

# Newsletter

Volume 24

## The Leading Edge

FOR GIFTED EDUCATION IN B.C.

**The Association of the  
Educators for the Gifted,  
Talented and Creative  
Children of B.C.**

**B.C.T.F.**



Spring/Summer 2007

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to Spring, a time for new growth after enduring the severe winter months both in our province and across the country. During the many winter days of cancelled flights due to heavy snowfalls in Vancouver and here in Smithers, I had the opportunity to examine the frozen ground of the gifted education terrain in this province. While the provincial landscape for gifted education may seem bleak, rough and barren, the PSA remains solidly determined to provide service to the educators of the gifted, talented and creative children of B.C. The AEGTCCBC executive members have sown seeds of new relationships, and are now in the midst of planting a variety of opportunities that will attempt to weed out obstacles to growth.

Following our successful Gifted Ed. 2006 conference with Dr. Marcia Imbeau, the new Executive Committee began to prepare to branch out for an exciting '07 year. We have working relationships with the parents' organization, The Gifted Children's Association (GCABC), and a combined districts' organization called the Lower Mainland Contacts Group (LMGC). The PSA, with these two groups, will cultivate new fields of support and advocacy for the needs – intellectual, social and emotional – of gifted children in British Columbia.

This year's first sign of growth for the PSA will be our Fall Conference as we have expanded the choices, venues and content. The Gifted Ed 2007 conference will coordinate with CUEBC's "Teaching to Multiple Literacies" at Thomas Haney Secondary in Maple Ridge. Thursday evening provides a choice of venues and programmes. One choice will be to attend the joint conference (AEGTCCBC and CUEBC) at Thomas Haney where

Jim Delisle will speak. The other choice is to attend the "Issues Forum" at the Holiday Inn on Broadway, hosted by the LMCG where representatives of partner groups will address the issue "Where Are Our Gifted?". Teachers across the province have reported that the numbers of identified gifted students has dropped drastically. Please refer to Patricia Clough's informed editorial in this issue of the newsletter where she expands upon this important topic.

On Friday, the AEGTCCBC will feature Jim Delisle speaking on the social and emotional needs of the gifted, with additional sessions provided by teacher facilitators. The conference continues on Saturday with the Gifted Children's Association hosting their annual conference. This active parent organization will also feature Jim Delisle, along with numerous workshop topics of interest to both parents and teachers.

As President of the PSA I am proud of the seeds we've sown, and the potential for growth through our PSA's links to others. The hard work is still to be done – no sitting back to admire the fruits of our labours. We must continue to cultivate our 'gifted garden'. Joining with others will provide a variety of opportunities to exchange resources, research and recognition. The three days of choices planned for gifted educators on October 18, 19 and 20, 2007 linking with Computer Using Educators of B.C. (CUEBC), LMGC and GCABC is an excellent example of the possibilities for new growth and I look forward to seeing you there.

Look for the conference flyer and visit the website for more information on Gifted Ed 2007.

*Charlene Watts, President*

The Leading Edge for Gifted Education  
The Association of  
Educators of Gifted, Talented  
and Creative Children of B.C.

## REMEMBER OUR WEBSITE

Visit our Web Page at:  
[www.bctf.bc.ca/PSAs/AEGTCCBC](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/PSAs/AEGTCCBC)

## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

### Where Have the Gifted Students Gone?

Ten years ago in British Columbia there were over 22,000 identified gifted students in the K-12 school population. In this school year the Ministry of Education student statistics list fewer than 10,000 identified gifted students.

If you access the Ministry of Education Information Department and look at the Summary Reports for Student Statistics you can find information such as:

1999 - 2000	18,322 (Gifted learners)
2002 - 2003	15,773
2006 - 2007	9,880

Even with declining enrollment, these statistics are ridiculous – and they are not replicated in any other Special Education category.

Can you imagine the public outcry if any other population category in BC lost over 50% of an identified group in the last 10 years ..... Whales? Bears? Doctor's, Nurses, Burrowing Owls? World attention would focus on our province asking for accountability and reparation.

