

MSB principal, teacher, EA nominated for Ontario award

Leadership, passion and dedication are just three of many positive words you can suggest for McKenzie Smith Bennett Public School's three nominees for the Premier's Awards of Teaching Excellence, says the school's School Council head, which nominated them.

"We are very fortunate to have such an outstanding team of teachers and administrators who deeply care about our students," says Melissa Secord, School Council head at MSB. "Sharon French, Tony Robinson and Lidra

Remacka in particular have made an outstanding impact on our school and need to be recognized for their efforts."

In the few short years that Sharon French has been principal at the school, EQAO scores have increased, improvements to the school have been made, and student and staff morale is growing. These improvements are the direct result of Sharon's leadership and devotion to her students and staff, Melissa Secord says.

Tony Robinson, or Mr.

As he is known around the school halls, is everywhere in the school and in the community. Whether it is being at the school early to set up for team sports, staying after school to participate on School Council or refereeing a game of soccer in the community, he just doesn't know the meaning of stop. He truly leads by example, Melissa says.

"Mrs. Remacka started working at MSB in 2007, and very quickly, she identified the school's need to become more involved in activities that would raise awareness of environmental issues," wrote Sharon French.

As an Educational Assistant, Lidra has an "unwavering support" to help her students. She works with students with special needs and helps them overcome learning obstacles with care and passion, French says.



BEWARE: Snow flurries returned Wednesday morning and made roads slippery as the driver of this vehicle found out along Hwy 7 west of the Fifth Line. No details were available at press time - Marie Shadbolt photo

Discuss culture at Council

By Frances Niblock

There is a lack of understanding of all that Halton Hills has to offer culturally, even among those involved with arts, culture and heritage. That was a recurring theme at a weekend cultural symposium held earlier this month in Georgetown to develop a cultural vision and plan for the town.

To that end, Town Council asked staff to prepare a report with a recommendation and advice on submissions from the Arts, Culture, and Heritage Advisory committees.

The staff report, due April 6, will investigate potential partnerships, long and short-term

roles for the Town and stakeholders, plans for a one-stop website to promote arts, culture and heritage, continuing representation on the Arts, Cultural and Heritage committee, a draft cultural policy and will identify how the policy would link with the Town's existing strategic plan.

Regional and Town Councillor Jane Fogal thanked the committee for its "gift" to the Town in the work it has done so far, noting the municipalities usually have to do this kind of work themselves.

In a recent brief to Council, Arts, Culture, Heritage Advisory committee members Laurent Thibault and Beatrice Sharkey summed up the initial findings of the cultural symposium.

The committee was formed 18 months ago over tea in the home of Thibault in an effort to follow up on cultural programming promises made in the Town's parks master plan.

Thibault called the symposium an important first step that identified all of the wide-ranging arts, culture and heritage groups that exist independently in town.

Symposium project manager Beatrice Sharkey said while Halton Hills not have a structured round table focus on culture, it does have many of the cultural events and programs that other communities are trying to build, but "not all of us know about it."

Sharkey said the term 'culture' is now being used quite broadly to include

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Discuss MSB land...

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a portion of MSB land, as surplus.

On Tuesday Ockenden agreed that he now has clearer picture of the issues.

"I know some things now that I didn't know before and I'm going to deal with the issue based on the information that I have," Ockenden said,

refusing to expand on his comments.

"I want to work towards a resolution of this thing and I don't want to jeopardize any possibilities. I was very happy with the tone and content of the meeting," Ockenden said, adding the talks were very productive and they will move forward to discuss some options.



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