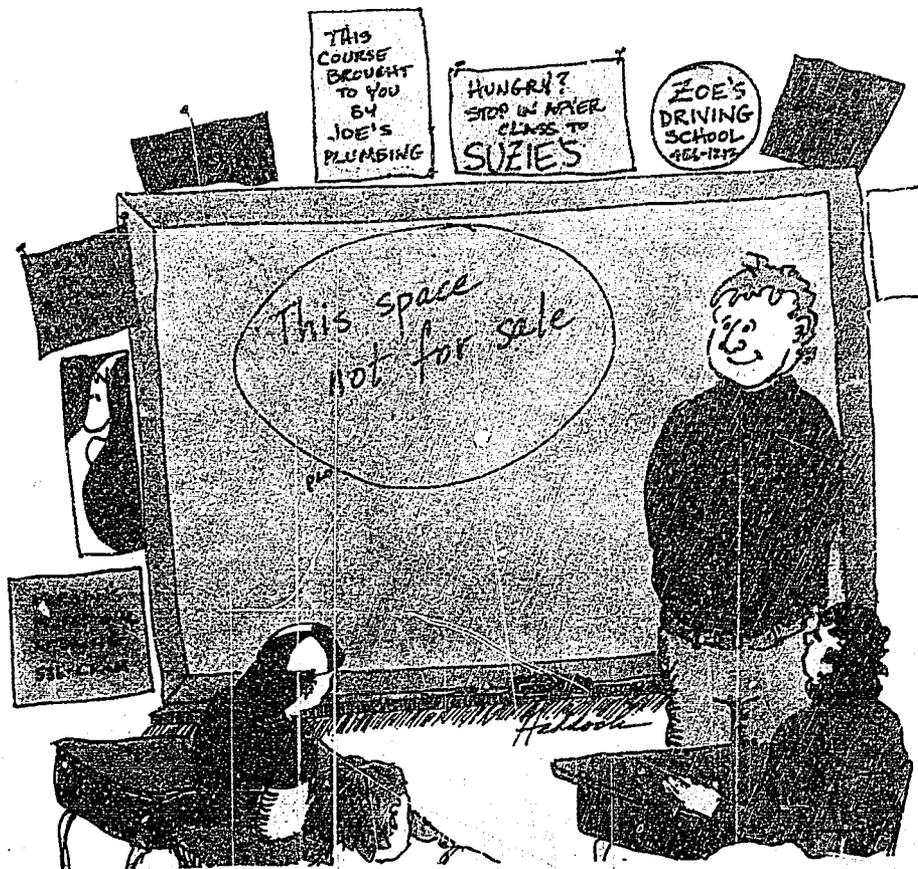
O'Leary did concede, to audience chuckles, that there has been resistance at the teacher level. That resistance has meant the education market has grown more slowly than the consumer market. But there seems to be less bias on the part of younger teachers. He also mentioned that "the use of technology advances test scores sooner"—which is yet to be proven. According to the recent study by Educational Testing Services, the results are actually to the contrary.

Most chilling to observe was the enthusiasm for the idea that enterprising educational institutions and investors alike can benefit from a climate of "government cutbacks and the onset of competitive mentalities and demanding stakeholders." Clearly, education is not seen as a public good but, rather, a private good: an industry for private providers who wish to "crack" this elusive market.

*Erika Shaker is a researcher with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA).*

Part II in this series about the Canadian Education Industry Summit held in Toronto, October 7, 1998, will share further education business opportunities.

# Students fight school district's corporate agenda



by Whitney Borowko

I am a member of a student group called Youth for Environmental and Social Justice (YES) at Thomas Haney Secondary School, in Maple Ridge. We discovered in June that our school district was seeking corporate sponsorship from one of the two cola giants, Coke or Pepsi. We were greatly disturbed by that news because we had already seen the negative effects of sponsorship in schools. In our cafeteria, during lunch last year, we had been subjected to promotion by Jones Soda. We had also been forced to attend a mandatory "self-esteem" assembly that was nothing more than a thinly veiled promotion for Pepsi and the B.C. Lions. This patronizing presentation was complete with smoke, music, and flashing lights to appeal to the "Pepsi Generation."

My sister, at a nearby high school, felt the power of the corporations even more directly. "They told me that I was not allowed to publicize the destructive environmental record of McDonald's," which is one of the school's sponsors.

With these incidents in mind, we decided that we had to take action against the current cola deal that could make corporate sponsorship in our district more far reaching than ever.

YES had already been working for two years to raise awareness around issues concerning corporations and globalization. When researching for our campaigns against child labour and APEC, we were appalled to realize how multinational corporations, supported by our consumer

culture, are wreaking havoc on environments and peoples around the world.

During the summer, I had the chance to see these issues first hand while travelling in Guatemala. I saw many Coke and Pepsi factories, which were set up in Guatemala to take advantage of the lack of environmental and labor laws. I was able to observe how these companies take advantage of the lack of information regarding health to promote their products, and are replacing diverse cultures with an Americanized cola-culture. I returned to Canada with a renewed conviction to fight our district's deal.

YES decided to circulate a petition around our school and to prepare a presentation to the school board and our parent advisory committee. Liz Krieg, Jenn Ward, and I recently gave our presentation to the Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows School Board at one of its bi-monthly meetings.

"Although we understand the need for district funding for some programs, we feel that corporate sponsorship comes at too high a price, and is actually detrimental to our future education," reported Liz Krieg at the meeting. "We believe that schools are intended to be institutes of critical thought and that this objective will become jeopardized when corporations are allowed into the schools."

YES is concerned about the possibility of an anti-disparagement clause that would seek to ensure that corporate sponsors could not be criticized by people associated with the school. A highly publicized case of this occurred earlier this year in

Georgia. Michael Cameron, a high school student, was suspended for wearing a Pepsi shirt on "Coke day," an attempt by his school to win money by impressing visiting Coke representatives. As corporations begin to take a greater role in education, it is probable that incidents like this will not be uncommon.

"Corporations are the ones truly reaping the benefits from corporate sponsorship," says Jenn Ward. "They are able to ensure brand loyalty in the youth market and advertise their products exclusively in schools."

Corporations also use these deals to gather favourable public opinion and distract consumers from unethical business practices such as laying off workers without cause, using child labour, or polluting the environment. In recent years, corporations have been reaching into the classroom in more ways than ever. Some corporations have actually been producing their own course materials.

*Eight million kids in the U.S. watch the mandatory Channel One news broadcast every day during homeroom.*

Although this practice happens more often in the U.S., tactics like these have been creeping into Canadian schools as well.

Several years ago, Coke developed a "Coca-Cola kit" for business and marketing classes in Ontario. The kit was described by a teacher as a "textbook dominated by Coke symbols" whose "educational

value is questionable." Eight million kids in the U.S. watch the mandatory Channel One news broadcast every day during homeroom. The service is offered to schools for "free," but it includes four commercials for Pepsi, Nintendo, Nike, and Burger King during each 12-minute broadcast. Corporations pay \$200,000 per 30-second spot to reach this captive audience. "Is it worth it for a few hundred dollars of AV equipment to have students subjected to corporate agendas every day?" asks Krieg.

It is our buying power and attention that are being sold as the "product," and we are concerned that students have been excluded from the decision-making process. Our school board stated that "all stakeholders were being represented in this deal"; however, they had made no effort to include student voices. We hope people will realize that the sacrifices we are making by selling our schools to these multinational corporations is far greater than what we are gaining.

In the next few weeks, we hope to raise our concerns

*It is our goal...  
...to aid in the development of a district policy that will protect our schools as places of critical thought and knowledge, not corporate control and manipulation.*

with other PACs and with students at the other high schools in our district. We will meet with the school board again, too. It is our goal not only to defeat this current proposal but to aid in the development of a district policy that will protect our schools as places of critical thought and knowledge, not corporate control and manipulation.

*Whitney Borowko is a student at Thomas Haney Secondary School, Maple Ridge.*

**Trustee aims to sell access to students**

The chairperson of the Richmond school board, who is also a director of the B.C. School Trustees Association, is attempting to sell access to students to either Coke or Pepsi. Sylvia Gwozd wants school boards to band together to sell exclusive rights to access the schools and students to one of the cola giants.

"The Lower Mainland alone has more than 300,000 students—more than 50% of the entire province. We're a huge consumer for them," Gwozd told *The Vancouver Sun*.

# PLAP contravenes ministry guidelines

by Liz Orme

A colleague succinctly summarized the new Provincial Learning Assessment Program (PLAP) plans: "Teacher accountability is a big black thundercloud, and it is going to break over our heads." At the time, her statement seemed more than a little paranoid to me. However, the past year of participating on the Assessment Review Committee (ARC) and, more recently, on the PLAP Interpretation Panel has convinced me that she was not paranoid; she was being conservative in her assessment of the implications behind the shifts in the PLAP. The problem is, there is a mismatch between the stated goals of the new PLAP and what it actually does.

- The purposes of the PLAP are clearly stated:
- Provide information to schools and districts annually about the achievement performance of their students in relation to provincial expectations and standards, in order to assist schools and districts to effectively implement provincial curriculum and to plan for school and student performance improvement.
  - Provide information to the public annually about the performance of students provincially in relation to expectations and standards, and trends over time.
  - Provide information to the ministry annually about performance of students in relation to intended learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum, in order to inform decisions about curriculum revision and learning resource identification.

The idea that the PLAP results will help schools plan

for improvement has shifted to encouraging schools to use the "hard numbers" provided by the PLAP in their school accreditation processes. Districts now have the option of asking for individual student results to be reported to them, and it was suggested to teachers that they mark the PLAP tests themselves before sending them in for central marking and include the scores as part of the year's report-card mark for the course.

This addition to the PLAP policy is what causes the inconsistency or misalignment between what the policy says it is going to do, what it actually does, and what is stated in other ministry policies regarding assessment.

For example, consider whether or not a census (every student writes) exam or a sample (a cross-section of selected students write) is best for the PLAP purposes. If the purpose is provincial program assessment, then a sample assessment is sufficient.

What size sample do we need for a good B.C. assessment? A reference group of about 1,000 students would be sufficient. How many students did we actually test in the B.C. PLAP? Over 40,000 per grade.

*"A norm-referenced evaluation system is not meant for classroom assessment because a classroom does not provide a large enough reference group."*

(MOE, 1994, p. 16)

That the PLAP is a norm-referenced assessment brings up another point of policy

misalignment: the booklet *Guidelines for Student Reporting*, provides policy for reporting student progress in B.C. It contains information that conflicts with the PLAP.

"A norm-referenced evaluation system is not meant for classroom assessment because a classroom does not provide a large enough reference group." (MOE, 1994, p. 16). If the PLAP is not meant for classroom assessment, why were teachers being encouraged to mark their individual student results, let alone include them in final report card marks? Furthermore, "placing student achievement on a curve (which a norm-referenced test does) does not accurately describe a student's individual progress; it compares student achievement to that of others rather than comparing how well a student meets the criteria of a specific set of learning outcomes." (MOE, 1994, p. 16) If that is the case, why was the ministry suggesting to districts that they collect individual student scores and use them for school or district self-assessment or accreditation purposes? And finally, there is the criterion-referenced evaluation procedure (MOE, 1994, p. 14-15), which clearly states that teachers should "establish and set criteria" and "involve students, when appropriate, in establishing criteria" and even "provide examples of the desired levels of performance" BEFORE the learning activity is implemented. Obviously, this did not happen with the PLAP. The marking panels met in July; the standard-setting committee met in August. Students and their teachers did not set criteria before the assessment took place, nor did they see examples of the desired levels of performance prior to participating. Thus, the PLAP expected teachers to

do something contrary to what both their professional training and the ministry's own *Guidelines for Student Reporting* informed them was the appropriate thing to do.

Another important question to ask is which program are we assessing with the PLAP? Historically the assessment has been targeted toward a particular program or curricu-

*... the PLAP expected teachers to do something contrary to what both their professional training and the ministry's own Guidelines for Student Reporting informed them was the appropriate thing to do.*

lum, but this is no longer the case. The PLAP is now a basic literacy (and will be a numeracy) assessment and is supposed to connect to a variety of curricular areas. No doubt this explains the appearance of the pizza-menu question for all three grades and the various charts and graphs that one might logically find in a social studies textbook. However, that the Interpretation Panel was asked to assess whether or not the provincial results indicated successful implementation of "the program" implies that the success of a particular program or curriculum, like the English one, say, was being evaluated. Even if that were the case, large pieces of the IRP were not represented by the PLAP assessment. In any case, not only does the PLAP not assess a particular program, it doesn't assess the

whole of any program that we are responsible for delivering. So why was the Interpretation Panel asked to make statements as if it did assess a program in its entirety? And—yippee, now we know that our students can perform basic, fundamental reading and writing tasks quite well. Is this news? No. Both the 1988 and 1993 assessments told us that (not to mention our own classroom-based authentic assessments of our students).

In the end, any educational policy must justify itself in terms of what we want for our education system. What do we value? What do we want for our children? Our society? Policies must reflect, indeed be driven by, our beliefs and goals about education. Currently, in B.C., in regard to the PLAP at least, we are lacking consistency between practice and policy, between the PLAP assessment and our beliefs and goals. What are we really assessing here? Programs? Students? Could it be teachers? Right now, with the shift in the PLAP, it isn't clear. While it is too late to do anything about the 1998 assessment, as the results have been long since released to districts and splashed across newspaper pages, it is not too late for future assessments. Only the policy makers at the ministry, working in positive conjunction with the rest of the education community in B.C., can ensure that what comes from that cloud mentioned by my colleague is liquid sunshine, a commodity of which all British Columbians can be proud, not acid rain.

Liz Orme is president of the B.C. English/Language Arts Provincial Specialist Association.

## A brief history of grading

**A** quickly to the schools and universities. In North America, as the population shift to large urban centres spelled the demise of the one-room schoolhouse in the early 1900s, one of the "efficiencies" created by the new administrative bureaucracies was the neatly printed uniform report card. In 1911, researchers testing the reliability of the marks entered on the cards showed that the same material could be assigned widely different marks, depending on the markers. But those findings changed nothing because the graded report card had taken firm root.

**B** In the years from 1911 to 1960, school systems experimented with various letter and number reporting conventions. Percentage grading was the most popular system during the latter half of the 19th and the early part of the 20th century. In that system, the teacher assigned each student

a number between 0 and 100 supposedly reflecting the percentage of the material that the student had learned. The full scale was rarely used, because marks below 50 were rarely assigned and the difficulties of narrowing down to a single percentage point led to the grouping of scores in multiples of five. During the 1930s and 1940s, most

educational institutions switched from numerical to letter grades, which represented groups of percentages. In the 1960s, the struggle to humanize schools pushed some institutions to move to simple pass/fail options and written evaluations. However, recent surveys have shown that letter grades (A, B, C, D, F) remain the most common grading practice in elementary and secondary schools.

