

PROFILES

with
Jennifer Barr



Teaching has changed in the past two generations. Gone is the image of the stern dark-suited master with pointer in hand reiterating dull literature. Today's teacher is more like Doc Tamblin of Acton High School who can often be found canoeing upstream with 16 of his outdoor education students ready to survive in the wilderness. Doc, whose given name is Paul, has a doctorate

in bio-chemistry from the University of Guelph. He introduced the outdoor program to Acton High five years ago. He joined the high school staff in 1972 as science teacher. His wife Margaret was already on the staff. Summer courses at Queens University led Doc to explore the possibility of teaching outdoor education. He says he felt there was more to teaching than "just chemistry". He wanted to give youngsters the challenge of surviving outdoors. Then Acton principal, Dave Katz, was most enthusiastic and backed him all the way, Doc says. Three outdoor experiences. Now the high school has three levels of outdoor education. The Outers Club is an extracurricular activity offering no credit but much experience to grade 9 to 13 students. Grade 12 offers an environmental science

credit course involving four major trips: backpacking, hiking, canoeing and water testing. But what Doc is now famous for is the grade 12 total immersion course given in semester two (January to June) during which 16 students receive two science, one social science and one physical education credit by living an outdoor life and presenting themselves with a series of challenges. One year the group built an entire log house on Doc's premises. One group spent two weeks at the Sportsman Show in Toronto watching a log building go up. Last spring students planned and executed a canoe trip which retraced voyageur routes across the Canadian Shield to Ottawa. The class usually gets a chance to winter camp in Algonquin Park. Some are brave enough to build their own snow shelter removed from the main camp and "solo"—spend the night alone. Rock climbing at Rattlesnake Point in Milton presents youngsters with an opportunity to conquer other fears.

When he's got the technical knowledge to overcome his fears (of climbing or heights) he realizes his fear is within himself" Doc says adding there's nothing quite like witnessing a student become successful over a challenge. "They learn more real life things, much more important than those in classroom situations" says Doc. "It's in direct contrast with the school system—the intensity of the situation cannot be repeated in a classroom." Not only do kids learn all manner of survival techniques but they find inner strengths, relate to friends in a deeper manner, and learn there are more important matters than shampooing hair daily. They also learn how not to throw up or if they do throw up, how to keep going anyway. On last year's two week trek from North Bay to Ottawa in furtrade canoes, the class learned more history than all the history courses they could have taken, Doc states. Fund selves. The course is not cheap but the students fund themselves as much as possible. Most have part-time jobs but a deserving youngster has never been turned away because he couldn't afford to fund himself. Up to 40 students a year apply to the course but only 16 are chosen. The number is dictated by how many fit into a van—one more student and a bus would have to be hired. When choosing the 16 teens who will make up a class Doc says he looks first at those who will be leaving school after grade 12 and therefore not have a chance to take the course in grade 13. He tries to keep an even girl-boy ratio and puts in a few who are experienced in other outdoor programs. He likes to choose students with good communications skills but also puts in those having trouble with a straight academic program who could benefit from a change in teaching methods. A good general mix is what Doc aims for and says he finds youngsters teach each other more than he could ever hope to. Parents are always helpful, Doc adds and then comments he's never had any criticism from parents with students in the program. Youngsters experience a different kind of fellowship and sharing according to Doc—"They begin to appreciate how important a friendship is, they develop a more mature way of looking at a relationship." He also finds male and female traits tend to rub off on their opposites as the girls discover they can be physically equal to boys and the boys learn how to be more caring. Next year there will be a hiatus in the total immersion program as Doc takes a step back into regular classroom teaching for a whole year. After five years, he feels he needs to re-charge his batteries before he gets stale. "I agonized over the decision" he says. Instead he plans to expend his energy on an extracurricular science club aimed at students capable of high level achievement. But in 1983 Doc will pull on his jeans, strap on his snowshoes and lead his team into the wilderness once more. Eat your heart out Samuel de Champlain.



