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BUSINESS & LABOUR

Economic hot spot
 In Yellowknife, the Northwest Territories' GDP rose to \$422.4 million in 2001. The increase is largely due to the territory's solid GDP and 4.6 percent of the national total.

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ARTS & LEISURE
And the winners are

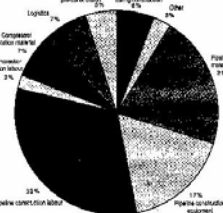
The Shoney Awards held last Friday named the old school but winning group winners.

WINNERS
 Best of Shoney (Best Comedy) - The Shoney Awards...

Who has a golden Shoney on their mantle?

2000...Millennium


Pipeline project estimate breakdown



PIPELINE SKIDS
 About 38,000 wooden skids could be needed for the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. At recent board foot lumber prices in Alberta rough cut skids should be between \$4 to \$6 per skid depending on wood supply. The cost could be closer to \$6 to \$8 in the NW. At \$7 per skid the total cost of pipeline skids totals \$270,000. Skids are 6' x 8' x 4 feet rough cut timber.


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Mines not to blame for arsenic, say experts


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The Scorpion King
 Rated 14A Plays nightly at 7:00 and 9:00 pm with weekend discount matinees at 2:00 and 4:00 pm

Yellowknife Catholic Separate School System 1952 2002

Like the rest of the world, Yellowknife prepared for the worst as it anticipated the new millennium and the Y2K bug, which never showed up. We quickly forgot about that little problem and focused on prosperity and growth. We grew to a population of approximately 17, 500 people and even with all the property development we've experienced, we're still sometimes short on living quarters.

One study of 1,598 YK rental units, only 40 were available and the vacancy rate was 2.4%. In 1999 it was 5.7% and in 1998, 9%. Most of the prosperity and growth has been caused by the continuing development of the mining industry. BHP, the only producing mine to date, sold \$290 million in diamonds in 1999. That increased to \$334 million in the first 9 months of 2000.

By the end of the year 2000, Yellowknife had two diamond cutting and polishing plants.

(Sirius Diamonds, Deton Cho Diamonds in Ndilo and a third, Arslanian Cutting Works, was well on its way to opening. The richness of culture was added to again as 30

Armenian moved to Yellowknife to work at the Arslanian facility.

We experienced increased housing starts, two new hotels and two new restaurants. The Chateau Nova and Super 8 hotels now add to the northern skyline. Jose Locos and the Grapevine offer their food and service to Yellowknife's residents and visitors. In late December, Diavik Diamond Mines Inc, got all its approvals in place and its investors, Rio Tinto and Aber Resources, received approval for a \$1.3 billion mine to be built at Lac de Gras three hundred miles north of Yellowknife.

There was some not so good news, Giant Mine, a cornerstone of the early Yellowknife economy, declared bankruptcy and was acquired by Miramar Con Mine with the prediction that its profitable ore reserves would probably only last to the third quarter of 2001.

Interest in Yellowknife has continued to grow in 2000. Close to ten thousand Japanese tourists were reported and northern authors, artists and crafts have come into high demand.

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We got some additional exposure when the popular CBC television show, "North of Sixty " shot one episode in the city. Also, movie director Dennis Allen's half-hour feature "Someplace Better" was invited to show in Robert Redford's Sundance Festival.

Yellowknife is one of the Northern centers targeted for the Smart Cities strategy, the Federal Government's high technology and computer development plan. Once again we're on the verge of another economic boom and the recent advancements in the Yellowknife Catholic Separate Schools has us ready to contribute graduates who can support and eventually lead Yellowknife in the future.

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Students say "Don't Drink and Drive" message working

It's not cool to drink and drive and Yellowknife youth want to make sure the adults in this town know it. Both Sir John Franklin and St. Patrick high schools have Students Against *Drinking* and Driving (SADD) volunteer campaigns, and teens were out in full force over the holidays to promote their message.

Sir John student Alex Legaree, 17 was one of the many SADD volunteers who handed out candy canes and don't drink and drive messages to motorists who got pulled over at RCMP check stops.

'I think more people knew we existed after we participated in the Stop Checks. But what was even better to see was that while I was there everyone was totally sober behind the wheel, said Legaree.

"I think with the combination of Sir John and St Pat's SADD programs, and the various media campaigns, the

message to not drink and drive is getting out there. "

Joan Glover is the Sir John Franklin SADD advisor. She said having students standing shoulder to shoulder with the RCMP at the Stop Checks really had an impact.

When you get pulled over and you're being urged not to drink and drive by a teenager, it has to have an effect, said Glover.