Determining the proportion of students to receive each letter in a common set of letter grades has been the subject of intense debate among experts in educational measurement. One well-known system, which evenly distributes the grades

on either side of a bell-shaped curve, would automatically fail a certain proportion of any given group—even in a group composed of known high achievers. Research has shown that rigid adherence to such practices can be very damaging to students. Student evaluation is a very complex process that should take many factors into account. Recognizing the limits of various grading practices and balancing them with common sense and good judgment is an important part of the work of professional teachers.

Marita Moll is head of research and technology, Canadian Teachers' Federation.

**C**

**D**

**E**

**F**

## Student teachers praise school associates and offer suggestions

by Terry Eastman

Student teachers continue to identify the practicum as the most important part of their teacher preparation, and they show a high level of confidence in their school associates.

A recent report prepared for the B.C. College of Teachers (BCCT) examined four anecdotal questions in *The 1997 Survey of Recent Graduates*:

1. What were the most positive aspects of your final practicum?
2. What were the most negative aspects of your final practicum?
3. Were there conflicts between the expectations of the university and the school?
4. If you were to make one change in your teacher education program, what change would that be?

The comments reveal a great deal about a student's life during the practicum. Many comments show the importance of a positive relationship between the student and the school sponsor. A typical comment underlines the value the student places on the relationship with the school associate:

"The most positive aspect of my practicum was the opportunity to work with an excellent sponsor teacher. As a teacher, she was a great role model, very professional, with high standards set for both herself and her students. As a sponsor teacher,

she was very supportive and open-minded; allowing me the freedom to try out techniques and methods that were different from her own, recognizing them for their educational worth when they were successful, and allowing me to analyze and learn from them when they were not."

Descriptors such as excellent, wonderful, marvelous are included in over 37 positive attributes given to school associates. Other positive traits include supportive/helpful, granted me freedom to grow and develop, provided constructive or positive feedback, an appropriate role model and many other admirable personal attributes. Another student responded:

"I was fortunate enough to have a wonderful school associate who was willing to share her knowledge and skills with me while allowing me to develop on my own. My school associate would point out both my strengths and weaknesses in a manner that was always professional and educational."

While the overwhelming majority of students describe a positive practicum experience, a number found their experience negative or including negative aspects.

(A summary of these is included here to spur debate about the role and responsibility of the associate. That was the purpose of the report to the Teacher Education Forum this November).

Students who had poor experiences cite not enough support, little sharing of ideas or resources, lack of opportunity to explore different strategies, pressure to copy teaching styles or strategies, poor role model, not current, little or no feedback, and associates who were too critical or too negative. Some feel powerless:

"Feeling that I was subject to the incredible power of the faculty associate and/or school associate to cater to their ideas because they write letters of reference needed to get a teaching position."

Conflicting expectations between school and faculty associates caused some concerns. These include a variety of communications problems from unclear expectations, to a lack of communication, to conflicts and contradictions between role partners. Policy conflicts, unclear expectations, teaching styles, methods, load, lesson plans, teachable subjects, and a feeling of being caught in the middle are frequently cited by students, who feel pushed and pulled by different masters.

The fourth question asked students to suggest changes to the practicum. Many students cited problems with the match and selection of school associates. Students' responses raise two issues with regard to selection: How are the school associates selected? and, How

can the student find a good match and/or select a compatible school sponsor? One student reported:

"It is a random match and the relationship with your school associate is the single most important aspect of the teacher-training program. I was lucky. I feel screening for school associates should be a more important part of the program as well as matching students with appropriate school associates."

Additional suggestions for changes raise important issues: professional development for school associates, (especially techniques for helping adult learners), recognition of effective school associates, evaluation of school associates, and a

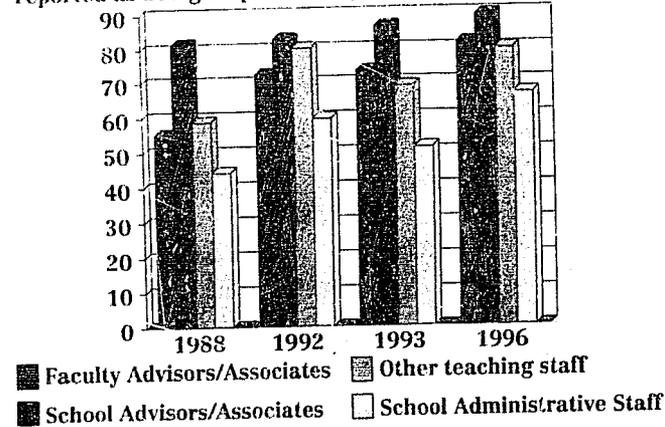
process or an ombudsperson for dealing with student teacher complaints.

Almost 2,000 of 2,155 responded that their practicum was the most important part of their teacher-education program. Ninety-five percent answered at least one open-ended question, producing 705 pages of transcript.

If you are interested in more data on the reported themes, you may read the full report by Terry Eastman and Frank Echols, *The School Associate: Roles and Relationships*, available from the B.C. College of Teachers (604) 731-8170.

Terry Eastman is a teacher at Mountain Secondary School, Langley, and BCCT councilor for the Fraser Valley Zone.

Percentage of respondents school/faculty personnel reported as being helpful during the practicum: by cohort



## Dorsey award completes adult educators' contract

by Janet Amsden

The BCTF was successful in winning salary parity for adult educators in the new provincial collective agreement, but BCPSEA frustrated the attempt to gain full inclusion for adult educators in the Surrey, Maple Ridge, Delta, Lake Cowichan, and Kimberly local agreements. Although adult educators are included in 35 local agreements, BCPSEA resisted BCTF attempts to gain rights for the adult educators, forcing the issues to arbitration. Arbitrator James Dorsey issued his interest arbitration award covering 175 adult educators on September 29, 1998. The award deals with 61 issues left outstanding when adult educators were merged with teachers in the five

districts. Concurrent with the arbitration hearings, the BCTF and BCPSEA established a side table to deal with less contentious matters. The side table decisions, along with Dorsey's award, now form the new collective agreements for the adult educators.

Dorsey considered the five groups separately and awarded different provisions to each group. Common to most is the definition of a regular work year as 1,000 hours of instruction. Adult educators are guaranteed seniority rights and posting, filling, and transfer language although some will not become fully realized until July 1, 2000.

James Burdon, an adult educator in Maple Ridge, is relieved that the arbitration is over. Burdon and other adult

educators in the district joined the BCTF three years ago expecting to have the same rights and rewards as their colleagues teaching in high schools. Although the adult educators teach high school courses, they were frustrated with low wages, short-term contracts and no access to jobs in the K-12 system. Dorsey's decision gives the Maple Ridge adult educators the same hiring priority as other temporary-contract employees in the bargaining unit and on July 1, 2000 they will have continuing-contract status.

Surrey adult educator Lynda Toews is frustrated with the definition of the work year. "In Surrey the 1,000 hours does not include prep time or PD. I personally feel it's a huge slap in the face to be told we don't

deserve professional development time. Also, we're really unhappy about the provision that student evaluations can be used to assess teachers."

"There are some improvements though. Our benefit sharing arrangement is better and we now have the right to job-share. But we don't have parity."

The BCTF had advocated full inclusion in existing local collective agreements for the adult educators. While adult educators in the five districts have gained significant improvements, they do not have the rights of full inclusion in local agreements that are enjoyed in 35 other districts.

BCTF Second Vice-president Linda Watson said, "While we did not achieve everything we wanted in four of these five districts, major gains were

realized. Teachers in adult education will have parity in salary and many fundamental employment rights that they were lacking before. Seniority will be recognized, there will be fair provisions for posting and filling, and there will be job security through continuing contracts."

"Our colleagues in adult education finally have the professional recognition that they deserve, and real collective agreements that are far superior to the conditions they had in the past. In future bargaining rounds, we will work hard again to improve on the areas where this award fell short, so that all our colleagues will have parity around the province."

Janet Amsden is an assistant director in the BCTF's Organization Support Division.

## New contract, new rights, new jobs

by Garry Litke

The new provincial collective agreement negotiated in the spring gives teachers an unprecedented right to audit staffing plans provided by school districts.

On September 30, 1998, each district was required to send its non-enrolling staffing plan to the Ministry of Education and to the local office. Each plan listed the number of teacher-librarians, school counsellors, learning assistance teachers, ESL teachers, and special education resource teachers working in the district.

Locals compared that plan with data collected by staff reps during data-collection week in late September. Teachers recorded their work on a version of the ministry's 1530 form. A data-collection officer collated the forms, and in most cases, the numbers agreed with the board's report.

However, one board reported that every teacher who took a class to the library for a book exchange was a part-time teacher-librarian.

Another board reported that teaching Career and Personal Planning (CAPP) was part of the counselling program. Some boards designated regular classroom teachers as

special education teachers, and some blended learning-assistance assignments with special education. These and other disputes were referred to Vince Ready for expedited arbitration.

In addition to the non-enrolling staffing plan, boards provided a plan for K-3 staffing on October 15. It detailed the staffing allocation for the district, and the actual K-3 class size. The data collected in each school was used to corroborate the board's plan. Of the thousands of primary classes in B.C., only five cases were referred to Vince Ready for arbitration.

Hearings began on Saturday,

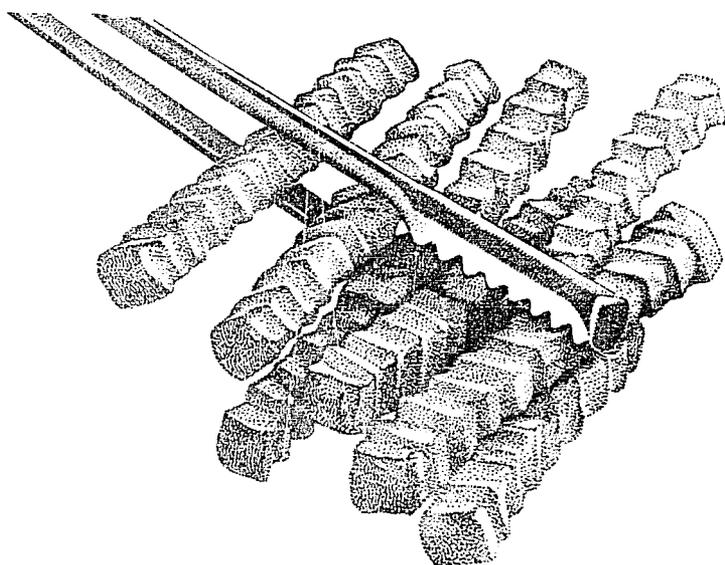
October 24, with a jurisdictional argument. BCPSEA argued that Ready could adjudicate disputes only if a board agreed it was not in compliance with the agreement, and had filed a non-compliance report on September 25. If boards had not reported otherwise, they believed they could not be compelled to participate in the expedited arbitration process. The BCTF argued that if that were true, any board could avoid the expedited process agreement by its own improper reporting. Ready agreed with the BCTF/BCPSEA is appealing the decision.

Local hearings on K-3 dis-

putes and non-enrolling issues began on October 29, and they are scheduled throughout November and into December. Settlements continue to occur as boards come into compliance, often on the eve of the arbitration.

Every teacher who completed the 1530 form, every union rep who collected and analyzed forms, and every spokesperson who delivered an argument on behalf of teachers deserves recognition and praise for his/her part in the success of the contract implementation.

Garry Litke is an assistant director in the BCTF's Bargaining Division.



## "Would you like fries with that?" The folly of school "choice"

by Pat Clarke

Alberta is in the midst of a charter-schools experiment. It isn't going so well. Embezzlement, fraud, and misrepresentation are a few of the problems encountered. In Calgary one of the schools was ordered closed in May, the Ministry of Education citing "financial irregularities." Charter school enthusiasts are discovering that opening and operating a school is more complicated than running a shoe store or a filling station. Much more serious, however, than the logistical or administrative issues surrounding the free-enterprise bromides that equate public education with "consumer choice" or "private initiative" is the philosophical fallacy that fairness and equality can be obtained only by satisfying individual preferences.

### Public schools foster equity by providing a common program of education to all children.

In terms of public education, the concept of equity is multifaceted; it is not only about "options." Public schools foster equity by providing a common program of education to all children. Individual or special needs and differences are accommodated to make education services or the common program accessible. We place such a high value on equity and access in public education because only through education do we assure a more equitable society, a society of equal opportunity.

The proposition that public education functions fairly only when it provides a wide array of choices in order to satisfy preferences or beliefs is a deliberate or thoughtless perversion of the primary purpose of public schools. The accommodation of preferences or particular beliefs or theories in the form of "choices" will diminish equity; it will, as a natural outcome, allow and encourage advantage, hence disparity in

equality of opportunity. The vociferous proponents of charter schools, vouchers, and other variations on the choice theme in public education do not agree with, do not understand, or do not care about the democratic principles that are the foundation of public education.

Choices in public education based on preference and belief are primarily intended to give children in certain circumstances advantages. This is entirely different from enhancing access and is, if anything, precisely the opposite of equity. Public school efforts at alternative programming or individualized instruction are intended to give more children a level playing field. Lighthouse or magnet schools, voucher schools, and the like may address some access issues, but mostly they provide exclusive surroundings, schools defined as much by whom they exclude as by whom they include. They don't tilt the playing field; they create their own, and through school philosophy, programming, and admissions, they "gate it" so that only certain people get to use it.

This is all about installing advantages and exclusivity in the public school system. It is also about perverting fundamental democratic principles. The more exclusivity we build into public education, the less equity we can achieve. The more circumscribed schools become in enhancing equal opportunity, the more we engender a society of privilege

rather than equality.

Somewhere, sometime, a lot of people forgot (perhaps they never knew) what public education is supposed to do. It is supposed to be about building a democratic community. Public schools are supposed to be places where children share a common and communal learning experience that gives all of them an equal

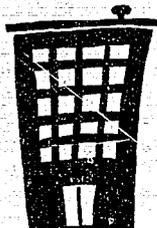
### The more exclusivity we build into public education, the less equity we can achieve.

opportunity to be productive, successful, and participating citizens. Public schools are therefore foundation pieces in democratic societies. Without the critical "equalizing" function of public schools, we will become a less democratic society. Public schools cannot go very far in servicing particular preferences, interests, or beliefs before they betray their mandate as institutions serving democratic principles such as equity and become the educational equivalent of a fast food restaurant: You'll have lots of "choice," but you'll need money to enjoy the product!

