

Brome County NEWS

TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2017

Farewell Sebby Call

Closure to a child that the community embraced

By Ann Davidson

Someone said that it takes a community to grow a child. In TBL it has been a child who has lit the fire within the hearts of its entire community. And it is this community that has remained steadfast in its love and generosity over the past two years to a kind and decent family who were faced with the unimaginable, possibility of losing their precious ten-year old son after grueling battle with Acute Myeloma Leukemia.

Jen Wykes and Steven Call and their son Phillip were not alone on March 14 when Sebastian (Sebby) succumbed to his raging blood cancer. Their community was silenced in sorrow over their devastating news but remain steadfast to sharing their load. Hundreds of friends gathered last weekend to celebrate and honour the child who will always be remembered for his smile even during the darkest times. Conversely, the couple has been overwhelmed with everyone's outpouring and ever-grateful to their long-

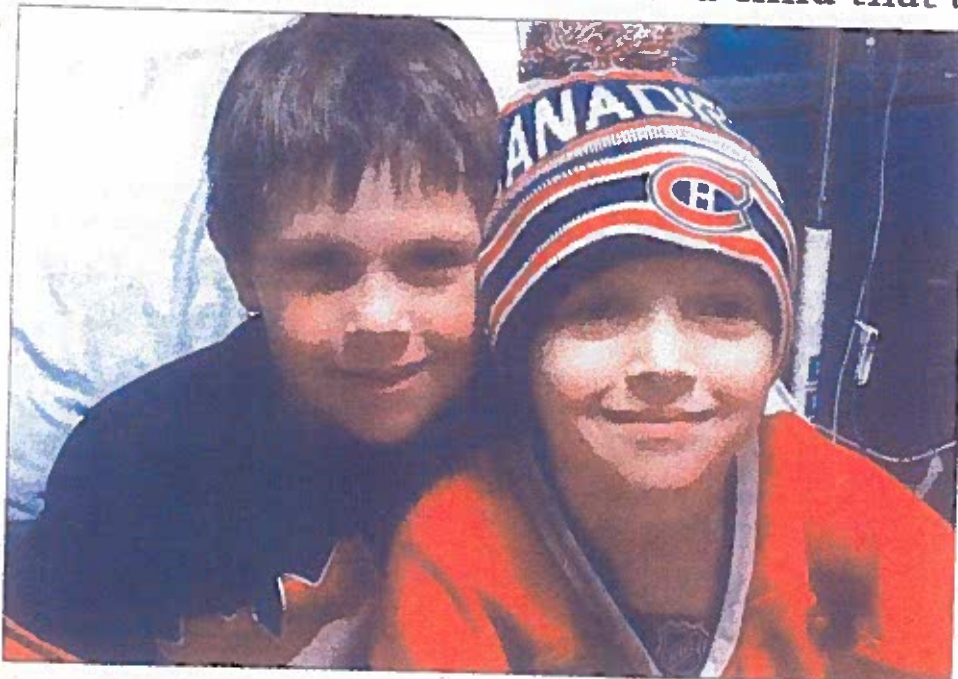
term investment to reach out to them. Consequently they want to help the community have closure with them.

Sebby's parents have been heralded for heroic contribution of love, strength, and infinite hope in getting their son the best of care, in keeping the family together during the tumultuous and often unforeseen situations that the fight against cancer presents.

Ten years in a person's life seems like a mere flicker. But for Sebby Call, it was his lifetime. And in his short little life he faced it like a man and became the spirit within the hearts of the TBL community. From the moment that he was diagnosed with AML two years ago, he won the hearts of his entire community. It was his gentle, kind and generous being that bore an infectious smile along with his courageous acceptance and compliance while undergoing treatment to fight the devil that drew strangers to his friendship circle.

Reverend Tim Wiebe said of Sebby that he was a gift to everyone he

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COURTESY

The most cherished picture of two brothers. Phillip Call on the left wants the world to remember his brother Sebby, who tragically succumbed to a two-year courageous battle with leukemia on March 14.

