

*Ottawa South***EMC**

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YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

# Franco-Cité wins volleyball championship

**SPECIAL TO THE EMC**

Recently, the École secondaire catholique Franco-Cité hosted the prestigious senior boys' Franco-Ontarian volleyball tournament.

At the event, the Franco-Cité senior team was victorious after a hotly contested final against Béatrice-Desloges.

In the preliminary round, the players on the Franco-Cité senior team racked up 15 wins and 1 loss, and in the elimination round, they had to face down two of the region's big teams, namely Samuel-Genest in the quarter finals and Louis-Riel in the semi-finals.

The players worked very hard in these matches to reach the big final, which pitted two of the CECLFCE's strongest teams against each other: Béatrice-Desloges and Franco-Cité. After a defeat in the first game

(20 – 25), captain Philippe Yeldon successfully rallied his team for the second game (25 – 19) and the deciding game (15 – 10). Coach Réjean Godmaire, a teacher at the school, stressed the players' team spirit and resolve in earning them the big win.

"It's an honour for the players to have won the Franco; it's a first for Franco-Cité in the senior boys category, he said. "The guys are proud."

Other performances worth mentioning for the CECLFCE: Samuel-Genest and Franco-Ouest both placed among the top eight teams. As for the Franco-Cité junior team, they managed to take home the silver medal in the consolation round.

The schools arranged to meet again next year in Rockland, Ont., where the École secondaire catholique L'Escale will host the tournament's 13th year.



Tuesday » November  
18 » 2008

## School bus companies don't check drivers' references

### Competition makes it 'impossible,' says manager of firm that fired man for drinking

**Joanne Laucius**

The Ottawa Citizen

*Tuesday, November 18, 2008*

Recruiting school bus drivers is so competitive that bus companies find it difficult to perform character reference checks on potential hires, says a manager for the bus company that fired a driver after he was caught drinking in an idling school bus.

While police checks are mandatory, it's uncommon for school bus companies to call previous employers in the bus industry, said Lilabette Leduc, manager for the Ontario operations of Quesnel Buslines, which operates about 500 buses in Ontario and Quebec.

Bus companies find it difficult to recruit and retain drivers, she said.

"When a bus driver wants to change companies, the last thing the first bus company wants to do is give a reference," said Ms. Leduc, who said the driver who was fired was "very cordial" and his police checks came up clean.

Ms. Leduc said she is on friendly terms with many other school bus companies. However, when it comes to character references, she wouldn't phone even those.

"It's impossible to get a reference."

The fired driver, whose name has not been released, was found to have a blood alcohol level of between .005 and .008 on Thursday afternoon after a man watching from his apartment window called police when he observed a bus driver sipping from what appeared to be a beer bottle.

The bus was parked outside Terre-des-Jeunes, a French Catholic elementary school on the west side.

While the driver was found to not be over the limit, his licence was suspended for 12 hours. Quesnel has a zero-tolerance policy on drinking. The driver, who had been working for the company since September, was fired immediately and the school board was notified.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation requires police checks, and Criminal Code checks are repeated every three years, said David Carroll, safety and legislative consultant with the Ontario School Bus Association. A police abstract also turns up Highway Traffic Act offences.

In Ontario, school bus drivers cannot have had their licences suspended within the preceding 12 months as a result of convictions for driving-related and Criminal Code offences. Drivers cannot have been convicted in the preceding five years of two or more Criminal Code offences by means of a motor vehicle. And they cannot have been

convicted in the preceding five years for certain narcotics, sexual or morals-related offences.

Laura Osheaski, a spokeswoman for Stock Transportation, one of Canada's largest school bus companies, said aside from police checks, character references are hard to validate -- and one bus company would hesitate to say much to another.

"We are limited in what we can tell another employer," she said.

Ms. Leduc said Quesnel Company officials conduct spotchecks, including checking for the smell of alcohol on drivers, who are not permitted to drink between routes. The company submits lists of drivers to the school board.

"All we can do is ask for police checks. That's all we can do," said Roxanne Deevey, a spokeswoman for the French Catholic school board.

Meanwhile, although it has always been hard to recruit and retain school bus drivers, it appears that it is getting even more competitive.

Ms. Deevey said the ability to communicate with students in French is also usually a requirement for school bus drivers in her board. That has been suspended over the last year because of the shortage of drivers.

