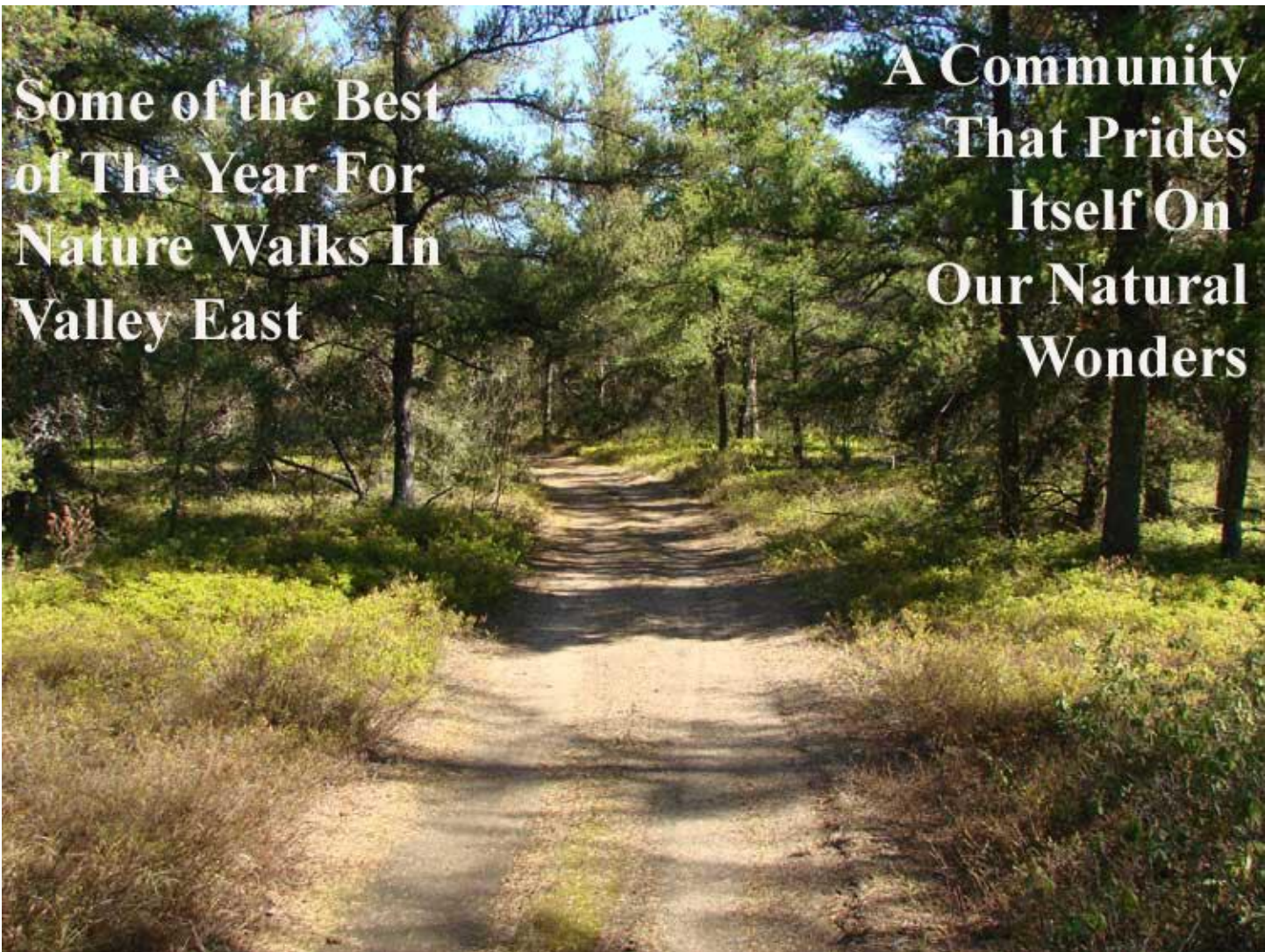


# **VALLEY EAST TODAY**

## **Community Lifestyle Magazine**

[www.valleyeasttoday.ca](http://www.valleyeasttoday.ca) and [www.thelearningclinic.ca](http://www.thelearningclinic.ca)



Some of the Best  
of The Year For  
Nature Walks In  
Valley East

A Community  
That Prides  
Itself On  
Our Natural  
Wonders

### *Other Stories in Valley East Today...*

*Election 2010 Candidates*

*After The Whistle - You Make The Call*

*The Theory of Continuity*

*Prepare For A New & Emerging  
Organizational Model for Schools*

*Single Gender Classrooms May Be Just  
Around The Corner*

*Reflections by Robert Kirwan  
"The One Thing Everyone Needs In Life"*

*Quality of Life by Kevin Shanahan  
"The Black Horse"*

# This Is Valley East

*"Where People Make The Difference"*



The Valley East Today Community Lifestyle Magazine is a weekly publication that is designed to recognize the accomplishments and achievements of the "people making a difference in the community of Valley East."

It is called a "lifestyle" magazine because it is much more than a newspaper. If you want up-to-date news you can check the daily newspapers or the internet. However, if you want articles and features that will take you deeper inside a story or an issue, then you will find that in the Valley East Today Community Lifestyle Magazine. Each publication will contain information that will be of interest to people from all walks of life and we are certain that our inspirational editorials and stories will leave a lasting impression on you and your family.

We also intend to use the magazine to help local residents become more aware of the goods and services that are available to them from businesses, professional offices, and institutions that serve the community.

It is our feeling that many people living in Valley East are unaware of the wide variety of quality goods and services that are being provided by our business sector. Once we develop and expand Valley East Today Community Lifestyle Magazine, we are convinced that residents will support local shoppers on a much higher level than ever before.

