

THIS EXPRESS



WORK COMPLETE: Toronto McDonald's.
— Picture by Daniel Hardy

New tables, wider menu

By DANIEL HARDY

RENOVATIONS are complete at the McDonald's Family Restaurant at Toronto, which now boasts a new McCafe.

As a result of the renovations, which began in mid June, the restaurant is now significantly larger, supplies a wider range of menu items and is experiencing even more patronage, according to restaurant manager Robert Gorseski.

The McCafe features hot beverages, milkshakes, muffins, biscuits, cakes and other items.

The enlarged dining area now features more than 30 extra seats and tables for customer use.

The patio outside has been renovated into an additional indoor dining room area that provides extra seating for patrons.

Serving counters inside have been extended, allowing more staff to keep up with the increase in demand.

The restaurant's Playland has undergone a face-lift with the construction of a large outdoor awning to provide shelter from rain and sun. It has also been resurfaced.

The restaurant's parking lot and drive-through have also been extended, following the purchase of land adjacent to the restaurant.

Mr Gorseski said the extensions would benefit the restaurant's patrons by providing the capacity to handle larger numbers of customers.

Magic touch for NAIDOC

By KANE GORDON, TROY GORDON and JACK McDONALD

ON Friday, August 10, the annual NAIDOC Week Touch Football Carnival was held at Lyall Peacock Oval, Toronto.

Indigenous and Pacific Islander students from high schools in the Lake Macquarie region were involved. These included representatives from Toronto, Hunter Sports, Lake Macquarie, Morisset, Glendale, Cardiff and West Wallsend high schools, and Kirinari Boys' Hostel.

The boys' grand final between Hunter Sports and Toronto went down to a nail-biting 1-0 victory for the Toronto Boys in extra time, when Hayden Edwards scored in the corner.

This was the second year in a row that the Toronto boys' team took out the title.

The girls' grand final featured intense rivalry between teams from Toronto and West Wallsend, which was played out in a dynamic "drop-off" situation. With only three players on each side, Toronto's Amanda Gleeson

stretched out across the line for the match-winning try.

The carnival has been running for four years. It was originally intended to give indigenous and Pacific Islander students an opportunity to ease community tensions and increase the interactions.

This was the third year the carnival was hosted by Toronto High School, with the event organised by Anita Barker, the Aboriginal Education Worker at Toronto, with assistance from Robert D'Elboux.

"The day wouldn't have been the success that it was without the support of the carnival's sponsors: Centrelink Toronto, Lake Macquarie City Council and Toronto Workers' Club," Mrs Barker said.

"Special mention must go to Warren Bull from Toronto Workers' Club, who organised the field, and to Russell, the groundsman."

The event was well-supported by the local community. Edward Smith was in charge of the barbeque, and Gillian Howie and Rae Dennis, from Centrelink, helped prepare food.

The Toronto boys' team



FINE RESULT: David Briggs and Latrista Gordon from Toronto High with their teams' trophies.
— Picture by Anita Barker

consisted of Kane Gordon, Troy Gordon, Randall Briggs, Isaac Briggs, Cody Gordon, Cody Sampson, Jarrod Edwards, Matt Simon, Sonny Standing, Lewis

Simon, Hayden Edwards, Shane Beale, David Briggs and Amos Simon.

The Toronto girls' team consisted of: Jamica Simon, Latrista Gordon, Amanda

Gleeson, Tonika Johns, Termanie Johns, Brittany Edwards, Lacey Simon, Jayde Sampson, Lateeka Eggins, Jade Leary and Kirsty Sharp.



PRETTY COOL: Students enjoying new seating.
— Picture by Daniel Hardy

Student survey results in new seats

By DANIEL HARDY

DURING the June-July school holidays, eight of the teachers and groundsmen at Toronto High School came together to assemble picnic tables for the playground.

The provision of the tables came about as a result of a school-wide survey held earlier in the year.

In the survey, students expressed a desire for

more playground seating.

Toronto High used some government grant money to purchase the materials for the tables at a cost of approximately \$16,000.

There are 25 tables, each of which seats about 10 students. The tables are made of hardwood on a metal frame.

"As long as they're cared for and not damaged, then they'll last for a very long

time," said the teacher in charge of construction, Leo Hudson.

Students of the school seem pleased with the tables and the opportunity they provide to sit and talk with friends.

"They're pretty cool," said one student.

The tables can be moved by students to take advantage of sunny weather or avoid wet conditions.



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Re-think negativity linked to education

Editorial

By PETER COOPER

EDUCATION is the key to a fulfilling life. A person's education defines who they are and what they will be. It is worrying then, that in today's society, education is one of the most concerning social issues we face as a community.

In the 21st century a person's class and success in life is no longer determined by the nobility of their birth, but by their educational attainment.

This seems logical as higher-paid jobs often require a higher level of education. However, it is sad to reflect that, after hundreds of years of rapid social progression, access to education is taken for granted by many.

In the end this educational apathy and disregard inevitably leave individuals and society suffering. While many people would think that individualism and class freedom have eroded notions of the proletariat, education has now formed the gap between the well-educated elites and the poorly educated workers.

Educational apathy can be seen in many of the educational establishments around the world. Many adults could think back to childhood memories of not paying attention in class and taking more interest in trivial social matters.

Popular culture helps to reinforce this perception, showing educational apathy as being the social norm, and educational interest as the opposite.

This problem stems from many factors found in society. The first and most influential of these is a

culture of under-achievement.

Quite simply, children today see learning as a negative experience to be shunned or rejected. Unfortunately, behaving like Bart Simpson will not aid them later in life. Stereotypes such as this influence the attitudes of children, and the effect is phenomenal. The point at which society made the change to the present situation is unknown, though at the current rate this strongly reinforced culture does not appear to be changing.

