

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Quality • Inclusive • Faith-based • Education



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Roger D. Lawler
Director of Education

“Catholic Education Week in 2011 is more important than ever to us because it represents a birthday -- the year in which we celebrate 175 years of Catholic education in Waterloo Region”.

Celebrating Catholic Education

As a faith community we have come out of the celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus, our saviour. Along with the celebration of His resurrection, we take the opportunity during the week of May 1 to May 7 to celebrate **Catholic Education Week** throughout Ontario.

Within Waterloo Region, we begin *Catholic Education Week* with our annual **Bishop's Banquet**. This year will be a wonderful opportunity to meet and hear from our new bishop, **Douglas Crosby, OMI**, who was installed in November 2010 as the ninth Bishop of the Diocese of Hamilton. Throughout the week there are also opportunities in our schools to engage the parents, students and community in the local school. Please feel free to visit.

Catholic Education Week in 2011 is more important than ever to us because it represents a birthday -- the year in which we celebrate 175 years of Catholic education in Waterloo Region. This is an opportunity for our schools to reflect upon and celebrate the many important activities they are involved in. Often, our schools engage in events and activities without much fanfare. It's when you examine the many social justice events and activities that you get a real sense of the many unsung heroes we have. They focus on understanding and contributing to a cause without the need to be recognized! This is truly living out the Gospel message.

I would encourage you to take some time during the coming week to reflect upon the good news of your local Catholic school – to appreciate how our learners, staff and the school community are living out the baptismal call to be Catholic schools that are the heart of the community...offering success for each and a place for all.

Special Message from Bishop Crosby

The following excerpt is from Bishop Crosby's Easter, 2011 message to the Diocese of Hamilton:

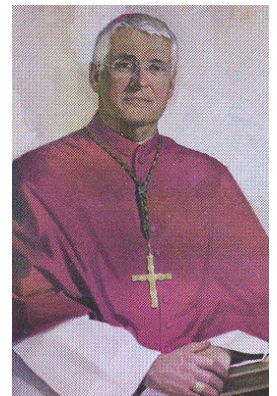
At Easter we surround ourselves with symbols of new life: Easter eggs, lilies, tulips, and other bright Spring flowers.

At this time of year, there are natural signs of new life: ice and snow melt, rivers run, and buds appear on trees and bushes. People dress in lighter colours. LIFE abounds.

During these wonderful Easter days look for signs of LIFE around you. And give thanks to the Author of LIFE for the blessings of LIFE, and love, and goodness.

Sincerely in Christ and Mary Immaculate,

+Douglas Crosby, OMI
Bishop of Hamilton



April, 2011

Available in colour @ www.wcdsb.ca
See inside for more!



Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools

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In Days Gone By

Michael Paleczny, member of the Waterloo Separate School Board, turns the first sod at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary School – April 19, 1948. Also in the photo are board members (L to R) **Charles Stroh**, **Leo Whitney**, **Norman Solomon**, **Fr. Jerome Ruth** (Chair) and **Reinhold Lang**. The new school cost \$100,000. In 1969 Mr. Paleczny would be elected the first chair of the newly amalgamated Waterloo County Separate School Board.

~CONGRATULATIONS~

**Chair's Award
2011**

GAI BROWN

**Community Partner Award
2011**

NUTRITION FOR LEARNING

**[www.wcdsb.ca/about/awards/
awards.html](http://www.wcdsb.ca/about/awards/awards.html)**

School Trustees Have a Long & Important History

As we celebrate the 175th year of Catholic education in Waterloo Region it's a good time to reflect on the long, storied history of school trustees and take a look at the changing role of trustees today.

The first school trustees in Ontario assumed their positions in 1807 – making the trustee role the longest ongoing elected office in Ontario.

Of course, our first local schools didn't begin until 1836 in St. Agatha and Maryhill but stories from those days tell us the early trustees (like their counterparts all across Ontario) were involved in EVERYTHING – right from hiring the teachers to painting the fences and fixing the desks. They also would have known everyone in the community and would have been personally involved in their neighbours' issues at the school.