St Pat's SADD advisor, Renee Lamoureux, said youth volunteers spearheaded several fund raisers during the holidays. They are raising money to send a Yellowknife delegation to a Canadian Youth Against Impaired Driving Conference in Edmonton. She said they've already arranged to bring the national conference in Edmonton. She said they've already arranged to bring the national conference, which attracts as many as 500 delegates, to Yellowknife next year. "I think the SADD Program is making an incredible difference in this community, said Lamoureux.

*by Dane Gibson
Northern News Services*

Yellowknife Catholic Separate School System 1952 2002

January 5th 2000

Can-drive madness

Green hair and sumo wrestling

A green-haired teacher Sumo wrestling, youth covered in shaving cream, authority figures acting out Charlie's Angels, and hundreds of students cheering in a wild, outrageous cacophony -- these were some of the sights and sounds in St. Joseph school's gymnasium on Friday last week.

Welcome to Can Drive Extravaganza 2000. This is the day the staff of the school gives their students what they love best: pure, unadulterated fun.

They do it to reward a job well done. The 600-plus students collected in excess of 3550 cans of food for the Salvation Army and St. Pat's church food hamper program.

Mr. Taylor, easily identified by his green hair, says the can drive began months ago.

"You start right away with propaganda," says the first-year organizer. Every day, at 3:10, students hit the P.A. system with

"can" rhymes. "Baa baa black sheep, have you any cans?"

That sort of thing," says Taylor.

Last year, the school collected 3,000 cans of food. To up the ante, Taylor vowed to dye his hair green if the students surpassed their record. Obviously, they managed just fine.

For each 100 cans, the students could participate in an event at the extravaganza.

"The more cans they brought in, the more events they could participate in during the Can Drive Extravaganza."

Balloon shaving and pie throwing, not to mention head shaving -- three students shaved their heads -- are a few more of the activities taking place.

But by far the most popular is the Charlie's Angels reenactment. Behind a screen, three teachers walk the walk of the angels.

As images flash on a screen, "Charlie" explains that one teacher was caught doing everyone's homework, another was seen Christmas shopping in the school's lost and found, yet another, oh horror of horrors, was witnessed blurting out

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comments without raising her hand.

Lots of people worked really hard to make the can drive happen, St. Joe's Kathy Lovatt, says. "But most importantly, you brought in the cans," she tells the students.

"You brought in the cans that helped our community."

Michele LeTourneau Northern News Services (Dec 22/00)a

Doing the math pays off big!

Ecole St. Joseph students take top marks in math competition

Apparently, now that the results are in Ecole St. Joseph school has a flare for mathematics. While math may not be the most favorite of subjects for most children, students at Ecole St. Joseph don't seem to mind it much at all. The local school took top honors for the Northwest Territories this year for grades 6, 7 and 8 in the National Math League competition held last February.

"The students who have won this are not necessarily A-plus students, they are just good at problem solving," explains Merrill Dean, assistant principal at the school. "Which is interesting because it's (the competition) more closely related to the new math program (Western Canadian Math Program) that came out two years ago. "

"It takes more creative thinking. Before, students learned math through rote but today they are being asked to actually understand what they are solving."

Every year, elementary and junior high school students across Canada take part in the competition. Even though NWT schools, Dean admits, are hard-pressed to procure a better average overall to math powerhouses like Ontario or British Columbia, she says that Ecole St. Joseph's results this year are at a competitive level with other schools in most provinces. It's merely a matter of population and number of schools.

"I'm quite pleased how we've done," says Dean. "We would've placed (within the top 10) in six or seven of the provinces."

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“People would've said, 'Big deal, you've won the territories,' but the fact is we would've placed in a number of provinces despite their larger populations.”

For Grade 8 student Erik Chan -- who tied for top marks with another Ecole St. Joseph student -- a little friendly competition proved to be his main inspiration for performing so well on the test. "We just wrote it and it turned out to be really good marks," Chan says. "I just wanted to beat my friend."

Mike W. Bryant Northern News Services (Jun 02/00) -

Destination conservation

Weledeh, St. Joe's students take part in national environmental pilot program

Swarms of children with 'People Power' T-shirts and 'People Power' face paint mill around the Destination Conservation booth at the Spring Trade Show. Their booth is an anomaly,

surrounded by somber, 'professional' displays.

Most businesses at the trade show try convincing people to consume more. But not Destination Conservation. Their aim is to convince people to consume less.

"You can't just waste energy," says Crystal Chasse, a student at Ecole St. Joseph school.

"I want to help the environment because it's getting polluted." Destination Conservation is a national environmental program designed for schools. It's in its third and last year as a pilot project with the Catholic School board.

Two schools, Ecole St. Joseph and Weledeh, are currently involved with the pilot.

The school board issued a challenge to both schools -- they get 40 per cent of money saved through their projects. If the school board saves \$1,000, the school gets \$400. Teachers are positive about the program.

