

# Opinion

## MUSKOKA MOSAIC

### Introducing Jen McColl

BY PAULA BOON

Jen McColl, mother of five, has a cause. As the leader of Huntsville's La Leche League group, she wants new and expecting moms to know there is support available for those who choose to breastfeed.

Breastfeeding has an initiation rate of 80 per cent in hospitals, she explains, but by the time babies are six months old that rate is down to 18 per cent. This is despite the fact that the recommendation from the World Health Organization is to breastfeed exclusively for six months and continue for two years and beyond.

"To be able to do that, you need the support of another mother who has done it," says McColl.

The Baysville woman says she was lucky that she had no problems breastfeeding her first two children, the eldest of whom is now 14. However, with her third child it was a different story.

"It was very hard," she says. "If I hadn't had my first two, I wouldn't have stuck with it."

McColl, originally from Montreal, became a La Leche League member 12 years ago when she was pregnant with her second child. "A doctor said I couldn't be pregnant and breastfeeding at the same time, and I looked for support," she explained.

She started working toward becoming a group leader when she became pregnant with her youngest daughter, who is now two.



JEN McCOLL

"The closest group was in Bracebridge, and I thought it would be good to have one in Huntsville," she said.

To become a La Leche League leader, she says, a woman must have breastfed for at least a year, agree with the organization's 10 basic principles and take preparatory course. The entire process took about a year.

Now between five and eight moms attend the monthly meetings, where McColl helps them deal with the physical and societal challenges of breastfeeding.

She feels passionate about the work she does. "Breastfeeding is healthier for the baby," she explains, "and promotes a bond between mom and baby which is important. It helps the baby be more secure."

McColl, who moved to Baysville eight years ago with her educator husband, Doug, always wanted a big family. She worked for four years as a nanny, and even before having children she knew she wanted to stay home with them.

"We felt it was important to do that," she says, adding, "I enjoy being home. We have dinner together every night. And it's nice to have a big family, lots of fun."

A typical day in the McColl household begins around 5:30 a.m. when Bronwyn, the littlest member of the family, wakes up. After a cup of tea, McColl rouses Steven and Daron, who are in grades 9 and 8 respectively, and gets them ready for school.

Her husband, who is also a volunteer firefighter, is out the door by 7:15. She and Bronwyn walk to bus stop with the boys then return home to wake up Owen and Morgan, who are home-schooled.

McColl says she really enjoys homeschooling. "I feel like I really know my own kids," she explains. "The boys come home and share things they might not have if they had always been at school."

Most of each morning is devoted to schoolwork. McColl says the girls follows same textbooks as those in their grade are using at school, and Bronwyn has her own "school book" with stickers in it so she doesn't feel left out.

During the afternoon, there is time for walks, swimming and other fun activities.

One day, though, is different from the others.

"We don't miss a Thursday at the Baysville drop-in," McColl says. "It's a nice change for the kids, and social time for me, too."

She notes that stay-at-home moms can sometimes feel isolated.

"Sometimes the only other adult I talk to is my husband," she explains. "It's good to have other moms to share with."

Evenings are hectic due to sports and other activities, but the McColls try to have some family time every weekend.

"It's busy," she says, "but we love it."

*Is there someone you'd like to see profiled in this space? Please call Paula at 789-5541 or e-mail pboon@metroland-northmedia.com.*

## LETTERS

### Young people give from their hearts

In an age where many people think youngsters just aren't like they used to be, I would beg to differ. I have a story that I think needs to be told, as many times we only hear the bad things.

Back in December, the store I work at (Robinson's Independent Grocer), ran a food bank event. If customers bought a \$10 Santa's Choice FoodBank bag and donated it to the Huntsville Food Bank, Robinson's would donate a five-pound bag of potatoes to go with it. And if they bought a \$25 Santa's Choice FoodBank bag and donated it, Robinson's would donate a 20-pound bag of potatoes.

When running this event, I received a letter just a few days before Christmas from the Grade 5-6 French Immersion Class at Riverside Public School in Huntsville. For Christmas, this class had wanted to do something to help others — to give, not just to receive. The students had to raise this money themselves, through their own efforts, not just by asking their parents to help.

Their class raised enough money to purchase one of our Santa's Choice FoodBags. Their money-raising efforts came 100 per cent from their hearts. My final thought for the year 2007 was that it just doesn't get any better than this.

To those students, I salute your great efforts.

Maggie Rittenhouse  
Huntsville

### Winning unfairly cheats everyone

Well, coach, you are probably like most amateur coaches and you have pledged yourself to honour fair play for the young boys and girls under your supervision; you know, let everyone have equal opportunities and let all your players have fun discovering their sports abilities. And yes, try to win, but celebrate the pride that can be taken in a loss as well. We all agree that fair play is important, don't we?

However, coach, do you succumb to excessive ambition and let your most talented players stay on most of the time? You know, you rotate your team members like you are supposed to, but you mostly exchange weaker players while your stars stay out there. And so you coach your house league team as if it was a rep team. Such tactics give you a great advantage over the fair play coaches, and yes, you end up with a splendid win/loss record at the end of the season, don't you, coach?

