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PAGE 3



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Sweeney Todd to screen

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PAGE 19



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Nobody is somebody

*Students build
character through
little blue doll*

By David Nesseth
Standard-Freeholder
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Turning nobody into somebody is simple, as far as one Long Sault teacher is concerned. All you need is a doll and some positive energy.

Brenda Saaltink's class is one of 30 in the *Who is Nobody?*, a program that revolves around a featureless two-ft. doll made of denim.

When a student completes a project that benefits people, animals or the environment, a corresponding feature is added to the doll. So, if little Sally helps her elderly neighbour shovel his driveway, she might add a craft-work shovel to the doll's hand. Sally would then write about the experience of helping her neighbour, create a drawing of it, then add it to all to the class scrapbook.

"It's our job to give this doll character," Saaltink said. "To turn nobody into somebody."

By the end of the school year, the Nobody doll will have 18 features added by each of Saaltink's students.

HELPING OTHERS CAN BE FUN

"It's to show helping others is a fun thing to do, and to instill things like virtue, honesty, fairness and respect," Saaltink added.

All of these qualities are goals of the school board's character education program.

The 19th feature added to Nobody, which is technically the first since the program's inception in mid-October, will be the result of a class project.

Saaltink and her students selected the environment for their first Nobody task. They came up with the slogan "Don't Choke the Earth", and put it on 750 cloth bags, not plastic ones.

So far, they've sold 200.

"We want to raise awareness about the negative effects of plastic on the environment," Saaltink said.

The students researched the downside of plastic bags, such as the fact that they can take up to 1,000 years to decompose, and create a choking hazard for many types of animals.

They also created a logo for the bags that shows a hand crushing the Earth and spoke to other classes in their school about plastic bags.

Nine-year-old Jacob says he likes mystery novels and books about animals, so he'd like to incorporate that into his own personal Nobody project, for which he'll keep the doll at home for one week.



Staff photo/Desiree 0107122103

Nine-year-old Longue Sault Public School students Abby and Jacob are excited about their new class program called *Who is Nobody?* Teacher Brenda Saaltink, middle, suggested their first project to dress up the Nobody doll should help the environment.

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