Ottawa: The Canadian Council for Geographic Education announced today that Mr. Lewis (Lew) French is this year’s recipient of the council’s Geographic Literacy Award. The Geographic Literacy Award recognizes outstanding individual effort in the development, enhancement and promotion of geographic literacy in Canadian education.

“Lew French is an ideal candidate for this award,” notes Dr. Stuart Semple, Chair of the CCGE. “His passion for teaching, his love of geography and his strong commitment to the environment has inspired students and teachers for over 30 years. And today, Lew – a lecturer with the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education – continues to ensure that geography remains relevant, challenging and exciting for students of the next generation.”

A gifted educator and textbook author, Mr. French is well known for the way he encouraged students to experience geography first-hand through field trips, research projects and the study of local geographic features. He made significant contributions to geographic education as a member of the team that developed the current high school geography curriculum; through his work with the Ontario Association for Geographic and Environmental Education (OAGEE) executive; by conducting teacher workshops and more. Mr. French has also received several awards in the past, including the OAGEE’s Award of Distinction in 2001.

As winner of the 2003 Geographic Literacy Award, Mr. French receives a $5,000 US cash prize from the National Geographic Society and a bronze medal from The Royal Canadian Geographical Society. The award is being presented to Mr. French on October 25, 2003 during a luncheon taking place at the Ontario Association for Geographic and Environmental Education’s fall conference.

The Canadian Council for Geographic Education is a joint initiative of The Royal Canadian Geographical Society and the National Geographic Society of Washington, DC. It is made up of teachers from across Canada who volunteer their time to promote and improve geographic education in Canadian schools.

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