## Open Invitation To Schools, Churches and Groups To Submit Articles of Interest & Photos

Valley East Today Community Lifestyle Magazine welcomes articles and photos from schools, groups, churches, and organizations. There is so much happening in our community each week, but we simply cannot get around to cover everything. You can help us out and at the same time keep the rest of the community informed by sending us photos and information about your events and activities so that we can publish them in Valley East Today for all to see.

Simply send me your story along with a photo or two and we will gladly publish it in one of our upcoming weekly magazines. Send the information in a Word document and attach the photos separately.

We have also decided to publish Valley East Today in a PDF format so that our readers are able to forward the attachment or link to all of their family and friends around the world. The public has been very happy with this decision and we look forward to providing them with even more in the form of content from the community.

All of the contact information you need can be found in the box below or at [www.valleyeasttoday.ca](http://www.valleyeasttoday.ca)

The Valley East Today Community Lifestyle Magazine is published by Infocom Canada Business Consultants Inc.

**Robert Kirwan, Publisher & Editor-in-Chief**

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# ELECTION 2010

## *Rainbow District School Board*

Gordon Ewin

Robert Kirwan

Ruth Ward

## *Sudbury Catholic District School Board*

Michael Bellmore

Geraldine Meskell

## *Conseil scolaire du district du Grand Nord de l'Ontario*

Robert Boileau

Francois Boudreau

## *Conseil scolaire catholique du Nouvel-Ontario*

Fern Bidal

Georges Boudreau

Marcel Legault

John Robert

## **COUNCILLOR OF WARD 6**

Pete Chenier

Christine Guillot-Proulx

Andre Rivest

## ***ELECTION 2010 IS COMING FAST – IT'S TIME TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CANDIDATES***

Time is running out for local residents to find out who they wish to vote for in the upcoming Municipal Elections. The Advance Voting will take place the weekend of October 16, 17 and 18, while Election Day is October 25, 2010. A few signs have been put up around the town and at least one candidate has distributed a flyer, but for the most part things have been very quiet. The Valley East Today web site is providing space for people to display their information, but so far only three candidates have taken advantage of the invitation of the FREE OFFER.

If you would like to read what has been posted by the candidates, please feel free to go to the following link:  
<http://www.valleyeasttoday.ca/Election%202010/2010%20mainpage.htm>

It is expected that there will be at least one or two Meet The Candidate Nights in the community over the next couple of weeks, so please be on the look-out for notices in the local media.

## ***PUTTING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE:***

# **School Board Trustees Control An Annual Budget of over \$450M Compared To The \$520M Budget of The City**

As the Municipal Election Day comes ever so close, it may be time to put things into perspective as far as exactly what people will be voting on when they pick up their ballot on October 25, or during one of the Advance Voting sessions.

### **ONE VOTE FOR MAYOR – “CHAIR OF CITY COUNCIL”**

Every registered voter in the City of Greater Sudbury is guaranteed “one” vote regardless of where you live. You will be voting for the Mayor of Greater Sudbury. The Mayor is your selection as the “chair” of the City Council and your full-time “watch-dog” at City Hall. In actual fact, other than being the official spokesperson for the Council, his most important role is that of overseeing the day-to-day operations of the staff employed at Tom Davies Square. He really doesn’t have much authority over the staff, but if he notices policies that are not being implemented properly, or if he comes across unanticipated difficulties, he is responsible for bringing these to the attention of Council so that they may deal with the matter.

### **ONE VOTE FOR YOUR WARD REPRESENTATIVE**

You then get to vote for a Ward Councillor (unless you are Wards 1 and 5 where the incumbent was acclaimed). The Ward Councillor is your “official representative” on City Council. The Councillor is supposed to be your voice among the group of 13 who will be voting to decide on matters of utmost importance to your best interests during the next four years. This is the person you will contact if you have problems with City Hall. There are 12 Ward Councillors who form City Council under the direction of the Mayor, whom you have also voted on to act as chair. The City Council is in charge of a total annual budget of about \$520M and employs a staff of approximately 2000.

### **ONE VOTE FOR A SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEE**

Most of the residents of Greater Sudbury will also have a third vote to elect a school board representative. There are four school boards in the City of Greater Sudbury, so you will be voting for the trustee candidate for the school board to which you designate your municipal taxes. Keep in mind that about 15% of the municipal taxes you pay each year go to the province as an education tax. The money collected by the province is then returned to each individual school board so that they are able to run their system. The person you select as trustee for your area sits with other elected trustees on the “school board” to oversee the operation of the system and to make decisions on policy. The trustees are actually monitoring the school system on behalf of the province, but as a “school supporter” you get a say in who represents your interests.

On a “composite” level, all school boards combined consist of 25 trustees elected by registered voters in Greater Sudbury. By comparison, you elect 12 Councillors and a mayor to run the city. In total, the school boards are responsible for administering an annual budget of approximately \$450M. The total number of employees working for the school boards is approximately 3,400, compared to the 2000 working for the City of Greater Sudbury. By comparison, the number of people employed by the school boards is at the same level as those working for the Sudbury Regional Hospital, with only Vale employing more in total number.

School Boards also have hundreds of millions of dollars in real estate holdings throughout the City of Greater Sudbury and generate a significant amount of economic spin off through the education-services industry, much like that experienced through the mining-services sector.

### **SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEE HAS THE MOST RESPONSIBILITY WITH THE LEAST SCRUTINY**

Unfortunately, when all is said and done, school board trustees hold more real estate assets, employ more local residents, and operate a budget that is almost the same as that being used at city hall. Yet, few people pay much attention to trustee candidates and for the most part, trustees are allowed to go about their business during the year with very little scrutiny during their term. On the other hand, every time a City Councillor or the Mayor makes a statement or brings forth a concern, the media attention is immediately on them and the public hears about it. Perhaps between now and October 25 we should all try to find out a bit more about the choices we have for trustee.



