

2010 Hall of Fame Induction Gala

Tickets for the gala ceremony can be reserved by calling Glenda Nixdorf at 905-873-1360.

Date:
Thursday,
June 17,
2010
Location:
John Elliott
Theatre



Educational assistant brings the world to M-SB students

By **JASON MISNER**
HDSB Communications Officer



LIDRA REMACKA

McKenzie-Smith Bennett (M-SB) educational assistant Lidra Remacka visited Palestine last November to help improve the teaching system. In the process, she introduced her Acton school to a whole new world—and a bunch of new friends.

Remacka travelled to the politically-fractious Middle East with Sustainability Frontiers, an international alliance of sustainability and global educators dedicated to curriculum development and teaching innovation. Members of the alliance are concerned with formal and informal education, through a holistic approach, that transcends social, psychological and spiritual levels.

The alliance was invited by the Teacher Creativity Centre, a Palestinian, non-profit, non-governmental organization working to ensure a peaceful and secure environment within schools. During her 10-day visit, Remacka spoke on the need for things like environmental, peace and civics/human rights education.

“Everything is inter-dependent of each other,” she said in explaining how so many issues relate to each other, creating a sort-of domino effect on society.

Before she left for the West Bank city of Ramallah, Remacka brought with her 80 student letters from her school. When she returned home, she brought with her 90 letters from students she met during her trip.

Remacka helped start a penpal network that has strengthened over time and gained the support of M-SB staff and, just as importantly, the students. She hopes it broadens their global perspective and provides a bigger picture of their place in the world.

“One day these (students) can do something together,” she said with a smile. “You are global citizens. We share the same planet.”

Mai-Lynne, 13, said she has learned to appreciate Canada even more through the penpal network, having learned about Palestine.

“I’m more thankful I live in Canada,” the Grade 8 student said.

The students have exchanged correspondences three times so far.

The letters resemble the kind of interests and subjects near and dear to students in Canada.

One Palestine letter from “outgoing” Jihad Abed, who loves playing soccer and basketball, partly reads: “My favourite season is summer. I also like the summer vacation from school. Between October and November, it’s olive picking season. This is where we get our olive oil.”

Another student, hip-hop-loving Fuhmi Zhou, wrote: “...the sport I enjoy are football and swimming. The subjects I take are history, science, math, English

and geography.”

M-SB principal Sharon French said she loves the penpal network because it helps expose her school, which is a bit more isolated than some given its north Halton location, to the world around them and have her students connect with kids they might not normally connect with.

“It was an amazing experience for her and it’s been good for our school,” French explained. “We’re a small school and fairly isolated in our part of Halton. For Lidra to bring the message of civics and responsibility and character education and growth and the commitment of the environment we focus on here is really important.”

Albania-born Remacka, a former research assistant at the International Institute for Global Education of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at University of Toronto, said she made the trek last November to impress upon the people the issue of inner peace and environmental preservation.

“I’m lucky I went there and saw what was going on,” she said, adding she was “humbled” by the experience. “What I learned is freedom is the most important thing in our life... freedom in every aspect.”

Remacka’s accomplishments include the development of a human rights education program for girls in Afghanistan funded by Right to Play, Toronto, in 2004.

Remacka was also heavily involved as an international consultant with the Albanian Pedagogical Institute and Ministry of Education, particularly in the areas of integrated curriculum for Albanian students with special needs, helping prepare the integration of autistic students in the classroom.

She has facilitated conference and workshop sessions on civic, environmental and global education for various international organizations, government bodies and non-governmental organizations.

Remacka, a nominee for the Ontario Premier’s Award of Teaching Excellence in 2009-2010, said she hopes to visit Ramallah again this summer to continue her work.



The Regional Municipality of Halton
www.halton.ca

Halton Small Business Centre

Upcoming Business Seminars and Program

Marketing: Convert those prospects into paying customers by learning about targeting, branding, marketing plans and promotion.

Wed., June 9 – Milton Public Library, Main Library (6:30 – 8:30 p.m.) (\$20/person)

Bookkeeping: Understand bookkeeping principles and practices, financial statements, taxation, expenses and software programs.

Tues., June 15 – Oakville Public Library, Central Branch (6:30 – 8:30 p.m.) (\$20/person)

Starting a Small Business: A general overview of the things you will need to consider, along with resources to help you succeed. Covers structure, registrations, regulations, licences, taxes and financing options.

Wed., June 23 – Halton Regional Centre (6:30 – 8:30 p.m.) (\$20/person)

Consultant On Site Program: In partnership with Halton Hills Public Library, a business consultant will be available to meet with small business clients at the Georgetown Branch Library on Thurs., June 24. Appointments must be booked in advance.

HST – Proposed Transitional Rules: Canada Revenue Agency will present information on the new tax.

Tues., July 13 – Halton Regional Centre (1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.) No charge for this seminar. Pre-registration is required.

Contact us for more information and registration details for these events.

Taking Action Against Homelessness in Halton

Participate in a community forum to develop an action plan to address homelessness in Halton.

This forum is for anyone who is:

- servicing individuals and families who are at-risk of homelessness
- experiencing or has experienced housing challenges or homelessness
- interested in shaping the future of homelessness services in Halton

Friday, June 25, 2010

9 a.m.- 4 p.m.

(Breakfast and networking starts at 8 a.m.)

Halton Region, Auditorium, 1151 Bronte Road, Oakville

There is no cost for admission. Breakfast & lunch will be provided.

Transportation is available upon request.

Please RSVP to Halton Region by June 17, 2010 at 905-825-6000 (toll free 1-866-442-5866), or by email to accesshalton@halton.ca

For more information or register online visit www.halton.ca/homelessness.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you will have an accessibility or accommodation need at a Halton Region hosted event or meeting.

1151 Bronte Road, Oakville, Ontario L6M 3L1 • Dial 311 or 905-825-6000 • Toll Free 1-866-442-5866
TTY 905-827-9833 • www.halton.ca