

Spotlight on Education

Schools need volunteers

By LYNDA WILLIAMS

It's not necessary to have a child attending school in order for you to serve as a volunteer.

The largest percentage of school workers tend to be parents; (usually mothers), of the school population. This need not be.

Recently, I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Sharma, a volunteer five mornings a week at Milliken Mills Public School. Mr. Sharma is a retired gentleman, originally from India where he was head of the History Department at an intermediate school, similar to our secondary school. His career has always been teaching. He now resides with his son and family.

Mr. Sharma assists daily for two periods in the library and two periods at the Grade 5/6 level. The vitality and enthusiasm shown towards the children is constantly evident. He thoroughly enjoys his work as a volunteer and I'm sure some of his eagerness has rubbed off on the teachers and students. It's contagious.

I have spoken with several principals in the area and each time, the same general comment concerning volunteers has come up. More adult help can be used in the system.

Some people don't realize how valuable their background is to the school setting. The school door is always open but schools don't go door-knocking to find helpers.

Here are some of ways volunteers can assist: Classroom helpers; drivers and chaperones on school trips; library workers; typists, (example — for student works possibly being compiled for their own publication); and sewing, (example — plays and musicals).

If you have a skill or a craft, you might demonstrate it or organize a student-participation workshop.

Creative, but not brave enough to stand up in front of a class? That's fine. Why not help teachers create new activities, game cards or puppets?

The fluoride rinse program often requires people to assist. Block Parents can always use more people as telephone callers. These are only a few suggestions. There are dozens more.

Volunteerism knows no education limit — Kindergarten through Grade 13.

If you're interested, speak to your local elementary or secondary school principal.

If you have extra time, try it. I guarantee you'll find it enjoyable and rewarding.

Dinner and dance

STOUFFVILLE — The Whitechurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce will hold its annual dinner and dance, Saturday, Dec. 6 at Sleepy Hollow Golf and Country Club.

Chamber members and friends are invited. Cocktails will be served at 6:30 p.m., with dinner to follow at 7:30. The cost is \$25 per person.

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Dear Editor:

Cheap food! One can imagine the reaction of the housewife to such a statement. Yet, looking into production costs and returns received by the farmer, one has to conclude the consumer is getting a good deal.

Take the case of the average farm that produces milk, beef or other livestock products. The farmer works an average of 12 to 14 hours a day, seven days a week, even longer in the summer. Apart from what one might term regular hours, there are extra chores such as checking the barn and stock in the evening and being on hand for calving or farrowing. These all add up to time spent in the work place.

What does the farmer obtain for his labors? A mere pittance compared to the industrial worker and other professionals, (a farmer is in every way a professional), who work less hours and usually a five-day week with occasional overtime.

If the farmer received a fair return for the amount of work done, and on his capital investment, our food would cost us

twice what it does today.

Other aspects concerning the trials and tribulations of the farmer include the weather, market fluctuations, high interest rates and the readiness of the product for market.

The weather determines if the crop is good, bad or indifferent; fluctuating market prices decide whether a profit or loss has been incurred, and the product, whether it be a beef, a pig or a cauliflower, has to be marketed when it's at its prime. It cannot be held back, hoping the market price will improve.

The owner of a retail store or a businessman, can put a price on any article that ensures him a reasonable profit, and has no farm hazards with which to contend.

It's high time the public in general, especially city folk, began to appreciate the fact they are the beneficiaries of the most economical and most essential service of all—cheap food!

Sincerely,
Adam Johnstone,
R.R. 1, Stouffville

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