### *“The One Thing Everyone Needs In Life”*

#### *Reflections About Life by*

**Robert Kirwan, Publisher/Editor-in-Chief  
Valley East Today Community Lifestyle Magazine**

I learned a long time ago through my involvement with people in all walks of life...whether it was at work, at school, at home or in any other part of life, that there is absolutely one thing everyone and I mean everyone needs in this world. It doesn't matter what age you are, or whether you are a man or woman, girl or boy, nor does it matter what your status is in society...the one thing we all need is to feel appreciated.

Mary Kay Ash once wrote, “Everyone has an invisible sign hanging around their neck saying MAKE ME FEEL IMPORTANT.”

In my line of work I meet a lot of people who are in between jobs. Many were once in pretty decent occupations earning a substantial income and all indications were that they were successful at what they did. Most of those people identified one main reason for leaving their employment – a lack of appreciation and acknowledgement for their contributions to the company or organization.

A quotation I read the other day by George Adams got me thinking about the various directions I have taken in my own life and career. Adams stated, ***“There are high spots in all of our lives and most of them have come about through encouragement from someone else.”***

Adams was absolutely correct. As I thought back on some of the times in my life I considered to be “high points” I could clearly recall that it was encouragement provided by others that gave me the confidence to move ahead with my dreams. It seems as if there was always someone there to give me the strength and courage I needed at just the right time. I wondered what might have become of me if I hadn't received that little bit of encouragement. What if I was left on my own to muster up the courage? Would I have been able to accomplish all that I have done in my life?

Dale Carnegie, the person who became famous for his inspirational books and programs has empowered people all over the world. He once said, ***“Perhaps tomorrow you will forget the kind words you say today, but the recipient may cherish them over a lifetime.”*** When I read Carnegie's comment I decided to reflect upon my activities during the previous few days. Where were the moments during those days when I may have said something that could possibly have had a life-changing effect on another person with whom I had come in contact?

I recalled that the previous morning I had a meeting with a recent graduate of Teachers' College to interview her for a position with my tutoring agency. We had never met before, yet when our eyes met in the crowded

room at Tim Horton's I knew right away who she was. As we sat down to talk I explained to her that out of all of the people in the room, she was the one who stood out because she "looked like a teacher". I said that as a very positive comment about the "presence" she portrayed and the way she carried herself. She thanked me and then we went on with our meeting. But I could tell that my comment meant a lot to her.

And then there was the young lady a few days earlier who stopped by my office to register as a tutor. After talking with her for a while I encouraged her to develop a seminar presentation that we could offer to schools in the area as part of a full-day workshop. She was absolutely thrilled with the prospect of getting involved in a project about which she was so passionate. I felt good about being able to provide her with the motivation to proceed with this venture, and then as she was leaving she turned to me and said four words that have echoed in my head ever since. She simply said, with a sincere smile of appreciation, ***"You are so inspiring!"***

Two seemingly uneventful moments in my life: and yet in those moments one lady who has thus far been unsuccessful in her search for a chance to begin her career in teaching may have received the strength and inspiration to carry on pursuing her dream of one day being in front of a class: just because I told her that she "looked like a teacher" and that she has obviously made the right career choice. I wonder if the other young lady will be inspired by my encouragement to fuel her passion for teaching natural science and perhaps spread her knowledge and enthusiasm among many other young students as a result of our meeting.

All I know for certain is that I will never forget the tremendous feeling of appreciation I felt when I heard those four words directed at me. ***"You are so inspiring!"***

It clearly made me aware of the enormous responsibility we all possess. Each and every one of us has the power to change a life with a single comment: the chance to encourage and show appreciation to all other human beings with whom we come into contact.

I leave you this week with a short passage from John Wesley: ***"Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can."***

Have a good week.



**Take A Trip Down Memory Lane With A Visit To Our Living History On The Valley East Today Community Web Site**

<http://www.valleyeasttoday.ca/newsmagazine/Living%20History/homelivhist.htm>

Click on the link above and you will find yourself in the middle of hundreds of articles and photos about the people who have been making a difference in Valley East during the past several years. It is a fitting tribute to the community that we have so many wonderful people who are committed to providing residents with such a great choice of activities and organizations in which to become involved. I am sure that you will see many people you recognize in the stories. You may also be the subject of some of these articles. The best thing is that you can forward the link to all of your friends on the internet and help us spread the message that Valley East is a pretty good place in which to live.



## The Black Horse

by Kevin Shanahan

*The following is one of the articles that have been written by Kevin Shanahan a local writer who has been battling cancer for a number of years. He shares his thoughts about life in the hope of providing inspiration to others who are dealing with this dreadful disease as well as other challenges in life. Kevin has provided us with a selection of over fifty different articles that Kevin has written for us so that our readers may share some of his inspirational words.*

My buddy, Percy, was only 53 when he died. His heart stopped and he was dead before hitting the ground. He had been feeling so good that he stopped taking his medication, continued to smoke, and worked way too hard for someone with a heart condition. Ten years later I still miss his contagious smile and, sometimes, I resent his not taking proper care of himself so we could grow old, as buddies.

Why is it when we are threatened by a critical illness we do all that's necessary to enhance our wellbeing? But when some of us get back to feeling good again we tend to drift away from all those precautions that were so beneficial getting us through our illness. When a person stops taking a necessary medication, stops a beneficial exercise or complimentary medicine, or continues to smoke is no different than taking a gun to our head. The matter of "when I'll die" is fast forwarded.

I had stopped my daily meditation/relaxation ritual, only took my native cleansing recipe occasionally and had slacked off my walking and gained weight. But I got lucky. I got reminded of their importance when I experienced how cancer may feel if it came back in my brain. Although it was caused by the side affects from a new medication, the fear of dying, though for a short time, was no less frightening.