Ecole St. Joseph school teacher Marla Chasse says the program is important for adults as well as children. "The environment is

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important. It's the future of our kids," she says.

"It's fun to teach kids about environmental strategy," she adds. "And the children are responsive."

Carmen Gobeil, a Grade 4 teacher at St. Joe's and co-ordinator for the project, puts all her extra-curricular time into the program.

"We're building an awareness in the children so that it becomes a way of life," she says. Gobeil stresses that the program is run by the children and that the teachers are only facilitators.

"There are two parts to the project," says Greg Krysko, public liaison officer with the project and parent volunteer at St. Joe's. "We focus on kids' lifestyles and also the school's infrastructure," he says.

The next big event for Destination Conservation is a wheel exchange on May 28 at the RCMP bicycle rodeo.

"The point of the wheel exchange is promoting alternative

transportation," says Krysko.

"People power is the most efficient type of energy," he says.

Jorge Barrera Northern News Services (May 17/00) -

Having faith - Ecole St. Joseph faces a changing world

Some students can still pick out where they left their handprints at Ecole St. Joseph three years ago.

Hundreds of children, sporting a multi-colored assortment of palms dipped in paint, added their impressions on the inside front wall of the school's foyer. This "rainbow of hands" was in celebration of the school's 20th anniversary in 1998.

The rainbow colors of the handprints reflect St. Joe's diversity.

"Not all students are Catholic, or even Christian," said Merrill Dean, the Catholic school's assistant principal. "I think we have a responsibility as educators today to bring an understanding that the world needs tolerance and you need to learn about other cultures and what they believe."

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Dean would be Yellowknifers guide during the newspaper's two-hour visit to the school last week. Principal Flo Campbell was out of town.

Ecole St. Joseph opened its doors to 253 kindergarten to Grade 9 students in 1978. That number has swelled to 595 today.

"Last year, we got involved in discussions over size," said Dean, who noted the school's population was even higher last year at 615. "The school was bursting at the seams. It's still over-capacity, so we'll probably be back to normal next year." The population squeeze at St. Joe's, Dean explained, has a lot to do with its location. It is smack dab in the middle of Range Lake North, where the highest density of Yellowknife's families live. Another reason is St. Joe's French immersion program.

There are no French immersion students at Yellowknife Catholic Schools' other elementary school, Weledah. If parents want their kids to attend a Catholic school and learn French, they have to go St. Joe's. Currently, 45 per cent of the student

body are in French immersion

Yet, Dean noted that St. Joe's hardly represents a scaled-down version of the two great solitudes. French immersion and English core students at the school make no such distinctions, Dean said. "We do well," said Dean. "I think it (French immersion) has had a positive effect on our core program. You occasionally get English students speaking French in the hallways."

'Who wants to be in the newspaper!'

A short distance down the hall from the principal's office, Judy Whitford's Grade 5 English core class were engrossed in a research project.

That all changed when Yellowknifer walked into the room. Children, it seems, are one of the few segments in society who truly enjoy a reporter's presence.

Yellowknifer was forced to play a quick game of eenie-meenie-minie-mo to decide which group of students should appear in the newspaper for this article.

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The winners were practically bouncing off the walls with glee. The vanquished remained undaunted, continuing to plead with the reporter -- "I want to be in the newspaper, please!" -- right up until the end of the period. Ironically, the task given by Whitford that day involved making a survey chart identifying changes they felt could improve the newspaper.

"Proof-reading for errors," said Natalie MacFadyen, was at the top of the list. "We also think it should have more world news, more stuff for children, color photos, and a larger editorial section."

Whitford, meanwhile, was taking it all in stride. It was not the first time a reporter had visited her class. She was somewhat of a *cause celebre* when she began teaching at the school in 1997. Whitford is also a former student, having started kindergarten at the school the year it opened.

"At first it was pretty bizarre, because you were working

with the teachers who taught you,

" Whitford recalled, before adding, "it felt safe to come back and work with familiar faces."

Whitford, who teaches both English core and French immersion Grade 5, said part of the challenge in itself was coming back North to work, having watched many of her classmates opting to head south after school.

"People have certain expectations about students coming back to work at Northern professions," Whitford said.

"It is a great challenge for people, though, because it can often be more alluring to go back down south."

Lunching with peacekeepers

Lunch-time was spent with student counsellor Carol Ostrom and her young charges, made up of grades 4 and 5 "peacekeeper" trainees.

In a couple of weeks the students will be ready to tackle head-on recess disputes on the playground and bullies within the

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younger grades.

"We've been learning the ground rules and doing some role-playing, where two people are pretending to fight," explained Grade 4 student Alex Tatti.

