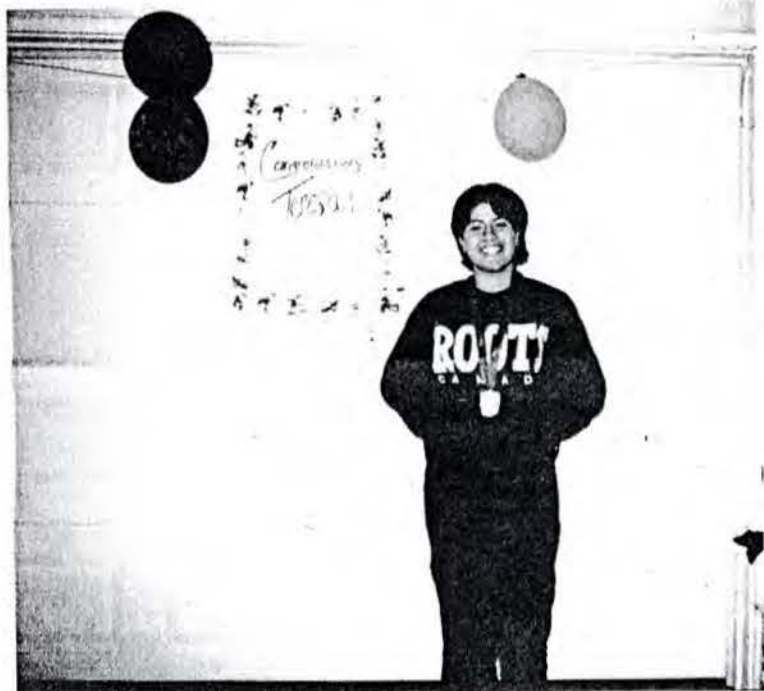


LOCAL GIRL GOES TO OFSAA

EDUCATION 1998



Theresa DaCosta a grade eleven student from West Elgin Secondary School has just returned from Sudbury where she was entered in the shot putt event. She was the first student from West Elgin in 40 years to make it this far and last year Coach Coran talked to Theresa about her talent and she then decided to go out for shot putt this year. This year was the 50th Anniversary of OFSAA and before arriving at OFSAA Theresa competed at the local track meets; Oxford Elgin meets, WOSSA and then onto OFSAA.

On Friday she travelled to Sudbury where she says it was very cold and began competition on Saturday at 9 a.m.

Theresa says that the best part of the competition was watching the top athletes from Ontario competing and 46 medals went to London area schools of which 19 were gold. Some of the different things they were able to do while there were visiting Science North; Big Nickel; the Imax theatre and bowling; and also took a trip into the mines at Sudbury.

As a community we are very proud of Theresa's accomplishments at every level of competition and at this year's OFSAA meet she came home with a silver medal. CONGRATULATIONS THERESA from everyone in West Lorne.

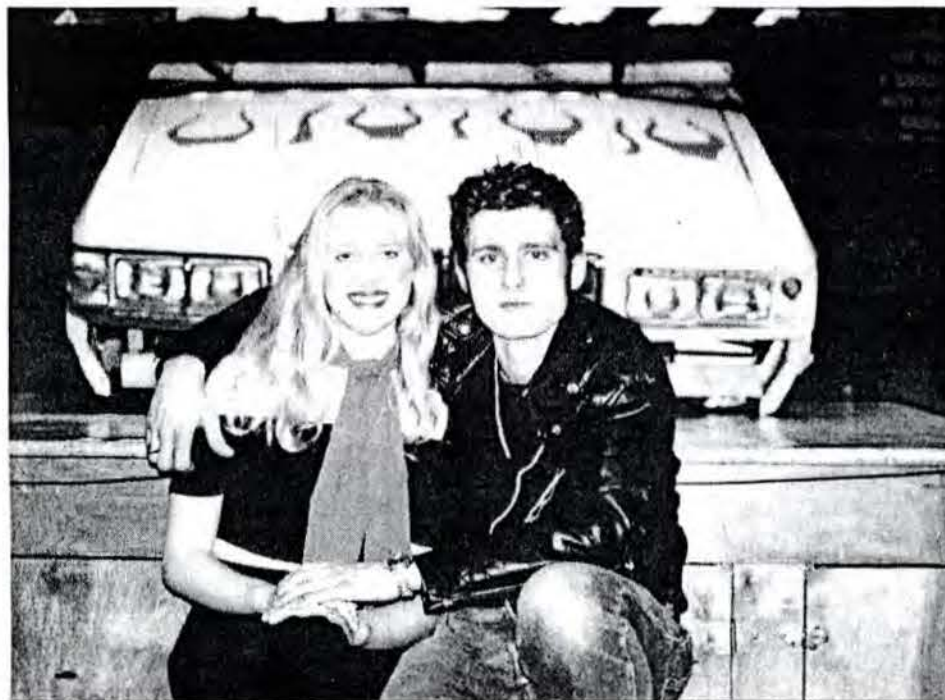


Provincial Champs!