But do you really win? Let's look at whom you fool:

1. You fool yourself, coach. You taint all your kids' victories by making them cheat. You don't play fairly. Do you think nobody notices? Do you forget that winning isn't everything?

2. You fool the parents and children that are encouraged by you to forget that winning isn't everything. (Do they really win?)

3. You fool a few coaches into following your dubious tactics. Occasionally your methods discourage coaches, and they decide that they had better act similarly if their children are to experience the pleasure of winning. Experienced coaches realize that such thinking is mistaken, but discipline is needed to refrain from following your example.

Do you really win? Let's look at whom you do not fool:

1. Most coaches. They watch you cheat and grit their teeth in frustration. But not wishing to be confrontational, they say nothing. Besides, who cares what they think; you beat their teams, and they are just being sore losers if they complain. Right, coach?

2. Many parents of the children on your team. The parents on your team learn who belongs on the A-team and who belongs in the inferior ranks. It is unfair, but not wishing to be confrontational, they say nothing. (The team is winning, you know.)

3. Many parents of the children on other teams. They are annoyed, but not wishing to be confrontational they say nothing. After all, this is a house league and you have to wonder about someone who cheats to win at this level, don't you? What type of reputation do you think you are developing, coach? Do you ever notice a

certain wariness among people who associate with you?

4. Some of the children on the other teams. And most get discouraged when they lose, especially when they play well enough to win if only you would compete fairly, coach. Perhaps some of them will conclude that it is best to cheat if you want to succeed in life. Do you think our society should thank you for your influence?

5. Many of the children on your team. Yes, even some of your stars are ashamed to play for you, because they realize that what is going on is not fair. Of course, most members of your inferior ranks are deflated by your biases, but you don't need to worry about them. How can a child ever protest their coach's antics? It really isn't fair, is it?

Well, coach, how do you do on the overall scorecard? Do you really win? Please, please, please don't be a winner who is much more a loser. It really is not all that much fun being superficially admired and profoundly pitied. It hurts you long after the winning season is over.

Have a great season, coach. Fairness is a wonderful thing. You should find it is much more gratifying to be cheered fairly. May everyone win.

Doug Raynor  
Huntsville

## New Year's resolutions from municipal councillors

As we begin a new year, *The Forester* asked councillors from Huntsville and Lake of Bays to share resolutions for 2008. We split the question in two parts:

1. If you had to make a New Year's resolution pertaining to the municipality, what would it be?
2. If you had to make a New Year's resolution on a personal level, what would it be?

### Huntsville mayor Claude Doughty



going to look like 100 years from now?

When you think about all the communities or cities or towns that you go to that, for example, you find attractive. . . (the architec-

ture) really speaks to our forefathers and what they did and our values and design and the time and energy they put into their buildings.

I'd like to see some of that interest rekindled because we have more technology and more ability to do things better today architecturally and oftentimes I think we fall short of the mark.

I think we should roll it into one of the discussion points of the community master planning and talk more about it because, very simply put, if we had a 14th century church in Huntsville that was five storeys tall everybody would think it was amazing. So somewhere between those two ends of the debate I think there's room to really talk about — whether it's a Shoppers Drug Mart or whatever — how can we really get more interest

going on architecture?

When I campaigned a year and a half ago, or thereabouts, I talked about an architectural board of review and I think it's an opportunity for Huntsville to really shine as a community if we can really enhance our architectural requirements.

2. A little more time off. I think I might have won the award for the most hours worked by anybody, staff or otherwise, at the town last year — in fact I know I did — so a little more time off.

I love to work; it's just that I really am getting a great comfort level with how things are progressing from a staff perspective so it's actually making me feel a lot more comfortable about that.

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### Lake of Bays mayor Janet Peake



organizations.

2. I am planning to do some painting and reorganizing in my home and to allow myself more personal time.

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**MOE'S  
PICK OF THE WEEK**

**2006  
CHEV MALIBU LT**



3.5 L, 6 cyl. engine,  
auto., 40,086 km  
stk# CP7590-A

**\$14,995**  
warranty

**2007  
CHEV COBALT**



2.2 L 4 cyl. engine,  
auto., 27,388 km  
stk# CP7595-A

**\$13,995**

**2004  
CHEV SILVERADO**



4.8 L 8 cyl. engine,  
auto., 66,663 km  
stk# TP8048-A

**\$15,995**

**2005  
CHEV COBALT LS**



2.2 L 4 cyl. engine,  
auto., 73,618 km  
stk# CP6087-A

**\$10,995**

**2004  
CHEV EQUINOX LT**



3.4 L 6 cyl. engine,  
auto., 45,915 km  
stk# TP8265-A

**\$22,995**

**2007  
BUICK ALLURE CXL**



3.6 L 6 cyl. engine,  
auto., 40,107 km  
stk# CP8138-A

**\$22,995**

**2007  
CHEV IMPALA LT**



3.5 L 6 cyl. engine,  
auto., 48,111 km  
stk# CP8233-A

**\$16,900**

**2004  
CHEV SILVERADO**



4.8 L 8 cyl. engine,  
auto., 57,056 km  
stk# 327972

**\$16,995**

**2007  
CHEV MONTANA**



3.9 L 6 cyl. engine,  
auto., 21,022 km  
stk# TP8093-A

**\$19,995**

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