

Lorraine Le Guerrier
1962 - 2003



Lorraine died tragically in a car accident on Friday, July 18, 2003. Lorraine is survived by her husband David Faren, her sons Alisdair and Philippe, her mother Gertrude Le Guerrier, brother Robert, sisters Marty, Danny, Joelle, Gina, Chantale, Renee Madelaine. Lorraine was a dedicated teacher at the Calgary French School. Lorraine's energy and love for life will be deeply missed by all who knew her. A Memorial Service will be held at 254035 Rocky Ridge Road N.W. on Thursday, July 24, 2003 at 1:00 p.m. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in her name to the Calgary French & International School, 6304 Larkspur Way S.W., Calgary, Alberta T3E 5P7 or you may plant a tree in her honor.

The staff and families of Calgary French & International School wish to extend our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of Lorraine Le Guerrier (Faren) more fondly known as 'Madame Lorraine' who has taught our children since 1994. She was tragically taken away from us on Friday, July 18th, 2003 as a result of an automobile accident on the Trans Canada Highway.

Her spirit and wisdom inspired and nurtured everyone she touched. Her light will live on through the eyes of the hundreds of children, staff and parents who knew her.

On behalf of the school community, a Celebration of Life service will be held in Lorraine's honor on Sunday, August 24th, 2003 at 2:00 p.m. at the North Glenmore Park Community Association (2231 Longridge Drive S.W.). Please check the School website (www.cfs.calgary.ab.ca) for further details.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations be made to Calgary French & International School in Lorraine's name. The School will establish an annual scholarship, provide educational support for her two boys and plant a flowering tree in her name at our new school.

Madame Lorraine, you will be deeply missed and never forgotten.

Daniel J. Boorstin, the former Librarian to Congress of the United States once testified at a congressional hearing into education funding, saying 'Knowledge is not simply another commodity. On the contrary, knowledge is never used up. It increases by diffusion and grows by dispersion'.

We forget sometimes that the people who do the 'dispersion' are the teachers. We forget sometimes because education is such an emotional issue, and emotional issues create loud voices and angry rhetoric that tends to draw our focus away from what is important.

Add to the mix the fact that education has become more of a political issue in recent years, and our connection to what is truly important becomes even more tenuous.

Yet, we care about education because we care about our children.

We know that you can draw a straight line between the quality of education a child receives, and how successful that child will be in life.

We also know that in a tumultuous world, education is what separates the prosperous, safe and developed nations from the poor, dangerous and impoverished nations.

Education leads us forward.

But too often we get dragged into debates over salaries and benefits, government funding or lack of funding, institutional mandates, classroom size, union politics, party politics, and inevitably personalities, and parents never seem to know whether we are making any headway towards a better education system.

And then a terrible tragedy strikes, and if there can be any good that comes from it, it is that it reminds us once again that at the end of the day, education is about a teacher, and his or her students, and their mutual journey towards knowledge.

Last Friday's truck-car crash just outside Canada Olympic Park killed a 41 year old woman, and the tragedy shocked the City because of the randomness of it. It could have been any one of us on a sunny, summer Friday morning waiting at the red light, thinking of the day ahead.

But to a smaller community, the loss was greater.

Lorraine Le Guerrier was a junior kindergarten teacher at the Calgary French School, and for 10 years in our

community, she put big sparks in little brains.

Her students called her Madame Lorraine, except for those who were too young to master even that phrase, and ended up simply calling her "Edam Lorraine" to our howls of laughter, Lorraine's included.

But more than just an educator, Lorraine was the kind of teacher that brings pride to the profession. She was forever motivating her young charges, organizing their concerts, bringing out their creativity, shepherding them through their field trips, helping develop their interactive social skills, encouraging them to try - not necessarily to win every time, but certainly to try everytime

Their biggest thrill was to be chosen Madame Lorraine's 'assistant' for the day, and the worst a rambunctious youngster got was a few minutes in 'the calming-down chair' - a concept we could all use now and again.

And while the kids never really knew it, while they were playing and drawing and colouring and laughing and singing, all of which they did a lot with Madame Lorraine, they were learning the French language, an important gift in our bilingual nation.

Lorraine came from a large francophone family in eastern Ontario and she loved her extended family, the outdoors, and a wide circle of friends.

But above all, she was a teacher who wanted only to teach - to lead her children to the door of learning, and help them step through. It is human nature when someone like Madame Lorraine is taken from us so suddenly to consider the legacy she might leave.

In a sense, there are countless legacies Lorraine has given us, and they are found in the hundreds of Calgary kids who moved through Madame Lorraine's class over the past decade, and who are now marching with confidence through the rest of their educational adventure.

This is what scholar Henry Adams meant when he said 'Teachers affect eternity, for they can never tell where their influence stops.'

So, her many students are one form of her legacy, but maybe there is another one.

Can we use this terribly sad story to remind ourselves, all of us, parents, educators, elected officials, union

leaders, public servants, everyone, that education is about the unique and perfect relationship between a teacher who wants to turn on the light, and a young student who wants to learn by it's glow.

Shouldn't we learn from this that when the politicians and the educators sit down to talk about our education system, the discussion should ultimately be about how to make that teacher-child relationship the cornerstone of early education?

After all, teachers are really the only people to whom we give our children.

We have a first class education system in Alberta, but problems remain both in K-12 and post-secondary. They are difficult problems, and we stumble looking for solutions because positions and attitudes become entrenched.

But somehow, the educators and the politicians have to find our way out of the boxes we have built for ourselves, so that we can help the Lorraine Le Guerriers of the world do the only thing they ever wanted to do - teach, with passion.

As for the Calgary French School, after many years in the community of Lakeview they are moving to a brand new facility on the west edge of the City that opens in September.

Most of Madame Lorraine's summer plans were organized so she could be back in the City by mid-August. She told the parents that she wanted to organize her new classroom so that, in her words, when her class arrived in September, it would be 'perfect'.

This summer, the Calgary French School teachers and staff will be moving all the equipment and books and chairs and desks and all the other things that go with a first class school.

But one thing will be missing come September.

A great teacher.

I know all this, because last year, we had a four year old uni-lingual daughter who was terrified of going to kindergarten. This year, we have a five year old who is happy to speak French and can't wait to go to school this fall.

Now, that's a legacy.
On behalf of the parents, merci Lorraine.

- Rod Love