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**Editor.....Laura Benedict  
Assistant Editor.....Andre LeComte**

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## President's Message

Another year has gone by and a new year is beginning.

Happy New Year everyone!

Every time the year changes things change, we change. Change can be a challenge. Sometimes change allows us to grow and sometimes it drives us crazy.

I know some Vocational Teachers have felt the challenges of Manitoba's Safety Awareness. Recently I attended a workshop presented by Peter Fuller, Technology Education Consultant for Manitoba Education and Youth. I encourage you to request to attend the next session (Please see information below) or any safety sessions you are aware of.

I would like to share with you the Role of the Teacher from Bulletin #226, Duties under the Workplace Safety and Health Act.

"Although a teacher is required, as part of his or her occupation, to supervise the activities

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# It's All About Skill

## Gear Up

*by Brenda Speirs-Fryatt*

### World Skills Report St Gallen Switzerland 2003

Imagine you are on top of the world. (Mount San-tis, Switzerland) You feel like you are a few miles short of heaven. You are there with 700 young people (90% male) who have just finished an intensive four-day competition. This is the climax of a yearlong training program for both the competitor and you the trainer.

It feels great. Enter the grand hall for dinner. It's crowded and noisy and our European hosts spoil us with food, drink and entertainment. Yes, I lived to tell the tale; including the ride back down the mountain in the 50 capacity tram.

Yes, the trip to World Skills in Switzerland was great! Yes, it was a highlight of my teaching career! Yes, I'm glad I said "Yes" to the opportunity to be a trainer. Yes, it was more work than I ever imagined and no I can't believe I managed to keep my head above water last year.

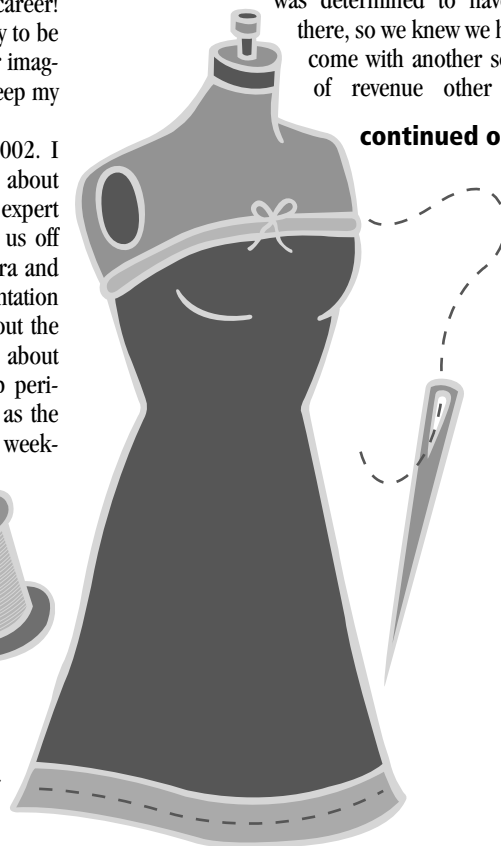
The training program began in July 2002. I worked with the candidate Aurora Dekker about 2 days per week all summer. The national expert in Ladies Dressmaking, Jozee Dulude, got us off to a good start with a weeklong visit. Aurora and I flew to Montreal for a team Canada orientation in the fall. We continued to work throughout the year, with Aurora working at the school about 2 days a week. (That means breaks, prep periods, lunch hours and after school as well as the occasional weekend.) Jozee made 2 more week-long trips out to Winnipeg from Montreal over the winter. Then, Aurora spent 3 weeks in Montreal in the spring and I joined them for a weekend to get the final phase of the training plan. We ended with a trip to the National Skills competition in Kitchener for a simulation competition.

In addition to the training program, there are additional responsibilities, primarily, fund raising. My

first responsibility was to find Aurora an appropriate job in the fashion industry. Nygard International made a place for her in their sample sewing room. This training proved to be invaluable in learning techniques and in building speed. Next, I needed to obtain an industrial sewing machine for Aurora to have at home. This proved to be more difficult than I thought. I finally got one when I guaranteed it would be purchased at the end of the competition. My thank you extends to Winnipeg Sewing. I hired a psychologist who specializes in working with competitive athletes. Aurora had numerous sessions to help prepare her mentally. Also, there were additional expenses and the trip cost of the trainer was not funded. Aurora

was determined to have me there, so we knew we had to come with another source of revenue other than

**continued on p3**



## 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Chef Educators Conference

by Roy Rudachek

Our 13th Annual Conference was held for the first time in Nanaimo, British Columbia. This is the third time that British Columbia Chef Educators have been our hosts. The organizing committee, headed by Terry Larson, had worked very hard to make this conference an educational success and also a time of renewing friendships and meeting new members.

