

Youth program offers environmental science opportunities

Most young people long for fulfilling jobs that allow them to gain valuable experience in an interesting field.

The Environmental Youth Corps (EYC) program offers such opportunities in the growing field of environmental sciences.

"This program provides young people with skills training, while increasing their awareness of environmental occupations and helping to develop an environmentally conscious culture," says Doug Jamieson, general manager of education programs at the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and member of the Environmental Youth Corps steering committee.

"Through funding for youth employment, for projects sponsored by various non-profit organizations, the program contributes to environmental protection and proper resource management."

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF) is one of five host ministries that approve project funding under

the program.

"Preservation of agricultural land, conservation cropping, agricultural pollutants treatment, environmental education and promotion, maple decline survey, organic gardening, waste management, pest diagnostic and biological control are only a few of the areas in which young participants have an opportunity to work," says Jamieson.

Diane Lefebvre from Alexandria, a graduate from Alfred College of Agriculture and Food Technology, was hired on an Environmental Youth Corps project two years ago. She has been working with a team of agricultural and civil engineers on a study of compaction and crop rotations in fine-textured soils or "heavy soils".

"The first set of projects is now completed and I am working on the reports," she explains. "I am learning a lot with the research team. It's great. And it is a good complement to my diploma in agricultural technology."

"What's really nice is that

when I talk with farmers they are very interested in the projects. Fine-textured soils and the conservation of those soils are a concern in many areas of Ontario and elsewhere in Canada. It's encouraging to see the results and help farmers to find ways to improve the management of their soil resources," she said.

While assisting in the completion of the report on this set of experiments, she is planning to contribute to another research project. This one will involve the treatment of milkhouse waste water.

Lefebvre is enthusiastic about research and wants to pursue a career in this field.

"This research experience will help me find a job when the project is over," she said. "I worked in the lab, as well as in the field, in all aspects of the project, from experimenting to carrying out computerized analysis and writing reports. Ensuring that the environment is taken care of is very high in my list of priorities."

Care of the environment is also important to David Mambella from St. Catharines, a recent graduate from Brock University in biology and environmental science. Mambella is working on integrated pest management systems in greenhouse production of poinsettias and chrysanthemums at OMAF's Vineland Research Station.

The project Mambella is working on is part of the Food Systems 2002 program a program that aims at reducing the use of pesticides in Ontario and replacing them with other pest-control techniques, including modified spray programs and use of biological control agents.

"I know a lot more about integrated pest management and the way it works now," Mambella says. "It is a definite benefit of the Environmental Youth Corps program to be able to work on a project for a longer term as opposed to a few months as a summer job."

"I enjoy this work. I guess it has a lot to do with my super-

visor. He takes time to teach properly and gives enough freedom and responsibilities to make the work interesting. The trust he has placed in me is also a great part of it," said Mambella.

"I am sure my experience here will help me find a job, as integrated pest management and biological control become more widely used in the future," Mambella said.

Environmental Youth Corps positions like Lefebvre's and Mambella's are advertised through Canada Employment Centres and local Canada Employment Centres for Students. Job posting boards, local newspapers, and local high schools, colleges and universities are also likely to be used for advertisement. Young people between 15 and 24 years of age or 15 and 29 for youth with disabilities are eligible for employment.

For more information of Environmental Youth Corps projects in agriculture, contact the Environmental Youth Corps, Education and Research Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Guelph Agriculture Centre, P.O. Box 1030, Guelph, Ontario, N1H 6N1.

Traffic offence charges change

Ontario motorists convicted of driving violations in Manitoba, Alberta and Newfoundland will now lose demerit points in their home province.

The exchange of traffic offence conviction information began with Quebec in 1989 and was extended to the other three provinces on June 1, 1990 under the Canadian Driver Licence Compact, signed last January by Ontario Transportation Minister Ed Philip.

"I encourage people to always respect the rules of the road whether driving at home or away," said Philip. "They now have more incentive since out-of-province violations will follow them home."

