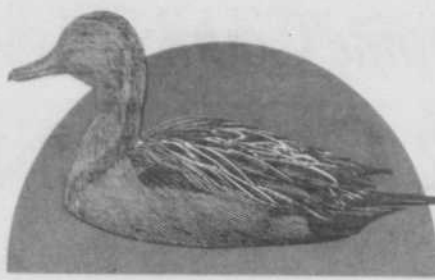


Brome County NEWS



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2006



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Knowlton scouts salute veterans



COURTESY FIRST KNOWLTON SCOUTS

Venturer Joshua Beaudry presents WWII 2nd Corps Survey Regiment (Artillery) veteran Cyril Pearson with the Scouting Movements stunning Thank You crest. The presentation took place at an evening designed to show appreciation for what veterans did and are currently doing overseas for all Canadians.

By Philip A. Godin
RECORD CORRESPONDENT

The Canadian government declared 2005 the "Year of the Veteran," not that Canadians should feel that honouring those who gave so much need be restricted to any defined segment of time.

Veterans, those men and women for whom love of country and sense of duty prevailed under the most objectionable conditions, deserve our sustained and unwavering admiration and recognition.

The wars and conflicts in which Canada has been and is currently involved have always been struggles against the abdication of humanity by those obsessed by its objectification.

For most of us, the demands and tolls extorted by war have been circumscribed to flashing video images, sporadic sound bites and repetitious annual ceremonies held publicly before a dwindling number of ex-combatants.

Fortunately, our remote knowledge of the events that have and still mould the shape of our world's borders and policies hasn't restrained community organisations of all stripes from holding events aimed at acknowledging the sacrifices made by veterans.

And that is precisely what the First Knowlton Scouting group did recently.

Under the coordination of Chair Rory McWilliams, a troupe of 30 Beavers,

Cubs, Scouts and Venturers gathered at the Knowlton Oddfellows Lodge and honoured the veterans of both World Wars, the Korean War as well as NATO Peacekeepers.

"We see our Canadian veterans as heroes who chose to stand up for what we, as a nation, believe in; freedom, truth, justice, knowledge and peace," said McWilliams in his welcoming address which was followed by the organisation's opening ceremonies.

To mark the event, a stunning commemorative crest was designed and

manufactured by Scouts Canada in collaboration with Veterans Affairs and the Canadian Legion. The badge depicts an embroidered poppy adorning a golden maple leaf and red sash upon which the words Thanks you or Merci are emblazoned in black.

The First Knowlton Troop handed out the crests at other veteran events in Hatley and Cowansville, but the evening held in Knowlton was the only one that called upon young boys to actively participate.

Fifteen veterans representing the three branches of the Armed Forces were in attendance, five of whom were women having served with the Red Cross. The vets then held an open discussion on their experiences and fielded questions from the young attendees.

One of the speakers was Cyril Pearson who saw active, at times intensely active, service in WWII in the Western European theatre, as a member of the Royal Canadian Army's Survey Regiment, a division of the Canadian Artillery.

Pearson was one of the fortunate to survive landing on the French beaches near Caen on "D-Day plus 2". As soon as he could gather his gear he began the long, gruelling and too often deadly Allied march across France, much of the Netherlands and finally into Germany.

His job within the Artillery Division was to scout ahead of held positions, pinpoint enemy emplacements and send their co-ordinates back to Canadian gunners. This placed Pearson and comrades squarely in harm's way for nearly their entire tour of duty.

"We were existing," said Pearson in a recent interview. "Not all of our boys landed safely, a lot of them never even landed at all. We were following the infantry whose job it was to push the enemy back from the beaches. They did quite well at it."

Gathering instruments and rations Pearson was trucked from one place along the battle line to the other, con

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BROME COUNTY COMMUNITY BILLBOARD

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Feb. 22

Maison de la Famille 'Coffee Break' - Subject: Time Management, 9:30 a.m., March 15, Workshop on Behaviour, Aggressiveness and Discipline without Spanking, 9:30 a.m.; March 31 to May 19th, Self-esteem Program. Please call if you would like to join the group and make it fast because there are limited places. 52 Du Pont, Porte, 305, Bedford. Information: 450-248-0595.

Feb. 24

The Wellness Volunteer Centre and HAL 50+ invite all Town of Brome Lake residents to an Information session given in English by JoAnn Jones, R.N. entitled, **Women & Heart Disease: Awareness, Symptoms, Prevention**, Part 1 on Friday, Feb. 24 at the **TBL Community Centre**, 2 to 4 p.m. A second session in March is planned dealing with Prevention and Diet. No charge but please RSVP by calling the Community Centre at 450-242-2020.

Spaghetti Supper to Benefit St. Edouard School, Knowlton, 5 to 8 p.m. In the cafeteria, 376 Knowlton Rd., Adults, \$7, children, \$3. Children's games, homemade products for sale, silent auction.

Feb. 25

The St. James Craft Guild will host a series of **Benefit 'Meals on Wheels' Card Party** in on Saturday, February 25th to be held at St. James Parochial Hall, 15 Maple St., **Stanbridge East** at 7:30 p.m. 500, cribbage, lunch and prizes. Bring your own crib board. Cost, \$5 per person. Info: 450-248-2407. All welcome.

