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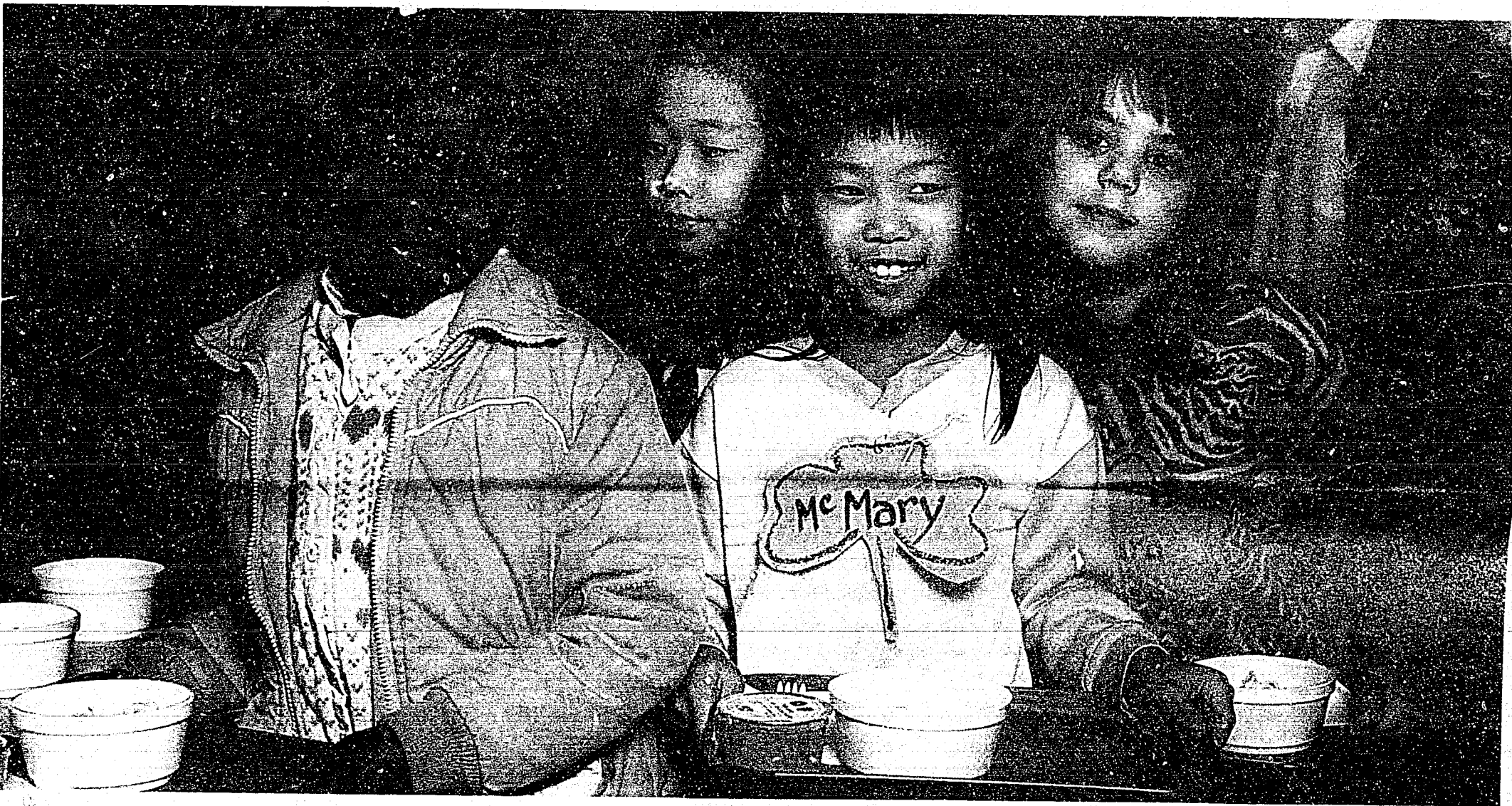
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Schools for all kids



Community and professionals have pulled together to support the needs of the children at Queen Alexandra Elementary School, Vancouver. Kharen Hill photo

TEACHERS TACKLE POVERTY

by Judith Turner

Poverty is a word that takes visual shape in the mind's eye. Poverty is the urchin of Charles Dickens, or the poor but proud heroine of Louisa May Alcott. Poverty is the face on the 10 o'clock news. Poverty is the man or woman behind the shopping cart that holds salvage from garbage bins. Poverty is also in the class picture or on the playground of our school.

In short, the victims of poverty are not only the unemployed but also the underemployed and underpaid, the victims of a changing economic and social structure. The children of poverty are a poignant reminder of parents' helplessness in a world over which they have little control.

According to Statistics Canada, in 1986 more than one million children were growing up in poverty. The number has likely not decreased since then. Every teacher reading this can probably think of at least one child who fits into that statistic.

Noel Herron, a Vancouver administrator, is an advocate for such children. A typical child, says Herron, comes from a family whose income is close to or below

According to Statistics Canada, in 1986, more than 1 million children were growing up in poverty.

the poverty line. Both parents may be employed. If the child is from a single-parent family, the family head will be the woman. The majority of the families are immigrants. The average number of children per family is three.

These are the working poor, people who cannot earn enough money to support their families. These are the families who slip through the social-assistance net, who are ineligible for welfare benefits, who pay a disproportionately large chunk of their income for housing, who cannot afford daycare. These are the parents for whom sickness, either their own or their children's, is disaster. Illness means loss of time from work, loss of wages,


increased medical costs — and overall, the prospect of perpetual health problems.

A single mother bears the additional burden of isolation. And in any household, if your overwhelming preoccupation is making a living, getting by at a subsistence level, you have little time or energy to foster the intellectual and social development of your children. "Single moms are the ones affected [by poverty] most severely," says Herron, "and if they live in the inner city, they face additional problems of aging, housing, the absence of playgrounds, and a continual concern for their children in a neighborhood plagued by prostitution and drugs."

One school district responds: Vancouver's Inner City Schools Project

The Inner City Schools Project established school-based teams and programs in four schools (1988-89) with an additional three slated for 1989-90. Lan-

See "Poverty" page 3

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A point of view

I am very frustrated by a group within our union/federation who seem to demand that we ostracize our administrator colleagues who choose to continue to be part of our federation.

Last year, I lost two of my peace-associate colleagues, who were no longer welcome as PD associates because they are administrative officers. The fee for Affiliate Administrative Membership has been raised from \$40 to \$100. A hard-working member of my PSA executive finds it difficult to pay such high fees to volunteer his services.

I believe the fee increase discourages the type of respect and dialogue that I feel is necessary to foster teamwork at the school level, where we live together day-by-day.

Beverly Davis
B.C. Teachers of Peace and
Global Education
Victoria

Teacher reaches Manitoba

Congratulations on a fine, fine professional newsmagazine! Not only is it visually appealing; the quality of the news/articles in it is extremely high indeed! An exemplar for teacher professional societies/federations in Canada.

Thomas Chan
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Write to Us

*We are always
interested in
hearing from
our readers.*

Welcome back!

Teacher will be published seven times this year. Copy and advertising deadlines for the remaining issues are: September 15 (October), October 20 (November), December 8 (January), February 2 (March), March 16 (April), April 27 (May/June).

Constructive critical thinking in schools: a response to Roger Albert

Roger Albert (Critical Thinking in Schools, *Teacher*, May/June 1989) suggests that formidable difficulties in introducing critical thinking to the classroom result from the desire of teachers and employers for control. I believe that critical thinking is compatible with these needs and can be introduced into classrooms quite easily if we take a more positive view. Critical thinking need not create people so independent they reject everyone else's arguments in favor of their own, disrupting the classroom or the workplace.

Critical thinking is simply good reasoning, used for understanding why others say what they do, for recognizing options and alternatives, and for working to create a consensus out of differing views. Seen in this light, it is a positive, co-operative, constructive endeavor that works as well in Albert's example of a "fast-food-restaurant kitchen" as it does for an independent leader — it does not threaten legitimate authority.

Our general reluctance to introduce more critical thinking in the classroom may be due not to a system-wide preference for uncritical thinking, as Albert suggests, but to a practical difficulty less easily blamed on others. We don't know how to get started. If we try to pull students away from memorizing and drop them headfirst into critical thinking without adequate preparation, we're likely to discourage ourselves, and them, very quickly. ("Right, class, forget the vocabulary lists; we're going to have a debate on the meaning of life instead!")

We can make a comfortable transition into a teaching style that encourages critical thinking and still maintain order in the classroom, if we focus first on activities that prepare students to hear and offer ideas, and to recognize their value. Initially we enable every member of the class to be heard with respect (teacher included) by using listening games, small-group co-operative tasks, brainstorming, and any other activity where contributions are welcomed and considered fairly. We should give students frequent practice in making their own choices wherever possible: for example, where to sit, which book to use, which topic to pick, or whom to work with. Students who become used to thinking about choices on small matters are better prepared to make choices, and take responsibility for them, on larger matters of opinion and theory, without jeopardizing the teacher's management of the learning situation.

I do agree with Albert on one point: "consider looking into" the B.C. Association for Critical Thinking Instruction and Research (ACTIRBC). The present membership includes many people who have taught critical thinking and wish to deal more effectively with the difficulties. We welcome inquiries and suggestions from teachers, and we're gathering resources to help instructors at all levels. Comments, questions, and membership enquiries can be directed to me at the address below, or to the president, Dr. Mark Battersby, Capilano College, North Vancouver.
Maira Gutteridge
Secretary, ACTIR(BC)
c/o Fraser Valley College, 33844 King Road, R.R. #2 Abbotsford, BC V2S 4N2

Government's technology priorities: kids or monitoring systems?

The Minister, Honourable Tony Brummet, replies

I was surprised at the inaccuracies in the article by Leslie Savage, "Catching Up with the Kids" in your May/June issue of *Teacher*, and I feel obliged to correct some impressions your readers might form from this.

On the front page, you headline the comment "Recent allocations of provincial technology funds seem determined to keep B.C. firmly anchored in the past." That is not correct, and not substantiated by the facts. We are moving as quickly as possible, with school districts, to provide computer hardware, software, teacher training, and applied research.

Ms. Savage points out that the B.C. government put \$6.83 million from the Fund for Excellence in 1986-87, but must not have been aware of the \$19 million which went into computers from that same fund the year before. In 1988, we embarked on a five-year program of \$15 million per year for computer technology in the school system. In 1989, we increased the year-two amount from \$16 million to \$20 million to fund the monitoring equipment. The article suggests the monitoring equipment funds were taken from the regular funds, which is not the case.

Later in the article, Ms. Savage states, "but at the proposed ratio of 1:56 computers per child in B.C." The actual ratio in B.C. is now estimated at 1:16, and when the 1989 funding has been expended, it will be at 1:13. This ratio reflects both ministry and local school-district commitments to education computer technology in our schools.

The ministry commitment to more computers, more software, and more teacher training will continue.

I hope you will see fit to inform your readers by means of this letter.

Savage has a second look

I am surprised at the Honourable Minister's accusation of inaccuracies in my article, as the data presented in my analysis of education spending on computer technology derives directly from documents provided by officials in the Ministry of Education in April 1989.

I enclose for your files the document forwarded to me by Technology Program officials on April 17, entitled *Technology Program 1989-90 Year 2 Funding to School Districts*. The document begins:

"At this time, approximately \$16.0 million is allocated to school districts and independent schools for monitoring of student performance, and for instructional uses. School districts will receive \$15.2 million to fund the purchase of hardware and software, and to facilitate staff inservice. In addition, \$0.8 million will be made available to independent schools. This represents a substantial increase over 1988/1989 funding to districts."

If the ministry has increased the year two amount from \$16 to \$20 million since April, in order to fund the monitoring program without taking funds away from the basic technology program goals of providing computers for schools, so much the better, although the rationale for the monitoring program still escapes me. At the time the article was written in April, however, the information provided by the ministry made it clear that \$5.6 million was to be taken from the \$15.2 million allocated to school districts for the whole program. The wording of the document seems unequivocal, and is supple-

mented by a circle graph to prove the point.

As I mentioned in the article, the ratio of one computer to every 16 kids was *proposed as a goal* by the BCTF Task Force on Microtechnology. I would be delighted if B.C. schools had reached that goal. But the ministry's Technology Program Year 2 document states, on page 2, that "...for each student enrolled in Grades 8 through 12, districts are allocated the equivalent of one computer for each 56 students."

This seems straightforward enough, but the possibility of misinterpretation is ever-present. Are there sufficient computers per child in the elementary grades to shift the total school population ratio of computers for kids from 1:56 to 1:16? This would be terrific news, and if it's true I wish I'd known about it. If the ministry has access to information demonstrating a 1:16 ratio, why was it not included in the Technology Program Year 2 funding report?

The Ministry of Education Annual Report for 1986-87 states that \$19.4 million from the Fund for Excellence was allocated to computer technology. My understanding is that school boards were requested to submit proposals for projects to increase access to computers, and that many did so and were funded. But to my mind there is clearly a difference between *ad hoc* funding from the Fund for Excellence, and program funding which recognizes an on-going need. One of the minister's victories has been to secure the technology program as a substantial and specific funding area, for which he deserves congratulations.

Finally, the Honourable Minister contests my statement that a \$6 million expenditure on a high-tech monitoring system keeps B.C. "anchored in the past." Given the urgent need for computers for kids in schools, and the lack of clarity about the rationale for a monitoring program, I will stick on this point. Perhaps the final word is up to your readers.

Teacher

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2235 Burrard Street Vancouver, B.C.
V6J 3H9 (604) 731-812
or (toll-free) 1-800-663-9163

Editor
Nancy Hinds

Contributing editorial group

Elaine Decker
Nora Greenway
Ken Novakowski
Lisa Pedrini
Ralph Sundby
Phyllis Westhara
Ray Worley

Editorial Assistant/Advertising
Helen Kolisnek

Copy editor
Debby Stagg

Design consultant
Betty Sommerville



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Poverty from page 1

language development and the enhancement of self-concept are the two major goals of the project. The four project teachers who acted as overall co-ordinators in the first year were Kathy Pickford (Britannia), Pam Proctor (Grandview), June Williams (Queen Alexandra), and Miki Maeba (Seymour). Project teachers work with school staff team members to share resources and activities within the project room, the classroom, and the school, and with parents. Emphasis is on the team — on collaborative goal setting and planning, on developing school policy, on implementing appropriate strategies in curriculum, on arranging professional-development activities, and on pursuing a host of other responsibilities. As well as working within their particular schools, the project teachers develop parent and community programs and co-ordinate the work of the project team and the schools involved.

Along with the classroom teachers in each school, support personnel include child-care workers, neighborhood assistants, primary-years staff assistants, area counsellors, and native Indian cultural-enrichment workers. Programs include pre-kindergartens, all-day kindergartens, subsidized meal service, the Anchor project (a UBC-designed video/parent-response communications endeavor), and health services carried out by community health nurses.

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Miki Maeba, the project teacher at Seymour School, speaks enthusiastically of the first year. For most of her children English is a second language. One of Maeba's goals is to make parents feel more comfortable in coming to the school. She spends two hours a week at the neighborhood community centre teaching English to the parents of Seymour children. She strongly emphasizes the importance of the bond between home and school, of encouraging parents to see their efforts and those of the school as complementary, of honoring what parents feel and say.

"Generally," she says, "kids don't have the background of experiences that our middle-class curriculum sets forth." For instance, these kids don't get the field trips or holidays, the exposure to middle-class culture. Teachers must validate the experiences that these children do have, she concludes. These are the lives they have, and they need to be accepted and respected.

The project teacher, a child-care counsellor, and a native Indian cultural enrichment worker are three key team personnel operating the Seymour project room.

One of the most rewarding aspects of Miki Maeba's involvement in the project is the kaleidoscope of perspectives on individual children. "It is easier to see kids in a good light," she remarks, "and easier to convey that message from the project room to the classroom teacher. Kids behave differently in a classroom, and because the teacher has to work with the whole class as well as with individuals, it is often easier to think of the child only



The benefits of a nutritious lunch are shown in the faces of these Vancouver children. Research has shown the correlation between poor nutrition and poor performance in school. Kharen Hill photo

as a part of the whole, in some cases a disruptive part, rather than as an individual. And when some of the problems that beset that child can be attended to, his or her ability to co-operate as part of the class improves."

The project room, open to the children before school as well as during the day, is a secure place. Indeed, children who have a reputation for being trouble on the playground are reasonable beings in the project room. Adults are always around, and kids can use the opportunity to search out the counsellor for a heart-to-heart or talk informally with the staff. "We're there for the kids," say Maeba simply.

Does the project alleviate problems that poverty creates? It seems so. Caring teachers and counsellors, monitored health care, access to good foods, communication, and support for parents are all visible offshoots. In a report on their first year, the project teachers, praising the Vancouver School Board for the initiative, noted the development of bonds between home and school, the enhancement of students' self-image, an expansion of experiential learning for students, and a food program that immediately addresses the needs of malnourished children.

Future reforms

The B.C. Council for the Family newsletter (Summer 1989) featured "Poverty and the Family," noting recommendations for reforms:

- Access to special funds for the working poor to help meet medical expenses.
- Enforced spousal and child support.
- Adequate social-assistance rates.
- And more liberal guidelines for those on social assistance.

Several studies have shown a statistical correlation between poverty and poor diet and, in turn, between poor nutrition and poor performance in school.

School food programs are the exception in Canada. Compared with children in British and American schools, our children literally fare poorly. Many teachers keep a snack cupboard, and children may put lunches on a sharing shelf, but these are both volunteer efforts. Needed are sustained nutrition programs providing a suitable meal for every child who wants one.

Projects require political will and taxpayers' dollars. Moreover, they require time and planning. What can boards do?

