

Richler on hand to open Humberview Writing Centre

By Bill Rea

Love of the craft is going to be important to the success of the new Humberview Writing Centre, and noted Canadian author and journalist Noah Richler tried to instill that at the recent grand opening ceremonies.

Based at Humberview Secondary School in Bolton, The Writing Centre is designed to support students with their writing during their lunch breaks.

Vice-Principal Lionel Klotz said the program is the first of its kind, and he predicted it will help students be more successful when it comes to their writing. The centre opened this semester, and already more than 200 students have made use of it.

‘‘Once again, Humberview is on the cutting edge of education,’’ he said.

Jan McFadyen, representing the parent council at Humberview, praised the efforts to help the students reach their full potential.

‘‘Thank you for your commitment to higher education,’’ she said.

Shannon McCauley of Student Success commented a need was seen at the school for more effective communication through writing. The kind of drop-in access to the centre is seen as a step in the right way,’’ she said.

The centre has also obtained the support of the Rotary Club of Bolton, to the tune of \$2,000 for computers, speakers and supplies. Rotarian Bruce Forbes said the club tries to support various organizations in the community, and the Interact Club at the school is a big part of that.

‘‘We want to see it grow,’’ he said. ‘‘We want to see it flourish.’’

Rotarian Murray Steward said he spent much of his working life in the corporate world, where he learned the importance of effective communication.

‘‘It’s just so encouraging to hear that these situations, where people are not able to communicate, are being corrected,’’ he commented.

‘‘Writing is tremendously important,’’ Richler observed, remarking that the stories people write and tell help make sense of the world.

‘‘Writing clarifies thought,’’ he added. ‘‘It helps you at work too.’’

The son of the late famed author Mordecai Richler, he quoted his father as saying writing is ‘‘more than just throwing letters up in the air and seeing how they come down.’’

He has toured a lot in his career. Richler said he was once approached by a student at McGill University who was interested in being a writer and was seeking advice on what sort of woman he should get together with.

‘‘A woman who doesn’t take you seriously,’’ was the reply.

He told the students if they’re going to be writers, they have to be ready for ups and downs along the way.

‘‘Don’t be tough on yourself,’’ he warned.

Richler said he makes a point of writing at least a bit every day, ‘‘just to prove that’s what I do.’’

He also said it’s important not to listen too much to people who have come before. He pointed out there are lots of ways to tell stories. ‘‘Just be open and open to the opportunities,’’ he said.

Canadians are a lucky and well-off people, and Richler observed there are a lot of artists and writers who think that makes us dull.

He was more inclined to take the advice of a friend of his from the southern United States.

‘‘Whatever you find, that’s the story,’’ he said. ‘‘Just write what you know, be inquiring and enjoy yourself.’’

‘‘You’ll discover your own rules,’’ he added. ‘‘The important thing, as I say, is do it.’’



Humberview teacher Andrew Cresswell, Bolton Rotarians Bruce Forbes and Murray Stewart, Shannon McCauley from Student Success, student Sarah Sgambelluri, teacher Leanne Gignac, student Arielle Barber, teacher Irma Quintal and Student Katlyn Sarris were all taking part in the official opening of the Humberview Writing Centre.



Noted Canadian author and journalist Noah Richler spoke at the opening of the Humberview Writing Centre. "Writing clarifies thought," he said. "It helps you at work too."