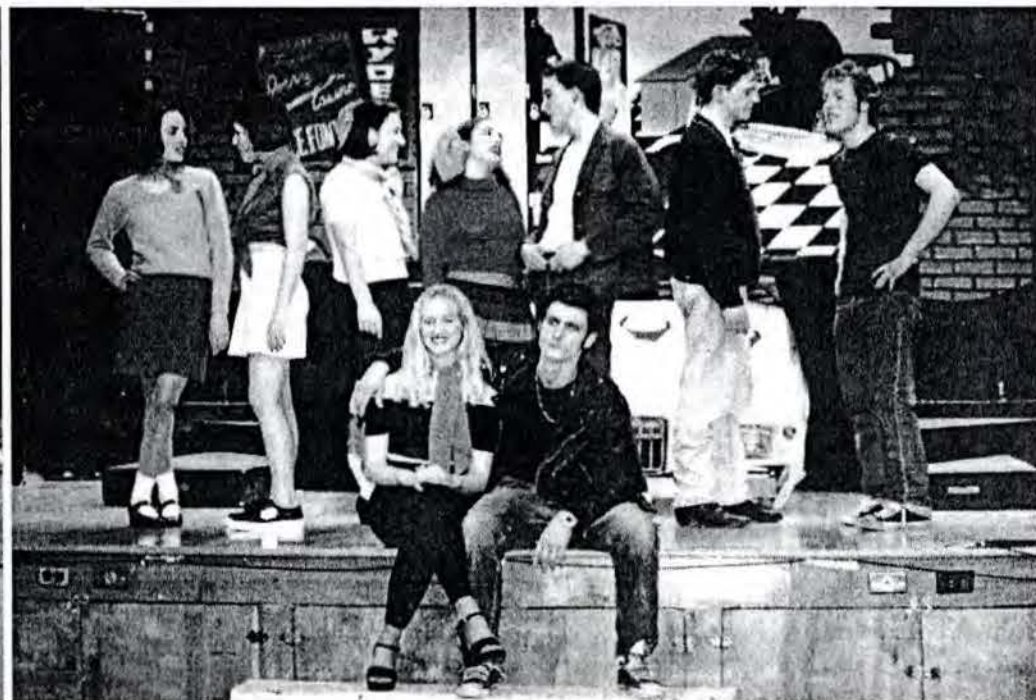
The Bantam Boys Forest City Volleyball Club won the Ontario provincial championship in Oshawa recently, taking care of Ottawa in the semi-finals and Durham in the finals. The team includes, back row from left, Cathy Robinson (asst. coach), Aric Sudicky, Steve Hebden, Chris Robinson, Pavel Kucharski, Andrew Gottschalk, Pierce Brudnell and Joffre Ribout (coach). Front row is Mark McKillop, Shawn Brac and Frank Longo.

West Elgin Free Press - Page 3

FORGET ANY OF YOU GREASE



Grease Lightening - Charlene Carroll and Alex Nesic



Grease Lightening: Front Row: Charlene Carroll, Alex Nesic. Back Row: Erin Deyle, Lisa Vergeer, Lisa Smith, Kasandra Langevin, Carl Prey, Dan Boyd and Travis Boyd.

Grease a Great Success

West Elgin Secondary School performed the school play "Grease" last week running from April 1st to the 4th. It was a wonderful and pleasurable play to watch. Everyone involved did remarkable. The band played well, the voices were admirable, and the acting was believable.

The play was directed by Mr. Paul Sydor, with musical direction by himself as well as Cheryl Kosciak.

The band members consisted of: Cheryl Kosciak on piano, Nathan Ouellette on lead guitar, Bruce Bobier on rhythm guitar, Kevin Bobier on bass guitar, Aaron Welch on drums, Shannon Cushman on first tenor saxophone and Melissa Eston on second tenor saxophone.

Choreography was done by Charlene Carroll and Lisa Smith.

The cast of the play included: Charlene Carroll as Sandy, Lisa Vergeer as Rizzo, Lisa Smith as Frenchy, Erin Deyle as Marty, Kasandra Langevin as Jan, Kelly Morden as Patty, Heather Haskett as Cha-Cha, Amy Champigny as Miss Lynch, Alex Nesic as Danny, Dan Boyd as Kenickie, Rob Cozzolino as Doody, Travis Boyd as Roger, Carl Prey as Sonny, Josh DeBoer as Eugene, Cory Welch as Vince Fontaine, Scott McPherson as Johnny Casino and Nathan Wright as Teen Angel.

All the cast and crew of this play should receive a standing ovation and plenty of applause. They all did an astounding job.

Given the limited equipment, and knowing that the stage in the high school is not made for a big production such as this, they made do with what they had, and showed the audience that they could still put on a marvelous performance.

Hats off and a round of applause to the cast and crew of "Grease."

W.E.S.S. ONTARIO SCHOLARS

The Principal has Recommended to the Minister of Education that the following Students be recognized as Ontario Scholars.



Peter Benneto, Dutton
Parents: John and Norah Bennetto
University: Waterloo
Program: Honors Co-op Computer Science
Career Ambition: Bill Gates, Jr.



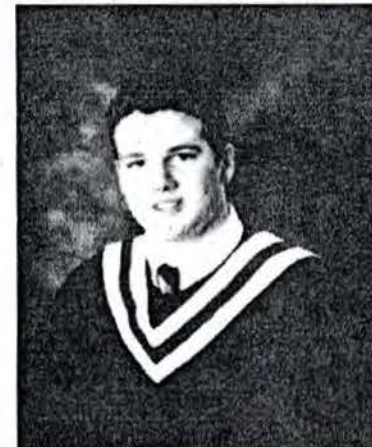
Simon Ecker, West Lorne
Parents: Simon and Brenda Ecker
University: University of Guelph
Program: Bachelor of Science in Agriculture
Career Ambition: Agriculture Profession



Zidra Ferreira, West Lorne
Parents: Arlindo and Maria Ferreira
University: Waterloo
Program: Environmental Engineering



