



WILLY WATERTON THE SUN-TIMES

Sierra Tanner of Banff, Alta., at right, plays an eagle board game with, from left, Sullivan Community School's Kody Weppler, Ty Mountain, teacher Crystal Thomson and Christopher Yale. Sierra has raised thousands for a blinded eagle.

Students make a difference

By **MARIA CANTON**
SUN-TIMES STAFF

A class of Grade 3 students at Sullivan Community School have taken their class project national.

They joined forces Monday with an Alberta girl who has raised \$7,000 to help an injured golden eagle that was blinded after being shot.

The Desboro students are participat-

DESBORO

ing in a program called the Nobody Project, which requires them to improve the life of a person, animal or the environment while raising awareness or money for their subject, a program their teacher, Crystal Thomson, first learned about on CBC Radio.

"I thought it (the Nobody Project)

would be a good tie in for our character education program. It's a more tangible way of teaching, for example, dependability," said Thomson, who's class is the only one in the Bluewater District School Board participating in the program, which is run by sponsors such as Rotary International and Free the Children.

Students: Many projects

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"The kids each do an individual project and through those projects they gain things like compassion, dependability, trust and respect."

The class of 15 met with Sierra Tanner, an eight-year-old girl from Banff, Alta., who was so moved after meeting "Spirit," a golden eagle that was left blind after being shot, that she started raising money at her elementary school to help pay for its care and recovery. To date she has raised \$7,000.

"Sierra's visit has really just opened their imaginations," Thomson said of her students.

"They are just amazed that she is the same age as them, they're amazed at the monetary amount she's raised and I think it's really opened their eyes to what they can do."

Before learning about Sierra and Spirit, the Desboro students were already working on several Nobody Projects, including that of nine-year-old Christopher Yale, who sold toys he no longer played with and then donated

the money to the Owen Sound animal shelter.

"I sold the toys to a second-hand store in Hanover and made \$20 and then I decided to go to the Owen Sound animal shelter and give them the \$20 because they gave us our cat Sampson," said Christopher.

"It felt really good to do that because the money will help pay for medicines and food for other cats."

Other students have completed projects that involved visiting nursing homes, collecting garbage along area roadways and even adopting horses

from the SPCA.

They have also incorporated Spirit's plight into their daily lessons. They've written descriptive reports about eagles and have read several non-fiction books about the bird.

On Jan. 27, the class will participate in a "non-fiction read-a-thon" for Family Literacy Day with the goal of raising \$50 to send to Spirit.

Thomson was able to implement the Nobody Project in her classroom with help from the Chesley Rotary Club and the Sullivan Community School council.

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