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 p.s. notes



# Acton's Robert Little Public School is big on school spirit

By Brenda Mathies

Nestled away at the end of School Lane in Acton is a quaint school, a second home to 400 students. Robert Little Public School is a French immersion Junior Kindergarten to Grade 5 school that is bustling with activity and welcoming to its community.

As buses and parents arrive each day, Principal Don Warren is out greeting them with smiles and waves. In a letter to the Halton Board of Education, the Robert Little School Council stated that it "likes the fact that our principal greets every school bus curbside as it arrives in the morning and sends them off every afternoon. He is a welcome presence." Sporting a Robert Little sweatshirt, Mr. Warren shows his school spirit and makes everyone feel that they belong.

Every Friday an assembly is held for the entire school. Principal Warren and his sidekick, the most adorable monkey puppet named Little Robert, teach the students a lesson. On March 21, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the message was about peace - peace both in the world and in the school. Just two days after the attack on Iraq had begun, this was a timely topic.

Canadian patriotism is evident in the singing of the national anthem, first in English and then in French with no musical accompaniment.

At the assembly, Mr. Warren informed the students that "the world is not as peaceful as it is at our school," and thus the reason for this special day. The children learned that racism is the bad treatment of people because of the different way they look and act. In the words of Robert Munsch, "Racism is a poison." To bring this lesson back to a level of comprehension for the younger students, Little Robert told them that it hurts when some people see him as only a puppet. Mr. Warren assured Little Robert that he "is not only a puppet - he is a friend."

Principal Warren's topic of peace was emphasized by a class who not only recited a story but also danced, sang and creatively emphasized our need for peace. "Peace is the world smiling. Peace is a gentle dove. Peace is sharing.



PHOTO BY BRENDA MATHIES

Pictured above are monkey Little Robert (left), and principal Don Warren (right) of Robert Little Public School in Acton.

Peace is caring. Peace is filling the world with love."

Mr. Warren and Little Robert recognized six special students, who helped bring peace to the school, as students of the week.

Robert Little Public School is a peaceful and caring place filled with dedicated students, staff and parents. With the encouragement and support of the community, Robert Little Public School has accomplished many things. For example, they participated in International Walk to School Day and raised \$400. Soon they will take part in Jump Rope for Heart and Turn Off the TV Week. At Christmas time, the primary grades presented the annual Christmas pageant, and this spring the juniors will present *Canada Goose*.

On March 20, both the girls' and the boys' volleyball teams travelled to McKenzie-Smith Bennett Public School and played on real courts for the first time. This certainly was an exciting event for all the participants. Soon, the Earth Kids will be planting seedlings for their upcoming sale, and the funds raised will be used to adopt a whale. When you add the variety of clubs, including dance and quilting, to these activities, this little school is quiet amazing.

Mr. Warren realizes that the

atmosphere of his school is special and leaves a lasting impression on all who have a chance to experience it. Ten-year-old Madison, a former student, recently wrote a note to Mr. Warren stating: "I'll never forget the best school ever. I tell all my friends about this school and now they're getting tired of me. Even though I don't live here anymore, I'll never forget the best and nicest principal ever."

Robert Little Public School is named after Mr. Robert Little, a British-born educator. In 1871, Robert Little was appointed Inspector of Public Schools for Halton County, and also acted as Town Inspector of the Board of Education for Milton and Oakville. Robert Little helped prepare the New Series of Ontario School Readers in 1884 and refused to accept any remuneration for his work. After an attack of typhoid fever in 1885, Robert Little passed away and was mourned by the entire community. Today, a granite monument (erected in 1900) stands at Mr. Little's grave in the Fairview Cemetery, Acton. As stated in the school handbook, Robert Little Public School is a monument to the man "who was held in high esteem by his pupils and who helped elevate the school standards in this province."

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