Pat Clarke is an assistant director in the BCTF's Professional Development Division.

This article is based on a paper presented at a BCSTA Public Ed Forum: Choice and the Public School Context, October 16-17, 1998.

O.K., THERE ARE NO MORE PUBLIC SCHOOLS...



...NOW WHAT'S YOUR CHOICE?

## Health and Safety

# Bill 14 - 1998

by George Taylor

Bill 14 Workers Compensation (Occupational Health and Safety) Amendment Act 1998 has passed third reading but it has yet to be proclaimed into law. It will likely be in force by the spring of 1999. The full text of Bill 14 is on the Internet at <http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/bills/amend/gov14-2.htm>

The amendments in the act will affect each occupational health and safety committee's work and the regulations that apply to workers. The following summarizes some of the more significant changes:

#### Section 125

Each workplace of 20 or more workers, which includes teachers, maintenance personnel, support staff, and administration, must have an occupational health and safety committee. This is a change from the current regulations, where it is 50 workers or more.

#### Section 127

The joint occupational health and safety committee must have two co-chairs, one representing the workers, and the other representing the employer. This is a change from the current structure, where if the chair is a worker representative, the secretary must be an employer representative and vice-versa.

#### Section 132

If the joint occupational health and safety committee is unable to reach agreement on a matter, a co-chair of the committee may report that to the WCB board. The WCB board may investigate the matter and attempt to resolve it.

#### Section 133

The employer must respond in writing to joint occupational health and safety committee recommendations within 21 days. If they do not accept the recommendations, they must give reasons in writing. A co-chair of the joint occupational health and safety committee may report the matter to the WCB board.

#### Section 134

A member of the joint occupational health and safety committee is entitled to time off work for:

- the time required to attend meetings of the committee, and
- other time that is reasonably necessary to prepare for meetings and to fulfill the other functions of the committee. (This includes regular inspections of the worksite.)

#### Section 135

Each member of a joint occupational health and safety committee is entitled to an annual educational leave totalling eight hours, or a longer period if prescribed by the regulations. The employer must provide the educational

leave without loss of pay or reimburse the worker for costs of the training and reasonable costs of attending the course.

#### Section 136

The employer must provide the joint occupational health and safety committee with equipment, premises, and clerical personnel necessary for carrying out the committee's duties and functions.

#### Section 141

The right to refuse unsafe work has some changes that lessen some of the current conditions in the regulations from an obligation to a may. In Bill 14, a worker may refuse to carry out work if the worker has reasonable grounds that the work is unsafe. The current regulations state that a person must not carry out work if that person has reasonable cause to believe the work is unsafe.

The occupational health and safety program at your workplace must meet or exceed the requirements outlined in the Workers Compensation Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, and other applicable standards, codes, and by-laws that cover the environment and activities where you work. It is very important that the current program be reviewed, because the new occupational health and safety regulations expand upon the former, and they add basic program elements. Instead of waiting for the new amendments in Bill #14 to be proclaimed, occupational health and safety committees should be proactive and have the new amendments in place before they become law. It is also important that the program be annually reviewed so that improvements or corrections are made to it through worker input and through analysis of the effectiveness of the program.

Work is supposed to be a healthy and safe activity, and workers are expected to be protected against occupational accidents, illnesses, and diseases. It is important to ensure that our schools are safe for us and for our students. Budget cutbacks and a lack of training of both management and workers have contributed to inadequate, even non-existent, occupational health and safety programs in many schools. What is needed is a comprehensive, preventative approach that tackles workplace problems at their source. This requires a real commitment from all those concerned to reduce workplace accidents, illnesses, and diseases—to make our work environment a healthier place for all.

George Taylor is an assistant director in the BCTF's Organization Support Division, assigned to health and safety.

# Celebrating 50 years of



Canada Post issued this stamp to mark the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to honour John Humphrey's contribution to human rights law. His portrait is superimposed over a copy of the typed draft of the declaration, with hand-written edits.

One afternoon half a century ago, a Canadian law professor named John Humphrey went for tea with Eleanor Roosevelt. The American First Lady wanted to talk about a framework for "the international Magna Carta of all mankind."

After their conversation, Humphrey went back to his hotel room in Long Island and worked night and day for a solid week to write the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"I don't pretend to have been a Thomas Jefferson," Humphrey said in a 1984 interview. "The Declaration really has no one father, but I did include a lot of things I especially cared about."

In a post-Holocaust world painfully aware of humans' atrocious inhumanity, the Universal Declaration was a ringing statement of hope and a world-wide commitment to peace with justice. Officially proclaimed on December 10, 1948, it is a revolutionary document because it affirms the principle that human rights are an international responsibility, not the internal purview of sovereign states.

*The declaration also enshrines economic, social, and cultural rights, such as the right to an education.*

The declaration affirms that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights; have the right to life, liberty, and security of person, and to equality before the law; have the right to seek asylum from persecution; and have the right to freedom of speech and the press, of movement, of assembly, and of worship. The declaration also enshrines economic, social, and cultural rights, such as the right to an education. And it asserts that no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, or slavery.

Despite these lofty ideals, such practices are woefully common in signatory nations. But through such documents as the Universal Declaration

of Human Rights, people the world over are being educated about their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and they are organizing to assert them.

Although the declaration is not legally binding, its principles have become so firmly entrenched in international law that it has acquired great force. Some activists in Canada and abroad are beginning the movement to make the declaration legally binding through having it incorporated in each nation's bill of rights.

*If the declaration became legally entrenched, "we would be in a position to deter the corporations' drive to make their agenda dominant in all areas of life..."*

According to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the economic rights asserted in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are particularly crucial because they are the most frequently violated in our corporate-dominated culture. They are not included in the Canadian Bill of Rights. The corporate elite recognizes that the entrenchment of economic rights would threaten their interests, and they will vigorously resist such a move.

In the October 1998 *CCPA Monitor*, George Crowell and Vito Signorile, both retired University of Windsor professors, note that making the Universal Declaration of Human Rights legally binding "is not to deny that corporations have rights—which is, of course, debatable—but to affirm that the rights of people take priority over the economic ambitions of corporations, as evidenced, for example, in the MAI." If the declaration became legally entrenched, "we would be in a position to deter the corporations' drive to make their agenda dominant in all areas of life," they write.

People all over the world are planning events to mark the

50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In B.C., it will be the topic of discussion, essays, and artwork in classrooms all over the province.

Pummy Kaur, a Surrey teacher and member of B.C. Teachers for Peace and Global Education, gave a workshop on teaching about the declaration at the October province-wide professional development PSA day. A teacher of gifted, talented, and creative children, Kaur keeps a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on her classroom wall.

She encourages her students to learn to assert their rights, and to accept the attendant responsibilities. Studying about rights and responsibilities together encourages leadership, tolerance, and empathy, Kaur said. And the children come to see how the themes of peace, human rights, and the global environment are interconnected.

Kaur helps her students to look at violations of human rights in democratic societies, as well as in autocratic regimes. She also encourages the youngsters to research the lives of human rights advocates such as Aung San Suu Kyi, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, and Nelson Mandela.

*"The fundamental truths set out in this declaration have lost none of their relevance or vitality in the half century since their adoption..."*

Himself a prisoner of conscience for 27 years, Mandela knows better than anyone how critical it is to uphold the vision enshrined 50 years ago. He has said, "The fundamental truths set out in this declaration have lost none of their relevance or vitality in the half century since their adoption. It is time for everyone to rededicate themselves to these ideals."

— Nancy Knickerbocker

## Why March 21?

Peaceful demonstrators against apartheid were killed on March 21, 1960, in Sharpeville, South Africa. In 1966, the United Nations declared the day as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Canada was one of the first countries to show its support, and in 1989, the first Canadian March 21 Campaign was held. Respect. Equality. Diversity. These are three fundamental Canadian values that support the March 21 Campaign. The point of each annual campaign is to make Canadians aware that racism exists in Canada and to inspire each of us to take action against racial discrimination.

## Top 21 ideas for March 21 (or any time!)

1. Conduct a media review to identify discriminatory or racist messages.
2. Organize a contest to create slogans and posters that support the March 21 theme.
3. Make a quilt that reflects Canada's diversity.
4. Get on the Internet, and sign the Cyber Petition at the March 21 Web site.
5. Stage a play that examines racism.
6. Co-ordinate a march down a main street in your community to promote racial harmony.
7. Design flags, t-shirts, hats, that carry the March 21 message.
8. Discuss with a friend his/her experiences of racism.
9. Volunteer to be a second-language tutor.
10. Participate in the March 21 Stop Racism National video competition.
11. Watch a film that explores racial discrimination, prejudice, or multiculturalism, and discuss its theme.
12. Learn more about conflict resolution, and put it into practice.
13. Construct exhibits to display around your school or neighbourhood.
14. Arrange a debate on issues related to racism.
15. Contact local politicians and encourage them to take action on March 21.
16. Discover your origins by tracing your family history and making a family tree.
17. Research the lives of individuals whose actions have improved race relations.
18. Arrange with a local retailer to display March 21 materials in their store.
19. Develop and complete a report card that measures Canada's performance on eliminating racial discrimination.
20. Form a club that promotes the elimination of racial discrimination.
21. Examine your own actions. Do they reflect beliefs in equality and diversity? How do your actions demonstrate these beliefs?

For more information and materials, call 1-888-March21, or visit [www.march21.com](http://www.march21.com)



# of human rights activism



NANCY KNICKERBOCKER PHOTO

Queretaro musicians raise their voices to raise the spirits of hunger strikers seeking freedom for imprisoned teachers and activists.

## 4th Tri-National Conference examines impact of neo-liberal agenda on public education

by Nancy Knickerbocker

Despite the many differences among schools of North, Central, and South America, teachers throughout the hemisphere all face similar threats to public education from the neo-liberal corporate agenda.

*Education "reforms"...include drastic cuts in education funding, politicization of curriculum change, increased centralization of government control accompanied by decentralization of accountability, increased use of mass standardized exams with greater power to limit children's educational options...*

That was the overwhelming message of a recent conference held at the University of Queretaro, in the central highlands of Mexico. About 200 delegates from Canada, United States, Mexico, Caribbean, Honduras, Peru, and Argentina came together November 7 and 8, 1998. It was the fourth conference sponsored by the Tri-National Coalition in Defense of Public Education, formed as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Larry Kuehn, BCTF's director of research and coordinator of international programs, warned of the proposed expansion of NAFTA

into all the countries of the hemisphere by 2005. The Summit of the Americas process deals specifically with education as a commodity to be marketed in the global economy, but it also contains some apparently progressive rhetoric, he noted. Rather than wait and react to governments, Kuehn called upon teacher unions to seize the initiative and develop a common strategy to resist the negative consequences of globalization.

Education "reforms" faced by teachers throughout the Americas include drastic cuts in education funding, politicization of curriculum change, increased centralization of government control accompanied by decentralization of accountability, increased use of mass standardized exams with greater power to limit children's educational options, deeper socio-economic disparities creating profound differences in quality of education, concerted attacks upon public education and, in some countries, overt repression against teacher leaders. For example, since 1970, more than 150 teachers have been killed or disappeared in Mexico.

Outside the conference hall, demonstrators called for freedom for Mexican political prisoners, especially Prof. Sergio Jeronimo Sanchez, a high-school history teacher jailed last February for his political activism. On October 12, Jeronimo and two others began a hunger strike to protest their continuing incarceration. The prisoners' wives also went on a hunger strike in front of the state Supreme Court building. One woman has miscarried as a result of malnutrition and stress. Interviewed on the 27th day of their hunger strike, the women appeared frail but determined.

Canadian teachers were deeply moved by the level of commitment shown by Latin American colleagues. Jan Eastman, president of the Canadian Teachers' Federation, was eloquent in her praise for their dedication and for their faith "in the power of education to transform the lives of people." She spoke of

public education as the hope for the future of democracy and social justice, and as the basis for a world in which every child has an opportunity to learn.

"The pressures on us are great, and the need to work together is paramount," Eastman said. "Who is more necessary than we to fight for public education and to put forward reforms that will expand potential for people and not squash it."

Eastman is among a group of teacher-leaders who have begun planning for a hemispheric conference to analyze the Summit of the Americas process and develop an action plan to counter its potentially disastrous impact upon public education. That conference is slated for Quito, Ecuador, in October 1999, to coincide with World Teachers' Day.

Nancy Knickerbocker is the BCTF's media relations officer.

## BOOK REVIEW

### Free the Children

by Kathleen Ruff

*Free the Children*, by Craig Kielburger with Kevin Major, published by McClelland & Stewart, 318 pages, \$29.99

Challenging governments that have ignored their most important obligations under international human-rights law, a Canadian youngster has stirred up a world-wide movement to demand action on children's rights.

Who can forget the image of an outraged 13-year-old Craig Kielburger telling Prime Minister Jean Chretien to include human rights on his agenda when Chretien, surrounded by Canadian political and business leaders, was enthusiastically carrying out his trade promotion tour of Asia?

"How come so much enthusiasm for trade, but not for human rights?" was Kielburger's question.

*Kielburger has written a book on his experiences meeting face-to-face with exploited kids in India, Thailand, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.*

Their abandonment of human rights is not a topic political leaders want to discuss. Chretien at first refused all requests for a meeting with Kielburger until media attention embarrassed him into changing his mind.

Kielburger was in Asia at the same time as Chretien because he wanted to see firsthand what life is like for child workers. His eyes had been opened to the reality of

millions of kids working in slavery when he read in *The Toronto Star* of the murder of young Iqbal Masih, who was killed after speaking up against bonded child labour.

Now, two years later, Kielburger has written a book on his experiences meeting face-to-face with exploited kids in India, Thailand, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. His book, full of challenging human rights issues, gives these issues a dramatic human face. We hear kids trapped in bonded labour, kids living on the streets, and kids exploited by the sex trade speak for themselves of their pain, their fears, and—unbelievably courageous—their hopes to escape and become teachers and help other children.

The book links the lives of children in Canada and children in developing countries. It builds a human and emotional solidarity and shows how policies and actions by our country and organizations like the IMF affect the lives of kids half a world away.

*Free the Children* groups have sprung up around the world. The book zeroes in on youth empowerment and how kids in wealthy countries like Canada want and need to be more than consumers.

Turning into a walking display ad for multinational companies does not satisfy kids' inner needs. Kids care about what is happening to other kids, and given the chance and given support, they can flourish and become dynamic advocates for children's rights and a better world.