What can teachers do? Support within the classroom is valuable. Just as important is putting aside the white, middle-class biases that most of us share, in order to understand and honor the varying cultures and facts of existence of large numbers of our children. Teachers can tackle the issues of children and poverty, either as active committee members or as informed supporters. In Vancouver, a children's advocate has been hired for a two-year term, a post created by the Mayor's Task Force on Children. Number one on advocate Rita Chudnovsky's agenda is "to increase the availability and accessibility of services for children with emphasis on gaps in health, mental health, multicultural treatment and social services." Within the BCTF, the Children's Rights Committee lists as its first priority for 1989-90, "to identify for the Executive Committee issues related to children and poverty and recommend strategies for addressing these issues."

Another source of information is a just-published study *Children, Schools, and Poverty* by the Canadian Teachers' Federation, available through the BCTF.

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No one knows better than a teacher poverty's effects — economic, social, emotional — on a child's ability to grow. If the mandate for public education in this province is truly "to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy," then the collective concern of educators, parents, taxpayers, and politicians must be on the real problems facing our children.

We thank Noel Herron and Miki Maeba for their observations and insight.

References available on request.

Judith Turner is an English teacher at Cowichan Secondary School, in Duncan.

Child poverty facts

• The income poverty line for a family of four in Vancouver and most of the B.C. Lower Mainland in 1989 is \$26,619. - Statistics Canada.

• Poor children in urban Canada are more likely than children of the wealthy, to die from accidents among older children and illness among infants. — Statistics Canada.

• Respiratory illness, the third leading cause of death of children under five, is more common among children of low-income families. - Canadian Institute of Child Health.

• School programs are more likely to succeed "if they are well planned and have a broad base of support, if they are not overly ambitious, if they are ongoing, if they incorporate low-income students' values and experiences and if they help disadvantaged students without attempting to change them to fit into existing structures." — *Children, School and Poverty*, Canadian Teachers' Federation, 1989.

• The proportion of families living below the poverty line in B.C. rose from 8.9% to 13.3% between 1973 and 1986 (the sharpest rise in family poverty in Canada). — Canadian Council on Social Development.

• The Vancouver School Board uses the following seven criteria to identify its inner-city schools: family and housing characteristics, income assistance levels, unemployment and median income data, the district's elementary assessment program (K-Grade 4 data), health concerns, pupil mobility, nutrition.

• "The recent reporting on various ad hoc school approaches to giving lunches to hungry children demonstrates how schools are left with the reality of dealing with troubled children when they slip through the social services 'safety net.' It is simply not possible to ignore the plight of these children. Therefore, schools have had to come up with ad hoc measures in the absence of a clear policy on what schools should be doing within an overall government policy on nutrition." — B.C. School Trustees Association brief to the provincial government, 1987.

• "This nation cannot continue to compete and prosper in the global arena when more than one fifth of our children live in poverty and a third grow up in ignorance. The nation can ill afford such an egregious waste of human resources.

Allowing this to continue will not only impoverish these children, it will impoverish our nation — culturally, politically, and economically." — *Children in Need*, 1987 report of the New York-based Committee for Economic Development (a group of leading American industrialists).

• "While not all low-income children will have difficulty in school, many experience less motivation to learn, delayed cognitive development, lower achievement, less participation in extra-curricular activities, different types of student-teacher interaction, negative effects of streaming, lower career aspirations and expectations, interrupted school attendance, lower university attendance, an increased risk of illiteracy and higher dropout rates." — *Children, Schools, and Poverty*, Canadian Teachers' Federation, 1989.

• 1988 Unemployment levels for B.C. regions: Lower Mainland 9.5%, Northern B.C. 9.9%, Okanagan 10.7%, Cariboo 11.0%, Vancouver Island 11.4%, Lillooet Thompson 14.1%, Central Kootenay 14.7%. — Statistics Canada.

Source: Facts compiled by Noel Herron, principal of Lord Strathcona Elementary School, Vancouver.

From the Inside

What I unwittingly teach

by Geoff Hargreaves

Personally speaking, I'm looking forward to another great year. I don't mean academically. I guess the kids'll do more or less as they always do. No. I mean politically.

You'll probably not believe this, but my political successes as a teacher are as astonishing as they're consistent. Over the last 12 years of teaching, I've probably dealt with close to 2,000 students, and I'm proud to say that not more than three or four of them have ever emerged from my classes as convinced anarchists, syndicalists, communists, monarchists, feudalists, fascists, or tribalists. Year after year, they all turn out to favor the status quo (plus a bit extra for themselves). It's downright uncanny.

I don't really know how I do it. I never took a course in ideological indoctrination, or anything even remotely political, for I pride myself on being a totally apolitical employer's employee. But I still pull it off, time after time.

Of course, I can't claim all the credit. I have to admit that I owe a lot to the great fans among my students, those wholesome, uncomplicated kids with whom I chat about hockey and baseball and tennis and football and golf and soccer and curling and basketball and, in moments of radical, devil-may-care recklessness, professional wrestling. My, do we ever have lots to say to each other!

Great fans are fabulous joiners, so different from the peevish, hypercritical loners who just don't know how to have real fun.

A great fan can say "we" in any context and sincerely mean it. For example, a great fan who's never been within 200 miles of Calgary and can't skate from one end of a hockey arena to the other without bruising his bum can say, "*We* won the Stanley Cup last May," and know it's true!

Fans know they make a difference. What would be the point of all those sports pages and TV shows if they didn't?

What I'm getting at is that great fans are in favor of groups because it's fun to be part of something bigger, and it's natural to be in favor of the group that you're part of, just because you're part of it. You don't need to intellectualize about that. It's obvious.

And our society's a team, right? Not everyone will agree, I suppose. There are always the grumblers who've never been taught how to surrender themselves and dwell in friendship with the ideological consensus. They get a kinky kick out of knocking the team.

But I don't want to sound political. That's the whole point. I'm not some propaganda hack. I don't have to be. Just by being myself, I'm doing a fine job of seeing that the conditions that produced what we have today will be there to produce the same things tomorrow.

Geoff Hargreaves is a teacher at Cowichan Senior Secondary School in Duncan and a member of the Teacher newsmagazine advisory board.

Film reviews

Dead Poet's Society

by Leslie Savage

In the current cinema fashion for school films, *Dead Poets' Society* stands out by taking us beyond sentimentality and social realism to portray issues at the heart of the educational enterprise. It is about teaching methods, curriculum, discipline, loyalty, and love. Mainly, though, this film is about the power that ideas can have on young lives.

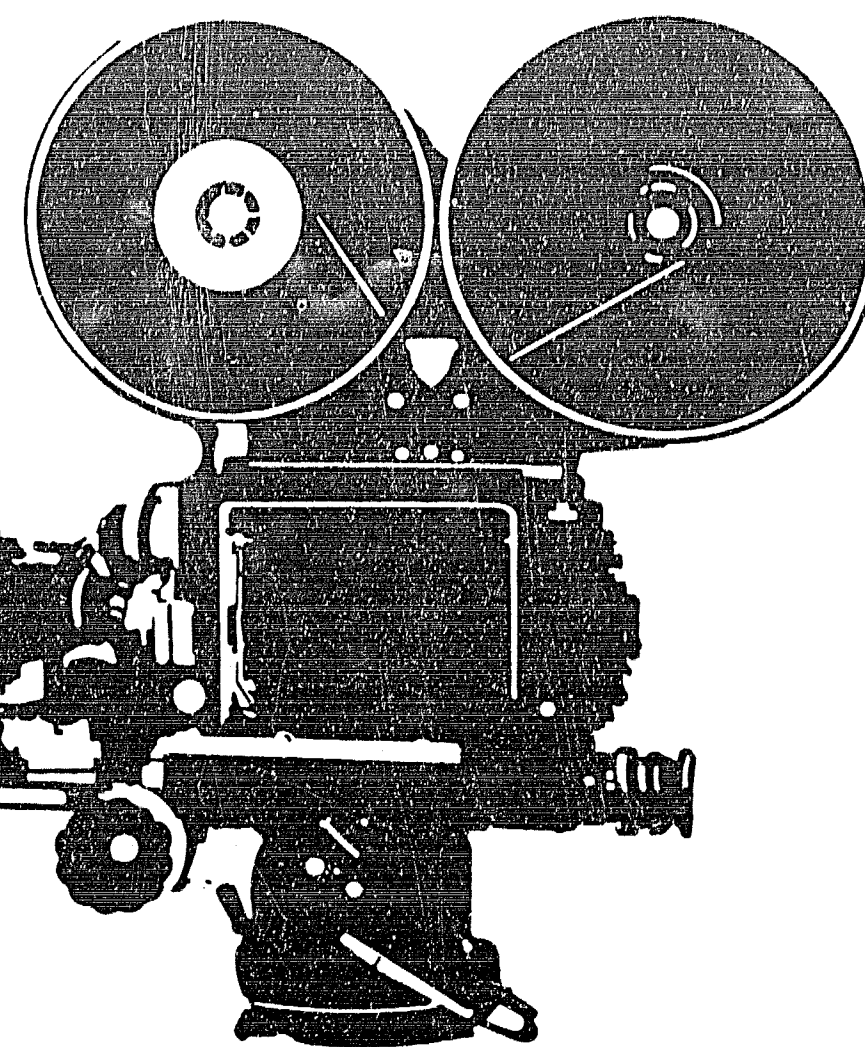
Dead Poets' Society proclaims the notion that individual autonomy is the highest value in life. The question the film asks is this: Is the teacher who promotes self-determination responsible for what happens when students try to act on it? This film gives an answer, one that will provide grist for staffroom mills for months ahead. The problem isn't so much that it's the wrong answer as that it's the wrong question in the first place.

Dead Poets' Society depicts a New England boys' prep school in 1959, an apt setting for the conflict between authoritarian tradition and the soft radical individualism that infused educational discourse from the mid-1960s on. Thomas Schulman's script favors the latter, couched as a rhetoric of freedom. Peter Weir's careful direction makes for a balanced contest, however, and never lets us forget the strong appeal that tradition can wield on young minds. The film's austere radiance makes the most of the visual and aural appeal of scholastic rituals whose attraction is more sensual than intellectual.

Honor, discipline, tradition, excellence, are the banners on which Welton Academy builds its daily world. Reverence for authority is symbolically invoked in the candlelight ceremony in the film's first scene, when "the light of knowledge" is passed by taper with awed humility from boy to boy. The dismantling of this reverence, and the entry of thought into school life, is graphically triggered by the academy's new English teacher, John Keating. Played with empathy and a tempered zaniness by Robin Williams, Keating orders a class of senior boys to rip the introductory essay, on how to value poetry on a numbered grid, out of their poetry texts. The boys' hesitation, their shock, the real difficulty they have tearing pages out of their books, reflect the world of unthinking conformity in which they have lived.

The Dead Poets' Society is a club formed by six of the boys in imitation and honor of the same club formed by Keating when he was at Welton. Their nightly escapades are tied up in the awakening of personal responses to poetry and also to authority. But the innocence of their school-boy rebellion is thrown into question; one of the boys is finally unable to exercise his new freedom with moderation. The consequences are dire. Keating has encouraged freedom of will and self-expression, although not at the expense of defying their parents or the school. Is he nonetheless responsible?

Weir and Schulman say no. In the final scene the boys, loyalties contorted by grief, parental hysteria, and the headmaster's smarmy cruelty, literally stand up for



Keating, climbing onto their desks to state their own view of the world. In their eyes he is still their *Captain, My Captain*.

The tragic fact is, however, that one student, Neil Perry, is not among them. John Keating is a forerunner to those of us who taught in the early '70s era of sex, drugs, and rock'n roll and watched a generation of children test the limits of self-determination to a point often ending in some form of self-destruction. Keating's failure is that of the soft revolution of the '60s in general: his naivete and disregard of the possibility for bad outcomes as well as good ones, once dreams of freedom are unleashed on minds unused to independent thought. The problem is that the particular rhetoric of freedom that Keating, and educators of the '60s, adopted, mistakes self-expression for autonomy, and fails to address the requirements for independence which begins with a solid appreciation of the social contexts of individual action.

The question *Dead Poets' Society* doesn't ask is the degree of responsibility Welton Academy bears for Neil Perry's death. A school that deprives its students of a long nurturing of autonomy through the gradual introduction of real choices in life, might be seen as a mine field of potential disaster. From this film we learn that ideas in general, and the idea of individual autonomy in particular, have risky and unforeseeable outcomes. Introducing real ideas into education requires careful planning and an early start.

Leslie Savage is a freelance writer and college instructor who lives on Bowen Island.

To a Safer Place

To a Safer Place is a documentary without experts, without data. It chronicles Shirley Turcotte's journey into her past and her victory over the abuse that shattered her childhood. From the time she was a toddler until the time she ran away from home at 14, Turcotte lived a violent nightmare of sexual assault and abuse at the hands of her father. She shares her experience through narrative and interviews with other family members. Finally, she takes the viewer with her to the house where her years of abuse took place and confronts the demons of her most painful memories.

Turcotte's story of rehabilitation through sheer determination is an inspiration, an unusually intimate view of the human spirit challenging the most painful odds. Today, Turcotte leads therapy groups for survivors; she also lectures and facilitates workshops on child sexual abuse and healing for adult survivors.

To a Safer Place was produced by Gerry Rogers and Beverly Shaffer for Studio D of the National Film Board. It is available from the NFB, Box 6100, Montreal, PQ, H3C 3H5, (514) 283-9410/9411.

To laugh, or not to laugh; that is the question

BEWARE OF PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSORS BEARING GIFTS

by Don Tait

Laugh, and the world laughs with you; cry, and you cry alone," quotes Dr. John Towler in the April 1989 issue of *Teacher* newsmagazine. In his article, entitled *Had a Good Laugh Lately?*, Dr. Towler points out that "laughing 100 to 200 times a day is said to be just as effective as 10 minutes of hearty exercise on a rowing machine." Furthermore, a workplace filled with laughter is both happier and more productive.

At first, I felt heartened by Dr. Towler's words of advice. After all, my own maxim "Laugh and the board laughs with you; leer, and you may be suspended without pay" is similar and has served me well for more than two decades in a profession that, heaven knows, has often desperately needed a good laugh. Knowing that an eminent professor of psychology endorsed my intention to chortle through a dozen more years of teaching gave me a temporary sense of warmth and security. How could I lose? Even a complete lapse into the non-stop maniacal laughter of raving lunacy would have to be interpreted by my superiors as simply the clever madness in my method. With a little luck and some practice, I might even howl my way into a sort of "golden handshake" early retirement with full pension, and a certificate congratulating me on my eternal joviality.

A more careful, second reading of Dr. Towler's article, however, made my initial feelings of solid security evaporate in a mist of doubts.

First, 10 minutes on a rowing machine, admittedly rather bland, isn't all that bad. It's definitely more fun, and certainly less dangerous than 20 minutes in a row boat, if only because the rower can click-on the TV and become completely absorbed in an episode of *Wheel of Fortune*, for instance, without inadvertently sculling into the path of an oncoming ferry. But the important question here, of course, is whether or not laughing 100 to 200 times a day is really a worth-while substitute for a few innocuous minutes of rowing?

Second, I feel uneasy at the thought of having to incorporate up to 200 laughs into an already hectic work day, especially when admonished by Dr. Towler that "Racial, sexist, off-color, and practical jokes are always in poor taste." Since most of my comic repertoire fits perfectly

into one or the other of these unfortunate categories, I'm left wondering what remains that *is* legally laughable? The thought of censoring a good joke is frustrating, the notion of laughing at nothing just for the exercise is embarrassing, and the vision of carrying *Cartoon Digest* around for quick reference is downright depressing. And what if someone tells me an off-color joke? Should I feel guilty about counting it in my daily quota of knee-slappers? A few samples, or even a modest bibliography of socially acceptable joke books for home and school would have been a helpful addition to Dr. Towler's article.

Even more worrisome is the dismal prospect of searching about for funny people and humorous situations to keep my laugh machine ticking along toward the magic "200." The vision of realizing at 15:15 that I have accumulated only 57 feeble titters and eight guffaws and have yet to endure another staff meeting before going home to what those of us with young children commonly refer to as the "nightshift" is particularly depressing. And what if no one else on staff wants to be funny? Worse still, what if everyone wants to be funny? The implications are horrendous, but, clearly, a 200 laugh day will have to be the result of a concerted group effort; its successful completion would be far too time consuming and exhausting for the average, sane individual to accomplish alone.

I usually arrive at school at 08:30 and leave at 16:30. That seven hours, divided into 200 laughs, works out to 28½ laughs per hour, assuming I laugh right through lunch. Twenty-eight laughs per hour, in turn, translates into approximately one laugh every two minutes. To complicate matters, Dr. Towler does not indicate just exactly what constitutes a hearty laugh. Perhaps a good belly laugh is to a snigger, as a brisk jog is to a casual stroll. I do know that a good belly laugh takes approximately 15 seconds

from conception of idea to recovery of composure, having experimented recently by reading portions of the new school act. Fifteen seconds times 200 laughs equals 3000 seconds, or 50 minutes. Add 30 seconds for each of the humorous situations I'm supposedly either creating or experiencing prior to actual laugh-time (that's another 100 minutes), and I emerge with a grand total of 2½ hours spent in the frantic pursuit of laughter at the expense of my academic and leisure (quality) time.

In the light of these calculations, I'm forced to reject Dr. Towler's laugh prescription as completely unworkable. However, it is always my practice to assimilate good theories whenever possible, and I believe I have arrived at a suitable compromise between rowing and laughing, which I will now be pleased to share with those of you who have followed the argument to this point.

When you go home this afternoon, completely frustrated over the hard day's quest for hilarity, instead of heading for the liquor cabinet, repair to some private place, lock the door, set your rowing machine in front of a full-length mirror, strip down to socks and underwear (or something equally ludicrous) and row heartily while reciting your favorite medley of racial, sexist, or off-color jokes. Laugh raucously when so moved. This clever application of laughter will not only contribute to a more healthy mind but also reduce the rowing time from 10 to 6½ minutes, and, before you know it, the whole, tiresome business will be quickly and painlessly over.