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Farewell Sebby Call

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touched. Sebby has brought out the best in this community, from donations of time and money and energy and just recently The Meal Train, the setting up of live-streaming his funeral so that those living afar could feel a part of his farewell. It is too bad that it often takes an enemy like cancer to bring out the best in people.

First grandchild on both sides of the family, Sebby leaves to mourn his brother, Phil, his grandparents: Christina Langraf (late Charles Wykes), and June and Murray Call, his great grandmother, Nancy Wykes, his aunts and uncles: Adam, Daniel (Sarah), Samantha (Keith) and Nancy, his cousins, Kadie and Dylan, as well as many other relatives and a lot of good friends.

His tousled-curly locks, beautiful open smile, and twinkling chocolate eyes are trademarks of the spirited, welcoming child. According to Knowlton Academy Principal Renalee Gore, who polled his classmates, they remember Sebby for being the go-to guy with new students at school, his love for hockey and soccer, hand-crafted greeting cards he made for everyone, his sportsmanship conduct, his playful silliness, his infectious laugh, his love for animals, his friends and family, and his brother Phil. He was always the first person to console another student. Apparently Sebby also loved to hang out with a friend on a certain roof and was always asking for ex-



COURTESY

Judy McKinnon-Martin, founder of The Bell Fund honoured Sebby Call by making him the first patient at the Montreal Children's Hospital to ring The Bell of celebration symbolizing luck, gratefulness, and hope on completion of chemotherapy treatment. Young Sebby soon afterward became an ambassador for Martin's Bell Fund.

tended time to be up there. She added that he loved school, not the work per se, but being with all his friends, doing art and singing in the choir. In speaking to all in attendance at Sebby's funeral, many who were his friends and classmates, Gore reminded, "The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or touched but are felt in the heart."

Speaking from first-hand experience, Judy McKinnon-Martin delivered the eulogy. "Cancer is an unwelcome curse for most people. It often strikes when you least expect it. It's painful. It's brutally unfair, especially when it strikes a child. But, I also like to say that cancer can be a gift because of the people you meet that inspire and amaze you with their positive attitude and their resilience. Sebby was a cancer gift weaving himself into the hearts of hockey players P.K. Suban and Max Pacioretti, as well as wrestling champion Sami Zayne and all who cared for him."

Martin is eternally grateful to his parents for allowing Sebby to become an ambassador and honouring her project. The Bell Fund aims to give patients support, inspiration, and hopefully a little comfort on this journey, provide comfort kits containing a fleece blanket to keep the patient warm because chemotherapy patients often feel cold, with a foot pocket and a lap pocket to store a book or phone; a reusable water bottle to help patients swallow medication and quench their thirst; a note pad and pen to take notes during doctors' visits; mints to soothe throats and remove the metal taste that some patients have during treatment; and a magazine to help pass the time. School children from the Knowlton Academy are also assisting The Bell Fund by writing notes to patients that wish them well, and will be included in the kits.

Martin, though she hasn't known Sebby for long, grew to be close friends with him and his family over this two-year period. She spoke about how he always managed a smile no matter how heartbreaking and unfair life had been with him.

It's a harsh lesson for young children when a friend is lost. Yet somehow they were empowered to be part of the program. The children of the Knowlton Academy choir led by Lucy Hoblyn sang Cindy Lauper's "True Colors" and Rachel Patten's "Its A Better Place Since You Came Along." Allie Woodard courageously shared her own memories in the farewell.

With Sebby's brother by her side, Aunt Valerie Godue spoke about the young boy wanting to help everyone. He wanted to help the homeless and find ways to feed starving children around the world. He had intense curiosity for religion. And he faced a monster like a man, a little boy that lit a fire in the entire community. He gave so much and took so little, leaving us with memories that will last a lifetime. Sebby Call was the true meaning of a gift to all he crossed paths with.