Potton Heritage Association, Mansonville - Cross Country Skiing, easy; Sugar Loaf Mountain, 10 a.m. Leaders: Diane and Michael Damey. Meet: **50 Hilmar Krausser**. Excursions are free for members of the Association: \$5 for oth-

ers. We recommend that you bring a snack and drinks.

Brome County Historical Society Winter Lecture Series 2006 with lecturer Jimmy Manson at the old Court House, 15 St. Paul, **Knowlton**, 1:30 p.m. Topic: "From Baker to Brown: Demographics and Politics in Brome County, 1911-1975". Unlike many other parts of the Eastern Townships, Brome County maintained a large English speaking population during a good portion of the 20th century and this fact was reflected in the voting patterns of the area's electorate in both provincial and federal elections. This lecture looks at the inter-relationship between politics and language in Brome County during these years, and examines the backgrounds of, and contributions made by, many of the political luminaries of the region. Information: 450-243-6782.

Feb. 26

Hymn Sing at St. John's Church, Brome with leader, Edna Badger and Organist, Evie Johnston-Maine. Sunday, Feb. 26th at 7:30 p.m. All welcome! Come and enjoy an hour of singing. Hymns of your choice.

Royal Canadian Legion 'Breakfast' at 120 Davignon St., **Cowansville**, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Everyone welcome. Info: 450-263-3543.

Feb. 27

Pancake and Sausage and Ham Supper sponsored by St. James A.C.W. at St. James Parochial Hall, 15 Academy St., **Stanbridge East**, 5 to 7 p.m. \$6 children, under 10 yrs., \$3.50

Feb. 28

Pancake Supper at Iron Hill Church Hall, **Iron Hill** from 5 to 7 p.m. All the pancakes, sausages and baked beans you can eat. Adults, \$5, children, 5 - 10, \$3, under 5 yrs., free.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at Grace Anglican Church, 52 Principale, **Sutton**, 5:30 a.m. Adults, \$6 and children, \$3. Pancakes, sausages, real maple syrup, beans, coffee, tea, and dessert. Everyone is welcome.

It's that time again. **Pancakes with all the trimmings**. Bacon, sausages, eggs, four kinds of toppings. Tea, coffee. Tuesday, February 28, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. **Odd Fellows Hall**, 476 Knowlton Rd. Admission charged. Everyone welcome.

SHROVE TUESDAY, Feb. 28, **PANCAKE SUPPER, Dunham United Church**, 5 to 7 p.m. \$6. Pancakes, sausages and maple syrup. Info: 450-295-2348 or 450-295-

3251.

March 1

Avante Women's Centre, 'Coffee Break' with Cindy Rhicard, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Topic: A quirky look at the way the media has portrayed women in the past and present. Has it changed overtime? 2 Adhemar-Cusson, Suite 2, **Bedford**. Info: 450-248-0530.

April 1

The Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 77, 77 Lewis Street will hold a Flea Market on Saturday April 1st from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Tables will cost \$10 and the Cantine will be open on the premises. Please reserve your table early. For info, please call 450-539-0847 or 450-539-1198.

ARTS CALENDAR

Feb. 26

KNOWLTON PLAYERS is pleased to announce that Emma Stevens will be directing **THE WIZARD OF OZ** - a children's play - for presentation in May. **Auditions** will be held Sunday Feb 26 and Tuesday Feb 28 from 3 to 5 p.m. upstairs at the Knowlton Pub. We need children/teens from ages 6-17 to come and try out!. Adults are also invited to come and see how you can help. If you would like to audition, but can't make it on those dates, please call Dianne 450-539-2906.

CHURCH SERVICES

KNOWLTON/CREEK PASTORAL CHARGE Worship & Song by members assisted by The Reverend Dale Skinner. Sunday School, Creek United, **Foster**, 9:30 a.m., Knowlton United, **Knowlton**, 11 a.m. (Handicap access).

ST. PAUL'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, 24 St. Paul's Road, **Knowlton**. Traditional Sunday Services, 8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. Music, a nursery and Sunday School. The Rev. Tim Wiebe and the congregation welcomes everyone.

ANGLICAN PARISH OF BROME, Sunday, Feb. 26 - St. Aidan's, **Sutton Junction**, 10 a.m. - Morning Prayer. M. & S. Jolley.

SAINT-EDOUARD CATHOLIC CHURCH, Knowlton - Sunday Mass: 10:30 a.m. (Bilingual).

ST. LUKE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, 420 de la cour, **Waterloo**, invites you to come and join us. 1st and 3rd Sundays, Morning Prayer, 9 a.m.; Holy Communion, 9 a.m. Rev. W. Davidson. Info: 450-

539-2078.

COWANSVILLE AREA PASTORAL CHARGE UNITED CHURCH Worship at Emmanuel United Church, 203 rue Principale, **Cowansville**. Worship 10:30 a.m., Choir practice, 9:30 a.m. Rev. Wendy MacLean officiating.

TRINITY ANGLICAN CHURCH, COWANSVILLE. Come and join us for Sunday Worship. We have a service at 9 a.m. (traditional) and a Family Service with music and Sunday school at 10:30 a.m. Info: 450-263-2662.