By 1968 those first two schools had spawned 12 independent local school boards – each with their own trustees: **Kitchener**, **Waterloo**, **Galt**, **Preston**, **Hespeler**, **Bridgeport**, **New Hamburg**, **Maryhill**, **St. Agatha**, **Linwood**, **Elmira** and **St. Clements**. Then, on January 1, 1969, the Ontario Legislature amalgamated them all into one school board – the **Waterloo County Separate School Board**. The first board chair was **Mike Paleczny**. The first Director of Education was **John Sweeney**.

Operations then were still not easy. The Catholic high schools (St. Jerome's and St. Mary's) – which were then run by their own stand-alone board of trustees -- were not yet fully publicly funded. The success of these schools relied upon the generosity of parishioners and tuition fees. Trustees even recall meeting in the 1970s and not knowing if they would be able to pay the teachers' salaries the following week. This fear ended in 1984 when the government of Premier **William G. Davis** granted full funding to Catholic high schools.

The landscape of school boards in Ontario changed significantly in the 1990's. The provincial government mandated both a common curriculum and province wide testing. School boards also lost their power to set the mill rate, the number of elected trustees was drastically reduced and education funding was centralized at Queen's Park. With the passage of Bill 177 (the **Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act**) in 2009, trustees are no longer involved in the day-to-day operation of schools, but rather take a more system level view. As in the early days however, trustees remain deeply interested in the well being of every student and every school.

Although there have been numerous legislative changes over the past 175 years, in many ways the role of school boards remains the same. The ultimate goal remains to create schools that are the "heart of the community" -- where there is "success for each" and "a place for all". As duly elected municipal officials trustees are not just representatives of their school system's supporters -- they are accountable to all citizens of Ontario, regardless of religious affiliation. Good governance, steady stewardship of scarce resources and ever increasing student success: That's where your board of trustees has its focus...and we truly appreciate your support and prayers as we fulfill our important mission.

You can find the Board's governance policies on the WCDSB website at: www.wcdsb.ca/ap_memos.html



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Student Trustees Report

By Anne Marie Hayman & Claire Matlock

In the school board's 175th year of Catholic education we are very proud to be the 20th and 21st student trustees of our school board. Initially, student trustees were appointed, but now we are elected by the **Council of Student Presidents** who represent the entire student body of our board.

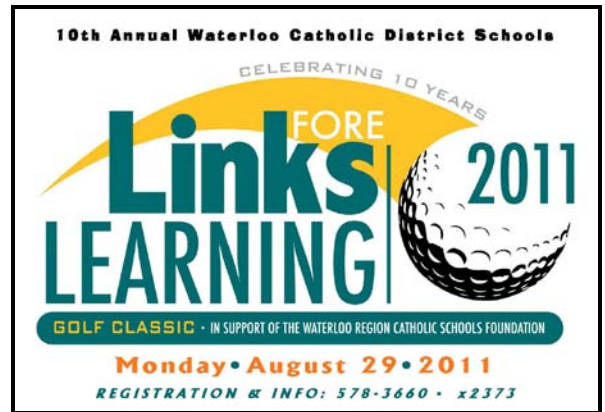
The Board's very first student trustee, **Shawna Thompson**, was appointed in 1999. Shawna is now a teacher at **St. Mary's High School** in Kitchener.

As student trustees we are the voice of all the students at the Trustee board table -- bringing forth their ideas, values and interests at every meeting. We also serve as co-chairs of the Council of Student Presidents, which is comprised of the student council presidents from each of our five high schools. In this council we work collaboratively together to create a unified board. We are accomplishing this in our 175th year by hosting a board wide **Film Festival** entitled **Inview** on Tuesday, May 3 at the Catholic Education Centre -- followed by a board wide Variety Talent show hosted by **St. David's Catholic Secondary School** on Wednesday, May 4.

These events have been initiated, organized, and hosted by students for the entire community to celebrate. The two events will showcase films created by students of our system based on social justice issues as well as a wide-variety of student musical talent. All proceeds collected at these events will be donated to **Toonies for Tuition** -- a charity that helps subsidize the tuition of Catholic students in other provinces where Catholic education is not publicly funded. Tickets are \$2 and can be purchased at each high school or at the door the night of the event.