In his memory, a donation to The Bell Fund (Cedars Cancer Foundation) would be appreciated by the family. www.cedars.ca/cedars/en/funds_and_fellowships/bell_fund

Condolences may also be expressed via the website www.complexebm.com

Dear Sebby,



DISHPAN HANDS

SHEILA QUINN

Sometimes it's hard to remember the first day you met someone. You go back through your memories, like a little dialing thing, flipping through them until you get close, and you know it was somewhere around that time. But, with you I know the very first moment we met.

It was your friend Leander's first day of school at Knowlton Academy. I had just moved him to a new community. We had spent the summer there, but I was worried about grade one. He had gone to day-care, nursery school and kindergarten with a little gang – they had known each other since they were one year old. What would this experience be like? He didn't have any of his old friends.

He's pretty friendly though. That gave me hope. He's also a little weird, like me, and I knew he might have trouble making friends, but that he would also probably find fun doing all kinds of different things, even if he was alone some of the time.

You were in kindergarten. I only just learned this weekend that it was your second time in kindergarten. You were one of the youngest ones – your birthday was in August, so you needed a little time to really get started in school, and what a good idea to be one of the oldest the second time around.

You looked like one of my favourite characters ever. The Little Prince (Le Petit Prince), from the story by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Wide-set, big brown eyes and a broad smile, a little button nose and curly blond hair that was like every little boy from just about every famous painting ever.

You looked at me and spoke with me, but mostly you spoke with Leo (Leander). You made my mother's heart beat with hope. I felt that everything was going to be okay.

You and Leo went to the KA school day-care, and had so much fun together there. We went to the movies together – you and your brother, your Mum, me and my boys.

fortable with how my son Angus behaved, as sometimes Autism means he acts a little strangely in public. I was grateful that you all liked Angus just the way he is. Your Mum (Jen) and I talked about how much we hoped we could figure out some kind of time together just the two of us. Believe it or not, we haven't managed that yet, Sebby. But, we will.

Just over two years ago, in the winter of 2014-2015, we learned that you had something called AML (acute myeloid leukemia). I remember feeling shocked. I remember your friend Leo feeling shocked too. We wanted to join with you in your cancer journey though, and we were even able to visit you at the Montreal Children's Hospital. We were your first visitors who weren't family. Leo is very proud of that. He has always been proud to be your friend anyway.

Your parents started an update page on social media, so we could all follow along. I thought that was such an act of generosity to share the experience with us. We became a whole village of cheerleaders.

You went through all kinds of treatments, and then you were able to come back to school. I know it was a brief return before you had to go back, and I'll bet that made you pretty mad. You went through more treatments, and even had something called 'bravery beads' that made a necklace to show every treatment or procedure you went through. Those beads were like getting a medal for something.

Not long ago, we got a message from your Dad – would Leo like to come and visit you AT HOME?! You were home, Sebby! How cool was that?! We went and picked up a whole bunch of silly, fun stuff for you guys to do together, and Leo got to spend the evening, having supper and playing with you. He had so much fun; I know he didn't want to leave.

You had to go back into the hospital, and off you went.

Then, on March 14th, 2017, just as the snowstorm hit Knowlton, Knowlton itself was hit with something far bigger than snow. Your Dad posted a status update. Our friend, the funny, silly, one-of-a-kind Sebastian Call had died. You were ten years old.

"It is such a strange place, the land of tears." – Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (The Little Prince)

Sometimes I think you can feel grief hit a whole bunch of people, like a big stretching web of electricity, and that web went through the storm that was hitting us. Your Dad said afterwards that he figures you probably thought your friends would like a snow day. Well, they got TWO.

Two days for everyone to try to figure out how to feel this experience. Two days for everyone to figure out how to help out your Mum and Dad, and your little brother Phil.

Your Dad wrote to us and asked if Leo would like to have your Transformers comforter. Leo said that it would be an honour, and he wrote a message himself back to your Dad. Leo and I watched the movie Pete's Dragon on the day that you died. He said that that was like him and you – two best friends who would have to part ways. I am making sure that he is able to cope and has the freedom to talk and let out his sadness, and also to talk about the fun that you guys had together.

