

LOCAL NEWS

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A special Valentine's Day surprise



THE SCOOP

MABLE HASTINGS

What could be better on a snowy Valentine's Day than a visit from some little people bearing flowers, cupcakes, cookies, gifts and an award? The Ken Jones Respite Program (KJC) for the intellectually and physically challenged were recipients of a heart-warming gesture made possible today by a group of youngsters from Jenny's Daycare.

The wee ones arrived with Jenny for a surprise visit this week after being invited last week by the Ken Jones Respite group to join them for their Zoo Therapy activity.

"The kids in my daycare program really enjoyed the zoo therapy activity and we were so happy to be invited by the KJC clients and animators," said Royea. "It was the kids who asked to make Valentine's cards and so on to bring to the group to thank them," she stated.

After observing that one of the Ken

Jones Respite Clients was having difficulty communicating while the group joined them for the Zoo Therapy the week before, one four year old had a special request in preparing the gifts for the Valentine's Day visit.

"I want to bring her a Teddy Bear," she said. "You must feel sad when people have a hard time understanding you and I know she likes Teddy Bears so that will make her feel happy," she added.

The children also presented Ally Leonard, a Respite participant volunteer with an award thanking her for helping them when they go to the local library.

Royea has been running a day care in Potton for many years now and she is a natural with children. Her efforts as the best craft maker and outing organizer are exceeded only by her love for Kenny Rogers; a love she has instilled in all of the children as well. Kenny Roger's leprechauns on St.Patrick's Day, Kenny Rogers Santa's at Christmas and if you play your cards right, a Kenny Roger's Valentine encouraging you to "know when to hold em."

Jenny is a gentle spirit with a passion for getting her little ones active in the community. For many years, Jenny organized fundraising initiatives to support the Montreal Children's Hospital and she always has one of the biggest floats, filled with kids, in the Annual Potton Parade. In summer, Jenny's Club is at maximum capacity. Jenny is loved by the kids and supported by the parents



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who trust her and her team in the caring of their most precious gift, their children.

For the Ken Jones Respite clients and staff, the Daycare group is like a breath of fresh air showing unconditional love and kindness. When these kids smile,

the day is instantly filled with sunshine. No better day to celebrate the love shared by community groups than Valentine's Day and thanks to Jenny's Day Care, 2019 was an extra memorable one.

Galt Carnival

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drawn wagon rides, an art competition, a woodsman challenge, a cupcake decorating contest, a mechanical bull riding contest, weightlifting competitions, ping pong tournaments, tug of war, and the infamous game of dodgeball in the gym.

The Devils were crowned this year's champions in the closest competition in Galt's history. In fact, only six points sep-

arated the first and third place positions. The current student body president, Emma-Lee Bernais, was a Devil for the first time. "Carnival really makes Galt special because we have the chance to put the things we learn in class like teamwork and time management into practice," she said. "I was a Lizard for three years and an Armadillo last year. I guess it was good timing to be a Devil. It's the best day of the year!" she exclaimed. Bernais has been one of the

many Galt students and staff members working tirelessly to put the event together.

"I was usually an Armadillo," mentioned Galt teacher and 1999 graduate Tannia Cortes. "The school spirit, the costumes, the fun activities, and having all the students and teachers participate definitely makes Carnival the epic event it is. We have to credit our Student Activities director, Kyle Martel, for all the work he did to make this happen. Us teachers just help out as much as we can throughout the day," she added.

Kyle Martel was welcomed by the Galt community with arms wide open. "I actually went to Richmond, so working at Galt was kind of a betrayal for the rivalry," he chuckled. "This is only my second year here but it's going very well. Carnival is such a big part of the job and it's unique to Galt. It's a staple and a tradition that I hope to help maintain for the years to come."

"I started organizing Carnival back in December," explained Martel. "I had to take care of bookings, I made sure lists went up for supervision, and I had to order and distribute the memorabilia, like the glasses and the buttons."

Martel credits the teaching staff for his success. "Nearly 100 per cent of teachers participate in Carnival. Those who

are scheduled to teach are required to be here, but the vast majority is proactive and a lot of teachers who aren't scheduled sign up for activities because at the end of the day it's for the kids. I can organize it to the moon and back but if it wasn't for the teachers' leadership and participation in organizing and supervising activities, a lot of it wouldn't be possible."

Although he has been widely praised so far, Martel admits that he has big shoes to fill. "I have to fall in the footsteps of the legendary Bob Halsall," he said. Halsall worked at Galt as the Student Activities director for over 35 years and is still involved with coaching and various events despite his retirement. "I went for this job because I wanted to be someone like that. I want to be a role model for these kids, because that's not something I necessarily had when I was back in high school," mentioned Martel, who had previously worked in schools and at summer camps before applying for the position. "Working with kids is just always something I have been drawn to. I want to leave my mark in a positive manner in these kids' lives, and I want to make sure that I'm preserving Galt traditions that are so much fun, like Carnival."