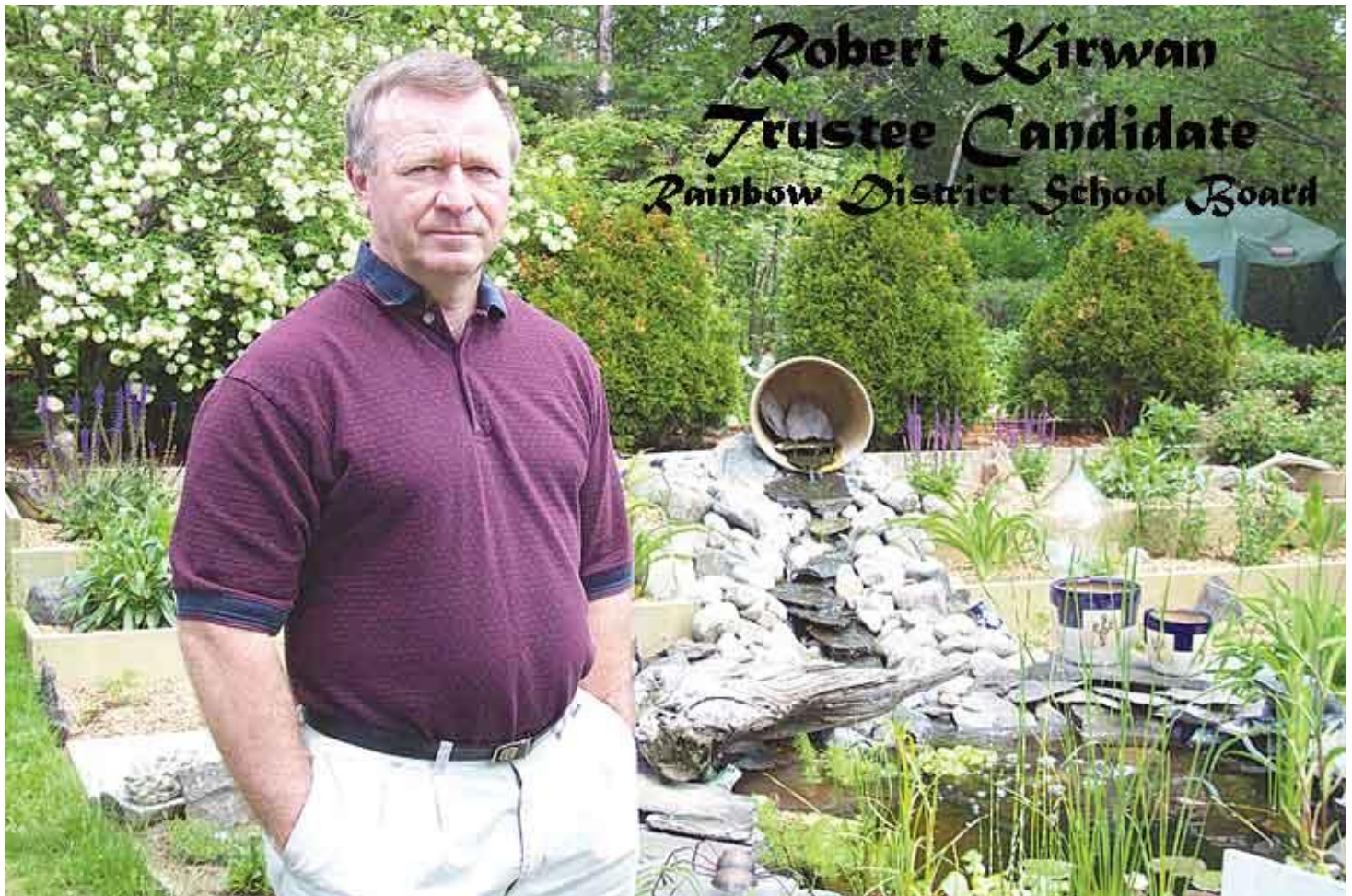
You need only ask any heart/cancer survivor how a new pain can set off a rush of, "Oh oh, it's back" type of thinking. I found this tremendous demonstration of how indirect negative imagery can subvert the entire healing process. A doctor asked a group of participants to close their eyes and meditate on anything they wanted other than a black horse.

Close your eyes and try it for a minute. Anything...but a black horse. Find it hard? Now close your eyes and meditate on a red rose.

He explains that the black horse represents not dying. When our efforts to heal are focused on the fear of death, when you are trying to keep death from happening, paradoxically we focus intently on it. So, when imagery techniques or any technique is done to prevent death, we indirectly create ongoing images of black horses. The red rose, on the other hand, represents a focus on life. When we use imagery or any other technique to live life with more creativity, joy, and love, we automatically enhance indirect healing imagery. It may be that a black horse will gallop through our rose field from time to time, but it isn't our major preoccupation. We are not hypnotized by it.

I need to remember the rose did not get beautiful by simply being a rose. It was nurtured with the right amount of sun/rain. Then it was pruned, fertilized and examined daily for pests that could destroy it. So, it stands to reason that because there are long life genes in my family doesn't mean I, automatically, get to live them.

Between the period of finding cancer and my first chemotherapy session, I experienced a connectedness of mind, body and spirit. I haven't experienced it since. Nurturing my spirit is the real source of healing & strengthening my body through proper exercise & healthy eating habits, is something I am capable of doing... daily.