Cindy Holland, Fingal
Parents: Ken & Elaine Holland
University: Brock University
Program: Honours Linguistics & Applied Language Studies
Career Ambition: Speech Pathologist



Brad Kriter, Rodney
Parents: Lorne & Helen Kriter
University: Waterloo
Program: Mechanical Engineering
Career Ambition: Mechanical Engineer



Monica Murray, Wallacetown
Parents: Dave & Brenda Murray
University: University of Western Ontario
Program: Beginning in Social Science then entering Honours Business in 3rd year



Allison Padfield, Rodney
Parents: Bob & Bev Padfield
University: University of British Columbia
Program: Human Kinetics and Exercise Science
Career Ambition: Medicine



Christine Pennings, Dutton
Parents: Henry & Coby Pennings
University: Waterloo
Program: Bio chemistry
Career Ambition: Pharmacist



Teresa Small, Iona Station
Parents: Fred & Louise Small
University: Guelph
Program: Bachelor of Science



Margaret Ellen Stevenson, Wallacetown
Parents: Wayne & Mary Jane Stevenson
University: University of New Mexico
Program: Political Science
Career Ambition: Career in United Nations

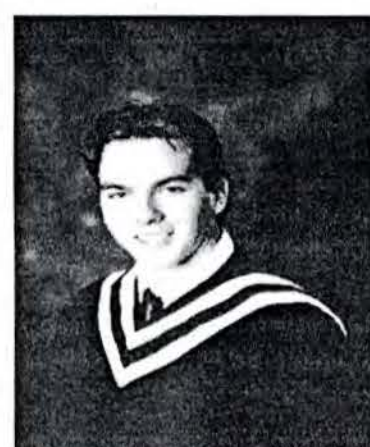
THREE NEW CURRICULUMS INTRODUCED TO ONTARIO STUDENTS

Queen's Park-Bruce Smith, MPP for Middlesex, praised the release of three new elementary school curriculums. Formally introduced by the Minister of Education and Training, the Honorable David Johnson, the new Arts, Physical and Health Education, and French-as-a-Second Language Curriculums will be implemented starting this September. "The new curriculums respond to demands for more challenging standards that are specific, clear and consistent. They are designed to improve student achievement and increase the education system's accountability to parents," stated Mr. Smith. The Arts curriculum will ensure that Ontario elementary students have formal instruction in the basics of music, visual arts, dance and drama. It also ensures students develop their creative, planning, interpretive, and critical skills by creating and performing their own works, as well as interpreting and critiquing their own work, and the work of others. The Physical Education program helps students develop their large motor skills as they move through the elementary grades. This will be done through par-

ticipation in individual and team sports, as well as activities such as power walking, push-ups, and skipping rope. Students will also learn about issues related to their physical development and health; from good eating habits in Grade 1 to issues dealing with sexuality, and alcohol, drugs and cigarettes in later grades. The French-as-a-second language curriculum focuses on grammar, language conventions, and vocabulary. Descriptions are provided of grade-by-grade knowledge and skills that students will acquire in Grades 4-8. The curriculum emphasizes the development of oral communication first, with reading and writing skills phased in. Core French is mandatory for grades 4-8 in English-language elementary schools. By the end of Grade 8, students must have had a minimum of 600 hours of French instruction. "As the Parliamentary Assistant to Minister Johnson, I have been pleased to assist in the development of these new curriculums. Improving the education our children receive remains this government's priority," said Mr. Smith.



Lisa Vergeer, Rodney
Parents: Henry & Mary Vergeer
University: Wilfred Laurier
Program: Political Science



Matt Vergeer, Rodney
Parents: Joe & Florence Vergeer
University: Wilfrid Laurier University
Program: Communication Studies



Asaph Warwick, Wardsville
Parents: Graham Warwick and Elizabeth Sebestyen
University: Western
Program: Science

