



A Time to Remember...

Students and Staff Mark Remembrance Day

Schools across AVRSB planned special ceremonies for Remembrance Day, to honour those who have served and those who currently serve in times of war and conflict, and to remind us all to work toward a more peaceful world.



Chris Seymour and student Fiona VanWilgenburg placing a wreath during the EMS Remembrance Day ceremony.

Students at West Kings District High School were highlighted in local newspapers for organizing two services on November 4, one for students and one for community members. This year's presentation included readings, a student-made film, music and drama performances, and a special guest. West Kings grad and Canadian Forces member Nick Dunning joined the ceremony to speak about his experiences being posted in the Middle East.

At Evangeline Middle School, Rebecca Johnson and a group of students organized a November 10 Ceremony of Remembrance. As part of the ceremony, retired peacekeeper

(and father of former EMS students) Chris Seymour talked with students about his peacekeeping experiences.

At West Hants Middle School, three separate ceremonies were held for different grade levels. Members of the school's student leadership group, PASTE, welcomed 10 Royal Canadian Legion members to the school, providing each with a school pin and thank-you card. The WHMS band played as Legion members carried flags in to the ceremonies. Each ceremony featured students reading poetry and playing a collection of songs, and student Andrew Maynard performed the Last Post.

A special highlight of the WHMS ceremonies was a presentation by a World War II veteran, speaking on his experiences during the war, and the reading of the poem *In Flanders Fields* by Board member Paula Lunn.

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Big Year for Face Aux Questions

Central Kings was buzzing with excitement on November 7, as 305 Grade 7-9 students gathered to put their French language skills to the test at the 28th Annual Face aux Questions competition. This year, teams competed in all 12 categories and participation increased by more than 100 students.

More than 155 equally enthusiastic Grade 10-12 students competed the next day.

After the final rounds, the winners in each category were:

Français de base: Wolfville 1 (7e année), Central Kings 2 (8e année), West Kings (9e année), MRHS (10e année), Central Kings (11e année), West Kings (12e année).

Français intégré: BRHS 1 (7e année), MRHS 1 (8e année), MRHS 2 (9e année), BRHS 1 (10e année), AVHS 1 (11e année), MRHS 1 (12e année).

Immersion tardive: WHMS 1 (7e année), WHMS 2 (8e année), WHMS1 (9e année), West Kings (11e année).

Immersion précoce: Berwick 1 (7e année), Berwick 1 (8e année), NKEC 2 (9e année), Horton 2 (12e année).

Sincere thanks to the teachers who contributed their time to practice with students and accompany them for the competition. Many thanks as well to the families who attended the event to support the participating students and validate their learning of a second language.

AVHS Students Visit Millbrook First Nations and Glooscap Heritage Centre



Students in Mi'kmaq Studies 10 at Avon View High School view artifacts and listen to a presentation at the Glooscap Heritage Centre.

On October 26, students in the Mi'kmaq Studies 10 class at Avon View High School visited the Millbrook First Nations Community and the Glooscap Cultural Centre.

Prior to the trip, the class hosted guest speakers to increase their knowledge of Mi'kmaq culture and history. Jude Gerrard, AVRSB Mi'kmaq Services Specialist, presented stories of the Mi'kmaq people as well as a variety of cultural content including a talking circle and smudging ceremony.

Gerald Gloade from the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq also visited the class. Mr. Gloade brought original and replica artifacts found at Canada's oldest archaeological site in Debert. Students learned that humans have lived in this area for longer than any other area of Canada, approximately 13,000 years. With the knowledge firmly seeded by our guest speakers, students traveled to the Millbrook First Nations, just outside Truro.

During the trip, students enriched their understanding of the curriculum in Mi'kmaq Studies 10 through activities such as a guided walking tour of parts of the community, led by Gordon Pictou. The tour included a medicine trail, community church and porcupine lodge.

Students spent the second half of the day at the Glooscap Heritage Centre, where they observed a drumming demonstration, viewed a video about the Mi'kmaq people and their history, and received a guided museum tour.

Students said they were surprised by the size and style of the community. Teacher Jill MacDonald said this experience prompted many students to challenge stereotypical perceptions.

Overall, students said the highlights of the day were the drumming presentation and seeing original petroglyphs and artifacts that are thousands of years old.



Congratulations to the Central Kings Rural High School Senior Girls Soccer Team for achieving their **fourth consecutive provincial title!**

Creating Safe, Equitable and Positive Environments for All Genders and Sexual Orientations



A number of learning opportunities focussing on gender and sexual orientation have been offered to staff and school communities recently.

On November 9, all school Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding and Human Rights (RCH) Advisors gathered for a day of learning focused on sexuality, sexual orientation, gender and identity, with the goal of promoting safe and equitable treatment for all.

Teachers and school support staff learned about the "It Gets Better Canada" project, which aims to address bullying and prevent suicide among LGBTQ youth. Participants also heard from African-Nova Scotian spoken-word artist Des Adams and volunteers from the Valley Youth Project.



