

October 23, 2009
Smithville, Ontario



Science teacher and hockey fan Joan Buma at Smithville Christian High School.

SCIENCE TEACHER JOAN BUMA IS A TOP-THREE FINALIST IN THE SEARCH FOR A NATIONAL HOCKEY CHEER!

Join the cheer at Pepsi.ca and help propel Buma to the top.

SMITHVILLE, ONTARIO — There's new sense of national pride at Smithville Christian High School, with the news this week that science teacher Joan Buma's hockey cheer has gone coast-to-coast.

Buma's 30-second video, featuring her colleagues chanting the catchy cheer that she wrote, is one of the top three hockey cheers in the country, and is now in the running to become number one.

Pepsi Canada is hosting the cheer competition to select a new cheer for Hockey Canada. The winning chant will be taught to sports fans at the World Junior Hockey Championship in Saskatoon in January, and at the Men's World Hockey Championship in Germany in May. The author of the winning cheer gets tickets, airfare and hotel accommodation to both tournaments.

Buma, who is an avid sports fan (her favourite teams are Toronto Maple Leafs and the Hamilton Tiger Cats) decided to enter the contest after seeing a commercial on TV.

"It was the perfect contest for me," Buma said. "I am an avid hockey fan, I am so proud to be Canadian, and I have a passion

for teaching. Teaching is all about encouraging, and the thought of teaching thousands of people to do a cheer to encourage our hockey teams – well it doesn't get better than that."

Her first few attempts were duds, she said, because her husband, John Buma, rolled his eyes when she tried them. But when she tried out "Eh! O! Canada Go!" and he didn't roll his eyes, she knew she was on to something. "I wasn't going to enter a cheer unless I could come up with one I loved," said Buma, who is also a competitive Scrabble player.

Buma said she knew she wanted the quintessentially Canadian "eh" in her cheer because "every time I travel people immediately recognize me as a Canadian."

She also knew she wanted a call and response in her cheer, because of her experience as a spectator at the 1988 Olympics, where frozen fans amused themselves for hours with a call and response cheer as they waited for a ski jump competition to get underway.

Once she had composed her cheer, Buma needed actors, but she

was running out of time, because the deadline for submissions was less than 48 hours away.

Buma asked all her teaching colleagues to wear red on a recent professional development day, and bribed them with donuts to join in her cheer. Her videographer and video editor is colleague, Jim Vanderlinde, an English and shop teacher.

Buma said the first indication she had made it to the top three was her visit to the Pepsi website on Monday morning. When she saw her video on the site, "I went screaming and yelling through the house," she said.

Students at the independent Christian school where Joan teaches were shown the video and were taught the cheer during an assembly this week. They and their families are now voting for Buma daily, but Buma hopes the whole country will get behind her. The winning cheer will be selected entirely on the basis of fan support, so the more votes the better, she said.

"It's simple, it's energetic, and fun," Buma said. "I think it will be an amazing encouragement to our national hockey teams."

To vote for Buma's cheer, register at the Pepsi Canada website, at pepsi.ca

Voters can vote every day and are eligible to win prizes too.

Voting ends November 1.

-30-

For more information contact:

Joan Buma, Smithville Christian High School
(905) 957-3255
jbuma@sdch.on.ca

Ted Harris, Principal, Smithville Christian High School
(905) 957-3255
tharris@sdch.on.ca



Science teacher and competitive Scrabble player Joan Buma tells her colleagues at Smithville Christian High School where to go in preparation for the recent Professional Development Day shooting of her hockey cheer video. The video was recorded and edited by English and shop teacher Jim Vanderlinde, in blue.