West Elgin Free Press - Page 8

**W.E.S.E.S. GRADE 7 GIRLS VOLLEYBALL TEAM
ELGIN COUNTY "B" FINALISTS**

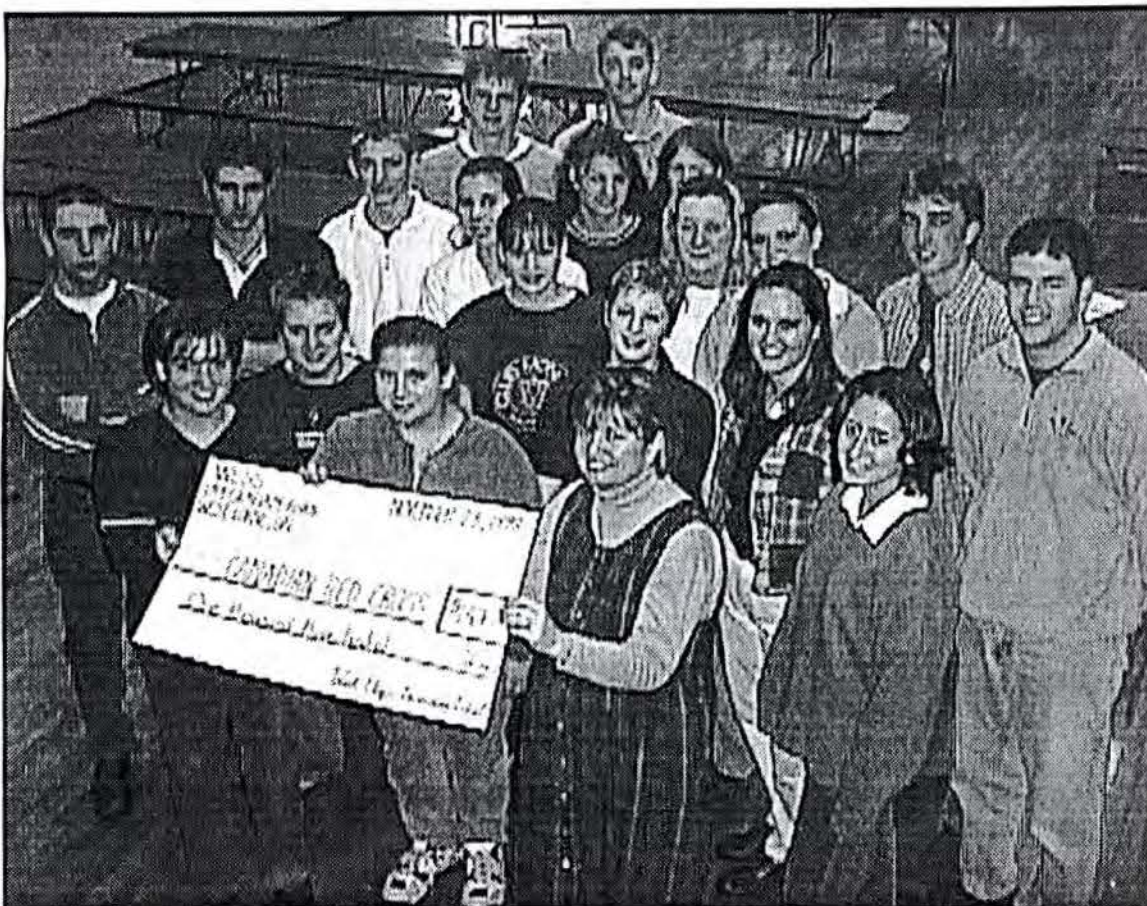


Front Row Jayme Ford, Danielle Bint and Lexy Trudell. Back Row Tiffany Kalita, Emma Sharpe, Katie Lyons and Kendra Goos.



There are plenty of new faces at Aldborough Public School this year. They include, back row left to right, Tim Coombs (Gr. 3), Caryl Waters-Coulter (Secretary), Diane Pease (Gr. 5), Kim Truax (Gr. 2) and Natalie Fowler (Gr. 4). In front, from left to right, are Scott Dunn (Resource), Jennifer Russell (Gr. 1), Christine McCoubrey (Resource) and Sherry-Lynne Kirschner (Gr. 6). **SEPT. 1998**

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Hurricane Mitch Relief

Miss Beattie OAC World Issues class at WESS decided to more than just study world issues - they spearheaded a money drive to help the victims of Hurricane Mitch in Central America. More than 11,000 were killed and thousands more injured in the devastating storm. The entire school took part on the fund-raiser which brought in \$1,300. Miss Sethi's homeroom topped all classes by raising \$152.30. Honourable mention goes to Mr. Lougheed's and Mr. Enn's class. Here, Cindy McIlmoyle and Paula Verbrugge present the cheque to Sharon Lechner of the Elgin-St. Thomas Red Cross.

W.E.S.E.S. GRADE 8 GIRLS VOLLEYBALL TEAM - ELGIN COUNTY "A" CHAMPS



Front Row Kayla Long, Devon Johnston and Carolyn Tunks. Back Row Cherie Hunter, Lindsey Webber, Justina Campbell, Ashley Thompson. Absent Jennifer Pinter and Shannon Kryhul. These girls won M. Bruyere Invitational, Tecumseh Invitational and Morrison

December 21, 1998 - Page 17

Aldborough Public School Show They Care



Aldborough Public School students have done their part once again this Christmas as they filled a number of boxes with non-perishable food items to be donated to the Caring Cupboard. Here, Sylvia Logan, representing the Caring Cupboard, receives the food from students Philip Ouellette (Grade 4), Amanda Jamieson (Grade 4), Lauren Sheedy (Grade 2), and in front Matthew Payne (Grade 2), Mitch Kuska (senior kindergarten) and Kelsie Zoller (senior kindergarten).

VALEDICTORIAN'S ADDRESS

WESS October 24, 1998
 "They're going to close our school!... Graduating class, Mrs. Foster, Staff, family and friends: this is only a rumour, but for many rural Ontario schools, it is a reality. My classmates and I were fortunate to have completed our years here at West Elgin without too many drastic changes. I'm concerned about the younger students, and whether or not this school will be here for them in the future. Schools are already being destroyed in rural Ontario today. This affects our class, students from the past, and new students to come. When might the last Valedictorian speak here at commencement? When will the last national anthem be played? Where will this community be without our school? When our "rural schools are tied to the economic, cultural, and social viability of the community ... To close our school would be like closing our community."* As I looked back over the past years spent within the walls of this school, so many thoughts and feelings were rekindled in my mind. How about the first day of school? *Nervous? Lost?* But excited all in one. We anticipated making new friends, feared some teachers, or perhaps dreamed of that first high school

romance. Grade nine was a time when the girls towered over the boys, we had cafeteria food for the first time, we received marks for showing up to class and behaving. Grade nine was also a time when Vanilla Ice was still considered cool. Grade nine was only the tip of the iceberg. At that time, we didn't realize the significance of the adventure we were embarking upon. Looking back on the happenings and memories that being together at WESS provided, we realize how truly lucky we were. While thinking about what I would say today, only the most important things stuck with me. The bad times, or the disputes among peers and with teachers, or even that time in detention, all seemed quite insignificant. The pressures of student life, like exams, projects, relationships and extra curricular activities were circumstances that we all shared. Together, we struggled with many of the same stresses, problems and tragedies of this small school. At times, it seemed quite difficult to overcome certain obstacles, but we used each other, our teachers and community for strength and support. We have literally grown up together. Some of us grew up here while others joined this school a bit later. One of the



