

The Spoke is a publication course for students who wish to be on the staff of Conestoga's award-winning and student-produced newspaper. Staff members write one to two articles a month for the newspaper and work with student editors to hone their writing and reporting skills. Staff also contribute to The Spoke's Web site, www.stoganews.com. In addition to reporters, The Spoke also has photographers, cartoonists, graphic artists, Web programmers and page designers on staff.

Students applying to The Spoke should be interested in journalistic writing and be able to consistently meet strict deadlines. Students will be required to do research, conduct interviews and write and revise articles. Applicants also must work well both in groups and independently and be creative and critical thinkers. Writers will work on assignments during designated class time and after school. All staff writers are supervised by the editorial board and must work with student editors during the course of production. (The Spoke is a class during the school day that meets three days out of the six day cycle.)

How to Apply

Applications are available in Room 280, Student Services and in the middle school guidance offices. Your application must be complete in order to be considered. Please return the completed application to Ms. Houseman or Mrs. Hyatt, Conestoga High School, or to Room 280.

Deadline is Friday, February 13, 2009

Applicants will be notified by Ms. Houseman and Mrs. Hyatt (faculty advisers) if they have been selected for the newspaper staff. Only successful candidates will be permitted to enter "Newspaper" on the course selection card. You will need the signature of Ms. Houseman or Mrs. Hyatt if you are at Conestoga, or the signature of your counselor for the middle schools.

As the staff is limited, preference may be given to older students.

Any Questions?

We understand that, especially for incoming freshmen, the course selection process can be confusing. Please contact us with your questions about The Spoke or the application process.

Henry Rome, Editor-in-Chief, hrome@stoganews.com
Meredith Mayer, Managing Editor, mmayer@stoganews.com
Anika Mehta, Managing Editor, amehta@stoganews.com
Susan Houseman, Adviser, shouseman@stoganews.com
Cynthia Hyatt, Adviser, chyatt@stoganews.com

Good luck and we look forward to reading your application!

2009-2010

Here's some background on different opportunities at The Spoke:

- For those good at **writing** or **reporting**, The Spoke is a great place to improve your skills while meeting new people and covering exciting events. Spoke reporters have interviewed Barack Obama and have covered, as press, rallies of Obama, John McCain, Hillary Clinton and Ralph Nader. Reporters have also covered stories such as the Phillies World Series Victory Parade (from the press truck) and SWAT team tactical drills. They have also conducted in-depth investigations into student issues such as student gambling. The Spoke divides its reporters into four sections: News, Opinion, Features and Sports. Reporters work with student editors who help them become better writers and better reporters. (Students who have more than a year experience on The Spoke can apply to be an editor. Applications for editors are available from Ms. Houseman or Mrs. Hyatt.)
- If you're interested in **photography** or **cartooning**, The Spoke is for you. Photographers cover a range of events, from championship games to Hollywood movie filming to rallies by Barack Obama, John McCain and Hillary Clinton. Having a camera is recommended, though The Spoke has a professional Digital SLR camera for its staff. Cartoonists on The Spoke draw art for a variety of stories, from politics to school issues to sports commentaries.
- Those interested in **graphic arts** who join The Spoke have access to the latest software (InDesign, FreeHand) and endless possibilities as The Spoke aims to update and modernize its design and layout. Graphic artists work on a variety of topics, from standalone graphics to full page, color spreads.
- The Spoke also has tremendous opportunities for those interested in **Web design and programming**. The Spoke's Web site is in its third year, and it offers many ways to get involved and shape the newest form of Conestoga High School student media. Check us out online at www.stoganews.com (we're currently renovating the site).
- Students interested in **business** and **advertising** will find the exciting opportunities involved with managing a budget of several thousand dollars and coordinating advertising within the school and selling ad contracts to area businesses.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions!

Please
remove
pages 1
and 2 before
you submit
the application
and keep them for
your reference.

Part One Personal Information

Full name: _____ Grade in 2009-2010: _____

Address: _____

E-mail address: _____

Current school (circle one): CHS TEMS VFMS OTHER

IF OTHER, PLEASE SPECIFY HERE _____

Current English Teacher: _____

Homeroom: _____

Part Two Writing

Please write your answers here neatly or attach a typed document.

1. Please describe specific reasons why you would like to join the newspaper staff.

Part Two, continued

Please write your answers here neatly or attach a typed document.

2. What can you contribute to The Spoke? In particular, describe any specific skills such as photography, computer or website proficiency, design ability or graphic arts skills. Please note any prior writing or newspaper experience (school paper, summer job, etc.).

Part Three Your Interests

Please circle any other school activities you anticipate joining in the 2009-2010 school year.

Fall Sport

Choral Group

Drama or Theatre Group

Winter Sport

Band or Music Group

Yearbook or Literary Magazine

Spring Sport

Student Council

Other:

Please rank the top three (3) areas of the newspaper that interest you, with one (1) being of the most interest to you:

____ News

____ Sports

____ Opinion

____ Features/Entertainment

____ Photography

____ Cartooning

____ Advertising/Business

____ Page design

____ Web design

____ Technology

____ Multimedia production (Video, Audio, Flash animations, etc., for the Web)

Part Four Samples of your work (Two parts)

1. Please submit an original news article. The article should deal with a school activity or event and include facts and multiple interviews. Articles written for the school or other newspaper that fit those qualifications are acceptable. Word length: 400-500 words.

Cartoonists: In lieu of this article requirement, you may submit samples of your work. They must fit on 8.5 x 11 paper. Maximum 5 cartoons. Please show us your versatility by providing a variety of different work. Please staple or paperclip copies to the back of this packet.

Photographers: In lieu of this article requirement, you may submit samples of your work. They must fit on 8.5 x 11 paper or you may submit a CD with jpegs. Maximum 5 photos. Please show us your versatility by providing a variety of different work. Prints should be stapled or paper-clipped to this packet. Photographs that have been altered, digitally or otherwise, are unacceptable in a newspaper and are thus unacceptable for this application.

Designers/Graphic artists: In lieu of this article requirement, you may submit samples of your work. They must fit on 8.5 x 11 paper or they can be included on a CD. Show us a variety of designs (page or web) or graphic work. Maximum 5 designs.

Please include copies of all your work. If you need something returned, please let us know.

2. To all candidates: please submit a graded essay (non fiction)

Part Five Additional Information

The Spoke is looking for versatile members of its staff. Therefore, if you possess multiple talents, please feel free to include other supplemental material to this application.

OPTIONAL Take your news article, photos, cartoons or graphics and design a full page of The Spoke on an 8.5 x 11 piece of paper.

Part Six Teacher Recommendation

Please have your current English teacher fill out the following page.

Thanks and good luck!

Students: In order to be considered for the newspaper, you must have the evaluation of a member of the English department.

**STUDENT
NAME**

**GRADE IN
2009-2010**

Teachers: We appreciate your honest input in evaluating this student. Please fill in this form and return it to Susan Houseman or Cyndi Hyatt, Conestoga High School, by **Friday, February 13, 2009.**

Do you recommend this student for The Spoke (please circle)?

Strongly recommend Recommend Recommend with reservations Not recommend

Please rate the student on the following abilities (please circle):

Meets deadlines	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree
Possesses good writing skills	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree
Accepts criticism	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree
Strong work ethic	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree
Works well independently	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree
Works well in groups	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree
Creativity	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree
Determination	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree
Integrity	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree

Other comments:

Teacher name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____