**Robert Kirwan, OCT, B.A.(Math), M.A.(Education)  
Candidate for Trustee, Area 3 (Wards 5 & 6)  
Valley East & Cambrian Heights Area  
Rainbow District School Board**

Robert Kirwan has been a resident of Valley East since 1974. While he and his wife, Valerie, were raising three sons they became actively involved in a just about all aspects of the community. Robert Kirwan is well-known for his weekly editorials in The Vision Paper which were both inspirational and educational. He was a classroom teacher for 28 years before retiring to open a private practice as a consultant in 2001. Since that time he has been involved in a variety of initiatives with all four school boards; has worked with secondary school students from Sudbury to North Bay on behalf of a private career college; is the host of a weekly radio show where he interviews business owners about education and career issues; publishes the Valley East Today Community Lifestyle Magazine and web site; and has operated a personal tutoring agency for the past four years. Kirwan is running for the position of Trustee because he feels that the personal and professional experiences he has accumulated over the years will enable him to provide other trustees with insight into the true impact of their decisions and policies on students, parents, grandparents, and teachers. He is aware of the realities of education today, is an expert on education law and collective bargaining and feels that he will be able to make objective decisions as a trustee with the Rainbow Board. Among other things, he intends to increase support for local school councils, communicate on a regular basis with parents, provide more resources to classroom teachers, strengthen labour relations and return to the basic essentials of education in order to better meet the needs of students and the expectations of their parents. You can visit his web site at [www.kirwan.ca](http://www.kirwan.ca) for more information or contact him at 969-7215.

# ***NEW ORLEANS PIZZA IS QUICKLY BECOMING A TRUE CORPORATE LEADER***



**VAL CARON  
523-8080**

***OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK AT 11:00 A.M.***

**SUNDAY TO WEDNESDAY  
OPEN UNTIL 9:00 P.M.**

**THURSDAYS  
OPEN UNTIL 10:00 P.M.**

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY  
OPEN UNTIL 12 MIDNIGHT**

Make sure you visit the Valley East Today Corporate Web Page for New Orleans Pizza by clicking the following link:  
[http://www.valleyeasttoday.ca/newsmagazine/Corporate%20Profiles/new\\_orleans\\_pizza.htm](http://www.valleyeasttoday.ca/newsmagazine/Corporate%20Profiles/new_orleans_pizza.htm)

## ***NEW ORLEANS PIZZA IS A FULL YEAR AHEAD OF THE MINISTRY COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS***



New Orleans Pizza has been providing lunches to schools and school groups for over 30 years and is proud to announce that it has altered its products to meet the new requirements set out by the ministry of education a full year before it will become mandatory. Some schools are making it mandatory now so this is something they might like to know.

New Orleans Pizza provides a school lunch menu where over 80% of its products are in the Sell More Category as outlined by the Ministry of Education's School Food and Beverage Policy. This is good news for teachers and principals who like to schedule weekly pizza lunches which comply with the requirements. New Orleans Pizza has a proud reputation for quality products and do not compromise when it comes to maintaining a high standard of nutrition. For more information you should contact Vicky Wydra at 523-8080.

# Heatwave Tanning Salon Has Information For Parents About Safe Use of Tanning Beds



With four locations to serve you, Heatwave Tanning Salon has become the preferred tanning spa in the Greater Sudbury Area. Each month you will find special deals that will help you stretch your dollar as far as possible. Ron and Andrea are also pleased to provide you with all the information you need about how to tan responsibly, whether in their tanning beds or on the beach. You can also save money on lotions whenever you buy any tanning package.

During the month of September you can purchase a 15 tan package for the price of 10

Ron and Andrea also invite people to call them up to discuss the safety measures that have been incorporated into the Heatwave Tanning Salon policy. There is much

concern about the safe use of tanning beds and Ron and Andrea wish to assure all local residents that no one is more concerned about the safety of their clients than they are. Visit the web site for more information

<http://www.valleyeasttoday.ca/Heatwave/> or call Ron or Andrea at 897-4006

## *Ron Pedneault of Fantastic Floors Has The Secret*



Ron Pedneault opened Fantastic Floors in the fall of 2005 after gaining years of experience in the flooring and construction industry. He built his business by providing customers with the kind of personal service that demonstrated the pride he has in always doing his best. Today his business is thriving because local residents appreciate the efforts he puts in to satisfy their needs. This is a perfect time of year to stop by the Val Caron location of Fantastic Floors and speak to Ron about projects you have in mind for the summer cottage or your mobile homes. You will find some special "cash and carry" deals on carpets and flooring that will certainly suit your needs and your budget. Ron always has something on sale so stop by before you head out to camp this weekend. [CLICK HERE FOR THE](#)

[FANTASTIC FLOORS PROFILE>>>>](#)



## *VCCNET.ca Internet Solutions Offers Full Range of Internet and Communication Services for Home or Business*

VCCNet.ca Internet Solutions is subsidiary of Valley Computers & Consulting Services and is a locally owned and operated business that has offered affordable, cost effective telephone, long distance, and internet

solutions since 2001. If you need any of these services for you home or office you should visit the web site at [www.vccnet.ca](http://www.vccnet.ca) to find out more about the services available and even get an indication of the low prices that are offered at this time. Give Edgar a call and he may be able to save you plenty of money while giving you the kind of service that you thought was no longer available.

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



## Calling A Hockey Game Is Easy From The Stands..Or Is It?

The AFTER THE WHISTLE hockey site was created to help minor hockey fans appreciate the finer points of the game from the viewpoint of the officials. It deals with the “realities” faced by on-ice officials while they deal with the emotional and competitive forces that are all part and parcel of the sport. What follows is one simple example for you to consider.

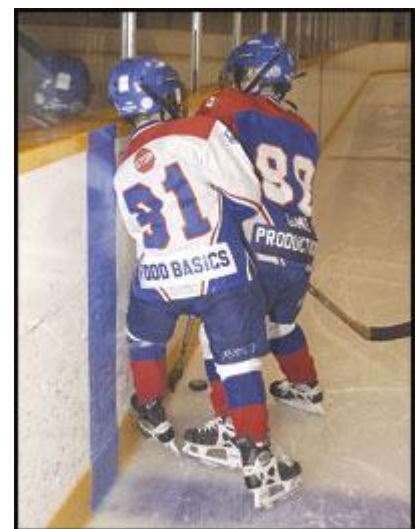
Imagine that you are a hockey fan watching the play and try to make the call...