You will arrive at school tomorrow morning alert, refreshed, and able to resume your old, miserable disposition. And while your colleagues anxiously giggle and snort through their 2½ hours of mandatory merriment, you can smugly mark at least three sets of term papers that have been mouldering in your in-basket for the past month.

Just don't let anyone catch you smiling.

B.C. global education project



Patrick Clarke, social studies teacher and former regional co-ordinator for CUSO, has been appointed co-ordinator for the B.C. Global Education Project.

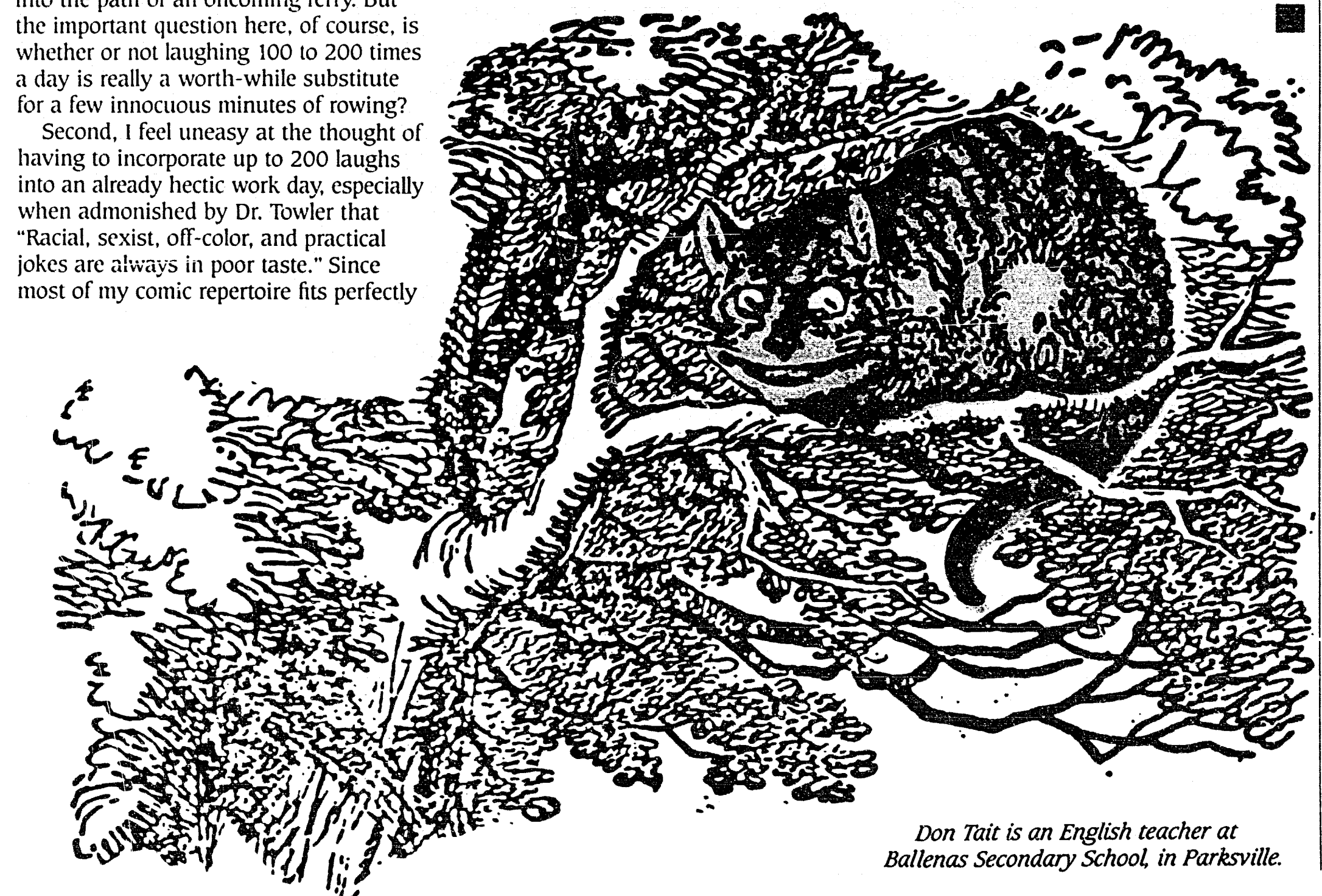
An ambitious and important initiative in global education begins this September with the British Columbia Global Education Project. This project will provide teachers in B.C. opportunities to develop educational approaches to today's critical issues such as environment, peace, human rights, technological change, and multiculturalism. It is a timely initiative of growing concern to students as they face a complex future in a seemingly shrinking world.

The project will provide resources, resource information, and professional development related to global education. Eventually there should be networks of teachers interested in teaching global issues and student pilot projects focusing on specific global concerns.

The project is unique and significant as it is the first time the federal government through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has provided funding for such a project in Canadian schools. Also, the project is the first to bring together a team of participants, key players in B.C. education, to oversee the work. The Ministry of Education, the B.C. School Trustees Association, the BCTF, the Association of B.C. School Superintendents, the universities, and non-governmental organizations are all on the project's management committee.

The project will be co-ordinated by Patrick Clarke. For the past three years Pat has been working as the B.C. regional co-ordinator for the Canadian Overseas Development Agency, CUSO. He is a social studies teacher with 10 years teaching experience in Central Okanagan.

For more information on the B.C. Global Education Project, contact Clarke at the BCTF office.



Don Tait is an English teacher at Ballenas Secondary School, in Parksville.

Dear Mr. Minister

SCHOOL ACT NOW LAW

You will understand if I claim some proprietary interest in the new School Act. My files go back to McGeer's ministry and a presentation to a blue-ribbon committee (replete with lawyers, researchers, and civil-service mandarins) that he established to write a new Act. McGeer was followed by a succession of ministers — Smith, Vander Zalm, Heinrich, and Hewitt — all of whom said that a new Act was as imminent as the next rain shower in the Queen Charlottes. But, you actually did it rather than just promise it, so congratulations from those of us who have some sense of the effort it takes to overcome the inertia of the bureaucracy, and the perils of steering legislation through caucus and cabinet.

You emphasized that the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Education greatly influenced the content of the Act. Thus it is in keeping with other initiatives already undertaken by your ministry that were similarly inspired by the commission's report.

The new Act is also, as you pointed out, "enabling" legislation because it grants, particularly to you and to school boards, authority to exercise widespread powers. Therefore, it is inevitable that the virtues of certain aspects of the legislation are in the eye of the beholder, and other feelings are aroused besides admiration for your legislative efforts. Those feelings range from pleasure through ennui to bewilderment about a couple of sections and major concerns about others.

First, the pleasure. Some of the initiatives have deservedly met with widespread approval. Bringing parents into the legislative fold and creating an Education Advisory Council are the two most prominent ones. Both are examples of broadening the base of consent, so long overdue in this province of polarized positions. This act is also unique in that it is written in inclusionary (gender-free) language — a first in British Columbia.

Then there are clauses that, though they are no doubt essential (the Act is, after all, the educator's three Rs, a compendium of rules, roles, and regulations), are not of engaging interest. Hence the ennui. Unless you are a secretary-treasurer, it is hard to get excited about the Registration of Debentures and Transfers, and only the ghost of Sir John A. MacDonald could be aroused by Section 52, which restricts persons from voting more than once in an election.

But there are clauses of special interest, mighty important to some people that quite frankly baffle me. Section 11 on Appeals, for instance. I thought it was against the first principle of administrative

The new Act grants to the Minister and to school boards authority to exercise widespread powers.

law, and a denial of natural justice, to have to appeal to the authority in whose name the decision was first made. But if parents object to a principal's placement of a student, for example, the avenue of appeal is to the school board. No doubt, the regulations under the Act will authorize the principal, not the board, to be responsible for the placement of students, but the bonds between those two authorities are such that boards can hardly be regarded as the *third party* in the appeal procedure recommended by the Royal Commission.

Then there is a part of the Act entitled Conflict of Interest, which is a rat's nest if ever I saw one. I think it is an ill-disguised attack on teachers serving on school boards, who in numbers and influence are, and always have been, except in Social Credit mythology, a negligible factor. There is also massive irony in government members' bringing conflict-of-interest legislation aimed at anyone but themselves. The foxes are establishing rules of conduct for the chickens.

Finally, come the areas of deep concern: the centralization of powers for the minister in Section 182, and the various clauses that make up what is now known as the "contracting out provisions" that are available to boards. In these areas do the eyes of the beholders see quite different things, and some of the things they see are by no means dragons that lurk only in the depths of the BCTF's imagination. Instead, they are real and well-founded fears born from decades of mutual distrust, a distrust that has only

of late been given a chance to soften in its intensity, thanks to the general acceptance of *A Legacy for Learners*, the report of the Royal Commission on Education.

The commission knew that it could not leave a legacy of anything for anyone in this province without first establishing a relatively peaceful climate in which the system itself would have a chance to make meaningful changes.

To give peace a chance to break out, the commission took two approaches. The first was not to give any of the combatants a stick with which to beat anyone else. The government was not openly chastised for its financial neglect of education; school boards rested secure in their important place and were not threatened with counties or regional governments; and the BCTF was confirmed in its historic professional role buttressed by the almost unanimous vote of teachers.

Second, the commission recommended the establishment of two major consultative committees: one political and advisory; the other, perhaps even more important, to deal with curriculum and assessment in its totality. The commission wished to force discussion and compromise on a system that was characterized by arbitrary dictates and predictable outcries of opposition.

To your credit, Mr. Minister, you established the policy advisory committee long before it was enshrined in the Act. But what about the second committee, the Curriculum Advisory Committee, the one that's supposed to deal, in some detail, with what schools are all about? The

The Royal Commission wished to force discussion and compromise on a system characterized by arbitrary dictates and predictable outcries of opposition.

Royal Commission, whose intent you have followed in so many areas, did not envisage the one committee without the other. On page 110 of the report, it says: "Under the direction of an Education Advisory Council, a Provincial Curriculum Committee could provide direction and co-ordination for all curriculum processes to do with planning, development, implementation, and evaluation."

Instead, we have Section 182 (2) of the School Act which says that the minister, without restriction, may make orders to deal with (a) the provision of education programs, (b) graduation requirements, (c) curriculum, (d) assessment, and (e) learning resources.

I would feel a lot less concerned about the use of those arbitrary powers in the vast area that lies between high policy and specific curriculum development if I knew that a broadly-based advisory group, with the time and resources to take a global look at curriculum and assessment, had first given its advice. In the absence of such a body, and there is no way that the Education Advisory Committee can do that sort of detailed work, those critical decisions that most closely affect the lives of students and teachers in this uncertain world are left to the whims of ministers, or, what's more likely, a few ministry officials who guard their territorial prerogatives zealously.

If such a committee had existed a scant few years ago, we might have been spared the ravages of elective programs and the increased number of drop-outs caused by changes to compulsory graduation requirements. These are arguably the worst decisions inflicted on the public education system in living memory.

The other major concerns are the provisions that would allow school boards to contract out services and employ teacher assistants. I confess that I find myself in a dilemma. I know better than most the intent of the Royal Commission in suggesting ways of dealing with the appalling waste of students in our secondary schools. The commission wanted to establish, in Torsten Husen's words, "a system of plurality of excellence...a variety of career paths in formal schooling leading to different types of high level competence other than academic ability" (page 104, *A Legacy for Learners*). When I wear that hat, it is not difficult to assume that these contracting-out provisions are intended to allow boards to encourage students to pursue "a variety of career paths."

But if I don the hat that says this is British Columbia and there are people in the woods who will do what the Act allows them to do, not what the minister says the Act is intended to do, then I get worried. I am more than worried, because I believe the Act would allow boards, if they had a mind to, to undermine professional standards, purchase cheap services, or interfere with contractual disputes. Any one of those things would be construed as a direct attack on the very purposes of a professional organization and we would be plunged once again into unnecessary strife.

I admit my hats mark two extreme positions, as the first assumes everyone is imbued with nobility of purpose, and the other has a Hobbesian view of this

british world. But on the long line separating those two extremes, I have to pin your government's commitment to privatization, and the singling out of teacher assistants for a special clause in the Act. Other clauses in the sections on

New initiatives can have a real chance of success only in a peaceful climate. That climate is in jeopardy.

Powers and Duties of Boards and Restrictions on Bargaining tie up all the loose ends very neatly. I wonder if there is more in the legislation to deal with these alternative programs than was envisaged by the Royal Commission. The commission noted that endeavors in this sensitive area "will require great co-operative effort and institutional flexibility." Yet these clauses in the Act are prescriptive not co-operative, rigid not flexible. Further, the commission noted that the additional requirements for alternative programs beyond the core "should be set...in consultation with the Provincial Curriculum Committee" — another good reason for getting that body into existence.

You see my dilemma, Mr. Minister. I know the intent of the commission. I have heard you state that your intent was the same, and I do not doubt your sincerity. But the circumstantial evidence, particularly the language and strictures of the Act, have made it appear as though something entirely different is contemplated. You know as well as I do that what the Act says will carry a lot more weight in court than what you say it was intended to do.

Even though the Act is now the law, will you recognize that the fears caused by these clauses are genuine ones, and move to allay them in a co-operative manner? If not, will you move to amend the Act or the regulations if the legislation is abused and your intentions are mocked? New and challenging initiatives are needed, particularly for those students who are not university bound, but those initiatives can have a real chance of success only in a peaceful climate. That climate is in jeopardy. I urge you to address these concerns before they become problems that overshadow the positive aspects of your administration.

You know, Mr. Minister, in years to come, when you have joined the pipe-and-slippers brigade, the laurels that you could be most proud of are not your long service to education or that you delivered a new Act when others merely

promised it, but that you kept the peace, fragile though it may be, that allowed the system to flourish and change for the good of all the children of British Columbia.

Yours sincerely,
Jim Bowman

Jim Bowman is a retired educator who worked as a consultant for the Royal Commission and formerly served as a BCTF staff person.

Excerpts from the new School Act

Section 15 - Employees

"(1) A board may employ and is responsible for the management of those persons that the board considers necessary for the conduct of its operation."

Section 18 - Teachers' assistants

"(1) A board may employ persons other than teachers to assist teachers in carrying out their responsibilities and duties under this Act and the regulations.

(2) Persons employed under subsection (1) shall work under the general supervision of a teacher or administrative officer."

Section 26 - Terms and conditions of teachers' employment

"(2) There shall not be included in an agreement between a board and an association or in a collective agreement any provision

(c) limiting a board's power to employ persons other than teachers to assist teachers in the carrying out of their responsibilities under this Act and the regulations."

Section 94 - Provision of educational program

"(6) A board may recognize as part of a student's educational program an educational activity that is not provided by the board.

(7) Subject to the regulations, a board is responsible for evaluating all of the educational programs and services provided by the board, including services provided pursuant to an agreement under section 104 (1)(a)."

Section 104 - Agreements

"(1) A board may, subject to this Act, the regulations and the orders of the minister,

(a) enter into an agreement to purchase managerial or other services with respect to the operation of schools in the district or to purchase educational services that will be under the general supervision of an employee of the board who is a member of the college..."

Cholesterol: a common health concern

What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a white, fatlike substance, used in the body as a raw material for cell membranes, digestive juices, and sex hormones, among other things. The liver makes most of the 1,000 milligrams needed daily, and the remainder comes from food.

No matter where it comes from, once it's in the body, cholesterol attaches to certain proteins to be carried through the blood stream. These tiny packages of cholesterol (lipids) and protein, together called lipoproteins, have been the object of research to find the link between cholesterol and heart disease.

The good guy

High-density lipoprotein (HDL) is the good guy; it acts as a magnet to keep cholesterol from invading the inner lining of arteries. It also serves as a vacuum cleaner, removing the excess deposited there. The higher the level of HDL, the less the likelihood of heart disease. (Women suffer fewer heart attacks than men, perhaps, in part, because they have higher HDL levels.)

The bad guy

Low-density lipoproteins (LDL) are the bad fats, because of their tendency to deposit cholesterol in the artery walls. If clogged arteries prevent an adequate blood supply from reaching the heart, chest pains (angina) can occur. Total obstruction can cause a heart attack. A blockage in the main arteries of the head and/or neck, stopping blood supply to the brain, can cause a stroke.

What causes high blood cholesterol?

Inheritance or ailments like thyroid deficiency account for elevation of LDL in some people, but high dietary intake of saturated fat is responsible for most. The body is stimulated by saturated fat to increase its LDL production, and then loads it onto the carrier protein in the blood stream. Limiting intake of saturated fats should help. Dairy products, red meats, and visible fats on any product are major sources of cholesterol and saturated fat. Egg yolks have a very high cholesterol level. Use safflower, sunflower, or corn oils instead of coconut or palm oil, or lard. Read labels to find products with polyunsaturated fats, as these fats seem to lower the LDL level.

Other factors

Other factors besides genetic background and diet may affect blood cholesterol level. Just being male can have an effect. At puberty, the male experiences a loss of good fats and an increase in bad ones.

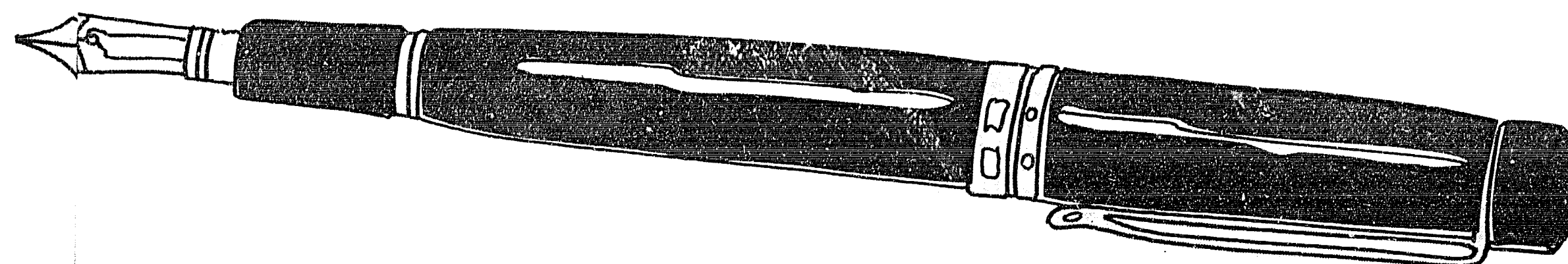
According to some research smoking and stress may also cause a rise in the level of bad cholesterol.