Of course, the bitter truth is that gifted students are still sitting in classrooms around our province. You see, if school districts formally identified these students, they

would be obliged to serve them and meet their needs in a consistent, documented way. There is no funding to do that.

Luckily there are still some teachers and parents who struggle to provide service to our gifted learners. Shame to those who talk about encouraging kids to go for their dreams when they know there are no programs or services or funding to help.

What a province! What an education system! What wonderful public relations talk about producing more innovations, advancing technological superiority, developing more effective learners and smarter workers, solving long-range problems and more amazing idea. How?

Underfunding services to the students who could actually develop their skills to build a growing, glowing future does not seem to be a solution that has occurred to the holders of the purse strings.

It is difficult in the current education system to provide appropriate schooling for our learners with gifted abilities. I am grateful for those of you working hard to help our students. I am saddened because I know there are many more of our children out in this system with no help and little hope. I apologize if I have depressed you. Think about how our gifted students feel.

*Patricia Clough*

## EXECUTIVE *Profile*

### **Charlene Watts**

*President, AEGTCCBC*

- Concluding second year as President of the PSA.
- Served on the Executive for many years in a variety of roles.
- Currently, local President, Bulkley Valley Teachers' Union in Smithers, BC.
- Have always found the inspiration and dedication of teachers involved with this PSA to be professionally rewarding. The PSA is vital to keep teachers in touch with teachers, to lobby for students in the public school system and to connect with other organizations devoted to the needs of gifted students.

## EXECUTIVE *Profile*

### **Leslie Lowe**

*Newsletter Co-editor, Former President, AEGTCCBC*

- Retired
- Co-ordinator, Gifted Services SD#83
- Teacher, multi-aged (Grade 4-7) gifted class for 10 years.
- Elementary Teacher with (Varying) .1 or .2 responsibilities for providing gifted services at my school.
- Professional Development Chair for NOSTA (North Okanagan Teachers' Association).
- Workshop presenter.
- Provided guidance and assistance to Parents and Teachers regarding the needs of gifted learners.
- Member of a variety of District committees (Beyond Monet Facilitator etc.).
- Wife of gifted Teacher of Senior English (retired).
- Mother of Two gifted children.

## IS THERE LIFE AFTER AEGTCCBC EXECUTIVE???

*by Leslie Lowe*

AEGTCCBC Executive meetings are lively and somewhat free-wheeling affairs. Those of you who read Teri Sobo's draft of meeting minutes in the last issue will surely agree. At one of these sessions Teri and I began a conversation about our plans for retirement which occurred for both of us in June 2007. After outlining my ideas for a long-anticipated trip to Australia and New Zealand, Teri trumped my plans with her own new enterprise. She and her partner, Philip, would be moving to Australia to open a bed and breakfast. Lots of talk and many emails later, my husband and I and our travelling companions determined that we would visit Teri and Philip and be their first guests.

The adventure began with Duncan and I driving into the area of Mount Dandenong, outside the city of Melbourne. We were approaching from the south (Teri had sent good instructions for coming from the east for the rest of our friends who were arriving later) and I was early in my training to be a reliable navigator, but hubby was doing a great job of sticking to the left-hand side of the road. The Mt. Dandenong area is beautiful – hilly and green with lovely stands of gum (eucalyptus) trees. The roads are narrow, winding and heavily flanked with greenery. We had the road address, but failed to spot the sign on both our first and second passes. Undeterred, we stopped and asked directions to “Teri and Phil’s place” and were met with blank stares. The new bed and breakfast entrepreneurs had only arrived four days before us, and had yet to make friends with their neighbours!

We eventually found the right driveway and connected with our hosts. Hugs and greetings quickly led to wine and conversation on the spacious and private balcony overlooking the hillscape of trees and Melbourne off in the mist below. Those beautiful trees were the subject of much amazement later on. When the bush fires of early summer were threatening the area, Teri went to the local residents’ fire awareness meeting. Imagine her surprise to be told that should the fire approach, she was to go indoors, wait until the flames passed by and then go out to extinguish any spot fires. Eucalyptus trees have so much sap that they flame up quickly and with great heat, but do not hold the fire like our Douglas firs or pine trees do. Fortunately, Mt. Dandenong was spared and Teri’s new found fire-savvy was not put to the test.