We are all ambassadors for the Canadian Hospitality Industry and our education facilities. As educators we all inspire and contribute to the achievement of students who are working towards a career in our industry. We meet to share our ideas and strategies in the promotion of our mission:

1. To promote Vocational Education in Hospitality and Food Training across Canada.
2. To promote student employability skills for the Hospitality Industry.

3. To standardize high school and apprenticeship training across Canada.
4. To promote facilities for exchange of information among members of the Association.

The exchange of ideas and the support of fellow Chef educators are especially important during these difficult times in education.

Thursday, June 19/2003 we arrived in Nanaimo, British Columbia and registered at the Grand Hotel. Malaspina University College hosted a reception that was second to none with plenty of Hors D'oeuvres and beverages. (Unfortunately I missed this because of jet lag with the whole day of traveling).

Friday, June 20/2003 Malaspina University College was our host again. In the morning the Chef Educators held their Annual General Meeting with the election of new executive positions. The Culinary Arts Department Head; Mr. Alec Rennie, his instructional staff and Culinary Arts students hosted the College activities.

Lunch was held at the College. In the afternoon we had a tour of the Culinary Arts kitchen and their new teaching lab. This lab cost one million dollars to build, it includes a stainless steel kitchen with stations for 18 students. All the equipment is "Garland" with an emphasis on the new cooking technique called induction cooking.

There are five television cameras to capture the teaching demonstrations on a Big Screen display. Every seat in the teaching lab is a good seat.

In this teaching lab we had a demonstration by the famous Mr. George Wagner; who teaches at the College. His demonstration was sugar work, which was very informative and interesting to watch a master at his work. He made a pair of dolphins from sugar. We took a tour through Mr. George Wagner's chocolate room, which contained several of his chocolate sculptures,

some weighing as much as 200 pounds. This room is a must to see in person.

We had a demonstration on chocolate work by Mr. Ken Harper an instructor at Malaspina University College. It was very informative on how to handle chocolate when preparing for chocolate work.

Chef Alec Rennie and his staff held our dinner for the Chef Educators at Malaspina University College. The format was different than usual; it was a self-serve buffet with five different stations: salads, seafood, meat, bread and dessert. We were encouraged to start at any station we wished and to have as much as we wanted. The selection of food was delicious and it actually worked very well without any lineups at any station. It was a very filling and enjoyable evening.

Saturday, June 21/2003 we went to Saltspring Islands and visited the Saturday's Farmers Market. This is a throw back to the 60's with people and fashion. It seems time has stood still on Saltspring Island. Talking with one resident of Saltspring Island, he enjoyed living there because he could do what he wanted to do (make jewelry) and sell it.

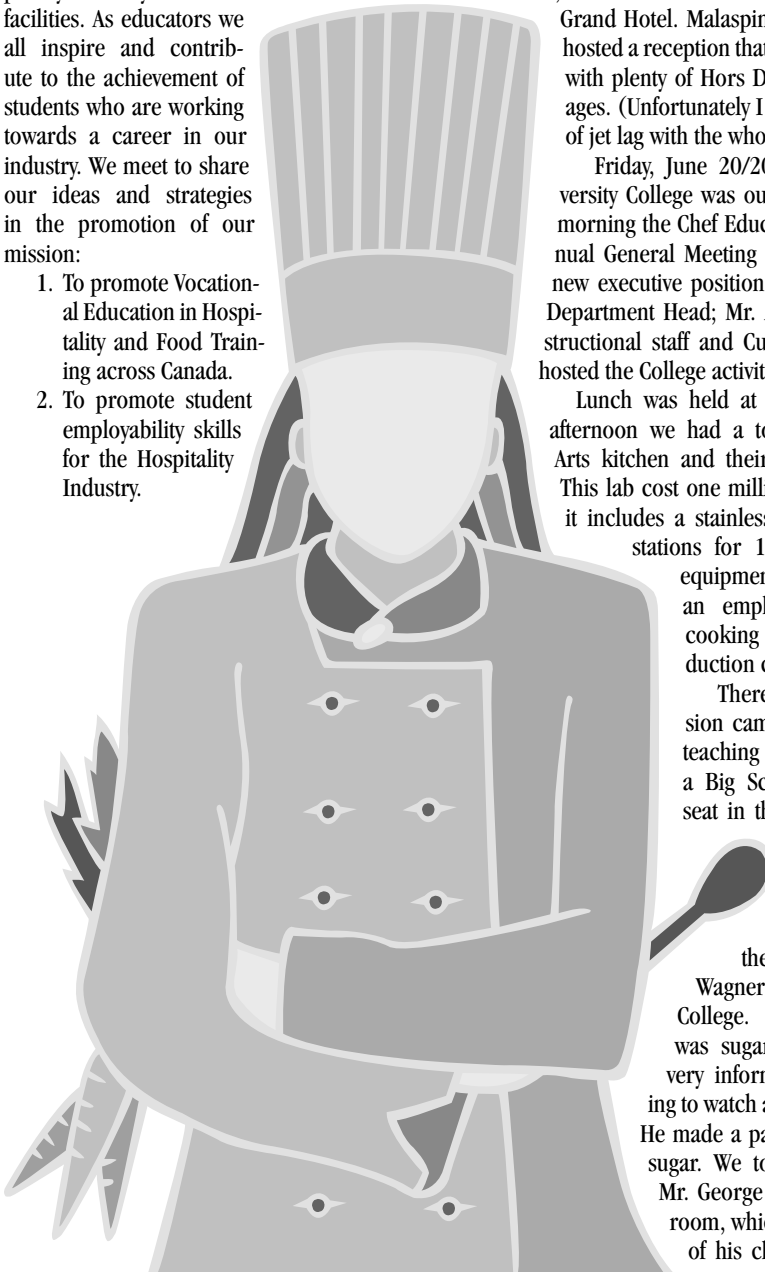
Lunch was held at Gulf Islands Secondary School hosted by Mr. Al Irving and his Culinary Arts students on Saltspring Island.