ANGLICAN PARISH OF BEDFORD/PHILIPSBURG & FARNHAM - Sunday Services: **Philipsburg**, 9:30 a.m.; **Farnham**, 1st Sunday in **Bedford** at 11 a.m., 2 & 4th Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in **Farnham**; **Bedford**, 11 a.m. For information call (450) 248-3923. The Ven. Dr. Brian A. Evans, Rector & Archdeacon of Bedford.

BEDFORD UNITED CHURCH PASTORAL CHARGE - Sunday Services: **Stanbridge East**, 9:30 a.m.; **Wesley United, Bedford**, 11 a.m., with Sunday School classes; **Mystic** 12:30 p.m. Everyone welcome. The Rev. K. Carl Triskle, Officiating. (450) 248-3044 for information.

GRACE ANGLICAN CHURCH in SUTTON, 52 Principale sud, welcomes everyone for Sunday Services at 10:30 a.m. The Rev. Canon Tim Smart, Rector. Info: 450-538-8108.

BAPTIST CHURCHES Sunday Services: **Mansonville Baptist**, 9:30 a.m.; **Olivet Baptist, Sutton**, 11 a.m. All are welcome.

COMMUNITY NOTES

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS - If you wish to drink and can... that's your business. If you wish to stop and can't... that's our business. Info: 450-242-2611 or 1-800-272-2611.

BCN RATES & DEADLINES
COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Brome County News Community Calendar is reserved for non-profit organizations only. Deadline is **noon** on **Mondays**. A pre-paid fee of \$7 is required per publication, or **SPECIAL RATE of \$11 for 2 insertions**: 1 BCN & 1 in Friday Record "What's On" section. Please forward notices to 88-A Lakeside St., Knowlton, QC J0E 1V0, email: bcnews@qc.aibn.com, or fax: (450) 243-5155. Visa and Mastercard accepted.

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RANDY KINNEAR PUBLISHER 800 463-9525
SHARON MCCULLY EDITOR/CH. MGR. (819) 569-6345
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Acting troupe takes on taboo subjects

By Wendy Denman
RECORD CORRESPONDENT

Terminal illness, the process of dying, and the death of a child are difficult subjects to address, considered taboo by many.

Yet there is a need to talk about these things, to approach the emotions involved, to communicate with the people suffering. A profound play that faces these topics is premiering at the Manoir Sweetsburg next Tuesday, Feb. 28.

The story, *Oscar et La Dame Rose*, was written by Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt and has been adapted for a cast of three by Brigitte De Souza and her Troupe des Cantons.

"Schmitt is a well-known European author and I found this book in the Pettes Library," said De Souza. "When I read the story I was very touched. I was hospitalized in the past and I know the uncertainty and the difficulties you face."

The story concerns Oscar, a 10-year-old boy who is dying of leukemia. He is visited by a volunteer he calls the Rose Lady and with whom he develops a humorous, tender and compassionate relationship that is both complicated and

truthful. He has many questions and emotions as he faces his disease and imminent death.

The Rose Lady suggests he write letters to God. The text is comprised of these letters.

"Oscar is very angry because his parents will not talk to him about his illness," explained De Souza. "In his letters he is able to say how he feels, to vent his anger, to talk about his aloneness. This story touches on many taboos, many parents have trouble talking about such illnesses to a sick child. Oscar's emotions are very real."

"They apply to anyone with serious illness. The story is very sensitive, the author approaches the subject with a freshness and compassion."

De Souza, a local teacher, actress, playwright and director, assembled a cast — Marina Aillaud, Jocelyne Marechal and Rémi Villeneuve a year ago.

"For the first few months all we did was explore the text. We discussed the questions it raised, we examined our own reactions. Then during the summer we began to focus on certain parts, it is a long text, we had to cut and decide how we would bring it alive on stage."

De Souza and her cast decided to set the scene with three characters — Oscar (played by an adult), The Rose Lady and an off-stage voice that represents Oscar's consciousness. Her next step was to contact the cancer charity Au Diapason, based at the BMP Hospital.

"We wanted some expert advice to see if we were on the right track with this," she said. "Marlene Coté, the director, was very encouraging, she confirmed what we had felt all along that this play was very real, that it touched on important issues."

Twenty per cent of ticket sales will go

toward Au Diapason, though De Souza and the Troupe plan on performing for specific audiences.

"This is not an entertaining type of play," she said. "Although we will do a public appearance or two, most of our shows will be for special audiences—at hospitals, hospices, at residences and for medical staff. We feel the message can benefit those who work with the sick as well as those who are sick. Many very good doctors and nurses have trouble dealing with death and with the emotions of their patients."

DeSouza has designed the play with a simple, easily movable set suitable for presentation to an audience between 20 and 60 people. The first production at Manoir Sweetsburg in Cowansville will be held in the conference room.

"We know the play will provoke reactions in the audience," De Souza said. "I realize we have to be ready for this. After the production we will have a discussion, we will answer questions, we will encourage people to express their own emotions. Oscar and la Dame Rose is all about open communication and truth."