Mt. Dandenong area is an artist’s and crafter’s enclave. Lots of local artisans display and sell their work from their homes and at the many local markets and sales. The small communities of Sassafra and Olinda tempt travellers to stay and sample cream teas or beer from local micro-

breweries. We could have happily spent many more days in the area, browsing, shopping, sipping and dining.

Teri and Philip’s place is a purpose-built bed and breakfast revealing Philip’s love of the grand architecture of the past and his passion for collecting antique furniture. The upper floor holds four large ensuite bedrooms with a common sitting area (well-stocked with a variety of teas) and gives access to the large and airy deck. Cockatoos and parrots greeted us in the mornings, settling on the deck railings and amusing us with their antics.

Breakfasts in the beautiful dining room were memorable affairs. Teri is a great cook and we were treated to lavish and varied feasts each day. We needed exercise to work off our breakfasts, so we asked our hosts for information on local walks and were happy to follow a number of different trails to interesting destinations. One thing I will always remember about Australia is the constant background of beautiful and exotic birdsong. The rambles we took around Teri’s place were made even more enjoyable by the varied calls of the indigenous birdlife.

So, is there life after being on the AEGTCCBC executive? You bet there is! And if you should be thinking of an escape to Australia, visit Teri’s website at: [Mtdandenongbandb.aus](http://Mtdandenongbandb.aus) and check out the delights awaiting you there.



### Social Issues

A Great Place to Develop Metacognitive Awareness and Knowledge

*by Lannie Kanevsky*

Many gifted students become deeply concerned by and involved in local, national and global social issues. What should be done about a new strip mall that will disturb the habitat of an endangered species: Is war the best solution to problems in the Middle East? Are school uniforms a good idea? Should schools sell “junk food”? Should cloning be legal? Is it fair to musicians and composers for us to share their works online without paying for them?

Classroom experiences with current events and their consequences invite students to invest their potentials and passions and can prepare them to do so. They can work through and pass the feelings of helplessness that often develop when they realize the scope, complexity, and impacts of many issues. We can help them see past the “Ain’t it awful” stage and into, “So what are you going to do about it?” Metacognition, the focus of this article, is just one type of knowledge that can be nurtured in the process of dealing with dilemmas.

#### What is metacognition?

Metacognition is what happens when one is making choices in terms of thinking in certain ways, deciding what to think about, monitoring how well a plan or strategy is working and evaluating reasoning when completed. Its richness is missed in simple definitions like “thinking about thinking.” Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) describe three types of metacognitive knowledge that play out in complex reasoning activities:

- Self-knowledge is an individual’s awareness of his or her own cognitive and learning strengths and weaknesses, preferences, interests, and the value found in different types of tasks involving reasoning.
- Strategic metacognitive knowledge is an individual’s collection of strategies for managing learning, thinking and problem solving.
- Task knowledge includes understanding the nature of different types of reasoning, tasks, such as how to determine a task’s difficulty and making a match between different types of challenges and the specific strategies best suited to addressing them.

#### Why nurture metacognition?

Some of the clearest evidence of the need for differentiated learning experiences for gifted students can be found in the research comparing the thinking and learning processes of gifted and non-gifted students. For example, Alexander, Carr, and Schwanenflugel (1995) found gifted students were more able to transfer the skills they’d learned to novel or unfamiliar tasks, and they have greater metacognitive knowledge. Findings like these de-mystify the nature of individual and ability-related differences underlying the learning and problem-solving processes of more and less capable thinkers. Asking students to describe these processes gives everyone involved a clear view of the ways their minds’ work. Finally, everyone gets real answers to the question, “How do they do that?”

In addition to enhancing their own self-knowledge, metacognitive activities provide opportunities for students to add to their strategic metacognitive knowledge and task

knowledge by learning from their peers. All students, gifted or not, can become more expert thinkers. When meta-questions become a part of the learning process, classmates offer models and examples of new and more sophisticated ways to think that are developmentally appropriate, within the “zone of proximal development,” for the class. Even if gifted students are often the most advanced tinkers, they can add to their repertoire of problem-solving and metacognitive strategies with new and different ideas from their peers. Smart people have many options in their collection, and they choose wisely from it.

