

L.S.B.E. trustees not taking pay increase

by Darren MacDonald
Staff

At a recent meeting of the Lake Superior Board of Education, School Board Trustees decided not to take an increase in their remuneration.

"There wasn't anybody who put a motion forward in support of a raise," says Schreiber Trustee and Board Vice-Chair Connie Elkin. "At a time of recession, when everyone's in trouble, it would be terrible to give ourselves a pay raise."

"There wasn't even three or four minutes of discussion," agrees Terrace Bay Trustee Marilyn Chapman. "As a trustee, I believe we're there for purposes of education and meeting the needs of students first. We're not there because it's a paying job."

Trustees earn \$300 a month, plus \$70 for attending Board and Committee meetings. They can receive up to \$75 for certain meetings, but are paid for a maximum of 36 meetings a year.

"For local trustee meetings, we don't get paid," says Terrace Bay Trustee Joan Nugent. "Or when you meet locally with parents, that kind of thing. But we felt we were well paid, and with the tough times, why should we take an increase?"

The trustees didn't take an increase last either.

"(Last year) we felt we weren't doing bad compared with other boards," says Elkin. "And the economy was doing too hot—but it wasn't as bad as this year. So this year, it wasn't even debated."

ART FOR SALE
SAGAS of Superior: Looking for that Perfect Christmas Gift? Why not give a copy of Pauline Dean's history book, "Sagas of Superior," on sale at Sharyn's Imperial Restaurant, The Voyageur & Serendipity Gardens

How to enjoy an environmentally sound Christmas

by Lola Este

As Christmas approaches, we should take a look at some of the traditions that are better left behind in favour of the environment.

When I think about waste at Christmas, the first item that comes to my mind is gift wrapping. We spend money to buy the paper, take time to wrap the gift so that other people can rip the paper to shreds and throw it out—it seems like an odd idea.

If I recall correctly from my Santa folklore, the presents in St. Nick's sack were never wrapped. What's good enough for him should be good enough for us. Just use a bow or colourful tag on gifts and do away with the paper. Or if you really feel you need to wrap, wrap boxes in a manner that allows them to be unwrapped without tearing the paper—try wrapping the lid and bottom of the box separately. That way, the receiver can reuse the packaging without trying to take the tape off so the paper doesn't rip.

If you do manage to get the wrapping off in one piece, don't be shy about using it again. We have to get over the hang up associated with using something twice.

But why not try something different this year? Instead of buying paper, use other things to wrap gifts. A baby's gift could be wrapped in a receiving blanket; socks and undies

(we all get them) could be tucked into decorated egg cartons; or use a poster or the Saturday funnies as wrapping; or you can make or buy a cloth bag that can be used for many things after the gift giving is done.

And speaking of gift giving, how about exchanging "green" gifts this year? Since many people are difficult to buy for, here are a few different ideas:

- For the handy person—an automatic thermostat control. Not only will they have endless hours of fun installing it, they will save money and energy since it can automatically turn down the temperature at night.
- A water-saving showerhead is great for anyone. They are easy to install and save hot water.

•How about a solar-powered calculator—you need never buy batteries again.

•Reusable food storage containers or cloth shopping bags are perfect for the person who eats or shops—does that sound like anyone you know?

•For a co-worker, a coffee mug would be appreciated. Let's ban styrofoam cups forever.

•A pressure cooker saves energy, time and vitamins, so any cook will love it.

•For Christmas treats, buy Brazil or cashew nuts. These are products of living rainforests and as long as there is a market for them, there will be some protection for rainforests.

•For the person who has everything, how about an acre of the rainforest? For approximately \$25, an acre of the Amazon

can be saved from destruction. Contact the World Wildlife Fund for more information.

There are dozens of books available that can help us become more environmentally friendly. Many of the ideas in this article come from a book called *2 Minutes a Day for a Greener Planet* by Marjorie Lamb. Why not encourage someone else to think about Reducing, Reusing and Recycling?

Certain gifts are harmful to our way of life. Certain electrical gadgets consume energy and don't really add much to our standard of living. If you do purchase gifts requiring batteries, buy rechargeable batteries so you can save money and resources.

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