Some studies have shown that aerobic exercises three or four times a week may raise the levels of good fats in the blood.

Dietary fibre, along with a low-fat diet, may help keep the blood cholesterol level down.

If lifestyle changes, such as exercise, stress management, and smoking cessation can't lower the LDL levels, a doctor may consider the use of specific medication.

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SUMMER CONFERENCE '89

Be bold



Novakowski addresses local leaders

There was a familiar ring to the call heard by the 300 delegates at this year's BCTF summer leadership conference — one of action on changes and taking charge of the future of education in B.C.

But it was a call heard with a difference. Teacher leaders, drawing upon the legacy of the past two years, responded with the confidence that a first local contract and successful organizing and bargaining experience can bring. We know now that when we put our minds to it, there isn't anything that we can't do.

"The history of unions in this country is as much tied into the struggles for peace, social justice, and democracy as it is to particular improvement in workplace conditions."

Ken Novakowski, President

Speaker after speaker underscored the fact that teachers will be at the centre of educational directions in the next decade. Their classrooms will be reshaped through educational reform; their sense of social responsibility challenged by those who would narrow their interests exclusively to matters of pedagogy, curriculum, and working and learning conditions.

Internally strong as an organization of teaching professionals, we are ready to meet any of these challenges head on, President **Ken Novakowski** told local representatives. "The partnership that defines our organization, a strong provincial body uniting strong local associations, is a key ingredient in our success. Co-ordination, communications, and democratic decision making help make that partnership work," Novakowski continued.



Jim Bowman, educational consultant and researcher, beckoned delegates to capitalize on this strength, to move beyond their status as a craft union, and "leap frog" into the future. "Get bold and imaginative," said Bowman. "You'll never get a better time to be bold. You're dealing from strength that must be the envy of every union in the country."

Others will always be ready to set the agenda for education, Bowman continued. The central challenge for teachers is to avoid a reactive stance, merely responding to the blueprints that governments and agencies of the government lay out. The opportunity today transcends the immediate reality of white papers and new school act legislation, and circles back to the *raison d'être* of teaching — creating a meaningful education for children in order that they can be active participants in the sweeping social changes of this and the next century.

Teachers look to their organization for inspiration, as well as for all of the impor-

tant and legitimate protections that the BCTF already so ably provides. Bowman concluded by urging the audience, "If you wait passively for others to essay into your future, you will lose the chance to become the kind of dynamic and adaptable organization that will prosper in this uncertain world. Your members should be inspired by their own leaders to face the challenges of a world that I cannot describe and can only half imagine."

Self-determination and concern for social issues are not new themes for the B.C. Teachers' Federation, or for unions. Speaking about a recent IRC ruling allowing two North Vancouver teachers to opt out of the union on religious grounds because they object to a specific policy of our union, Novakowski reaffirmed our role in social issues.

"The history of unions in this country is as much tied into the struggles for peace, social justice, and democracy as it is to particular improvement in workplace conditions," said the president. "As professionals we see each day the impact of the social system on our students, and on their opportunities to learn. We cannot ignore poverty, violence, or the condition

of our environment, because they daily affect the work we do, the work we aspire to do," he continued.

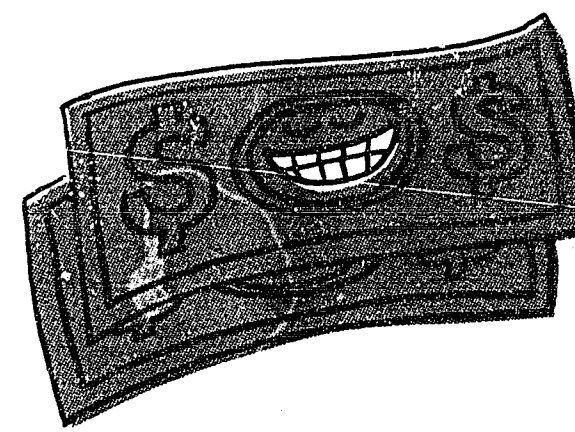
Luncheon speaker, **Kay Sigurjonsson**, from the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario reinforced Novakowski's view of the role of Canadian unions by comparing what she called the history of business unionism in the United States, with the social unionism evident in Canadian history. Sigurjonsson told the story of Sam Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labour, who when asked, "What do unions want?", answered, "More." She contrasted that with the role of J.S. Woodsworth in setting the course of Canadian unions with the words, "What we desire for ourselves, we wish for all."

As the new issues are dished up over the next year, will teachers be bold enough? Will teachers meet them with a clear resolve to do something significant for children, and with the conviction that teaching brings a responsibility to society, as well as to the individual learner.

Nancy Hinds



Putting your money where your mouth is



(Left and below) Summer Conference participants examine the implications of a new School Act and proposals for curriculum and assessment reform in B.C.

EXECUTIVE SUPPORTS EDUCATION POLICY PILOTS

At its August 21 meeting the Executive Committee voted to encourage and support pilot projects initiated by local associations to develop new and effective means of involving members in key education policy issues such as curriculum, assessment, the sequential program, gender equity, professional autonomy, parent and student advisory structures and processes.

The plan (subject to the approval of the Representative Assembly for the use of the Reserve Fund) is designed to provide a maximum of \$1,000 for locals with 100 or fewer members, and for locals with more than 100 members, the lesser of \$10 per member or \$10,000.

Locals are asked to submit project outlines that describe the goals and objectives identified by a needs assessment, structures and roles, activities, federation support required, including training support, and estimated costs.

In each of the pilot projects teachers will define an appropriate structure for professional planning and reflection. The projects will be described and evaluated, and the ideas will be made available to others, contributing to the evolution of effective structures for teacher leadership and education reform.

For more information, contact your local association president or the BCTF Professional Development Division.



The 1989-90 BCTF Executive Committee (back row, left to right) **Rina Berkshire**, **Richard Hoover**, **Jan Eastman**, **Gary Robertson**, (front row, left to right) **Alice McQuade** (Second Vice-President), **Peter McCue**, **Ken Novakowski** (President), **Ray Worley** (First Vice-President), **Cathy McGregor**, **Bob Taverner**. (One member-at-large to be elected at the Representative Assembly.) *Alistair Eagle photos*

Teaching: from craft to profession

YOUR IDEAS WANTED

The BCTF Task Force on Teaching Conditions and Professional Practices wants to know what classroom teachers think about their profession. In an unprecedented example of largesse and bribery, the task force is offering an original cartoon by *Province* editorial cartoonist **Bob Krieger** to the group of teachers that makes the most valuable contribution to the task force.

The "wisdom of the practitioner" is central to the task force's work. Its objectives are to enhance teacher effectiveness, promote the professional status of teachers, and promote meaningful achievement by all students. If teachers are professionals, they must be at the centre in determining education policy and practice.

In 1988, the BCTF Executive Committee established a Task Force on Teaching Conditions and Professional Practices. Its mandate is to define fundamental principles that could be included in a declaration of professional practices and to define working conditions necessary to facilitate professional practice. The task force is scheduled to submit its recommendations to the 1990 BCTF Annual General Meeting. The task force is gathering information on teaching conditions and professional practices in a variety of ways, including surveys of all teachers through the *Teacher* newsmagazine. Every teacher will have an opportunity to describe the teaching conditions and professional practices that ought to prevail in public schools.

Also, school staff representatives will be asked to assist in gathering teachers' insights into these important matters. Task force members and BCTF staff are reviewing current research, and preparations are being made to obtain submissions from provincial specialist associations, local associations, and provincial committees and networks.

The task force prefers that input be the product of discussion among groups of teachers rather than the insights of individuals. Your staff, or an interested group of individuals in your school or district, is encouraged to make submissions to the task force on any or all of the following questions:

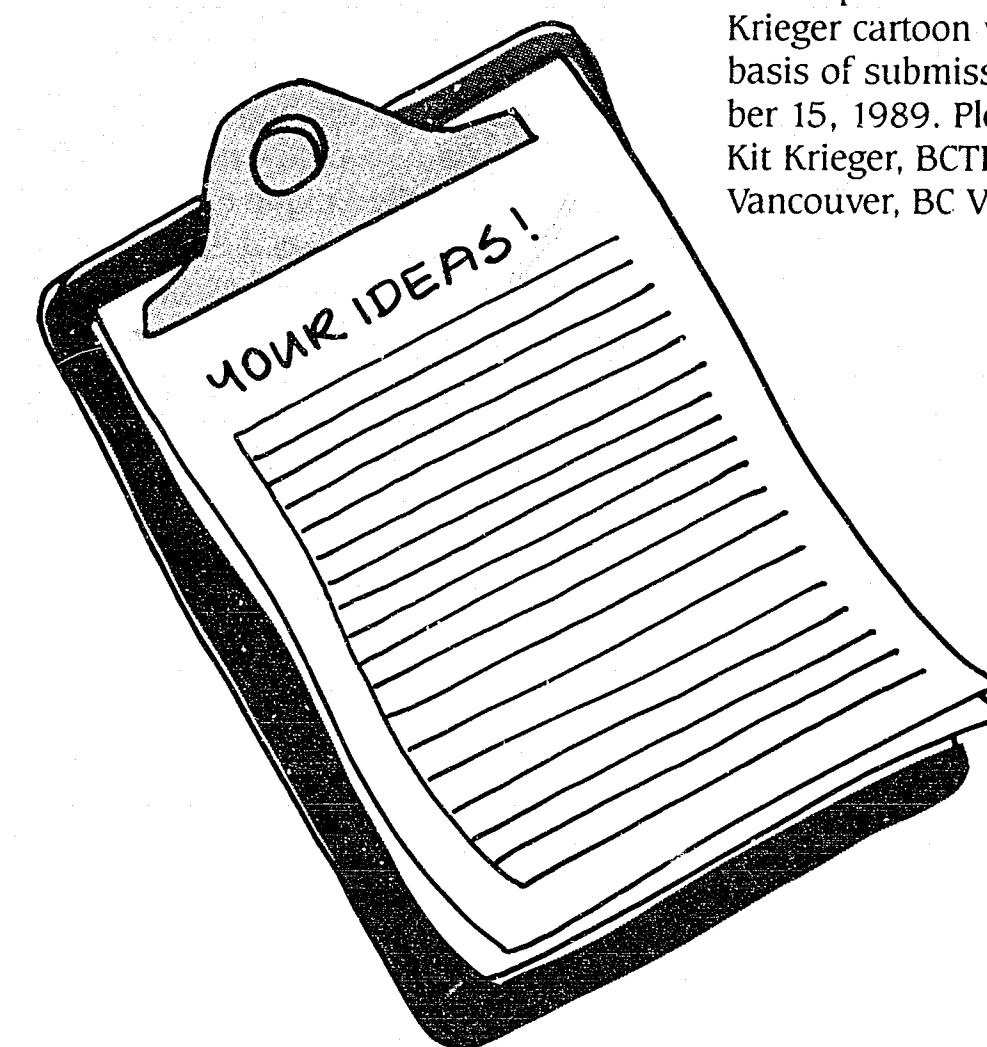
1. What knowledge should every teacher possess?
2. What knowledge do teachers have that entitles them to professional status and a central role in education?
3. What are appropriate professional rights and responsibilities of teachers?
4. What should teacher training be to ensure that only qualified persons enter the teaching profession?
5. What should the internship experience be like for those newly entering the profession?
6. What principles and practices should form the basis for teacher evaluation?
7. How should schools as places of work and learning change in order to enhance teaching as a profession?
8. What objective standards for working conditions would enhance the professional status and efficacy of teachers (e.g., class size, student load, role definition, etc.)?
9. What is an appropriate role for teachers to play in decision making? What is an appropriate decision-making model? Which issues are properly decided by teachers, by administrators, by trustees, by government, by parents, by students?

The task force does not expect teachers to provide comprehensive answers to each and every question, but it is convinced that no player in the public school system is better qualified to respond to these issues than active teachers.

Submissions may be in any form. Send the results of a brainstorm. Send brief notes, an essay, a tape recording, or a video. Send 25 words or less or a weighty tome.

The prize of the original and framed Krieger cartoon will be awarded on the basis of submissions received by November 15, 1989. Please send submissions to **Kit Krieger**, BCTF, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC V6J 3H9.

— Kit Krieger



TOO COOL FOR WORDS

by Susan Underwood

ac came from the city in April. A skate-board kid deprived of pavement, he was brash, sassy and "cool." The other kids were dazzled. My island students, like drab brown sparrows, flocked about the strutting peacock whose fan of feathers held them with its iridescent eyes.

We were writing stories about heroes and journeys, and poems about magic and beauty when Zac joined the class. Our reading of novels, legends, myths, and fairy tales for well over two months was now bearing blossom and fruit in the writing of the students. The transformations I had witnessed were quietly thrilling.

David, all shuffles and grins, extravagant gestures and exuberant grace, whose talents are physical, the dream of every coach in the district, began the year writing BIG, filling up the pages of his journal by incorporating three inch margins on both edges of the page. Shyly he told me in April that his goal in life is to be a poet. He brought me new gifts every morning, a poem he wrote about a girl he had seen with emptiness in her eyes, a leather-bound poetry volume that belongs to his grandfather.

Lara, who in her journal had endlessly recounted the plots of the novels she read, wrote the first two chapters of her own novel, a story about a fairy who lives on the moon but visits earth by entering the dreams of children. She has so many beautiful images, she told me, she has to write them all down in a poem.

Sonja is a whisper of a girl, a sliver of grass. I remember reading a Yeats poem to the class and seeing Sonja's face lift like a flower to the sun, her eyes holding the mystery of the night sky, stars I could sail by. She brought me a four-line poem the next day.

"There," she announced as she plunked it on my desk, "I spent all night writing this but it's right now." Earlier in the year, she would abandon with disinterest any writing begun 10 minutes earlier.

As a fellow translator of experience into words, I welcomed the opportunity to share stories and poems with students, acknowledging the unique expression of our common ground. Each day, as we wrote together, read together, and spoke together, the reviscent quality of our experience became tangible and our community of writers replenished its muse. But Zac's entrance interrupted the conversation and transformed it momentarily into a monologue.

Zac's first piece of writing, so lacking in any involvement in or understanding of the process, caught me by surprise. I had grown accustomed to the tones of spring; those students who in September had been indifferent to the hums and murmurs of their syllables and synonyms were attuned in May to the birdchatter liveliness of words and the wondrous possibilities of their endless inventions. When the time came for volunteers to read their writing to the class, Zac was

the first. The limelight drew him like a moth to flame. I was uneasy as he read his story. How would the class respond?

He read the story with dramatic flourish. The class was mildly amused. The next reader was Brian. Brian is an eccentric electronics genius, perpetually devising circuits and formulae. Batteries and magnets bulged from his desk, equipped with lights that blinked when he wanted my attention. Tall and skinny, diffident and gawky, Brian is usually lost in a world of his own. As he unfolded himself from the chair and stood before the class, clearing his throat, shifting from foot to foot, the atmosphere quickened within the room. Here was something unique, of interest. The students leaned forward.

Brian read a poem about a lonely dragon flying forever above a world he loved for its green-blue beauty, a beauty that was always distant and mysterious. When he finished, there was silence for a moment as we all stared at Brian, who shuffled and nodded his head self-consciously and peered birdlike about the room, blinking and folding his paper. Then, the class rose to its feet, clapping their hands, whistling, announcing to one and all that this poem *spoke*.

Uncomprehending, Zac sat alone, puzzled, almost angry. Later that day, he gave me his story again with some revisions. One or two sentences showed promise, a sensitivity to words, sounds, images. But something was missing, and we both knew it.

In early June, at lunchtime, the door to the school crashed open, and I heard the slap of sneakers, signalling crisis, beat down the hall. Before I had risen from my chair, Zac was before me, breathless.

"There's a baby fawn. I found it in the woods, and it doesn't have a mother. It'll DIE!" I explained to him that mothers of baby fawns hide them in safe thickets during the day and return around dusk to feed and protect. But Zac, an unconvinced city boy, wanted to *do* something, so we tramped through underbrush, over logs, into a secret glade, where, curled like a comma between stone and stump, lay a sleeping fawn.

"Don't touch," I whispered, awestruck by the fawn's proximity, the rhythm of its breath, the tender white markings like fingerprints on its back.

"We shouldn't tell anyone," Zac whispered back. "They'll all want to see it." Just as I had wanted to, I acknowledged to myself. Yes, best to keep the fawn a secret. In the end, we couldn't. Students had witnessed Zac's dash into the school, our trek into the forest, the return. But they agreed to stay away from the woods for fear of disturbing the doe or fawn, and, since the bell had rung to commence classes, our fears were ungrounded. We did agree that in the morning, Zac, to assure himself, would check that the fawn was gone, hidden by the mother in another safe alcove.

When the bell rang for morning classes, Zac was already in his seat, eyes shining. For one moment we shared a secret. "Gone," he told me. Then he turned to the rest of the class. "It's good I found it," he bragged. "Somebody else would have done something stupid like touch it or something. But I didn't tell anyone."

Ah, but he had. He had told me. The last day of school, we had a picnic down at the beach. Zac would return to the city to live. We had cleaned out our desks, had our farewell banquet, made our speeches, and shared our gifts. I was just about to leave the party, and so was Zac, when at the last minute, he dropped his bicycle, came back to where I was standing, put his arms around me, and gave me a big hug.

"All those nerds hugged you," he said. Then he added, "I'll write." Who knows? Maybe he will.

Teaching literature and writing is an act of freeing, of returning ourselves and our students to our essential beings, our dwelling place on earth. "Listen to the earth," we say.

