

By 2006 this initiative had utterly outgrown the abilities of any one person. When one person's passion and giftedness is tapped in their volunteer work, the serving is a joy and by 2006 a new era of volunteer delegation and cooperation lay ahead. 'The early years' proved that in Dufferin, a few determined parents and educators had a chance so see 'if we build it, they will come'. The ideas worked and educators began to sense what could be shared and celebrated. Getting the story out there to other communities in Ontario like our own was a possible next step but how could it be done? Noelle Klassen, one of the DYFA coordinators, put us on the World Wide Web. She offered a week of her summer to design a DYFA website that would tell our story there and streamline registration by offering it, on line. Check it out! www.dyfa.com. Send along your feedback!

Another volunteer, Elizabeth Campbell, who had served as a volunteer school host for years, decided to step up to the plate and became our first registrar. She also took over programme design. It is difficult to express how fortunate we are in community work when people find what they love to do and offer their giftedness to an initiative. Yes, we are blessed. In 2006 a student from Credit Meadows Elementary School wrote "I thought that the band from Westside and the band from the Christian School were the best. Also I thought when we were up singing was fun but I was really nervous when we first got up but by the end I felt good. When we were watching the other groups I was wondering, about how nervous they were probably feeling too. But it was cool and really fun. I hope I go next year!" 2006 was another mile marker in that Robert F Hall's senior band attended and hosted one of the four mornings. Bob Borden, past Chair of the UGDSB wrote – 'Attending the event, each year, I am amazed at the coordinated effort of the many volunteers working to ensure a smooth show for everyone. In the end, the real winners are the young artists who get to showcase their talents in such a wonderful setting.' A pilot research project on the impact of the festival on students was conducted. PMPS student 'Well, band lets you express yourself and it builds your self confidence. After you play for someone like at the festival of the starts and they clap and scream for you, you feel very good. Like when I finished every one of my pieces the crowd clapped and cheered. I've never had a cheer like that before and after, I felt pretty good. I can't wait to go to the festival next year.'

May 1 to 4, 2007 brought us together once again now under the leadership of an additional coordinator, Jaime Wouters. As a parent of two children attending Island Lake Public School, music teacher and member of Orangeville Baptist Church, Jaime put her shoulder to the wheel and began establishing contacts with school council and parent contacts at each school in Dufferin. She is also interested in gathering submissions for arts stories from each school across Dufferin on the arts matters link at www.dyfa.com Encourage her on! Jaime@dyfa.com Take a minute and tell us what you remember most. Graduate research interviews and focus groups have been conducted with 27 UGDSB students, 9 teachers and 4 DYFA volunteers, through the University of Western Ontario. The aims of this study are to better understand the nature of the DYFA experience

how it relates and compares to school based arts education. Participants were asked to reflect back on the festival experience and sketch something memorable. The audio taped interview and focus sessions explored dialogue such as “Can you tell me a bit about your drawing? Why do you remember the DFYA arts experience as special in this way? How is it similar or different from other arts based activities at school?”

In Public Spaces in Local Places, Maxine Greene argues that efforts need to be made to encourage public spaces where individuals recognize the integrity of diverse perspectives and each other’s stories. If these spaces can be realized, they will embrace imagination. Greene contends that the arts will be present in those spaces. “To be literate in this fashion, is to be able to crack the cues that have kept secret . . . freedom and fulfillment that allow created worlds such as Cézanne landscape. . . to emerge in experience, recognized, intended, deeply grasped.’ She concludes that something vital and palpable enters the human world through art. In this regard, through aesthetic experience, she sees the world as changed. Encouraging the arts rereleases our imagination within a dialogical community, allowing us to ponder about the future of our schools and to explore the spaces where emerging conversations can take place. (Greene, 2000)..

“It is art that makes life, makes interest, makes importance and I know of no substitute whatever for the force and beauty of its process.” – Henry James
Wendy Carter DYFA 2008 Coordinator

Why do teachers bring their classes to the DYFA? Why did every secondary school host and perform at the DFYA 2008? Is there somehow a growing awareness that this is truly worth our time?

Our stories – each is unique and valuable. Just a look at Thursday and Friday’s programme and see the names of heroes in this county. Matthew Fleming – persuasion extraordinaire who led after hours workshops for teachers from several schools. Tony Culp who coordinated 4 four arts emphasis from ODSS. Mrs. Norgaard at ST Benedict who simply asks how she can help. Glyn Lloyd who brings Robert F Hall’s band because it’s worth his time. Ann McAlpine who volunteered to come back to the school she retired from in January to conduct the school choir. Mrs. N. McClellan who marks the festival as the highlight on her arts curriculum. Mrs. Orme and Mrs. Heimbecker who train some of the most appreciative and determined students in this county. Brett Girvin and Erin DHS who are legends concerning secondary school enthusiasm and commitment. Ryan Grist who was led the ODSS Jazz band for about then years, even as a student when no teacher could! Each and every name in the program for all the days of the week – all people in our education community who has served in ways none of us can forget.

