



Champion COMMUNITY Page

High school students travel to Nepal

By STACEY MASSEY
Special to The Champion

March Break is typically a relaxation time. But there wasn't much relaxation for Milton District High School students Brendan Coyle, Jay Sakuta and Katie Magee or for student services head Fran Lloyd, who all travelled to Nepal armed with supplies for the Nepalese people.

The trip was put together by an organization called the Nepal School Projects (NSP). Its focus is to build schools in Nepal — one of the least developed Third World countries.

The country suffers from overpopulation, with an estimated 22.4 million people in a small land mass similar to the size of Florida. It's also under a kingdomship and the people are struggling to achieve democracy.

Ms Lloyd was one of three chaperones on the trip, the other two from Burlington's Nelson High School, who escorted a total of 13 students to Nepal for three weeks. Ms Lloyd was on two previous trips to Nepal in conjunction with NSP.

After 32 hours of flying, participants were immersed into a totally different world. A grade 11 student, Katie said they were expecting some poverty, but not to the extent that they witnessed.

The group had been planning the trip for two years. Ms Lloyd said a group from the area goes every two years.

The students had to raise \$6,000, which was coupled with matching funds from the Canadian International Development Agency. The \$12,000 total enabled the NSP to teach Nepalese people the skills needed to construct the school.

Once the school is built, the Nepalese government will supply and pay teachers. The cost to build an entire school in Nepal is the same amount for the four locals to travel there.

Ms Lloyd explained the schools built are one-room elementary schools. The children are taught in English and only until grade 5.

The group received many donations of clothing, toys, medical supplies and text books from numerous people including members of the Milton Rotary Club and clients from As We Grow. The students also had fundraisers including a 'Stair A Thon' in November. Pledges were made for the students to walk the stairs on the Hamilton Mountain — the equivalent height of the C.N. Tower — five times.

When the group arrived in Nepal, the real work began. A 10-day trek had been arranged throughout the mountainous terrain in order to deliver donations. The group of 16 was accompanied by