### *YOU MAKE THE CALL*

Everyone in the arena has been waiting for this game all year long. The Blue's against the White's for the league championship. Whenever these two clubs meet, sparks fly. The intense rivalry between the neighbouring communities goes back over many, many years. In fact, many of the parents of the children on the ice played against each other when they were in minor hockey.

A White defenseman, Darcy carries the puck out of his end zone on the first rush of the game, Blue's Chris comes skating alongside him, and rides Darcy into the boards.

As one of the fans in the stands, you can imagine the emotions you are going through. If you are a parent of a child on the blue team, this check would get you even more pumped up. What a way to start the game! If you are a parent on the white team, you don't particularly like the fact that your player lost the puck on the first rush, but that's hockey.



Take a look on the next page at what the referee saw.

## **FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE REFEREE**

In this situation, from the vantage point of the fans, it looks like a clean body check was thrown by Chris. Darcy was taken out into the boards while he was carrying the puck. So, from the original picture, you wouldn't have expected a penalty to be assessed.

However, from the vantage point of the referee, this is what he saw. It is clear that an elbow has landed on Darcy's neck/face.

From this point of view the Referee would probably assess an "Elbowing" penalty.

This is what would be considered an 'Impact Penalty'.

By calling the penalty it shows both teams that they will not get away with the high hits to the head of their opponent. It sets the tone for the rest of the game.

The thing that also plays in the mind of the referee is that the players on the ice as well as the coaches and players on the bench likely saw the action from this point of view as well. The referee doesn't like to call a penalty so early in the game, but if he lets this one go, it is going to be harder to call similar infractions as the game progresses. He knows that the fans might not understand why he is making what would appear to be a "cheap call", but the referee is not there to manage the fans. He's there to manage the game and make sure that the players follow the rules.



***Question: It is very confusing for players when one game one referee lets things go and the next game we get penalties? Why is it so hard for referees to be consistent?***

**Answer:** The game of hockey is one of the most complex games in the world. Because it involves so many emotions, and because judgement is involved in refereeing games, it is almost impossible to achieve perfect consistency. The rules are pretty clear, but it is the interpretation of the referee that counts. He must take into consideration so many factors in a split second. However, referee associations across the country are trying to become more consistent when it comes to abuse of officials and impact penalties. There is a long way to go, but hopefully everyone is moving in the right direction on this matter.

***Question: I would like to know what kind of training referees receive. I know they all have to pass a test at the beginning of the year, but after the season starts, what do they do to improve. Players practice all the time. Is there any comparison with referees?***

**Answer:** Once the season starts, officials generally develop through the guidance offered by supervisors. The problem we are finding today is that there are so few senior officials around that they are too busy doing games to "coach" or "mentor" young officials. This will come to haunt us in the very near future. While experience is the best teacher, the pressures associated with refereeing hockey today are forcing so many good young officials to quit before they reach their prime. And without adequate supervision and coaching, young officials are going to take longer to reach their prime. It is a problem which must be addressed by associations. More money is going to have to be provided to pay for good supervisors. A developing referee should be seen at least once a month by a supervisor.

**INSIDE EDUCATION***News & Commentary On Important Issues In The World of Education & Learning*

INSIDE EDUCATION is a special publication that is a supplement to The Greater Sudbury Learning Clinic which can be found at the web site at [www.thelearningclinic.ca](http://www.thelearningclinic.ca)

The main purpose of INSIDE EDUCATION is to help parents, grandparents, teachers, school administrators, the general public and the members of the business sector better understand some of the major trends and issues in the world of education, training and career development today.

Many of the articles and commentaries that are contained in this publication will reflect what is happening locally, but we will also deal with larger political and policy matters that impact on the local education scene.

## **The Theory of Continuity Poses The Question: What's Next? *By Robert Kirwan***

Most people over the age of 40 will experience a “change in philosophy of life” as they approach retirement age, and in some careers, with retirement coming in their early 50’s, this shift will be something that is even stronger. As those of us in this demographic group face our own mortality we continue to ask the question: “What are we going to do with the time that’s left?” This is being referred to as the “Theory of Continuity” where you stop looking at the end of a particular career as a time to sit back and wait to die, but rather as a time to look to what you will be doing next. Since most people living today can expect to be healthy and vibrant well into their late 70’s and 80’s, there is still a whole lot of living left during one’s normal retirement years.

And while the baby boomers are changing the way we look at retirement, there are tremendous implications for the younger generation currently in secondary and post-secondary schools and for those who are just beginning in their own desired careers.

For years we have been telling young people that the job market will open up as baby boomers hit retirement age. Now that the baby boomers are arriving at this place in their life, they are about to change the entire way we look at retirement. Many of them are financially secure and can now look at employment as a way of finding fulfillment and making a positive contribution in ways that perhaps they always wanted but were unable to because of other commitments. This shift is going to have a remarkable affect on career planning for our youth and is something that will have to be addressed by our education institutions.

Imagine what it will be like for business owners who are facing the prospect of hiring a new graduate from college who has absolutely no experience, is expecting to receive a high starting salary, and despite all of the time and money you invest in training him, is likely to leave you the moment he finds something better. On the other hand, this same business owner could outsource the work to one or two baby boomers who already come with decades of experience, are willing to work “on demand” whenever the owner needs them, during any time of the day, for a much lower salary, and since they are at a stage in life when they have no desire to move away from their current home, will likely be available for as long as the business owner needs them. Who do you think is going to get the job?

