

**In Memory of**



**Ted McTavish  
1952 ~ 2008**

Ernie McTavish's legacy lived on in his son Edward (Ted) McTavish who followed in his father's footsteps as an educator. Ted dedicated his career to education, first as a teacher and then as a principal in Thames Valley. Beyond the school system, Ted was a devoted father and family man and a dedicated church member. We celebrate his life tonight, as he passed away one year ago, on June 24<sup>th</sup> 2008, at the age of fifty-six.

As an educator, Ted believed that it was important to embody the qualities that we value, to transmit those values to students. We all learn through example. He believed that students are so much more than test scores. He believed that the "hidden curriculum" involved nurturing the social and moral intelligence of each student. His leadership was strongly based in ethical behaviour. He was a great believer in second chances for students and staff alike. In his view, human beings are both fallible and redeemable. He never gave up on anyone.

Ted's greatest strength was his ability to create a nurturing, caring community where young people could thrive. Ted always put people first, and he valued everyone for the role they played. He understood the importance of respect for each member of the school community. Ted fostered an atmosphere of trust, where people knew they were working together for a common goal. He always kept his office door open to everyone. That open door was a daily reminder that he was the kind of leader who also had an open mind and heart.

The measure of Ted's success as an educator is best gauged in terms of the impact he has had on others. In the face of a daunting medical diagnosis, Ted modeled courage, and those around him drew strength from his example. The attendance at his funeral was symbolic of his popularity and the number of lives he touched. His sister Kathy said later, "The number of people that said to me, 'I would have done anything for him,' you know...I think it was because he would have done anything for them."

In the words of Ted's wife and life partner of thirty years, Julia McTavish, "He just taught us a lot about life. He was such a good person. He inspired us all." In the words of his physician, who delivered his eulogy, this was Ted's Final Lesson: "It's the small acts of kindness we do day to day that have an impact on each other and for these you will be remembered". Someone in my office asked me one day how Mr. McTavish was doing. Surprised, I asked her how she knew Ted. She mentioned how she was a self described 'lost' student, but that she had managed to finish high school because Mr. McTavish believed she could do it. She succeeded because someone cared about her. One day, Ted mentioned how happy he was to see a former student, a pregnant teenager in high school at the time, now a nurse who gave him chemotherapy. I'm sure the family heard many stories of how his acts of kindness over the years affected others. Yes, kindness travels. Ted has sown many seeds of kindness in his all too brief lifetime and these acts of kindness will never be forgotten."