"We go up and introduce ourselves as peacekeepers and lay down the ground rules."

The ground rules are as follows: 1) effort must be made to solve the problem; 2) no interrupting the peacekeeper; and 3) no "put downs" allowed.

It is a different world out there today, Dean acknowledged back at her office.

"You are looking at kids who look at the world through 30-second sound bites and MTV," Dean continued.

"I can't teach the class in rap all the time."

Yet, even though St. Joe's is no more or less immune from the influences of a rapidly changing world, some things remain the same.

"One of the underlying principles of our school is to ask, 'What would Jesus do?'" Dean said. "I think there is a compassion and belief system that you can speak about openly here."

Mike W. Bryant Northern News Services (Nov 23/01)

City schools short of teachers

Yellowknife schools are feeling the effects of a national teacher shortage.

"We are heading into a serious teacher shortage and it's getting worse," said Judith Knapp, Yellowknife Education District No. 1 superintendent, at a policy committee meeting last week.

"Today we didn't have enough subs to cover all our classes." David Murphy, president of the NWT Teacher's Association, said the number of supply teachers, also known as substitutes or subs, has decreased over the last year or so.

One reason for this is that there are more jobs available," he said. "There was a time when qualified teachers had difficulty finding jobs." Not only is the list shorter, but subs are getting

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choosy.

"Right now, we have a number of subs who only want to work once a week, or in the afternoons," said Knapp.

"People are being more particular and that limits our flexibility."

And schools often hire substitutes when full-time positions open up. "We've reduced our own pool," said Knapp.

Certificates preferred

Kern Von Hagen, superintendent at the Catholic School Board, said its sub list is about the same as last year. But many of these substitutes are employed elsewhere part-time.

"There are some mitigating circumstances making it difficult," he said.

The Catholic School Board tries to use subs with teaching certificates, university degrees and work experience in a similar field. "But sometimes, that's not possible," said Von Hagen.

The boards have jointly advertised for more substitutes. Knapp is currently looking for a full-time teacher.

However, so far, not one person has applied, despite ads placed internally and through the Internet.

William McDonald school is one school feeling the supply teacher crunch.

"There have been no problems where students have gone without supervision," said principal Gord Breen. "But it's pretty close, it's at a critical point."

Breen said that on one occasion, the school found itself down to its last supply teacher on the call list. Once, a teacher lost a preparation period to fill in for an absent teacher when no substitutes were available.

"We've been OK so far," said Breen. "But it's not a good situation and we hope it improves."

Over at Ecole St. Joseph, principal Flo Campbell said they are managing.

"But we'd certainly feel better if there were more -- we haven't entered the flu season yet," she said.

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Sickness isn't a problem at K'alemi Dene School in Ndilo.

Not one teacher called in sick last year.

"We have a very low incidence of teacher sickness, but it's hard to predict," said principal Angela James.

The school relies on one regular substitute teacher who works only for K'alemi Dene.

But what if two teachers are absent?

"We haven't crossed that bridge yet," said James. "I'll cross all my limbs to make sure that doesn't happen."

Jennifer McPhee Northern News Services (Oct 10/01)

Latest batch of teachers settle in

They come from near and far, but more important, they're here now.

Twenty-nine new teachers, teaching assistants, librarians and other staff moved to Yellowknife this fall to fill the

minds of city children.

Most replace teachers who have moved on. But at Yellowknife Catholic Schools, which hired 22 of the newcomers, just nine are replacements. The other 13 are on board thanks to the district's growth. At Yellowknife No. 1, the public board, there is no growth, with all seven new arrivals replacing outgoing staff.

A handful are Northerners, including the husband-and-wife team of Steve and Lynn MacFadyen, who moved to the city from Inuvik. Both teach at Ecole St. Joseph.

A few are from the East Coast, with a sprinkling from other places like Saskatchewan and Manitoba. For Sylvie Bernard, moving north "is like a dream."

After earning a business degree and spending a couple more years trying to get into law school, the New Brunswicker then heard about Northern opportunities from a fellow Maritimer who had just returned from Yellowknife.

"She sold me on the idea, and made it sound interesting," said Bernard this week, adding that she's already a bit homesick.

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"But it's worth it ... I love it so far."

Her job at St. Patrick high school is the only one she applied for.

Bernard's ultimate boss, the Catholic School Board's superintendent, said the new teachers prove that "we attract diversity." "You see it in the new people here this evening and in the staff we already have," Kern von Hagen last week.

Most are young, but some are middle-aged, while one 53-year-old intern finishing her education degree has eight grandchildren. Only 20 per cent of the new crop are men.

Many have been paired with mentors, a Catholic board program in which established teachers are paired with new ones to help them adjust to the North.