Wheel to Heal Earth Contest Winners

In March the Board's **Facility Services Department** sponsored the first annual **"Wheel to Heal Earth"** contest. Students were invited to submit drawings based on environmental themes -- with the winners receiving a new bike. Congratulations to the winners: Kindergarten - Grade 4: Amber B. - John Sweeney CES; Grade 5 - Grade 8: Brooklyn H. - St. Timothy CES; High School: Ryan J. - St. Mary's H.S. More details are available at: <http://ecozone.wcdsb.ca/contest/index.html>

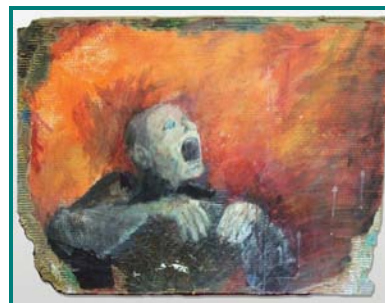
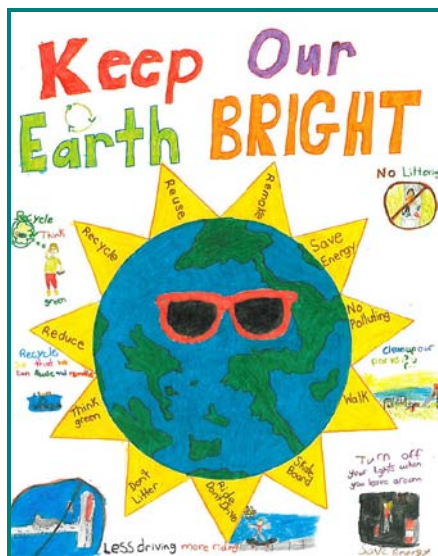


REGISTER TODAY!!

Links FORE Learning has generated more than \$300,000 since 2002 in support of valuable programs in athletics, arts, science & technology, faith formation and equity for all learners.

~~ 4 Ball Scramble Format ~~
Whistle Bear and Doon Valley

Registration & Breakfast 7:30 a.m.
Shotgun Start – 8:00 a.m.
Lunch – 1:30 p.m.



<http://ecozone.wcdsb.ca/contest/index.html>



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When Contacting Your Trustees...

As partners in education our board of trustees is always interested in receiving information and feedback from the community.

However, there may be times when you contact your trustee with questions or concerns and your trustee will refer you to our policy called **"Communication Guidelines for Parents & Staff"**. These important guidelines are posted on our website: www.wcdsb.ca/AP_Memos/PDF/APC001.PDF.

The guidelines are in place to help you resolve your questions or concerns quickly right there at your school. While your trustee does not have the legal power to solve your issue directly they will certainly be a valuable resource in helping you use the guidelines to reach the appropriate staff person for assistance.

The guidelines are very simple: If you have a concern involving your child you should first speak directly to the child's teacher. If the issue remains unresolved, you should speak to the school Principal. If the issue continues to be unresolved, you should speak to the Superintendent of Learning for that school.

These guidelines have been a huge success and the vast majority of issues are resolved even before reaching the school superintendent or calling a trustee.

In cases where you do wish to speak directly to a trustee you may contact any of the nine adult trustees at any time. While they have been elected based out of various local municipalities they represent all Catholic ratepayers in Waterloo Region and will be happy to assist regardless of where you live in the Region.

Trustee phone numbers and email addresses are available on the trustee web page at:

www.wcdsb.ca/about/board/trustees.html.



New Banner
If you are driving past the Waterloo Region Catholic Education Centre on Weber St. in Kitchener be sure to look for our new 175th anniversary banner!!

Bennies Turns 50!

By Anton Milardovic



It's hard to believe that it has been 50 years, but "the old St. Benedict" first opened its doors to Catholic students in Cambridge in September of 1962. This means that in a few short months, St. Benedict C.S.S. will be celebrating its 50th anniversary.

Are you a Benny's grad? Do you have other family members who walked either the old carpeted or the new tiled halls of either building? We are in the process of collecting email addresses and will soon start sending out information via an electronic newsletter similar to the BENN.

To get your name on our contact list, please go to <http://stbenedict.wcdsb.ca/50/> where an online form has been created to gather information.



St. Benedict CSS – Then & Now

Eventually, information about the 50 year festivities will also be placed on the page.

We will eventually start asking to borrow pictures, memorabilia and your stories of your days at St. Benedict, whether as a student or a staff member. So dust off those old yearbooks, pull out that old photo album, and start taking that walk down memory lane with us!