On October 26, students at **West Hants Education Centre** welcomed more than 200 visitors at the school's annual Haunted House. According to visitors, the two most frightening rooms were "Haunted Classroom" by Brittany Trider, Amanda Hill and Shannon White, and "Aliens" by Eli Boyd, Jesse Giles and Dillon Macumber.

Several students representing school-based GSAs (Gay-Straight Alliance or Gendered Sexuality Alliance) gave a presentation to staff on the important role of GSAs in creating awareness, dialogue and support for all students. RCH Coordinator Krishinda McBride says this was an example of students teaching the teachers.

"What the students told the adults in the room that day was that they want people to be vigilant. They don't see how teachers can turn a blind eye to the harassment that happens. LGBTQ students need caring, they need people to listen, to be honest, open and understanding," explains McBride. "The main message is, 'Accept me for who I am'."

McBride says that many School Advisory Councils within AVRSB have also received presentations on gender and sexuality. These learning experiences are part of an effort to educate and encourage each of us to have "courageous conversations" about gender and sexuality in order to create schools and workplaces that are safe, equitable and positive for all.

Food for Thought a Huge Success!

For the third year in a row, local Rotary Clubs and 19 AVRSB schools worked together to ensure students have access to healthy breakfasts, snacks and lunches.

The Food for Thought campaign raised over \$32,000 for participating schools, thanks to the efforts of the Rotary Clubs of New Minas, Kentville and Wolfville and the students, staff, parents/guardians and school community members of participating schools.

Campaign chair Greg White says plans are already being made for next year's campaign. "We're always thinking of how we can improve, to make sure children have food to learn, and to educate the public that this need exists, that nutrition is essential for kids to succeed."

Dancing for Fun and Fitness



On October 28, 32 students from Annapolis East Elementary School and Middleton Regional High School travelled to Bridgewater for the second annual Dance Spectacular, held as part of the Teachers Association of Physical and Health Educators (TAPHE) conference to promote dance in schools.

The dancers performed seven routines to the delight of the audience. Their next performance will be in Halifax at the National TAPHE conference.

Dance is a great form of exercise that promotes self esteem, social skills, creativity, and much more. Several of these students are now creating their own choreography!

Special thanks to group leader Cindy Perry, the volunteers who went on the trip, and Mrs. Zaleski, who has introduced a dance club at MRHS.

We want to hear from you!

- Send news/events for the December issue by Dec. 10 to communications@avrsb.ca

November Board Meeting Highlights

For complete Board Meeting minutes visit www.avrsb.ca/content/meeting-information.

Annual Election of Board Executive: Lavinia Parrish Zwicker re-elected Board Chair by acclamation, Sue Ritchie re-elected to Vice-Chair and Jackie Foster re-elected by acclamation as third Board Executive member.

Terms and Conditions of Employment for Non-Union Employees Policy: Benefit cost sharing of 65% employer, 35% employee approved for non-union employees effective Jan. 1 2012.

Annual Performance Report: This Contains a summary of achievements from 2010-2011, highlights from last year's Board meetings and an outline of challenges ahead. Full report online.

Internal Audit Charter Approved: Internal Audit Charter, Audit Plan and Work Plan for Internal Audit Team were developed in response to Auditor General recommendations.

Annual Review of Board Solicitor and Auditor Appointments: Reported that TMC Law and Morse, Brewster and Lake are performing duties well.

Next Board Meeting: December 7, 2011 at AVRSB Regional Office, Berwick

TMPDS Staff Learn Creative Problem Solving

Earlier this month, staff of Three Mile Plains District School took part in a presentation on collaborative problem solving (CPS) by Dr. Ross Greene. This approach is a model for understanding and helping youth with social, emotional, and behavioural challenges. Staff at TMPDS recently read Greene's book, *Lost at School*, and Principal David Campbell says the opportunity to learn from Greene in person will help staff better support students.

"I believe the approach that Dr. Greene describes is effective for problem solving with all students, but especially those students we would consider to be very challenging," says Campbell. "This is an approach that we have been following and learning about for the past few years, and to have Dr. Greene appear in Bedford was a golden opportunity for all staff members, including our Educational Assistants, specialists and our secretary, as we all play an important role in the behaviour and development of the students. This approach emphasizes making connections with students, then determining what lagging skills or unsolved problems may be present and then developing a realistic plan collaboratively with the child and other key players in the child's life."

Successful Schools for Successful Students Public Meetings November 28 and 29

All school community members welcome to attend upcoming public meetings for an overview of Successful Schools for Successful Students and to provide input on long-term plans. Contact board.secretary@avrsb.ca to send your input.

- **Mon., November 28** at West Kings District High School, 7:00 p.m. (Focusing on West Kings and schools in its feeder system)

- **Tuesday, November 29** at Central Kings Rural High School, 7:00 p.m. (Focusing on Central Kings and schools in its feeder system)