Heather McPhail was honoured with being Valedictorian for the Graduating Class of 1998.

graduates, who moved here from another place, described how he had elementary classes in the city, and barely recognized the faces in his own classroom. This student said that being at WESS he felt like a part of something big, and loved to feel accepted. Another impressive aspect of this school was its energy. There were hundreds

of memorable school trips, hot plates, band trips, concerts, and competitions. We developed many successful sports teams over the years. Track and field, volleyball, field hockey, basketball, badminton, ice hockey, football, golf, soccer, and a competitive modified sports teams. We must not forget about our dedicated cows in the pas-

ture. Not only did they support our Wildcat teams on the field in all weather, but they also taught us many things about the birds and the bees! The SAA and Students council were both energetic and very public organizations which gave us some breaks from the usual classes each day. They were a lot of fun for us, while they also reached out to the town. These groups raised money for charitable events like the Terry Fox run, the United Way, and many food drives. Those were just the "biggies". I think that the hard work involved on our annual blood donor clinic, as well as the brave souls willing to donate blood should be recognized. All of the other clubs like yearbook, drama, dance committee, art, and school reach added to the atmosphere. And Superstars! We had them too! I'm talking about the cast of our smashing production Grease. Thanks to the new hall monitoring cameras, anyone could be a star! It is a bit overwhelming to remember all of the extraordinary things that happened here. I'm sure that everyone here today has some memories stirred up from these lists of events. We share most of these memories because they were experienced
Continued on page 6



Brad Krieter, Monica Murray, Simon Ecker and Kevin Bobier.

SPECIAL AWARD WINNERS



Front Row Left to Right Cathy Holland, Simon Ecker. Back Row Left to Right Monica Murray, Heather McPhail, Matt Vergeer and Tina McLeod.

**WEST ELGIN
SENIOR
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL NEWS**

Oct 15th 1998

By: **Craig Hoglund**

During this past week W.E.S.E.S. has been preparing for many upcoming activities. Student Council had it's second successful meeting. The following students were selected by their classmates for classroom representation: 7B: Jan Kool, Richa Sharma, 7C: Craig Hoglund, Jessie Jones, 7S: Jenna Campbell, Emma Sharpe, 7T: Katie Lyon, Jeff Okolisan, 8B: Matt Mistele, Carolyn Tunks, 8L: Kayla Long, Lindsay Webber, 8P: Amy Mc Landress, Sheri Hunter, 8PT: Becky Gray and Megan McLandress. These students have volunteered to be on one of these committees: Public Relations, Economics, Social or Athletics. Saturday, October 17 was our first volleyball tournament of the season for the grade 7 and grade 8 boys. It will be held in the gymnasiums of W.E. S.E.S. and W.E.S.S. from 9:00 to 3:30. We wish you success.

Ms. Race is working with our Cross country running team preparing for the meet on Tuesday October 20th in Alymer at Optimist Park.

The intern reports will be going home on October 22. Parents with any questions please contact the school. W.E.S.E.S. is holding a book fair during the week of October 26 - 30. Students: if you have any spare change, purchase a book.

Do not forget about the musical presentation "From Bach to Beatles" on October 27th. Rifle through the closets and bring a costume to school for our Halloween dance on October 31st. Read next week's paper for more details on our school's activities.

WESES UPDATE

October 16th 1998

THANKS !

Thank you for your support of the Terry Fox Run and the fundraising for Camp Celtic! Sharon Leatherdale assisted us by counting the cash and organizing the efforts and we thank her for the hours of work spent.

COLLECT:

We are collecting the grocery tapes from Zehrs, Dutton Knetchels, and West Lorne IGA for cash return, and now we add the collection of Campbell Soup product labels. We hope to get computers, musical instruments etc. by bringing labels from all soups and Pepperidge Farm, Goldfish crackers. Large soup can labels count as five times more than small ones, but all help the cause. Please send them in with students.

JOIN US:

We will be attending the Remembrance Day Ceremonies at the Cenotaph on Nov. 11 to lay a wreath. Please join us in celebrating our freedom, won by the bravery of others.

LEARN:

The Health Unit is sponsoring a six week session locally, geared to parents of young children and early teens. It is called "How to talk so kids will listen" Call the Health unit at 1800-922-0096 for more information.

JUST FOR YOU:

Please use our answering service to leave messages about your child's absence from school. A message left saves our secretary hours of calling to verify your child's safety.

CALENDER OF UPCOMING EVENTS:

October

- 19 Vision testing for JK
- 20 Vision testing for JK
- 21 Stamp collecting workshops for interested students
- 22 Intern Reports go home
- 26 Hep B shots for grade 7, School council mtg. 7:00p.m
- 27 From Bach to Beatles presentation :1:00p.m.
- 28 Cookie dough and candles are delivered- please come for your order, Magazine subscription kick off (this is for new and renewal subscription)
- 29 Celtic Meeting 7:00 p.m.
- 30 School Dance (\$ 1.00 admission in costume, \$ 2.00 without) 1- 3:15p.m.
- 31 Volleyball tournament for girls (WESES and WESS)

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL NEWS

The JK's and SK's in Mrs. Milne's class had a super time at the pumpkin patch! They picked pumpkins for the class, saw how pumpkins were washed for the market, had a hayride, and everyone was able to take home a pumpkin. They would like to thank Joy and Dave Westelaken for the tour and also the parents who helped make the trip fun.

