

The Townships Sun



his first meeting with the knowledge of the affairs, and his earnest purpose of interest-
ing himself in this cause, he had given Sally an idea of the course he intended to pursue
and of the help he hoped to succeed in bringing as the result of his efforts. He could
with immediately to different parties in hope of learning the truth, the whole truth of
the matter, and ascertaining who of the real heirs of Major Willen, were still living, and
not only an assured knowledge of facts in the premises. He also spoke her continued
watchfulness over the children; and told her that in case it might be necessary to in-
terfere in Kelly's behalf, she might call on either Judge Willen or Mr. Perry, as both
were Magistrates, as an understanding ^{careful} between them and himself to that effect. But if
nothing out of the ordinary occurred, it was best to wait.

Kelly, now in her tenth year, was becoming useful in many ways to the blacksmith's family,
and felt a childish gratification in a part that might win her a word of approval.
There was one of those peculiar persons who— all unknown to themselves— feel an instinctive
love of giving pleasure to others, which operates as ~~an~~ ^{an} incentive to right action; while
its opposite of disapproval, even though kindly manifested, is all that is necessary to restrain
from wrong. In short, she had the natural gift of that strong moral sense which rightly
directed, and under favorable influences might have developed into a most excellent charac-
ter. Perhaps however, it would be better to say that she had ^{naturally} had a strong mor-
al sense which surrounding influences would develop and she had seen what
influences had surrounded her since her poor mother's death: her only ^{glimpses of}
bitter life, ~~long~~ ^{very} heavy, but the ^{hard} ~~indistinct~~ ^{indistinct} memories of her earliest childhood, connected with
her mother's home, and later occasional glimpses into the ^{dark} ~~dark~~ ^{dark} and sordid kitchen where Sally
lived. Day dreams would wander to that ^{dark} ~~dark~~ ^{dark} to be dispelled by harsh cries or accu-
sations of laziness or may be some unfeeling allusion to her friendless and dependent state, a
result of fault in herself. In her great desire to please, when craving for kind words,
she was often led to make efforts that taxed her childish strength to the utmost,
in retaining a memory of the harsh, as contrasted with the plain and gentle among whom
the question would live in the childish mind why her kind loving ma-
ther was away from herself and baby brother, and she left with the

WHAT ARE WE TEACHING
OUR CHILDREN?

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The March issue highlights the theme of education. What and how to teach our children is a perennial question, but a question that deserves extra attention when we consider an economy in ruin, an ecology in distress and a public culture in decline. Francois Legault's *Coalition pour l'avenir du Quebec* has suggested that we should restructure our school boards as well as how teachers are paid. He suggests an economic incentive approach, an approach that will only increase the commercial element that is already too powerful in the classroom, an issue Peter Cohen takes up in his article "Consumption, teaching and learning". Mr. Legault's views on education are quite superficial and overly tainted by his mercantile background, but at least he has the courage to suggest something needs fixing. The Charest government's implementation of the obligatory ERC (Ethics and Religious Culture) course was designed to address Quebec's moral decline. Although this course makes a mockery of religion and is despised by all students and teachers I have spoken to, it again signals that something must be done with how and what we teach our children. But what is to be done?

Prior to our materialist age and alongside the West's culture of technology and economics, most traditions viewed education as a means to help students attune themselves to something greater. It might be the good, God, nature, the Tao, all recognized there was something greater than the material world and individual desire. Today we educate our children to enter the market place on slogans like "just do it", "be all you can be", "you're a good boy no matter what they say", "find your inner self", etc, etc. Consequently our children are left frustrated and ill equipped to meet the world. Anyone who is honest with themselves knows that life doesn't quite work that way. So why do we cheat and lie to our children?

COVER PHOTO courtesy of Eastern Townships Research Center. A reproduction of a portion of Catherine M. Day's manuscript for "History of the Eastern Townships"

Happiness, a modest aim of education, the great traditions universally agree is found through the recognition of limits, the cultivation of discipline and finding one's place in relation to others and the world. Considering the ecological devastation we have unleashed, a perspective Don Atkinson explores in his

article "Education for Sustainable Living", learning to live with less and recognizing the beauty in smallness are ways that we will have to recover whether we like it or not. And to arrive here, Gary Caldwell's article "Where's Latvia" reminds us that we need to regain control over the fate of our children, that is, parents and communities need to reclaim schools and school boards, a proposition that is much more sensible than Mr. Legault's economic incentives.

Do we have the courage to transform this lifestyle of ubiquitous perishing into something worthy of our humanity and the earth? Our actions will tell.

In the next issue we take up the theme of agriculture and the economics of local agriculture. Please pass the word on to anyone who might have something to contribute. For not only are our systems of education breaking down, but our soils are poisoned and our food comes from so far away that we are left eating substances with no nutritional content and we are left with no farmers left to secure local food production.

Rod Leggett

Editor

Letter to the editor

To the editor and readers of the Townships Sun:

I read with interest Michael Durrant's article, "The Fight for the Huntingville Dam," in the February issue of the Sun and wish to congratulate the people of Huntingville for a job well done in saving the dam from impending demolition.

