

Kids become humanitarians *HPS students take up real ca*

By Bill Freeman

Hastings - Humanitarian projects that reach beyond the classroom have produced quite a buzz at Hastings Public School.

"Anything that helps people, the environment or animals," says Grade 3 teacher Nan MacDougall of the "Who is Nobody" program her class and the neighbouring 1-2 class have embraced.

Students had 10 lessons leading to the presentation stage of the "Who is Nobody" program. All students are responsible for producing a project which become the focal point of classroom discussions. Some, like the one Mitchell Bell produced on diabetes this week, also become school-wide fundraisers.

The first student project was on Sick Kids Hospital. The next one will encourage HPS students to write cards to an Ottawa-area boy stricken with cancer.

"We hope to get a good variety in the projects," Nan says. "Some have plans for animals, others for environmental clean-ups."

Endorsed by the Rotary Club and sponsored by The Printing House Ltd., the program also features a doll called Nobody who is given special tags and memorabilia reflecting each project so by the end of the year Nobody is transformed into a

"Somebody."

Students take Nobody home with them along with a program kit to help with their projects.

"It is quite a lot of work but very valuable," Nan says. "It makes the students better citizens and more aware of the things around them that they can help with. It is more about contributing to society than the curriculum.

"They're quite proud of it. Some have made personal connections right away. Others have to seek things outside of themselves."

An added, she says, is the fact that parents are encouraged to work with their children on the projects.

"They need a lot of support from their parents but they are able to see that even at their young age they can do something to be helpful."

Who is Nobody is new to the KPR District Board, she says, but it is spreading.

"It can be for any grade, it doesn't really matter."

Mitchell was selling apples to raise money for the Canadian Diabetes Association. His grandpa, Keith Potts, has diabetes and is a partial amputee. He was at the school with his wife to talk to students about the illness and the daily blood

sugar tests he has to take.

"He talked about how his cousin's daughter has had diabetes since she was 12," Mitchell said, while selling apples with classmates David Hennings and

Bailey Fife.

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An apple a day: Mitchell Bell (right) was selling apples during nutrition break at Hastings Public School as part of a Who is Nobody project on diabetes. Money raised went to the Canadian Diabetes Association. Helping him with apple vendor duties is David Hennings. Photo: Bill Freeman

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