New caterer brings Basque flavour to area

By Wendy Denman
RECORD CORRESPONDENT

Former Agur Gallery owner Madia Esquerre has set her sights on a new business. She opened a catering business and small café, called Etchea, on Knowlton Road at the beginning of December.

Etchea is the Basque word for home. The store carries a wide range of home-made specialities from main dishes, pies and tarts to patés, vegetable combinations, comfits and preserves.

"I cook every day we are open, there is a great kitchen downstairs, fully equipped," she said. "I make a wide range of fresh dishes to sell daily, as well as a few frozen dishes I keep on hand. People can come in and buy their dinner or sit down and have lunch."

The café seats nine comfortably for lunch without reservations.

"I will also open and serve dinner, we have had a lot of groups come for a private party or celebration, but people must make reservations for the evening," she said. "They can order a special meal in advance or ask me for suggestions. The customer can pick up or we can deliver the meal to their home. I will also cook in someone's home for a special dinner or a wedding, whatever the occasion. We are very open to the people's needs."

Esquerre inherited a love of cooking from her grandmother who owned a restaurant.

"I spent a lot of time there when I was a child," she said. "My grandmother was a wonderful cook, I worked there when I was a teenager. I love to create different dishes using very fresh and organic ingredients. Patés and fresh foie gras are one of my favourites. One of my dishes combines deer meat with dried apricots, mushrooms and port."

"I think of the food I create as cuisine savour, colour and voyage — I love to create dishes with the tastes and colours of traveling to different countries."

Esquerre and her brother Jean-Yves operated the Agur Gallery together in Sutton, closing it recently. During that period, Esquerre catered many openings for the gallery as well as special art dinners and musical evenings.

"Eating needs to be a very special occasion," Esquerre said. "The ambience is so important. I love to combine good food with art and music — to make dining a total experience."

The art lover in Esquerre hasn't gone away. The walls of Etchea are lined with paintings, sculptures on white pedestals surround the tables.

"The 32 permanent artists we featured at Agur all said 'bring us with you anytime, anywhere,'" she said. "So we did. We sell the art as well. But even more important is the beautiful atmosphere it creates."

Esquerre lives in Knowlton, a five-minute walk from her business.

"I love being able to work so close to where I live. We had the Agur Gallery here in Knowlton before we moved to Sutton and I am very happy to be back. I love the town, people here are very friendly

and gracious."

Etchea is open Monday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"At the moment we are closed Tuesday and Wednesday, but during the summer we will open more days and for longer hours," Esquerre said.

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THANK YOU:

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

stantly relaying back the position of enemy locations that would be shelled moments later.

Pearson learned early on, the hard way, about the savagery of war. "On day

four we were knocked out. The enemy hit us, destroyed our truck and killed our driver. That's when we realised that we really were in the war."

But prevail was the word, and determination the bottom line for the 19-year-old soldier. "Still we moved on," Pearson added, an almost palpable sense of remembrance ringing in his voice. "We had a hell of a time keeping track of where the line was, it kept moving so fast. But as it moved, we just kept going."

In fact, events on the front line were unfolding at such a pace the Pearson and his colleagues never stayed in the same place for more than two consecutive nights throughout their months of trekking across pasture and village.

Hearing the narrative through the voice of experience was both revealing

and disturbing.

"As far as having the scouting movement hold an appreciation evening that seconded as a youth awareness session, Pearson's military savvy shone through.

"I thoroughly enjoyed seeing children of that age making an effort to understand what we had to go through during the war," he said. "But I told them that it may be a brave thing to go to war, but it is not such a brave thing once you get there. I told them that if you could avoid war, you must."

As far as a moving tribute to veterans and a singular opportunity for transmitting knowledge from generation to generation, the evening was a resounding success. In terms of giving all those present an increased sensitivity to humankind it was circumscribed triumph.

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Quick fix: How the NFL helps SAD

Each year the American Association of Psychiatrists (and doesn't that sound like a fun group?) struggles to come up with new conditions and disorders afflicting the mental health of humankind. Then they add these to the ever-growing list and charge individuals or their insurance companies for subsequent expensive treatment.

A recent such discovery (perhaps 'invention' is a better term) is CRD - for Chronic Relationship Disorder. This was a creative new diagnosis for anyone having difficulty getting along with others. Did it ever occur to the experts that maybe the person in question is just a sorehead, or someone having to deal with soreheads?

A decade or more ago, the learned doctors came up with Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD. This became the official, and hence treatable, condition for anyone feeling depressed or suffering other undue mental or emotional stress from the dark and cold of winter.

Most living things experience a nat-

ural slowing down of biological functions as daylight fades and temperatures drop, from watching more TV to outright hibernation. In some people, at least according to other family members, these two phenomena are almost indistinguishable.

Wild and frequent swings of weather supposedly aggravate the SAD burden, adding a measure of anxiety to the mix. (On the matter of a sudden freezeup after rain, can't modern science come up with an adhesive strong enough to hold the weather stripping on the car and not have it torn off by a little frozen water around the door?)

Happily, for most adult males in North America, there's some relief from SAD, at least one day a week, up until early February. This is the wonder of professional football, particularly the National Football League south of the border. (The Canadian Football League helps too, but its season is over come

late November.)