Dave Sullivan Northern News Services (Sep 28/01) -

Never a dull moment

John Dalton fixes the broom he uses to sweep his bus while he waits for a group of Grade 3 kids to come out of the museum. Dalton is the owner of Yellowknife Cabs, but he spends most days driving children to and from school trips in his Yellowknife charter bus.

"I like the driving," he says as he tapes the broom together with masking tape. "I like the kids."

How did the broom break?

"I stepped on it," he admits with a laugh. It's an important tool.

"If you don't keep your bus clean, people won't respect it."

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When the kids return to the bus, Dalton welcomes them with questions about their field trip. "Did you see the big elephant on your way into the museum?" he asks.

"No, it's a polar bear," they respond in unison. "No, it's an elephant," he says, continuing to tease them.

"It is not -- polar bears don't have fur," says one little girl.

The kids settle into their seats and Dalton, who has lived in Yellowknife for 30 years, starts the drive back to Ecole St. Joseph school.

"Alright boys and girls," he says, "I don't want the windows open any more than they already are. If you can't trust yourself, sit on your hands."

Three girls in the front seat are whispering and staring at him.

"My friend wants to know if you can put the radio on," one of them finally asks. Dalton obliges.

"I'm not chicken," she tells her friends. "I just proved it."

When he drops the kids off, he cheerfully calls out goodbye

as they bounce off the bus.

"Everyone calls you Santa Claus," says one boy as he exits.

Dalton, who has a white beard, responds: "That's right, but just in the winter.

"Each group of students are different," he says after they leave.

Next he has to pick up a class of kindergarten students from the tennis courts. These kids usually walk the short distance back to their school, but today a bear was spotted in the area, so they are playing it safe by riding the bus. However on the way, he sees his third pick-up walking home.

He stops the bus and the kids, who were at the bowling alley, jump on. It turns out the power went out at the bowling alley and they had to leave early.

"You see, you have to be flexible on this job," he says.

He drops the kids off and makes it back to the tennis courts just in time.

"Some days are busy and others aren't," he says. "The next three days I'm booked solid because it's the last week of school. It can be feast or famine."

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Dalton says he enjoys all the kids, but especially likes the younger ones. Why?

"They're just nice," he says. "They appreciate being able to get out. It's a treat for them."

Jennifer McPhee Northern News Services (Jun 29/01) -

Mentorship helps ease the pain

Program designed for new teachers

When Lori Milleker moved North last year, it was "hugely intimidating." Nearly fresh out of university, moving from southern Saskatchewan for her first big teaching job was "a scary, scary thought."

Yellowknifers bent over backwards as they are known to do, but an official mentorship program at her school, Ecole St. Joseph, is what really put her at ease.

That's where Michel Emery came in. The French immersion teacher knew what she was going through.

"It's an adjustment," Emery says of moving this far North.

He was one of three teachers who decided to volunteer for the school's new mentorship program, after remembering being a little nervous after his own big move North from Ontario four years ago.

Milleker says the new program made her a better teacher right from the starting blocks. She had lessons to develop and students to get to know, plus a curriculum to learn that's "binders thick."

She and other new teachers have to cope with all that without a safety net of family or friends. Help from a mentor "made me more relaxed in the classroom."

She experienced some stress because NWT classes are more integrated than in the Prairies, but Emery was always there as a sounding board.

His local knowledge helped with things like picking good field trips and arranging guest speakers. Lori, who's used to shopping in the U.S. just a half-hour from her Weyburn home,

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found it "hard to adjust to the lifestyle here."

Emery wishes he had help after first arriving in town.

"It would have made a big difference. That first year would have been a lot easier."

He said the mentoring partnership is two-way, because Lori offered him a fresh perspective on things.

Ecole St. Joseph hopes to expand the mentorship program next year.

Dave Sullivan Northern News Services (May 04/01)

Spelling champ off to Montreal

Follows older sister's tracks

Rebecca Mahler can sure spell, and in French. That ability earned her a trip to Montreal next month to compete against the country's best.

More than just spelling got her on top. The French competitions include other correct uses of the language, like sentence structure. Even a misplaced accent will send her packing for home at the level she'll be competing at.

"Verbs come easily to me. I'm kind of strange because I like to conjugate French verbs. None of my classmates like to do that," says the 11-year-old Ecole St. Joseph student.

After breezing through La Dicterie language competitions at local and regional French and French immersion schools, the Grade 6 student was selected to represent the territory in Quebec. The high-level contest takes place on May 20.

Language talent runs in the family. Rebecca's older sister Kirsten was NWT's representative two years ago. Kirsten told her sister the competition is really hard. Ecole St. Joseph principal Flo Campbell is proud. She recognized Mahler and several other achievers by gathering the entire school population and staff together April 2 and singling them out.

