

W. H. Morden School's Millennium project is a line of hand prints around the gym. Shown front from left are Natacha Leduc, Rachel Maich, vice-principal Bob Hewson; middle from left Rodney Hall, Ryan Shields, Carl Palmer, and at back, Darlene Jones, Millennium projects co-ordinator.

Photo by Barrie Erskine

Imaginative Millennium projects at schools

By Darlene Jones
SPECIAL TO THE BEAVER

The Community Foundation of Oakville (CFO) is a fundraising and granting organization that likes to take on new initiatives, its latest one being that of stimulating and registering Millennium projects in town.

Oakville school children have been actively involved in celebrating the beginning of a new millennium in some unique ways.

When Lynn Snider, principal of Sheridan Public School, and his staff began discussing the idea of a school-wide millennium project that would mark this momentous occasion they realized that the school population numbered about 366 students. That is the exact number of days in the year 2000.

They decided that the students would create a Millennium Desk Calendar for the year 2000. So they assigned each student a specific date on the calendar year for 2000. "For his or her specific calendar day," Snider said, "each student was directed to draw a picture describing what he or she wished for the world in the new millennium."

Sheridan students came up with a number of wishes. For example, one child drew cars flying over trees and added, "I wish for flying cars with no gas so we can have a healthy world and no pollution."

Another's wish "is for the homeless to have a home."

The calendar pages were copied and collated into desk top calendars. Ann Goeden, a parent volunteer, designed and created a wire stand for the calendars and enlisted the help of other parents to make one for each calendar. Parent volunteers also created little white bag holders that were stamped with Christmas motifs. They placed a calendar and stand in a bag and presented it to each child as a millennium memento.

Ask Cam Fraser, principal of Brookdale Public School, about their millennium projects and be ready to take notes. It seems that once the students got started they kept coming up with more and more millennium ideas throughout the school year.

Currently 18 Grade 8 students have completed a Millennium Mural of Oakville, under the direction of their art teacher, Sandra Shier.

The students researched Oakville both on the Internet and books on Olde Oakville to explore period dress and modes of transportation. Then they designed the mural as a co-operative plan before sketching it directly on to one of the walls in the school hallway.

On one side of the mural they created a dark winter scene of Oakville depicting the town circa 1900 complete with Murray House, a sleigh and people wearing long black winter coats. On the other side they created a scene of Oakville in the first summer of the new millennium.

A pink convertible sporting zebra seats sits in front of an updated building. People wear bright summer clothes, ready to have fun in the new millennium. And the bright red sports car parked on the side of the building looks ready to speed off to the beach.

The artists took a little licence throughout the scene especially with Bronte's lighthouse painted right in the middle of the mural connecting the two scenes.

Vice-principal Bob Hewson of W. H. Morden Public School displays his enthusiasm for his students' unique way of celebrating the millennium. He'll escort you down and around long hallways of his school to the gymnasium where you can view their school-wide project, 'Hands Together Into The New Millennium.'

In February, students, teachers and school volunteers dipped their hands into paint and then literally left their mark on the school wall. The result is a border of 430 pairs of interconnected hand prints, done in the Morden colours. "We then sealed the border so the hand prints will still be there for the next millennium," said Hewson.

This is a sample of some of the activities in and around Oakville schools. Check out all of the millennium events, including many from schools, on the Our Millennium web site, www.ourmillennium.ca

The mission of the CFO is to actively develop and manage philanthropic funds with an emphasis on endowment. The CFO also acts as a catalyst for establishing community projects to

both maintain and improve the quality of life in our town.

There is still time to plan a project for the millennium or register your completed project with the CFO.

Darlene Jones is the Millennium Projects Co-ordinator for the Community Foundation of Oakville. To register a project, call her at 905-825-2309 or send e-mail to djones25@home.com

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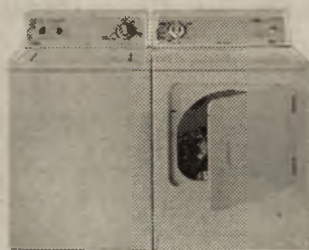
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