The SK room became a very scary looking place as they continued to decorate their room with witches, skeletons, and jack-o-lanterns. They are learning the colour words orange and black and the number 3. They also searching for as many words as they can that start with the letter p.

The Grade 1 class just completed a unit on Living and Non Living things found in our school yard. They went for a walk around the school yard and sketched a picture of what they saw.

Grade 2 enjoyed making apple crisp, but the best part was eating it with ice cream and sipping apple cider. They want to thank Mrs. Griegochevski for helping them. They also sang thankful songs and dramatized a turkey poem. They learned about the first Thanksgiving.

This month in Language Arts the Grade 3 / 4 students have been reading short stories and will begin putting together a personal collection to tell others about themselves. The new math unit is about place value and working with large numbers. In religion they buried a time capsule to preserve what they are like right now. They will dig it up when they graduate from Grade 8. They had a test on basic map skills and are moving on to learn about world maps. The science unit about habitats has just finished and they will be doing a research project. Book reports are due at the beginning of November. They are reading, reading, reading!! Mrs. Dupuis' Grade 4 students have

been busy collecting, organizing and interpreting data. They are moving on to numeration. They buried their time capsule and plan on digging it up on graduation day in 2002. Environmental Studies finds them learning about the interdependence of living things. They are also looking forward eagerly to Hallowe'en. Grade 5 hopes that the turkeys they made got home in time for Thanksgiving! They are getting ready for Hallowe'en and made scary paper mache spiders. The students have received a communication book. It will contain all homework, reminders, and notes from teachers, and will be sent home each night with the students. Parents are being asked to initial the book after reading it, and checking to make sure that their child's homework is complete. The teachers are hoping that this will help students become better organized and responsible and will keep parents well informed. The Grade 6 students have completed the novel, The Ivory Claw, by Sylvia Sikundar and Mrs. Small enjoyed the personal responses by students to the story and about the conservation of elephants. The oral questions for individual chapters indicated that most students were responsible for the homework assigned and displayed a good understanding of the story. The class has been working on decimals and patterning in math. They are very interested in their science unit on The Diversity of Living Things, especially since the introduction of the microscope. In social studies they are continuing to work with the atlas on mapping skills.

The Grade 7 students had a chance to find out about preparing a big meal as they made a Thanksgiving dinner for the Grade 8 class and the staff. They did a great job and everyone was stuffed! They are working on measurement in mathematics and learning formulae for pe-

rimeter and area. In history they are studying the native peoples of Canada and are doing some research in this area. They have been reviewing their keyboarding skills on the computers and are going to learn how to use the word processing programs to do reports.

Grade 8 students are working on statistics and probability in mathematics and are making graphs, as well as interpreting them. They are enjoying their mystery and wonder unit in English and are reading mystery novels for a book report. They would like to thank the Grade 7 class for the wonderful Thanksgiving meal. In religion they have selected a community service project to work on for 25 hours in preparation for Confirmation.

Intramural sports are running for all divisions and are a form of volleyball. Students are having fun playing each other during the recesses and noonhour and are also improving their skills. Mrs. Seed and Mrs. Dupuis have chosen a Junior Girls Volleyball team and hoping to schedule some games for their team.

The Senior Girls and Boys Volleyball teams are in full swing. They are in a league with other separate schools from Glencoe, Delaware, Byron, and London, are doing a lot of travelling and playing.

Elections for Student Council took place this week after campaigning and speeches. The Phys. Ed. Council is selling chips on Fridays. They are also helping with the intramural sports programs that are running, and are working on keeping the equipment room in the gym neat and tidy.

A.P.S. BUTTERFLY GARDEN EXPANDS



This week seemed the perfect autumn time for Mrs. Bandeen's Kindergarten class to plant their very own daffodils. The grade 6 students assisted with the planting (roots down) of over 200 bulbs that will be showing their presence come spring.

Mrs. Lippold and Mrs. Laurence of West Lorne Horticultural Society were on hand to answer questions.

