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Community Page

Teacher of the Month

Coverdale tries to make learning fun

He wasn't exactly a model student, admits beloved Sherratt educator

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**
The Champion

A teacher who discovers a former student has followed in her footsteps usually beams with pride, happy to have inspired someone to choose the same profession.

But not always. The reactions of Robin Coverdale's former teachers couldn't have been more different.

"When my teachers found out I was a teacher, they just about died," the Sam Sherratt Public School teacher said, explaining he wasn't exactly a model student.

"Most of my teachers were shocked I moved into this profession. I wasn't a good student and I didn't follow the rules."

Now thirty-odd years into his career with numerous awards to his name, it's quite clear Mr. Coverdale made the right — if not expected — career choice.

And it seems his students — he teaches three grade 6 math and social science classes — couldn't agree more.

The Champion has chosen Mr. Coverdale as March's Teacher of the Month after receiving a nomination letter from one of his grade six students, 11-year-old Jessica Love.

"He is a really fun teacher and knows how to teach stuff so that it's not boring," she wrote, adding, "Our school couldn't be here without him and I would like to show him how much we care about him."

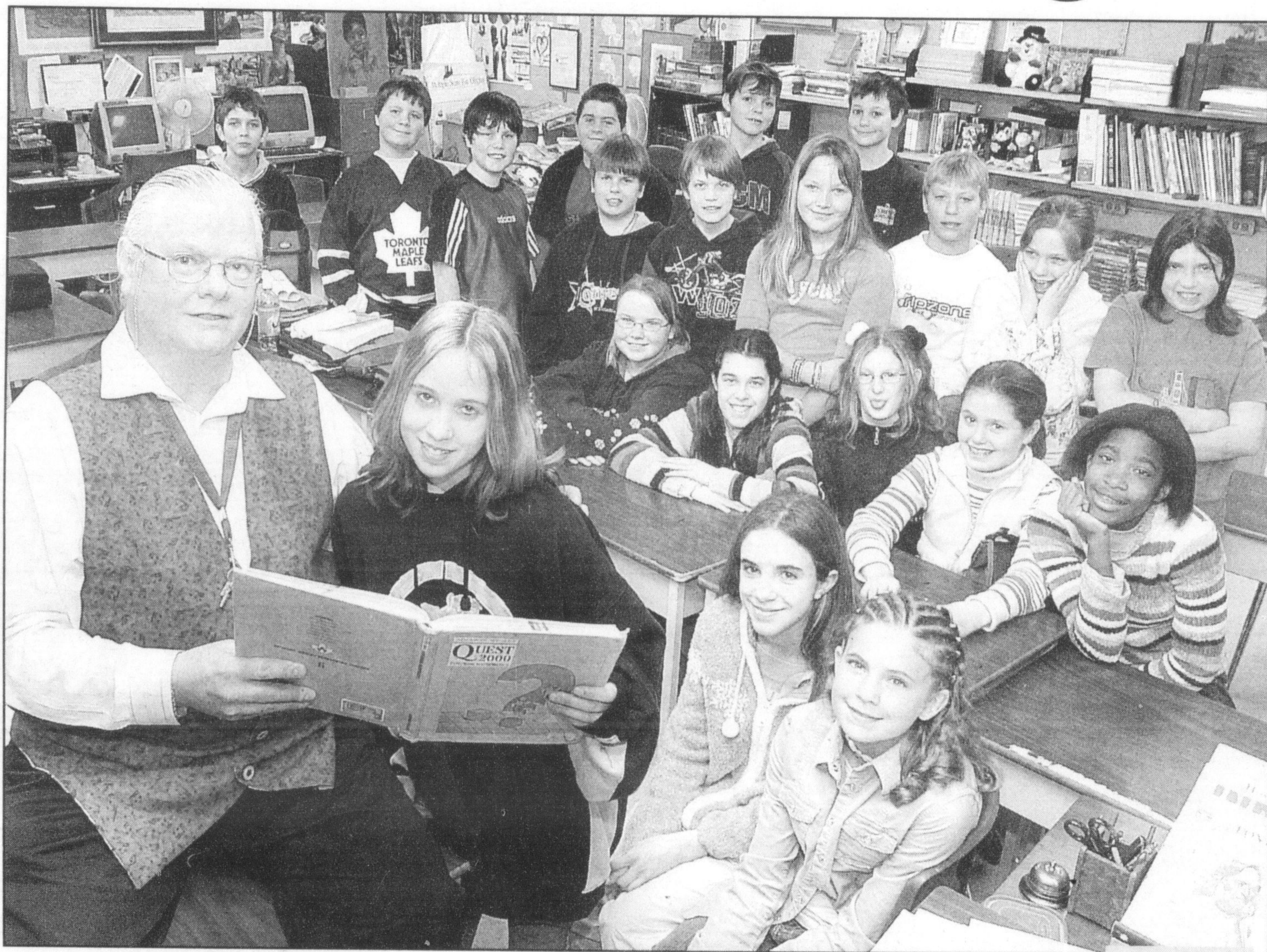
Mr. Coverdale is in his second year teaching at Sam Sherratt, a kindergarten to grade 8 school.