I grew up a stone's throw from the dam. For twelve years, 1972-1984, my family inhabited the old white frame farmhouse on Route 147, built by Seth Hunting, one of Huntingville's founders, and later owned by the Butler family. Indeed some of those "dances at a local farmhouse" Durrant assumes ended in the 19th century continued at my house when I was kid! For years the Huntingville Dam, and the ruins of the old Hunting mill on the south shore of the river, was my playground, my hideout, and secret cool place to take friends from school.

As I've revisited Huntingville over the years, I've often thought of how the dam represents an important piece of heritage—not just my own, but the community's as well. The fact that the people of Huntingville were able to band together to save the dam, and the fact that the Boralex company cared enough to listen, is an inspiring example of community spirit in action. Many thanks to all and to Michael Durrant for a fine article.

Peter Webb, Verdun, Quebec

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Canada 

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING

By Don Atkinson

A lifestyle is sustainable if the planet's resources are sufficient for all humans, now and in the future, to have the same quality of life. The lifestyle fostered by mainstream culture in this society is unsustainable. At least two additional planet earths would be required if everyone in the world consumed resources as we do. The economic system driving our lifestyle requires continuous growth. This is simply not possible on a finite planet. Sooner or later we will run out of the resources on which we have come to depend and our pollution will overwhelm nature's life-supporting capacity. With globalization exporting our lifestyle, and technology constantly increasing our consumption of resources and our production of waste, the limits of growth are likely to be reached sooner rather than later and its catastrophic effects will be experienced the world over.

To avoid the consequences of exhausting the earth's ecosystems, the worldview that gives rise to our lifestyle will need restructuring. Education will have a major role to play in this cultural transformation but it will have to be substantially different from what the school system currently provides. A primary purpose of education now is to develop the human resources necessary for economic growth. As such, it is an integral part of the problem. It is no accident that as levels of schooling have increased, the health of the planet has deteriorated. For individuals, getting the kind of job that pays well enough to permit a high level of consumption is a major rationale for pursuing an education and there is undoubtedly a strong correlation between the amount of formal education one has and the size of his ecological footprint.

A basic principle in our worldview, one that shapes the curriculum and practice of education for economic growth, is that reality is a collection of discrete things. This

atomistic view allows for separations to figure prominently in our thinking and some of these divisions play a central role in sanctioning the behaviour that is leading to the environmental crisis. The important distinction we draw between the "me and the "not-me" encourages the pursuit of self-interest with little regard to consequences which do not have an obvious impact on "me." Schools have fostered this by structuring education as a competition between individuals with self-fulfillment the prize for winners. Another significant and harmful divide is the one we make between the human and non-human. We see ourselves as separate from and above nature. It only has

value insofar as we can find ways of using it. When it is recognized that our way of life is harming the environment, the ideology of individualism weakens our ability to affect a solution. Instead of collectively working to change underlying structures, we shift the onus onto the individual. With that focus a person might think that with fluorescent light bulbs and reusable shopping bags, the environment is being resuscitated, or at least that she is no longer implicated in the problem. If she has some inkling

of its enormity, she can easily become convinced that she, being only one person, has no power to alter the situation.

In education for sustainable living, the emphasis will be on interconnections and interdependencies. Both its content and practice will be holistic. The curriculum will not be chopped into disparate subjects but integrated. Divides like those between teachers and students, school and society, intellect and emotions, theory and practice will all be bridged. Students will come to understand their role as a part of the natural order and see their actions in the context of the networks in which they reverberate. Self-fulfillment will not be considered a solitary achievement.

"To avoid the consequences of exhausting the earth's ecosystems, the worldview that gives rise to our lifestyle will need restructuring. Education will have a major role to play in this cultural transformation but it will have to be substantially different from what the school system currently provides."

It will be pursued by forging strong, caring bonds with the social and natural worlds.

With its mission tied to competitiveness in a global market, in our school system, educational decision-making is centralized and the curriculum is standardized. Supporters of this bureaucratic approach can claim to be defending equality of opportunity. It would be an injustice if students in remote rural areas were not given the same education as those in the affluent neighbourhoods of cities. That would be denying them access to the tools needed to compete successfully for a good life.

Undeniably, contemporary schooling has given many the geographic and social mobility to improve their material circumstances. However, this has come at a considerable price.



*Stanstead East School.
Matthew Farfan Collection.*

As education gives individuals the means to escape from poor communities, schooling results in a brain drain that makes these communities even poorer. This bias against the local in the curriculum fosters a rootless alienation that weakens the incentive to care for a specific place. If the social and natural resources where one lives get too depleted, one can always move someplace else. The economic growth that is now rapidly weakening our life support system has been made possible by a school system

that produces workers who can be moved to where the jobs are.

Education for sustainable living will be place-based. It will be centred more on communitarian values than individualism. Rather than encouraging competitiveness, the energy source of our economic system, it will foster the cooperation essential for living well sustainably. It will be an education for solving rather than escaping a community's problems. Through direct engagement, students will learn about the unique features of their environment, how to care for and live in harmony with it. Elders with local wisdom will be resources that students can draw on and students working on solutions to local problems will become assets for community revitalization.

"Place" is not simply an objectively defined space. It is the group of people, their distinctive culture and environment to which one is emotionally attached. It is "home." Place-based education will aim at reinforcing this emotional bond. Where this approach to education has been tried, students do tend to be more engaged in the learning process. They perform better, even on standardized tests, and create fewer discipline problems.