...by listening with the same bowed head that sings, draw all into one song,

join the sparrow on the lawn, and row that easy way, the rage without met by the wings within that guide you anywhere the wind blows. Listening, I think that's what the earth says. — William Stafford

To write with words that speak, one has to listen to the earth and the voices of all its creatures. I'm glad I live in a place conducive to listening. We are surrounded by trees and meadows; eagles soar above; and from our classroom window, we see the ocean ripples glinting in the sun. But students do not always hear. What opens their ears, is often the story or poem of a fellow spokesperson. When Sonja listens to a Yeats poem and David reads his grandfather's book, they open themselves to the words on the page, to the experience of the person who wrote them, and to the experiences of other readers and listeners. I love to teach writing and literature, because as I read stories and poems to children, I connect with the words of the poet, the stories of my life, and the wakefulness of myself and my students to the world.

...In writing, for the person who follows with trust and forgiveness what occurs to him, the world remains always ready and deep, an inexhaustible environment, with the combined vividness of an actuality and flexibility of a dream. Working back and forth between experience and thought, writers have more than space and time can offer. They have the whole unexplored realm of human vision. — Stafford, 1977, p. 20

At the end of each school year, I am surprised by the voices with which my young students speak in their poems, stories, and speeches. I am not the only one with whom the writing resonates. Other

teachers have asked for the lesson plan that has produced a certain piece of writing from a student. They mistakenly assume that I somehow controlled the process or that it can be isolated and removed from the individual writer. Our questions are unique, and our responses even more so. The experience we live helps to formulate our questions, and the quality of our thoughtfulness determines our responses. How did Zac feel entering a class in which the students were open to listening and he was not? In his experience, stories were not sustenance for the spirit; writing did not offer a world "always ready and deep." Instead, language seemed to be little more than a collection of codes used to exclude connections with the "other." In using language as a shield to protect against experience, Zac could not simultaneously use language to both question and respond. He was, indeed, "too cool for words."

To open the door is an act of courage. What caused Sonja, Brian, Lara, and David to unclench their hands and risk exposing their secret treasure? Other writers had reassured them that such open gestures would be reciprocated. Responding to the voice of an "other" stirred an awareness of their own core, which they sought to express in their words of a poem or story. What formed the melody were notes previously played within the experience of the student.

Teaching literature and writing is an act of freeing, of returning ourselves and our students to our essential beings, our dwelling place on earth. "Listen to the earth," we say.

The earth says have a place, be what that place requires; hear the sound the birds imply and see as deep as ridges

go behind each other.... — Stafford, 1962

In returning to our essential beings, we are returning to our connection with the "other," opening ourselves to the world. I, blessed as a teacher of writing, am constantly touched by the words of my students, tapped on the shoulder, and reminded to look again at this world, through the eyes of another. In turn, my being beckons to them, and theirs, to each other. We stand before the class to speak our words. They flow more readily in June than they did in September. We have lived together within the months, some of us for three years now. At some time or another, an exchanged glance has transformed our understanding our interactions.

Sometimes, I am the one to "follow with trust and forgiveness" a moment of shared time. I bring to the class a precious treasure and stand before them and say, "Listen. I love this poem (or memory or leaf or person). I trust you to honor this love in me." At those moments, I am able to inspire. I remember an art class in November, as we used brush and ink to draw bare branches and grasses. Watching the students sketch tentative, careful scrawls across the page, I am exasperated. I "let go" and tell them what it *felt* like for me to draw. I talk of how one can see with one's whole body, of how when I felt that type of seeing I put brush to paper. Then I close my eyes and see, open them and draw. Just before I turn again to the class, I feel a moment's apprehension. Would I catch the uneasy sideways flicker of eyes, betraying the fear that their teacher is deranged? Instead I catch an eager light of comprehension in their eyes, and in their expressions, I read a new intent. They draw with heightened concentration; the classroom is silent. The drawings are superb.

At other times, the student issues the invitation to openness: a shy offer of a cookie at recess, a question, a poem, or a story. From Zac, the invitation was urgent, announced or perhaps accepted, with a slam of door and pell-mell rush. For a moment, a gentle hush in his noisy world, we listened together and to each other, and in that moment, I feel we were taught.

To ensure confidentiality, fictitious children's names have been used. Susan Underwood is a teacher-librarian at Fulford Elementary School on Salt Spring Island. She is currently on secondment to the Ministry of Education as curriculum co-ordinator.

References: Heidegger, M. *Basic writings*. New York: Harper & Row, 327. (1977) Stafford, W. "In response to a question." *Travelling through the dark*. New York: Harper & Row. (1962) Stafford, W. *Writing the Australian crawl*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, (1977)

NEW WESTMINSTER TEACHER SAYS "YES!"



Ron Bennett, head teacher/librarian, Library-Computer Resource Centre, New Westminster Secondary School is an excellent teacher in an unusual teaching environment.

The LCRC at NWSS is a large area on two floors, with two computer labs attached. Ron works particularly in the MacIntosh lab, a network of 27 stations. It is not an enclosed room, but part of an area that supports magazine research, video viewing, and a professional collection. Students and teachers are constantly moving around the area, creating noise that Ron must take into account when teaching in the Mac lab.

Ron also serves as the LCRC resident computer technician. He is in demand to straighten out the bugs in both the Mac and Apple labs. Attempting to keep the computers functional affects Ron's teaching. He has added to his introductory lessons, care and safety of the computers, and he instills in the students the desire to keep the labs in good working condition.

The Mac lab is booked by subject teachers. Ron introduces the students and often their teachers to the computers. Classes range from Grade 8 to 12 and from emotionally/mentally handicapped to gifted. Ron quickly gives his students the tools to succeed with the Mac by establishing a good rapport with them, and by motivating them to appreciate and respect the computers. His lesson presentation is highly organized, clear, and geared to the experience and understanding level of the class that he is instructing. He has boundless patience, which is essential in this setting where machines may not be responding as expected; where he is being interrupted by requests for help by students and teachers not in the class; and where other groups are using the area for non-computer purposes. Ron Bennett is very successful in this three-ring circus.

This unusual teaching situation would not suit many teachers, because it demands a high level of flexibility. It also demands constant lesson adaptation; the students must get needed information the first time, because one hardly ever gets a chance to redo a lesson. And finally, a teacher must have a great deal of enthusiasm and understanding of students; and these Ron has in abundance. All of this makes him an excellent teacher in an unusual teaching setting and I felt moved to share with you these observations of his unique teaching quality.

Adrienne Graham
New Westminster Secondary School

Write to us...

Have you seen some outstanding classroom teaching lately?

Teacher is interested in hearing from you about good teaching practice going on in our schools.

Write to us. Tell us what you have seen. We want to open the doors to our classrooms, to showcase our good practice.

ANOTHER IN A SERIES OF TEACHING STORIES





College of Teachers

Call for nominations

Call for nominations for the 15 elected zone representatives to sit on the council of the college went out September 1, 1989 to each member in good standing in the College of Teachers. To be eligible for nomination to the position of zone representative, a person must be a member in good standing of the college, be chiefly employed by a board in the zone or have principal residence in the zone, and not be an employee of the college. The deadline for return of nominations is 17:00, Monday, October 16, 1989 at the college offices. Nominations must be in writing, be proposed by 10 members in good standing of the college in that zone, and be accompanied by the candidate's written consent.

A mail ballot will be conducted in the zones for which there is more than one nomination. Ballots will be sent out on October 30, 1989 to all members who were in good standing at the time of the call for nominations. The deadline for return of the ballots will be November 28, 1989 at the college offices and the count will begin on November 29, 1989.

Environmental resources

Project WILD

Project WILD is an education program that emphasizes awareness, appreciation, and understanding of wildlife and natural resources. It is interdisciplinary and supplementary. It can be used to teach basic skills not only in science, but in social studies, language arts, math, art, music, and physical education.

Project WILD teaches young people from Kindergarten to Grade 12 how to think about wildlife, not *what* to think. They learn basic concepts about wildlife, its needs, and its relationship and importance to people and the environment. The program helps develop problem-solving and decision-making skills to determine responsible human actions.

Project WILD is sponsored in B.C. by the Ministry of Environment and Parks. Educators around the province are being trained as leaders to present WILD workshops, assisted by the ministry's staff.

For information on attending workshops or becoming a workshop leader, contact Project WILD, c/o Information Services Branch, Ministry of Environment and Parks, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, BC V8V 1X5.

Environmental Partners Fund

The Environmental Partners Fund is a program designed to establish lasting partnerships for the good of the environment. The federal government has set aside \$50 million over five years to help local groups take action in protecting, preserving, enhancing, and restoring the environment at the community level.

Potential projects include those that rehabilitate and enhance the environment, or propose innovative ways to deal with waste disposal or recycling.

In 1990 there will be three application deadlines for funding — March 1, June 1, and September 1.

For more information, contact Environment Canada, 700 - 1200 West 73rd Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6P 6H9. Telephone 666-5887.

Shopping for a better world

Shopping for a Better World: A Quick and Easy Guide to Socially Responsible Supermarket Shopping, is put out by the Coun-

cil on Economic Priorities, 30 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. This booklet rates products according to whether the company is involved in defense contracts, nuclear power, South Africa, women's advancement, animal testing, social disclosure, community outreach, minority advancement, charitable giving, and caring for the environment.

How to get your lawn and garden off drugs

For a copy of this book and information on the campaign, contact Friends of the Earth, 701 - 251 Laurier Avenue W., Ottawa, ON K1P 5J6. The book costs \$12.95 plus \$2 postage/handling.



Environmental sticker

Wishart Elementary School in Victoria held a two-day Environment Fair organized by a representative committee of staff members and members of the parents' group. An adhesive sticker was designed that brings into focus all the educational aspects of our fragile environment. These stickers can be ordered from Wishart School Supporters, 3310 Wishart Road, Victoria, BC V9C 1R1. Price per sticker is 90¢ — minimum 25 sticker order preferred. Make cheques payable to Wishart School Supporters.

Environmental speakers available

Teachers are responding to the environmental crisis by integrating environmental education into their curricula, and the Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC) is one place you can turn to for help. SPEC offers a number of educational resources to teachers and students, including a library, informational materials, and speakers who will talk to your students about what they (and their parents) can do to contribute to a sustainable environment. All services are free of charge, although with speaking engagements outside the Lower Mainland, we would appreciate schools covering transportation and accommodation costs.

For more information, contact SPEC, 2150 Maple Street, Vancouver, BC V6J 3T3, 736-7732.

Creative classroom project on the environment

by Karl Osmer

We can easily raise student awareness of local environmental issues by allowing students to conduct an actual research project. Using satellite generated data from RESORS in Ottawa combined with aerial photographs and Landsat images, students can "look back in time" to see how their environment has changed over the years.

Aerial photographs are available dating back at least 35 years, and Landsat images go back to the early 1970s. Using such information, students can see how the land has been changed: whether by humans (logging and urban expansion) or by nature (drought).

To deepen students' awareness, and to make such a project economically possible, students can work with local experts (forestry, agriculture, environment, or fisheries and oceans). In this way, students have an opportunity to see how their work relates to the "real world." Working with experts also provides access to their information: photographs, satellite images and data, etc.

A pilot project was run in Bella Coola in 1989. Senior students from a small (120 student) secondary school used the computers and modem to perform a data search of the RESORS library (60,000 documents) to request information pertinent to their project. They worked with experts in forestry to analyze changes to forest cover (biomass) over the past 35 years and with fisheries experts to see what kinds of activities had detrimental effects on salmon spawning habitat.

Having conducted this experiment, the students are themselves increasingly aware of environmental issues, and they have also raised the general consciousness of the whole community by having their projects publicized in the local newspaper.

For further information, write me, Box 730, Bella Coola, BC V0T 1C0.



Across Canada on current teacher collective bargaining

by Al Cornes

Newfoundland

The provincial agreement expires on August 31, 1990.

Prince Edward Island

Agreement was recently reached on a two-year contract effective September 1989. The salary settlement gives a cash bonus of \$650 to each teacher in September of 1989, with scale increases as follows: February 1, 1990, 4.75%; September 1, 1990, 3%; and February 1, 1991, 2.25%.

Nova Scotia

The provincial agreement expired on July 31, 1989. The negotiations recessed for the summer. The provincial government is attempting to withdraw all supervisory personnel (department heads and above) from the teacher bargaining unit.

New Brunswick

The parties have just settled a three-year contract that provides for increases as follows: year 1, 4%; year 2, 2% and 2%; year 3, 5% and 1%.

Quebec

The provincial agreement expired on December 31, 1988. The provincial government has made an offer that includes the following: a salary increase of 4% in the first year, with the second and third year negotiated in accordance with Bill 37; areas such as workload, class size, and financing for professional development to remain unchanged; the salary for surplus teachers to be reduced to 75% of a full-time teacher's salary. Little progress has been made on the priority issues. The Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers has launched a publicity campaign, and regional demonstrations have been organized in co-operation with the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec.

Ontario

Teacher settlements have generally been in the 4.5% to 5% range, with the provincial average 4.8%. Most locals have settled for the 1988-89 school year, and a significant number have signed multi-year agreements that also cover the 1989-90 school year.

Manitoba

As of June 16, 57 agreements or tentative agreements had been reached. Most are two-year agreements, effective January 1, 1988, providing salary increases of 3.25% in 1988 and 3.45% in 1989.

Saskatchewan

The current provincial agreement expires on December 31, 1989.

Alberta

Teachers under the Calgary public school board signed a 20-month agreement effective January 1, 1988. The agreement provides for a wage freeze in 1988 and a 2% salary increase on January 2, 1989.

Teachers under the Edmonton public school board recently signed a two-year agreement effective September 1, 1987. The agreement provides for a salary increase of 1% on September 1, 1987; 1% on January 1, 1988; and 1.5% on September 1, 1988.

British Columbia

Seventy-four locals have now settled, leaving Mission as the only district without a contract for the current period. The settlement and rate average over two years is 14.79% with other significant gains in hours of work, supervision-free noon hours, processes for evaluation, discipline, and dismissal, professional autonomy, and paid maternity leave. Locals are now preparing for the next round of bargaining, which, for most locals, will commence in the spring of 1990.

Al Cornes is the acting director of the BCTF Bargaining Division.

Lesson Aids opens new doors

TITLES FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS

The BCTF Lesson Aids Service offers the following selection of teacher-prepared materials for beginning teachers.

For a complete listing of more than 700 curriculum-support materials for K-12 in all subjects, please consult the *1989-90 Lesson Aids Catalogue* in your school library.

Enclose a cheque with your order, and mail it to BCTF Lesson Aids Service. Orders are mailed the day they are received. Display-room hours are from 09:00 to 17:00 Monday through Friday, and from 09:00 to 12:00 Saturdays during September, October, January, and February.

LA 8806 Getting ready for the fall term, by Lorna Robb, 2 p. Suggestions to help primary teachers get organized for the first few weeks of school. \$3.50
LA 8814 Organization is the key: one look at the integrated day, by Linda O'Reilly, 9 p. Practical ideas on physical organization, daily routines, record keeping, etc., as well as one method of starting an integrated program. \$1.15

LA 9901 Applause: for first year teachers, by University of Victoria staff associates, 32 p. A handbook of helpful hints to guide first-year teachers to a smooth start to teaching. \$3.25

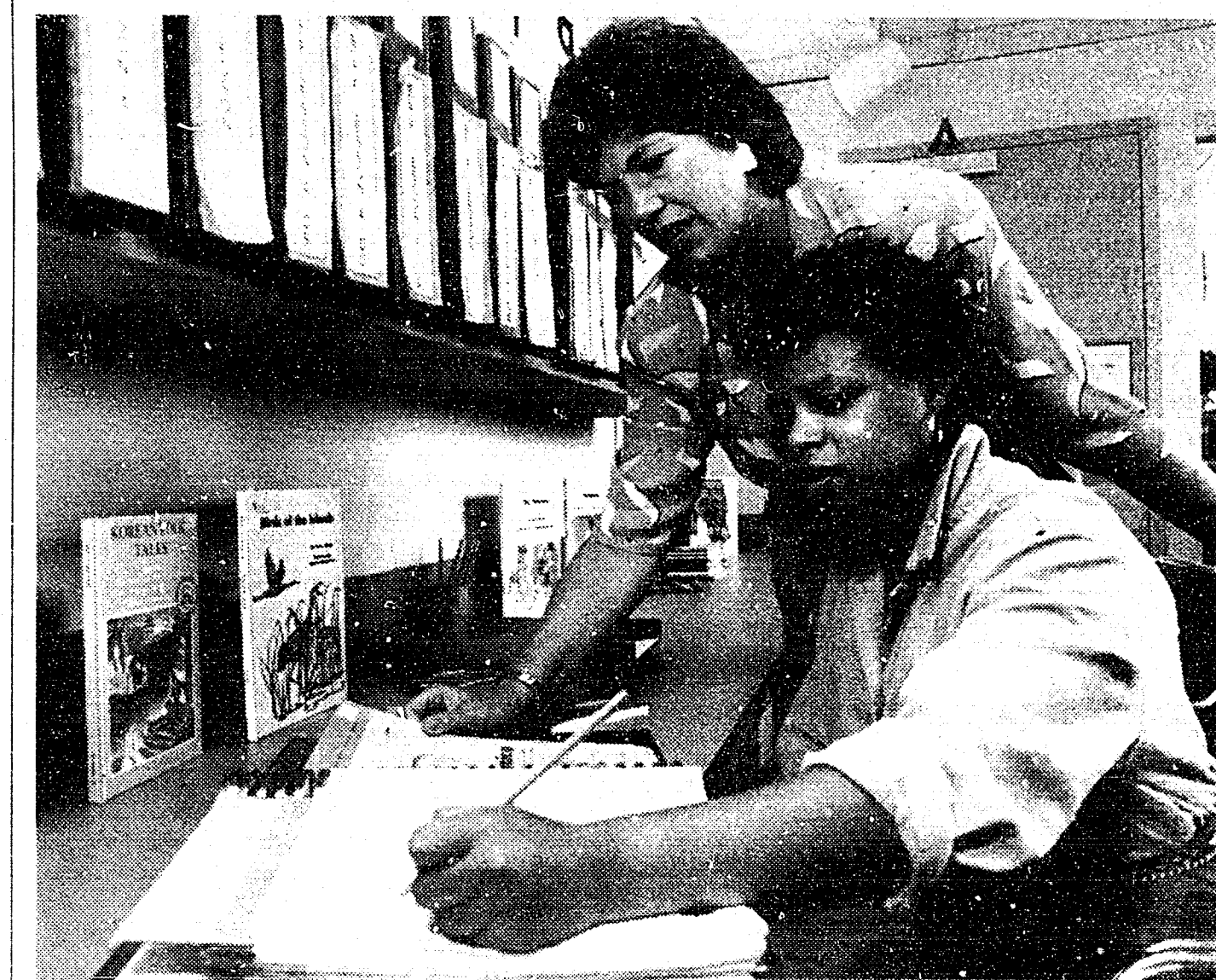
LA 9902 Evaluation techniques — a handbook for teachers, produced by the B.C. Primary Teachers' Association, 138 p. Includes a wide range of evaluation techniques and tools appropriate for the evaluation of primary pupils. The authors of this book won the 1987 Hilroy Award. \$17.00

LA 9905 The parent/teacher conference — a guide for elementary teachers, by Bob Poulton and Mike Lombardi, 16 p. This guide includes purposes of conferences, types of conferences, procedures for planning and conducting conferences, a teacher's conference planning guide, and miscellaneous materials useful for parent/teacher conferencing. \$1.95

LA 9906 Evaluating and reporting to parents, 24 p. This committee report deals with the philosophy of evaluating pupil behavior. It has tables, check lists, and descriptions of many ways to evaluate and report. \$3.00

LA 9942 Record of pupils' attendance and achievement. This is a reprint of the Ministry of Education's *Home Economics Record of Pupils' Attendance and Achievement Book*. It includes record sheets for 24 pupils. \$7.80

LA 9946 Classroom survival tips: A handbook for new teachers compiled by the Coquitlam Teachers' Association, 16 p. A compilation of proven teaching tips that have been developed and published by teacher organizations. \$3.00



The ever-popular BCTF Lesson Aids Service offers over 700 titles of teacher-prepared curriculum support materials in its collection. Recently, it opened in a new location in the BCTF building, off the back parking lot at 2235 Burrard. Here, Sandy Godard (standing), Co-ordinator helps a teacher with her selection.