Last weekend was your funeral. Reverend Tim Wiebe did a great job giving that packed church permission to cry, let us know that it was going to be hard, he acknowledged that some of your school-mates had probably not even been to a funeral before. People who love you spoke about your impact on all of us. And, as Tim quoted our friend Sarah Biggs as saying, "It takes a village to mourn a child." That's right, Sebby. And that village stretches far and wide, even to your friend, professional hockey player PK Subban, whom you met while you were in the hospital, and to friends all over the world. Your funeral was live-streamed over the internet so that friends and family far away could be a part of this very special and sad day. Kind of magical, that.

I want you to know that we're (all of the friends, and definitely your family) going to be there for your Mum and Dad and Phil. We will learn to go through this with them, and we'll learn how to be there for them in the ways they need us to be. We know those ways will change, sometimes in the same day. We know that sometimes unexpected feelings will happen, and we'll learn to understand that too.

"You – you alone will have the stars as no one else has them...In one of the stars I shall be living. In one of them I shall be laughing. And so it will be as if the stars were laughing, when you look at the sky at night...You – only you – will have stars that can laugh." – Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (The Little Prince)

Thank you for your friendship, Sebby. For making your friend's Mum feel like 'everything was going to be okay' the very first moment we met. Right now, things aren't okay, but we know one day again, they will be, and part of who we are and how we go forward in life will be because you were here with us, even if it wasn't for as long as we wished it had been.

We love you forever.

Love,
Sheila and Leo

The Record, March 28, 2017

KA Garden project prepares to break ground

Recruiting and building a volunteer base central to the program

By Ann Davidson

A couple of dozen enthusiastic members of the TBL community showed up at the first information meeting about the Knowlton Academy Green-

house and Garden project to learn more about the project and that the school plans to break ground within the next month.

Both principal of the elementary school, Renalee Gore and co-chair of the project, Shelley Mizener outlined the objectives of the program as well as this year's plan. In attendance to show support was Richard Gagnon, a commissioner representing the Eastern Township School Board. Many of the participants signed up as volunteers for different aspects of the program.

Under the premise that "A community that sows together, grows
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ANN DAVIDSON

Principal of Knowlton Academy, Renalee Gore, and co-chair of the KA Greenhouse and Garden Project, Shelley Mizener welcomed more than two dozen members of the TBL community.

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KA Garden project

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together," Mizener is determined that this kind of project is needed everywhere and will make a difference to sustaining a healthy community. "In general," she said, "it is about cultivating positive change, developing local sustainability while reconnecting generations and all learning in the process."

Principal Renalee Gore emphasized that this project has been met at the ETSB level with great enthusiasm and support. The board is prepared to support the project, which would serve as a model for other schools under the board's umbrella. However, for now, this is solely a Knowlton Academy adventure.

The idea is for it to become a community-inclusive, inter-generational program featuring a garden to table element that serves as a platform to integrate the basic curriculum. For example, it is a living science lab facilitating writing, reading, art, socialization, cooperation amongst many other learning skills.

To better understand the concept of the project, a 20-minute film that was produced by Jane Churchill and Potton's Gwynne Basen called, "A Crack in the Pavement: Digging In" is a must-see and can be found online.

The organizing committee strongly wants to facilitate youngsters to connect

with the natural environment while developing skills that will ensure healthy eating from local produce. According to Gore, already a volunteer in the community is offering to work with the students in the Bistro program in making preserves with their harvest in the autumn of 2017. This ties into the existing Bistro program. Of course the group is undergoing a recruitment process for volunteers to help prepare the necessary infrastructure, planting with the children, harvesting, and food preparation. Other tasks and skills needed would be building an inventory of resources, marketing, community liason, etc. The list is long. As Mizener says, "There is something for everyone in this program, if they want to get involved. Your skill is adding to our strength."

As the funds to cover the initial budget of over \$66,000.00 are being amassed the school is eager to go ahead with the project this year by building raised beds in April and planting soon thereafter. Muir says that they plan to set up a simple rainwater catchment system that will serve to maintain the gardens and not burden the local water supply. A location for composting will be determined within the next couple of weeks.