Doc Tamblin assists Tony Bonozew and Paul Moore lacing snowshoes.

Parent bitter about decision

The timing of decisions concerning eligibility for kindergarten could have been better, according to some Acton parents whose youngsters will have to sit by while chums go on to school next September. Janet Fleming said she is "bitterly disappointed that Halton had no other choice" except comply with the ministry's memorandum. "It could have been avoided if it was dealt with earlier as a result of The Education Act

alone," she said after Thursday's board decision at Burlington. Mrs. Fleming indicated she regretted that board trustees, before the last election, had not been "more responsible in the past." There are about 17 town children effected by the change. Other parents wrote the Halton board with details of their concerns. Florence and Ken McGregor, RR 4 Acton, wished "there would have been more advance



Laurie Early

notice" so they could plan their Philippe's education. Barry and Glynis Norminton, Dudy Rd., moved to Halton partly because of the board's policy of early kindergarten enrolment. They have had one son, Matthew, in nursery school for two years. They have "also been mentally preparing him to start school in September." They write that he is "completely geared up for it." The Normintons go on to state that their son will be disappointed when his nursery school friends go on to school. Another year for Matthew in nursery school, they fear, will be boring for him. "And (it) could well have a physiological effect on him."

Reed...

(Continued from Page 1) Continuing his attack, Reed recalled the number of young people out of work, while skilled workers are being imported from other countries. He claimed the young people are not being given proper training and education to do the jobs. Turning to local issues Reed pointed out after years of effort and thousands of dollars spent by the citizens, on the eve of an election the Minister of the Environment finally agreed there should be an environment assessment hearing on Site F. He concluded by stating the \$1.5 billion give-away program reflects a crass attitude towards the voters. "I believe they are more discerning, and see through the bid for votes." Henry Helfant, owner of Henry's Clothing on Main Street, Georgetown, officially nominated Reed, after the whole audience had done so.

Cutler...

(Continued from Page 1) the NDP Provincial executive and is the co-chairman of the party's youth cadre. In addition he has served on many posts within the Hamilton-Wentworth NDP riding association. He is involved in soccer, a league his father founded, and he sits on the Waterdown committee which tries to preserve and conserve historic sites. "First and foremost, I'm a New Democrat, a socialist, and proud of it," he said. Mr. Cutler has already visited parts of Halton-Burlington riding including a visit to Georgetown on Sunday to shake hands and meet people. He said the electorate and the other parties "underestimate the New Democrats in Halton-Burlington." "We're going to surprise them on March 19." He categorized the Progressive Conservatives as presenting "40 years of mismanagement." He said Liberal leader Stuart Smith has "identified all the problems, but hasn't given the answers."

Actario winners

Mr. and Mrs. S. Rouse, 14 Wynford Pl., were the winners of the weekly Actario draw for \$350. Charles Wright, 188 Churchill Rd. South, won a merchant bonus envelope containing vouchers from IGA, Stedmans, Acton Bowling Lanes and Ed's In-N-Out. Vouchers from Nielsen's, Family Restaurant, Family Cleaners and Acton Deli were won by Arlie White, 52 Church St. West. Susan Dawtrey, London, and Stella Brunelle, 18 Acton Blvd., shared a ticket which won vouchers from AB Foodland, J and T Sports and Acton Photo and Camera. Ross Knechtel, 29 Rosemary Rd., won the super shopper draw,

Laurie Early Ont. Scholar

There is one "potential" Ontario Scholar among the four grade 13 graduates at the end of the first semester at Acton High School. Laurie Early achieved an average of 80 per cent. Chris Kainz, Alice Mulders and Sheila Johnson also graduated from grade 13 at the end of the first semester. The following completed grade 12: Bev Anderson, Janet Britton, Sandy Chaarani, Janice Curry, Robin Gannon, Esther Jones, Russell Miller, Erik Mussnug, Glen Renton, Geoff Saxon, Gordon Scott, Steve Scott, Joanne Walker and Mary Ziegler.

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