The U.N. human rights covenants and the Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantee every child basic human rights such as food, shelter, education, health, security. Every country in the world except two (the United States and Somalia) have ratified the convention.

*Free the Children* is a book and a movement calling on governments and the adult world to keep these promises to the kids of the world.

Teachers can play a vital role by supporting this home-grown movement of child activism and world solidarity. While raising serious issues, the book is a fun read for kids. It has "the drama and emotion of a top flight thriller" says *Quill & Quire*, rating it as a book of exceptional merit.

The book would make an excellent classroom resource for social studies, writing, AND youth empowerment.

Kathleen Ruff is a former teacher and former director of the B.C. Human Rights Commission.

For more information, contact Craig Kielburger, Free The Children, 16 Thornbank Road, Thornhill, ON L4J 2A2 (905) 881-0863 F: (905) 881-1849 E-mail: freechild@clo.com <http://www.schoolnet.ca/exlcommunity/freechild>

## Teacher union president still imprisoned in Ethiopia

Amnesty International, the world's most influential human rights organization, has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its scrupulous investigation and fearless reporting of human rights violations. Its logo, a candle inside a helix of barbed wire, illustrates the Chinese proverb that serves as its motto: "It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness."

Amnesty International "adopts" prisoners of conscience who are incarcerated in violation of international human rights law. Dr. Teye Woldeesemayat, president of the Ethiopian Teachers' Union, is one such person. He was an assistant professor of political science at Addis Ababa University until he and other government critics were arbitrarily dismissed. As leader of the ETA, Dr. Teye criticized government education policies and sought better conditions for teachers. He has not advocated violence and has no party affiliation.

Nonetheless, he was arrested on May 29, 1996, and was held in shackles in solitary confinement. Later he was transferred to a filthy cell with about 250 other prisoners. Largely as a result of international pressure, Dr. Teye's conditions of incarceration have improved, but he is still denied private access to his lawyer.

Three months after his arrest, Dr. Teye was charged with armed conspiracy. He firmly denies the charge, asserting that his defence of teachers' rights and his union work are the real reasons for his arrest and detention. If convicted, he faces a possible sentence ranging from five years imprisonment to the death penalty.

Teachers and others can write courteous letters expressing concern about the arrest and ill-treatment of Dr. Teye Woldeesemayat, detained for trade union activities and non-violent opposition to the government's education policies. Please express concerns that his ongoing trial has fallen far short of international standards of fairness. Please write to:

*His Excellency Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister, Prime Minister's Office, P.O. Box 1031, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Fax: +2511-522-030*

*Dr. Fecadu Gadamu, Ambassador, Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 210-151 Slater Street, Ottawa, ON, K1P 5H3. Fax: (613) 235-4638. E-mail: info@magi.com*

# Earl Manners speaks at the fall 1998 RA

**W**hat has happened to public education three and a half years after the Harris revolution and one year after the political protest is similar to what has taken place in health care, social services, and in general government services. The Ontario government has steamrolled over welfare recipients, the poor, single mothers, nurses, and the public service, and moved on to teachers and education workers. Educators have risen to the challenge. Education is the Achilles heel of the government of Ontario. One of the biggest dips in its popularity occurred last year at this time, during the political protest.

- The government took more than one billion dollars out of the education community. The new funding model that comes into place this year is going to take out at least another 700 million dollars over the next two years.

- A new elementary school curriculum has been imposed. It was developed in very short order without teacher involvement and delivered to schools this summer. Some teachers were given a one-day in-service, and the rest were told to start teaching it at the beginning of September. Before it was delivered, the premier's office and his senior staff reviewed the curriculum and removed all references to values. The government rushed through the printing of textbooks, which were not necessarily tied to the curriculum. They sold them to school boards at a greater cost than they paid.

- At the secondary school level, we're going through an entire review of our curriculum. An attempt to contract-out the curriculum writing to American multinational corporations was stopped as a result of public pressure.

- Standardized testing has been introduced in math and English for Grades 3, 6, and 9, and an exit exam for literacy in Grade 10. They're hoping to make it as standardized as possible so that students, schools, school boards, and teachers can be ranked. The Education Quality and Assessment Office has stood up to them, and the tests are curriculum based.

- This spring, the government bullied through a pension deal where we got an 85 factor window. The deal gives

the government an \$8.5 billion windfall. More than 9,500 teachers retired at the end of June, and the boards were given some tools to override our collective agreement. They hired back only 6,000.

- Bill 104 amalgamated school boards in both the public and separate school systems. The 76 school boards were reduced to 31 in less than a year. We reorganized just as quickly to maintain bargaining strength.

- Bill 136 introduced rules for the merger of various unions because of amalgamation. Educational workers had to decide who would represent them with the new school boards, but Bill 136 also included a provision to ensure that non-union be a choice on the ballot. The silver lining of this bill is that union participation increased after the votes, and the education sector is more unionized than it ever was.

- Bill 160 gave the provincial government total control of all aspects of education decision-making, and funding, eliminating the rights of school boards to tax. The bill reduced trustees in every school board and limited their salaries. It removed principals and vice-principals from the union. It scrapped negotiations legislation for teachers and moved us under the Labour Act. It made all teacher collective agreements null and void as of August 31, 1998. School boards can unilaterally set the terms and conditions of employment for this September including salary, benefits, leaves, and workload provisions. The bill said that our new work world would be based on 1,250 minutes of instruction per week. They were trying to encourage school boards to add one class of instruction for every secondary school teacher. At the elementary level, they calculated 1,300 minutes.

The funding formula, as well, said that schools could remain open only if they met certain operational requirements. One of those was that the square footage needed for a student be limited to 1,000 square feet. If you had excess space, you had to close the schools. That formula is lower than the formula for space for monkeys at the Toronto Zoo and for prisoners in our jails in Ontario.

Toronto announced the closure of 138

schools as of September 1999. School boards across the province figure with that formula, 600 schools would have to close across the province.

You can see why it was very easy for the teachers and educational workers to walk off their jobs last year, and they did for two weeks beginning on October 27. During that two weeks, we had a 66% approval rating in the polls in spite of the fact that the government tried to buy support by offering parents a \$400 daycare rebate during the political protest.

The funding formula almost eliminates teacher guidance counsellors, teacher-librarians, and special education program teachers, and some of the boards decided to go even further and cut our benefit plans, limit union leaves, and even make it impossible to be sick without losing a day's pay. All of this was done against the backdrop of the government's developing a \$5 million advertising campaign that attacked teacher unions and blamed them for everything and said that the government was the only one interested in improving education.

In light of all this, last spring, teachers across the province suspended their participation in voluntary activities. They declined to be coaches, they declined to get involved with student councils, they declined to get involved in clubs. The athletic association suspended all the fall athletic programs. All our teacher bargaining units conducted strike votes, most of them in the 90 to 100% range.

We identified a few boards that would go on strike and everyone else was sent back to work, with all voluntary activities suspended, and we used rotating strikes of one-day duration to try to spur negotiations.

We now have 24 agreements with 31 school boards that bring back our old terms and conditions of employment, our old contracts, and protect the six out of eight workload provisions. We have eight more to go, and we are not going to quit until all of them are settled in our favour as well.

We are hanging on by our fingertips. We protected our bargaining rights, but there have been costs. Most of our members haven't had a pay increase since 1992, most of those 24 agreements won't get a pay increase for another two years, and guidance teachers and library teachers are watching their jobs disappear.

*Earl Manners is the president of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.*

Edited version of the speech given at the BCTF's Fall Representative Assembly, November 7, 1998.



*Kit Krieger presents the charter to Pierre Blouin, president of local union #93, Association des enseignantes et enseignants francophones, for teachers employed by Conseil scolaire francophone.*

## Forum examines immersion

by Paule Desgroseilliers

**R**epresentatives from a number of provincial associations attended a forum on immersion organized by the Committee on French Programs and Services. The main focus of the day was to explore topics related to French immersion education in British Columbia and to recommend ways to address the issues raised.

Each of the five discussion groups was assigned one of the following topics to examine in depth: funding allocation, promotion of the program, delivery of the program, administration of the program at the district and school level, and retention of students in a French-immersion program. Each group presented a number of recommendations and suggestions to ensure that the immersion program continues to be an alternate educational program of high quality available to all students.

The issue of lobbying to enshrine the French Immersion program in the B.C. School Act was debated. Some felt that energies were better spent on lobbying for an assurance of continued federal/provincial funding rather than a legislated inclusion of the program in the School Act. Another recommendation was to raise awareness of funding allocations at school and district levels. This was reiterated by the participants examining promotion of French immersion.

Both groups emphasized the need to disseminate information on the success of the program more often and more effectively. The four representatives of B.C. Parents for French, the provincial organization responsible for the promotion of the immersion program, stated that their work has been impeded by smaller budgets and fewer volunteers. Accordingly, they supported wholeheartedly the notion of building more partnerships so that they can

be assisted in their efforts to promote the program.

A knowledgeable and committed administrative team at both the district level and the school level is necessary to ensure a healthy French-immersion program. As it is their responsibility to staff the program, a careful selection of qualified teachers, in terms of both French language abilities and subject area expertise, will provide quality education from Kindergarten to Grade 12. All discussion groups emphasized that a commitment on the part of administrators, teachers, parents, and students is essential for the healthy growth of a French immersion program in a district.

The final topic addressed was that of students' dropping out of the program. Having a late-immersion graduate in this discussion group provided insights on the subject. Aside from peer pressure, there are many reasons for leaving the program at the Grade 7 and Grade 9/10 levels. The major ones seem to be, at the secondary level, the lack of opportunity to work with different teachers and experience different teaching styles, the lack of flexibility in course programming, the lack of transportation to attend immersion schools outside the catchment area, and the attraction of other alternate educational programs such as the international Baccalaureate. In concluding their report, the group listed a number of strategies and practices to put into place to encourage students to remain in the program until graduation.

The Committee on French Programs and Services will complete the final report of the forum at their February meeting. The recommendations will be distributed to all associations, groups, and individuals involved in the French-immersion program.

*Paule Desgroseilliers is a member of the BCTF Advisory Committee on French Programs and Services.*

**Must all these schools die?**

Toronto District School Board identifies 138 schools that could close next year



## British Columbia Treaty Process Awareness Test

How many stages are there in the British Columbia Treaty Process?

Six. (1) Statement of intent, (2) Preparation for negotiations, (3) Negotiation of a framework agreement, (4) Negotiation of an agreement in principle, (5) Negotiation to finalize a treaty, (6) Implementation of a treaty.

To get a detailed explanation of the B.C. Treaty Process, take a look at the booklet "Understanding the B.C. Treaty Process," which is available on the Web at <http://www.bctf.bc.ca/Social/FirstNations/TreatyProcess/report.html#stages>

How many First Nations (as accepted by the British Columbia Treaty Commission) are active in the British Columbia Treaty Process?

Fifty-one. For a list of all the First Nations involved, see the Web site at: <http://www.bctf.bc.ca/Social/FirstNations/TreatyProcess/report.html#participants>

How many treaties exist in British Columbia?

Fifteen. Governor James Douglas entered into 14 treaties with First Nations in the lower Vancouver Island in the 1850s. The 15th is Treaty 8, in northeast B.C., which covers First Nations whose territories stretch across the provincial border from Alberta.

No B.C. government was prepared to make treaties again until the 1990s. The Nisga'a Treaty, once ratified, will be the 16th and the first negotiated in modern times. True or false? The Nisga'a treaty table was the first established under the British Columbia Treaty Process.

False. The Nisga'a negotiations began 20 years ago, after a court judgment established that aboriginal rights still exist. The B.C. Treaty Process was established more recently. The entire Nisga'a treaty, along with support documents can be found at <http://www.aaf.gov.bc.ca/aaf/treaty/nisga/nisga.htm>

Name the two First Nation litigants in the Delgamuukw case.

Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en. True or false? The First Nation litigants in the Delgamuukw "won" in the Supreme Court decision on their appeal handed down in December 1997?

False, although it depends on what is meant by *won*. The Supreme Court overturned the lower court decisions that ruled against the land claims. However, it did so on technical grounds, and ordered a new trial. The decision did define more clearly the rights of First Nations in land claims, so in that sense, it was a win for all First Nations, not just those involved in the court case.

In what year did blanket extinguishment of aboriginal title occur in British Columbia?

A trick question. Title was never extinguished. For nearly 150 years, British Columbia governments claimed that aboriginal title had been

extinguished when British sovereignty was declared in 1846. However, the Delgamuukw decision makes it clear that those claims were never extinguished.

What is the significance to First Nations of OIC (Order in Council) 1036?

An order passed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council that allows the provincial government to confiscate ("resume") up to 105% of reserve land without compensation. This provision has been used frequently to run roads, power lines and the like across reserves, with no say by the First Nations on whose reserve the service is running.

With what does Section 91 (24) of the Constitution Act deal?

It gives exclusive authority to the Canadian Federal Government for "Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indians."

Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution recognizes and affirms what?

Section 35 affirms inherent aboriginal rights. Supreme Court decisions, such as Delgamuukw, have further defined those rights.

Constitutional Act 1982—PART II: Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada

• Recognition of existing aboriginal and treaty rights

35. (1) The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.

• Definition of "aboriginal peoples of Canada"

(2) In this Act, "aboriginal peoples of Canada" includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada.

• Land claims agreements

(3) For greater certainty, in subsection (1) "treaty rights" includes rights that now exist by way of land claims agreements or may be so acquired.

This awareness test was developed by Brian Domney, negotiator in the Treaty Negotiations Division of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

## Crisis Response: Summary of a counselling LSA discussion

by Robert Dionne

On Thursday, April 2, 1998, the Comox Valley School Counsellors Local Specialist Association held a potluck dinner meeting to discuss experiences in responding to various sudden-death crises. The counsellors directly involved in supporting the schools, and the other counsellors attending examined the process outlined by our crisis-response manual and compared it with their experiences. We acknowledged the usefulness of our manual and cited areas of concern that experience suggests still need to be addressed.

Who can best support a school when a tragic event occurs?

Many schools in B.C. have crisis-response teams, but what is their role? When a crisis occurs, can we expect people who are emotionally involved to respond in an effective manner? Or is it better to have a district crisis-response team to attend to the needs of the school so that the school's team has only to introduce the external team and help facilitate their work?

We concluded that the advantages of having the school's crisis-response team support its school population is more effective for several reasons:

The school population is like

a family. Members experiencing the pain resulting from loss can provide empathy and emotional support for one another. Through shared grief, new meanings are created, and existing relationships are strengthened and redefined. When a death related to the school population occurs, initially counselling is not what is required. Instead, just as in a family, empathy and emotional support are needed. The trained members of the school's crisis-response team, who are themselves experiencing grief, are in the best position to teach and model the giving and receiving of empathy and support.