We had a chance to tour Cherry Point Vineyard with a tour of the Winery and a lecture on proper growing procedures for grapes and the harvest of the grapes. A wine tasting session was held at the end of the tour. It was very informative, interesting and delicious.

The dinner was held at John Barsby Secondary School hosted by Mr. Bruce Chandler and his Culinary Arts students. It was a very nice evening to wind up the convention.

Sunday, June 22/2003 we all departed to the airport to get back to reality. We (I) had a great convention and I enjoyed the benefits of the West Coast for this very short visit.

Thank you to Mr. Terry Larsen and his organizing committee for their long hours of preparation and organization.



## World Skills Report continued

selling her training projects. We approached many different organizations and received donations toward our cause. But, this did take some time and financial guarantees had to be made. So, Aurora and her good friend Jean-Paul Corbeil (another former student) held a fashion show at the Empire Cabaret. It was a huge time commitment but was the answer to the money problem. We had lots of support from family, friends, colleagues and the fashion industry. It was a successful venture. As, we approached the competition, the Skills Canada organization decided to partially fund my trip as trainer. This came as a huge relief and took much of the pressure off for items we needed to buy.

Another hurdle was release time from work. I did manage to get the odd long weekend for work with the expert or travel. The big commitment was the 2 weeks in Switzerland. Fortunately, this year, the competition was at the end of June. I rearranged my exams and was able to wrap up before I left so there was no substitute requirements. But, past competitions have been held in September, November and in 2005 in Finland it will be held in May. I don't think I would have been granted the 2 weeks release if a substitute teacher was required to cover my teaching assignment.

The actual trip and competition were both exciting and stressful. The competition site was massive with 40 different trades and technologies competing simultaneously. The organization of the event went like clockwork. (Hey, it was Switzerland!) My role was to be a support to the competitor although I was not allowed to "train" during the 4-day period. I also observed the other competitors and took pictures, video and notes. The day before the competition Aurora took ill for a few days and I did my best to send comfort food and nurse her from afar. Aurora, Jozee and I were

all in different hotels (in fact different cities) to prevent the opportunity of cheating.

Aurora did extremely well in her trade. She got off to a good start and although she wasn't in the top 5 at the end of the first day, she was well ahead in speed. After the first day, the rankings are posted each morning for the top five scores. This adds an additional level of stress to the competition. Aurora was the first to complete the dress project. She was the first to start cutting the tailored jacket. This proved to have a significant role in her outcome, as the contestants were not given enough fabric to cut the garment. After, trying a number of layouts and techniques, one of the judges noticed she was having a problem. Soon all 13 judges were watching her struggle. Besides losing time, she also lost confidence. The committee determined that all contestants required another half meter of fabric.

On the third day the rankings were not posted. Aurora continued to out pace all the other candidates. I had no doubt that she would complete the test on time. On the last day, the rankings were still not posted. Aurora worked at a steady pace and her jacket looked exquisite. A number of candidates did not complete the project in the time frame.