When you speak with people from the baby boom generation you will find some common paths to happiness. Many of us indicate that that as we get older we discover that the secret to life comes from living in the moment, making the

people you love a higher priority, and understanding that happiness comes from the inside, and not from material possessions. We find that no matter at what age we are right now, when we look back over the path we have followed it is what we “gave to the world, not what we took from the world” that gave us the most satisfaction. Now that we are more financially secure and do not have the pressures that we faced while raising families and meeting our responsibilities to our former careers we can spend the rest of our days in more meaningful activities doing what we always wanted to do.

In many ways, life is just beginning for people in their 50's and 60's. It is as if you are entering a second adulthood with all of the advantages of the life experiences you have gained during the first 50 years. Many of us have often said that if we only knew when we were younger what we know now, we may have done things differently. Well, the reality is that most baby boomers still have a good 25 to 30 years of good productivity left inside them. I know many people in their late 70's who are still going strong and still making tremendous contributions to society.

And so, here I am at the age of 60, “retired” from teaching for the past nine years, publisher of the Valley East Today Community Lifestyle Magazine and web site ; running a private practice as a tutoring agent and education consultant; a talk show radio host for almost three years; “working” seven days a week; and my wife and I still have time to enjoy our grandchildren, our children and our leisure activities together. If you had told me that this is where my life would be when I was 25 years old I never would have believed you. I can't wait to see what my life will be like a year from now, but I do know one thing – whatever it is that I am doing, it is going to be my choice and it is going to make me happy.

## **A New Organizational Model For Elementary & Secondary Schools** *by Robert Kirwan*

It would appear as if all school boards in the Greater Sudbury Area will at one time or another give serious consideration to implementing a new organizational model for elementary and secondary schools. In fact, this is not a new model, but rather one that is developing “out of necessity” and will actually be much better suited to meeting the needs of secondary school level students.

I am referring to the practice of moving Grade 7 and 8's into the current high school facilities so that the building houses students from Grades 7 through 12.

We are only just beginning to see the effects of a new trend in school organization in this part of the province, but it should be clear that moving the Grade 7 and 8's into the community secondary schools is inevitable if our school system is going to be in a position to better prepare young people with the skills necessary to become successful contributors to society in the future. The model is working quite well at Marymount Academy and there are already other schools in the area where elementary and secondary school students share the same building.

The only way schools of the future are going to be able to adequately fulfill their responsibilities is by organizing students in a way which is more conducive to the development of the learning skills necessary for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And when you examine the needs of our children, it makes far more sense to offer education in two distinct settings.

Children have one set of needs as they move from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6, and they have a completely different set of needs as they move from Grade 7 to Grade 12. Therefore, the sooner we can move all students from Grades 7 to 12 under one roof, the better. And, unfortunately, that may mean that it is necessary to close some of the smaller elementary schools and build larger, more central ones to accommodate the enrolment from JK to Grade 6.

## ***REFLECTION:***

First of all, quality of education is directly related to the competency of the teachers who are actually working with the children. It doesn't matter where your son or daughter goes to school. It is the classroom teacher who is going to make the greatest difference in the growth of your child.

Larger, newer schools tend to have the most up-to-date facilities and supplies which assist teachers in providing for the needs of their students.

The larger the school, the less likely it is that you are going to have a lot of split grades and the more likely it is that students will be organized in a way that is more conducive to meeting their individual needs.

Larger schools provide principals with a wider selection of staff who may be qualified to provide for the special needs of all students in all grade levels.

You can therefore do a lot more with your students in a large school setting. Small schools served their purposes when they were first built, but times have changed and we must have the resources to prepare our children for the world of today and tomorrow, not the world we were accustomed to yesterday.

Secondly, we know that there is going to be a critical need in the workplace for more graduates with skills in the trades areas and the cost of outfitting schools to give young people exposure to this training is enormous. Most secondary schools already have the equipment necessary for the delivery of these specialized programs.

## **NEW DIRECTION PROMOTED BY GOVERNMENT**

For example, the Liberal government announced in January 2008 that they are about to spend \$150 million over the next several years to improve education for students in Grades 4 to 8 by introducing programs such as outdoor education, home economics and shop. It is easy to implement outdoor education programs at any level, but when it comes to home economics and shop, the \$150 million won't even come close to equipping our elementary schools with those facilities. However, moving Grades 7 and 8 into secondary school buildings where those shops and home economics facilities already exist makes much more sense. The province is also considering starting co-op programs for Grades 7 and 8 so it would make more sense to move them to secondary schools where those programs are already in place.

Education Minister Kathleen Wynne stated "We know that if we're going to be successful in getting more kids through high school and going on to post-secondary or into apprenticeships, they must be fully engaged by the time they get into Grade 9. It's way too late if we wait until Grade 9."

## **MORE CONDUCTIVE TO TRANSITIONS PROGRAM**

It is perfectly clear that the period from Grade 7 through 12 is the time when one discovers his/her true passion for life and when natural talents and aptitudes begin to blossom. The more exposure to a wider variety of options we can provide students from the beginning of Grade 7 right through to graduation at the end of Grade 12, the better.

This re-organization would even benefit the "Grade 7, 8, 9 Transitions Program" which is intended to help students make the transition from elementary to secondary school.

By gathering everyone under the same roof during the six years from Grades 7 to 12, we are better able to offer children a chance to explore the skilled trades, the arts, information technology and all of the other

possible paths they can follow. We can also offer them a whole new way of learning and get them involved in positive school based and community based activities that will prepare them take their place in society. Participation in extracurricular sports and activities would be encouraged within a secondary school setting since there are usually so many more things going on at this level than in the elementary schools.

