



# Chalk Talk

Greetings | Feature | News | Essay Contest

PLEASE SHARE *CHALK TALK* WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES !!!

## Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers:

I woke up this morning to the news that the great tenor — perhaps the ‘greatest’ tenor — **Luciano Pavarotti**, had died at the age of 71. What a loss! But even more so, what a Life! Few artists have achieved more in one lifetime. The strength and sweetness of his tone, his big personality and that broad, mischievous smile had come, in my lifetime, to represent opera. And who can forget the spectacular performances as part of **The Three Tenors** performing in some of the most beautiful open air locations on the planet? And yet, he was a man of the people. His **Pavarotti & Friends** concerts to benefit refugee children of war and poverty



brought together the worlds of rock and opera, creating unlikely pairings with Bryan Adams, Bono and Sting. He sang with the muppet, Miss Piggy and was uniquely immortalized by John Candy who played ‘Johnny Pavarotti’ on Canada’s comedy classic, **SCTV**.

They say Pavarotti popularized opera among the masses. I’d say that he brought opera, with its universal themes and eternal melodies, *back* to its roots. Born and raised into an Italian culture, I thought everyone knew the words to ‘O Sole Mio’. It was hummed by my parents around the house, aspiring opera singers would sing ‘Nessun Dorma’ at weddings, and ‘Ave Maria’ was as common as ‘O Canada’.

The last years of ‘Il Maestro’s’ life had been equally eventful, personally and professionally. He gave his final performance at the opening ceremonies of the Winter Olympics in Turin in 2006. Also, in recent years, his life had begun a new chapter. He had remarried and revelled in the joyous birth of a daughter. Cancer curtailed his life just as he had settled back into the town of his birth, where he might have had the opportunity to reflect on his very BIG life and enjoy his children and grandchild.

Biographies are compelling because they tell us not only how a person’s life made a difference but how much we share in common with them. I often read the ‘**Lives Lived**’ column on the back page of the first section of the *Globe & Mail* and am struck by how interesting these expanded obituaries can be. Written by a loved one of the deceased — sometimes well-known but often just a ‘regular’ person — we gain insight into what made their lives unique and at the same time much like ours. The arc of each story is different, at times revealing a moment of heroism or an unexpected turn of events that makes

## A&E Classroom’s Essay Writing Contest!!

**A**ttention all teachers, students, school principals and librarians! A&E’s ‘**LIVES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE ESSAY CONTEST**’ [formerly ‘Biography’ of the Year Essay Contest] invites students in grades 5-12 to write an essay based on someone they think has made an important impact on Canadian Society. Students can win cash prizes and audio-visual equipment for themselves and their schools.

Students in grades 5-12 may enter [A&E Canadian Classroom’s](#) ‘Lives That Make A Difference’ essay contest by writing and submitting an **original essay in 300 words or less on who they think made the greatest impact on Canadian society in 2007**. Each entry must include the student’s name, complete address, postal code, telephone number, age, grade, name of teacher, school, school address, and local cable system (if known). Send entries to: **LIVES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE ESSAY CONTEST**, c/o Temple Scott Associates, 250 The Esplanade, Suite 301, Toronto, Ontario M5A 1J2. **Contest begins September 1, 2007 and ends November 1, 2007. Entries must be received no later than November 10, 2007.** [Click here](#) for full contest information.



Two winners from each grade level — 5th-8th grade and 9th-12th grade — will be selected.

### 5th-8th Grade level

**GRAND PRIZE** (1): Student: \$5,000 Cash Prize

- Department/Classroom of Teacher: \$1,000 Cash (Cdn.) for use in the classroom.
- School: A&E Television Networks Video Library. (Includes 25" Colour TV, DVD Player, and 3 Classic DVD Box Sets - Est. Retail Value: \$800 Cdn.)

**FIRST PRIZE** (1): Student: \$2,500 Cash Prize

- Department/Classroom of Teacher: \$1,000 Cash (Cdn.) for use in the classroom.
- School: A&E Television Networks Video Library. (Includes 25" Colour TV, DVD Player, and 3 Classic DVD Box Sets - Est. Retail Value: \$800 Cdn.)

### 9th-12th Grade level

**GRAND PRIZE** (1): Student: \$5,000 Cash Prize

- Department/Classroom of Teacher: \$1,000 Cash (Cdn.) for use in the classroom.
- School: A&E Television Networks Video Library. (Includes 25" Colour TV, DVD Player, and 3 Classic DVD Box Sets - Est. Retail Value: \$800 Cdn.)

**FIRST PRIZE** (1): Student: \$2,500 Cash Prize

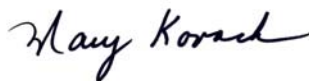
- Department/Classroom of Teacher: \$1000 Cash (Cdn.) for use in the classroom.
- School: A&E Television Networks Video Library. (Includes 25" Colour TV, DVD Player, and 3 Classic DVD Box Sets - Est. Retail Value: \$800 Cdn.)

ism or an unexpected turn of events that makes you stop and think. A person who died in their 40's or 50's is often described as busy, living a full and spirited life, raising a young family, building a career, in passionate pursuit of their interests.

Socrates said the 'unexamined life is not worth living'. This week's issue of **Chalk Talk** has information about an exciting essay writing contest that will inspire your students to consider the lives of Canadians who changed our world.

CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting the important work of teachers by providing resources on a range of topics for the classroom. We invite you to visit our website at [www.4edu.ca](http://www.4edu.ca) to view the many free teachers' resources on offer.

[Your thoughts are appreciated.](#)



Mary Kovack

(Includes 25" Colour TV, DVD Player, and 3 Classic DVD Box Sets - Est. Retail Value: \$800 Cdn.)