The Canadian Driver Licence Compact covers eight categories dealing with 80 per cent of all traffic offence convictions in Ontario. The offences under the compact are:

1. Failure to stop for a red light or stop sign
2. Failure to stop for a school bus
3. Speeding
4. Dangerous or careless driving
5. Failure to remain at the scene of an accident
6. Failure to report an accident
7. Racing
8. Passing where prohibited

Prior to implementation, only information on Criminal Code convictions - such as impaired driving and criminal negligence - was exchanged by Canadian jurisdictions.

All jurisdictions, except British Columbia, have agreed to exchange traffic conviction information. B.C. is expected to sign the compact soon. Ontario is currently working on a similar exchange with New York State and Michigan.

Canadian jurisdictions which have signed the compact and do not currently exchange information with Ontario will begin as soon as procedure negotiations are initiated.

"I know concern for safety on provincial roads extends throughout the country," said Philip. "I am pleased that the tremendous cooperation that has made this agreement possible."

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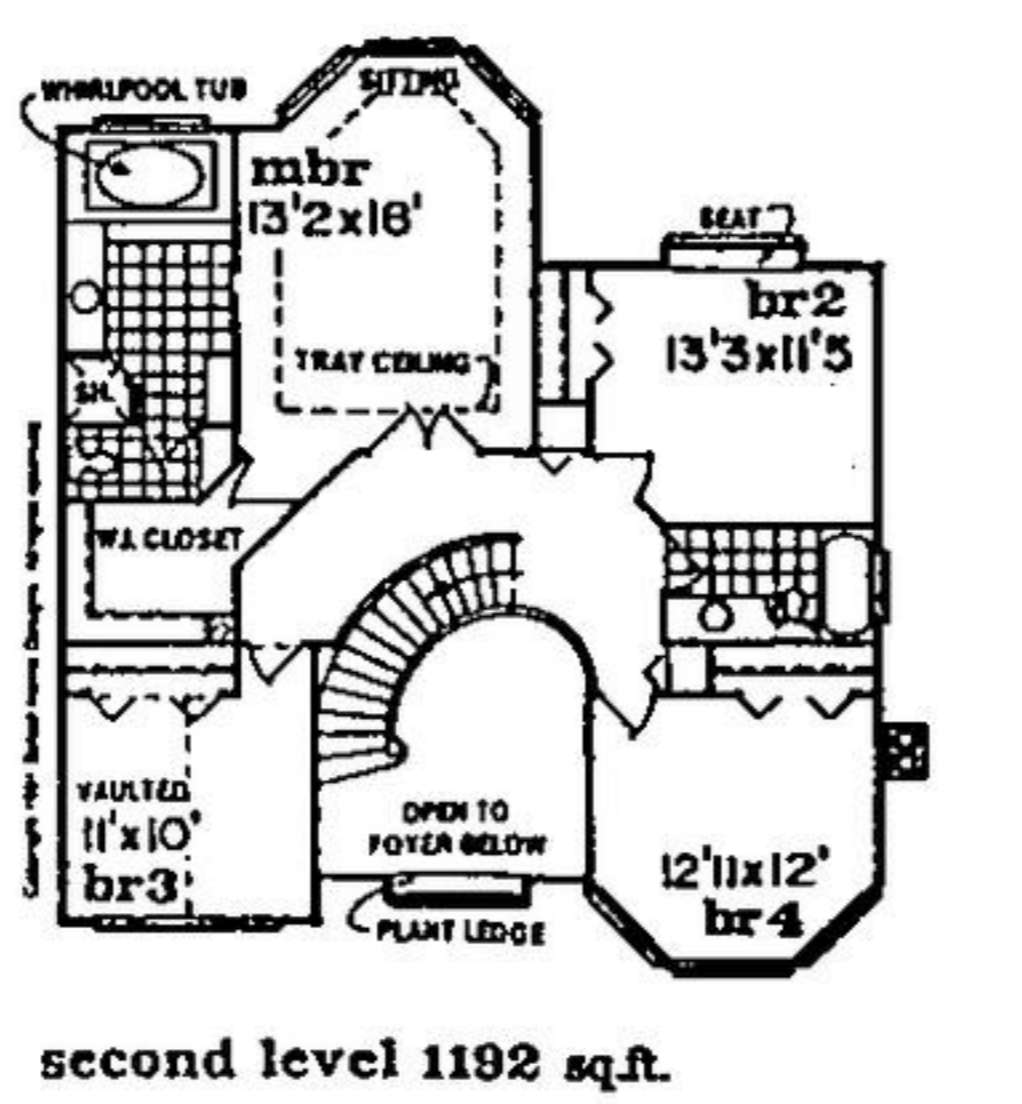
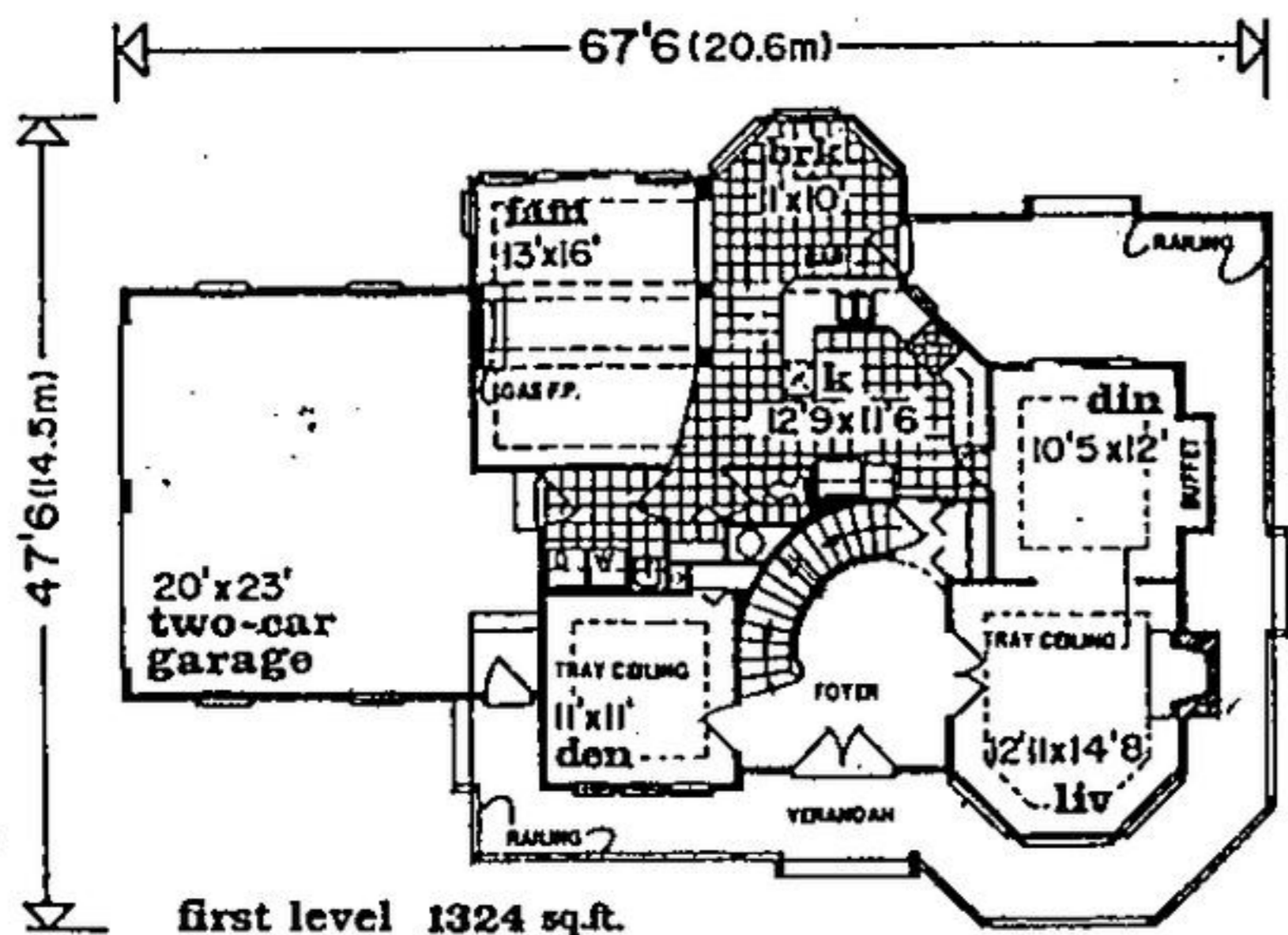
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