#### When and how can metacognitive knowledge be developed?

All three types of metacognitive knowledge are important before, during and after wrestling with a social issue. How is this done? Simply, by weaving metacognitive self-questions that typify the three types of knowledge into any activity that requires students to reason their way through to an end, like resolving a social issue. Other examples include planning a campaign, designing models, webquests, problem-based learning, writing mysteries and poetry, and mathematical problem solving.

Table 1 (see page 6) provides a small collection of self-questions that could be woven into the process of investigating an issue and developing a proposal to resolve an issue. Each question can be used to stimulate or structure students’ thinking. Some can be used in any reasoning activity while others are tailored to social issues. They are phrased as self-questions because they are intended to act as models for self-regulation. The expectation is that over time, they and the ideas shared in the

conversations they stimulated will be internalized to strengthen students "habits of mind".

In the past, most meta-questions were posed in debriefing sessions (whole class discussions after the activity concludes), or in reflective journal responses. Those are only two of many ways to include them. Some, like those in the "Before" column of the tables, are used when introducing the task. They remind students to think in particular ways before leaping into action; consider what they already know and consider their options before and while they develop their initial plan. Impulsive gifted students need to learn these habits.

Students can also be prompted to monitor their progress "During" their investigations of the issue and preparation of their proposal. The second column of the table offers meta-question possibilities for his phase. As many have noticed, all gifted students are not great managers of resources of time! When this is the case, add the questions about tracking resources and time to the work of one or more students.

Create and carry strips of three or four questions as reminders to weave certain questions into class discussions before, during, and/or after wrestling with the issue. Or, questions can be individualized by posing one or more in conversations with individuals or groups at different times

based on readiness or need. Or, create strips for students to use to prompt the development of new strategic metacognitive knowledge in any phase of the activity. Teachers may wish to be systematic — choose one type of question or type of metacognitive knowledge to develop before moving on to another. Do this consistently across days, lessons or tasks. Students can also select their own meta-focus and build their own "bookmarks" to remind themselves of the new habits of the expert they are trying to develop. The possibilities are endless.

All students can improve their metacognitive awareness, skills and knowledge but research mentioned earlier tells us students can be expected to differ in terms of what they already know and can do. In other words, instruction in metacognition needs to be differentiated, too. Weaving meta-self-questions into and across reasoning activities provides students in all grades, subjects and settings differentiated learning experiences to make them smarter.

### References and Resources

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**LANNIE KANEVSKY, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at Simon Frazer University. Her research focusses on gifted students' learning. In addition to her work at SFU, she continues to teach children and lead workshops for educators and parents.**

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• **Gifted Education: A Resource Guide for Teachers** •  
• **(RB0050)** •  
• Available on the Internet through: •  
• **Government of British Columbia Publications Index.** •  
• **(publications.gov.bc.ca)** •  
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# EXECUTIVE

## Profile

**Linnea Lanstrom**  
*Conference Chair*

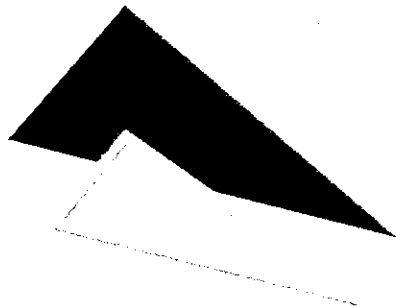
- Active, retired member of PSA Executive
- Co-ordinated annual Gifted Ed. Conference the past two years.
- Look forward to Gifted Ed. 2007 as we partner with others who are passionate about the needs of gifted students.
- Personal passion for meeting these needs of gifted students began with my own son, continued throughout my Teacher-Librarian career and flourishes amongst my colleagues on the AEGTCCBC