Another adverse influence that has resulted in this apathetic attitude can be found in the home. While parentage is no longer the determinant of one's location in the class system, parental attitude to education is highly influential on a child's learning. Although the educational system expects children to be on an equal footing, in reality a well-nurtured childhood does not exist for everyone and, for many, this impacts on their education later in life.

The great Orwellian phrase, "All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others", seems to have profound significance, even in the Australian education system.

Whatever the specific cause, the result is irrational and damaging to any individual who is caught in this web of educational neglect. Education, especially at an early age, is critical to the development of the human mind. A deficiency in knowledge and skills gained at school will establish individuals as unfortunate victims with considerably fewer opportunities.

The solution to the problem is not simple. There needs to be a cogent change, a revolution of educational values. Society must re-think the value of learning and work to remove the illogical negativity associated with it.



TAKE A DIVE: Cassandra Rogers in mid-flight. — Picture courtesy of Sports Action Photographics

Cassandra's a perfect 10

By MELINDA JENKINS

CASSANDRA Rogers recently represented Toronto High School at the National Diving Championship in Hobart.

She competed in both the individual springboard and the synchronised events. While diving with her partner, Cassandra scored a perfect 10.

Cassandra started diving at the age of nine with the Hunter United Diving Academy. She competed in her first national championship in 2004 at the age of 11.

In total she has competed at four national championships and was last year named the 14-year-old Diver of the Year.

Cassandra's success has come through her hard work with her coaches Sue Burke and Brett Austine.

As well as diving, Cassandra competes in trampolining and has participated in regional, state and national titles.

Cassandra trains up to five times a week with Mr Austine, who himself holds several world records.

Cassandra began trampolining at the age of seven at the Hunter Sports Centre before moving to Lakeside Trampoline Club, where she competed at a higher level.

Cassandra now competes at elite as well as age level and is also coaching a beginner's class.

Cassandra hopes to one day compete at a world title event.

Second win no drama

By HANNAH POLLARD

FOR the second year in a row, a year 11 drama class from Toronto High has won first prize and \$1250 in the MindPlay Competition, held by the Hunter Institute of Mental Health at the University of Newcastle.

In this annual competition, year 11 drama students from the Hunter and Central Coast regions were invited to research, write, and perform a 15-minute performance that had a strong focus on a mental health issue.

The class from Toronto High, led this year by an enthusiastic Mark Lulham, worked together to compose a performance titled *You're Not Alone*, which carefully and effectively explored Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and its impact on individuals.

Around 12 schools competed in the first round of auditions, which were held at the University of Newcastle on June 4.

Five schools were selected to progress to the final round, held at the university on June 29.

Lambton High School took home second prize with a performance on the impacts of drug use on mental health, followed by Taree Christian School in third place with a performance relating to depression.

"It's a really effective way to increase awareness for mental health issues in society," said Toronto thespian Luke Tobin.

"Just from watching other people perform, to researching your own, you learn so much."



— Illustration by Alex Scott

Age no barrier as TOADS leap into semis

By BRONTE SHORT

A RECENT win by the Toronto TOADS (an acronym that stands for Too Old And Definitely Slow) secured them first place on the ladder in the over-35 C-grade soccer competition.

At the time of writing, the minor premiers were undefeated in 2007 and were thrilled to be facing the semifinals.

The Toronto TOADS comprises players who vary in age from 36 to 50. Speaking with *THIS*

Express after winning the minor premiership, the TOADS hoped that their good luck this year would continue into the semifinals.

"We're just one big, happy family," one player stated.

"We get quite a crowd as our friends and family are always there cheering us on," said another.

"This is the best team yet," said team captain Warren Penfold.

"We hope to continue our great form and keep our nerves under control."



MINOR PREMIERS: The TOADS prove you can never be too old or too slow. — Picture by Angela Sullivan

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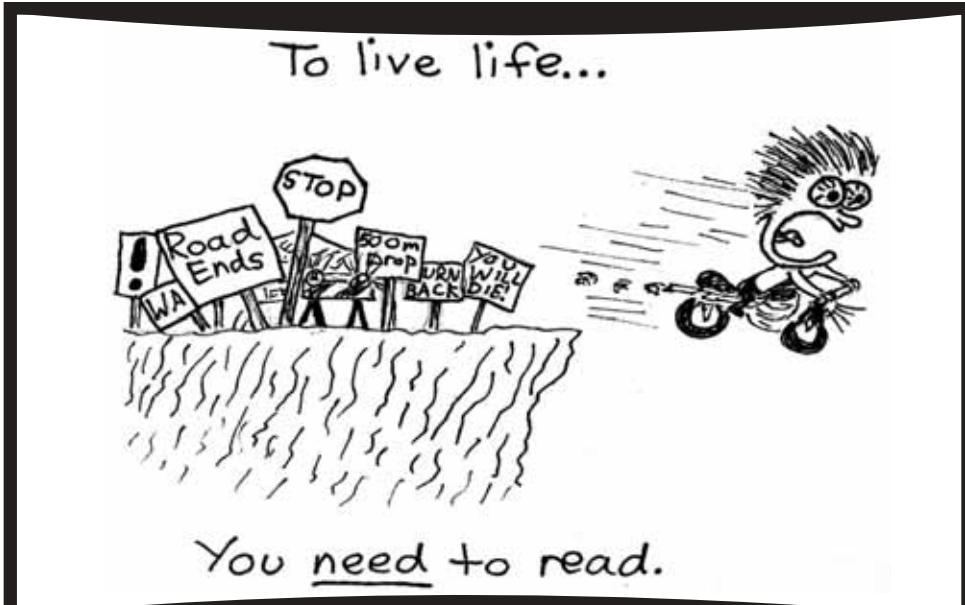
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