

SPELLING BEE - TORONTO EAST SPELLING BEE

For the second year, the University of Toronto PDK Chapter partnered with Gerrard Square, the Toronto Bathurst Lions Club, and Spelling Bee of Canada in the Toronto East Region Spelling Bee. Throughout the winter, Kappans Susan Seidman, Carolyn Moras, Irene Manahan and Joulie Georgopoulos held weekly practice sessions with interested students. On April 5, more than students gathered at Gerrard Square to compete in three categories: Primary (ages 6 to 8), Junior (ages 9 to 11), and Intermediate (ages 12 to 14). PDK provided volunteers, from U of T Chapter and OISE to welcome the contestants and their parents, select and pronounce the words, and judge the correctness of the spelling. Participating were Girthya Sitsabesan, Audrey Wright, Janice Abdul-Jabbar, Liz Parker and Kappans Ruth Childs, Lianne Tan, Aalia Sherif, and Susanna Tang. The contests were hard fought in all three age groups, going more than 20 rounds. Congratulations to the Toronto East Region winners, Rakshan Balachandran (Primary), Vinojan Anandakumar (Junior) and Alexander Newcombe (Intermediate), who will go on to compete in the Ontario Championship on May 4.
By: Ruth Childs



OSHAWA-WHITBY SPELLING BEE

Organizing a second spelling bee, the University of Toronto PDK Chapter partnered with the Durham regions of Oshawa and Whitby and Spelling Bee of Canada in the Oshawa Whitby Region Spelling Bee. Throughout the winter, Kappans Carolyn Moras and Lisa Hill along with volunteer Laura Armstrong, held weekly practice sessions with interested students. On April 12, more than 50 students gathered at St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic School in Whitby to compete in three categories: Primary (ages 6 to 8), Junior (ages 9 to 11), and Intermediate (ages 12 to 14). PDK provided volunteers, from U of T Chapter and their friends and family to welcome the contestants and their parents, select and pronounce the words, and judge the correctness of the spelling. Participating were Kappans Carolyn Moras, Lisa Hill, Susan Seidman, Dr. Vivian Smith, Sheila Bennett-Smith, Kristin Hopper, Lis Horley-McLeod, and assisted by Stephen Hill, Patricia Power, Kate Hopper, and Laura Armstrong. The contests were hard fought in all three age groups; the junior division went to almost 20 rounds! Congratulations to the Oshawa-Whitby Region winners: Noah Storey, Bradley McLaren, and Austin Powell (Primary), Samantha Wigglesworth, Nikhil Patel, and Sarika Navanathan (Junior), Caitlin McLaren, Colm McLaren, and Abdus-Sami Siddique (Intermediate).
By Lisa Hill, Co-President of Oshawa Whitby Region Spelling Bee



Presenting to Toronto East Spelling Bee Primary Winners



Co-President Lisa Hill and Primary winners of Oshawa Whitby Spelling Bee

SPELLING BEES DEVELOP SKILLS

A spelling bee is a public speaking competition in that you speak aloud in front of a crowd. You need to use your voice. You need to be articulate and clear. You may need to ask for a definition. You must have confidence. This helps to prepare you for every speaking situation as you grow. You will need these same skills when presenting projects, plays, or in the future-when making presentations to the Board!
Excerpt from Kappan Sheila Smith-Bennett's Opening Speech at Oshawa Whitby Spelling Bee, April 2008

100 Kappans— young and old— from teacher candidates to Dean Jane Gaskell - attended the AGM: truly a testament to the efforts of the U of T chapter as well as the respect we hold for Dr. Clay Lafleur, this year's Outstanding Educator Award winner. In addition to awards for long service and the initiation of new members, Lynn Lewis, Director of Development offered greetings from the International.