**Table Six:**

**Self-questions to consider when investigating and developing a proposal to resolve an issue.**

	<b>Before Beginning (planning your life)</b>	<b>During Investigation &amp; Proposal &amp; Preparation</b>	<b>After the Process is Completed (debriefing or reflecting on the process)</b>
<b>S E L F K N O W L E D G E</b>	<p>Have I done anything like this before? How is this like that? How is it different? What did I learn from it that I can use here?</p> <p>Which aspects of the issue do I care about? What are my feelings and beliefs about the issue?</p> <p>What do I know I do well when working through an issue like this?</p> <p>What are my weaknesses when I work on things like this? Where can I get help if I need it?</p> <p>What are all the different ways I can think of to work through this issue?</p>	<p>Does any part of this work feel familiar? Can I use what I learned from other tasks on this one?</p> <p>How do I feel about this issue now? Have my beliefs changed?</p> <p>Am I working well? How can I work better?</p> <p>How can I make this more fun?</p> <p>Am I working with my strengths and interests? If not can I find a way to do that?</p> <p>Which parts of the work am I struggling with? Where can I find help?</p>	<p>What did I discover about myself that I didn't know before (strengths, abilities, interests, values, skills, etc.)</p> <p>Have my feelings and beliefs about the issue changed? If so, in what ways?</p> <p>What did I do well? Not so well?</p> <p>How could I have made this more fun?</p> <p>Did I find the help I needed? If so, where? If not, why not?</p>
<b>S T R A T E G I C M E T A - K N O W L E D G E</b>	<p>Are there special strategies experts use to investigate issues? To develop proposals for issue resolution? What are they?</p> <p>What strategies need to be in my plan?</p>	<p>Is my strategy working well? What steps can be skipped? What steps are missing?</p> <p>How well is each strategy working?</p> <p>Do my strategies address all part of the issue? If not, what should be done?</p>	<p>What strategy(ies) worked best? Why?</p> <p>Which strategy(ies) didn't work well? Why?</p> <p>What new strategies did I learn along the way?</p> <p>Who or what was a good source of ideas for new strategies?</p>
<b>T A S K K N O W L E D G E</b>	<p>What do I know about the issue? Do I understand it? If not, what can I do to get a clear understanding?</p> <p>Do I understand what I'm supposed to do? Do I understand how I'll be evaluated? If not, what can I do?</p> <p>How much time do I have?</p> <p>What resources do I have? What resources will I need? Which will I use?</p> <p>What is my plan? What are my options for where to begin? Which is best?</p> <p>Are the strategies I've selected appropriate for investigating and resolving an issue like this one?</p>	<p>Do I know enough about the issue to develop my proposal?</p> <p>What more do I need to know before submitting my proposal?</p> <p>Where can I find it?</p> <p>Have I included all required elements in my proposal? How well are they done?</p> <p>How much time do I have left? Am I working too fast or too slow?</p> <p>Is my plan taking me where I need to be going?</p> <p>What am I learning about the suitability of the strategy(ies) I chose?</p>	<p>What do I know about the issue that I didn't know when I began?</p> <p>If I could do it again, what would I do differently? Why?</p> <p>Which parts of my proposal needed further development? Why?</p> <p>Did I use my time well: If not, what could I have done differently?</p> <p>Did I use the resources available effectively?</p> <p>Did I stick to my original plan? If not, what changed? Why?</p> <p>Were the strategies I selected for investigating and resolving this issue well suited to it? Did I support my position well?</p> <p>What are some similar situations in which I can use what I've learned in the future?</p>

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**ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATORS OF THE GIFTED,  
 TALENTED AND CREATIVE CHILDREN IN BC**

**STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS (Note 1)  
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED June 30, 2006**

Balance, July 1, 2005	\$	17,100.46
<u>Receipts</u>		
BCTF Grant	4,750.00	
Membership/subscription fees	1,128.00	
Interest	550.51	
Other	1,910.46	
		8,338.97
<u>Disbursements</u>		
Executive meetings	2,211.74	
Meeting - TOC costs	918.71	
Publication - newsletter	798.25	
Publication - other	1,914.27	
Operating	40.00	
Miscellaneous	171.03	
Conference - operating	1,148.00	
Conference - printing	467.71	
Conference - speakers	831.09	
Conference - miscellaneous	8.39	
		(8,509.19)
Balance, June 30, 2006	\$	16,930.24

**Notes:**

1. This statement reflects only funds held by the BC Teachers' Federation on behalf of the Association of Educators of the Gifted, Talented and Creative Children in BC.

