

QUEBEC CLUBS RECOGNIZED FOR



In a rare but welcome occurrence, two winners of the 2012-2013 Community Projects Awards (CPAs) are from the St. Lawrence Region. While that is unusual, they are also both from the Quebec Central District! In the Best Video category, the Montréal-Maisonneuve Optimist Club was awarded first place and the Ste-Béatrix Optimist Club won first place honors in the Best Writing category.

The Montréal-Maisonneuve Optimist Club's Bicycle and Fire Safety project was created over 30 years ago. At that time, there were a number of children involved in bicycle accidents. The Club wanted to remedy this by offering neighborhood children safety tips and guidance on how to properly ride a bicycle. Members also saw the value in providing children with tips for fire prevention in their homes.

More than twenty Members organized a day-long activity, which required nearly 100 hours of preparation. They were able to teach safety skills to over 500 children between the ages of 5 and 12. All the participants and Optimists enjoyed themselves. There were plenty of smiles as a number of prizes including bicycles, safety helmets and more were given to the children.

The project's chairman, Pierre-André Jacob, noted that a schedule must be prepared several months in advance. It is necessary for the sponsoring Club to establish a financial plan and work at finding partners, a location, prizes for the participants, and of course, a beautiful summer day.

Pierre-André emphasized the importance of promoting the event and garnering publicity. He encourages Clubs that want to conduct a similar project to send letters of invitation to day camps, their partner organizations, other Optimist Clubs in their Zone and local elected officials. Event flyers should be posted in store

windows and around the community. Journalists should be invited to ensure that professional photos are taken and the project receives coverage in the local newspaper.

The Ste-Béatrix Optimist Club project was the *Corvée du Camp Papillon* or Camp Papillon Duty. The camp was bustling with ten Optimist Members who worked an entire day in May, in addition to nearly 40 hours of preparation. This activity helped to renovate and beautify a camp that serves over 1,500 handicapped children in Saint-Alphonse-Rodriguez.

The chores completed by Optimists included putting new paint on the cabins, repairing roofs and fences, cleaning up leaves and washing windows. The work gave the camp a fresh appearance and much needed update. Thanks to generous donors, the Club was able to acquire the supplies needed such as rakes, paint and wood, as well as snacks for the campers.