The danger that place-based education will adjust students to a narrow parochialism is no greater than in schooling for economic growth. Localism need not entail a turning inward that cuts off relationships with outsiders. In fact, communication between different communities is likely to be more interesting and productive when both are secure in their distinct identities and neither aims at domination or exploitation. If the restrictiveness of the local worldview is a source of trouble, there is no reason why place-based education cannot be the process through which it is broadened.

In contemporary education, a value-free scientific viewpoint detached from emotion and spirituality is the

quintessential form of knowledge. Questions of justice and morality are beyond the scope of scientific inquiry. Scientific work is guided by ethical considerations but these can be treated as bureaucratic hurdles and their concern is primarily with unwarranted harm to identifiable individuals. Broader questions of value are given little attention. When applied to the interrelated problems of helping the economy grow and satisfying our ever expanding appetites, science has developed very sophisticated technologies that have effectively made the world smaller. No place is now too remote for us to extract its resources; no place is now free of the consequences of moving some of nature's most poisonous substances to the earth's surface. In some cases, the tools we have developed to harvest the planet's assets have been efficient to the point of turning a renewable resource into a non-renewable one.

Ironically, we have developed something like an unreflective religious faith in the power of science and technology. Consequently, when it is acknowledged that our lifestyle is creating environmental problems, it is frequently coupled with the assumption that a technological fix will be found and no significant changes in our way of life will be required. This faith is not warranted by any track record.

There is no question that schools have enabled many to acquire an impressive degree of usable knowledge. Unfortunately, they have not been nearly as successful in cultivating the wisdom that should be guiding its use.

In education for sustainable living, science will still be important but it will be integrated with other disciplines and infused with values. The technology it spawns will aim at preserving, not dominating nature. The new scientific outlook will not be focused through an anthropocentric filter that makes humans the only beings with moral standing and sees the non-human as simply a warehouse of means to our ends. It will be guided by a moral vision that includes the whole network of life forms and shifts our role from conqueror to responsible member of the biotic community. Rather than being emotionally neutral, science in education for sustainable living will be steeped in Biophilia and it will be quite reasonable to make

spiritual development an objective for scientific studies.

How we meet basic needs has significant ecological implications which need to be understood in order to make environmentally responsible choices. This area of study, with an emphasis on learning by doing, will be a central component of education for sustainable living.

Many of us whose lifestyle is causing the problem will have left this earth before the consequences are fully felt. It is clearly unjust that others will have to pay for our overconsumption. We have a moral obligation to rectify the situation, to bring our own lives closer to sustainability and actively support the institutional changes needed to make sustainable living a norm in our society.

“Many of us whose lifestyle is causing the problem will have left this earth before the consequences are fully felt. It is clearly unjust that others will have to pay for our overconsumption.”

Unfortunately, appeals to do the right thing often fall on deaf ears when they appear to be calling for a sacrifice of self-interest. However, Aristotle's contention that true happiness is to be found in being virtuous is applicable here. Our belief that self-fulfillment comes

through consumerism is misguided. A sustainable life will involve less alienation, conflict, and stress. While the means for achieving them will be simpler, it can be a life every bit as rich in opportunities for pleasure. Through caring for others who are close to us, through caring for the land well enough to pass it on in good condition to the next generation, life will have a purpose.

No matter how strong the case for sustainable living, one can assume that the power of the business and political establishments and the mainstream media will be mustered to thwart any move away from schooling for economic growth. Furthermore, even if the system is reoriented, even if it is successful in transforming the worldview and behaviour of students into a sustainable lifestyle, quite possibly the change will have come too late to reverse or even halt the environmental damage. If so, we should concentrate on how we will explain to grandchildren our inability to foresee that our way of life would have such a devastating impact on theirs.

Don Atkinson: taught philosophy at Champlain Lennoxville and in the education department at Bishop's University



CONSUMPTION, TEACHING AND LEARNING

By Peter Cohen

I look back now on a career that began more than twenty years ago as a teacher at Seward Park High School in New York City which served mostly working class Dominican and Puerto Rican students. I arrived at Seward Park with a group of new teachers who were influenced by Paolo Freire whose best known work is *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Throughout this and subsequent books, Freire argues for a system of education that emphasizes learning as an act of culture and freedom. He spoke of *conscientization* or the process in which men, not as recipients, but as knowing subjects achieve a deepening awareness both of the sociocultural reality that shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality.

Not all teachers, or for that matter administrators, were in favor of anything even mildly innovative. What I found striking however, was that the greatest resistance to *conscientization* came from the students themselves. To be sure, many students were engaged and interested; however, fashion, jewelry or simply money were far more seductive and satisfying. The ideas of equity and change were no match for the allure of consumption. Certainly it could be argued that coming from working class and/or immigrant homes an experience of deprivation coloured their thinking. I believe however, that these students were not the exception; they reveal a larger issue that cuts across class lines and poses a challenge to teachers in 2012; that education, as a formal process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills, customs and values from one generation to another, has been neutralized and replaced by consumption in North America.

The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory are supportive in this regard. The Frankfurt School, founded

in 1923, included the key figures of Theodor Adorno (1903-1969), Max Horkheimer (1895-1973) and Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979). Also connected with the school were Walter Benjamin, Robert Lowenthal and Erich Fromm. All Jewish, they fled Germany with the rise of the National Socialists. Not surprisingly, the themes and issues they explored most often focused on the power of fascism between 1930 and 1944. Their collective experience resulted in an explicit pessimism. Critical Theory is the fruit of the Frankfurt School; it explores the quality and structure of social relations and how the expression of dominant interests systematically suppresses alternative meanings and perspective on everyday life through ideology and repression.