It was at the end of the competition that we found out why the rankings were not posted. There had been some irregularities with the judging. All the dresses had to be remarked by a different group of judges. The 3 dresses that had topped the chart were reevaluated and placed near the middle of the pack. One dress, that had been ranked as 10th; was moved up to 1st. (It was Canada!) Looking back, I'm glad the rankings had not been posted because I don't think I could have handled the stress of seeing Aurora's name in the top 3 on that board. I also found out that

Aurora had made an error in cutting the jacket. (Due to the fabric shortage?) But, she did do very well. She scored the highest on sleeve and collar construction. Aurora ranked 4th overall and received a certificate of distinction for achieving an international standard of excellence.

Am I proud? You bet I am. A fourth place in the world from a student attending a little high school on the prairies. Don't get me wrong, I don't think I was the key player here. Aurora is the student you meet about every decade or so. She is talented, intelligent, industrious and committed. I'll change that to once in a career. We also had the privilege of working with a phenomenal Canadian expert, Jozee Dulude. Not only did she give up at least 5 weeks of vacation time to work with us; she was generous with her knowledge, samples, tools and advice. We couldn't have done it without her. Of course, I can't forget all the support we received from: The Manitoba Fashion Institute and members, Nygard International, Winnipeg Sewing, River East Transcona School Division and my colleagues at Murdoch MacKay, MHETA, VTAM, the media (3 TV spots, 2 radio interviews, and at least 6 newspaper articles), as well as all our families and friends.

Can you be proud? You bet you can! Canada cracked the powerhouse of the 5 Asian countries that dominate this competition and broke the historic European stronghold in this trade area. Although we were behind Thailand, Taiwan and Korea, we did beat Japan, Hong Kong, Italy, France, etc. and I still feel like I'm on top of Mt. Santis.

*Brenda Speirs-Fryatt  
Fashion Technology and Design Instructor  
Murdoch MacKay Collegiate  
fryatt@mts.net*

## Skills Competitions Canada/Manitoba Important dates

**May 26, 2004**

7th Annual Skills Competition

**May 27-30, 2004**

10th Canadian Skills  
Competition

**May 28, 2004**

Interactive School Tours  
Canadian Competition

**May 26, 2004**

4th Annual Young Women's  
Conference

Education Week - 2nd Annual  
Technology Days

## Skills Picture Finds Home

The picture donated to VTAM from Skills Canada is now proudly displayed on the main floor of McMaster House.

Presented to the Vocational Teacher's Association of Manitoba "For your long standing support and commitment to the growth and success of Skills Canada Manitoba 2003" Check it out!

## President's Message continued

of students, this does not mean that the teacher is a "supervisor" as contemplated under section 4.1 of the Act. The "Supervisor" position under the Act applies to a person who supervises "workers".

The teacher is a "worker" under the Act and has a duty under section 5 to ensure that his or her work does not put workers or other persons (students) at risk. A significant role of the teacher as a worker is to supervise in his or her class. In this role, the teacher must ensure that the supervision he or she provides does not put students at risk. This would include ensuring that students are trained to perform tasks safely; that students use all safety devices and wear all protective equipment required; and that all equipment used by students is maintained, and safe.

In Manitoba, Vocational teachers have a good record. Though we have had our challenges (budget restraints, student teacher ratio, providing for special needs students) we have maintained and provided students with safe learning environments since the late sixties.

Our role as a teacher has not changed. We just

need to keep doing what we have always done. Think of the students' safety and teach our students how to do the job safely. What has changed is the need to request and document.

Request equipment and tools be repaired and updated. Request additional assistance with at risk students and with larger classes, and document everything you have requested.

***"We cannot always build a safe future for our youth, but we can build wise youth for the future"***

*Source Unknown*

For further information on upcoming safety sessions contact:

Peter Fuller  
Technology Education Consultant  
Manitoba Education and Youth  
W320 - 1970 Ness Ave.  
Winnipeg Manitoba  
R3J 0Y9.

Telephone: 945-8424 Fax: 948-3668

Email: [pfuller@gov.mb.ca](mailto:pfuller@gov.mb.ca)

## VTAM Executive Members 2002/2003

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Miles MacDonell Collegiate

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Chantal Simard  
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### Public Relations:

Earl Gibbs  
Winnipeg Technical College

### Editor:

Laura Benedict  
Substitute Teacher

## Contact Editor

Thank you Jan Hamilton, VTAM's former editor, for all of your guidance, direction, and sense of humour. As your new Editor I welcome all articles and any correspondence pertaining to your specific skill area.

*Laura Benedict*

[laurabenedict@shaw.ca](mailto:laurabenedict@shaw.ca)

Fax: 885-0173

Ph: 897-4200



## Vocational Teachers' Association of Manitoba



***a Hire Education***

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