Turnover in the industry is generally believed to be about 20 per cent a year, said Mr. Carroll. Bus drivers, who are paid around \$11 or \$12 an hour, are offered work for about four hours a day. Recent recruitment targets have included retirees and stay-at-home mothers, and workers who don't want to work full-time and like to have summers and holidays off.

"It's a very demanding job. Of all the driving positions, it's the most demanding," said Mr. Carroll. "You have to manage people, you have to manage traffic."

In the U.S., bus drivers who drive from one state to another are subject to random urine testing for alcohol and drugs, as are Canadian drivers who drive across the U.S. border, he said. But urine tests are more likely to turn up drug use than alcohol use.

In Canada, there have been human rights challenges to drug and alcohol testing, and the school bus industry doesn't have an appetite to push for it, either, said Mr. Carroll.

"It's pretty foreign to the way we do things in Canada."

He said he was shocked when he got a copy of a news reports about the incident.

"You couldn't imagine a worse scenario. It's totally unacceptable," said Mr. Carroll who said he couldn't remember another incident like this one.

He added there are 18,000 school buses on the road. "When a story like this comes along, it shows how rare an occurrence this is."

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### Écoles et excellence

Depuis neuf ans, le magazine *L'Actualité* publie une revue globale sur la performance des écoles secondaires du Québec. Des 462 écoles listées, celles de l'Outaouais s'affichent au 240<sup>e</sup> rang. L'absence de réaction au rapport qui dénoncerait la performance assez piètre de notre système pédagogique (pour la neuvième année consécutive!) doit signaler une indifférence monumentale au rendement douteux de nos écoles. Or les contribuables paient beaucoup en taxes scolaires; ils auraient droit d'attendre une scolarisation supérieure, n'est-ce pas?

Comment expliquer cette médiocrité dans une région où le revenu moyen des familles (81 000 \$) et la scolarité moyenne des mères (12,8 ans) sont relativement supérieurs que ceux des régions au Québec où les écoles sont plus performantes et les jeunes plus responsables?

*L'Actualité* (15 novembre) rapporte aussi les propos du ministre de la Santé, Yves Bolduc, qui songe à appliquer aux hôpitaux les méthodes industrielles, et de dresser pour les hôpitaux un palmarès comme celui des écoles.

Les contribuables de l'Ou-

taouais payent très cher pour la formation de leurs enfants. Nous ne voulons plus de cette médiocrité dans laquelle baignent nos écoles secondaires. Il faut que les écoles de l'Outaouais se réorientent définitivement vers l'excellence.

Brian Jewitt,  
Cantley

### Deux étudiantes du Cégep de l'Outaouais honorées

Véronique Artelle, une étudiante du Cégep de l'Outaouais, a remporté la mention collégiale des 20<sup>e</sup> Prix Albert-Dumouchel, un concours national qui encourage l'utilisation de l'estampe originale comme moyen d'expression. Elle devient ainsi la troisième lauréate du Cégep de l'Outaouais à obtenir ce prestigieux prix, après Michelle Maltais (2003) et Mireille Nolet (2004). Une autre étudiante du Cégep a vu son œuvre récompensée. Karina Pawlikowski a été sélectionnée, tout comme M<sup>me</sup> Artelle, pour faire partie de l'exposition qui se tient à l'édifice Belgo, à Montréal. Léonie Gauthier (2007), Mariève Tessier (2004) et Véronique Fillion (2003) avaient aussi obtenu une mention par le passé. Le concours a été créé en 1989 par le Conseil québécois de l'estampe, aujourd'hui l'ARPRIM (Regroupement pour la promotion de l'art imprimé), en l'honneur du maître-graveur Albert Dumouchel.

LEDROIT

## Students urged to take cold, hard look at water

### Queen's group wants more fountains, fewer bottles

Posted 2 hours ago

Once a prominent feature in schools and public buildings, the water fountain has been on its way to becoming a relic from the past.

A group of environmentally conscious students at Queen's University are hoping to reverse that trend.

Yesterday, students at Queen's joined students at eight Canadian universities in a day of action to discourage the use of bottled water and to urge university administrators across the country to increase access to water fountains and other tap water facilities.

"We want to offer people something they can do to help the environment," third-year life sciences student Emily Merrick said.