The contemporary relevance of critical thought was expressed by Adorno and Horkheimer when they wrote:

“He (Freire) spoke of conscientization or the process in which men, not as recipients, but as knowing subjects achieve a deepening awareness both of the sociocultural reality that shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality.”

The ruthless unity in the culture industry is evidence of what will happen in politics. Marked differentiations such as those of A and B films, or of stories in magazines in different price ranges, depend not so much on subject matter as on classifying, organizing, and labeling consumers. Something is provided for all so that none may escape; the distinctions are emphasized and extended. The public is catered for with a hierarchical range of mass-produced products of varying quality, thus advancing the rule of complete quantification.

Herbert Marcuse reinforced his colleagues' thinking when he stated:

We may distinguish both true and false needs. “False” are those which are superimposed upon the individual by particular social interests in his repression: the needs which perpetuate toil, aggressiveness, misery,

and injustice. Their satisfaction might be most gratifying to the individual, but this happiness is not a condition which has to be maintained and protected if it serves to arrest the development of the ability (his own and others) to recognize the disease of the whole and grasp the chances of curing the disease. The result then is euphoria



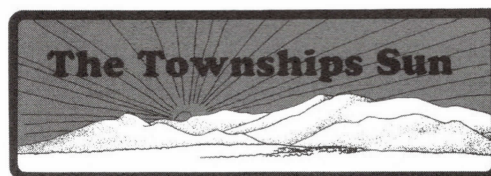
in unhappiness. Most of the prevailing needs to relax, to have fun, to behave and consume in accordance with the advertisements, to love and hate what others love and hate, belong to this category of false needs.

And the impact on North America? A cultural and political context that limits human potential and oppositional imagination in radical fashion. Consumption is hardly the lighthearted expression of a person's will in the marketplace; it is the ideological antithesis of Freire's notion of *conscientization*. Accelerating patterns of consumption, and its bi-product entertainment, have become the arbiters of daily experience in the post industrial economy. The

classroom then, is not *sacred space* nor *the temple of the intellect*; it is a zone of contention where even minimal *conscientization* clashes with and far too often loses in the face of an audience (students) who have been socialized from birth in an ever tightening Marcusean system. Students thus reproduce and impose in the classroom what has been imposed on them--they have become the arbiters of what occurs in the classroom.

Perhaps this explains the frustration of my colleagues with the passive-aggressive behaviors of students in the contemporary classroom; that there is a larger systemic issue to be confronted and individual student behaviors are symptoms of a greater malady.

Peter Cohen teaches in the Humanities department at Champlain College Lennoxville



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WHERE IS LATVIA?

By Gary Caldwell

Recently I was dealing with a senior civil servant – a regional director of a ministry – and the subject of the possibility of a commercial exchange with Latvia came up. The civil servant had no idea of what and where Latvia is; and this person is a university graduate... an educated person. Now you may say that almost no one knows, or needs to know, where the Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia) are. I note that Canada has a Baltic embassy and ambassador and they are in Riga, the capital of Latvia.

The point is that the Baltic states are part of our world. Indeed, Canada was the second country in the world to recognize Latvia when they regained their sovereignty after the 1989 Soviet collapse. A Canadian, Latvian born, became the first president of the new Latvia. Hence an “educated” Canadian could be expected to know that this country exists: Latvia is part and parcel of our civilization, the Western World.

The issue here is one of failure of transmission of our culture, in the wide sense; as opposed to specialized professional or vocational knowledge. And transmission of our wider culture is important because we are the inheritors of a civilization that has acquired a body of knowledge and accumulated a wisdom which is the product of five thousand years of strife, reflection and progress. This knowledge and wisdom is the Western canon. Bereft of this canon, we individually or collectively are unable to act on our world and become, consequently, reduced to political impotence and individual servility by the “powers that be”. Hence education is, although not exclusively, a question of cultural transmission: the carrying forward of a body of knowledge and all that goes with it: competence, creativity, critical thought, and the capacity to project oneself backward (history and literature) and forward (ethics and philosophy).

And why are we (in the West generally, and in Quebec in particular) experiencing a failure of cultural transmission? There are at least three immediate factors that are amenable to being acted on: “dislocation” of school from local community and civil society; “bureaucratization” of schools; and the “etatization” of education... all obviously inter-related. We have “consolidated” our schools out of our communities. Our youngsters go to schools that have no organic connection with the geographical or cultural communities to which they belong. How can we expect transmission from people who we do not know,

“Hence education is, although not exclusively, a question of cultural transmission: the carrying forward of a body of knowledge and all that goes with it: competence, creativity, critical thought, and the capacity to project oneself backward (history and literature) and forward (ethics and philosophy).”

who are not part of the civil society of which we partake? In our context, reclaiming public schools would mean smaller school boards, no more than one high school serving a dozen primary schools. Not impossible in the contemporary sense: Vermont education is thusly organized.

Secondly, as for the size of our schools – scale really matters in education – primary schools should be no larger than two hundred pupils and our secondary schools no larger than eight hundred. This is possible as it was largely the case before the state took over education in the last quarter of the last century.