Tim Felling photo

Lesson Aids is open every Monday to Friday: 09:00 - 17:00; and also in September, October, January and February: Saturdays, 9:00 - 12:00.

THE WASILIFSKY DECISION

On August 11 the Industrial Relations Council granted exemption from the union membership and dues provision of the collective agreement to two North Vancouver teachers. The teachers did not object to trade unions, or to collective bargaining, but rather objected, on religious grounds, to the BCTF policy confirming the right of women to a full range of health services, and the right to decide whether and when to have children. (See

Members' Guide to the BCTF, policy 42.05.)

Under previous decisions of the IRC and its predecessor, the Labour Relations Board, back to 1975, religious exemptions were granted only to employees whose religious belief was contrary to the whole concept of trade unionism. If this decision is allowed to stand, it may see others selecting a specific policy they oppose and claiming for religious reasons exemption from the union, and exemption from paying dues to the union.

These exempted employees are still covered by the collective agreement, and the union is still required to act on their behalf. President Ken Novakowski said, "This decision seems to allow people, who get all the benefits of a union's work in negotiating contracts, either to muzzle the union on many important policies, or to threaten the stability of the bargaining unit by opting out."

Novakowski explained that all BCTF policies are adopted through a democratic process and reflect the views of the majority of the members. "In all issues of public debate, especially a controversial one like abortion, it is impossible to satisfy everyone," he acknowledged, "but to use a disagreement over a single policy issue as the basis for undermining union security provisions is unwarranted, unprecedented, and irresponsible."

The IRC decision was not unanimous. Vice-chair Nora Paton in her strong dissent from the decision made the same point as Novakowski. "The Council will be brought into the fray over controversial issues which in reality are internal union disputes. These are best left to the union membership to decide." Paton went on to say, "Section 11 is not intended to allow exemptions for individuals who disagree with a specific union policy which in their view has religious implications."

Before the Wasilifsky decision, only 16 of the province's 30,000 teachers had sought exemptions. This shows that the overwhelming majority of teachers, even those with strong religious views that occasionally may put them at odds with particular policies, have no trouble reconciling these views with active support for the federation and its locals. They recognize the democratic structure of the organization, they are aware of the tradition of strong respect for individual freedom, and they respect the decisions of the majority. They also value the protection and benefits won through collective bargaining and are willing to take their share of that collective responsibility through membership and dues.

The North Vancouver Teachers' Association and the BCTF are appealing the decision.

— Elaine Decker

Income Security

Tax reform affects pensions and RRSPs

by Karen Harper

There is confusion with regard to the impact that tax reform will have on pensions and RRSPs.

• Severance pay

Money received as severance pay is eligible for rollover into RRSPs for 1989 and subsequent years. The tax reform measures, both implemented and proposed, will not alter the current severance pay/RRSP arrangements. Currently, you may roll over up to \$2,000 into an RRSP per year of employment with a B.C. school district. For example, a teacher who taught 20 years in B.C. would be eligible to protect up to \$40,000 of a severance package in an RRSP.

• Pension income

Money received as pension payments from the Superannuation Commission (Victoria) remain eligible for *direct* rollover into an RRSP until the end of 1989. After 1989, this option disappears. Also, up to \$6,000 pension income per year may be rolled directly into spousal RRSPs until the end of 1994.

• RRSP limits

For 1989 and 1990, pension-plan members continue to be subject to the combined maximum of Registered Pension Plan and RRSP contributions, not to exceed 20% of earned income or \$3,500, whichever is less. The proposed RRSP contribution limits will be based on a formula that is estimated to give most teachers up to \$2,200 of available RRSP room.

Under the proposed tax changes, 1991 RRSP contributions will be based on 1990 earnings and pension contributions. Unused RRSP contribution room may be carried forward for up to seven years, commencing in 1991.

When a spouse dies or the relationship ends, his/her RRSP may be rolled over tax-free to the partner's RRSP.

• Purchase of past teaching service

Teachers who are eligible to reinstate past-service pension contributions may currently deduct these repayments at up to \$3,500 per year in addition to the required annual pension contributions. Under the proposed tax changes, such repayments will be deductible only from available RRSP room.

• Confusion

The proposed tax-reform rules have been simmering for more than three years. Both the BCTF and the Canadian Teachers' Federation have pointed out to the Minister of Finance that he is creating an administrative nightmare. The minis-

ter has not responded to our concerns or to concerns raised by all sectors of the pension community. Although the reform measures are written in terms of equity and even-handedness, little attention has been given to the massive reporting system required of each employer. Many commentators have suggested that the reform measures will drive employers away from defined-benefit plans, such as the Teachers' Pension Plan, and into money purchase plans — or, worse, no plan at all. The federation will continue to resist any such weakening of this country's pension-plan structure.

Karen Harper is the BCTF administrator of Salary Indemnity Plans.

Where are they?

Robert William Dotson last taught in Skeena-Cassiar — 1969

Phyllis Gwendoline Drummond last taught in Golden — 1979

Earl Einer Skei last taught in Howe Sound — 1966

If anyone knows the whereabouts of any of these people, please telephone the Superannuation Commission at (604) 387-1002.

I thought . . .

"I thought the salary indemnity plan covered me if I was disabled from teaching!"

Ken Smith, former SIP administrator, says that he frequently hears this statement from members.

"The short-term plan covers teachers if medically disabled from teaching for up to 120 teaching days," Ken explained. "Subsequently, the long-term plan provides a benefit for up to 12 months if the disability is severe enough to prevent the member from teaching. However, after the 12 months, the member must be *totally disabled*; that is, unable to perform *any* substantially gainful employment. This later aspect is the part of the plan least understood by members."

Substantially gainful employment is defined in the plan as any occupation the member may be qualified to do by virtue of education, training, or experience.

Therefore, a member who is medically unable to teach may be capable of working at some other occupation. If so, benefits from the plan cease after one year.

Reminder

A reminder to teachers 64 years or older, or with at least 35 years of contributions to the Teachers' Pension Plan: enrolment in the BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan, Long Term is optional.

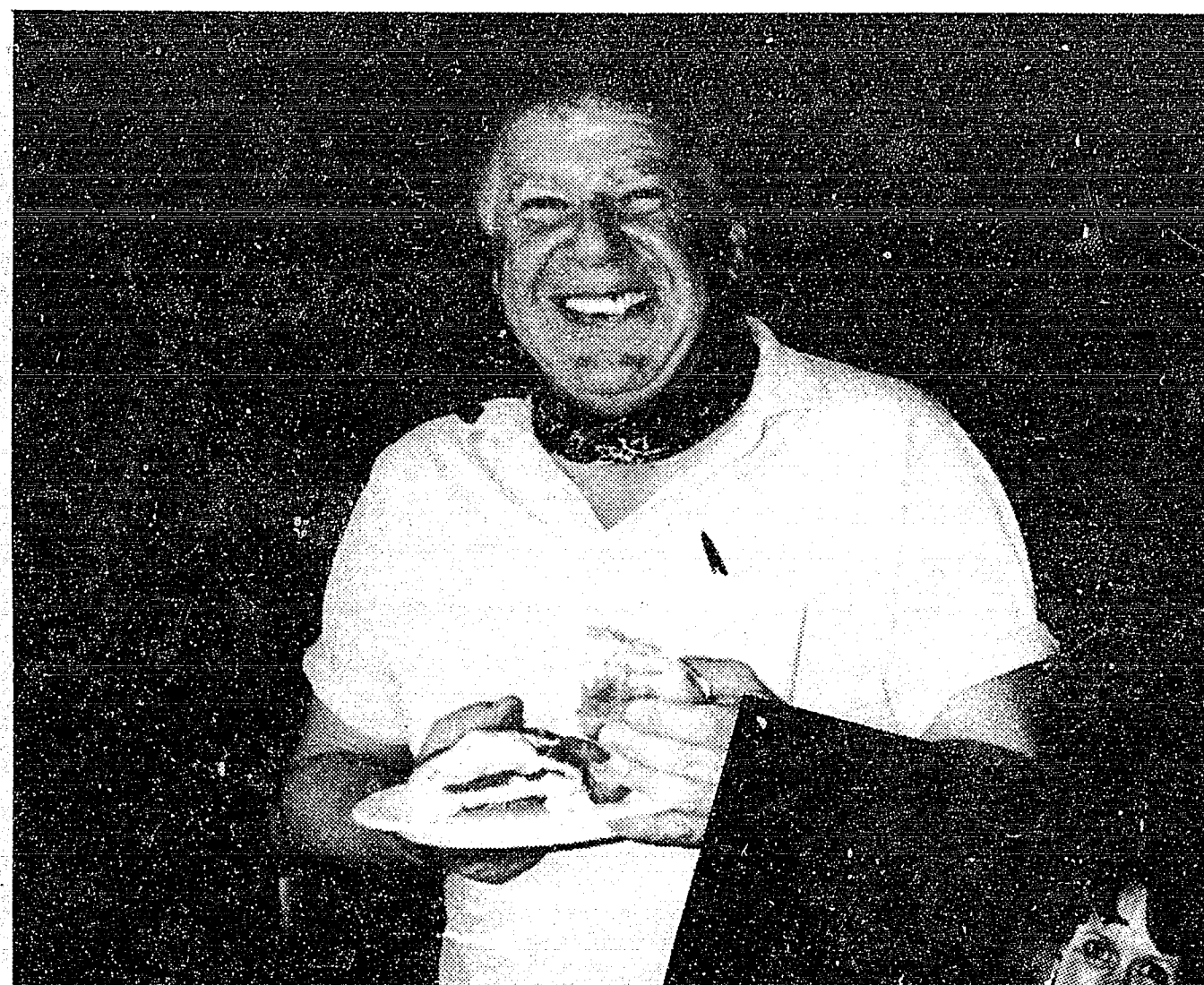
If you fit the above criteria and wish to withdraw from the long-term part of the plan, write or telephone the BCTF Income Security Department for withdrawal application forms.

Register of names

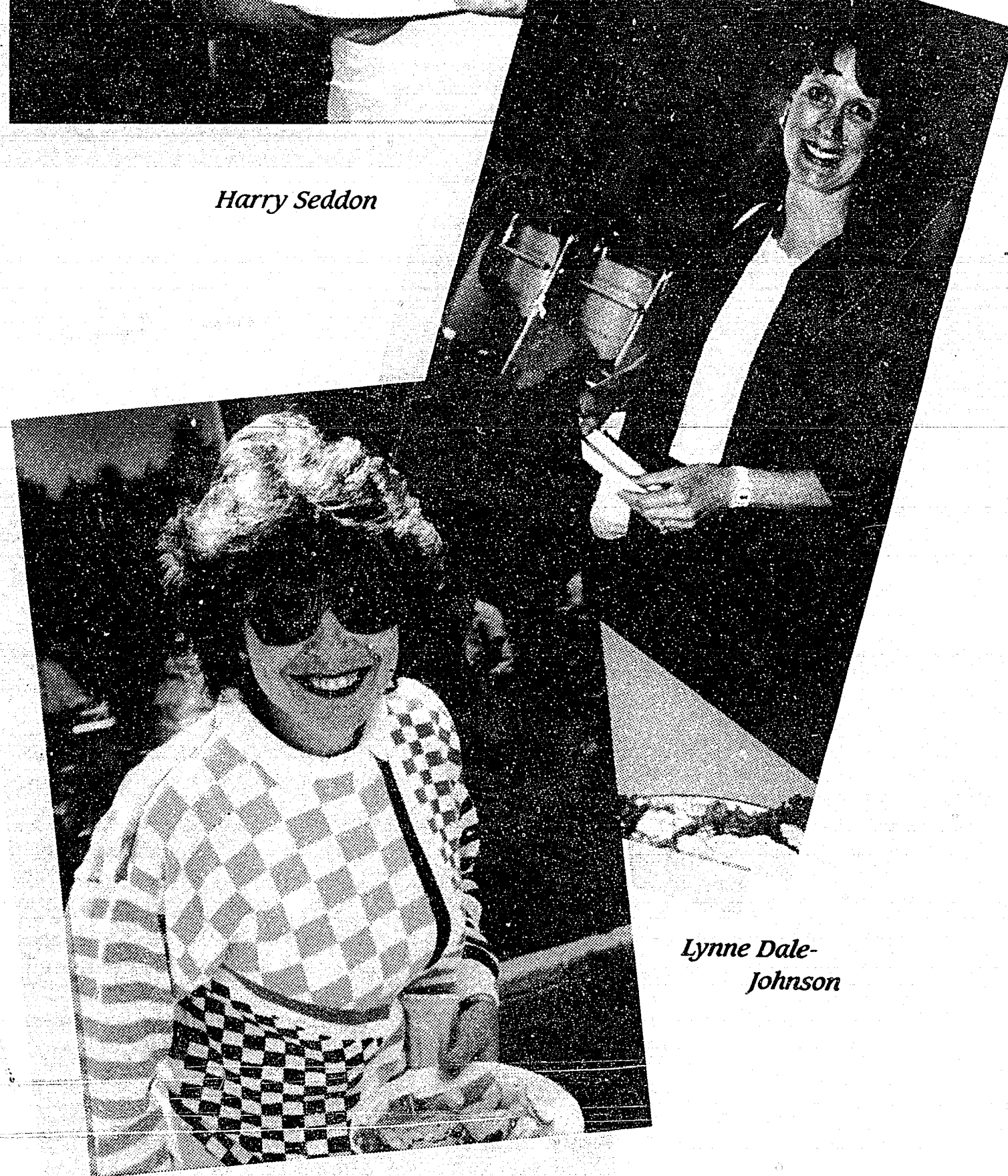
A register of names is being compiled of people who took refunds from the pension fund and are now not able to reinstate their pensions.

Contact Tony Stander, 8850C Young Street, Chilliwack, BC V2P 4P5.

Why are these teachers having so much fun?



Harry Seddon



Lynne Dale-Johnson

Louise Foreman

a. They're still on summer holidays.
b. Their class sizes are the smallest in the province.
c. They're BCTF associates being trained so that they can volunteer their time to facilitate workshops for their colleagues.
Yes, indeed (c) is the correct answer. In June, a group of your teacher colleagues and several BCTF staff members proved it is possible to spend three sunny days in an intensive associate training session at UBC and still have fun.

Three BCTF programs joined forces and shared expertise to offer first-class training. The training increased our cadre of BCTF Associates, who facilitate work-

shops for the Status of Women, the Staff Representative Training, and the Continuing Education programs.

General sessions covered aspects of adult learning; specific content for the separate strands prepared facilitators to lead workshops in co-operative learning and contract enforcement and a workshop for teachers of teen women, Today's Decisions: Tomorrow's Careers.

Look for more information about these and other BCTF workshops on posters in your staffrooms, or call the BCTF for more information.

— Lisa Pedrini

Active teachers represented by active members

ON COLLEGE OF TEACHERS' COUNCIL

by Ray Worley

"We elect teachers to represent us as AGM delegates; we elect teachers to represent us at RAs; we elect teachers to staff committees and to be local presidents. We should elect teachers to represent us on the College Council." One of the members of the BCTF executive used this comparison to explain his support for the motion adopted by the Executive Committee on May 23, 1989:

"That active BCTF members be eligible for endorsement." The motion formed part of a series of decisions by the executive and Representative Assembly concerning elections for the College Council.

Amazing as it may seem, two years have already passed since the first 15 college councillors were elected. (The other five are appointed by the government.) This fall will see the second election to the council. All 15 elected positions will be open.