Precedents set in 2008. An emphasis on Music Monday through the determination of Mary Runciman. A fifth morning and several schools attending a second time in order that audience numbers were evenly distributed for all performances. Students spoke as

part of the introductory remarks alongside their teachers or principals. Bernadette Hardaker and David Nar co hosted on the final morning and we all had so much fun they decided to come back in 2009 as co host for each and every day! We distributed our first professional press reassess based on the excellent advise of Leisa Wray who was covering publicity for Theatre Orangeville that spring. Students from Mono & Amaranth wrote over 60 notes that were briefed and sent to attending teachers and sensors with our thanks for commitment.

Much to be proud of, and a sense in which we have much to look forward to 2009.
Wendy Carter

Our story in 2009 begins in a personal context and I write, as a DFYA coordinator, aware of my privilege to have spent the last year reflecting on some of most distinguished voices in the education community and arts advocacy.

Maxine Greene (1996) speaks of how informed engagements with the arts release an imaginative capacity and give it play in ways other disciplines cannot. Simply being exposed to artistic expression though is not the same as experiencing it. There must be a conscious participation. "A going out of energy, an ability to notice what is there to be noticed in the play, the poem, the quartet. 'knowing about', even in the most formal academic manner, is entirely different from creating an unreal world imaginatively and entering into it perceptually, affectively, and cognitively. . . freeing ourselves to perceive works as meaningful' Maxine Greene is not reticent about what this means. "Imagination creates new orders . . imagination connects human consciousness and works of arts, music dance. . imagination may be the primary means of forming an understanding of what goes on under the heading of 'reality'- imagination may be responsible for the very texture of experience.'

Overall, educators who attend remind me of what Richmond (1993) outlines as teachers who embrace the six criteria of Imaginative Art Teaching (I A T).

1) IAT generates unusual ideas and activities: The public, private and separate school teachers who attend cooperate in ways unheard of anywhere else in terms of performance and visual arts display. To the best of our knowledge, it is unique provincially, nationally and internationally.

2) IAT constructs learning opportunities that lead to worthwhile artistic understanding: in fact some teachers consider the experience the impetus and highlight of their art curriculum.

3) IAT utilizes the teacher's knowledge and judgment: participation requires no privileged arts background or experience and is based on voluntarily sharing school based arts ideas amongst the education community at large.

4) IAT is flexible and adaptive to the unique demands of practice: the festival addresses the actual learning community in the county and involves teacher's feedback.

5) IAT respects the exploratory, open ended and insightful nature of arts: the DFYA offers material and opinions from committed educators and publishes reflections on what was experienced.

6) IAT is vital and motivating and is a model for the pupils' own imaginative efforts in art: ideas as vignettes. Letters and drawings from students themselves sent to the DYFA speak clearly about this.

In 'The Heart of a Teacher' Parker Palmer speaks of teachers meeting as fellow travelers offering encouragement to each other in this demanding but deeply rewarding journey across the inner landscape of education. Often schooling highlights how different one learning style is from another. How different a person's background and life experience can prepare them for graded activities in communication, mathematical skills, and sports ability. Yet this celebration transcends levels and invites each performer and audience member into the aesthetic moment. No child interviewed about their festival experiences spoke of being teased, bored, and feeling isolated or not valued for each and every performance given. And I have read nothing closer in part to the set of foundational beliefs of the celebration's volunteers and teachers that the words by Karen Witmer as she speaks of 'Transformative Leadership'.

1) I believe in the dignity of all individuals. I believe we are all different and that it is those differences that enrich our society and our learning. I believe it is no job as an educator, a parent, and a human being to help each individual learn to see her differences as gifts to be discovered and nurtured.

2) I believe in the power of learning. In fact, I believe learning is power and freedom. Since I have such confidence in the power of learning, I believe nothing is truly impossible. The only constant in life is change, and change is only possible through learning.

3) I believe in the power of relationships. I believe people need to be connected in order to grow. I believe we learn best when we learn together. I believe we are more likely to take risks when we have the security of relationships to comfort and encourage us.

4) I believe in love. Love is the greatest of all emotions. It should be the reason behind every great deed. The force behind every good decision, and the influence behind every major movement. My leadership, my decision, and my learning are all based on love.