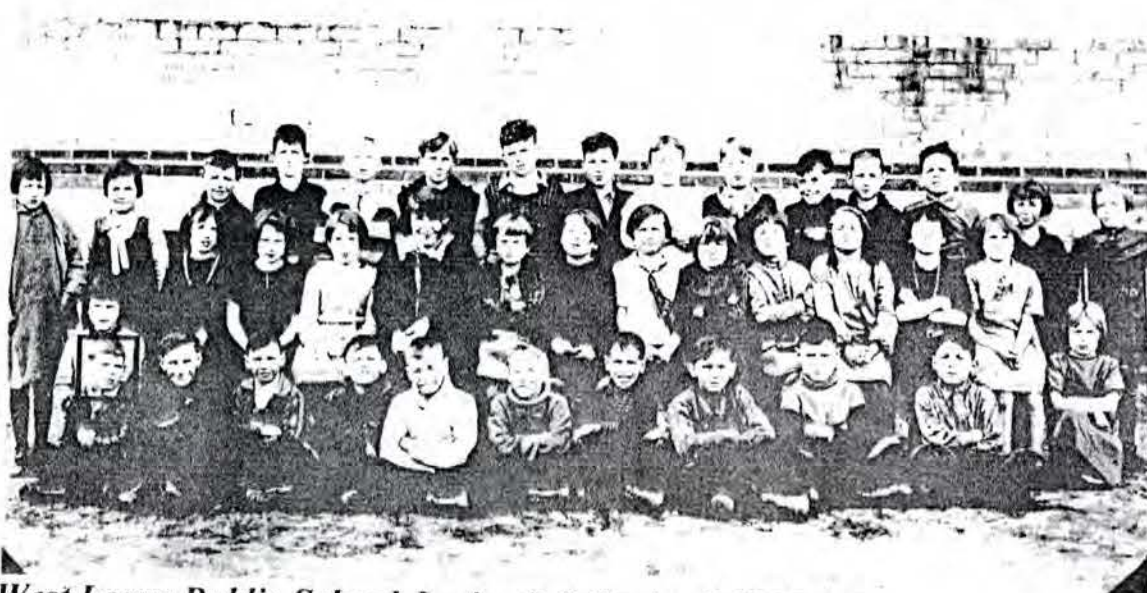
Mrs. Peternal and Mrs. Waterworth and Committee welcome you to enjoy the array of colour over the seasons.

OCT 1998



So, do you recognize anyone? Submitted by Eleanor Coleman, the picture at the Rodney basket factory was taken sometime in the 1930s. All have been identified but one (circled). Back row from left are Roy Haskell, Carl Little, Joe Payne, Lloyd Elliott, Fred Galbraith, Margaret Baxter, Rena Haskell, Albert Wells and Gord McDonald. Middle row from left are Nola Davis, unknown, John Meserschmit, Bob

Gray, Bill Constant and Jim McGhan. Front row from left are Peter McVanell, Ernie Schibe, George Doan, Charlie Hyland, Carl White, Russ Knight, Frank Hurdle, Claude Shaw and Dick Johnson. If you have an idea who the person circled may be, give us a call at the Chronicle (785-2455) and we'll pass it on to Eleanor. Thanks!



West Lorne Public School Junior 3 & Senior 3 1927-28

Teacher: Miss Tena McKillop

First Row (sitting) left to right: First person unknown; Arney Brock; Glen Ross; Leonard Brock; Jack Tochak; Fred Hill; Ken Roat; Morley Gammon; Clarence Gibson; Ray Edwards.

Second Row left to right:

Vera Clark (kneeling); Bessie Watterworth (sitting); Florence McGill; Edna McGill; Dorothy Loucka; Thelma Handy; Lois Carson; Merle Frank; Connie McPhail; Isobel Sloan; Mabel Gammon; Lena Webber; Jean Schlechauf; Kathleen McPhee (kneeling).

Third Row left to right:

Leta Butler; Margaret Scott; Archie Hill; Frank Taylor; Myron Smith; Dick Schlechauf; Ray Lemon; Dan Dymock; Gordon Smith; Cliff Brown; Glen Schlechauf; Fred Taylor; Tom Dymock; Alice Gammon; Dorothy McColl (crutches).

The names were sent in to us from Mrs. Connelly of London. Thank you.



Gayle Bogart, AES manager.

AES still has a presence in West Elgin

BY: KAREN ROBINET

Unlike what's happened in years gone by, Agricultural Employment Services (AES) does not have an office in West Lorne this year.

However, area residents do have access to the federal service through the Rural Outreach Office in West Lorne. AES Manager Gayle Bogart is in the outreach office Wednesday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon.

Bogart says the West Lorne branch office became a casualty of cutbacks, but she's pleased to be able to get out to this area weekly. She says the elimination of the seasonal West Lorne office is quite a blow for the area as it has been in place for the past 20 years.

She is now in the process of compiling a database of people looking for agricultural employment through to the harvest. "It's easier to get job orders in from employers than it is to get people registered," she says. Bogart says it isn't easy to track down those who are looking for work in the agricultural sector, and she says it's important for people to be registered. Even though she is only in the outreach office once a week, Bogart says application forms are available there every day, so anyone interested can stop in and fill one out.

While there are still lots of job opportunities in agriculture this year, Bogart says youngsters who have traditionally gone corn detasseling will be in for a disappointment. Because of Pioneer's decision to grow its corn in the U.S., there won't be detasseling jobs this year. "It's going to be hard on young people," says Bogart. "It's been a good income for them." Detasseling has meant jobs for "a couple of hundred kids," in past years she said. However, there are still options for young people, and Bogart says while there are no age restrictions for agricultural labourers, she says parents must make the final decision on whether or not a youngster can handle the demands of work.

As far as older employees go, Bogart says, "we want to hear from them because of the jobs here that are available." Each year, about 1,000 people in Elgin County find seasonal and/or casual work in agriculture.

As well as matching up employees with employers, the AES also does a lot of other things, including serving as a resource for employers. The AES is also working in partnership with the provincial Summer Assistance Wage Experience Program and is currently exploring ways of creating new partnerships to try and head off the federal government's plans to eliminate the service as of next March. Agricultural groups are also lobbying the government to keep the AES alive. Bogart says people can also contact MP Gar Knutson, who she says, "has been trying to help us."

Bogart says the elimination of the AES will be a major setback to the farming community. "It's such a specialized service," she says, adding that farm produce, "is different from other commodities; crops that are perishable, the weather... We rely on the business."

