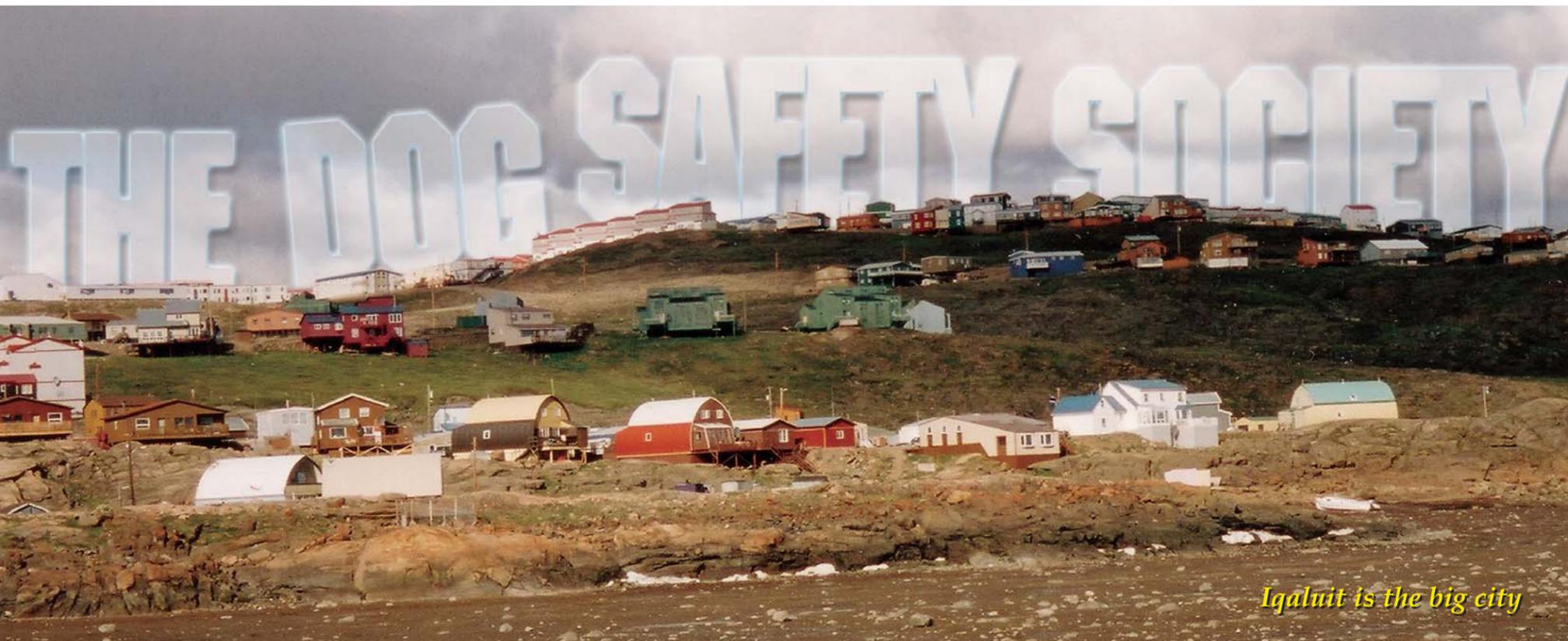


# BRIDGES

FROM THE COMMUNITY TO THE CLASSROOM



*Iqaluit is the big city*

Switching to a new school in the middle of the year is not generally an attractive prospect for a ten year old girl. Questions like “Will I make new friends?” or “Will there be anything to do?” are understandable. When your old school is in the heart of Vancouver and you join your new school in the new Territory of Nunavut on a freezing Arctic January day, the questions are a little more complex.

This is what faced Kelsey Gage when her father took a five-month television assignment in the frozen north in January of this year. Kelsey didn't ask herself whether she could make a difference during her five-month stay in Iqaluit, but she did. A number of dogs would agree.

Nunavut is a territory that spans two million square kilometers of Canada extending north and west of Hudson Bay to the North Pole.

The average age of its 29,000 residents is 22 and 85% of the population is Inuit. There are 26 communities with populations that range from 25 to 6,000 in the largest town Iqaluit. It has the highest cost of living in Canada; there is one person for every 70 square kilometers, four different languages spoken, and a lot of stray dogs.

