

OAF *express*

This first 2005 edition of the *OAF Express* is a testament to this dynamic year. Ontario's presence at the *Sommet de la Francophonie* in Burkina Faso as well as the new Domestic Violence Action Plan ended the year on a very positive note. News to read about and to pass on ... Enjoy!

2005 IS OFF TO A GOOD START

■ A New Domestic Violence Action Plan

This four-year proactive plan will emphasise prevention and better community support for abused women and their children. The key components of the plan are better counselling, shelter, and housing supports for abused women, more training for front-line workers, improvements to the justice system, and an innovative public awareness campaign.

The domestic violence action plan was developed following consultations across the province with over 180 experts and front-line workers and with the cooperation of 13 government ministries that deliver programs and services in the area of domestic violence.

The government is currently running a \$4.9 million campaign to prevent domestic violence over a period of four years. It will mobilize communities to take action and promote healthy, equal relationships. This multi-faceted program will include a

high-profile public education campaign that will target boys and girls aged eight to 14 years and the adults who influence them.

■ 10th International Francophonie Summit

The Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs, was pleased with Ontario's role in the 10th International Francophonie Summit held in Burkina Faso in late November. Premier Dalton McGuinty had instructed the Minister to begin the process of applying for membership in the international organisation of French-speaking communities, *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF). With the federal government's support for this undertaking, Minister Meilleur met with Francophonie decision-makers, Mr. Jacques Bilodeau, the Prime Minister's "Sherpa", and dignitaries from Canada and Burkina Faso.

Minister Meilleur discussed a number of international issues with the Burkina Fasan Minister of Women's Affairs, the Honourable Gisèle Guigma. These included the prevention

of violence against women, shelters and the increased role of women as heads of households (the average family in Burkina Faso has six children). Minister Meilleur also visited a training centre for midwives and a training centre for non-traditional professions for young women.



Burkina Faso students at the training centre.

■ New Designations!

The Municipality of Callander, located in the District of Parry Sound has become the 24th designated region in Ontario and the City of Brampton has been added to the City of Mississauga in the designated Regional Municipality of Peel. In the designated regions, the services of government agencies and ministries must be



Brampton's Farmers Market

delivered in both languages, whether over the telephone or in person. Motorists can look forward to new signage in these two regions.

For Brampton, the process of designation will involve a two-year implementation plan and the creation of a French-language service planning committee with regional representation.

■ Sudbury is always Welcoming

In late January, Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs Madeleine Meilleur attended the 7th Annual General Meeting of the *Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)* and had an opportunity to congratulate its leaders for their tireless efforts. Minister Meilleur then had an opportunity to meet Sudbury's Francophone community in the delightful setting of Parker House. General Roméo Dallaire

delivered the opening address at the AFOCSC's AGM. He spoke passionately about his military and personal experiences of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. It will be recalled that Lt. General Dallaire published a memoir, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, in 2004. Everyone who attended was very moved by his speech.



Lt. General Roméo Dallaire

■ Let's Celebrate the *Ordre de la Francophonie*

The Prescott and Russell Chapter of the *Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario (ACFO)* held its 7th Francophonie Banquet on March 5th, in Embrun. *L'Ordre de la Francophonie* was awarded to Dr. Richard Thain, *Maître* Ronald Caza, Mr. Sylvain Charlebois, Mr. André Chabot, Mr. Stephen Virc and Mr. Jean Poirier. The *Prix Jeunesse Thomas-Godefroy* was given to Ms. Véronic DiCaire, Ms. Geneviève LaTour and Ms. Vanessa Racine.

Those two distinctions aim to highlight the significant contribution that individuals have made to the advancement of the French language and culture in the region. "Many people deserve to be acknowledged. These two awards recognise their tremendous contribution to Ontario's Francophone community," stated Jean Poirier, Interim President of the Prescott and Russell Chapter of ACFO.

You can contact the Prescott and Russell Chapter of ACFO by email at acfopr@hawk.igs.net, or by telephone at 613 679-7621.

Erratum

The correct web site address for *Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes* is www.francofemmes.org/aocvf

HOW TO REACH US

OAF Express is produced by the **Office of Francophone Affairs**. If you have questions or comments, e-mail us at ofa@ofa.gov.on.ca, or visit us at www.ofa.gov.on.ca

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GREAT WEB SITES ... did you know that?



■ A Healthy Start ... Whenever!

The Healthy Ontario Web site at www.healthyontario.com/english/index.asp contains many interesting articles including "Power produce in March - Nutrition month", "Flu Myths Persist", "Health trips - taking a cruise", and "Tea time may improve memory".

Excerpt from the most recent information on the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs)

www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/lhin/lhin_mn.html