Together, in their shared grief, the students, the staff, and their response team can begin to make meaning of their loss and, through that experience, strengthen and redefine their relationships with others.

External teams can provide support, but they cannot realistically share in the grief the school is experiencing, because they do not have an attachment with the deceased. External teams are appreciated, but they are seen as outsiders, and when the initial shock and pain subside, they withdraw, giving the impression that the crisis is over, thus interrupting or ending the natural process of healing that should be ongoing.

Therefore, it is imperative

that each counsellor in the district receive training in crisis response and the grieving process so that he/she can go to his/her school and train a team. The counsellor, as part of the team, can take an instrumental role, even while dealing with personal grief, in facilitating the grieving process of others in the school.

Effectiveness of the crisis-response manual

Discussion around our crisis-response manual yielded three suggestions:

• *Managing feelings of loss*  
Inherent in grieving, the feelings of loss can be intensely painful and frightening, and learning to face these feelings head on is an extremely important task in the grieving process. Many individuals try to avoid these feelings by focussing discussions on: assigning blame, on feelings of anger, or, in some situations, on the graphic details of the death. When this occurs, it is important for the counsellor to bring the focus of discussion back to the individual's feelings of loss and the meaning that these feelings have.

• *Managing feelings of anger*  
Anger typically arises out of an individual's sense of helplessness over the loss. By focussing on the meaning of the loss, one can channel the

energy created by anger toward constructive action. This, in turn, can return to the individual a sense of personal agency, which facilitates greater understanding and meaning and supports the grieving process.

• *Logistical concerns*

In junior and senior secondary schools, students usually travel from class to class. Powerful emotions arise in each class the deceased would have attended, especially initially. We concluded that it is important to ensure that a team approach exists for back up in these classes throughout the first few days in case the teacher needs extra support or relief. This can be done by having counsellors assigned to classes so that they can connect with teachers at the start of each class and offer this support should the teacher feel it is needed.

Critical-incident and post-critical-incident concerns

Immediately following a sudden death, the agencies involved all have protocols to deal with these situations. However, although most communities have disaster-response teams in place, these teams are different from what is needed for a smaller scale crisis. As a result, community responses may be less well organized. Any time confusion arises over whose responsi-

bility it is to initiate and organize a response, it is likely that it will be too slow to be most effective. We believe that it is imperative to address this concern with local agencies that provide counselling services and to put in place a structure that can respond immediately.

The second area we recognized as needing attention was post-critical-incident as long as several months later. Schools often experience an increase in behaviours that require the attention of the school counsellor or administrator. The increase can exceed the school's ability to deal with the behaviours effectively. Districts that recognize this possibility and budget for it, can provide increased short-term post-critical-incident debriefing and grief counselling to support the school.

This paper was written to summarize and share our discussions. We hope it will stimulate similar discussions to provide effective support to schools when tragic events occur.

Robert Dionne is a counsellor at Trail Lake Middle School, Courtenay.

Source: B.C. School Counsellors' newsletter, Fall 1998. This discussion paper, prepared by Dionne while he was president of Comox Valley LSA has been edited for the newsletter.

## Ideas for working with students with special needs

• Need to find a workshop on dealing with students with behaviour problems?

• Want to join a discussion about inclusion policies?

• Then take a look at... the *Inclusion Resource Network* Web page!

Seven of the BCTF's PSAs who deal with the support of students are collaborating on this Web page project:

Association for Educators of Gifted, Talented, and Creative Children in B.C.

B.C. Alternate Education Association

B.C. School Counsellors' Association

English as a Second Language

Provincial Specialist Association

Hospital/Homebound Provincial Specialist

Association Learning Assistance Teachers' Association

Special Education Association

Special features include:

• A calendar of PD events related to inclusion and special needs.

• A monthly *What's New and Useful* section: lesson ideas or plans, information about resource people in specific

areas of expertise/discussion on policy questions, what's happening around the province, and more!

• *Focus PSA of the month.* Each PSA may feature reviews of programs or resources, book reviews, articles, recent publications, etc.

• Links to listservs maintained by each of the PSAs.

• Three online professional development workshops, each

lasting four weeks, on relevant topics.

• Links to active Web pages maintained by each of the PSAs.

• Links to other related special education Web sites.

• Links to two databases: *Inclusion Resource Database*, and *Modified and Adapted Database*.

Visit the new Web page at <http://www.bctf.bc.ca/IRN>

—Larry Kuehn

## 1998-99 Retirement-planning seminars

All teachers age 40+ should plan to attend one of the retirement-planning seminars listed. There is no pre-registration, nor fee. Seminars are on Saturdays from 09:00 to 16:00, except where noted. The agenda includes what retirement is, the Teachers' Pension Plan, legal issues, retirement experiences, pension calculations, and personal advice. Make sure to bring a calculator and your most recent pension statement. Younger teachers are welcome.

Date	Location
January 16, 1999	Surrey, Sheraton Guildford Hotel
January 23, 1999	Coquitlam, Westwood Plateau G&C Club
January 30, 1999	Burnaby, Clarion Hotel Villa
February 6, 1999	Langley, Newlands Golf & Country Club
February 13, 1999	North Vancouver, N. Shore Winter Club
February 27, 1999	Vancouver, Plaza 500 Hotel
March 27, 1999	Kelowna, Ramada Lodge Hotel
April 10, 1999	Castlegar, Sandman Inn
April 17, 1999	Abbotsford, Inn at King's Crossing
April 24, 1999	Prince George, Inn of the North
April 29, 1999*	Smithers, Hudson's Bay Lodge
April 30, 1999*	Prince Rupert, Crest Motor Hotel
May 1, 1999	Terrace, The Terrace Inn
May 8, 1999	Victoria, Victoria Conference Centre

\*Thurs. & Fri. 16:00 to 20:00

## Information coming your way

### Early Retirement Incentive Plan, Accord '99

Descriptive literature and application forms have been sent to all schools. Your school should receive this information in the first and second week of December. Additional copies are available from your local teachers' office and your school board office.

### Actions to take now

1. Undertake financial review of anticipated cash flow to determine whether or not you are in a financial position to retire.
2. Get outstanding pension issues sorted out now; these include:
  - correcting errors that you believe are on your pension statement (i.e., errors in salary and service)
  - making leaves purchases
  - purchasing reinstatements
  - making transfers from other plans including other provinces.
3. Ask the Superannuation Commission for a retirement package and a pension plan options statement. Requesting a package at this stage does not obligate you to retire. You may make your request by telephone but follow-up with a written confirmation by mail or fax; include your Social Insurance Number.
4. Attend a Retirement Seminar in your region. Posters on times and locations were sent out to all schools and a further listing is provided in each issue of *Teacher*.

### Who to Contact

- Accord '99 Information: BCTF (604) 871-2283 or 1-800-663-9163 (Accord '99 Hotline 871-2118 or Local 2118 if you are calling on the toll-free line)

Check out the BCTF Web site at [www.bctf.bc.ca](http://www.bctf.bc.ca) (under Pensions and Income Security).

- Pension Information, Retirement Packages, Option Statements, Correction of Pension Statements: Superannuation Commission Teachers' Pension Plan PO Box 9465 Stn. Provincial Government Victoria, BC V8W 9V8
- Victoria area: 753-3022, Vancouver area: 660-4088 Toll free for the rest of the province: 1-800-665-6770

-Al Cornes

## Factor 88? Age 64?

Reminder: SPP-Long Term

Teachers who have reached the age of 64 or the factor 88, age plus contributory service with the teachers or municipal pension plan, may voluntarily withdraw from the BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan: Long Term. If you have reached age 65 or factor 90, you are no longer eligible for long-term benefits and should withdraw.

If you fit one of the above criteria and wish to withdraw from the long-term part of the plan, write or fax (604) 871-2287 the BCTF Income Security Department for withdrawal application forms.

5th Annual  
British Columbia Institute of Technology  
Junior Educational  
**CHESS  
Tournament**  
Sun. January 24, 1999  
All K-12 Students Welcome  
Registration on site 9:00-9:30  
\$9 entry fee, guaranteed 5 games  
3700 Willingdon, Burnaby T:432-8600



**Blue Lake  
CENTRE**

Ph (250) 426-3676  
Box 759, Cranbrook, BC V1C 4J5  
Fax (250) 426-3633  
E-Mail [bluelake@cyberlink.bc.ca](mailto:bluelake@cyberlink.bc.ca)

**Experiential Forest Education for Youth**

- programs complement school curriculum
- programs can be developed specifically for your class' needs
- positive social experience for youth
- trained, professional staff to assist your class
- comfortable, rustic, residential setting
- 2½- or 5-day packages available
- facilitates groups of up to 84 people
- fund-raising ideas

Visit our website! <http://www.cyberlink.bc.ca/~bluelake>

**BOOKING DEADLINE  
DEC. 20/98**

**Discover Guatemala**  
Something For Everyone!

- Mayan architecture
- Three civilizations
- Tropical rainforests
- Small villages
- Exotic markets

Come into a magical world and experience Guatemala.

From \$1749.00 CDN fully escorted tour.



**Spring Break '99**  
March 13-21/99

*BOOK EARLY to save over \$1,000 per person!*

**Caribbean Cruise**  
8 Night Package Includes:

- 7 night cruise on the MS Wind
- 1 night pre-cruise hotel in Miami
- \$50 US Dollar shipboard credit
- 2 category upgrades while they last
- Return Airfare

From \$1549.00 CDN

Phone: (604) 596-3322  
Fax: (604) 596-7177  
[www.flyandsea.com](http://www.flyandsea.com)  
1162 - 84th Avenue  
Delta, B.C. V4C 2L7

**MARKETAS Bed & Breakfast**

**Att. TEACHERS**

The perfect setting for your next over night field trip to Victoria 5 min. walk to Leonardo at the RBCM. Lodging for groups of 20-30 \$20/person. Breaky included.  
Tel/Fax: (250) 384-9844 / 384-9848  
E-Mail: [info@marketas.victoria.bc.ca](mailto:info@marketas.victoria.bc.ca)  
WEB: [www.marketas.victoria.bc.ca](http://www.marketas.victoria.bc.ca)

**SPRING BREAK CRUISE**

7-day Western Caribbean  
March 13-20, 1999  
with Dance Instructors:  
Lee and Elizabeth McGregor  
Aboard

**PRINCESS CRUISES**  
*It's more than a cruise, it's the Love Boat*  
newest ship  
**SEA PRINCESS**  
from \$1,999 CDN\* per person based on double occupancy  
Includes Port Charges  
\*Prices subject to availability  
\*\*Taxes/Govt fees/transfers are extra

**BCAA Travel**

#120 - 777 Royal Oak Drive  
Victoria, BC V8X 4V1  
PHONE: (250) 744-2282  
BC Registration #2232-6

**BRITISH COLUMBIA**

*B.C.'s Waiting Children*

In B.C. there are over 200 children in need of permanent families. These children range in age from infants to teens. They may have special needs such as prenatal exposure to drugs or alcohol, emotional and/or behavioural challenges, or physical and/or mental disabilities. They may belong to a sibling group of two or more children. Many are of Aboriginal ancestry and need an Aboriginal adoptive home in order to preserve their cultural heritage.

Information about *B.C.'s Waiting Children* and the adoption process can be obtained from any Ministry adoption office. Please call Enquiry BC at 1-800-663-7667 for the adoption office nearest to you (in Victoria call 953-3711). If you would like more information about adopting one of *B.C.'s Waiting Children*, please call an adoption office.

*Each child deserves a forever family.*

Don't look for the smart money,  
look for the smart people.

FOR ALL YOUR FINANCIAL AND INVESTMENT PLANNING NEEDS.

GREG HUXTABLE, B. Math, M.B.A., CFP  
Financial Consultant  
Merrill Lynch Canada Inc.  
New Westminster, BC  
(604) 525-0563  
1 800 340-9909

**Merrill Lynch**

Merrill Lynch Canada Inc. is a member - CIPE. [greg.huxtable@ca.ml.com](mailto:greg.huxtable@ca.ml.com)

**Exclusively for BCTF Members**

**Home Insurance**

- ★ Preferred Rates!
- ★ Up to 35% OFF!
- ★ Monthly Payments!
- ★ Prompt Claims!

**Free Quotes! Call Now!**

**Sun Country Insurance Services Ltd**  
Grand Forks, B.C.  
Toll Free: 1-877-442-8191  
Fax: 250-442-3577  
[www.suncountryinsure.bc.ca](http://www.suncountryinsure.bc.ca)

**SAVE \$150.00 ASK US!!**

**SPRING BREAK**  
*Caribbean Cruise '99*  
March 13-21, 1999

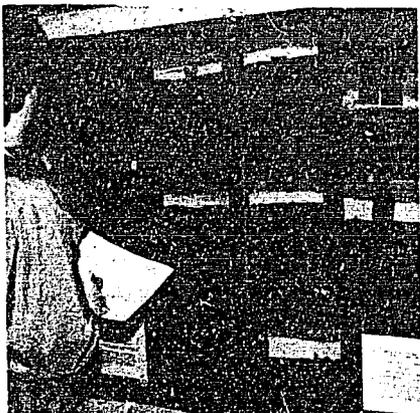
**8 NIGHT PACKAGE INCLUDES**

- 7 Night Cruise on the "NORWEGIAN SEA"
- 1 Night Pre Cruise Hotel Houston
- Return Air Vancouver/Houston
- Much, Much More!!!!

**TREASURE TOURS**

Ste. 2005 - 7495 - 132nd Street  
Surrey, BC V3W 1J8  
Tel: (604) 572-2888  
Toll Free: 1-800-665-5573

**\$1399.00**  
CANADIAN DOLLARS



Left: A teacher gathers ideas for art projects at the Primary PSA Conference. Right: Delegates share ideas at the "Building Bridges" Conference.

## Building bridges, not walls

Attorney-General Ujjal Dosanjh says that in antiracism work, "what motivates us is compassion."

Speaking to 300 delegates to the "Building Bridges, Not Walls" conference, he said many opponents argue that governments cannot legislate tolerance, nor can they legislate love. "Well, we can legislate that you can't steal another person's bread or shelter. Why can't we legislate that you can't steal another person's dignity?"

The conference, which took place October 23-24 at the Coast Plaza Hotel, was sponsored by CODE, the Consortium on Diversity in Education. About one-third of the delegates were students involved in multicultural and antiracism clubs or activities in school and the community.