But for now, Bogart says it's business as usual. "The jobs are here and we are doing business," she says, adding that, "the west end has not been forgotten!"

For more information, call AES at 519-631-3240 or 519-773-5307.

Health centre has new program co-ordinator

BY: KAREN ROBINET

Anyone stopping in at the West Elgin Community Health Centre will see a new face.

Patricia Potter has just begun work as the new program-co-ordinator at the centre. Potter has moved to West Lorne from Brook's Falls, near Huntsville, where she was the co-ordinator of community services and community development at the Almaguin Community Health Centre.

Potter says there are a number of similarities between the local health centre and the Almaguin one, which had seniors and disabled adults as its targeted population. Potter's position in West Lorne was most recently held by Donna Lunn, and Potter says she wants to continue the work that has already been done to this point. At the Almaguin centre, which was a new facility, Potter developed palliative care, respite care and meals on wheels programs, and learned the ins and outs of working in a rural setting, where she dealt with 16 different communities.

While she says she initially met with some skepticism up north, once people got to know her and understand what she was doing, things went very well, she says. Coming from a farm family has been a definite asset, Potter says, as it enables her to understand the challenges and unique concerns of people in rural communities.

Although she is new at the job, Potter says she already has some ideas on things she'd like to do, including helping the health centre expand into the Dunwich area. She's also meeting with various community agencies to see what is available to local residents, as well as what is not. She said the health centre's board of directors is currently prioritizing what it would like to see done, and she will be working closely with them to turn the needs of the community into reality.



Patricia Potter is the new program co-ordinator with the West Elgin Community Health Centre.



Organizers of the Funshop held in West Lorne last week were: (back row left to right) Ron Jones, Agnes Gosnell, Mary Frances O'Hagan, guest speaker Dan Needles (front) Mary Payne and Hilde Morden.

Funshop brings participants of study together for results, entertainment

BY: KAREN ROBINET

St. Mary's Parish Hall in West Lorne was busy last Wednesday as over 80 area seniors gathered together for the Making It Happen funshop, the wrap-up to phase one of the West Elgin Seniors' Project.

The seniors' project was initiated in January of this year, with the goal of allowing seniors in West Elgin to live as full a life as possible and how new supportive housing services could best enhance seniors' well-being.

Project Co-ordinator Mary Frances O'Hagan opened the day-long workshop with a few statistics to show that the senior population is on the rise. In 1991, she said the population of Canadian seniors was 11.6 per cent, but by the year 2031, that number is expected to more than double, to reach 24.5 per cent. And, during that period, the number of seniors over the age of 75 is expected to triple. And, while 25 years ago, there were twice as many teens as seniors, by the year 2031, there will be three times as many seniors as teenagers. "We've got to do a lot of planning now," said O'Hagan.

To that end, a series of 17 focus groups was held across West Elgin, with a total of 158 seniors participating.

O'Hagan said the concept of the seniors' study is part of a new thrust to see community projects initiated and tackled by members of the community. "In the past, things have been dictated from on high, but things are changing; things are coming back to the community," she said. "We want to build momentum so you seniors can be part of the change process."

Four senior volunteers made up the project team; Hilde

Morden, Agnes Gosnell, Ron Jones and Mary Payne and they were instrumental in gathering material from others to get a picture of how seniors in West Elgin perceive their assets, contributions and strengths. Much of what was discovered was very positive. "Every person in this room has an asset or a contribution they make not only in the community but sometimes around the world," said O'Hagan. Not surprisingly, study participants who reside in seniors' homes saw themselves as more dependent on professional services than those who live at home. However, O'Hagan said that residents at Beattie Haven, "have a tremendous sense of involvement in that community."

Some primary concerns of all seniors are safety, security and community support, and emphasize that socializing greatly influences a person's quality of life. Many participants discussed formal programs like Neighbourhood Watch, while others rely on a more informal system between neighbours. On the practical side, sidewalks and lighting are pressing issues for many seniors, while friends and neighbours are the most important support people for seniors, not professionals. O'Hagan said that the church is the most important institution to seniors, while local organizations are also very important, including the Womens' Institutes, horticultural societies and the Daffodil Society. Organized recreational activity is also seen as vital. Transportation came up again and again as an issue, as did the need for friendly visiting. Long distance telephone charges, particularly for seniors in Rodney and West Lorne were viewed

(continued on page three)



The results and recommendations of the West Elgin Research Report on Optimizing Capacities In A Rural Community was discussed on the television show *This Business Of Farming* on February 25 and 26. Taking part in the program were: (left to right) Hilde Morden, Agnes Gosnell, Ross Daly and Mary Frances O'Hagan. Copies of the report are available at a cost of \$5 each by calling 1-800-265-4588.

October 14, 1996



At Funshop 2 for Seniors, John Davidson of Jesse's Journey was the keynote speaker. He is flanked here by: Hilde Morden, chairperson of the West Elgin Seniors Project (left) and Jill Soos, chairperson of Funshop 2.

(K. Robinet)



Volunteers recognized - Several volunteers from the West Elgin Funshop 2 program were recognized for their talents and hard work in making the workshops such a success recently by project co-ordinator Mary Francis O'Hagen. The recipients of the awards were from left to right front row: Mary Paine, Agnes Gosnell, Hilde Morden and Ron Jones, (Middle row l-r) Jill Soos, Eleanor Blain, Mary Frances O'Hagen, and Jean Georgevich, (Back row l-r) David Haweg, Bob Walker, Terry Heeney and Keith Kelly.

Nov 1996