## Exploring Your Options: Making Gifted Education Work For You

James Delisle is the Feature Presenter at our Fall Conference October, 2007. If your school or school district has other successful options, please let the editors know.

Ask GTs about school and most will be quick to say that it's their #1 hassle in life.

It's boring. It's too easy. It's repetitious. It's irrelevant. It's blah, blah, blah. And the reason school-work may be all of these things is because it doesn't match your intellectual interests and capabilities.

What can you do about it?

Basically, you have two choices:

1. You can work to change the system so it offers the options and alternatives you need.

OR ...

2. Maybe several options and alternatives are already in place – and all you have to do is find out about them and how you can take advantage of them.

Many schools across the country offer a wide variety of possibilities for gifted students. Here are some we know about. Your school may offer one of these, all of these, or others we don't even mention here.

### **ACCELERATION**

Acceleration allows you to jump to a higher level of class work than your age would ordinarily dictate. You may skip a particular class or an entire grade.

Where acceleration is reasonably commonplace many adults have historically been against it. They worry that if you start rubbing elbows with kids older than you, "you'll suffer emotionally". And yet there isn't a single study which shows that acceleration has, in fact, caused any great problems for anybody.

On the contrary, many studies show that when you're allowed to learn at your own pace you feel better about yourself, are more motivated and creative and are more socially "with it".

### **ENRICHMENT**

School enrichment programs are designed to replace or extend the regular school curriculum.

The goal of enrichment should be to help you work on high level skills, such as divergent and evaluative thinking, problem-solving and creativity. Some of the

ways these skills can be taught are through debates and discussions, research, or simulations.

### **INDEPENDENT STUDY**

When you want to "do your own thing" an independent study may be just the ticket. You work at your own pace in a program of your special interest, with a mentor or teacher as your guide. But mostly, you're on your own – sink or swim.

Independent study programs usually require you to:

- Develop a plan stating the object of your study
- List your goals and objectives
- Plan activities to achieve your goals, and
- Complete a final project.

Study plans often take the form of a contract.

### **ADVANCED PLACEMENT**

Advanced Placement (AP) classes are super for students who are looking for greater academic challenges and more opportunities for accomplishment and individual progress.

Students in AP classes take college level courses taught by highly qualified high school teachers right on their own high school campus. AP classes may take the form of honours classes, strong regular classes, or independent studies. If you successfully complete an AP course and exam, you qualify for college credit. Some students start college with a full semester of coursework earned through AP.

Is your school too small to offer AP or does it offer it only on a limited scale? No problem. If you're good at calculus, for example, you may take the AP exam without having taken the AP calculus course. What a deal! And there are no age or grade restrictions on who can take the exams.

For more information about AP send for the no-cost "Guide to the Advanced Placement Program". Write: College Board Publication Orders, Box 886, New York, NY 10101. Or ask your school counsellor about it, he or she may have a copy.



## **WEIGHTED GRADES AND TRANSCRIPTS**

Many students are given the option of taking high school courses at the honours level. Although these aren't AP courses, their content and requirements may be just as demanding.

Since you'll be asked to expend more effort in these classes you ought to get more out of them. Like extra credit – literally. By taking harder courses you'll be risking getting lower grades than if you took regular-track courses. So it's not unreasonable to expect something in return.

Ask your principal or guidance counsellor what rewards exist for students who take honours level courses. Often, an honours grade will be weighted – that is, a B or B+ in Honours English will be noted on your transcript as being equivalent to an A in the nonhonours track.

At the very least, a notation should be made on your transcript indicating which courses you took at the honours level. College admissions officers pay attention to this sort of thing.

## **EARLY COLLEGE ENTRANCE**

Early college entrance is a time-tested strategy that's available to many gifted high school students. It usually works in one of two ways:

1. You do well enough in your freshman through junior years to apply early to a college of your choice. If you show strong promise (high grades and ACTSAT scores) many colleges will consider accepting you as a full-time student at the end of your junior year. Check with the colleges you're interested in to see if they allow for this option, called "early admission".
2. The "dual enrollment" option allows you to take college courses at a local university while your attending high school. It works best when you live near a college campus and transportation between the two schools isn't a problem. Even if the nearest college is 100 miles away, you may be able to take summer courses to build up your academic credentials (and have more fun).