Manjeet Chand, a social worker and volunteer with Vancouver Youth Voices, offered suggestions to adults who want to be allies to young people in their quest for meaningful participation in social-justice work. Adults must have an understanding of power relations and the

dynamics of oppression.

"The role of an ally is to listen and learn and trust that the young people...know what they need," she said. "All of us live in a society that values adults over children and youth. As adults, we benefit from that. We know that when we go into a meeting, we will not be discounted because of our age. To be an adult ally, we have to reject that privilege, and work to ensure that youth voices are heard."

Chand cautioned that supporting youth in their endeavours does not mean doing the work for them. "I allow the young people to lead, and sometimes that's hard because I'm a leader in my work and in how I perceive the world. So I have to hold back and support the young people in saying what needs to be said."

On the same panel, Romi Chandra, a young gay man of colour, spoke about confronting homophobia within his heritage culture and racism within the homosexual community. He now is struggling to integrate these elements of his identity and find a more complete sense of belonging.

Iris Yong, a staff member with Vancouver Youth Voices, spoke enthusiastically about her experience with helping students form multicultural and antiracism clubs in schools.

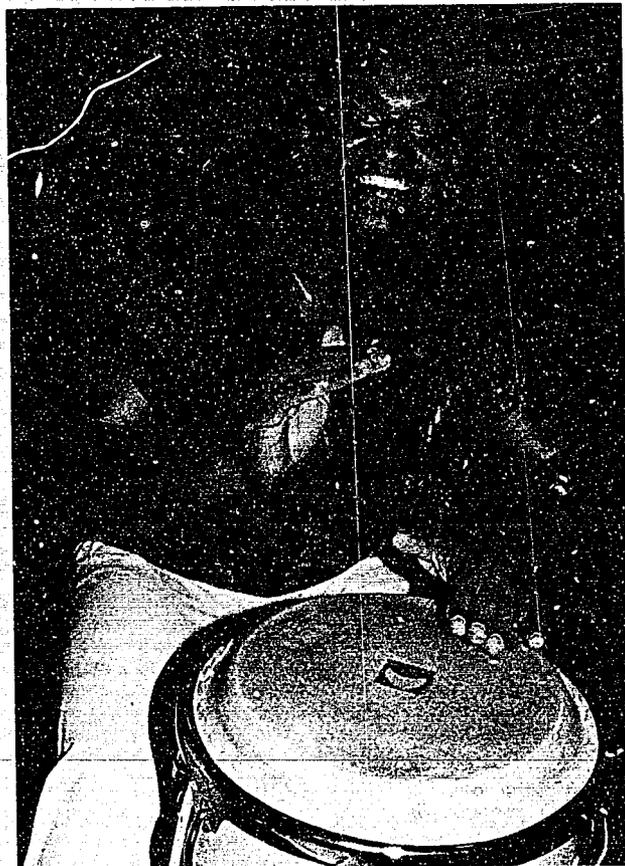
High school student Meaghan Winsby is a member of SPARK, Students Participating Against Racism in Kelowna. She spoke about their Racism-Free Schools campaign and how, with changing demographics, Kelowna schools are rapidly becoming more diverse.

BCTF antiracism co-ordinator Viren Joshi said that it is easy to preach the antiracism message, but difficult to practise it every day. He urged delegates to understand that the human race is one. "Spiritually we are one...the life force within each of us is one."

Besides attending workshops and social gatherings, the teachers at the conference held the founding meeting of Educators Against Racism, a group that hopes to become a provincial specialist association, BCTF's 33rd PSA.

- Nancy Knickerbocker

## Peace and global education



by Twila Konyonenbelt

On October 23-25, the B.C. Teachers for Peace and Global Education held their annual conference at Camp Squamish, entitled "Global Rights = Global Responsibilities." Thom Henley, noted global conservationist and executive director of Rediscovery International, examined the impact of the UN Declaration of Human Rights on the world's indigenous peoples. He inspired the audience with slides and

stories about Brunei and Thailand, and he challenged participants to "make change happen."

Pummy Kaur, director of the Global Wellness Center, explored the history of the UN Declaration and provided many ideas for classroom use. Sheila Reynolds, cultural anthropologist and partner in the Fusion Group, talked about building bridges from diversity to community. Greg Smith, co-ordinator for Social Studies at the B.C. Ministry of Education, gave a presentation

about the Holocaust and Hope Educators Study Tour. Entertainment, in the form of drumming and dancing, was provided by Bale Tropicalia African Roots.

Participants made connections, gathered resources, shared successes, and left enriched and refreshed. Many thanks to all who contributed to the conference's success.

Twila Konyonenbelt is the new president of B.C. Teachers for Peace and Global Education, one of the BCTF's provincial specialist associations.

Left: Entertainment was provided by Bale Tropicalia African Roots. Below: B.C. Teachers for Peace and Global Education who attended the annual conference.



## TOC conference

This first ever TOC conference was held at the 108 Mile Resort, just north of 100 Mile House, a wonderful spot for a workshop.

Friday night, the conference started with a welcome from the BCTF, which included making the TOCs aware of the various resources and support services available to them. There was also a brief presentation on enhancing your life as a TOC. Both presentations, of great interest to all who attended, made the TOCs feel that the BCTF really has some interest in their profession.

Saturday featured two workshops: Classroom Management and Communications (with students and staff). There was also a networking session, where concerns and problems were aired. The informal exchanges over breakfast, coffee, and lunch also covered a wide range of topics from common frustrations and problems to successes and sharing of ideas.

While the workshops themselves gave valuable information, the overall feeling about the conference was that this chance to get together, either in a formal workshop or in a more informal setting was vital to dispel some of the isolation a lot of TOCs feel. It also made them aware of assistance available to them through the BCTF and, perhaps most important, aware of the need for TOC networking not just in a district but throughout the province.

The TOCs want this type of conference continued and expanded throughout the province. We strongly urge all TOCs to promote the idea with their local associations.

Linda Helm  
Cariboo-Chilcotin

My growing interest in the professional development of teachers inspired me to take on the role of PD rep for TOCs in the Kamloops Thompson Teachers' Association.

My first duty as a PD rep was to attend a TOC conference at 108 Mile Resort, titled "Thriving as a TOC—Building for Success."

I attended both the classroom-management and communications workshops. Everyone I spoke to had positive things to say about the conference. My colleagues agreed it was important to be recognized as a group of teachers with specific needs worthy of specific professional development.

My next duty as PD rep was to take part in a PD-rep training session. I was amazed to learn about all of the funding available for the professional development of teachers on call. I encourage TOCs to take advantage of the opportunities available, which range from reimbursement for one-day workshops and weekend conferences to subsidies for university courses and sabbaticals.

I will be putting together a newsletter for TOCs in my local informing them of their entitlements to PD, and I encourage other PD reps to spread the word as well.

Julie Boyes  
Kamloops Thompson



SHEILA WYSE PHOTO

GAETAN KLUMBE PHOTO



**UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA**  
**Faculty of Education GRADUATE PROGRAMS**  
**THE QUALITY CHOICE**

**SUMMER PROGRAMS, 1998:** (MED) Intakes in Summer 1999 will be:  
 Coaching Studies (Co-op), Curriculum Studies, English Language Arts,  
 Educational Administration/Leadership, Math, Science, Social Studies

**WINTER PROGRAMS:** (MA, MED, MSC) Full-time on-campus programs:  
 Curriculum Studies English Language Arts  
 Educational Administration Mathematics Education  
 Educational Psychology Music Education  
 • Counselling Physical Education  
 • Learning & Development Science Education  
 • Measurement & Evaluation Social Studies Education  
 • Special Education Sport & Exercise Studies

**PHD PROGRAMS:** Educational Psychology, English Language Arts

**CONTACT:** Graduate Secretary, Faculty of Education, University of Victoria,  
 Box 3010, Victoria, BC V8W 3N4 Tel: (250) 721-7883 Fax: (250) 721-7767

http://www.educ.uvic.ca

Financial awards available to full-time students.

**LIGHTS. CAMERA. ACTION!**

**ENTER THE STOP RACISM NATIONAL VIDEO COMPETITION**

If you're a student 12-18 years old, we want to see how you would eliminate racial discrimination. Make a video! Get a team together and produce one that's about a minute long. The Top Ten entries will be acted and broadcast on MuchMusic and MusicPlus on March 21.

**DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES: FEBRUARY 12, 1999**

For more information and an entry form visit our website at [www.stopracism.com](http://www.stopracism.com) or call toll-free at 1-888-MARCH21

Canada

**CLASSIFIED ADS** accepted up to deadline date as space permits. Ad cost is 60¢ a word + 7% GST. Ads must be in writing and be prepaid. Send to K. Smith, BCTF.

**TRAVEL/VACATION**

**FRANCE.** 1bd. close to Paris; 1 bd. Paris central; Provence house fully furn. Wkly/mnthly. (604) 738-1876.

**MAYNE ISLAND.** 2 bd. cottage on waterfront property, quiet, NS, N/P, adults only (604) 294-8487.

**WHISTLER.** Blueberry Hill. 2 bd. & loft, 2 bath condo sleeps 6-8. Fully equip. F/P, underground parking, hot tub & sauna. Near Valley Trail. 1 km to village or Alta Lake. (604) 534-6839.

**KIHEI, MAUI.** Large selection of fully equipped condos. Great beaches. Near shopping centre. Call Alf (604) 291-1751, F: (604) 421-5858. [alf@intergate.bc.ca](mailto:alf@intergate.bc.ca)

**TOFINO.** Located on Clayoquot Sound, Cannery Retreat is a beautiful, new, fully equipped 1 bd. loft condo with a large open concept living, dining and kitchen area. Adult oriented. Stops from restaurants, galleries, shops and adventure. No smoking or pets. Minimum 2-day stay, weekly or longer. Toll free 1-888-492-6662.

**WHISTLER CREEK** Tamarisk, 1 bd. condo, sleeps 4. Fully equipped, F/P. Seasonal rates. Excellent rates for midweek rental. Seeking flexible shared rental arrangements for ski season. (604) 222-1022.

**DISCOVER HEMLOCK VALLEY** 1 hr. from Abbotsford, Studio \$75/night, 1 bd. \$125/night or \$3,500/season. Sauna, Jacuzzi, great cross-country & downhill skiing. Restaurant/bar in lodge. (604) 926-6223 Fax: (604) 926-1125, e-mail: [pcgr@GTE.net](mailto:pcgr@GTE.net)

**MAUI KANAPALI** townhouse. Pool, tennis, ocean view, near beach, beautiful quiet setting. NS. (250) 492-6871, [www.v.personal.img.net/jroberts](http://www.v.personal.img.net/jroberts)

**FRANCE (Provence) and ITALY (Tuscany) and BRITAIN**—well priced rental accommodation, personally inspected. Contact Gail Schwarz, manager of the French Division of Absolute Travel for all your European travel requirements. Tel: (604) 689-1177, Fax: (604) 689-1170, e-mail: [absolvtv@istar.ca](mailto:absolvtv@istar.ca)

**BLACKCOMB** benchlands, ski in/out, pool, hot tubs, beautifully equipped, sleeps 4, secure parking, minimum 3 nights. Book early. (604) 929-6589.

**MAUI.** Privately owned, beautifully furn. condo, across from Kamaoli beaches. Great complex, great location. (250) 598-6955.

**DENMAN ISLAND.** Waterfront cottage. Sleeps 4. N/P. NS. Available by week or weekends. (250) 337-5063.

**WHISTLER/BLACKCOMB.** Alpine Meadows, cozy 3 bd. chalet, sleeps 6, forest setting with mountain views, fully furn., F/P, TV/VCR, stereo, W/D, microwave, close to Meadow Park Arena, valley trail and transit. Call John (604) 987-7619.

**WHISTLER.** Alta Lake, waterfront 1 bd. condo, 1 km to village, sleeps 4-5, F/P, TV/VCR, summer/winter rates. (604) 298-2073.

**WHISTLER.** Comfortable 4/5 bd. cabin at Pinecrest Estates cabin. Sauna, fully equipped kitchen, woodstove! From \$160/night (tax incl.), 2-night min., special weekly rates. Plan for Christmas, Spring Break or ski get-a-way. (604) 936-3346.

**Bali Magic & Singapore**

**Irresistible Offer!**  
 17 day/15 nights  
 From \$1,399

**15-day Historic China**  
 \$2,099

**14-day Yangtze River**  
 \$3,599

**13-day Indian & Singapore**  
 \$3,465

**INCLUSIVE PRICE.**

Air, 1st Cls. Htls., Tours, & Meals  
 Depart Vancouver Jan. thru Mar. '99

**CHINAPAC INTERNATIONAL**  
 1-800-661-8182  
 Fax: (604) 731-1694  
[www.chinapac.com](http://www.chinapac.com)

**SUNNY**  
 by mary-ellen lang collura  
 SUPER BOOK...SUPER PRICE

Set in Vancouver, *SUNNY* is the story of a family, a race horse, and a Holocaust survivor. Easy to read, yet powerful.

*SUNNY*, an award winning novel suitable for Grades 6-8, comes direct from the author to you, complete with lesson aids and author notes.

Order a class set (\$3/book) and get 15 pages of teacher stuff free.

To order or enquire, contact **HOMERUN WRITER**  
 4068 Barclay Road  
 Campbell River, BC  
 V9W 4Y6  
 Ph: (250) 286-9635



**WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**

Are you interested in earning a Master's degree in Educational Administration? Do you want to be part of a program that focuses upon the practice of being a principal with classes taught by current school administrators? Are you interested in a program that individualizes for you and adjusts to your needs? Would you like a program offered in your own neighborhood or area?

Western Washington University has prepared hundreds of practicing B.C. school principals for several decades. Talk with any of our graduates or talk with us if you are interested in a Master's degree from a long-recognized quality institution—Western Washington University.

**Tuition for all Educational Administration courses for 1998-99 is \$161 (US funds) per credit hour.**

Call or write: **Dr. Marvin Klein, Program Chair**  
 Educational Administration—MS 9087  
 Woodring College of Education, WWU  
 Bellingham, WA 98225-9087  
 Ph: (360) 650-3829 or (360) 650-3708  
 Fax: (360) 650-6526 Email: [mklein@wce.wvu.edu](mailto:mklein@wce.wvu.edu)

Perfect Solutions

**A Computer for Every Student!**

- \* Full-size keyboard
- \* Only 1 lb.
- \* Wireless upload – Mac or PC

1-14 Units \$283 — 15-29 Units \$276 — 30+ Units \$268

1-888-274-4076

[www.perfectsolutions.bc.ca](http://www.perfectsolutions.bc.ca)

**QUINELLA AUTO**

New Car Purchase Plan  
**Information Package**

will be mailed to you by calling

1-800-307-4808

or

1-250-658-6580



**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**

Study in Vancouver for a Master of Education Degree through the University of Calgary. Four specializations offered in a combination of evening and weekend small classroom settings, with four entry dates a year. This program has been approved by TQS.