Clay's "elegant" (my word) address, Why Innovations Fail: What can we learn from a garage sale of great ideas? was a history of sorts based on his years of experiences both in Canada and Australia over some three decades. Among the points he made (any one of which could stand a major examination but presented here to raise questions for all of us) were the following:

- reforms are not the same as innovations; in fact, some reforms can block innovations
- complex systems like schools have "powerful grammars" that resist change
- if you want to deeply understand something, just try to change it
- the factors that make an innovation most likely to succeed are often the ones most likely to make an innovation fail
- innovations may start with a dissatisfaction of the status quo
- yet they need to be perceived as a good thing by those affected
- concerns need to be addressed
- resources to support the innovation need to be ready from the outset
- so do accountability measures
- since innovations involve people they represent a social activity
- thuds a positive climate beginning with those with leadership roles and sufficient time is also needed
- among the references he made to Michael Fullan's work are the dicta that
 - you can't mandate what matters
 - problems are our friends

In the end the success of innovations depend on **people, time, collaboration and negotiation and learning from failure**

There is a graveyard full of great ideas that were oversold or undersold, misunderstood, poorly supported. Diluted in their potential, such ideas are soon dismissed, discarded, and deleted.

Let's not waste more energy but try to make good things work for the next generation of children. This is a mission for all Kappans.
By: John Myers



Top Most: Award winners Lianne Tan and Susan Marar receive their Excellence in Student Teaching Award from Susan Seidman and Kari Peters.

Top Middle: Bev Freeman and Walt Winchell present the Outstanding Educator of the Year Award to Clay Lafleur.

Top Bottom: Readers during the initiation ceremony.

Bottom Left: Kappan reaffirm their dedication to PDK.

Bottom Right: PDK Director of Development Lynn Lewis.



INITIATES – AGM 2008 AND NOVEMBER 30TH

LORRAINE DILLING

A graduate of UWO and London Normal School, Lorraine Dilling began her teaching career in Sarnia, Ontario, in the primary division. While there, she became a proponent of literacy and the "New Mathematics" and developed curricula for primary teachers in these areas.

In 1965, she moved to Toronto where she taught primary grades before being asked to become Resource-Librarian in a K-8 public school. Her final assignment was as Resource-Librarian at Jack Miner Senior Public School where, among her contributions to staff and students, were her creations of week-long special units for participation by the entire school. To promote reading further, as well as charitable values, she initiated the first Multiple Sclerosis Readathon in Canada. From its inception in 1977, it has raised well over 40 million dollars for research into the cause and treatment of this degenerative disease. For this enterprise, she was awarded the "Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal" in 2002.

Prior to this, in 1992, she had been granted "The Commemorative Medal for the 125th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada" for her efforts in community fund-raising and her music contributions to seniors in nursing homes throughout the province.

EVANGELINA CROOK

Evangelina's life is a good example of the saying "Variety is the spice of life". She went to schools in both India and Sri Lanka, and has attended Universities in Sri Lanka, Canada, the United States and France. As a teacher she has worked in Sri Lanka, Brunei, Manitoba and Toronto. She enjoys travelling and has visited many countries and states in Asia, Europe, Australia and North America. Currently, Evangelina is enjoying her retirement- reading copiously, playing scrabble, attempting to speak French fluently, and cooking for friends-specializes in Indian cuisine, but will try other kinds also!

LIS HORLEY-MCLEOD

I began teaching at the age of 20; my first students are now about 55 years old. I achieved my degree through night and summer courses and got a B.A. and a B. Ed. through York University. Most of my career has been in inner-city schools and I seem to have taught everything at one time or another. I particularly enjoy Language and MSI activities. I'm a proponent of kids' reading and proper grammatical usage. I donate heavily to the school libraries and references. Although I retired, I'm still supply teaching. I'm presently in my 42nd year of teaching, driving school teams, and cheering kids on in many activities (the newest one being spelling bees.).Some of my students are now teachers - at least 4 that I know of.