Community controlled school boards and human-scale schools would make possible again what statization and the attendant bureaucratization (centralization, careerism and unionization) have undermined. We could re-habilitate principals in charge of their schools and teachers in charge of their classrooms.

Would it be that we limit the role of the state (in our case provincial governments) in public education to re-distribution of financial means; assuring a basic curriculum (language, science, history, civics); the certification of teachers; the issuing of diplomas; periodic

on-the-spot inspections; and faculties of education limited to pedagogical preparation (not more than two years) of candidates with an acquired disciplinary competence, and research. And were the above parameters of size and scale to be implemented, then civil society might be able to take back its schools. Schools in our Western tradition do not belong to the state: they belong to parents and communities.



Were the above to happen, and were we to have the material and moral resources to sustain these changes, then our culture in all its literary, artistic, scientific and ethical dimensions would stand a better chance of getting transmitted in schools that might well be places of “sweetness and light” (Mathew Arnold); rather than places bereft of civility (bullying) and hope (value vacuum). Places where good men and women prepared by such cultural and moral giants as was Alan Jones, could be of inspiration for young minds and spirits.

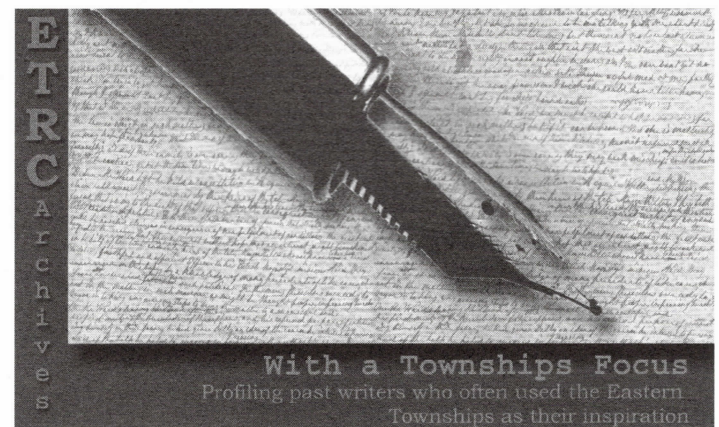
Gary Caldwell: Participated in the Quebec’s 1996 Estates General on education and has recently authored Canadian Public Culture.



WITH A TOWNSHIPS Focus

*Profiling past writers who used
the Eastern Townships as their
inspiration*

The Eastern Townships Resource Centre (ETRC) Archives Department has produced a new exhibition entitled: **With a Townships Focus: Profiling past writers who used the Eastern Townships as their inspiration**



The Eastern Townships is fortunate in that there are several writers and authors who have used this unique area as their source of inspiration and research. Whether they were considered amateurs or professionals, they helped to document an area of Quebec which to this day struggles in many ways to be a focus of research. This exhibition focuses on just a few these writers who have since passed away and whose documents are now held in the ETRC Archives. They include Catherine Matilda Day, Dorothy Dutton, Mildred Waldron and Bernard Epps. Through fiction, non fiction, family histories and historical records, this geographical area was no doubt a source of inspiration for these authors. All of them have since passed on and are only a sample of writers who call the Townships home.

The display is available for viewing until May 31st 2012 during the Old Library’s opening hours: **Monday to Friday, 9-12, 1-4:30.**



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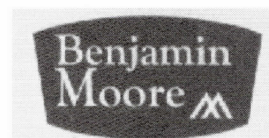
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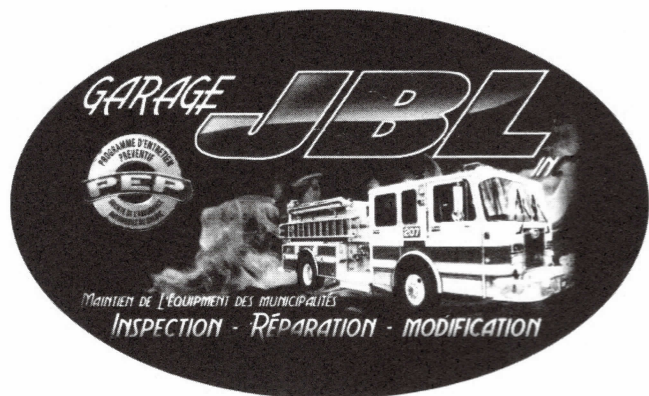
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Sundav	Mondav	Tuesday	Wednesday
Legend CA: Community Aid ANAF: Army Navy Air Force			
4	5 Action St-Francois General Assembly 7pm	6	7
11 Lennoxville Men & Sn Men's Bonspeil March 11 to 17. ANAF: brunch	12 ANAF: mens meeting	13 CA: Blood Pressure Clinic Lennoxville (1h30-3h30) Lennoxville (1h30-3h30)	14 Richmond Green Bi 2h30pm ANAF: ladies aux. meeting
18 Richmond: St-Pat's parade	19	20	21 ANAF: bingo
25 Lennoxville Junior Bonspeil	26	27 CA: Blood Pressure Clinic Lennoxville (1h30-3h30) Waterville (10h30-11h30)	28
			