Critics of the new school organization model state that they do not like the fact that their Grade 7 and 8 children may be exposed to the sex, drugs and violence that is often associated with high schools. However, when you speak to parents of Kindergarten and Grade one students they are quite happy with the prospect of removing the Grade 7's and 8's from the elementary school settings because of the negative influence those older children have on the younger, more impressionable primary grade children.

However, despite all of our fears and concerns, we must remember that schools are only a "means to an end" for our children. Students are not going to remain in their current schools forever and in this day and age it is quite common for children to be uprooted from their school for other reasons emanating from changes in the lives of their parents. Seldom will you find a Grade 6 class today where all of the students have been together in the same school since JK.

Therefore, if schools are truly a "means to an end", and if most of the older, smaller schools were built to accommodate the baby boomers who grew up in a different era, then consolidating children into larger, better equipped buildings for JK to Grade 6 and into secondary school buildings for Grade 7 to Grade 12 is something that we simply must consider and move forward with as soon as possible. The children entering school today have a completely different set of needs than the children of yesterday. We are simply going to have to adjust and get used to it. This is the way it is going to be. Let's make it work.

## **Single-gender Classrooms May Be Just Around The Corner**

More than 1700 girls and boys in South Carolina took part in a recent survey conducted by that State's Department of Education. The students were from Grades 2 through 9 in over thirty schools. What is interesting about the survey is that all of the students were receiving their education in single-gender classrooms and the results may surprise you.

No less than 75% of the students agreed that the single-gender approach was helping them in school. They said that being in a classroom of all boys or all girls has increased their confidence, class participation, desire to succeed in school and their report card marks.

State Superintendent of Education, Jim Rex stated, "More and more South Carolina parents are choosing this option whenever and wherever it's made available." Indeed, more than 150 South Carolina public schools are expected to offer the single-gender option to parents in September 2009.

The results of the survey and the tremendous endorsement of both parents and students could be an indication that we may begin to see this option being made available in Ontario as well. It is at least worthy of consideration as a way of perhaps improving the problems inherent in our system today in terms of classroom management and motivation of students.

Marymount Academy is currently the only publicly funded single-gender "school" in the Greater Sudbury Area. The school is operated by the Sudbury District Catholic School Board and offers programs exclusively to girls from Grades 7 through 12. If you were to take a survey at Marymount you would discover an overwhelming support of the single-gender approach from students, teachers and parents alike. Most would cite the same reasons as noted by the South Carolina students for their endorsement.

It is a bit surprising that with all of the efforts being made to improve the quality of education being provided in our Ontario schools the single-gender approach has been largely ignored as a viable option. And yet it makes perfect sense for at least one particular cluster of grade levels, especially since we are witnessing the growing acceptance of another trend in school organization across the province today.

The trend to which I refer is the policy being adopted by many school boards to place Grade 7's and 8's into secondary school settings. This trend is showing no signs of slowing down, and in fact a number of the local secondary schools in the area have already made the move.

This will result in two distinct school organizational models which are more appropriate to the way children learn. Elementary schools will consist of JK – Grade 6 and Secondary schools will include Grade 7 to 12. This new organizational model makes perfect sense in light of the priorities we have in our schools today. It is also in line with the major move across the province to offer more courses in the skilled trade areas to our intermediate grade level students in order to encourage more of them to consider careers in the trades.

Once we have shifted the Grade 7 and 8 students into the high school setting, the next logical move may be to introduce the single-gender approach, especially since it is receiving such positive results in the United States and even right here in Sudbury.

The most appropriate situation would see single-gender classes offered from Grades 7 through 10. These are the most volatile years for adolescents when hormones have a tendency to get in the way of learning and when curriculum content begins to become more and more important.

By organizing the students into single-gender classes, we would remove one of the major distractions which has become such a barrier to learning. There would be no more “game-playing” and “posturing” in class. Students could get right down to the business of learning the all-important curriculum in Grades 7 to 10. It is during these four critical years that students must be allowed every opportunity to discover their academic strengths and passions. This is the time for them to lay the foundations for Grades 11 and 12 as they prepare to make the transition from secondary school to university or college. Once they get into Grades 11 and 12 students can once again be placed in mixed-gender classes. By this time they will have established their goals and objectives and will be able to focus on what they must do to get ready for life after high school.

Elementary schools, which are often smaller in size, would present much more of a challenge when it comes to offering single-gender classes. There just may not be enough students in each grade to allow for a suitable split of the boys and girls, but the need for single-gender classes is not as great at the elementary school level. Up until the end of Grade 6 it doesn't make much difference whether you have boys and girls together in classes. Moreover, the focus is more on the development of learning skills and attitudes up until the end of Grade 6. In Grade 7 the priorities begin to shift towards curriculum content as students use their “learning skills” to acquire new knowledge in a number of different areas.

Within the next couple of years it is quite likely that we will see one or two local secondary schools offer the single-gender classes as an option for Grades 7 to 10. Predictably, the interest among parents and students will likely be tremendous and registrations for these classes may go through the roof. Once school board administrators realize the level of support from the public for this organizational model we may see other schools naturally follow the lead.

The move towards single-gender classes would be very easy to implement. For example, if you have four Grade nine classes at a secondary school now, with approximately half of each class consisting of boys and the other half girls, then you will end up with two Grade nine classes of girls and two Grade nine classes of boys. The curriculum will be the same. The expectations will be the same. The exams will be the same. The only difference will be that two of the classes will be able to deal with the curriculum from a female perspective, while the other classes will deal with the curriculum from a male perspective. There will be “no games”. There will be no “pressure” to impress the opposite sex. Those games and pressures will be left for the interaction of students in between classes and after school where they belong. Classroom management will improve; participation levels will improve; self-confidence among students will improve; and all students will have an opportunity to succeed without fear of intimidation from the opposite sex.

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