ANN DAVIDSON

Susan Muir is an architect technician who has designed a number of school playgrounds and is now directly involved with the development of the infrastructure needed for the Knowlton Academy Greenhouse and Garden Project.

Already several composting units have been ordered.

That many of the plants going into the raised beds could be started soon, the school is reaching out to the wide community for donations of pots and garden tools. They can be dropped off at the school at 81 Victoria St. in Knowlton during school hours.

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Article rank | 29 Mar 2017 | Sherbrooke Record

Operation Backpack receives \$500 donation



The Sherbrooke District Rotary Club presented a \$500 cheque to support Operation Backpack, a project of the Lennoxville District Women's Centre that provides backpacks and school supplies to elementary and high school students in Lennoxville and surrounding communities. Pictured are Rotary Club president Ghislain Lemay, Jane Loiselle, president of the LDWC Operation Backpack committee, Sharon McCully, Publisher of The Record, a sponsor of the program, and Rotary Club president-elect Roger St-aubain. The Rotary Club has been sponsoring a backpack program in French-language schools for the past 15 years, supplying hundreds of Grade 1 children with the necessary supplies to start their school years off on the right foot. This year, the Rotary Club expanded its reach to the English-

speaking community, thanks to funds raised at a Brett Kissel concert sponsored by Firehouse Productions. Firehouse has staged a number of fundraising concerts at Centennial Theatre to support community causes, and this time, chose the Rotary Club's backpack project as a recipient. The club in return extended its support to Operation Backpack which supplies backpacks to some 85 children entering Grade 1 at Lennoxville Elementary and children from community schools entering high school in Secondary 1 at Alexander Galt Regional High School. Loiselle and St Aubain said Operation Backpack and the Rotary Club will continue to work together to help young people in the area.

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ETSB suspends TTFM survey

By Matthew McCully

At Tuesday evening's council of commissioners meeting, the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) decided unanimously to suspend administering the Tell Them From Me survey until May 4, after the board has had an opportunity to address parent concerns about the survey.

The issue came up as parent commissioner Ken Waterhouse delivered the parents' committee report, pointing to concerns about consent, assuring the anonymity of the students, and setting up an ethics committee to ensure the appropriateness of the questions.

Waterhouse read out a resolution drafted by the central parents committee to suspend the implementation of this year's survey.

Following a discussion among the councillors, ETSB Chairman Mike Murray proposed an amendment to the parents' committee resolution. Rather than suspend its implementation this year, Murray suggested the survey be suspended until after a May 3 meeting where concerns about the survey can be addressed. That way, there would still be a window to move forward with the survey for the current school year.

"We've heard and tried to address the negative aspects, but we've never delved into what are the benefits that apply directly to the students," Murray said.

"Without listening to what the students tell us, we're less able to understand their needs."

Waterhouse pointed out that 'without criticism, there is no improvement,' suggesting what parents want is a proper evaluation of all aspects of the survey before moving forward.

ETSB suspends TTFM survey

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During Tuesday's meeting, more commissioners attended the meeting via Google hangout than in person.

During his report, Murray referred to the \$3.4 billion announced for education in the provincial budget.

"What this really means for the school board is we have finally been granted a long standing request for predictable funding for years ahead," Murray com-

mented, saying the board can now look at staffing and spending in a wider timeframe.

The education budget is a five-year plan, representing a 4.5 per cent annual increase, compared to consecutive cuts in recent years.

Murray called the budget encouraging.

The board pointed out that a decision regarding the class action suit filed by a Saguenay Lac St-Jean parent regarding school fees is expected to be made by April 11.

The ETSB is one of 68 school boards named

in the class action suit, questioning the legality of some of the fees parents are required to pay, asserting that public education should be free of charge.

The suit seeks punitive damages in the amount of \$100 for each of the plaintiffs in the class action.

The board approved the academic calendar for the youth sector of the ETSB for the coming school year.

No questions were asked during question period.

Giving Blood: a feel good act!