She urged people to consider both the environmental cost and personal economic cost of buying bottled water.

"I'm sure a lot of people don't realize how harmful the bottles can be," Merrick said.

"A bottle can be in a landfill for up to 1,000 years.

"We're trying to make people aware of the side-effects of their consumption of bottled water."

As co-chair of Students Taking Responsible Initiatives for a Viable Environment, Merrick is one of the leaders of a campaign on campus called Think Outside the Bottle. The campaign aims to wean students off single-use bottled water in favour of relying on refillable containers.

To help educate students about water bottles and their impact on the environment, students organized a panel discussion with three professors yesterday afternoon. Steven Moore of the School of Business, Stephen Brown of the chemistry department and David McDonald of the developmental studies department had been scheduled to speak about bottled water.

Queen's student Sharon Zheng organized the event with the campus group Students for Corporate Social Responsibility.

"Our goal was to get people from different backgrounds," she said.

"Our purpose was just to show the different issues behind bottled water -one of them is environmental.

"We're hoping that by giving students that information, it will allow them to make informed choices on whether or not to use bottled water."

In addition to yesterday's day of action panel, there are other longer-term projects happening on campus to reduce the consumption of bottled water.

Merrick's group is circulating a petition to urge the Queen's administration to make water fountains more accessible. The student-led group is also in the process of collecting data to present to the administration about the condition of water fountains on campus.

A survey that looked at the availability of tap water, which was released in September by the Canadian Centre

for Policy Alternatives, the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Polaris Institute, suggested that universities could be doing more to encourage the use of water fountains.

The survey found that 33% of respondents noticed a reduction in the number of water fountains on campus and 43% cited delays in repairing them.

To improve the situation at Queen's, the group plans to inspect all water fountains on campus in order to rate them on their accessibility, temperature, cleanliness, water pressure and taste.

"We're going to look at all the reasons why people wouldn't use them," Merrick said.

Student leaders at the University of Ottawa completed a similar study in order to convince the administration to make improvements to campus water fountains as a way to get more people to use them.

In Kingston, students plan to present their data to physical plant services, which oversees the university's infrastructure, so officials there have an idea of what needs to be fixed.

"The idea is that hopefully they will take the initiative to do what needs to be fixed so that our water fountains are up to par," Merrick said. "That will encourage people to use them."

Officials at the university's physical plant services couldn't be reached for comment yesterday to discuss the condition of water fountains on campus.

Though there are water fountains around campus, many aren't accessible or have low water pressure, Merrick said.

"There are things that could be improved to encourage their use," she said. "They're difficult to get into with a water bottle because some of them don't have a good flow. Some of them would be difficult for someone with a disability to get into. I know of one fountain that has a vending machine blocking it."

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## L'U d'O accusée de racisme dans le traitement de dossiers de fraude scolaire



par **Kristina Brazeau**

[Voir tous les articles de Kristina Brazeau](#)

Article mis en ligne le 14 novembre 2008 à 12:56

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Le Centre de recours étudiant de l'Université d'Ottawa (l'U d'O) soutient dans son rapport annuel que l'institution fait preuve de racisme dans le traitement des dossiers de fraude scolaire. Le rapport soutient que les étudiants internationaux ne sont pas assez informés de ce qui est considéré comme du plagiat.

Selon la coordonatrice du centre, Mireille Gervais, les étudiants sont sommés de ne pas plagier mais ils ne sont pas informés de ce qui est considéré comme tel.

Elle dénonce le fait qu'ils soient accusés de plagiat pour des références faites de façon inadéquate.

Toujours selon Mme Gervais, ce problème est fréquent chez les étudiants étrangers mais maintient que c'est n'est pas là leur intention.

Selon le rapport, sur une cinquantaine de dossiers de fraude scolaire, 34 impliquent des étudiants d'une minorité visible.

L'administration de l'Université d'Ottawa n'a pas voulu commenter le rapport et maintient qu'une réponse est en préparation. **(K.B.)**

Upper Canada District School Board and its secretarial, custodial and maintenance staff have reached a tentative new contract.

The board east of the Kingston and the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 5678 have agreed to a deal in principle but, as neither side has voted on it, the details have not been released.

Union members are due to hold a ratification vote on Sunday, and the board is scheduled to vote on the tentative agreement tomorrow night.

The contract must also be approved by Ontario's education minister.



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