## **BACK-TO-BACK CLASSES**

Here's a clever way to get an extra long class period by planning classes, or scheduling them one right after another.

This gives teachers and kids more opportunities to do things that require more time than an hour-long class

can provide. (How many times have you just gotten started with an exciting project only to have the bell ring in the middle of it.)

Back-to-back classes also make it easier for teachers to use a variety of learning and teaching skills like independent study, debate, drama, field trips or extended discussions.

## **RESOURCE ROOMS**

Resource rooms can be havens for the gifted where they can make new friends of similar intellect, work on fascinating projects and use special equipment.

Usually the teachers who work on these special resource rooms are sensitive to the needs of the GT and are not threatened by students who quite often know more than they do about certain things.

If you want to work in an atmosphere where you're free to use your talents and abilities without criticism from others a resource room could be your salvation.

## **MENTORSHIPS**

Mentorships enable gifted students to be paired with a student or an adult who is an expert in a particular study or profession they'd like to pursue. Members come from either the academic or business community.

Usually, students and mentors agree to work together closely for a set period of time. Meetings are arranged during or after school hours as determined by the participants.

Accelerated and enriched learning are the natural consequences of mentorship – which also provide good career exploration opportunities.

## **FIELD TRIPS AND CULTURAL EVENTS**

Everybody benefits from field trips and cultural events, especially GTs. Why? Because they perceive things more deeply. They're more inquisitive – they ask more questions GT's want to know how things work.

Trips to the zoo, the symphony, a museum, a baker, banks or in a salvage plant will broaden your horizons. Where would you like to visit?

## **SEMINARS AND MINI-COURSES**

These classes, now becoming quite commonplace, are for students gifted or not, with similar interests and abilities. There's nothing new about recognizing that people with common interests support one another and make learning more fun.

Classes may be offered during or after school, or

on weekends. Usually they're taught by teachers or members of the community.

### WHICH OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU?

Ask if the program involves a specific academic area, go to the teacher who teaches that subject or a department hear.

You might also check with your school counsellor (strange but true most gifted kids don't deal a lot with counsellors. The counsellors are there to help you as much as any other student.)

If you can't get answers from either of these sources, go straight to the horses mouth – the school principal. Make an appointment to see him or her and come prepared with questions about what your school offers to bright motivated students.

If your school has requirements for participation in a program that you want to join, find out what they are, if you don't qualify, see what you can do to change your status. If the requirements seem ridiculous or unfair to you list your reasons for feeling that way and share them with the person in charge.

Request admission on probation if necessary. If, after a reasonable time, you don't work well in the class or program be prepared to drop out and move on to something which is right for you.

Adapted from *The Gifted Kids' Survival Guide for Ages 11-18* - Judy Galbraith, and *The Gifted Kids Survival Guide II* - James Delisle and Judy Galbraith.

# EXECUTIVE Profile

## Toni Jones

*Member-at-large*

- Has been working with gifted learners in the Surrey School District for 17 years
- Helping teacher for Gifted Education K-12 (.5)
- Teaches the Elementary Challenge Program (.5)
- Member of the Lower Mainland Gifted contacts
- Works closely with Elementary Challenge and Multi-age Cluster Classes teachers
- Works collaboratively with classroom teachers and curriculum Helping Teachers to develop awareness of the needs of gifted students
- Supports the Secondary Gifted Facilitators in developing identification procedures and writing I.E.P.'s
- Coordinates district initiatives for elementary and secondary gifted students
- Involved in many district projects such as Early Entrance to Kindergarten and Critical Thinking Training



Watch for more Bios in up-coming issues of "The Leading Edge"

# EXECUTIVE Profile

## Patricia Clough

*Current and past PSA executive for 20 plus years*

- Worked with Gifted Education students, parents and teachers for 28 years
- Taught full-time multi-age, multi-grade congregated Gifted Classrooms for 6 years
- District coordinator in two school districts, South Okanagan and North Okanagan - Shuswap for 20+ years
- B.C. Teachers' Federation Executive Committee (1998-2002)
- Honourary life member of Local 83 (North Okanagan - Shuswap)
- Honourary life member of the B.C. Teachers' Federation (2006 A.G.M.)