Do you want to make a difference? Give blood! Donating blood is an act of solidarity that costs nothing, takes only a few minutes of your time and helps save lives.

The LVTC and Alexander Galt Regional High School Students invite you to the blood drive, under the honorary chairmanship of Marc-André Skelling and Justine Gagnon, to be held on Wednesday, April 5th from 2:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., at Lennoxville Vocational Training Centre (cafeteria – Alexander Galt High School), located at 1700 College Street, Sherbrooke. The members of the Héma-Québec team and the volunteers hope to welcome 120 donors.

In Québec, someone needs blood every 80 seconds. Every day, Héma-Québec must collect at least 1,000 blood donations to meet all the needs of Québec hospitals. The collective blood supply belongs to all. Regardless of where the blood is collected, it is processed and tested, and then sent wherever the needs are, wherever it is necessary to contribute to saving lives.

A blood donation takes an average of 60 minutes and you can donate whole blood every 56 days. Make an appointment at one of our four GLOBULE Blood Donor Centres or check for upcoming mobile blood drives on our website: <http://www.hema-quebec.qc.ca>.

Who can donate?

Any healthy person aged 18 and over can generally donate blood. Héma-Québec makes donor and recipient safety its utmost priority and establishes strict qualification criteria that are reviewed and assessed on a regular basis. Consult our website to learn more about these criteria.

Before coming to a blood donor clinic, you can check if you are eligible to donate with the Donor Customer Service at 1-800-343-7264. You can also go to the BLOOD (Who Can Donate Blood?) section of Héma-Québec's website to become better informed.

Stans lead Journal, March 29, 2017



photo courtesy Jan Draper

Workshops spark story-telling in students

Victoria Vanier, North Hatley

The North Hatley Elementary School students of Mr. William's class recently took part in a Townshippers' Association writing workshop, similar to those being offered to adults around the region by the literary team of Kyl Chhatwal, Melanie Cutting and Jan Draper.

More workshops with students, like this one in North Hatley, will be taking place at Sunnyside Elementary and Ayer's Cliff Elementary.

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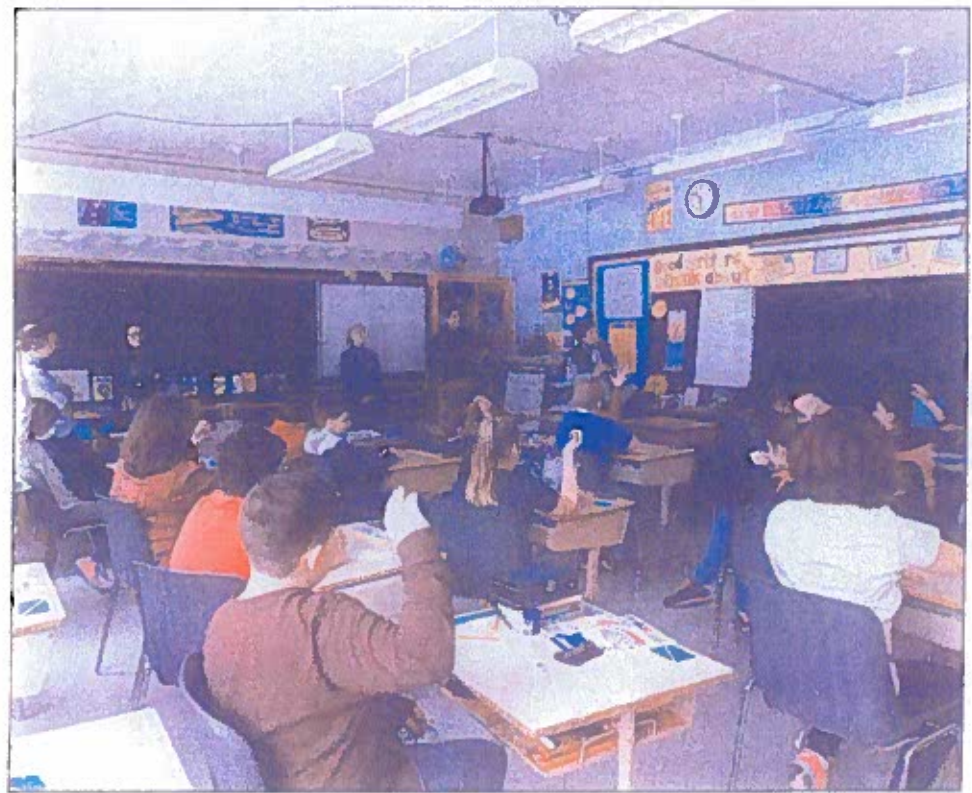
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Creative writing for Canada