In 1987, teachers elected 15 active members of the BCTF as college councillors. We elected them because we realized that active BCTF members constituted the vast majority of the college. We could be properly represented only by active members of our organization: the organization created by and for teachers (in stark contrast to the creation of the college).

Today active teachers in the classrooms of the province, who are active members of the BCTF, still form the vast majority of college membership. The councillors whom we elect to represent teachers, now as in 1987, must be teachers in every sense of the word. All 15 elected representatives of teachers must come directly from the ranks of the teachers in the public schools of the province — the active members of the BCTF.

Some former active members of the federation have lost that status since the college elections in 1987. Administrative officers are no longer teachers by every legal definition. Although some did not support the change and have chosen affiliate membership, they cannot be active members of the teachers' organization and are ineligible to represent teachers by seeking office within local associations or the federation. Clearly they are also ineligible to represent teachers on the College Council.

Teachers' concerns and priorities are firmly grounded in their classrooms and flow from the day-to-day realities of their practice of the profession and from their status as employees covered by collective agreements. Those who no longer fully share those realities or that status, either because of the positions they hold or through retirement, are not fully representative of the teachers of the province, however supportive they may be.

Teachers did not ask for the college — it was imposed on us. There is no provision within the college structure for the constant accountability to members which is provided by the democratic structures of the BCTF. Teachers can determine the course of the college only through the biennial election. This fall, active teachers should choose from among their peers their representatives on the College Council.

BCTF ENDORSED COLLEGE CANDIDATES WILL BE NAMED THROUGH A ZONAL PROCESS PRIOR TO OCTOBER 15. THE COLLEGE ELECTION WILL FOLLOW.

Ray Worley is the first vice-president of the BCTF.



Photo courtesy of CIDA

A special Monday

OCTOBER 2, DEVELOPMENT DAY

by Deborah Fletcher

What will your students be doing October 2?

If they're like many others across the country, they'll be on a voyage of discovery. Monday, October 2, is Development

Day — an opportunity to glimpse the global village and become acquainted with the Third World.

On the first Development Day in 1988, schools throughout Canada held debates and discussions, watched films, attended exhibitions, and discovered what life is like in developing countries. In some cities, children were able to speak to their counterparts in developing countries via short-wave radio.

Through various activities, students were finding out what some Canadians are doing to assist these faraway countries, in resource centres, non-governmental organizations, institutions, unions, and many other groups — an extraordinary network of solidarity.

October is full of special days that encourage us to look beyond our daily lives, to view the world around us and re-evaluate our goals. UNICEF emphasizes the situation of children. World Food Day (October 16) and World Habitat Day (first Monday in October) are devoted to people's basic needs.

Development Day is an initiative of the

Canadian government's new official development strategy entitled *Sharing Our Future*. It encourages Canadians to make a specific effort to understand the world around us and the challenges facing developing countries.

We all know of Africa's famines, of Asia's millions of poor people, and of Latin America's desperate situations. We also know that in the 20th century, countries are linked by their economies and in a multitude of other ways. All countries, including Canada, depend on one another.

Development Day is both an appeal for all of us to do our part, and a reminder that it is OUR world and OUR future we are working to improve.

For more information about resource materials for educators, contact Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Public Affairs Branch, 200 Promenade du Portage, Hull, PQ K1A 0G4, (819) 953-6060. You may also call CIDA's Regional Public Affairs Consultants in Vancouver, Marian Dodds or Deborah Fletcher, 876-4800.

Deborah Fletcher is a freelance media and communications consultant, working for CIDA.

Developing global awareness TEACHING TIPS

by Marian Dodds

To help make Canadian youth more aware of international development issues, the Canadian National Development Agency (CIDA) has produced a series of publications called *Youth Editions* for young people and their educators. Materials include a wall map *The Developing World*, posters, a kit for teachers (K-12), magazines for adults and young people, and a film catalogue. All of these are available free of charge in English or French from: Canadian International Development Agency, Youth Editions, P.O. Box 1310, Station B, Hull, PQ J8Y 9Z9.

The teacher's kit provides 100 lesson plans, organized into grade levels from primary to senior secondary. The lesson plans are based on five themes: learning about the world through the use of maps, all about differences, all about interdependence, developing positive attitudes, involvement through solidarity.

The following ideas are examples of what the CIDA Teachers' Kit has to offer.

• A is for Argentina

Put cards with letters of the alphabet in a shoe box, and have students (in teams) draw a letter and find a country on the world map that begins with that letter.

• The world is a puzzle

Take several laminated copies of the world map (*The Developing World* — available free from CIDA), and cut up jigsaw fashion. Put in large envelopes, and have teams assemble their map puzzles.

• All the worlds problems

Have students select a particular problem in one or more countries, and have them engage in personal reflection in the form of a journal or talk to the class. Problems could be famine, poverty, racism, literacy, war, acid rain, etc.

• I sell, you buy, and vice versa

Each team has a resource the others need. The world is divided into trade sectors and students must trade, barter, buy, and sell to make their sectors prosper.

• What are you telling me?

Using a story or legend from another country, discuss the similarities and differences between it and Canadian stories. Study and, if needed, alter the story to make it into a script for dramatization.

• Still with it

Study stamp collections, and note how stamps teach us about events, history, and natural resources.

• What's in the comics?

By analyzing comics with characters from other cultures, help students develop

an awareness of the attitudes and prejudices conveyed in comics. Discuss reasons for stereotyping. Are the authors wanting to make fun of a foreigner, or do they feel theirs is an accurate presentation? Is mockery a form of racism?

• Get your pencils ready

Using a game that originated with the Shongo tribe in Zaire, have students draw motifs used in foreign art (example, Inca birds, Greek frescos) without lifting the pencil off the paper. Discuss ways to use less material, since paper and pencils are expensive and rare in some countries.

• A country at the end of the earth

Have students become investigative reporters, interviewing new Canadians in order to perceive, appreciate, and integrate differences. In preparation for the interviews, have them research articles on refugees, immigrants, and exiles and study laws governing Canadian citizenship. Include field trip to attend a citizenship ceremony. Have students prepare a follow-up article based on the interviews.

Marian Dodds is a teacher at Gladstone Secondary School in Vancouver and is a member of the newsmagazine advisory board.

Headlines Theatre tour begins October 5

A provincial tour of a new play, *Sanctuary* with members of B.C.'s refugee community. For details of tour and the location closest to your school, contact Headlines Theatre in Vancouver at 738-2283.

SEPTEMBER

September 27-October 1

Glasser's Control Theory Workshop, Vernon. Contact Chris Rush, 545-1260.

September 29-30

B.C. Rural Teachers' Association conference, Marie Sharpe Elementary School, Williams Lake. Contact Lea Hengstler, Box 82, Big Lake, BC V0L 1G0, H: 243-2257, S: 243-2255; Joan MacDonald 594-4346; or Lillian Dalles 476-1117.

September 30

Lower Mainland Council of the International Reading Association fall conference, "Literacy for Life," Vancouver. Contact Diana Hill, 2229 Stephens Street, Vancouver, BC V6K 3W5, 873-1321.

September 30, October 1

Teaching Conflict-Resolution Skills in the Classroom, training for educators, co-sponsored by B.C. Council for the Family and the Justice Institute of B.C., Sheraton Plaza 500, Vancouver. Contact B.C. Council for the Family, 204-2590 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC V6H 3H1, 732-4838, Fax: 732-4813.

OCTOBER

October 7

Beyond the *Komagata Maru*: Race Relations Today Conference, sponsored by The Progressive Indo-Canadian Community Services Society, New World Harbourside Hotel, Vancouver. Pre-register; please call 594-3833.

October 11-15

Glasser's Control-Theory Workshop, Victoria. Contact Marjorie Urquhart, 749-6636, or Richmond Hanna, 595-5389.

October 12-14 SEATTLE

28th Northwest Mathematics Conference, Seattle Center. Contact 28th Northwest Mathematics Conference, 611 North 178th, Seattle, WA 98133.

October 12-14 BANFF

The Special Education Council Conference '89, "Facing Tomorrow Together," Banff Springs Hotel, Contact Kathleen Hunter, c/o Ethel M. Johnson Elementary School, 255 Sackville Drive S.W., Calgary, AB T2W 0W7.

October 12-14

Western Canada School Library Conference sponsored by B.C. Teacher-Librarians' Association and West Vancouver School District, Cedardale Centre, West Vancouver. Keynote Ken Haycock. Contact Diana Poole, 46875 Eric Drive, Chilliwack, BC V2P 3M5, H: 792-2197, S: 795-7295.

October 14

Shared Visions, a mini-conference (08:30-12:30), sponsored by the Association of World Citizens for a Universal Curriculum, Vancouver. \$20. To contribute to the ideas market, contact Melanie Zola, 5-1019 Gifford Street, Vancouver, BC V6G 2P1, S: 224-1392, H: 669-6701. Registrar is Janna Atkinson, c/o Hazel Trembath Elementary School, 1252 Paula Place, Port Coquitlam, BC V3C 2W2.

October 20, 1989

Province-wide PD Day

October 19-21

Math in a High-Tech Society, a Central Interior mathematics conference, Prince George Secondary School. Keynote Brendan Kelly, Topics: problem-solving K-12, computers, advanced placement, and more. Contact Sharon Cairns, H: 564-3492, S: 962-9271.

October 19-21

"Get High on Nature," an environmental conference hosted by School District 7 (Nelson), for students, teachers, school board members, and the public. Adults \$100; students \$75. Contact Helene McCall, c/o 308 Anderson Street, Nelson, BC V1L 3Y2, 352-6669.

October 19-20

Learning Assistance Teachers' Association conference (partial session October 19), "Classrooms for Every Learner: A Shared Responsibility," Coast Bastion Inn, Nanaimo. Contact Donna Klockars, H: 753-7348, W: 754-5521.

October 19-21

Provincial Intermediate Teachers' Association fall conference, Challenge '89, Langley Senior Secondary School, Langley, B.C. Keynote Stephen Lewis. Contact George Gray, Langley Meadows Elementary School, 530-4101, or Ron McLean, 530-2711.

October 19-21

B.C. Primary Teachers' Association fall conference, "Sage Connections," Kamloops. Contact Grace Sinnema, 35227 Marshall Road, Abbotsford, BC V2S 5W4, H: 850-5526, S: 853-7730.

October 19-21

B.C. Technology Education Association conference, Richmond. Contact Ken Caig, c/o McRoberts Junior Secondary School, 8980 Williams Road, Richmond, BC V7A 1G6, H: 590-6833, S: 274-1264.

October 19-21

TAG Conference (The Association for Gifted and Talented Children), sponsored by TAG B.C., Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver. Contact Linda Spruston, Schou Education Centre, 4041 Canada Way, Burnaby, BC V5G 1G6, 437-4511.

October 19-21 ST. JOHN'S

Lighting the Way, Seventh National Conference of the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada, The Hotel Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland. Contact Judith A. Davis, LDAC, PO Box 7122, St. John's, NF A1E 3Y3, (709) 753-0383.

October 20

"Imprints '89," B.C. English Teachers' Association Annual Fall Conference, Hotel Vancouver, Vancouver. Contact Gail Arts, 7530 14th Avenue, Burnaby, BC V3N 2A1, H: 521-2852.

October 20

Lower Mainland B.C. School Counsellors' Association conference, Contact Louise Christie, c/o Burnaby Central Secondary School, 4930 Canada Way, Burnaby, BC V5T 1M1, H: 224-5472, S: 299-5771.

October 20

First Central Learning Assistance Teachers' Association conference, "Times Are Changing," Sahali Junior Secondary School, Kamloops. Contact Larry Dixon, c/o Brocklehurst Junior Secondary School, 985 Windbreak Road, Kamloops, BC V2B 5P5, H: 372-9786, S: 376-1232.

October 20

Northern Learning Assistance Teachers' Association and Quesnel PD, "Integration: The Challenge of the '90s," Place St. Laurent (Thursday evening), Correlieu Secondary and Baker Elementary Schools (Friday), Quesnel. Features a wide range of speakers and sessions. Contact Debra Cullinane, c/o 450 Bowron Avenue, Quesnel, BC V2J 2H5, 992-7211.

October 20

1989 Provincial Social Studies Conference, Vancouver. Contact Perry Seidelman, c/o Lord Byng Secondary School, 3939 West 16th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6R 3C9, 224-4321.

October 20

Update '89, a one-day conference for teacher-librarians sponsored by University of British Columbia and B.C. Teacher-Librarians' Association, Contact Ron Jobe, Faculty of Language Education, UBC.

October 20

A day at Science World, sponsored by B.C. Science Teachers' Association. Register with Science World's booking clerk, Nancy Pumple, 687-8414. Registration is limited to 70 teachers.

October 20-21

B.C. Business Education Association conference, "The New Curriculum," Coquitlam. Contact Ken Kuhn, c/o Centennial Secondary School, 570 Poirier Street, Coquitlam, BC V3J 6A8, H: 461-1254, S: 936-7205.

October 20-21

B.C. Association of Teachers of Modern Languages conference, Richmond Inn, Richmond. Contact Marcus Berndt, 11581 92nd Avenue, Delta, BC V4C 3K9, 584-0632 (business hours).

October 20-21

The Association for Community Education in B.C.'s 14th annual conference, "Putting the Community Back into Education," Sooke. Contact Donna Oswald, 3143 Jacklin Road, Victoria, BC V9B 5R1, 478-5800.

October 21

Focus on Nutrition and Food, Update '89, B.C. Home Economics Association, School of Family and Nutritional Sciences, UBC. Inquiries: 228-4808 or 738-1217.

October 27

"Knowing What You Want - Getting What You Need." Author of "In Pursuit of Happiness" and Dr. William Glasser's Control Theory Psychology, 09:00-16:30. Presentations by Reality Therapy Practitioners, October 28, 08:30-16:30. Adolescence, Control Theory, Co-operative Learning, Happy Family, Drug-free in a Drug Culture, etc. Contact Michael Callaghan, 738-4662.

October 27-28

Focus on Children: The Role of Play and Physical Activity in the Developing Years, a symposium sponsored by the Society for Children and Youth, Children's Play Resource Centre, and IPA Canada (International Association for the Child's Right To Play), Sheraton Plaza 500 Hotel, Vancouver. \$125. Contact Society for Children and Youth of B.C., 3644 Slocan Street, Vancouver, BC V5M 3E8, 433-4180.

NOVEMBER

No Science Spectrum. See April 1990 entry.

November 1-5

Glasser's Control Theory Workshop, Vancouver. Contact Diane Giles, 536-4200.

November 2-4

"Transforming Tomorrow: Women's Studies in the Secondary Schools," Simon Fraser University at Harbour Centre, 515 West Hastings Street, Vancouver. For program information, call 291-3593; for registration information, 291-3649.

November 2-4

Council for Exceptional Children provincial conference, "Learning To Think, Learning To Learn, Learning To Create," Bayshore Inn, Vancouver. Contact Lynda Handy, 1690 Arbutus Street, Vancouver, BC V6J 3X2, H: 732-0482, W: 734-2221, Fax 734-3533.

November 2-4 SAINT JOHN

Thirteenth Annual Conference of the Association Canadienne des professeurs d'immersion/Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers (ACPI/CAIT), "Immersion: Quoi de neuf? What's New?" Saint John, New Brunswick. Contact Ronald Brunet, CAIT/ACPI, 101-1815 prom. Alta Vista Drive, Ottawa, ON K1G 3Y6.

November 4-5

Working with Anger and Resistance in Youth, training for educators, co-sponsored by B.C. Council for the Family and the Justice Institute of B.C., Sheraton Plaza 500, Vancouver. Contact B.C. Council for the Family, 204-2590 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC V6H 3H1, 732-4838, Fax: 732-4813.

November 7-11

Glasser's Control-Theory Workshop, Prince George. Contact Sandra Nadalin, 562-2241.

November 11-12

The fall conference of the Computer-Using Educators of B.C., Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver. Contact Linda Spruston, Schou Education Centre, 4041 Canada Way, Burnaby, BC V5G 1G6, 437-4511.

November 16-18

B.C. Association of School Psychologists' fall conference, Sheraton Plaza 500, Vancouver. Contact Barbara Holmes, c/o 14225 56th Avenue, Surrey, BC V3W 1H9, H: 222-0839, O: 596-7733.

November 16-19

Enhancing School Quality - Theory into Practice, an international educational conference on schools as centers of change, teacher as researcher, quality school districts, school improvement, etc., Four Seasons Hotel, Vancouver. Contact Enhancing School Quality, c/o Delta School District, 4629 51st Street, Delta, BC V4K 2V9, 946-4101, Fax: 946-3910.

November 17-18

Conference of the Association for Educators of Gifted, Talented, and Creative Children in B.C., "Spearheading Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum," Hotel Vancouver. Contact David Halme, H: 748-1955, S: 749-6634.

November 24-25

Pacific Rim Symposium to assist teachers and educators interested in Pac-Rim programs for their schools and districts. Sponsored by Canadian Cultural Exchange Society, UBC Asian Centre. Contact 526-3111.

November 24-26 OTTAWA

Canadian Council for Multicultural and Intercultural Education's fourth national conference on multicultural, intercultural, and race-relations education, "Taking Ownership," Congress Centre, Ottawa, Ontario. Contact CCMI/ECCEMI, 252 Bloor Street West, Suite 8-200, Toronto, ON M5S 1V5, (416) 966-3162.

Compiled by Debby Stagg, PSA Services
Co-ordinator, Professional Development Division.



Labour pioneer honored

In B.C.'s early days, working in the mines was dangerous. But organizing to make mining safer was dangerous, too. Union organizer Albert "Ginger" Goodwin was killed for his work on behalf of miners and other workers.

Ginger Goodwin was instrumental in organizing smelter workers in Trail. The famous Trail strike shut down operations at Cominco's mine for over a month in 1917.

Goodwin's organizing skill did not go unnoticed by the authorities. Having previously declared Goodwin physically unfit to fight, authorities changed his draft classification to "Class A," making him eligible for conscription during World War I. But Goodwin was a pacifist, and rather than join the army, he went into hiding near Cumberland, where he had many friends among the coal miners.