These beliefs have given me much to reflect on. They inform my conviction that case study about the DFYA explores a phenomenon that is a model for other communities. Ideas brought up first in 1998 at a community forum that brainstormed opinions from each and every sector in the Dufferin community. Henderson and Hawthorne (1999) views transformative curriculum leadership as "a fancy term used to describe life in a

democratic society – a life in which we work together, learn together, and grow together towards a better way. We, as ‘becoming’ leaders, must listen with our hearts, speak of truth and love, and envision what’s right. As difficult and draining as it is transformative curriculum leadership is our calling. And we wouldn’t have it any other way.’ Yet, words and talk are one thing. Persistence and commitment is another. Several of the arts advocates and teachers who attended the first festival in 1998, had continued to attend and their names were on the 2009 programme: Mrs. Karen Orme, Mrs. L. Heimbecker,, John McIntyre, Mrs. Chris Langman, Mary Runciman, Marilyn Logan, Joy Bell, Linda Thompson, Melissa Dobson, Brandy Robinson, and Ann McAlpine.

All of us as children and adults are impacted by our social, political and economic contexts. Through out our lives we construct lenses through which we view the world. In the forward of Context, Content, and Community in Art Education – Beyond Postmodernism, Jerome J. Hausman observes: ‘Increasingly, we are coming to recognize the interconnectedness of elements that contribute to the fabric of our existence. Our expanded visions of arts education are bringing us back to an enriched grasp of self-knowledge and creative process. Ideas of a ‘global village’ are bringing us to a deepened sense for community.

The story documented on www.dyfa.ca is about relationships happening among remarkable people who imagined something beyond any one circle of influence. Something greater than the sum of parts. With great pride in my community I mention the names of the people who have linked arms as they have served in the DYFA 2009.

DYFA 2009 Team

Web Master and Design Noelle Klassen
Registrar and Programme Design Elizabeth Campbell
DVD Highlights Production Jeff Broderick
Upper Grand District School Board Liaison Bob Borden
Visual Arts Coordinator Martha Muntz
Volunteer Coordinator Kathy Ayliffe
Stage Manager Marilyn Logan
Assistant Stage Manager Sharon Larsen
Master of Ceremonies David Nairn
Master of Ceremonies Bernadette Hardaker
Dufferin Arts Council Liaison Joan Borden
Executive Advisors Brandy Robinson, Sharon Larsen
Pam Claridge & Ryan Carter
Artsmatters Bruce Phillips
Hospitality and Welcome Pam Claridge
Communication & Media Sue Halliday
Communications Committee Valerie Webster,
Sue Halliday, Lisa Sarkar & Constance Scrafield-Danby
Photography Sharyn Ayliffe

Principal Advisors Ms. J. Gilewski, Mr. P. LeBlanc
Teacher Advisors Mrs. M. Runciman, Mrs. K. Orme,
Ms. L. Heimbecker, Ms. M. Dobson,
Mrs. D. Norgaard, Mr. T. Culp, Mr. B. Girvin,
& Mrs. I. Langhorst
DYFA Coordinators Jaime Wouters & Wendy Carter

Festival 2009 Volunteers

Mrs. Pam Claridge, Ms. Brandy Robinson, Ms. Sue Allen,
Mrs. Ann McAlpine, Mrs. Christine Murray,
Mrs. P. VanTright, Mrs. Sharon Mullins,
Ms. Elizabeth Campbell, Ms. Sherry Naftel,
Ms. Debbie Hunt, Ms. Phyllis Robinson,
Ms. Nancy Thompson, Mrs. Sonya Vacher,
Mr. Chris Vacher, Ms. P. McLeod,
Ms. A. Brackett, Ms. Debbie Strange, Ms. Jackie Field,
Mrs. Sue Halliday, Ms. Shannon Knudson,
Mrs. Janet Poyatzi, Mrs. Wanda White,
Mr. Wayne White, Ms. Christy Balch, Mr. Cliff Wright,
Ms. Hannah Campbell, Mr. Willie Brown, Mrs. Bridget Burd,
Mr. David Kirk, P. Forrest.

Inaugural Visual Arts Open House – OBC

May 5th 6 to 9 p.m. Martha Muntz Coordinator

Visual Arts Volunteer Team: Ms. Brandy Robinson, Ms. Jackie Field, Ms. Stephanie
Carter, Ms. Rachel Burd, Ms. Vanessa Jones & Mr. Ryan Carter

18 schools displayed what's creating excitement in their schools in the visual arts!
Princess Margaret PS,
Island Lake PS, Orangeville Christian School,
Parkinson Centennial PS, Manchester Montessori School,
Mono Amaranth PS, Brisbane PS, Hyland Heights ES, Westside Secondary, St Peter PS,
Primrose ES,
Erin District HS, ODSS, St. Benedict ES,
Princess Elizabeth PS, St. Andrew
& Montgomery Village PS