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 CA: OPALS Amedee Beaudoin	2	3
8 International Women's Day CA: OPALS Amedee Beaudoin Vivienne Galanis: Glimpses of Ethiopia, Hotel Le President, 12pm lunch	9	10
15 CA: OPALS Amedee Beaudoin ANAF: bingo	16	17 St-Paddy's Day ANAF: St-Pat's party
22 CA: OPALS Amedee Beaudoin	23	24 Lennoxville Junior Bonspeil ANAF: rummage sale fundraiser for LES
29 CA: OPALS Amedee Beaudoin	30	31



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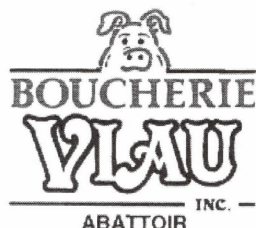
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SUPPORT FOR THE LENNOXVILLE CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

By Rod Leggett

It's called managerial creep, and the creep began 10 years ago. When Lennoxville merged with Sherbrooke, part of the 2002 Parti Québécois' effort to centralize power and consequently diminish local democracy in Quebec, Lennoxville, along with many other municipalities, took the road to disempowerment. The signs of powerlessness are now emerging more clearly, the emergence of the Lennoxville Citizens Association is testimony. Their grievances signal what could be the beginning of the end of Lennoxville as an English and bilingual community, the cultural capital of the Anglophone Townships, and the end of its already precarious status as an independent borough. The consequences are not only grave for the Anglophones who will no longer have political institutions and representatives to protect, voice and secure their heritage, but it will also cripple the francophone community as it will no longer have a mirror to reflect its difference and no longer have a community that can introduce them to the language and the social mores that dominate global culture and global business.

In the Record's one-on-one interview with Bernard Sevigny (January 26, 2012), the Sherbrooke mayor assured Evan Lepage that Lennoxville's bilingual status will remain intact and that Lennoxville will not be consolidated with another borough. He assured Lepage that this was not a part of the committee's mandate who was charged 1) to see how local services could be improved and 2) to review governance at the borough level. However, he does not dismiss the likely recommendation that borough councillors could be cut, making reference to Québec City, a city of 500,000 citizens, who has only 21 counsellors when Sherbrooke, a city of 150,000 citizens, has 24. We need not be a political hawk to see his intention, and any student of politics knows that more often than not

committees mandated to conduct a study usually have the study serve as a justification for pre-established intentions rather than inform an impartial decision. Surely it is no coincidence that both Lennoxville and Brompton, the most likely to be affected and so most pressing they be present, had no CSAM representation (Sherbrooke's Commission on Municipal Affairs).

Clearly Sevigny recognizes that to have a bilingual Lennoxville is to the advantage of the city of Sherbrooke. Where else could mother-tongue French kids study English without leaving the region if it was not for the schools in Lennoxville? Over 60% of CEGEP Champlain Lennoxville students are francophone. This is surely an asset for the French community. Not to mention that English schools and a functional English community is a great way to lure businesses to transplant themselves, and their families, in the Sherbrooke area. But as McDevitt is often quoted saying "language is a characteristic of a culture—it is not its definition."

We agree: people are primary.

As I alluded to earlier the problem is the managerial creep that begun with the 2002 municipal mergers, a managerial creep that Sevigny continues to foster. First, I should define what I mean by managerial. Simply, by managerial I mean reducing politics and community relations to strict quantitative values and quantitative methods of governance. Rather than take the whole person into consideration, her social, environmental, cultural, and psychic components, administrators subordinate these essential attributes to economics and so focus on numbers, on statistics, on the balance sheet. But how

do numbers represent culture, how do they articulate language, how do they embody social mores, how do they account for history and heritage? They don't, and by virtue of their misguided assumptions—that balance sheets and quantitative methods represent political reality—they cannot. Now the “creep” refers to how large bureaucracies are in the business of extending their reach (it is sometimes called Parkinsonian bureaucracy). Unless citizens resist, bureaucracies extend their reach to such a point that they no longer function optimally and become inefficient. To sum, excessive managerialism is destructive because it eliminates people, and what people hold dear. Lennoxville may be a great example of an all too common problem today: if Sevigny's intentions go through Mark McLaughlin and William Smith are dumped.

But dollars and cents, you may argue, are important. Undoubtedly, but at what cost? If Lennoxville loses its counsellors it loses two people who have the capacity for prudential judgment and not simply numerical manipulation. It loses two people who walk the streets and see problems for what they are, not abstract notions that appear on a committee report before absentee counsellors who have no personal attachment to Lennoxville. If Lennoxville loses its two counsellors, citizens of Lennoxville lose two people who they can spontaneously bump into to ask a question in their busy day rather than having to drudge to and through the formalities of city hall.

People are the heart of politics; humans are political animals and not merely consumers and economic maximizers. If Lennoxville loses its counsellors it will eventually merge into another borough, as what distinguishes Lennoxville from Ascot, from Fleurimont, from Rockforest on the balance sheet? (I suggest a committee will be assigned to this task circa 2015.) Eventually it will no longer be able to care for the English language as it will slowly habituate itself to working in the bureaucracy's dominate French language and so English will first lose its vitality and eventually Bishops students will write term papers on how quint it must have

been when people spoke English off campus. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, the French community will lose out as it will lose its reflection and its local access to the anglo-dominated global world.