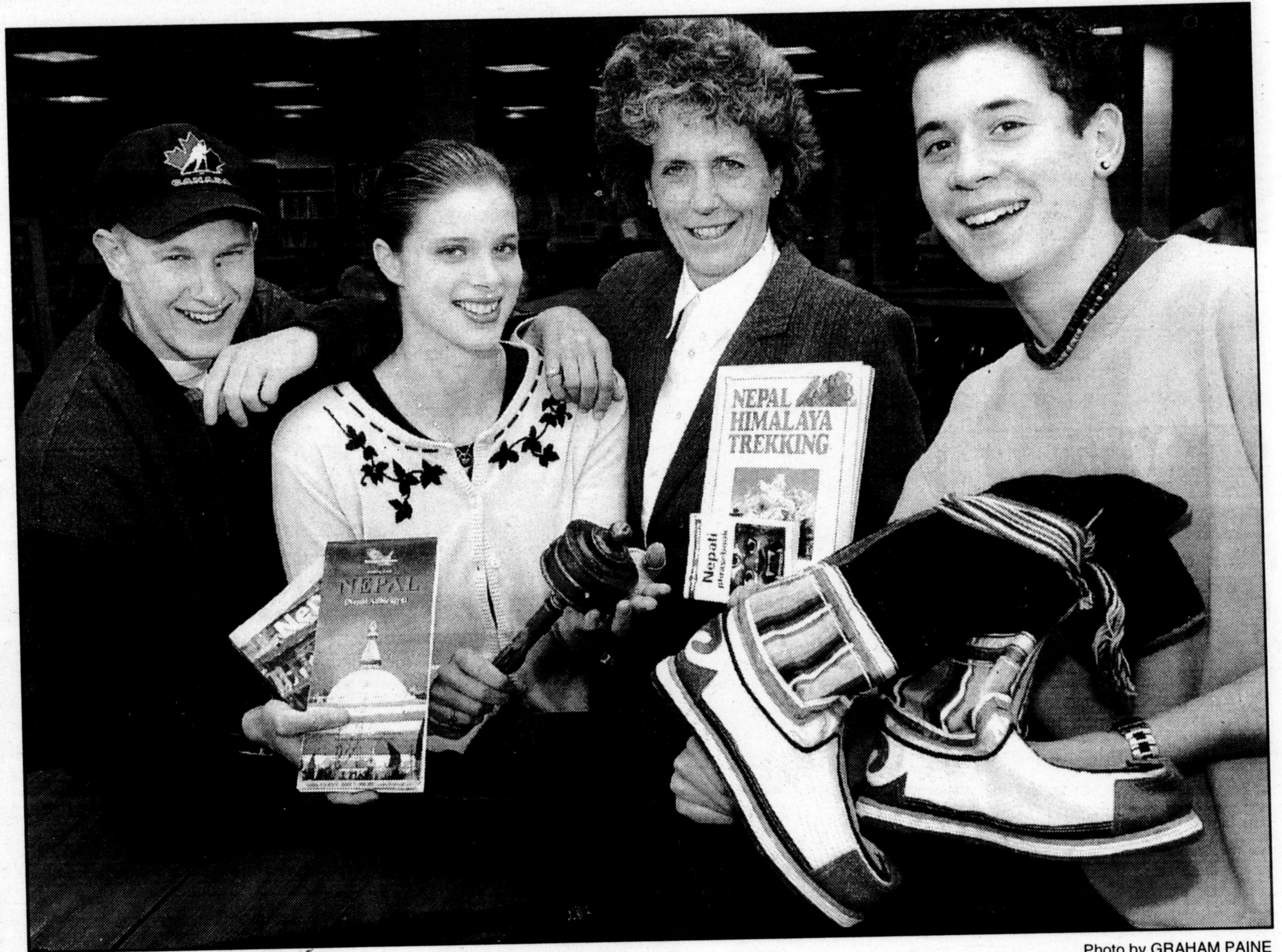


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Milton District High School students Brendan Coyle (left), Katie Magee and Jay Sakuta along with teacher Fran Lloyd recently travelled to Nepal to bring supplies to citizens living in poverty.

29 porters, who helped carry supplies. Six of the porters were also kitchen workers who organized and prepared breakfast every morning bright and early at 6 a.m.

Each day of the trek consisted of visiting different villages where they would hand out supplies. The hikes lasted anywhere from two to six hours. One day the group hiked a gruelling eight hours in order to reach the rural village.

"There's no civilization especially on the trek," Katie said.

The Nepalese don't have running water. The women sometimes walk all day to fetch water. Families live in stone and mud homes with thatch roofs and they only grow enough food to eat. "You realize how lucky we are."

Katie explained that when the group arrived in a village the little kids would swarm around. They would spend hours with them.

The group made a lot of friends with the Nepalese people. Most evenings they would be exhausted and in bed by 7 p.m. Other nights they spent with porters. A couple had flutes and drums and they would dance and sing.

Ms Lloyd said the Nepalese people were amazing. "Wonderful people, curious and shy but very generous."

The only problem they encountered was bouts of illness — predominantly due to contaminated water, which had to be boiled and then have iodine added.

Ms Lloyd was impressed with how the teens

handled themselves. "They really embraced the culture. They never complained. They never whined. They kept moving."

The only thing the group may have complained about was the food. Jay, a grade 12 student, said at first the food was interesting but after three weeks of rice, curry and goat's milk, he wanted traditional North American meals.

"I just kept thinking about chicken wings," he said laughing.

After all the work the 16 travellers did, they deserved some fun. So the group went white water rafting, canoeing and rode elephants.

Brendan, a grade 12 student, was marvelled by the nature of the Nepalese. "They are so happy living so simply."

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COGECO 14 Programming Schedule — April 25th, 2000 - May 1st, 2000

Tuesday, April 25th	Wednesday, April 26th	Thursday, April 27th	Sunday, April 30th	Monday, May 1st
10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In! Encore	10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In! Encore	10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In! Encore	4pm, 5pm, 6pm Plugged In! Week In Review	10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In! Encore
5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!	5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!	5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!	4:30pm The Local Scene	5:30pm Plugged In! - TV Auction Preview
6:00pm Seniors Showcase	6:00pm Cable in the Classroom	6:00pm The Local Scene	5:30pm Seniors Showcase	6:00-10:30pm Georgetown Kinsmen TV Auction
7:00pm The Issue Is...	7:00pm Swap Talk - Live!	7:00pm The Issue Is...	6:30pm New Life's Easter Cantata "Alpha & Omega"	
8:00pm Halton Hills Council - April 17	8:00pm Milton Council - April 17th	8:00pm Halton Region Council - April 19th		

Feature this week: Georgetown Kinsmen TV Auction - www.kinsmen.stn.net - Live Monday, 6 - 10:30pm.