

EDITORIAL

"After twenty years, I feel it is time to focus my attention elsewhere," explained Clifford.

Norma Clifford Honoured for her volunteer work

THE SCOOP



MABLE HASTINGS

On Wednesday, April 6 the Missisquoi North Volunteer Centre (CAB) Partage/Share Food Bank committee honored its exiting Chairperson, Norma Clifford for her twenty plus years of volunteer work with the food bank in Mansonville. Norma has long been involved in the program and for the past three years, she has assumed the role of Chairperson of the committee.

Partage/Share provides families in need with food throughout the year but is best known for the efforts put in with their annual Christmas Baskets which are distributed each year in December just before Christmas. This year, 39 baskets, representing 61 adults and 22 children were distributed. Norma and her many volunteer "elves," worked over a three day period in preparing the boxes and distributing them.

New Partage/Share Chairperson, Claire Alger addressed Norma and those who gathered with a heartfelt speech on

Wednesday.

"Norma, you are leaving some big shoes to fill and we are going to call upon you for guidance," said Claire. "On behalf of the Partage/Share committee and the CAB, we thank you sincerely for your time and hard work helping the food bank."

Norma was presented with two dozen roses, a framed collage of photos, a set of frying pans and a delicious chocolate cake as well as cards and best wishes from friends, CAB Board Members and staff. Attendees were treated to a piece of cake and beverage while enjoying the speeches in honor of Norma. At the end of the event, Norma addressed the group saying...

"After twenty years, I feel it is time to focus my attention elsewhere," explained Clifford. "I am involved with other volunteer activities and feel that it is time to take a break. I still support the Food Bank with all my heart and appreciate this kind gesture of appreciation shown here today," she added.

The Food Bank is holding a fundraising Mother's Day Breakfast on Sunday May 8 from 9am to noon at the "Baluchon" (French Elementary School in Mansonville) and tickets are \$10.00 per person, children under 5 are free. The breakfast will consist of pancakes, sausages, tropical fruit and beverage. For tickets, contact Partage/Share committee member, June Peacock at 450-292-4473.

For more information about the Partage/Share or any of the CAB's other programs visit the website at www.cabmn.org



MABLE HASTINGS

Norma with the honour of cutting the cake at her goodbye celebration last Wednesday.

Sherbrooke man charged for attempted murder

Record Staff
SHERBROOKE

A Sherbrooke man will appear in court this morning to face a charge of attempted murder after an incident involving his former life partner Friday.

At about 1:15 a.m. Friday the man is alleged to have gone to the home of a former partner with the intention of killing her. According to police, he tried to suf-

focate his intended victim but fled after the latter managed to get away and obtain refuge with neighbours and call the police.

The suspect was subsequently found by the Sûreté du Québec in a motel near Joliette and handed over to Sherbrooke Police.

He now faces charges of attempted murder, uttering threats, and illegal entry.

Letters

DEAR EDITOR:

I was present on April 6, at the National Assembly, when Corinne Payne, president of the Fédération des comités de parents du Québec (FCPQ), addressed the Committee on Culture and Education on the proposed school board reform Bill 86.

On behalf of 62 parent committees, she told the MNAs that 80 per cent of parents generally approve of the provisions in Bill 86, which calls for parents, teachers, principals and support staff to have more decision-making power at their schools, aimed to benefit students.

This brings to mind the four polls taken by CTV News and Global Montreal, in 2015, on the matter of elected school boards. An average of the polls suggested that 68 per cent of the anglophone community want them ditched.

Madame Payne, told the Committee, the status quo is no longer acceptable because many parents are victims of "bullying and harrassment" when dealing with the boards. (*Le Soleil*, April 6)

The same point could be made on the English side.

In 2014, I ran for chairman of the Lester B. Pearson School Board. The Central Parents' Committee, wisely put out a questionnaire to all candidates running for commissioner. There was a special questionnaire for those running for chairman - the incumbent, Suanne Stein Day; the vice-chair, Angela Nolet, and me.

Question # 3, under the heading: "Vision and Leadership" was most telling: "What will you do to reduce the intimidation and helplessness that many parents feel when they question the school board and its policies?"

Among the many interviews we did, I recall the vice-chair say on City TV on the 'Breakfast Television' show, on Oct. 20, 2014: "...we need a different type of leadership" ...and "...parents feel intimidated..."

Her written answer included this sentence: "Firstly, the Chairman of the School Board should be approachable and non-judgemental."

Part of my written answer said: "Having been personally refused, along with others, the right to ask questions, and tossed out of Council, the Pearson board, to my knowledge, has been the only board that demands security be called, when the Chair does not like a question."

By far, the biggest complaint made by the French and English school board associations is that Bill 86 grants new powers to the Minister of Education. Madame Payne said the FCPQ considers this new power to the Minister a good thing. So do I.

Presently, the system allows for abuse of power and a lot of school board secrecy. It is very hard for the parent, the taxpayer, the public to complain about matters, which include financial and ethical irregularities.

That said, in an unexpected turn of events, *La Presse* reported on April 9, that Premier Couillard is reconsidering the idea of scrapping school board elections. He said one reason is the English school boards have brandished the threat of a court challenge.

Throughout the day, CJAD reported the reaction of the news by the chairpersons of the Lester B. Pearson School Board and the English Montreal School Board. Suanne Stein Day expressed she was "beyond delighted;" Angela Mancini announced the move was a "victory for the anglophone community."

This is no victory. This is a loss for democracy, accountability and openness. Schools matter! Parents rule! Mr. Couillard: Bill 86 is good!

CHRIS EUSTACE

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	1 MONTH	6.49	0.32	0.65	\$7.46

Rates for out of Quebec and for other services available on request.

The Record is published daily Monday to Friday. Back copies of *The Record* are available.

The Record was founded on February 9, 1897, and acquired the Sherbrooke Examiner (est. 1879) in 1905 and the Sherbrooke Gazette (est. 1837) in 1908. The Record is published by Alta Newspaper Group Limited Partnership.

PM#0040007682

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to The Record, 1195 Galt East, Sherbrooke, QC J1G 1Y7

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