"It's important to celebrate the great things that kids do," Campbell says.

Vice-principal Carol Forget says "there were some really

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difficult words" in a workbook that competitors filled for the La Dictee competition.

The cost of Rebecca's trip will be covered by funds from a Quebec-based foundation that aims to narrow cultural gaps between English and French-speaking Canadians.

Dave Sullivan Northern News Services (Apr 06/01)

Bursting at the seams

Portables until GNWT can be persuaded to expand

The Yellowknife Catholic School Board plans to add at least three portables outside of Ecole St. Joseph school to deal with overcrowding.

The number of students will also be capped at the current 615 for the next two years. The 21-year-old school is supposed to hold just 585.

Moving three or four portables onto the school's grounds

will "best meet the short-term needs of students and staff," says trustee Francis Chang.

Officials say what's really needed is a new \$11 million school, but the Range Lake residential area is not yet on the territorial government's list of places to build one.

When the government looks at population trends, overall growth is projected without looking at needs of individual school boards, says Board Superintendent Kern Von Hagen.

The portables will be free, courtesy of the Yellowknife public school board

But it will cost about \$20,000 to move and refurbish each one, says Von Hagen. They won't necessarily be used for class space.

A science lab and administrative space are being considered and for now the portables won't be attached to the main building.

"In order for us to keep up the quality we've had to be creative," says vice-principal Carol Forget. "But now we're out of ideas on

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how to use the space." "It's good to see they're doing something (but) everyone agrees this is a short-term solution," says Shannon Gullberg, chair of the parent's advisory committee.

She says Ecole St. Joseph's popularity indicates the quality of schooling taking place there. Board chair Larry Purcka said while the board is "definitely looking at having an additional school," there are no immediate plans to construct a new school in the Frame Lake area. At the same time "we don't want to see our growth stifled," Purcka said.

Von Hagen said the territorial government wants hard statistics on growth patterns in Frame Lake neighborhoods before committing to building an additional school.

About 45 per cent of students at the kindergarten to Grade 8 school are in French immersion.

Dave Sullivan Northern News Services (Apr 04/01)

Teamwork

Ecole St. Joseph students learning about life

They're our future. Soon-to-be nurses, journalists, pilots and politicians learning about budgets, time management, public relations and -- the big one -- compromise.

Eight Ecole St. Joseph students are leaping towards the adult world with a student organized Family Health Fair on March 29.

The Grade 5 and 6 students are responsible for securing sponsors, booths and volunteers for the evening event.

The star attractions? Fruit smoothies served from a grass hut, indoor mini-golf, a nutrition wheel and blood pressure station. "We're promoting healthy living and raising awareness about diabetes," said student Karly Oliver.

Oliver said a classmate left Ecole St. Joseph this school year because of diabetic complications. The departure did not motivate the fair, but students have since reflected upon the

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school. The thinking is, young people who feel good about themselves make better students.

"I'm here to provide support to the kids," explained Ostrom.

"So that could be providing a listening ear, advocating for them or conflict mediation."

Ostrom stressed that mediating conflicts between students and teachers make up only a small part of her job at St. Joe's. "I really like the environment I work in here because students are treated as people. They're valued and their thoughts and ideas are valued."

In addition to providing a listening ear and mediating disputes, counseling includes helping kids deal with the intense social dimension of school, boosting their self esteem, helping them cope and deal with difficulties at school and at home, and simply providing a hug when one is needed.

Students at the kindergarten to Grade 8 school wishing to see Ostrom can either drop by her office, which is filled

with games and toys, or leave a note in the mail box on her office door. In October, at the suggestion of a student, Ostrom started a new program called Peacekeepers.

"The response from the kids was overwhelming," recalled Ostrom. "At least 60 students wanted to be a part of it." She trained 20 students to help mediate disputes among their peers. They take turns keeping the peace on the playground at lunch hours.

Another 10 peacekeepers will be finishing their training in two weeks.

Richard Gleeson Northern News Services (Jan 12/01)

More money for NWT schools

GNWT cites falling enrolment for added funding

Due to lower than expected student enrolment rates, the NWT government will be freeing up extra cash for the upcoming school year.

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No room at the school

Parent asks what's wrong with education system

A Yellowknife parent is questioning the city's education system because her children can't attend a school at her doorstep.

"Why would I want to bus my children to another school when I've got one across the street," Carla Shuparski wonders.

Shuparski wants to send her 10- and seven-year-old daughters to Ecole St. Joseph a stone's throw from home, but the overcrowded school recently decided to stop letting in new students.

Portables are being added but student numbers will still be capped at the current 615 for at least the next two years. The 21-year-old building is supposed to hold 585.