So, every Sunday from Labour Day weekend to the Superbowl, beleaguered North Americans can take respite from whichever of life's struggles they've been losing - work, weather, family, personal debt, the heartbreak of psoriasis, and so forth. Just kick back on your pre-shaped couch or Lay-Z-Boy amidst abundant snacks and beverages, and cheer on the heroes, champions, alter egos, whatever.

According to recent surveys, more and more women are becoming football fans. Not that they're always wildly enthusiastic at the prospect; it's more the old 'If you can't beat 'em, join 'em' idea. And football, growing from the first Superbowl forty years ago, has become a huge social and cultural force in America.

Even the churches know better that to compete with an NFL game for the crowd's favour. When the Carolina Pan-

thers, playing out of downtown Charlotte, joined the league as a new franchise about ten years ago, area churches re-scheduled all afternoon services and events to Sunday morning. Their official reason was to help avoid traffic snarls. Avoiding near-empty churches was the real one.

Many clergymen admit that pro football has 'assumed a liturgical function.' Or, in ugly simpler words, it's become a substitute for religion. In a time of fear, doubt, and nasty political divisions, there's one thing people can depend on - their gladiators will duel it out on the gridiron, all of life's worries be damned.

Of course, if you're a fanatic and your team loses, or a compulsive gambler on the games with a run of bad luck, your SAD problem could get worse. As well, a stretch of mean weather through late February will only deepen the gloom.

At which point the SAD sufferer might consider the only sure cure: a couple of weeks way down in the sunny south.

THE COUNTRY SQUIRE

BRIAN EDDINGTON

A rose by any other name

By Alanna Fahey

RECORD CORRESPONDENT

It is February and like most avid gardeners I am pouring over seed catalogues. The days are getting noticeably longer and plans are well under way for a new perennial bed.

Perennials are an enigma to many people, especially those just starting out in gardening. It is confusing when you are confronted by the many gardening books and the people who work with plants when they tend to refer to plants in technical terms. Botanical terminology and nomenclature will come with experience, but for the beginning gardener it all sounds like a foreign language. For me and to many other gardeners, Lily-of-the valley is Lily-of-the-valley not convallaria ma-

jalis, so in the the seed catalogue you would expect to find it under L. To be certain, as you are beginning to learn the fine art of gardening, you will want to know the Latin name for the plant, but don't rush it, it will come to you.

The best perennial gardens contain a mixture of plants. A garden is created to have a continuous show of flowers. These plants should be gracefully coordinated as to shape, size texture and color. When done properly a perennial garden should have continuous blooms and colorful shades of foliage throughout the season.

Planning the perennial bed is one of the most pleasant occupations you can take on at this time of year. Take a look at where you are going to put the bed. Consider the sun and how much or how

little sunlight the bed will receive. Consider what type of plants you like, tall and short. Do you like birds or butterflies and do you have windows that will open onto the garden? If you do have windows that open onto the garden you may want to reserve that spot for something fragrant.

Look at lots of magazines and books to get ideas. Talk with your friends or with neighbors whose gardens you have enjoyed. Planning is fun and the rules can always be broken. When drawing up your sketch, don't be too rigid. Lining up all your plants in rows will be boring, so mix it up.

Put some tall plants with medium-sized ones, put some small plants around bushes, medium plants with small plants, use your imagination. We

garden to create, so create. If it doesn't work when you see it in bloom, you can always move it around in the fall, because the planning of a garden never stops, it just keeps changing.

The thing you will find you love most about your garden is the thrill you get when little green shoots appear through the spring snow and you know summer is on the way. Some of your best moments will be made in your garden when cool drinks and dappled sunlight are the backdrop for your family and friends. And, a garden always holds a promise and no matter what happens, it is a promise of beauty that is unexpected and never, ever broken.

ALANNA FAHEY IS A FOREST MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST AND IS EMPLOYED AS A FULL TIME SEASONAL GARDENER.

The Canadian/Czech art exchange

By Alanna Fahey

RECORD CORRESPONDENT

Fred Korn may just be the Eastern Townships most interesting art dealer. At first glance, you know Korn is no ordinary joe. On a recent weekday morning, Korn, in his early 70s, stands in line at a local corner store with his morning paper tucked under his arm. He seems boyish this morning, dressed casually in cashmere and merino wool for he is off to Montreal to meet with Chloe Surprenant, a 28-year-old artist who will accompany him to Prague.

In the past five years, Korn has or-

ganized an outstanding cultural exchange of art and artists. He invites Canadian artists to Prague then reciprocates the gesture to artists from the Czech Republic. The last time the Czech artists were here, they exhibited at the Czech Consulate in Montreal and then at Gallery LaFemme in Sutton. This year the Czech artists will show at the Czech Embassy in Ottawa and then they will move onto Toronto.

The Canadian artists will have their vernissage in Prague, May 3 at Gallery LaFemme-Prague. The Canadian artists who will exhibit in Prague

are Kathryn Jacobi (B.C.), Judy Anderson (Ont), and Chloe Surprenant (Qc).

Korn has enlisted some heavy sponsors for this exchange. He has engaged the Czech Republic government, Mr. A. K. Velan as well as the Canadian Embassy in Prague. These sponsors are aware of the good work of Korn and they respect his vision and they continue to support this year's exchange.

