

## **Camp Away, Experiences in the Snow**

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I am so glad that I had the golden opportunity to be part of the support staff at Camp Mariste for Greaves Academy. Amazingly, even though it had warmed up for Spring time by March in Montreal, we had snow around the banks at the waterfalls in Rawdon, Quebec.

At first I thought that my agenda was just too full between my chamber choir (five performances a month including trips out of town), taking care of my son as a single mother, grading papers and art work, lesson planning, rehearsing the choir after school hours, changing winter tires and finding time to rest. But, to show that I could walk the extra mile for my students, I decided to go to the camp for the Sabbath with a group of three other teachers. We got a little lost because our camp was really out in the boonies this year, but we made it there just in time for lunch. What a beautiful site! It was worth the 75-kilometer drive from Montreal!

After prayer, we shared lunch with the group. I quickly learned that the duties were not outlined but that each teacher just filled in where they were needed the most. Our CNA teacher and Principal Cousins prepared lunch for our hungry students who were coming in from a Prayer Walk. Our Science teacher started serving the students and I took the initiative to help during lunch. I found it to be a successful and collaborative way of getting the tasks accomplished. To my surprise, even the students who are not too responsive during my class, were very glad to see me at camp. I was further thrown by a student who said, "Miss, you have to spend the weekend with us!"

The students and teachers alike were resourceful enough to find me and my son blankets, pillows, and bunk beds in separate rooms. As a matter of fact, I ended up with an extra blanket and two beds to choose to sleep in. On Sunday morning, I got ready early to go on my morning walk for the last time on the site. To my surprise, two of my students came along to talk and enjoy nature.

This weekend reminded me that what we are really teaching at a Seventh-day Adventist school is not just Music, Art or Personal Orientation Projects; we are teaching a way of life. My students some of whom are not so successful academically, helped me when we were walking through the rocky side of the waterfall and cared for my son when he got too close to the lake. This experience tells me that even when we discipline children that are not of our faith, they can see the love of Christ through us. They do understand, even if they just show their frustration at the time we rebuke them, that we love them deeply and want them to be good citizens of the world.

When we give our personal time as a gift of love, the students sense that they are more than tuition dollars or a job guarantee for us. They see a reflection of love and our lifetime commitment to education. Some of our students, when faced with the possibility of being removed from GREAVES ACADEMY by their parents, have pleaded to stay because GREAVES is the school that cares and goes beyond a 5-day per week experience with the students. Greaves is the school that is a bridge between a Christian life on earth and eternal life

with Jesus Christ in the world made new. Greaves Academy is a “Gateway to Excellence” for the mind, body and soul.