Shuparski's children go to N.J. MacPherson school in the Yellowknife No. 1 School District, but working single parent prefers the Catholic school system.

"I want my kids to have the religion background."

With Catholic Ecole St. Joseph across the street, Shuparski says it's ridiculous for her children to be bussed to William MacDonald school, where they'll soon end up as they get older. Her babysitter lives nowhere near that school. She says the Catholic School Board may pay to bus the children to Weledeh school but it's too far, and Shuparski prefers not being subsidized by taxpayers for transportation that shouldn't be needed.

"Why would I choose William MacDonald or Weledeh, when I have St. Joe's right at my doorstep. These options do not solve my problem."

Ecole St. Joseph recently started keeping a waiting list, according to principal Flo Campbell.

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school was open two years before closing for the current school year.

Tolley says it's difficult to predict enrolment for privately run Koinonia and two other privately run city schools.

Dave Sullivan Northern News Services (Apr 25/01)

A New Home *Modern school awaits Weledeh students*

There is a sense of excitement brewing for Yellowknife Catholic Schools' staff and students gearing up to return to Weledeh Catholic School for a new school year.

That's because when classes begin on Aug. 28, they will be settling into their new and improved school. "That excitement will help to offset, we hope, some of the stress of having to get set up for a new school year in just a few days time," said Annalise Van Ham, assistant superintendent of business for the Yellowknife Catholic Schools.

"They'll be moving into their new space for good now, so I

think in that way it will be exciting." said Van Ham. Work continues at the new school, which already has 250 students registered for this fall.

"It's going great. We're on a tight timeline.

The construction manager and all of the trades are just working tremendously to meet our schedule," she said. "By then, everything will be settled and people will be enjoying their new spaces, I'm sure.

"Our main focus is to make sure that all of our instructional and administration spaces are ready for the staff and the students," she said, adding that contractors will still be working on the new gymnasium well into fall.

Both the administration areas and classrooms are expected to be organized by the end of this week.

"The neat thing for children coming back or for the staff is that they're going to drive down that street where you used to have Weledeh standing in front of you, it's just gone now," said Van

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Ham.

The whole face of that lot and that whole property and the playground for the children has changed so much, so dramatically.

by Glen Vienneau Northern News Services

Weledeh Ready to Go *After 13 Months, New School Nearly Complete*

Construction crews are heading into the home stretch in completing the new Weledeh Catholic School.

Despite a rolling domino effect of delays that hampered the completion of the school, Yellowknife Catholic Schools (YCS') is confident the facility will be ready when it opens its doors to students three days from now.

“Really, what the whole issue is, was the three weeks before Christmas last year we lost when the ferry outage happened,” said YCS superintendent, Kern Von Hagen. “It threw us off and we never really seemed to recover.”

Construction of the school began 13 months ago. According to Von Hagen, the final tally on the cost of building is expected to total \$10.2 million. Most of those dollars will come from the territorial government in \$860,000 installments paid out over 20 years.

The pride of the school will be its gymnasium. Almost 1,600 square meters in size, it will be the largest indoor space North of 60, said Von Hagen.

“The music/drama space and the gym will be the last spaces ready.

“The gym will take the longest, it will probably be ready in mid-September.”

Von Hagen expects the gymnasium to play an important role in the community for recreational and civic events, such as trade shows and the Youth against Drunk Drivers awareness campaign next March.

Staying in step with the current trend in Yellowknife for using natural sunlight to brighten rooms and hallways, the architects

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have designed the building with a multitude of windows and skylights.

“There’s a lot of glass,” said architect Simon Taylor, who works for Pin-Matthews Architects.

“It’s a very open concept building.”

“I think the big draw is that it completes the St. Pat’s (school) project, so it’s now going to be like a campus.”

Even though the school will primarily be used by elementary school-aged children, four classrooms will be left aside for students from St. Patrick high school next door. In all, there will be room at the school for up to 375 students: Weledeh Catholic school will be officially commissioned Nov. 20-22.

by Mike W. Bryant [Northern News Services](#)

Weledeh - all the way in v-ball tournament

The school captured both Grade 8-championship banners in a volleyball tournament at the school last weekend.

Visiting schools did manage to wrest away both Grade 7 banners from Weledeh, despite a determined defense.

In the Grade 7 arena, William McDonald faced the always excellent Rae-Edzo in the boys’ finals. In two closely- fought contests, William McDonald took the best of three. 15-7 and 15-9, for the title.

In the Grade 7 girls’ corner, Rae Edzo made an easy sweep of the competition and heat Willy McD, 15-3 and 15-4 in the finals for the banner. But it was Weledeh all the way in Grade

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Catholic board eyes site for new school

Superintendent says planning needs to start now

by Nathan VanderKlippe
Northern News Services

Yellowknife Catholic Schools could build another 400-to-500-student school as soon as 2005.