The students were inspired to work on stories for the Association's "Our Stories" project, an e-book of local tales and photos to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary. The Townshippers' team will also be doing writing workshops with students at Sunnyside Elementary and Ayer's Cliff Elementary.

Stanstead Journal, March 29, 2017

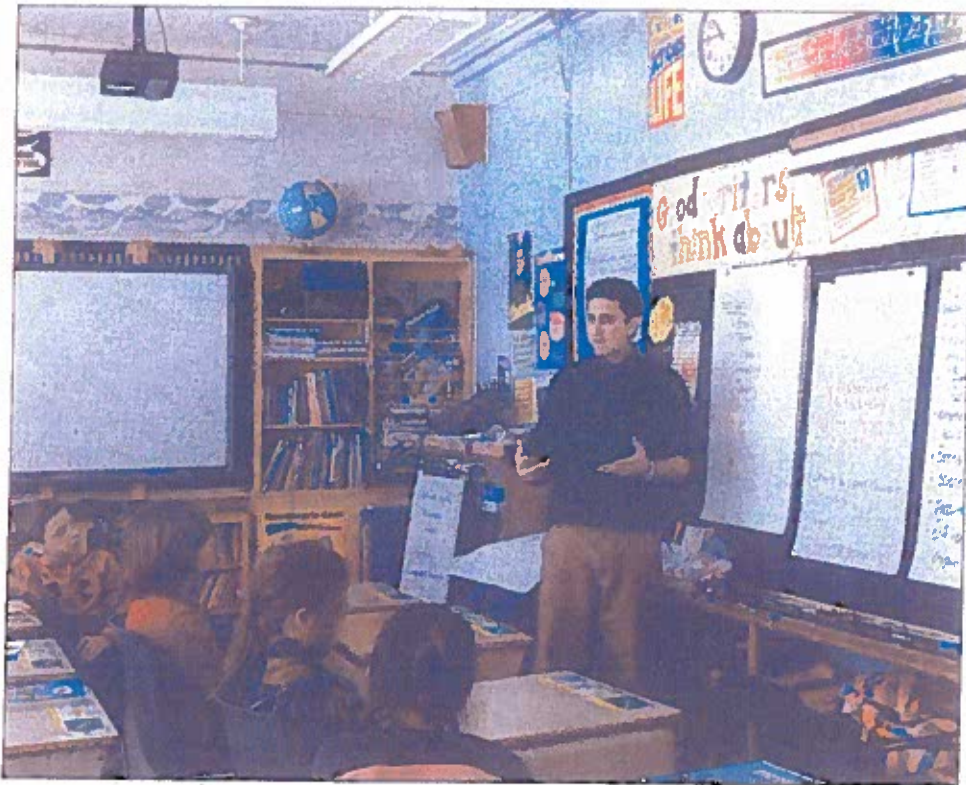


photos courtesy Jan Draper

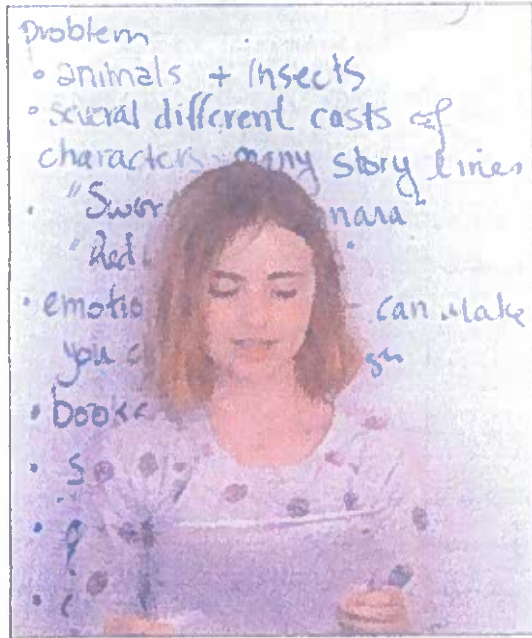
Melanie Cutting's turn with the students.