Fred Korn possesses a confidence that accompanies one who is sure of his place in this life. Without hesitation he has a swift sense of humor and he refers to his age with respect.

When asked why he does this exchange, he says simply, that he does it because he loves art and in his old age he wants to give back his knowledge of Canada and the Czech Republic.

If you know Korn, you know he has a sense of quality, a standard that far exceeds the average. Neat, tidy, organized and wildly seductive, his taste for art is well, let's say, nutty and extremely adventuresome and every year, a few, just a few, lucky artists get to accompany him on his staggeringly beautiful journey to Prague. Canadian Artists Vernissage-Prague May 3rd, 2006 Gallery LaFemme www.glf.cz

It's time for a commuter train revival

Looking at the traffic situation in and around Montreal these days, I think its time we had ourselves a big-time railway revival. Free up the freeways by riding the rails.

I'm no economist. In fact, I got into journalism because I can't do math. But I don't understand why over the last several decades rail travel went from viable option to costly curiosity. Or for that matter why it's considered cheaper to load up one transport truck and have it pound our roadways to bits than it is to tag 50 or 100 rail cars together and have them roll on the rails that were designed for them.

When I was a kid in the early 70's, you could still catch the train in Farnham for Montreal. Lots of folks did it. It rolled back into the station in the evening, right on time. Never once did it get stuck in traffic on the bridge, and to my knowledge accidents, if any, were minor and rare.

Somewhere along the way that service went the way of the dinosaurs. As did the train that passed through Adamsville on its way to Sherbrooke. For over two decades now anyone heading for Montreal has two choices: Take the bus, or drive in and fight the traffic for a couple of hours.

At the same time there are more people than ever who live in the Townships and make the daily commute to their jobs in Montreal. They get up extra early and plan to be home extra late, knowing full well that it might take 20 minutes to get across the Champlain bridge, or if somebody sneezes at the wrong time it might take two hours and 20 minutes. Add an eight-hour workday on top of that and you don't have much time for a life.

In this situation a commuter train to the Townships, stopping someplace like Farnham (a town that was built around its railway) or even Cowansville makes a lot of sense. Commuters could drive to the station, board the train and then spend the next hour reading the morning paper, having breakfast or getting ready for the day's work. They could even get an extra hour of sleep in each direction, making for more awake time with the family.

There are other advantages as well: Poor weather would cease to be a problem for train travellers. Heavy traffic, manoeuvring through lanes and around heavy trucks, also a thing of the past for them as well. Fewer accidents.

UNDER THE HOOD

MAURICE CROSSFIELD

Just hop on and the next thing you have to worry about is how to get from the station to your job.

There is a commuter train that runs from Montreal to Delson on the South Shore.

From what I've heard it has been very popular, and on some days they pin on a dining car, letting commuters have a proper breakfast along the way. Coffee, a bagel and the morning paper seems a lot nicer way to get to work than a slippery autoroute dodging heavy trucks and listening to a blaring radio.

The benefits would be numerous: Less pollution, with the train polluting less overall than the dozens of cars it would replace; less traffic, particularly on Montreal's bridges and downtown streets; less stress on commuters; increased safety for commuters; a better quality of life for people who want to live in the country, but don't want to give up their decent paying jobs in the city.

There would also be benefits for the towns with train stations as well. People passing through would likely stop to get gas, or hit the local grocery store to pick up a few essentials on the way home. Unless you live there, when was the last time you bought something in Farnham?

Of course a Townships commuter train would only work if a couple of factors were met: First, the operators of the train would have to drop the Via Rail ap-

proach. In other words, it would have to be affordable. While long train trips used to be a relatively economical way to travel, the cost of a Via ticket isn't far from a plane ticket these days. My grasp on economics may be minimal, but I understand that it costs more than twice as much to take a train from Montreal to Toronto and back in economy class than it would for me to drive a minivan from West Brome to Toronto alone. Minivan: About \$150. Train: About \$300, plus parking for the van once I get to Montreal (about \$15 a day). This just doesn't make sense.

The second factor is the human tendency to not want to give up our cars. We like the convenience of having it nearby, of knowing we can climb in and drive away at a moment's notice, even if that means we'll spend the next two hours stuck in traffic. It's a false sense of security, and the sooner we deal with that the better.

I think it is time our local politicians, be they federal, provincial or even municipal, took some initiative to revive the commuter train concept. Any government money spent on helping get the idea off the ground would be recouped in cleaner air, healthier citizens and less wear and tear on our roads. It's an idea that never should have gone away, and whose time should come again.

Moving a little more freight on the rails probably wouldn't be a bad idea either.

These Students need Homes!



Joop, 15, comes from Thailand and is looking forward to sharing a little bit of his Thai culture with you as well as learning what it means to be Canadian. While he is here, he would love to continue playing his violin as well as maybe learn how to dance and cook a few Canadian dishes.

Manuela, 16 is from a very small village in Switzerland. She is very active, competes in downhill skiing, swimming and scouting and loves to read and play the trumpet. Manuela describes herself as an independent and fun young lady who gets along with everyone, young or old!



