

New digs give special ed program space to work

By Wanda McConnell
Herald Editor

School aren't "shoehorned" into their area any more.

The students and staff in the Special Education Centre at Salisbury Morse Place

Last week, their newly-renovated and redesigned area was officially opened. Parents, government, and school officials came out to

toast the \$250,000 project.

Shoehorned is the word special education teacher Dave Weller chose to describe how the centre used to be set up.

"It wasn't very great," he says of the memories of the makeshift, crowded conditions the students and staff had to cope with in the past.

Two years ago, the Public Schools Finance Board approved funding, in two phases, to make the space more functional.

Renovations were completed last fall and the 13 staff and 18 students - ages 12 to 16 and ranging from the mildly to the profoundly mentally and/or physical-



photo by Wanda McConnell

FOR SALE \$7,900 - NO G.S.T.



'93 Nissan, K.C. 6 ft. box, 2.4L, 5 spd, bra, trailer pkg, NO RUST, 261-9528

Special education teachers Dave Weller and Bev Dalman are thrilled with their new surroundings, as are students Kim Fontaine and Corey Dueck.

ly challenged - have been settling in ever since.

Weller, who's been with the program at SMP for 11 years, says the new digs "are the envy of anyone in the city."

The newly renovated facility includes a comprehensive therapy area, wheelchair washroom and changing area, vocational area, fully-equipped kitchen, leisure area, office and assessment room.

"Now we have a lot more space, and there's tremendous potential for the use of the space. We couldn't ask for anything better," en-

thus Weller.

Maria Larocque is one of the 11 paraprofessionals who works with the students. She's been there 12 years.

"We survived in one little room. This is real plush," she says gazing around the leisure area.

"Everyone has their own areas now, and we're not on top of each other. The noise level is also way down," she says.

A "quiet room" is also a boon, says paraprofessional Bonnie Quesnel.

"It's made a total difference to what we can do aca-

demically," she says.

Most of the students in SMP's Special Education Centre move there from a similar program at Polson Elementary School.

The students graduate from SMP to the special ed program at Kildonan East Collegiate.

While at SMP, Weller says the students' program is generally divided into three areas: academics, integration into the regular classrooms in the school, and community-based activities where among other things, the students learn daily living skills.

Education opportunities for aboriginals

PUBLIC MEETING

to discuss

Kildonan River Bank Trail

in

Frasers Grove Park

755 Henderson Hwy.

(Henderson Hwy. at Kimberley)

from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL

MARK LUBOSCH

Councillor North Kildonan Ward

Phone 986-5196

or e-mail: mlubosch@city.winnipeg.mb.ca