Before that, he taught at Percy Merry Public School until it closed.

Although he's been teaching for some time now, Mr. Coverdale said his passion for the job hasn't waned.

"I've never lost my enthusiasm for teaching and being with kids."

One of the projects at Sam Sherratt he's most proud of is helping raise money for new, badly-needed playground equipment.



Together with the school council, the playground committee — headed by Mr. Coverdale — has raised \$16,000 so far.

He also heads up the chess club, risk club, and is directing a play.

It's his penchant for fun that makes Mr. Coverdale want to provide the same for his students.

"I'm in my fifth childhood," he said, laughing.

If there's one thing he hopes his students take from his classes, he said it's to look at life with a sense of humour.

He recalled the time he was teaching a lesson when he stopped in his tracks and said to his class, "This is so boring!"

He then asked his class's advice on how he could make it more entertaining.

It's his unconventional approach to teaching that distinguishes Mr. Coverdale in his students' and fellow educators' eyes.

"He's worked hard to raise the self esteem of his students," said Sam Sherratt principal Steve Fraser.

"He has a way of motivating youngsters to not only meet academic standards, but exceed them."

Growing up on a farm in Wentworth County, Mr. Coverdale said he wasn't known for his grades, which usually averaged in the low sixties.

When he graduated from high school, he was presented with two choices — take over the farm or go to teachers college.

He enrolled in 1969.

It was when he began training in a class-

room for the first time that Mr. Coverdale said he knew he was meant to be a teacher.

"I thought, 'I like this,' and I became one of the top students," he said.

When the suggestion arose that he'd be a good school administrator, Mr. Coverdale said he nixed the idea right away.

"I've always wanted to work with kids, not in an office."

Although this isn't his first teaching award, Mr. Coverdale said it's among his most treasured because it was student initiated.

It shows what he's been trying to do — make school fun — is working, he said.

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**S a m
 Sherratt
 School
 teacher
 Robin
 Coverdale
 sits with
 Teacher of
 the Month
 nominator
 Jessica
 Love and his
 grade 6 stu-
 dents.**

Photo by
**GRAHAM
 PAINE**

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Programming Schedule — Tuesday, March 1 - Monday, March 7, 2005

Tuesday, March 1	Wednesday, March 2	Thursday, March 3	Friday, March 4	Saturday, March 5	Sunday, March 6	Monday, March 7
2:00pm-5:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	3:30pm-6:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	3:00pm-6:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	4:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	8:00am-4:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	10:30am TVCogeco Sports:	1:00pm-6:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA
5:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	6:00pm Simply Halton	6:00pm Simply Halton	5:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	4:00pm TVCogeco Sports:	Jr. A. Hockey Playoffs - Hamilton at Oakville	6:00pm Living Healthy:
6:00pm Osler Health Connection	6:30pm Plugged In! EXTRA	6:30pm Osler Health Connection	6:00pm - 8:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	Hamilton at Oakville	1:30pm-5:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	Know your numbers - Hypertension
6:30pm Optimist TV Bingo (Live)	7:30pm Swap Talk (Live)	7:00pm Living Healthy:	8:00pm Halton Region Council Mar 2	7:00pm-Midnight Plugged In! EXTRA	5:00pm Living Healthy:	
7:30pm Simply Halton	8:30pm Auto Experts (Live)	Know y-ir numbers - Hypertension	10:00pm-Midnight Plugged In! EXTRA		Know your numbers - Hypertension	
8:00pm Halton Hills Council Feb 21	9:00pm Milton Council Feb 28	Halton Region PPW Committee			6:00pm Osler Health Connection	
Midnight Plugged In! EXTRA	11:00pm-Midnight Plugged In! EXTRA	11:00pm-Midnight Plugged In! EXTRA			6:30pm Plugged In! EXTRA	
					7:30pm Simply Halton	
					8:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	
					Midnight	

Halton Region's Greenbelt Public Meeting: Thursday 8pm & Friday 1pm