Felix, 15, is a friendly, cheerful boy from Germany who loves traveling, making friends and playing sports. While he is in Canada he really wants to learn as much as he can about the Quebec culture, including the French language. Felix loves to play soccer, ski and in-line skate and is looking forward to joining his host family in these activities on a regular basis.

These EF exchange students are coming to your area this August to enjoy a cultural exchange at your local high school. They will arrive with their own pocket money, travel insurance and will be assisted through out their exchange by a local EF International Exchange Coordinator.

The only thing these EF exchange students are still missing is the love and support of a local host family like you to help them through their journey of personal growth and achievement.

If you or anyone you know would like to host one of these EF exchange students, please contact Barb at 450-689-9572 or call the National Office at: 1-800.263-2825.

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Pet of the Week: Maggie



SPCA MONTEREGIE

Hi, I'm a lovely two-year-old young lady with rust-coloured fur and white markings and I weigh about 50 pounds. I'm cheery, very friendly and love everybody. Hope you'll come and see me and all my new friends here at the SPCA Montérégie, 178, ch. du Vide, Ste-Angèle-de-Monnoir (exit 37 on Autoroute 10). Visiting hours are 2 to 4 pm. Info: 450-460-3075

Knowlton businessman going to Guatemala

By Joshua Bleser
KNOWLTON

When Marc Pelletier took a "sabbatical" from his business consulting firm in Montreal in 2005 and moved to Knowlton full time, he says he wanted "to let life decide where I was going to go next."

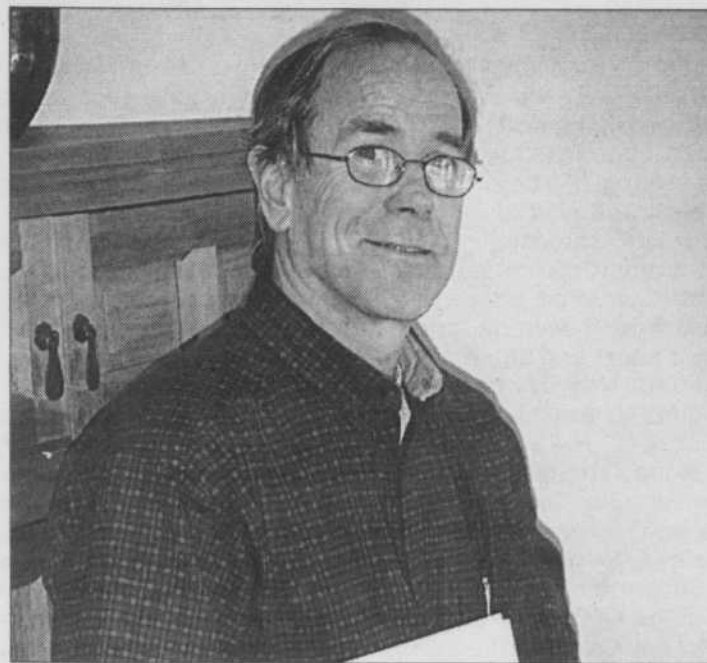
After a brief stint as one of the driving forces behind the Knowlton Business Development Group, life decided the Quebec City native should go to Guatemala. Pelletier leaves next Thursday for Guatemala City for a six-month volunteering stint with Uniterra, an initiative by the Canadian Centre for International Study and Cooperation (CECI in French), a non-profit non-governmental organization funded in part by the Canadian International Development Agency.

Pelletier will be working with Agexprom, an association of 200 small and medium-sized manufacturers of non-traditional products (eg. not chocolate, bananas, or other raw resources) affiliated with the Guatemalan government who are concerned about the impact of the Central American Free Trade Agreement that is expected to be implemented next month.

Helping manufacturers stay afloat in evolving markets and trying circumstances is old hat for Pelletier. In the 1970s he was a trade commissioner in Canada's Foreign Service, stationed at embassies in Guatemala, Austria, and Lebanon. His job was to help Canadian manufacturers develop business in those countries, a challenge he continued to take on within a North American context when he founded ExportNet in the early 1980s.

Now, with ExportNet on ice, Pelletier saw the opportunity to renew his decades-old latent love affair with Latin America, while hopefully helping its people to achieve development and prosperity. "There's nothing wrong with doing some carpentry work, but I felt I could contribute more in my field," Pelletier explains.

Not that Pelletier is expecting miracles; he is the first



JOSHUA BLESER

Marc Pelletier is going to Guatemala to help local businesses adapt to changes in their economy as free trade spreads.

to acknowledge that free trade has not always meant fair trade, and that it will be difficult for some of the smaller Guatemalan companies to compete with the influx of cheap American goods. On the other hand, Pelletier is quick to add, protectionism has its pitfalls, too—notably a tendency to result in stunted growth and innovation, and a deterioration in the quality of local products.

"Free trade has its advantages and its disadvantages," Pelletier admits. But, he continues, "given that it is a fact, how can we best benefit from it?"

This is the problem to which Pelletier hopes to help Guatemalan manufacturers find a solution. He plans to do so by setting up networks of businesspeople and encouraging dialogue both within the country and

with international partners, as he has done throughout his career and around the world—a vision in line with CECI's mission to "fight poverty and exclusion" by "mobiliz(ing) resources and promot(ing) the exchange of know-how."

