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Following a Remembrance Day assembly held November 10, Caledon East Public School 'Centipede Children for Peace' ambassadors showed off seasonal cards made by students which will be sold during this Saturday's Christmas Craft Sale at the school. Proceeds from the cards will go to help children living in wartorn countries across the world. Back row are Sabina Rock, 13, Heather Goulet, 13, Jordyn Stafford, 11, Peter Stepanis, 12, and Noel Fortner, 13. Front row are teacher Shelley Dyer, DareArts founder Marilyn Field, Colin Sinclair, 8, and Erin McLeod, 9.

ROBYN WILKINSON PHOTO

## 'Children for Peace' send love

BY ROBYN WILKINSON

While thousands of Canadian soldiers continue to fight overseas in countries ravaged by war, Caledon school children are spreading messages of peace and love through art to children of war.

For the past 16 years, more than one million students across the world have taken part in the 'Centipede Children for Peace' card movement, an initiative raising funds for children living in wartorn countries.

Each year, using design skills, creativity and colour, students paint seasonal cards featuring original drawings and paintings, which are then sold and sent overseas to soldiers who deliver them to local children.

Earlier this year, Caledon schools, including Alton Public School, Mayfield Secondary School, and Macville Public School among others, helped send more than 2,000 cards to children in Afghanistan with the message 'I love you' written in English as well as in Farsi, the traditional language of Afghan children.

As well as letting innocent children know that there are other children around the world who are thinking about them, sales from the cards, with assistance from NATO-peacekeeping forces, have helped rebuild schools in Bosnia, bought special ambulances for children in Kosovo, supplied 1,000 school bags for children in Afghanistan, and helped purchase a 'Big Foot' landmine remover.

Proceeds from the children's card movement has also gone to helping Canada's aboriginal children living in 'fly-in-only' communities in the far north.

Following a Remembrance Day ceremony held at Caledon East Public School last Friday, 'Centipede Children for Peace' student ambassadors were joined by DareArts founder Marilyn Field, who introduced the card-making project to local schools after she'd learned about the world movement which began in the Czech and

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## Spreading peace one child at a time

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Slovak Republic almost two decades ago.

Sitting in a circle in the school's gymnasium, the student ambassadors listened as Field told them a story of a stuffed centipede named Centi, the Children for Peace mascot who represents all children in the movement, Field explained.

A recipient of Canada's Meritorious Service Medal, which she received in 2003 from the Governor General for her commitment to helping children, Field told the students how the centipede and its many legs represent the hundreds of children involved in the move-

ment for peace.

"The legs of the centipede represent all those children including each one of you who have taken part in the movement to spread peace and love to those less fortunate."

The colourful stuffed animal, Centi the centipede, was first given to two Bosnia girls by soldiers after their school was bombed. That very stuffed animal was given to Field as a gift and is now in Afghanistan where there are currently 2,300 Canadian soldiers stationed. Canadian soldiers visit local villages in Afghanistan with the stuffed animal to meet with children and let them know

of the millions of youth across the world who are thinking of them.

"We really can change the world one card at a time," Field told the students. "And it's through each of you that the movement will continue to spread. In the end, we can do this."

The cards made by Caledon East Public School students are for sale for \$5 during Saturday's (today's) Christmas Craft Sale at the public school.

For more information on the Centipede Children for Peace movement and how to register a school for the programme, visit, [www.darearts.com](http://www.darearts.com).