*“Dogs are a traditional part of the Inuit culture”*

Shortly after arriving, Kelsey tuned in to the dog problem. Dogs are a traditional part of the Inuit culture but changing times and a lack of spaying or neutering services mean that dozens of them roam the snow-bound streets at night. They roam in packs and many acquire aggressive behaviors so that

occasionally the dogs are culled. Joined by four of her new friends in a Dog Safety Society, Kelsey visited the mayor of Iqaluit and

*“Some of the dogs gathered also qualified for free air”*

delivered a simple message “Dogs are our friends we want to do something to help.” They gathered stray puppies and brought them to the community’s dog pound. There they visited them

during the week to spend time with them and help with their socialization to humans. Some of the dogs gathered also qualified for free air trips to the south where they could be adopted.

Back in Vancouver where she attends False Creek Elementary School Kelsey stays in touch with her former northern classmates and brought one of them down to spend two weeks at summer camp. The Dog Safety Society continues. In the words of her father Marc, “Kelsey left Iqaluit a better place by being there.”



*Learning to be sociable*

## Ocean Reflections

The journal of the B.C. Science Teachers’ Association offers these sober reflections on the health and importance of oceans.

Among them:

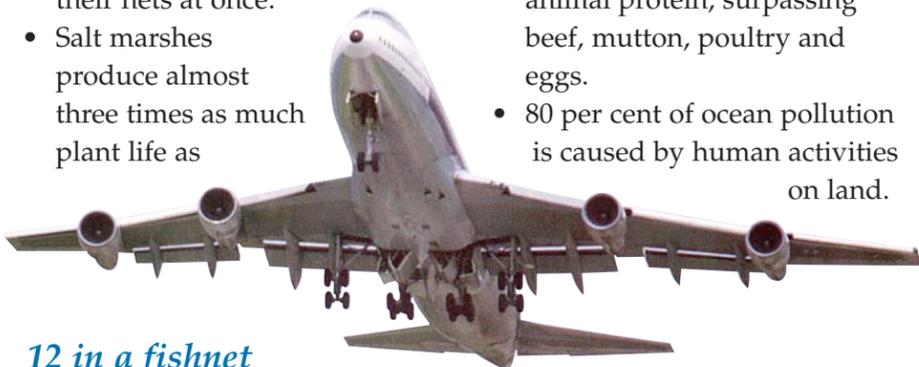
- Canada has the world’s longest coastline at 243,792 kilometers.
- The average Canadian uses 370 litres of water per day, which is the most per capita in the world.
- Approximately 800,000 seabirds and 120,000 dolphins, whales and seals are killed annually in driftnets used for tuna and squid fishing.

*Continued to page 16...*



## Continued from Page 3...Ocean Reflections

- Draining and filling wetlands for agricultural use has destroyed 85 per cent of Canadian salt marshes and fresh-water wetlands.
- Some ocean trawlers could hold a dozen 747 airplanes in their nets at once.
- Salt marshes produce almost three times as much plant life as the richest farmland and about 70 per cent of fish species spend part of their life cycle in coast areas including salt marshes.
- Fish and shellfish are the world's largest source of animal protein, surpassing beef, mutton, poultry and eggs.
- 80 per cent of ocean pollution is caused by human activities on land.



## 12 in a fishnet

## Continued from Page 4...Collision on the Trans Fat Highway

defensive position to the effect that they never suggest children eat hamburgers or French fries three times a day. Critics counter that the combination of poor nutritional value and bombardment of television commercials on young minds combine to produce undesirable eating habits. The risks become higher for children who do not embrace an active lifestyle. The snack food industry may be moving to change their menus. One of the larger French fry producers has already introduced an optional non-hydrogenated French fry.

There is no indication on how the Creative Directors will combine images of skateboards and face stuffing with a healthy eating message.

## Continued from Page 12...Questions and Answers?

J. Kwan: "Under all that rhetoric the answer then is simple; it's no. That's what the Minister is saying, essentially. She went on and on and on about a whole bunch of other things, but actually never provided a simple answer to a simple question - yes or no."

## Continued from Page 13...Teachers Helping Teachers

### ACCESS DOESN'T EQUAL UNDERSTANDING

*"Computers are not teaching machines. A computer connected to the Internet is a school library at a child's fingertips. But the entrance to a room full of books does not guarantee a student will read or make sense of anything."*

These are the views of Judith Comfort a teacher-librarian at Doctor Charles Best Secondary in Coquitlam.

Writing in the journal of the B.C. Teacher-Librarians' Association, Comfort adds that, "accessing information instantly does not make anyone learn faster. Reading with understanding is a subtle process that takes time."