More concretely, Pelletier sees the development of niche markets and, for example, an emphasis on quick, customized service as the saving power for Guatemalan companies faced with competition from multinationals. He recognizes that the solutions he is likely to propose will be messy and incomplete, and that some of the manufacturers he works with won't make it.

For Pelletier, however, his success in Guatemala is not to be measured quantitatively. "If to each company I can bring a new idea, a new perspective, a new partner to dialogue with, a positive outlook on the future, then I'll feel that I've done a good job," he sums up.

Pelletier will be back in Knowlton at the end of August, but he doesn't intend to settle into retirement quite yet. He says he hopes to return to Latin America for "at least a couple of months per year" for the next decade or so.

BRIEFS

Coffee house success

The kids in Mansonville know to repeat a successful formula - so they've invited musician Ralph Steiner to host another coffee house this Friday, February 24th.

The formula - an open microphone with an invitation for anyone to come up and provide the entertainment has provided great evenings in the past. Steiner's easy manner and improv performance helps relax the wary and eager alike and opens the floor for some interesting and often surprising down home fun. The event is sponsored by the local Citizen's Advocacy Chapter of Students against Destructive Decisions (SADD).

"Admission is only \$2 or \$5 if you want to partake of homemade dessert and a beverage - while supplies last," says Mable Hastings, youth director. "With Ralph Steiner as host, the evening is sure to be a hit! Musicians and singers young and old - we welcome anyone who wishes to perform. This is a time to come with family, friends and neighbours and to join in."

The evening will benefit SADD's youth projects. The coffee house begins at 7 pm. in the basement of the Mansonville Catholic

Church.

"We hope a lot of people will join us for this special alcohol-free event."

Ralph Steiner, known for his interpretation of the great Hank Williams, is a favorite performer and host at Mansonville's coffee houses.

-Wendy Denman

BMP to help people butt out

A booth called "Toward a smoke-free environment" will be installed in the lobby of the BMP Hospital Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to help people who want to quit smoking. A respiratory therapist and a nurse from the quitting help centre will be there all day, distributing information and dispensing tips.

There will also be mini breathing tests available, and registration forms to the J'arrête j'y gagne challenge, the 5/30 diet and exercise challenge, and the quitters' support group set to begin March 6.

The awareness day is timely, as Bill 112 becomes law May 31. Under this modification to the province's tobacco law, smoking will be forbidden in bars and restaurants and within nine metres of entrances to health and social service centres, cegeps, universities, and day-care centres.

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The Guild of All Saints Anglican Church

Dunham

The Guild gathered at 9:30 a.m., on Monday, February 6, to set the hall for their annual "Valentine's Soup and Dessert" luncheon with the kind assistance of Mr. Arthur Hall. When all was in order, the ladies organized for their monthly meeting which opened at 11:15 a.m., with the Lord's Prayer.

Present were Mrs. Erma TenEyck - President, Mrs. Ruby Sherrer - Vice President, Mrs. Ada Tinker - Secretary, Mrs. Claire Hobbs - Treasurer, Mrs. Joan Patterson - Publicity, Mrs. Christine McLaughlin and Ms. Joyce Martin with regrets from Mrs. Lydia Fougères.

The January minutes were read and found approved. A very favourable report was given by the Treasurer. The Sunshine Convener reported the passing of one of our faithful attenders to our luncheons, Mrs. Opre (Ope) Page, whom was well known and loved by all and will be greatly missed.

Several of the Guild members have been busy in the preparations of the "Orange Seville Marmalade" with many thanks to Mrs. Claire Hobbs for her extended long hours of work resulting in 130 jars ready for sale.

With the final details confirmed for the upcoming luncheon, The Guild began preparations for their "St. Patrick's Soup and Dessert" luncheon to be held on Thursday, March 16.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m., with the hostesses, Mrs. Ada Tinker and Mrs. Christine McLaughlin serving a delicious lunch. Next month's hostesses will be Mrs. Lydia Fougères and Ms. Joyce Martin.

Valentine's Soup and Dessert Luncheon, Feb. 9, the hall was festively decorated for the occasion with a "Sweet-Heart sale's table covered with sweets for the sweet!

Soup was served shortly afternoon with the blessing kindly given in our

Rector's absence by Rev. Malcom Gogswell. At the conclusion of lunch, the winners of the door prizes were Mrs. Ada Tinker, Mrs. Mavis Rumbolt and Mrs. Doreen McKee.

Following lunch, eight tables of "500" assembled for an enjoyable afternoon. One table of Bridge played for their pleasure.

At the completion of the card games, Mrs. Judy Jones and Mr. Steve MacPerson were the winners of the Bingo. Other winners were: 6 games - Mrs. Judy Jones, 5 games - Mrs. Violet Realffe, 4 games - Mr. Arthur Hall, 3 games - Mr. Bruce Bockus, 2 games - Mrs. Stella Mizener, 1 game - Mrs. Jeanne d'Arc Elie, and our good sport - Mrs. Beatrice Monette.

Mrs. Erma TenEyck, president, thanked all for their support and invited them back to next month's "St. Patrick's Soup and Dessert" luncheon.

Joyce Martin

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