On July 26, 1918, Goodwin was hunted down and shot by a Dominion constable. His death enraged workers and sparked B.C.'s first general strike on August 2, 1918.

Seventy years later, Goodwin is still a hero to all workers, to miners especially. In June, he was honored at the 4th Annual Miners' Memorial Day in Cumberland. The previously unnamed peak where he was shot was named Mount Ginger Goodwin. The day of celebration also included the dedication of a cairn at the No. 4 mine commemorating the 51 miners who had been killed at the mine site. At Goodwin's graveside, labour leaders spoke about the man who demanded safety and justice in the workplace and organized others to work for those goals.

— Elaine Decker

Classified

Maui-Xmas depart December 23 for two weeks. Adults \$878, children \$639. Phone 261-3751 (evenings).

Gabriola Island. Cozy, neat, 2 bdrm. bungalow. Self-contained with electricity and plumbing. Ideal winter hideaway with spectacular ocean view and convenient beach access. Daily, weekly, or monthly rates available. B. Kilbey, 2980 Nechako Drive, Prince George, BC V2M 3A8, Phone 562-6520.

PID: The Costs. A one-day conference on pelvic inflammatory disease. Saturday, October 28, 1989; 9 am - 4 pm; Simon Fraser University/Harbour Centre, Segal Conference Centre, 515 West Hastings, Vancouver. Keynote speakers: Barbara Romanowski, MD, FRCP(C), Director of STD Control for Alberta and Chairperson of the Expert Interdisciplinary Advisory Committee on STDs for Canada; and Dr. Lynn Simpson, MD, FRCS(C). Panels and discussion groups on prevention and on the social, infertility, and health care costs of PID. Everyone welcome; registration is free. Lunch provided; childcare available. For more information: Canadian PID Society, 684-5704.

The Phoenix Seminar provides proven principles which can be put to use immediately to make lasting life changes. Write 7375 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC V3N 3B5 or phone 525-8373 for program information and fall schedule.

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— Richard Andrews (U. of Washington)
— Barrie Bennett and Carole Rolheiser-Bennett (U. of Toronto)

Registration materials will be available in April of 1989. Send requests to:

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For further information contact Ed Lorenz at 946-4101.
See the advertisement adjacent for details and registration procedures.

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"Enhancing School Quality" conference showcasing B.C.'s best practice: November 16-19, Vancouver, Four Seasons Hotel

Delta School District is hosting an international conference on "Enhancing School Quality," with a particular focus on placing theory into practice.

Delta's superintendent of schools, Rod Wickstrom, describes the two and one-half day event as "an opportunity for teachers, administrators, and trustees from across North America and beyond to explore recent developments and share programs which succeed!"

Major presenters include Richard Andrews, Larry Cuban, Dean Fink, Louise Stoll, Carl Glickman, among others.

The conference features exemplary B.C. programs linked to conference themes: schools as centres of change, teachers as researcher/reflective practitioners, school improvement, and quality school districts. These programs are research based, are documented and evaluated, illustrate emerging trends in education, and demonstrate sound implementation strategies.

Exemplary program topics include leadership development, beginning teachers, emerging computer and multi-media technology, typical and atypical learners, teaching for strategic thinking and learning, and district- and school-based teacher teams.

Representing various approaches to staff development, the sessions are presented by teachers and administrators responsible for the implementation back home. Conference attendees may follow a theme, track a particular speaker, or sample a wide selection of sessions throughout the conference. It promises to provide a rich variety of tested staff-development programs for all to try.

For further information contact Ed Lorenz at 946-4101.
See the advertisement adjacent for details and registration procedures.

BCTF Executive Committee position

A vacancy on the Executive Committee exists because the past president was appointed to the position of executive director.

An election for a one-year term as member-at-large will be held at the October 13-14 Representative Assembly. Details regarding the nomination process and other pertinent information were sent to your staff representative for posting in your school, to local association presidents, and to local association representatives. If you require additional information, please contact Lise West, at the BCTF.

Committee vacancies
Curriculum vitae for the following vacancies should be submitted to **Berniece Stuart, Organization Support Division, before October 23, 1989.**
Committee Against Racism (1)

A one-year term is vacant because of a resignation of a committee member.

Task Force on Social Action and Responsibility (5)

The Executive Committee struck a task force on social action and responsibility in May. The terms of reference for the task force are as follows:

- to consider strategies to address race relations issues at the local and provincial levels;
- to consider strategies and structures for the federation to broaden the scope of its involvement in social issues (e.g., environment, poverty, children's rights, peace education, global education);
- to consider strategies and processes for the federation and its locals to adopt policy positions on social issues which will broaden the basis of support for those positions within the organization.

Task Force on Affiliation (5)

The Executive Committee has struck a five-member task force on affiliation with the following terms of reference:

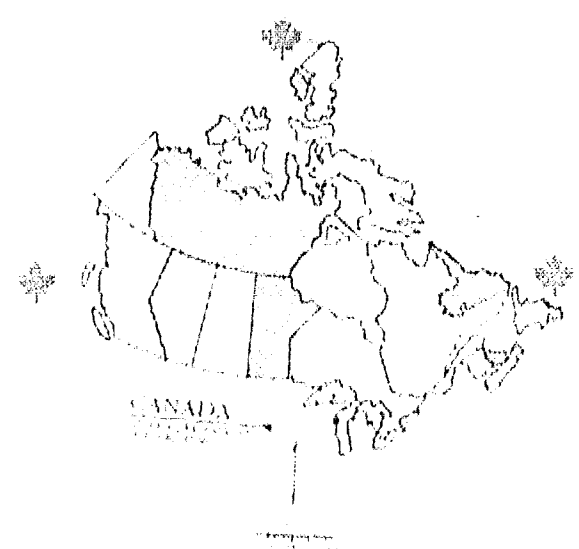
- to investigate and report to the Executive Committee and the RA on the range of affiliation options open to the BCTF including affiliation to the CLC, affiliation to any other labour centrals, non-affiliation.
- to prepare advice regarding processes, content and timelines for consideration of the question of BCTF affiliation with the CLC.
- to provide advice with respect to the cost of affiliation with the CLC, including political and staff resources, and its potential impact on our current affiliation with CTE.
- to provide advice with respect to the status of local associations with respect to CLC affiliation.

Appointments for CAR and the two task forces will be made at the November 3-4 Executive Committee.
Federation Appeals Board (11)

As a result of a number of resignations and prior vacancies, the Federation Appeals Board is in urgent need of additional appointees.

Procedures regarding the work of the board appear in the *Members' Guide to the BCTF* as statement 31.E.02. Board members will be elected by the fall Representative Assembly, October 13-14, 1989. **Deadline for submission of curriculum vitae for Federation Appeals Board vacancies is October 9, 1989.**

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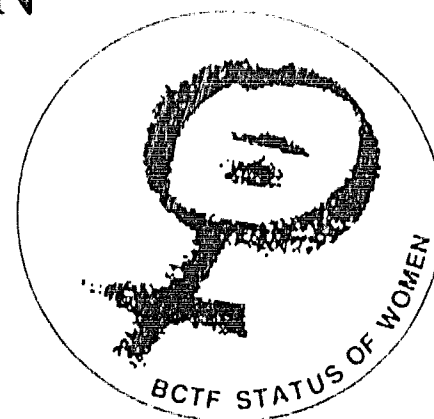
Address of school _____

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project overseas 1990/91

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Administrative, travel and living expenses are borne by the Canadian Teachers' Federation, the provincial and territorial teacher organizations which are members of CTF, the Canadian International Development Agency and the Superannuated Teachers of Ontario.

It should be noted that the sponsors of Project Overseas do not pay any salaries or honoraria to teachers who apply to Project Overseas. Furthermore, the sponsors do not pay any costs associated with substitute teachers or release time.

REQUIREMENTS

- membership in a provincial or territorial organization which is a member of CTF
- an appropriate teachers' certificate
- a minimum of five years teaching experience in Canada
- Canadian citizenship
- excellent health
- evidence of flexibility and mature judgment

APPLICATIONS

Deadline date for applications: NOVEMBER 15, 1989.

In 1990-91 CTF will require teachers for two types of projects as follows:

- **PROJECT OVERSEAS I** (the summer project) will operate during the months of July and August 1990 in English- and French-speaking countries. In 1989, teachers at the primary, elementary and secondary levels were requested to teach the following:

School Administration, English, English as a Second Language, French, French as a Second Language, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Testing and Evaluation, Arts and Crafts, Music and Drama, Principles and Methods of Teaching, Classroom Management Techniques, Guidance and Counselling, Pedagogy, Curriculum Development, Special Education, Early Childhood Education, Primary Methods, Library, Industrial Arts, Physical Education, Business Education, and Home Economics.

- **PROJECT OVERSEAS II** (the winter project) refers to all in-service projects which take place anytime other than July and August. Currently, Project Overseas II operates in English-speaking countries only. Participants must be ready to devote their time to this project for a four- to sixteen-week period between September 1990 and June 1991. Project Overseas II often uses the services of retired teachers or practising teachers who have obtained an extended leave of absence from their school boards.

In 1989-90 primary and secondary teachers were requested to teach the following: School Administration, English, Mathematics, Science, Early Childhood Education, Primary Methods, Special Education, Upgrading of Teachers, and Training of Teachers.

Further information and application forms are available from:
British Columbia Teachers' Federation, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC V6J 3H9. Tele: (604) 731-8121, 1-800-663-9163, FAX 731-4891

Applications sought for



Hilroy Fellowship Awards

Applications are being sought for the Hilroy Fellowship Awards.

Established by the Roy C. Hill Charitable Foundation and administered by the Canadian Teachers' Federation Trust Fund, the Hilroy Fellowship Program rewards classroom teachers who have developed new ideas for the improvement of teaching practices.

Applications may be considered only from individuals or small teams of certified teachers employed at the pre-primary, primary, elementary and secondary levels, and who are members of recognized provincial or territorial teacher organizations. *Consultants and subject coordinators whose normal duties include educational development and innovation should not apply for awards for innovations within their assignment.*

Each province grants two awards of \$2,500 and there are six national awards of \$5,000 each for great merit and one national award of \$10,000 for outstanding merit.

Applications must be made in English or French on the official application form and must reach the Hilroy Fellowship Committee of the provincial teacher organization not later than October 31.

Further information and application forms may be obtained from the Professional Development Division, B.C. Teachers' Federation, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC V6J 3H9.

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From practicum to "real thing"

WINNERS OF 1989 STUDENT TEACHING AWARDS SPEAK OUT



Kathy Shannon
Simon Fraser University
Elementary
Teaching: Burnaby

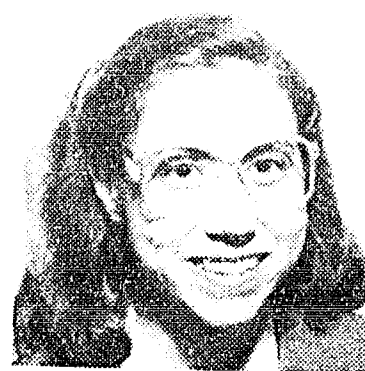
Completing the PDP program at Simon Fraser University marked the beginning of a second career. I had worked full-time for five years with a large company in the Lower Mainland, and during that time, I had volunteered with children in various activities, thinking that someday, I would like to teach. Practicums confirmed that my decision to pursue a teaching career was right for me.

I anticipate many new challenges as I enter the classroom on my own. I look forward to the challenge of working with children and being part of a group of

teachers and support staff in a school. Because teaching children is such a big responsibility, parents, teachers, and administrators must work co-operatively and in support of one another. I have been impressed by the teachers I've met and worked with who have extensive knowledge and expertise to offer us less experienced teachers. Many teachers I encountered were more than willing to lend their support, share their experiences, and offer helpful words of advice.

I am excited to be starting my teaching career when changes such as the ungraded primary program are taking place in the profession. It feels great to be starting my teaching career in British Columbia when the demand for teachers is on the increase.

This year I will be able to put into practice many of the skills I have learned. As I face challenges and new experiences in my teaching career, I shall continue to learn about the diverse needs of students and strive to make school an enjoyable place in which children learn and share together. My goal is to work hard to develop the skills necessary to be a role model in the school and in the community and to provide a stimulating and rich learning environment for all students.



Joanne Wilkes
University of Victoria
Elementary
Teaching: Sooke

It was a thrill to win such a wonderful award. Winning the award proved to me the benefits of hard work.

Although I have finished my university training for now, I know I will never stop learning new things. The continually changing face of education and the chance to learn about a variety of topics make elementary school teaching so appealing.

When I entered the Education Faculty at the University of Victoria five years ago, I was told that the prospects of finding a teaching appointment when I graduated were poor, but the situation has changed. As I went through each year, the prospects looked better and better.

At UVic, I took the bachelor of education (elementary) program, with concentrations in mathematics and music. I look forward to conveying my love of these subjects and the love of learning to my pupils. I am especially interested in the

use of computers as teaching tools in the schools.

I was on the Saanich internship program at Cordova Bay Elementary School, where I taught Grade 4. I also taught some Grade 2 music that year. Seven months in the school taught me about long-term planning and about the many aspects of a school year.

As any beginning teacher, I have concerns about stepping out on my own. I am concerned about not having enough time to develop programs and resources to suit different ability levels. I am also concerned about ensuring that I evaluate consistently and fairly.

Sometimes I feel overwhelmed by all the preparation that is necessary, but I am also careful to allow flexibility in my planning to adjust to what children already know and what they want to learn.

The whole education system is being restructured. As I read through the new primary program, I am impressed to see the ideas about focussing on processes and teaching children thinking skills and the strategies to solve problems. These are the skills children will need to adapt to our ever changing world.

As a first-year teacher at Sooke Elementary School (Grade 2/3), I hope to help my pupils enjoy learning and to develop in them integrity, perseverance, and the determination to do their best at any task.



Charlotte Genschorek
University of British Columbia
Elementary
Continuing university studies

Most kids see the dentist twice a year, a doctor maybe even less. Grandparents? Some are dead, some devoted, and some just don't care. For some children parents are either non-existent, unavailable, or far too busy to deal with problems that arise. However, there is one person that is reliably present, available every weekday from 8:45 in the morning to 15:05 in the afternoon. Some kids view this individual as a person who administers great bouts of pain — school work, home work — work, work, work. Others (and I laugh because I hope this includes 99.9% of all kids) respect, admire, and listen to this person; a provider of knowledge, understanding, and caring. Who is this individual? Who is this dichotomized being who elicits both joy and discontent from children? Who else? It is the *teacher*.

And what better profession can there be for people who wish to express most aspects of their personalities. We are writers and readers, speakers and listeners, artists (maybe not Picasso), care-givers, pseudo-parents, babysitters (after 15:05).

The list goes on and on. Yes, it is a challenging role with many burdens. For many students, the teacher is the only continuous source of guidance available. We play a major role in the socialization of society.

Why did I choose this profession? I asked myself this very question as I was taking a child to the office during a recent practicum. I wondered what I was getting myself into as I recovered from being humiliated by a cheeky student. And I rolled my eyes to the ceiling and questioned my career choice as my class descended into a state of chaos just as the principal dropped in unexpectedly. But, I didn't need to look for the answers to my questions. They came quickly and comfortably when a child brought me flowers for the first time, when I witnessed true understanding in a student who was once utterly confused about something, and, of course, when my practicum was over and the tears began to roll.

I still believe that most teachers hold the same naive ideologies that I have now. As I gain working experience in this profession I will undoubtedly confront several problems that make me wish I was not a teacher. Problems such as major curriculum changes that are obviously a mistake, the technological replacement of jobs, and inadequate wages.

Whether or not the future of teaching looks bleak or bright, I am convinced that most teachers will perform their jobs with a caring attitude and sense of professionalism. I intend to be one of those teachers.



Dawn Jakovac
University of British Columbia
Secondary
Teaching: Richmond

School's over. The final practicum is finished. I'm qualified, and now I'm hired. Suddenly I find myself a teacher, standing at the door of a challenging profession. I've always wanted to teach; yet now I feel a little confused and apprehensive. There is so much "stuff" to teaching. Courses have to be planned in challenging, creative ways to meet the varied needs of students. Rules and routines have to be established and maintained to ensure good classroom management. Skills that can be learned only in a work environment, such as how to conduct parent-teacher interviews, have to be learned and refined. There are papers to be graded, lockers to be assigned, textbooks to be distributed and collected, pupils to be disciplined, and report cards to be written — the list seems endless. Ideals might easily be lost in the "bureaucracy" of teaching, but it's because of the ideals that I chose the profession.

I want to be an excellent teacher, a fair disciplinarian, an understanding counselor, and a supportive friend. Yes, I'll admit,

I'd like to have a *To Sir, with Love* or *Stand and Deliver* kind of experience. I want to inspire pupils just as some of my teachers inspired me. A French teacher made me love every corner of Paris, so that when I actually visited the city, I felt as if I had already been there. A writing teacher continuously — relentlessly — pushed me to write naturally and let the truth that is within me come out. My sponsor teacher encouraged me to try new things, to follow my instincts, and learn — always learn — from my mistakes and my triumphs.

Those teachers had a quality that all great teachers have: a genuine concern for the needs of the students. No matter how much the world changes, truly great teachers will be adapting to meet the needs of their students. That knowledge holds a challenge for me. I want to use all the resources available to help me meet those needs.

Fortunately, help is readily available to me in the form of mentoring teachers, resource centres, and professional journals and workshops through such associations as the Canadian Council of Teachers of English. Then, if somewhere in the process of teaching when to use commas and co-ordinating conjunctions, or when to use the subjunctive mood of a French verb, if somewhere in the "stuff" of teaching, I can reach students and make them strive to be the best that they can be, *then* I will know that I have chosen a truly worth-while career.

Each year the BCTF Maxwell A. Cameron award is given to university graduates for outstanding performance in student teaching. Apologies to winner, whose name was inadvertently overlooked.