

MEDIA RELEASE

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Iconic Canadian Author Roch Carrier visits Thornhill to award a prize to local student!

OTTAWA, ON– Roch Carrier, Honorary Member of the Society for Educational Visits and Exchanges in Canada (SEVEC) and author of such books as the children's classic, *The Hockey Sweater*, presented the Roch Carrier award to Natalie Pressman from Thornhill, Ontario today at a ceremony at Louis-Honoré Fréchette school from the York Regional District School Board.

SEVEC is a national charitable organization that has been providing educational exchanges, trips and forums for Canadian youth for 75 years. Over 350,000 youth have benefitted from our programming, including the Roch Carrier Award. Each year the Roch Carrier Award recognizes a student who writes a short story in his/her second language and speaks to the meaning of Canadian identity. This national writing contest encourages young Canadians to communicate in their second-official language and explore their Canadian identity.

Among his many accomplishments, Roch Carrier is the author of *The Hockey Sweater*. The story first printed in 1979 is considered a classic in Canadian literature and is a favourite of Canadian youth. The National Film Board created an animated short story on the book in 1980 and an excerpt from the story is featured on the back of the Canadian \$5 bill.

Hundreds of youth have submitted short stories for consideration and each year one lucky student gets a visit from M. Carrier who entertains the students with a reading from the student's winning submission as well as a reading from *The Hockey Sweater*.

"It is a pleasure for me to visit with youth and see through their eyes their understanding of Canadian identity," said M. Carrier. "To be in the Greater Toronto Area today and witness these students celebrating their second language through reading and writing is such an honour."

Natalie Pressman's winning submission entitled *l'île grise*, tells the story of two spies from a far-away land sent to investigate what makes Canada such an admired country throughout the world. On their adventure, the spies gain an appreciation for Canada's multiculturalism, stunning national landscapes, and, of course, the hockey tradition!

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SEVEC's mission is to create, promote and facilitate enriching educational opportunities for youth within Canada for the development of mutual respect and understanding through programs of exploration in language, culture and community.

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