

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE: Grade 8 Graduation from Devins Drive Public School

By Stephen Somerville

Last week, Devins Drive P.S. held its Grade 8 graduation ceremony at Aurora High.

It was held there because the gymnasium at Devins is not big enough to house all the graduating students' family members for the occasion.

Among the 52 graduates was my thirteen year old son Ryan.

I had a number of thoughts and emotions as the graduates assembled for a class photo outside the front door of the school.

My initial thought was, 'Wow- these kids clean up well!?' The girls all looked so grown in in their cocktail dresses while the boys looked great, but rather uncomfortable in their suit jacket and ties.

I also could not believe how tall some of the children had become, like one of my son's friends Brett, who at 6 foot 1 inch, is now taller than his dad.

During the awards ceremony, Cameron and Gracie did a wonderful job as the Masters of Ceremony.

Every student received a big cheer as they received their graduation certificate and well deserved applause was provided to the various award winners.

The formal part of the evening ended with a 13 minute video montage showing various pictures of the students over their last ten years at the school.

I had a good laugh as they showed some baby pictures of the students juxtapositioned against their respective picture today.

I did feel rather sad when they showed a picture from the first day of junior kindergarten when all the students were standing against the wall with their knapsacks waiting to go into the school for the first time.

It made me instantly recall that morning ten years ago when Julie and I took Ryan for his first day of school. Ryan was not happy to go to school. He liked being at home with Julie. An hour later, however, he had made some new friends and he did not look back.

That picture also made me feel old as the ten years has flown by too quickly.

After the ceremony, I was looking at the Devins Drive Dragons 2016-2017 Yearbook. The pictures are great and I was truly amazed at the amount of groups and activities that have taken place.

My hat is off to the teachers and to the parent volunteers who have made all this possible as I know that it is a lot of work.

I also had a great chuckle at the captions beneath the photos of the graduating Grade 8 students. A number of the students want to be lawyers, but there is also a budding actress, a professional golfer and a taxidermist!

When I drove by Devins P.S. the day after the graduation ceremony I also felt a tinge of sadness/nostalgia as I knew that a place where my son enjoyed learning, a place where he has developed the beginning of life-long friendships, a place that we knew was safe, he would never return again through those doors as a student.

My son has spent the past ten years of his 13 years at this institution. There will (hopefully) be no other educational institution that he will spend as much time at.

I have seen him and the other children grow, not just in size and intelligence, but in awareness of the world around them.

If I am having all these emotions now, I wonder how I am going to feel four years from now when Ryan graduates from high school.

Oh well, I will just try to savour each and every single day that I have watching my son and his friends grow up.

To all the graduating students in Aurora, have a wonderful summer and I wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

Stephen can be contacted at stephengsomerville@yahoo.com