

## RCMP lend helping hand to playground

*Cheque for \$3,000 ensures Somerset Elementary students have safe place to play*

By JIM BROWN

TRANSCONTINENTAL MEDIA

**KINKORA** — Children at Somerset Elementary School have a new playground thanks to outstanding community support and a cheque from the RCMP's Mounted Police Foundation.

East Prince RCMP members Const. Dwayne Pardy and district commander Jay McInnis presented members of the Friends of the Somerset Playground committee with a cheque for \$3,000 last week.

The money represents a big part of the \$50,000 raised to completely overhaul the playground, including replacing aging, potentially dangerous equipment.

"The money is always great to buy the new equipment," said committee member Patricia McKenna.

"For the RCMP to have a presence in the area where our children are going to be sends a great message."

The playground renovation and upgrade represents the first of three phases in the transformation of the school's play area.

Later phases will see the school acquire new sporting facilities and equipment for such sports as soccer and basketball.

McInnis said finding healthy recreational opportunities for youths is an important priority for the RCMP.

## Right kind of humour for comic strip

*Chuckle Bros, now run in over 50 newspapers, had its beginnings in Stanley Bridge cottage*

By STACEY MURRAY

THE GUARDIAN

It was on a sleepless night at a cottage in Stanley Bridge five years ago that a light went off in Brian Boychuk's head.

He imagined an image of the devil speaking with a fire marshal in Hades, explaining why he took the batteries out of his smoke detector.

"I had to take the battery out," Boychuk imagined the Devil would say.

"The darn thing kept going off."

He wrote down the idea — along with 20 others — in his daughter's colouring book that night.

It was from those ideas that the beginning of the syndicated comic strip Chuckle Bros was born.

The Guardian was the first newspaper to start running Chuckle Bros.

Boychuk, who was vacationing on the Island last week with his family, said in an interview that he has always enjoyed reading comics and thought he had the right kind of humour.

"I've always been a funny guy. I've always been known for my quick, razor-sharp humour . . . and my modesty, of course."

When he got back home to Ottawa, he phoned his brother Ron, who was on board immediately.

For a few months, they came up with a stockpile of ideas but there was only one problem.

"We said, 'This is crazy, we can't draw.'"

So the brothers searched long and hard, eventually finding their cartoonist in Ronnie Martin.

After taking a look at his work, Boychuk knew they



**Brian Boychuk, co-creator of Chuckle Bros, shows off one of the comic panels that have been created in recent years. Chuckle Bros is a part of more than 50 newspapers.** Guardian photo

had found the right man, although Boychuk said he found his characters were "too pretty" at first.

"I said, 'Ron, I want people with beer guts . . . and fat faces,'" he said.

He said their comic panel isn't about the same people and can carry a different theme each day.

"It's not character-based, it's situation-based."

He said while there are many subtle elements to the cartoon, they are meant to draw a quick reaction from the reader.

"The picture tells you practically everything."

While perfecting the style of the comic was one thing, it was quite another to get that

comic in papers and the rejection letters didn't hold back their criticisms.

"They (are meant to) weed out the weak and the less confident," he said.

It was also hard to get started, as their success would mean bumping another cartoon from a paper's staple of comics, something that can cause a stir with readers.

"A lot of editors don't want to put up with the e-mails and the flak."

The group now has a place in more than 50 papers in Canada and the United States and has been admitted to the National Cartoonist Society, which Boychuk terms the Hollywood of comic strips.

While they still have a long way to go, they have been getting some encouragement from their peers.

"We're a new kid on the block, but several people have said, 'We've heard of you guys', and that's something."

While they haven't been able to quit their day jobs just yet, they have come a long way from the days of constant rejection letters.

"We're just happy to be doing cartooning."

He said he always admired the work of other cartoonists.

"I always thought these guys are heroes to be in the newspaper."

smurray@theguardian.pe.ca

## Consultant to develop Malpeque Bay aquaculture plan

Fisheries and Oceans Canada has engaged a P.E.I. consulting firm to help develop an Aquaculture Management Plan for Malpeque Bay.

VisionQuest Inc. will work under the direction of a management committee comprised of representatives from the federal and provincial governments, industry and aboriginal interests.

VisionQuest is now contacting Malpeque Bay users to identify the opportunities, risks and other issues that relate to the further development of the oyster and mussel industries.

Malpeque Bay was chosen because it offers the most potential for future P.E.I. shellfish farming. The bay itself, about 19 kilometres long and 16 kilometres wide, is ideal habitat for aquaculture development.

While the bay is zoned for aquaculture, only about six per cent of it is being used for aquaculture. There has been a freeze on development since 1999.

The review will include the identification of potential riparian and terrestrial activities around the bay that might impact on the expansion of the aquaculture industry or vice versa. The review will also look at environmental issues and examine the potential impacts on existing commercial fishing and harbour facilities.

For more information contact: Bill Drost, P.E.I. area director, Fisheries and Oceans Canada @ 566-7810 or drostb@df-mpo.gc.ca.