



Celebrating Our Youth



Over the past months I've had the pleasure of working with a group of self-motivated young students at Quesnel Junior Secondary under the leadership of Vice-Principal Marissa Knauf. These students are interested in becoming community leaders and have been learning how local government works and how they can influence decisions made by Council. Over the coming weeks they'll be learning more about the West Quesnel Land Stability project and the City's waste management program, potentially even helping out with our recycling education program.

A few weeks ago, I spent time with a couple of young men who are keen to see the skateboard park in West Quesnel upgraded and expanded. On their own initiative they worked with Anand Chandy at Shaw to create a promotional video documenting their positive, proactive vision for the skateboard park that is generating attention and great reviews on Facebook.

This past weekend I celebrated the tenth anniversary of the indoor soccer complex by playing in a "celebrity" soccer match with some of Quesnel's best young players. These young male and female players were outstanding ambassadors for this sport; they were respectful and gracious as they played against people who were three to five times their age, making the game fun, competitive, and a learning experience for everyone involved.

Also this weekend, I attended the final gala of the Quesnel Festival of the Performing Arts and thoroughly enjoyed watching some incredibly talented young people recite poems and prose, sing, play piano, and dance. A number of the speech arts and piano pieces were originals, composed by the performers themselves. Many of these young artists will represent our City at the provincial competition later this spring – I have no doubt they will do us proud!

No matter what sport, art, or activity, Quesnel has an abundance of talent of all ages, and especially among our young people. We should recognize and celebrate this talent whenever we have the opportunity by attending and supporting the many showcase events and tournaments Quesnel has to offer virtually every week.

As the saying goes, it takes a village to raise a child: it takes many likewise talented volunteers, teachers and coaches; community boosters and sponsors; and, countless hours of parental support and involvement to nurture our young people and grow their talents. On behalf of Quesnel City Council I wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to all the people in our community who invest their time, energy, and money in our youth. You make our community a more dynamic and interesting place to live in, and you make the lives of our children and youth richer by both your example and your selfless investment in them.

For everyone who has been "thinking about" volunteering or coaching or sponsoring, it's time to jump in. Virtually every group, activity, and sport needs more volunteers and sponsors to enable them to continue to offer quality programs and experiences to our youth. The majority of these organizations will give you the support you need to help our children and youth grow their talents and skills. So please, join the "village" of volunteers and sponsors who are so capably and selflessly raising the talents and skills of our youth.

Mayor Bob Simpson
bsimpson@quesnel.ca