- Hazel Davy Special Education Award (given to recognize an individuals' professional contribution to Special Education in British Columbia (BCSEA - 1995)
- Workshops and summer institutes for teachers, parents and university students - 35 of the school districts in British Columbia
- Member of several Ministry of Education committees, assessments, projects and initiatives (including the Ministry of Education Resource Guide for Gifted Education)
- Partner in organization and presentation for OKANAGAN VALLEY RETREATS (several years, eight school districts, 100-150 students each year)
- Over 300 classroom demonstration lessons (Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, Creative Problem Solving)
- Gifted and supportive family: husband (42 years); two daughters (oldest teaching gifted students in China - 5 years); 4-year-old gifted granddaughter (scheduled for K this fall)

# Summer Retreat for Gifted Kids **SATORI**

Literally, the word Satori is Japanese for "Ah, Ha!" It originally represented a state of enlightenment sought in Zen Buddhism. It's an exploration of the mind and the unknown. It's the insight you achieve only after expending a good deal of your energy and imagination. Satori is the sense of joy that comes from learning.

For junior high and high school students, the word Satori is also the name of a one-week journey toward their own personal enlightenment through specialized instruction and social activities. For its 23<sup>rd</sup> straight summer, Eastern Washington University is proud to present this opportunity for academically and intellectually talented students to experience their first taste of college with others who share their enthusiasm for learning in an academic and social environment.

Satori Camp allows students to choose three mini-courses from a variety of offerings. Participants are introduced to a wide range of academic and special interest courses designed to develop well-rounded individuals. Each course is held for approximately two hours a day over the six days of camp. This continuity allows for in-depth exploration of subject material, active inquiry and discussion and hands-on participation by students.

While attending Satori, campers live on Eastern's tree-shaded main campus in Cheney, Washington. This collegiate setting is ideal for learning and provides an opportunity for college-bound students to gain college preparatory experience. Because the camp is designed as an enrichment experience, no letter or number grades are given.



[www.satoricamp.org](http://www.satoricamp.org)

For more information call (800) 831-6114

# EXECUTIVE Profile

## Lannie Kanevsky, Ph.D.

*Gifted contact, post-secondary education*

- Associate professor, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University
- Recently visiting professor, Department of Special Education, San Diego State
- Teaching, research and consulting across Canada, USA, Asia, Australia and New Zealand
- Advisory Board on several international publications
- Contributor to several international publications
- Her research focusses on gifted students' learning
- In addition to her work at Simon Fraser University, she continues to teach children and lead workshops for educators and parents
- Open hearted and open handed with ideas and problem-solving
- Kanevsky, L (1999) - Possibilities for Learning: Tool Kit for Curriculum Differentiation, (kanevsky@mail.sdsu.edu)

# EXECUTIVE Profile

## Marcia Garries

*Member at large*

- Worked with gifted learners in the North Vancouver School District for approximately fourteen years
- Vice President of the Gifted Children's Association of British Columbia
- Member of the Lower Mainland Gifted contacts
- District facilitator for Gifted Programs (K-12) in North Vancouver
- Works in diverse and collaborative environments to provide professional development in understanding the profiles of gifted and twice exceptional learners, look at best practice to support their learning needs, and provide research and develop resources to support classroom teachers
- Involved in TRIBES and CRITICAL THINKING training and facilitation
- Has developed and is available to present several workshops

The editors want to take this opportunity to express gratitude to New Horizon Printing and Stationery Ltd. who have been our PSA's publishers for 17 years. During this time they have produced for us: 24 newsletters, 4 journals, 11 profession brochures (What Educators Need to Know About ...), conference flyers, conference brochures and materials, posters, book marks, stationery, etc. They take in our not ready-for-print submissions and transform them into attractive professional products. We are proud of our publications and proud of the partnership provided by Loretta and her team at New Horizon.

*Thanks,  
Leslie and Patricia*

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