Superintendent Kern Von Hagen has already begun lobbying city hall to set aside a plot of land at the Yellowknife Correctional Centre for the proposed school.

"The costs of not planning for a new school are obvious: lack of school spaces, lack of school choices, slow development of the city as a whole," he told council this Monday night. "We need to do productive, constructive, partnered planning together."

Early estimates for the school call for a facility with a similar capacity to Weledah Catholic school that would cost between \$10 and \$13 million to build.

However, Von Hagen warned that boom-time construction prices could mean that "it might bleed a little more than that."

Projected enrolments for Yellowknife show the city's student body growing by about 750 in the next eight years. Numbers calculated by Yellowknife Catholic School extrapolate 2005 enrolment at 4,037 and growing to 4,401 by 2010. There were 3,673 students in 2000.

Existing schools — both public and Catholic — can accommodate a total of 3,94 students at 85 per cent capacity, and 4,173 at 90 per cent capacity. The usual thresh-

olden is 95 per cent. "The school density," said Von Hagen.

"We think that the location we're suggesting works simply because of the access points (Old Airport Road and Franklin Avenue) and development costs in that area would probably be far less than ... in some of the other locations."

But the debate lines may be drawn over the location.

Mayor Gord Van Tighem said council still has to decide on what to do with the correctional centre site, which will be vacant in two years.

The city will begin looking again at its general plan in the near future. Locations for a new school

"The costs of not planning for a new school are obvious."

will be determined in part by zoning allocations in the general plan.

As for the correctional centre site, Van Tighem said the question that needs to be asked is:

"If it's located there, does it best meet the growth patterns?" he said.

"What we have to look at, is, do you want five schools within six blocks of each other in a city that's growing in other directions? Does that make sense in the long run?"

Another question is that of financing.

Education, Culture and Employment Minister Jack Ootes said his staff are currently reviewing capacity numbers before allocation decisions are made.

"I'm understanding of the (YCS) position and certainly we'll do our best to move things forward," said Ootes.

"You can understand that as minister I have to have the responsibility to have the appropriate work done."



Kern Von Hagen: Correctional centre site is good spot for new school.

Continuing the Dream

Yellowknife Catholic Separate School System 1952 2002

When we discussed finishing this collection of memories, one thing came to mind first and foremost—the students. The school system came into being for them, those of the fifties and those of the year 2002 and beyond.

In their respect two important events came to mind that should be mentioned as this collection closes.

One very chilly November morning in 1999, following a spirited Wade Hamer Challenge Cup hockey game, I drove past the YK Fire Station at about 7 30 in the morning, . And there, standing together on the side of the road were the students of the Students Against Drunk Driving, (SADD) from St Patrick and Sir John Franklin High Schools. They were happy, smiling and waving to the cars going by, and being heard in the community on a very important issue.

The hockey game the previous night and the gathering that morning told a lot about the students of the YK Separate school. Through these activities, the students showed spirit, strength, commitment and the fact that they have a voice and a place of importance in the community. As a group and as individuals, the students of the Separate School System have done justice to the ideals and dreams of Mr. Norman Byrne, Father Ebner and others who have worked so hard for the System over the past fifty years.

The other event that helps define the School System, it's students, teachers and their values took place in November, 2001 when the

The following report, written by Deb Maracle, is an excellent way to finish this memory book and begin the next fifty years in Yellowknife's Roman Catholic School System.

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Yellowknife students pray with the cross

“It was like having the world come together.” This is how one St. Patrick High School student described the double celebration that occurred in the St. Patrick High School Weledeh Catholic School twin gyms on Tuesday, Oct. 30.

The World Youth Cross Day event celebrated the once in a lifetime experience of having the cross visit Yellowknife as well as kicking off the 50th anniversary of Catholic education in Yellowknife.

The pope wasn't here, but his cross was, the cross that he gave to all youth in the world, the cross that has been touched by millions of hands, big and small.

On Tuesday, this cross made its way to Yellowknife. Eighty candle bearers led the cross into the dark twin gyms. This

demonstrated the effect of light shining through the darkness.

This also marked the first time in a long time that students from all three schools — Ecole St. Joseph School, St. Patrick High School, and Weledeh Catholic School in Yellowknife Catholic Schools were in one venue.

“That was the biggest cross I ever saw and I was very surprised,” said one Grade 1 student from Weledeh Catholic School.

What a wonderful way to begin our 50th anniversary celebrations Catholic education in Yellowknife is entering its 50th year. Our founders, Father Frances Ebner and Norman Byrne, would be proud.

Western Catholic Reporter November 12, 2000

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