

# Opinion

## Encouraging generosity

It was encouraging to see various Haitian relief efforts spring up around Slave Lake last week. It's also nice that Slave Lake has a personal connection with that poor country, thanks to the presence of Sister Maureen Fuelkell there.

Sister Maureen grew up in Widewater, where her parents Bruno and Rita managed a mink farm, fished and raised a family of six. Maureen has been in Haiti for over 45 years, working as a nurse, teacher and missionary with the Order of the Holy Cross.

How much has been raised for the Haiti relief effort in Slave Lake is not known – and probably won't be, because no doubt many contributions were made individually through the many avenues available. But the group efforts, including a celebrity basketball game at St. Mary of the Lake School and the Rotary Club/Town of Slave Lake Hotcakes for Haiti breakfast last Wednesday were both a nice touch.

Last week on a CBC Radio call-in show, a caller said that Canadians shouldn't be congratulating themselves for the \$65-odd million that had been raised so far for Haiti relief. That's only about two dollars per capita, he said, which is an embarrassment rather than something to be proud of.

'I'd like to see us contributing a thousand dollars per capita,' he said.

That's \$33 billion, and probably not realistic. But it expresses one person's feelings about the importance of the cause.

Whether Slave Lake area residents have exceeded the \$2 per capita level remains to be seen, but we hope so. We think so, judging by the turnout at events last week.

## Hockeyville

It's going to be tough for the Kraft Hockeyville judges to ignore Slave Lake's bid for the 2010 Hockeyville short list. At 923 stories and 1,179 pictures, we're solidly in third place in the western region, behind Cranbrook and Hazelton, B.C. Numbers alone don't win it, but if they don't turn a few heads, something's wrong.

Then if we do make the top 12, it comes down to what we can come up with to dazzle the CBC profilers who come to town. That buzzing sound you hear is the brainstorming going on as you read this. See Page 28 for more details.

## Correction

Last week's editorial on the dispute between Southshore Leisure and the Town of Slave Lake contained an error regarding a stop-work order. Contrary to what the editorial stated, the town had not issued one to the business, but had threatened to do so if Southshore Leisure had not complied with certain requirements by Feb. 1. *The Leader* regrets the error.

## BOB BOZO COMMENTS



## Regional Commentary

### Keeping it simple and elegant

Caezer Ng  
Lakeside Leader

Advancements in technology also mean simplicity and elegance. One example of this is Apple's soon-to-released iPad.

Apple is going to hit a home-run with their iPad, due for a Canadian release by the end of March this year. By simplifying hardware and software components, it is a sign that computers' maturity will help people use computers more productively.

It is a sign of good things to come. It means the days of the big, clunky, and complicated desktop computer will be over for the average Joe.

The specifications are not to the liking of a number of online critics; an iPad does not fit in well with other electronic devices that some people depend on for productivity; it lacks support for removable media like SD cards, USB connection, and discs such as CD and DVD.

However, within a few years, there will be new developments to address all the burps and hiccups that usually come with new technology. There are untapped niches to be explored.

Apple's iPad is not a laptop re-

placement – yet. It has great potential in months and years to come. It will replace many people's desktop computers to save space.

This translates to a mobile and intuitive viewing device. It will allow users to surf the Internet, watch movies, and read e-books with more ease compared to a vertical viewing screen.

Simplicity is another advantage in iPad's favour. For example, some people use a computer only for e-mail, news, and word processing. All the bells and whistles that make a PC complicated can be intimidating for people who are not techno-savvy – and there are a lot of them.

Technology should not be intimidating. Digital products like the Internet are a ground for some terrific tools. Productivity improves when access to these tools are made easier. The possibilities in a workforce and educational setting are endless.

But, there are possible consequences in social settings. Although you can take a person away from his or her computer, can you take the computer from him or her?

"Do we need this thing at the table of a family dinner?" one will

ask.

The onus is on the family to decide what is in their best interests, and this writer is optimistic friends and family members can work something out to prevent social isolation. Technology is here to stay.

The iPad's concept is not new, nor is Apple the first to develop one. It is the stuff that has stayed in the consciousness of science fiction dreamers for decades.

In one *The Globe and Mail* forum comment, a man shared his story where he sold his apartment, donated volumes of books, worked on a cruise ship for several years, then settled for a job in television broadcasting.

He was able to do so with ease because all his beloved books were in condensed electronic form, by putting them into his laptop and e-reader Kindle machine. Digitizing helped this free-spirit.

Personal computers should not only be for 'techno-weenies'. Technologies should not solely focus on making the biggest, the fastest, the most customizable machine.

Advancement should also mean improving useability – keep it simple and elegant.

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