- \* Educational Technology
- \* Teaching English as a Second Language
- \* Educational Leadership
- \* Teaching & Learning

For further information, call:

**Kay Pearson, Assistant Director, M.Ed. Programs**  
 c/o Century College, #200-1788 W. Broadway  
 Vancouver, BC V6J 1Y1  
 (604) 731-8869 Fax: (604) 731-8830  
[kpearson@centurycollege.com](mailto:kpearson@centurycollege.com)

Adler School of Professional Psychology

Investigate our accredited, flexible degree granting programs, all TQS approved.

- Master of Arts in **CLASSROOM PSYCHOLOGY** (for teachers only)
- Master of Arts in **COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY**
- Master of Arts in **COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY: ART THERAPY**
- Post-Masters Certificates in **Career Counselling**

For more information call or attend one of our Public Information Meetings: December 15, 1998, or January 20, 1999.



**Adler School of Professional Psychology**

#101 - 1193 Kingsway, Vancouver BC  
 Tel: (604) 874-4614 • Fax: (604) 874-4634

"The best field trip... ever!"  
 A magical underwater world of discovery...

something's **fishy** here!



The Vancouver Aquarium's school programs are curriculum-based and hands-on, unforgettable, fun-filled learning for K-12 students. See, hear and touch a one-of-a-kind aquatic experience.

And if you can't come to us, we'll bring the Aquarium to you! The AQUAVAN delivers the same unforgettable experience anywhere in B.C.

To book your Aquarium field trip, call (604) 659-3556. To book the AQUAVAN, call (604) 659-3488.

Where the Wild Things Are



VANCOUVER AQUARIUM  
[www.vancouveraquarium.com](http://www.vancouveraquarium.com)

**WHISTLER CREEKSID**. 1 bd. condo, sleeps 4, fully equipped, F/P, w/g parking, walk to lifts. (604) 988-1433, e-mail: [berardoc@intergate.bc.ca](mailto:berardoc@intergate.bc.ca)

**NORTH GALIANO**. Sheila's House, a forested retreat. Peaceful walks to adjacent Dionisio Park. Charming 2 bd., full kitchen, off-grid cottage. \$75/night double. (250) 539-2127, Barbara & Gary Moore.

**WHISTLER CREEK**. 1 bd. condo at Lake Placid Lodge. Sleeps 4, hot tub, swimming pool, sauna, and ungrd. parking. B.C. Transit stops at front door. Convenience stores and restaurant next door. Book early to avoid disappointment. Contact Jan or John at (604) 530-0958.

**WHISTLER CREEKSID**. Ski in/out. Large balcony with mountain view. 1 bd. plus loft, F/P. \$125 per night, \$700 per week. Phone (604) 946-2494.

**CHINA**. Your choice! *Spring Break in China*. Beijing & Xian. Fly Air China: Mon. March 15, Mon. March 22/99. Modern/ancient capitals! Great Wall, 6,000 Terra Cotta Warriors, Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven, Xian City Wall, more! Beijing Opera/Tang Dynasty shows. Only \$1,499 CDN. *Spring Break in China!* Beijing & Xian. Fly Canadian Airlines Sun. March 14, Sun. March 21, 1999. Modern/ancient capitals! Great Wall, 6,000 Terra Cotta Warriors, Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven, Xian City Wall, more! Beijing Opera/Tang Dynasty shows. Only \$1,699 CDN. *Summer 1999*: July 2-16, 1999. Ancient Capitals Tour! Shanghai, Suzhou, Zhouzhuang, Kaifeng, Zhengzhou, Luoyang, Xian, Beijing! In the footsteps of Marco Polo! Only \$2,499 Air China. Interested? Questions? (all trips: dbl occ., 1st cl. hotels, all meals, Van-Beijing rtn.) Need itineraries? Contact j.a.m. learning services (604) 805-2171 or [jamlearn@bc.sympatico.ca](mailto:jamlearn@bc.sympatico.ca) or contact China Holidays (604) 708-2288 or toll free 1-888-708-7118.

**WHISTLER** Village North townhouse. 1 bd. (sleeps 4), priv. hot tub, decks, full kitchen, F/P, ungrd. parking, fitness ctr. & heated outdoor pool. Just steps from mtns and village. Reasonable rates. (604) 596-1615; Fax (604) 596-1620; e-mail: [lorne\\_hains@bc.sympatico.ca](mailto:lorne_hains@bc.sympatico.ca)

**XMAS SKI** vacation at Rosslands Red Mountain. Will rent or preferably exchange large home nearby for Vancouver westside accommodation for four. (250) 368-5093.

**CONDOS AVAILABLE** Hawaii (or??) 1, 2 bd., \$5-\$600 week. (or monthly rates) Golf, tennis, pools. (604) 876-2826.

**GALIANO**. Lowbank oceanfront with spectacular 180 degree views. New cottage sleeps 4-6. Children yes, pets no. Available by the week. 1-299-4203.

**MT. BAKER CHRISTMAS**. Snowwater luxury 1 bd. condo avail. Dec. 25-Jan. 1. Excellent amenities. (250) 653-2040.

**SALT SPRING ISLAND**. Luxury oceanfront accommodation, 1 kitchen unit. Teacher weekend package. Beach House B&B. 1-888-653-6334.

**WHISTLER**. Teacher-owned 2 bd/2bath townhome, sleeps 4/5, fully equipped, covered carport, shuttle bus to ski hill or 3 min. drive. Avail. Dec. 23-27, possibly New Year's. Reasonable rate. Kathleen (604) 935-1181.

**WHISTLER**. Owner direct, condos steps from Whistler Mtn., pool, jacuzzi, fully equipped, Alena (604) 922-3233, 714-5163, Fax:

(604) 922-3287, 714-5151, [abajkov@vimsy.com](mailto:abajkov@vimsy.com)

**WHISTLER CREEK**. Tamarisk, 1 bd. condo sleeps 4, tennis, outdoor pool, F/P, sauna, summer/winter rates. Clara (604) 327-3840.

**MEXICO CABO SAN LUCAS**. Spring vacation Mar. 12-19, new. 2 bd. unit, sleeps 6, large, fully equipped, pool, tennis, golf. phone (604) 522-1109.

**WHISTLER CABIN**. Lux. 3 bd., 2 bath, full kitchen, F/P, W/D, hot tub, sleeps 8-10, great rates! (604) 274-2671 or 275-2770.

**KEATS ISLAND**. New, clean, quiet cabin for rent (in Howe Sound, 1 hr. from downtown Vancouver). \$125 for a wknd. Contact (604) 301-1123 or [dmatthewson@richmond.sd38.bc.ca](mailto:dmatthewson@richmond.sd38.bc.ca)

Give the **TEACHER'S A BREAK**. Spring break and summer vacation 1999. Ask about specials and travel selloffs. Teacher's 5% discount applies to preferred suppliers current brochure rates. Call Teachers' pet Judy at TriLink Travel BC Reg. #3039-1 (604) 430-6847 or 1-888-430-6847, e-mail: [cjnelis@intergate.bc.ca](mailto:cjnelis@intergate.bc.ca)

**HERIOT BAY/QUADRA ISLAND** lovely custom 2600 sq.ft. home overlooking beautiful Heriot Bay. Gorgeous setting. 1 min. walk to beach and public docks. Kayakers' paradise. Photos and information available. \$1000/wk. July & Aug. Ph. or fax: (250) 285-3601.

**SUN PEAKS RESORT**. Only 45 min. from Kamloops. Creekside Chalet is a new, fully equipped mountain retreat. Fantastic layout, excellent views, great location and lots of parking make this the perfect 4 season holiday get-away for your family and friends. For reservations & rates, or more information, call (604) 853-7324.

**BIG WHITE** condo. Deluxe, 4 bd., fully equipped, hot tub, F/P, ski in/out, sleeps 12. (250) 764-4703, [thbooks@okanagan.net](mailto:thbooks@okanagan.net)

**WHISTLER**. 4 bd., 2 baths, walk/lifts, F/P, VCR/TV, (604) 937-3792 (Jill).

## RENTAL/EXCHANGE

**STICKS N' STONES, GALIANO**. Quiet location, modern, self-contained cabin, all amenities, wood stove, water/beach access. Weekend/ week or monthly rates. Ralph/Rocky (250) 539-3443 collect or via compulink 44.

**GILLIES BAY/VANCOUVER** exchange. 2 bd. guest hse. with large deck, F/P, and all conveniences. Waterfrt. loc. on Texada Is. on one of B.C.'s largest S. facing tidal beaches. Abundant shell fish and wild life present. Pkp. truck avail. with exch. Wish to exch. with comf. mod. condo/apt. in Vanc. within reas. walking dist. Robson & Burrard. Two people, non-smoking, retired, no pets, no kids. To exch. 1 wk. 2x a year on an annual basis with others in approx. same situation. Ph & fax: (604) 486-7810, e-mail: [texgrove@prcn.org](mailto:texgrove@prcn.org)

**VANCOUVER**. Will houseit your home (pets ok) over Christmas. References (250) 851-8485.

**SUBLET**. Dec. 18 to Jan. 3. Furn. 1 bd. apt., Kitsilano (Vancouver). \$150/week. Ph: (604) 734-5063.

**CHRISTMAS IN VANCOUVER**. Westend 1 bd. sublet. Dec. 16-Jan. 5. (604) 688-9260.

## FOR SALE

**MANUAL FOR PARAGRAPH & ESSAY** writing. Designed for teachers/parents of weaker or remedial students. To order send \$10.75 plus \$1.45 postage to Avstan Publications, 8850c Young

Rd., Chilliwack, BC V2P 4P5. Phone/Fax: (604) 792-0839.

The perfect **RETIREMENT ENVIRONMENT** in the Gulf Islands. Visit my website: [www.realestate-gabriola.com](http://www.realestate-gabriola.com) to discover Gabriola Island or call for free brochure and catalogue at 1-800-205-8080 or email: [spring@island.net](mailto:spring@island.net) (J. Springford. Gabriola Village Realty).

**ENG/LANG ARTS**. Study Units! (Creative Titles, *Cowboys Don't Cry*, Lang Fun). For free brochure send name/address on index card to: Shingle Learning Resources, Dept. B-1, 663 Parel Place, Kelowna, BC, V1W 2K6 or visit [www3.bc.sympatico.ca/shingle](http://www3.bc.sympatico.ca/shingle)

**VICE PRINCIPALS EXAM** companion 2.0 offers full features for your Exam Time Table Scheduling for just \$289. Please send for brochure to Doncaster Office Services, 214 Willowridge Court, Oakville, ON L6L 5J2, (905) 842-9616, F:(905) 849-0604, [doncaster@compuserve.com](mailto:doncaster@compuserve.com)

**HALF SHARE** in 27' Catalina sailboat. \$7,300. Comfortable boat inside and out. Extras. Incl. moorage at Burrard Civic Marina. Owners will maintain. Ph: (604) 929-8227, [csteale@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:csteale@interchange.ubc.ca)

**SUN PEAKS**. B.C.'s next great 4 season resort; 45 min. from Kamloops. Beautiful new 1/2 duplex chalet. Open plan on main; 3 bd. up, full basement. Great views & the best skiing! Engineered & quality constructed. (604) 853-7324.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**ENRICH YOUR INUIT UNIT!** Experienced teacher presents dynamic 2 hr. classroom presentation: slides, music, stories, games. Hands on! Authentic Inuit tools, clothing, toys. Serving Okanagan and Kootenays. \$199 includes supplies and teacher's kit. Classroom Expeditions (250) 352-3598.

**TRAVEL-TEACH ENGLISH**. 5 day/40 hr. March 10-14, 1999. TESOL teacher cert. Course (or corresp.) 1,000s of jobs avail! Free info pack, 1-888-270-2941.

**DISCOVERY TOYS**. Books, games, & software. Individual orders welcome. 2-4-6 Reading fundraiser. 100% of funds raised awarded to school. For '98 Fall catalogue, call/fax: (604) 463-9295.

**AUSTRALIAN EXCHANGE**. Teacher Librarian in Western Australia wishes to exchange to B.C. in 2000. Modern house, 200m to Indian Ocean, for details e-mail Chris Smith at [gsc\\_highbury@wn.com.au](mailto:gsc_highbury@wn.com.au) Fax: 011-61-89-921-8590 or ph: local (604) 596-2176.

**AUSTRALIAN EXCHANGE**. Primary school teacher interested in exchange with a K-4 teacher. Queensland, just north of Brisbane. Prefers Vancouver Is. or Vancouver. E-mail: [gymplwlib@pegasus.com.au](mailto:gymplwlib@pegasus.com.au)

**PENSION ADVICE** and counselling (personal and confidential)? Small group pension and retirement workshops? Call Ken Smith at (604) 435-5907, F: (604) 435-5917, [kjsmith@istar.ca](mailto:kjsmith@istar.ca)

**INTERNET RESEARCH**. Frustrated with the internet? No time to "surf"? You produce the topic and we'll provide internet sites appropriate for you to use in the classroom. Contact "InQuest Information Services" Brenda Duffley (604) 685-0577 [bdiffley@axionet.com](mailto:bdiffley@axionet.com) or Mary Briggs (604) 526-8163, [mbriggs@istar.ca](mailto:mbriggs@istar.ca)

## JANUARY

**14-16** Richmond. Working Together To Empower Youth. B.C. Student Activity Advisors 3rd Annual Conference, Thurs. p.m. to Sat. a.m., Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel and Marina. \$150. Contact Gloria Solley, (250) 477-6945, F: (250) 721-1960, [chill@sd61.bc.ca](mailto:chill@sd61.bc.ca)

**14-16** Victoria. Three-day intensive Leaders Training Program certifies registrants to facilitate Developing Capable People to parents, educators, and support staff. \$495 + GST includes \$250 worth of training materials. Contact Developing Capable People (Canada), 1-800-327-1090, F: (250) 545-1270.