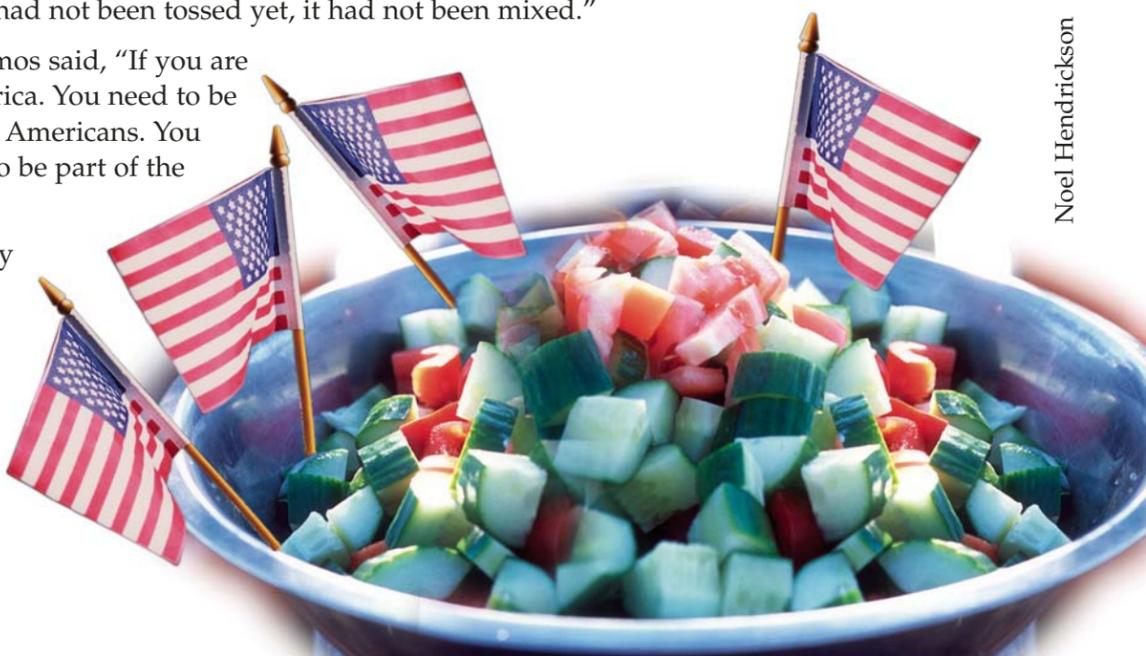
## Salad Days

The keynote speaker at the annual conference of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development was Edward James Olmos, a prominent Mexican-American star of television and movies. He offered his personal perspective on multi-culturalism in the United States. Said Olmos, "Where I grew up, we were not part of a melting pot; we were part of a salad. We had Korean-Americans, Chinese-Americans, Japanese-Americans, Mexican-Americans, first generation Russian Orthodox, and African-Americans - but this beautiful salad that we were all a part of had not been tossed yet, it had not been mixed."

Commenting on the challenges of identity and integration, Olmos said, "If you are Mexican-American you know how difficult life can be in America. You need to be more Mexican than the Mexicans and more American than the Americans. You don't want to lose your identity but you want so desperately to be part of the society where you live."

He challenged educators to foster a greater sense of community among their students, recalling a lesson from his mother who told him that while everyone is selfish, there are two kinds of selfish people; foolish, selfish people and wise, selfish people. He explained "The foolish one gets up, goes to work, comes home, makes sure the family is okay, says his prayers, and goes to bed. The smart selfish person, on the other hand, does all of these same things but just before he goes to bed, he opens his door to make sure his neighbour is okay."

He exhorted his audience to be wise, selfish people.



Noel Hendrickson

## Continued from Page 13...

### THE CASE FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION

According to Peter Noha the President of the B.C. Business Educators' Association, business education remains a low priority for government while the need for business education is increasing. Says Noha, "While this government calls itself pro-business, we see no signs of any pro-business education initiatives. We, therefore, have to work closely with the business community to pressure the government for more emphasis on business education."

Noha describes the general level of business knowledge in society as "abysmal." He adds, "People don't know how to balance a cheque book, don't know what a budget is, and run up astronomical credit card debt with the inevitable sad outcomes."

He also calls for closer working relationships between high school business educators and colleges and universities. One of the key problems he identifies currently in this relationship is that post-secondary institutions are not recognizing business education for advanced credits. Says Noha, "We teach Marketing in grades 11 and 12, Accounting in grades 11 and 12 and Entrepreneurship and Business Management in grade 12, yet most universities do not recognize any of these courses."

*Astronomical debt.*

## Continued from Page 14...Canadian Literature Lacking

The report also finds teachers indicating that few students are writing creatively and that most students read five or less Canadian books during their entire secondary education.

A summary of the report appears in Update, published by the B.C. Teachers of English Language Arts, in May.