

Keeping you connected to the DGR



Marie Wilson (L&ILW), has accountability, on behalf of OPG, for work programs in the areas of geoscience, safety assessment, engineering/design, environmental field work and public engagement. NWMO, as a good corporate citizen, also takes an active role in the Bruce community. NWMO participates in and sponsors community events, delivers an annual DGR Community Partnership Program and provides support to various community initiatives, and it should be noted NWMO staff members often serve as volunteers for various community functions. It's all part of our commitment to the Bruce community.

Recently, NWMO was very pleased to participate in the annual Kincardine and District Chamber of Commerce Community Achievement Awards Gala where the NWMO Award of Merit – one of eleven different community awards – was presented to Amy Snobelen and Kathie Hackney. The Kincardine District Secondary School (KDSS) teachers were nominated for the NWMO Award of Merit by the Kincardine Economic Development Committee in recognition of a new program at KDSS, which is already yielding positive results.

Recognizing the need to provide alternative resources for teenage girls who were experiencing limited success in high school because of poor attendance and low academic achievement, Amy and Kathie developed, secured funding and implemented a new initiative designed specifically for these young women who weren't responding to mainstream programming.

Students spend two periods a day in a special classroom setting where the emphasis is on positive reinforcement by encouraging and developing self esteem, teamwork and goal setting. If the girls are behind in their courses, they are in an environment where they can get caught up without feeling stigmatized by being in a classroom with younger students. Special speakers from various vocations are brought in as a means to inspire the girls to set realistic career goals. It is recognized that not everyone is university or college bound, but there are still many other worthwhile

careers and employment opportunities to aspire to, but creating awareness of such opportunities is key. Although the program is only in its infancy, the attendance rate of the first 16 students has improved and according to Snobelen, "60 per cent are on track to graduate."

Several of the students said the program provided them with the incentive to attend class because they enjoyed the support they received from their classmates and the overall sense of belonging. One girl noted that she had thought about leaving school, but being in the program gave her the confidence to seek a co-op position in a local restaurant, and now she is on track for graduation, and thinking about various career options. Of the four girls who were interviewed for this story, all had positive experiences with the program and said they fully expect to graduate from high school.

As for Snobelen and Hackney, there are very appreciative of the award, and wanted to express their thanks to the Kincardine and District Chamber of Commerce, NWMO and the various community partners who helped them through donations and funding to get the program started; however as Snobelen said, "it's nice to get the recognition, but Kathie and I feel we are just doing our jobs."

In other news, the spring engagement program has begun with the L&ILW DGR mobile exhibit and NWMO staff spoke to about 150 attendees at the Midwestern Agrifair in Chesley over April 6 & 7. Always a popular event, many of the 150 we spoke to were

repeat visitors who really wanted to know when we were going to start constructing. Please be aware the process is unfolding as it should through the passage of time. When you consider the project description was submitted to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) in late 2005, and we are moving closer to an expected public hearing for the project in 2012, we are making progress towards a decision on the L&ILW DGR Project. It takes time to do all of the work that must be done to ensure the L&ILW DGR will safely isolate and contain low and intermediate level waste for tens of thousands of years. It also takes time to provide the public with numerous public consultation venues where they can seek information, ask questions and provide comment. For more information about the L&ILW DGR, please call Marie Wilson at 519 368-1639 or visit: www.nwmo.ca/dgr.*



NWMO's Diane Barker, during the Chesley Agrifair, discusses the importance of geology to the safety case for the L&ILW DGR with Chris Hughes, Manager of Tourism for Bruce County.