Mayor Sevigny will argue that cutting cost will allow Sherbrooke to provide better services, but how can the community be adequately served when no one is there to understand its needs, what needs fixing now, what can wait for later, etc.? Only people who have their ear to the ground can make these judgements. Without sufficient local representation, and here I would argue that the citizens of Lennoxville are already suffering a

“If Lennoxville loses its two counsellors, citizens of Lennoxville lose two people who they can spontaneously bump into to ask a question in their busy day rather than having to drudge to and through the formalities of city hall.”

loss since the mergers in 2002, Lennoxville will be increasingly managed and influenced by Sherbrooke administrators who cannot possibly have the interests of Lennoxville citizens at heart—human understanding and consideration has its limits

no matter people's good intentions and rhetoric.

In the short view two counsellors can appear as an extra expense, but in the long run their ability to properly attend to problems, and attend to them before they exacerbate, can also save money. Moreover, when we consider the investments that go into securing the French language in Quebec, we should understand that some things are worth paying for: securing the local governance of a minority language group is worth paying for; representative democracy, and the diversity of issues it represents beyond language, is worth paying for too. That is, if it indeed costs more. The burden of proof rests on the Sherbrooke mayor, but then, as Timothy Belford mentions (Record February 1, 2012), since the CSAM is not transparent, this might be difficult for the citizens of Lennoxville to establish.

for more information see: <http://www.lennoxville.org> or / www.facebook.com/pages/Lennoxville-Citizens-Association



CELEBRATING OUR UNSUNG HEROINES ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

By Brenda Hartwell

Since March 8th is International Women's Day, I thought it would be appropriate to shout out an appreciative thank-you to all Townships women: Thank you for all that you are and all that you do! Countless women work behind the scenes—raising children, raising funds, supporting our vital institutions, and volunteering for community initiatives. Many community events, grassroot projects, and social gatherings would never happen if it weren't for the generous gifts of time and energy donated by women.



Florence Blake

I am fond of an old saying by Mrs Jamieson: "When you pray for potatoes, grab a hoe." This expression has always made me think of the spunky Townships women who peopled my past and bless my here and now. I have witnessed a lot of hard work and good-natured comradery, and I have seen many commendable, vital things accomplished by womenfolk who aren't afraid to roll up their sleeves and work for the betterment of their community. Many of these fine ladies have shunned the spotlight, working industriously and quietly behind the scenes. I am sure that each and every one of us knows more than a few such women; shouldn't we take the time to celebrate these unsung heroines one day a year?

Of course it is impossible to know what sort of society we would be living in, if all women selfishly spent their free time upon themselves instead of helping others or propping up good causes. There are no statistics, no evidence-based documents detailing the full impact that women have had upon our modern civil society. But I do not doubt the incalculable good of their contribution for a minute, and I imagine we would be living in a much colder, fractured world without their humanitarian impulses and influences. I base this assumption on the anecdotal evidence I have witnessed in the work accomplished by women in my village as well as work carried out by various volunteer committees throughout the region. I think many people would be surprised at how much even a small group of women can accomplish if they put their collective shoulders to the task.

In this article, I would like to share the work of one group, not because I believe it is better than any other group in the Townships, but because I know it best and believe that it is probably representative of many other groups within our region. When I moved to Baldwin's Mills in 1985, I was invited to join The Ladies Group of Baldwin's Mills. I knew and respected a number of ladies in this group (Jane Baldwin, Florence Blake, Ruth Law,

Doris Close, and Ruby Racicot) and joining the group seemed like a great way to become a contributing member of my new community.

Although The Ladies Group of Baldwin's Mills has been around for many, many years (well before my time), it is a non-denominational group; members belong to different religions and spiritual traditions, and there is a general atmosphere of openness and acceptance. The fundamental glue that seems to hold the group together is a spirit of fellowship combined with the mission of service to community, both local and global. Since the 1980s, the group's numbers have diminished as wise elders were lost to old age, but the group is more vibrant than some—perhaps because this group has always been open to new ideas and has been willing to share power with younger members—wisdom not always found in all groups. Whatever the reason, the group still survives and flourishes. Here is their 2011 annual report so you can witness what a small group of concerned women can accomplish in one small sector of their lives:



The Baldwin's Mills Ladies Group, 2008

The Ladies Group of Baldwin's Mills, Annual Report 2011

In 2011 The Ladies Group of Baldwin's Mills, a multi-denominational, intergenerational service organization, met the second Tuesday of each month, with the exception of December. Each meeting included a devotional, a business component, sharing, and a communal meal. Meetings are a time for fellowship, and members shared thoughts and experiences. Current events were discussed, ideas were exchanged, and we raised funds for local causes and global initiatives.

Our slate of officers for 2011 was elected as follows: President Carolyn Rowell, Vice-president Judy Baldwin, Treasurer Louise Baldwin, Recording Secretary Brenda Hartwell, and Corresponding Secretary Eunice Baldwin. Members at large included Jackie Baldwin, Masti

Mayrand, Lysanne Prévost, and Rose Mary Schumacher. During the year we were joined by several guests: Sora Davis, Ann Clark, Madonna Burke, Sarah Markwell (once each); Cecile Baldwin (twice) and Lynn Drew, a member in everything but name, who attended 8 meetings, hosted the July meeting, and offered much appreciated support during our special events.

