

## **Political speak - Many spectacular young people continue to impress us all**

by Kelly Regan, MLA for Bedford-Birch Cove

September is the time of year when many of us focus on young people - they're returning to school, heading off to university, spreading their wings. After some recent experiences, I'd say our area has some pretty spectacular young people who impress us with their selfless ways.

This September, 11-year-old Behraam Raja of Bedford decided to raise money to support UNICEF's flood relief efforts. Behraam used to live in Pakistan, so he set up a website, [www.madadpakistan.ca](http://www.madadpakistan.ca), with the help of his neighbour Jean St-Amand. (Madad means "help" in Urdu.) Jean's brother Paul (an award-winning videographer) produced a video with Behraam's classmates to explain why people should donate.

Behraam decided \$5,000 was an appropriate goal; he knew that the federal government would match any donations he gathered.

In the end, the Basinview student garnered nearly double that - \$9,840 online - which will be matched by the federal government. What a tremendous accomplishment!

And word came this past week that 13-year-old Bedford Junior High student Logan MacGillivray will be the youngest recipient ever of the Young Humanitarian Award from the Nova Scotia Division of the Canadian Red Cross. Logan founded Listen to the Children when he was still in elementary school. He organized the donation of two ship's containers worth of school, recreational and building supplies (worth \$55,000) to Sierra Leone.

And these two boys are just a small sampling of the terrific things local kids are doing.

This summer, Bedford teens Islay Wright and Noah Brownstone spent countless hours at the Greater Halifax Hospice Society's hospice on Spring Street. They painted and refurbished the former Teachery building so it can be used to house terminally ill patients in their final days.

A couple of weekends ago, the Charles P. Allen Cheetahs football team picked up trash along Bedford Highway. They want to make giving back to the community a new CPA Football tradition.

Over the past two years, CPA has raised over \$11,000 to help build a school in LaGonave, Haiti. And when an earthquake destroyed much of that country, the school, principal Jeff Lewis and his wife, Dr. Valerie Lewis, worked together to raise over \$100,000 for the hospital in LaGonave.

Over at Halifax West High, student Katie O'Connell is leading her school's effort in the Run for the Cure. Both her mom and her aunt died as a result of breast cancer. She created a video in which students hold up signs indicating who they've lost and why they're running.

This summer, our local Girl Guides served tea, oatcakes and berries at Scott Manor House helping that historic institution raise money.

These young people are just the tip of the iceberg. Scores of children and teens who are looking around, noticing problems, and asking themselves: what can I do to help?

They make me feel hopeful about our future.

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