**15-16** Victoria. UVic A la Mode: French Immersion Weekends for Teachers. The 3rd of 3 weekends: Le francais dans la vie (Expressing yourself in daily life situations) FSL teaching strategies, lesson ideas, and communication skills to implement the Core French IRP in elementary and middle schools. Contact Leslie Kennedy at (250) 721-7875, [lkennedy@uvcs.uvic.ca](mailto:lkennedy@uvcs.uvic.ca)

**21-22** Fort St. John. Northern French Teachers' Conference, workshops for elementary and secondary CORE French/Immersion, North Peace Cultural Centre. \$35. Contact Darby Forest, modern languages facilitator SD60, Peace River North, (250) 262-2682, F: (250) 785-2269, [dforest@toolpush.prn.bc.ca](mailto:dforest@toolpush.prn.bc.ca)

**21-22** Vancouver. B.C. Alternate Education Assn. Conference, Challenge and Change, Westin Bayshore. Contact Joyce Pauls (604) 859-3015, [joyce\\_pauls@sd34.abbotsford.bc.ca](mailto:joyce_pauls@sd34.abbotsford.bc.ca)

**21-23** Vancouver. 3-day intensive Leaders Training Program certifies registrants to facilitate Developing Capable People to parents, educators, and support staff. \$495 + GST includes \$250 worth of training materials. Contact Developing Capable People (Canada), 1-800-327-1090, F: (250) 545-1270.

**22** New Westminster. Enhancing School Safety (CP100), Justice Institute of B.C., 715 McBride Boulevard, \$100. To register, call (604) 528-5590; for program information, call Sheila MacCallum (604) 528-5625, [smacallum@jibc.bc.ca](mailto:smacallum@jibc.bc.ca)

**26** Vancouver. B.C. Literacy Council of the International Reading Assn. Family Literacy Day featuring Dr. Terry Johnson, Intellectual Engagement at Home and at School, Alice McKay Room, Vancouver Public Library, Main Branch. Contact Shirley Choo, (604) 420-7967, F: (604) 988-0186, [tschoo@direct.ca](mailto:tschoo@direct.ca)

**29** New Westminster. Dealing with Harassment and Peer Victimization: A Solution-Focused Approach (CP220), Justice Institute of B.C., 715 McBride Blvd., \$100. To register, call (604) 528-5590; for program info., call Sheila MacCallum (604) 528-5625, [smacallum@jibc.bc.ca](mailto:smacallum@jibc.bc.ca)

**29-30** Kelowna. Assn. of B.C. Drama Educators' conference, Working with the Masters: Producing Their Own Work, Capri Hotel. Contact Linda Beaven, Summerland Secondary, Box 2501 Summerland, BC V0H 1Z0, F: (250) 494-4390, [lbeaven@cln.etc.bc.ca](mailto:lbeaven@cln.etc.bc.ca)

## FEBRUARY

**5** New Westminster. Taking Back the Schoolyard: A Bully Prevention Workshop (CP210), Justice Institute of B.C., 715 McBride Blvd., \$100. To register, call (604) 528-5590; for program information, call Sheila MacCallum (604) 528-5625, [smacallum@jibc.bc.ca](mailto:smacallum@jibc.bc.ca)

**4-5** Vancouver. Teaching the Holocaust. An Educators' Conference, rationales and strategies for teaching the Holocaust within the context of B.C. curriculum and with a focus on Canada's historical role, Norman Rothstein Theatre and Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre. \$70 before Dec. 18; \$85 thereafter. Contact (604) 264-0499, F: (604) 264-0497, [holecdir@direct.ca](mailto:holecdir@direct.ca)

**12** New Westminster. Classroom Management Techniques: Dealing with Inappropriate Behaviour,

(CP110), Justice Institute of B.C., 715 McBride Blvd., \$100. To register, call (604) 528-5590; for program info., call Sheila MacCallum (604) 528-5625, [smacallum@jibc.bc.ca](mailto:smacallum@jibc.bc.ca)

**18-20** Victoria. Renaissance 99: Celebrating Our Creative Spirit, 43rd Annual B.C. Art Teachers' Assn. Conference, MacLaurin Building, UVic. An evening at the Royal B.C. Museum will feature the genius of the Renaissance, Leonardo da Vinci. Contact Lily Wallace, c/o Cedar Hill Junior Secondary, 3910 Cedar Hill Road, Victoria, BC V8P 3Z8, (250) 4776945, F: (250) 721-1960.

**18-20** Vancouver. TEAL 99, 32nd Annual Conference of Teachers of English as an Additional Language, Reading the Signs: Systems Literacy in a Changing World, English Language Institute, UBC, 2121 West Mall. Contact Alison McBride, B.C. Teal, 106-3195 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC V6H 3K2, (604) 736-6330.

**19-20** North Vancouver. Environmental Education Resources for Teachers (EERT) Fair and EEPFA Annual General Meeting, an opportunity to shop for educational field programs and network with program facilitators, an EEPFA-organized event, North Vancouver Outdoor School. Contact Donna Hill, [dhill@uniserve.com](mailto:dhill@uniserve.com), (604) 857-9467.

**19-20** Victoria. Watershed Education Resources for Teachers (WERT), an EEPFA-sponsored event. Contacts TBA.

**19-20** Chilliwack. Hospital/Homebound PSA 21st Annual Conference, Going the Distance for Students: Building Partnerships with Distance-Education Specialists and Developing Internet Skills, Holiday Inn and Chilliwack Secondary. \$125 includes PSA membership and meals and refreshments. Contact John Bell, 23671 118A Ave., Maple Ridge, BC V4R 2C9, (604) 467-8938, F: (604) 936-5451, pager: (604) 444-4903 Mon.-Fri., [pummy@ibm.net](mailto:pummy@ibm.net)

**19-20** Penticton. Music 4Ever, 4Ever Music, 34th Annual Conference of the B.C. Music Educators' Association, featuring Juliana Saxton, Peggy Bennett, Greg Gilpin, Amanda Montgomery, Reading Sessions, and more, Penticton Trade & Convention Centre. \$185 BCME members. \$64 bus round trip. Contact Brenda Wallace, (604) 882-9561, F: (604) 882-9571, [brwallac@istar.ca](mailto:brwallac@istar.ca)

## MARCH

**11-12** Vancouver. 24th Annual Special Education Association Crosscurrents Conference. Sessions for regular and special education teachers. Contact Michael Scales, F: (604) 888-5832, [scales@iname.com](mailto:scales@iname.com), [www.bctf.bc.ca/psas/SEA](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/psas/SEA)

## APRIL

**8-10** Vancouver. Three-day intensive Leaders Training Program certifies registrants to facilitate Developing Capable People to parents, educators, and support staff. \$495 + GST includes \$250 worth of training materials. Contact Developing Capable People (Canada), 1-800-327-1090, F: (250) 545-1270.

**9** Kelowna. Learning Assistance Teachers' Association Spring 1999 Conference, An In-Depth Look at Reading: Teaching Phonological Awareness and Educational Implications of Dual-Coding, with Dr. Steve Truch, Okanagan Grand Hotel and Conference Centre. Contact Lynda Mawer, F: (250) 558-1065, [lmawer@sd22.bc.ca](mailto:lmawer@sd22.bc.ca)

<http://www.bctf.bc.ca/events/PD-Calendar.html>

October PD Day	
1999-2000	October 22

*Any additions or changes? E-mail Debby Stagg, PSA services co-ordinator, Professional Development Division, BCTF, [dastagg@bctf.bc.ca](mailto:dastagg@bctf.bc.ca)*

# The traditions of Christmas

by Sid Bentley

**C**hristmas celebrates the birthday of Jesus Christ, upon whom Christianity is founded. Christmas is the most popular Christian festival of the year. For most Christians, it falls on December 25; for others, on January 6 or January 7. Christmas is also celebrated in many non-Christian countries and settings.

Stars and angels, decorated Christmas trees and holly, reindeer and turkey, and of course Santa Claus are now traditions and symbols of Christmas. Some help us express the religious meaning of this Christian Holy Day, or holiday. Others have pre-Christian pagan roots. Those like Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer are more modern, but they also help us to express the joy of this holy season. Each of these symbols has a story; some very simple, some profound.

## Christmas, the name

The word *Christmas* has two roots *Christ* and *mass*. It was originally Christ's Mass. Christ is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word *Messiah*. Christians recognize Jesus to be the Messiah. Mass, in the Christian tradition, is a celebratory rite of the church. The word *Christmas*, as a combination of *Christ* and *mass*, is used to describe the Mass held to celebrate the birthday of Jesus.

## Xmas

Is this a correct spelling, or is it incorrect or even blasphemous? *Xristos* is the Greek spelling for the word *Christ*, which means Messiah. For those early Christians who read Greek, *Xmas* meant Christ's Mass.

## December 25, the date

As there was no record of the birthdate of Jesus, the

Christian Church, in A.D. 350, declared that from that date on, the birthday of Jesus should be celebrated on December 25. The earlier use of December 25 by Christians was because December 25 was already a widely celebrated Roman festival, *Saturnalia*. Those members of the Eastern Church, who still use the *Julian* calendar, celebrate Christmas on either January 6 or January 7 instead of December 25.

## Christmas Eve

December 24, originally the evening before the Christ Mass, has now become a non-religious festival in its own right. The evening is a time of families' coming together, often to prepare for the coming of Santa Claus. It can also be a time of much drinking and partying.

## Boxing Day traditions

*The Feast of St. Stephen*, December 26, is now called *Boxing Day*. On that day, in Medieval England, the priests used to open the *alms boxes* (charity boxes) and distribute the contents to the poor and needy of the parish. That led to a charitable custom of giving gifts of leftover food, money, or clothing to poor people on December 26, St. Stephen's Day.

Later celebrants gave Christmas boxes containing food or money to family servants, suppliers, and tradespeople on December 26. Nowadays the most important Boxing Day custom seems to be returning Christmas gifts that don't fit, or don't suit our fancy. Also popular are the giant, post-Christmas Boxing-Day sales that have now become "traditional."

For most people in Canada or North America, Christmas has become a secular, or non-church, festival. Some still attend church or in some other way put an emphasis on

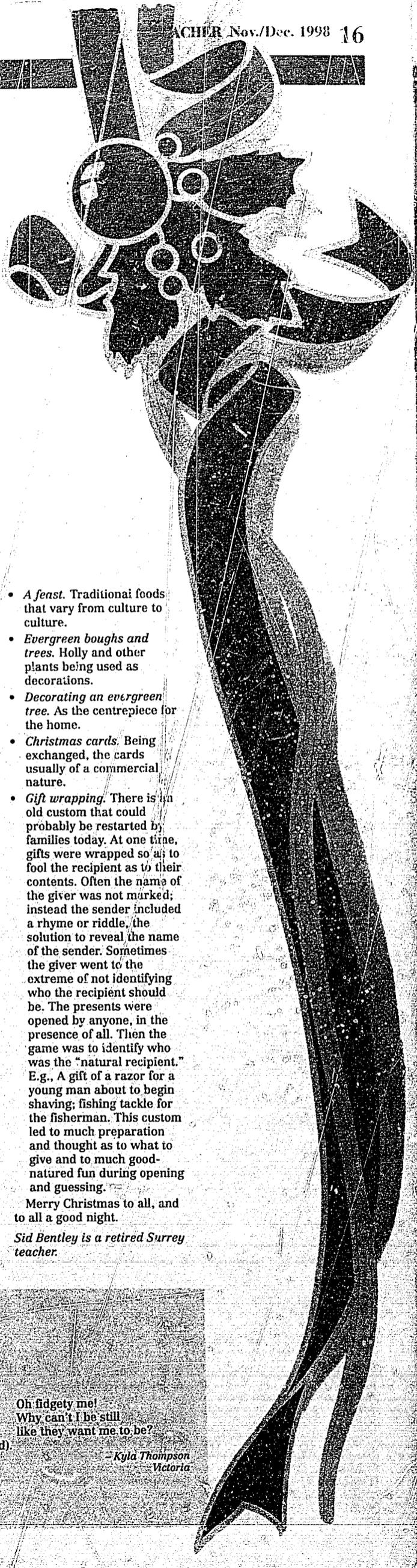
Christian symbolism; however, most focus on the gift-giving and gift-receiving, the eating and drinking, and the general coming together of family and friends.

## Christian traditions

- *Going to church.* Traditionally at midnight Christmas Eve, and on Christmas Day.
- *The Creche.* In France a representation of the "Crib of Baby Jesus" is called a creche, in Italy a *presepe*; in Spain a *nacimiento*, and in Germany, a *krippe*.
- *Stars.* Five-pointed stars remind us of the Star of Bethlehem.
- *Angels.* Angels appear throughout the scripture as messengers from God.
- *The Three Wise Men or The Three Kings.* The bearers of gifts to Baby Jesus. Traditionally the Three Kings were Melchior, King of Arabia, who brought the gift of gold; Gaspar or Caspar, King of Tarsus, who brought the gift of myrrh; and Balthasar, King of Ethiopia, who brought the gift of frankincense.
- *Christmas carols.* Joyous Christmas songs, some Christian, some traditional.

## Popular traditions

- *Gift-giving.* Probably rooted in Roman gift-giving, during the *Saturnalia* festival. Easily adopted by Christians, because of the gifts of the Three Magi.
- *Santa Claus.* Being involved, either physically or mystically, in the gift-giving.
- *Christmas carols.* A mix of Christian, traditional, and popular seasonal songs.
- *The coming together.* Christmas is the time for family and friends to reunite.



- *A feast.* Traditional foods that vary from culture to culture.
- *Evergreen boughs and trees.* Holly and other plants being used as decorations.
- *Decorating an evergreen tree.* As the centrepiece for the home.
- *Christmas cards.* Being exchanged, the cards usually of a commercial nature.
- *Gift wrapping.* There is an old custom that could probably be restarted by families today. At one time, gifts were wrapped so as to fool the recipient as to their contents. Often the name of the giver was not marked; instead the sender included a rhyme or riddle, the solution to reveal the name of the sender. Sometimes the giver went to the extreme of not identifying who the recipient should be. The presents were opened by anyone, in the presence of all. Then the game was to identify who was the "natural recipient." E.g., A gift of a razor for a young man about to begin shaving; fishing tackle for the fisherman. This custom led to much preparation and thought as to what to give and to much good-natured fun during opening and guessing.

Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night.  
Sid Bentley is a retired Surrey teacher.

# The moving child

Oh fidgety me!  
Why can't I be still  
Like they want me to be?

I fiddle and I fidget  
throughout the day—  
it looks like I'm nervous  
when I have something to say.

I feel so ashamed  
because I cannot sit still  
I know I'm a bad student  
and a disruptive pill!

Oh teacher and friends  
if you only knew  
that when I am fidgeting  
I'm really listening to you

But if I am still  
(like a good listener should)  
then I hear nothing you say  
(even though it looks like I would)

So please let me fidget  
and wiggle as I please,  
and move around all day  
'cause then I can be me.

Oh fidgety me!  
Why can't I be still  
like they want me to be?

— Kyla Thompson  
Victoria