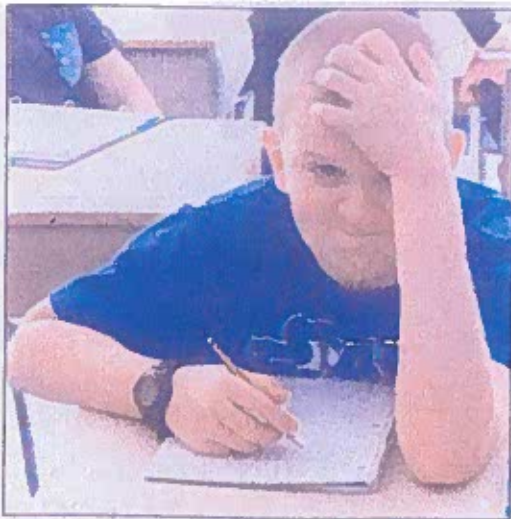
Jan Draper leads a workshop with North Hatley Elementary students.



The students listen to Kyl Chhatwal during the writing workshop.



A student reads her work in front of the class.



It can be a challenge getting started!



This student seems to be enjoying the ...

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Article rank 31 Mar 2017 Sherbrooke Record By Matthew McCully

ETSB unites in music for 7th year

On April 10, 300 students from 10 schools across the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) will come together at Massey Vanier High School for an afternoon of music.



MATTHEW MCCULLY

"I started this event because I felt that we needed more music in schools and I felt very alone as a music teacher," said Sherbrooke Elementary's Tracey Rivette.

"We have seen music programs grow since the first festival seven years ago. For example, Sutton school now has a music teacher, Agnes Boisvert, which they did not have before," Rivette told the Record.

Rivette said the planning for the event is now done by a festival committee with the help of members Laura Barr, Mathieu Viens, Bill Jarand, Julie Turcotte, who work on their own time to put the festival together.

"The caliber of the performers gets better and better every year and the children have a great time showing off their talent and uniting with other schools in the spirit of music," commented Rivette.

This year's festival will feature performances by students from Knowlton Academy, Sherbrooke, Heroes' Memorial, Butler, Parkview, Sutton, St. Francis, and Drummondville Elementary Schools as well as Richmond Regional and Masseyvanier High Schools.

Last year the theme was 'Broadway Bound.'

Rivette said this year the ETSB will be United in Folk music.

SES will perform a medley of Bob Dylan songs, according to Rivette.

The choir has been meeting twice a week at lunch hour to practice for the show.

Rivette said prepping the performance has been a challenge since SES is also rehearsing for a musical, *Dreamcatcher*, scheduled to take the stage May 18.

In addition to the performances from the different schools at the festival, Rivette said there will also be a number of common songs that all the schools will perform together.

"Bill Jarand (MVHS) does an amazing job at setting up the auditorium and organizing MC'S for the event," Rivette said. "His band will be accompanying the final common songs and will perform a few tunes of their own as well."

When asked if she ever thought the United in Music festival would grow into what it has become, Rivette said, "I hoped it would; that was the goal," she said, adding that in its seventh year, word is spreading through the community.

The concert will take place April 10 in the MVHS auditorium beginning at noon.

Admission is free and members of the community are welcome, Rivette said.

"This is an opportunity to bring music teachers together and show students that yes, music is cool and music can inspire," she said.



"For me, music's mission is to inspire people to be better, stronger and kinder as their hearts open up to the beauty of young voices and musicians uniting."

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