[Note: Due to Provincial restrictions the contest is void in Quebec.]

Don't delay! This contest is sure to spark lively discussion as students and teachers take a critical look at their world and the Canadians who are catalysts for change. Start the conversation today to ensure that you won't miss out on a chance to win prizes for themselves, their school and their classroom!

[\[Source: A&E Canada website\]](#)

## Quotes of the Week

**Children should be given the chance to play instruments, to sing.**

**The music itself could never take the place of my own passion in life.**

**Am I afraid of the high notes? Of course I am afraid. What sane man is not?**

— Luciano Pavarotti, Tenor, Artist, Humanitarian, who began his career as an elementary school teacher

## A&E's 'LIVES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE ESSAY CONTEST' – 2006 Winners

Be Inspired by the Winning Essays from the 2006 Essay Contest!

### Grand Prize, Grade 5-8

[Emma Gibbons](#) — Age 13, Grade 8, Fisher Park Public School, Ottawa, ON — who wrote eloquently about Heather Crowe, the Ottawa waitress who suffered from the effects of second-hand smoking and played a key role in the development of Smoke-Free Ontario Act before her death in 2006.

### First Prize, Grade 5-8

[Emma Seckel](#) — Age 11, Grade 6, Queen Mary Elementary School, Vancouver, BC — whose essay about anti-war activist Deborah Ellis echoed the passion of this mental health counselor/author's five books dealing with the effects of war and AIDS on children around the world.

### Grand Prize, Grade 9-12

[James Barron](#) — Age 17, Grade 11, W.P. Wagner School of Science and Technology, Edmonton, AB — whose essay recognized the contribution made by Justice John H. Gomery in 2005 in exposing the corruption in what came to be known as "The Sponsorship Scandal".

### First Prize, Grade 9-12

[Tara McMillan](#) — Age 16, Grade 11, Mark R. Isfeld Secondary School, Courtenay, BC wrote about radio icon and humourist, Stuart McLean, whose weekly CBC program, *The Vinyl Café*, celebrates all things Canadian.



## Bring Great Ideas into Your Classroom

**A&E Canadian Classroom** offers a commercial free and copyright cleared block of programming designed for classroom use. A&E Classroom airs Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 9:30am NT/ 8 to 9am AT/ 6 to 7am CT/ 5 to 6 am MT and 4 to 5am PT.



Twice each year, **A&E** develops support materials to help you incorporate A&E Classroom into your history, literature, performing arts, science and social studies curricula. The **A&E Classroom Calendar** provides six months of scheduling information and program descriptions. **A&E Study Guides** include classroom activities and discussion questions for select programs. Additional Study Guides are available online. For more information about A&E Canadian Classroom, go to <http://www.aande.com>.

A&E Classroom and the support materials have been developed as a classroom resource for Canadian educators to use **free of charge**. For additional information, please call 1-800-722-6146.

A schedule of upcoming program air-dates is available in A&E Classroom's "**Idea Book for Educators**". This free resource guide is printed twice a year and offers educators a six month programming calendar, program descriptions, and lesson plans to accompany some of the programs. To order your copy of "The Idea Book for Educators" [click here](#).

## Education News & Related Articles

[World-renowned Italian tenor Luciano Pavarotti dies at 71](#) – Canadian Press, *CBC News*, September 6, 2007

“Luciano Pavarotti, one of the world's great tenors, and a man known for his ability to hold a high G for a

"Luciano Pavarotti, one of the world's great tenors and a man known for his ability to hold a *high C* for a period of time that seemed beyond human capability, will sing no more. Pavarotti, 71, died at 5 a.m. Thursday in his home in Modena, Italy, of complications of pancreatic cancer. His wife, Nicoletta, four daughters and his sister were at his side, his manager said. Luciano Pavarotti was credited with bringing opera to a wider audience and sang pop songs as well as opera classics."

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[Taming first day of school butterflies; Letter from teacher and small assignment help to prepare kids](#) — Daniel Girard, Education Reporter, *TheStar.com*, September 04, 2007

"It may be her first-ever day of school but Sydney Maas already has that homework thing down. Bounding into kindergarten class at Withrow Avenue Public School, Sydney will be clutching a completed assignment for her teacher – a paper leaf she's decorated with all the energy and enthusiasm that comes with being four years old. Sydney's work, along with that of her classmates, will be displayed in their classroom, offering some familiarity to students making their first foray into elementary school. "It helps as an icebreaker," said Elaine Hofer, a kindergarten teacher at the school in Toronto's Riverdale area. In August, she sent out a letter to each student along with a little art assignment to complete for the first day of class."

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[School lunches around the world](#) — *TheStar.com*, September 06, 2007

"Here's a look at children's school lunches abroad: CHINA: Children seldom bring lunch to school in Beijing. Their lunches are arranged by the school and they pay a monthly fee. Schools order boxed lunches – usually rice, meat and vegetables in a take-away box – from food companies supervised by the local educational authority. The cost is the equivalent of 70 cents to \$1.40 (Canadian) a day."

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['Up with play, down with homework'; A growing number of parents say extra work detracts from family life, discourages learning](#) – Elvira Cordileone, Staff Reporter, *The Star.com*, August 23, 2007

"Growing numbers of parents and educators say this needless nightly homework ritual destroys family life, robs kids of their childhood and extinguishes interest in learning. "I don't see a true benefit from homework," says Gord Scott, a Toronto father of two: Devin, 13, and Shannon, 10. "More than half the homework is redundant, busy work. I'm not sure the time spent on it couldn't be better spent on structured play, being with their friends or just reading." ... The vice-principal explained the extra work was necessary because the provincial curriculum couldn't be squeezed into the school day."

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