JENNIFER LAIDLAW

Jennifer Laidlaw is a recent D'Youville College graduate focussed in Childhood K-6 education. She completed her undergraduate degree at York University, Toronto majoring in English Literature.

Prior to teaching, Jennifer worked in business in the areas of payroll and pension administration.

AALIA SHERIFF

Aalia is currently completing her Bachelor of Education at OISE/UT. She has a background in English and sociology, and is taking additional qualification courses in ESL education to further her studies. In the near future, she hopes to be teaching high school students about the magic of words.

The U of T PDK Chapter welcomes new members from a wide range of levels.



SERVICE – FEATURES EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

NEW FUTURE EDUCATORS

On Thursday April 24, a team composed of U of T Kappans Stephanie Fetterolf, Susan Seidman, International Director of Development Lynn Lewis, and Teacher Advisor Elizabeth Hemmerick to officially charter Hilltop Middle School's Future Educator Association group the Falcon Facilitators. Members of the Falcons Facilitators were initiated, and showed the work they have been doing. They have been researching schoolyard games, and practicing teaching them to others. In early May the group will go to nearby Westmount Elementary School, which they all attended, to teach the games to the Senior Kindergarten and Grade 1 classes.



Top: FEA Falcon Facilitators leave for trip to Westmount Elementary School

Left: PDK International's Lynn Lewis presents Liz Hemmerick with her FEA binder



FALCONS FACILITATORS FEA BY ENXHI AND ALENA

We're the Falcons Facilitators FEA! Our mission? To teach a bunch of games we came up with to an SK group and a Grade 1 class over at Westmount Junior School. Oh, let's backtrack for a minute.

A group of us: Tianna, Brett, Ms Hemmerick, Mrs. Seidman and us joined together for our own FEA club at Hilltop. It took us a while but we finally thought of a name for us; Falcons Facilitators! Brett, our computer genius, went on the computer and created our logo. Then we began FEA training.

We had a blast filming as we practiced many of the games we had thought of. Looking back on the videos we decided on what we could improve about our teaching. Later, we got our first mission; teach kids at Westmount a bunch of games. Mrs. Hemmerick and Mrs. Seidman met with the teachers whose classes we'd be teaching. The teachers were great and we decided on the date and time. Soon after we filmed a video, kind of like an introduction, to send back to Westmount, we had our official initiation to the FEA.



The initiation went great! We lit candles for every section that was read to us, and we performed the pledge. We were completely surprised to be presented with our very own FEA t-shirts, an FEA pin, and our FEA portfolio binders. Amazing!

Now we are immensely excited to head over to Westmount and see the little kids who we'll be teaching! The future is looking bright!



HILLTOP'S FUTURE EDUCATORS MAY 1ST TRIP TO WESTMOUNT A GREAT SUCCESS!

BY: BRETT CHURLY-GREENE, 7B

Hilltop's Future Educators left Hilltop and headed out on our trek to Westmount. On arrival, we realized that we were exactly on time. We headed down to Ms. Leavoy's Grade 1 Class and introduced ourselves (Alena, Brett, Enxhi, Tianna, Ms. Hemmerick-Staff Advisor, and Ms. Seidman-PDK Representative.) Then, once we had placed down our "LILY PADS", Tianna taught the Westmount students the game Lily Pad. Afterwards, we played the games Blob Tag (Alena), Different Motion Tag (Enxhi) and Red Light Green Light (Brett). After a short break, we taught Ms. Chiovitti's SK's the same games.

The Future Educators group is for students who wish to become teachers of some sort in the distant future. We have learned many things, which include the facts that things don't always go as planned, and that the attention span of some children is pretty short. The trip to Westmount for the Future Educators Group was a great experience. We saw what it's like teaching younger children.

We had lots of fun and hope to be in the FEA again next year. Imagine, if all you students at Hilltop come out and participate, with a group of more students, we're bound to have even more fun!!

For more information, check out: <http://www.pdkintl.org/fea/feahome.htm>