We held one major fundraising initiative this year:

Our Annual Labour Day Extravaganza, which featured rummage, garage sale items, innumerable books, a tantalizing bake sale, and a tea room, was a roaring success. We raised \$2545.05! Leftover rummage was donated to the Kingscroft Church for their upcoming sale, and unsold books were donated to the BU Refugee Sponsorship book sale. As is our custom, we joyfully gave away the money we made throughout the year to causes that touched our hearts. Donations were sent to Stephen Lewis Foundation (\$150), M.S. Society of Canada (\$50), Fistula Foundation (\$100), Red Cross (\$100), Crohns and Colitis Foundation (\$100), Plan Canada (Foster child support +gift of literacy for two girls + Peanut Butter Project: \$377), Coaticook Hospital (\$200), CUSE (\$200), Sherbrooke Geriatric Foundation (\$200), Doctors Without Borders (\$300), Barnston Heritage Cemetery (\$200), Baldwin's Mills United Church (\$200), L'Éscale

(\$200), Moisson Estrie (\$200), St. Columba House (\$200), Old Brewery Mission (\$100), Canadian Diabetes Association (\$50), Bhutan Canada Foundation (\$100), Terry Fox Foundation (\$100).

During the year The Ladies Group also carried out the following: We provided dishes for a potluck lunch prior to the Baldwin's Mills United Congregational meeting; gave the church a thorough spring cleaning; decorated the church and supplied refreshments for the Fall Colour Service; and paid the bulk of the Church hydro bills. Through Plan Canada, we continued to support Pyalo Kamouna from Togo, our foster child since 2008. We also journeyed to the Wales Home and provided a toothsome luncheon to celebrate loyal member, Ruby Racicot's 90th birthday. On the political activism front, we sent a letter of support for the Canadian Wheat Board to our political representatives, stating that farmers should be consulted, a vote taken, and the will of the farmers should be respected re the abolishment or continuance of the Wheat Board. The Ladies Group also collected toiletries, toys, and donations for l'Éscale, the region's women's shelter. We held our annual Community Christmas Party at the hall in Way's Mills and enjoyed a festive potluck supper and lively entertainment in the company of friends and family. In lieu of an adult gift exchange, guests were encouraged to donate non-perishable food items and/or a cash donation to support the Coaticook Centre d'Action Benevole's Christmas Basket Campaign. People were in a generous spirit this year, and we were able to pass several bags of non-perishables on to the CAB, as well as \$285 in cash.

Our monthly meetings offer a regular venue for fellowship, a place to voice our concerns, and a forum for our ideas. Meetings are accomplished in the spirit of neighbourliness and all opinions are respectfully listened to. We understand that we can accomplish more by working collectively, and strive to do so with willing hands and cheerful hearts. Last but not least, we never underestimate the healing power of laughter and camaraderie over a bounteous meal. *(Respectfully submitted by Brenda Hartwell, Recording Secretary)*

I believe the work of our group to be a fair representation of what a small group of dedicated women can accomplish to help further the most worthy social goals of civil society. There are many different women working in many different ways to improve the lot of their fellows.

I would wager that you could find such industrious and caring women in every village in the Eastern Townships. And I don't think it is unreasonable that we set aside a day to celebrate the many contributions that women have made to this world.

Of course, some say that it is sexist to set aside a day to celebrate one particular gender. Balderdash! Last year one man confronted me by saying, "Well there isn't an International Men's Day, is there?" Now, I have always been very fond of men, and I heartily admit that the males of our species have also contributed a great deal to our world so I answered with, "No there isn't an International Men's Day but there should be! What do you think they are waiting for—some women to organize and cook for it?" Wink, wink, nudge, nudge.

Happy International Women's Day!



Jean Rousseau

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SNOW BUNTING ENCOUNTER

By Tom Moore



The “unwinter” weather we’ve been experiencing this year has put a damper on many Quebec winter activities. As well as limited cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and skating, the numbers of winter birds has also been very low. I did, however, spot a couple of small flocks of snow buntings last week, the first I’d seen this year. And one

flock even stayed put long enough for a couple of photos. (My past snow bunting encounters have mostly been frustrated by the bird’s skittery nature which usually results in the whole flock blasting off before you can get anywhere close).

Our snow buntings spend winters in Canada and the northernmost part of the US but they breed in the farthest northern regions of the continent (snow buntings also occur in Northern Europe and Russia).

The male snow bunting arrives back in the cold, dark Arctic tundra in early April to stake out a territory with a nest site in a rocky crevice or cavity. Courtship success is believed to be highly dependent on the nest site quality: the females, arriving in May, choose a mate with the best site for protection from predators and bad weather.

two weeks, always under threat from arctic foxes, weasels and the possibility of late cold and snow. The male feeds the female during the two week incubation period: the cold, rocky nest sites necessitate almost continuous brooding by the female to achieve hatching success.

Based on Christmas Bird Count data, snow bunting populations have declined more than 60% in the last 40 years, although some observers doubt the validity of the numbers since a lot of CBC count circles don’t include the wind-blown rural areas where the wandering snow bunting flocks are usually spotted. Climate change may also be affecting the snow bunting’s winter travels or breeding success. The remoteness of the breeding area makes data difficult to acquire.

To the resident of the far north, the return of the male snow bunting in early April is a sure sign that the long Arctic winter is nearing an end: since they’re still here, maybe we’ll have some real winter in March or April.



Moore Nature Photo

The 4 to 5 eggs are incubated by the female through





Moore Nature Photo

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