

bulletin

Vol. 56/No. 2

November 2012

MEMO

TO ALL TEACHERS

Vote 2012

Be Informed!

Be part of the process!

DECEMBER

4th - 2012





Ferocity of a Kindergarten Teacher

by JONATHAN TEGHTMEYER

Liz Wingert fits the stereotypical image of a kindergarten teacher. She is young, enthusiastic, polite and petite. She sports stylish eyeglasses and blonde hair pulled back into a ponytail. She is intelligent and caring.

It is her ferocity that might seem opposite to the image of a kindergarten teacher. It is her conviction that makes some people want to paint her image as that of a union thug.

Wingert is the secretary of Madison Teachers Inc. (the union represents teachers in Madison schools), and for one month last winter, she, along with her teacher colleagues and other public employees, stood in solidarity at the Wisconsin state legislature to protest Governor Scott Walker's so-called budget repair bill.

In August, Wingert spoke to the Alberta Teachers' Association Summer Conference delegates about Walker's attack on teachers and public workers. The Wisconsin government introduced a bill portrayed as cutting costs to balance the state budget, but the bill was actually an attack on workers' rights. The legislation would rip up existing collective agreements, eliminate fairly bargained employment conditions and impose new legislated terms. The right to bargain collectively would be outlawed for some workers, and the ability to act collectively would be hampered for the rest. In some cases, unions would have to take annual certification votes.

Walker's legislation was an ideologically driven, authoritarian attack on workers' rights done in the name of repairing the economy. For Walker, public workers are a political foe best defeated by impairing their ability to organize and act collectively. And

while we'd like to believe that such a heinous attack on workers' rights is reserved for Tea Party types south of the border, the forces are at work here, too. One law currently proposed in Ottawa is a similar ideologically driven and authoritarian attack on workers' rights done in the name of "transparency." But, again, the actual motive is to impair workers acting collectively.

British Columbia Conservative MP Russ Hiebert has put forward private member's Bill C-377, which would require labour organizations to provide detailed financial statements for public distribution. While most private members' bills are doomed to fail, this particular bill has the support of the Conservative majority caucus and could pass easily this fall.

By placing the bill's reporting requirements in the *Income Tax Act*, the bill attempts to skirt the constitutional issue of provincial domain over labour relations. Hiebert's website (www.c377.ca) suggests that the public tax benefit received by unions compels public disclosure. The logic is spurious. Unions are obligated to report to their funders – members – not to the general public. If this bill is solely about tax deductions, then the reporting requirements should be no more onerous than they are for government, charities or private corporations (who take advantage of deductions on a wide array of business expenses).

In terms of financial transparency, the Alberta Teachers' Association's line-by-line budget is provided to, and approved by, locally appointed teacher delegates at our annual assembly. Our audited financial statements are posted to our website for our members and tabled in the Alberta leg-

islature. Despite these current obligations, the additional reporting demanded by Bill C-377 alone would likely require the hiring of two additional full-time accounting staff at Barnett House.

Bill C-377 is intended to divert time, money and energy from labour's effective representation of its members. At the same time, the bill will produce a website outlining line-by-line union activities, costs and vendors. Such information will play nicely into the hands of anti-labour groups such as Alberta's Merit Contractors and B.C.'s Fraser Institute, who will distort the data to discredit unions. Employers will have a heyday with access to confidential and strategic information about union expenses.

The bill is a politically motivated attack on the association rights of workers. It attacks workers' organizational abilities through costly distractions, preoccupations and mischief making. It may not stoop to the same level as Wisconsin's budget repair bill, but teachers (including kindergarten teachers) would be wise to pay attention.

Jonathan Teghtmeyer is Associate Coordinator – Communications, Government with the Alberta Teachers' Association. He can be contacted at jonathan.teghtmeyer@ata.ab.ca.

T H E
bulletin

Lesley-Ann Browne
Editor

Michelle Lamarche
Editorial Assistant

Linda Babstock, John Bishop,
Elliott Green, Louise King
Design • Printing • Distribution

Linda Farrell
Online Services

The *Bulletin* is published eight times a year during the school year by the Nfld. and Labrador Teachers' Assn., 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, A1B 1W1. Tel: 709-726-3223; 1-800-563-3599 Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582 lbrowne@nlta.nl.ca www.nlta.nl.ca

Unless otherwise indicated, materials used in *The Bulletin* may be reproduced or broadcast without permission. Advertisements and/or notices of resources carried in this publication do not imply recommendation by the Association of the service or product. Advertising inquiries should be directed to: Michelle Lamarche, Ext. 227 mlamarche@nlta.nl.ca

Subscription Rate: \$18 per year. For subscriptions and address changes contact Printing Services, Ext. 249.

Deadlines for material are:
December Issue: November 1
Jan/Feb Issue: January 2



ISSN-1189-9662

Member of the Canadian Educational Press Association, International Association of Business Communicators, and the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education.

CONTENTS

Features

- 8 Hats Off!**
Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medals Awarded to NL Educators
- 12 NL Teacher Presented Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence**
- 13 NL Principals Receive Victor May Award**
- 14 Benefits & Economic Services**
I Wish I Would Have Known That Twenty Years Ago
by Perry Downey
- 16 Living Well**
When "Just get over it" or "Suck it up" Doesn't Work... Mental Health Matters!
by Judy Beranger
- 18 Professional Development**
Thirty for Sixty
by Beverley Park

- 20 CONTACT 2012:**
More Than Just Clowning Around
by Paula Courage
- 22 Media Awareness**
Facing Online Hate: Preparing Youth to Deal with Hate on the Internet
by Matthew Johnson
- 26 Canadian Teachers' Federation**
Taking a Stand for Teachers is Taking a Stand for Public Education
by Paul Taillefer

Departments

Guest Editorial	2
On Location News	4
In Memoriam	7
Resources	27
Calendar	back cover

CALL FOR PRESENTERS

Physical Education Special Interest Council Conference 2013
"What's Your Summit? Reaching New Heights"

February 21-23, 2013
Grenfell College – Memorial University
Corner Brook, NL

PESIC is inviting presenters who are willing to share their ideas and expertise at their 2013 conference. The conference theme is *What's Your Summit? Reaching New Heights*. The focus is winter outdoor education which challenges both students and instructors to participate in activities in their surrounding environment.

The following is a list of session guidelines to enhance the professional development of the PESIC 2013 Conference:

- 75 minute sessions
- Applicable to the conference theme *What's Your Summit? Reaching New Heights*
- Present the intended session as described in the application
- Provide a participant information package (i.e. handout, equipment, online resource, etc.)

The "Call for Presenters" registration deadline is November 17, 2012.

For further information contact: r_peddle@hotmail.ca or 709 646 2044 (res)

or Shannon Sweetland at ssweetland@wnlsd.ca

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL
NEWS

ST. JOHN'S

NLTA Staff Changes



Claudette Coombs

Claudette Coombs, Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers, retired from the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association on October 31, 2012 with over 17 years of service.

Claudette was appointed to the position of EAP Coordinator with the NLTA in March 1995. As a former teacher, medical researcher, health promotion consultant and adolescent counsellor, Claudette brought considerable experience in counselling, assessment and health promotion to the EAP.

Claudette's work for and with teachers involved offering a wide variety of support services for teachers who experienced personal or work-related issues. She also had responsibility for the Wellness Promotion Program that was designed to enhance the current health status of teachers. Claudette's work involved sitting on or chairing numerous provincial and national committees on various topics and subjects to help improve quality of life.

The Provincial Executive would like to express their heartfelt thanks to Claudette for her years of service to the teachers of the province and send best wishes for her retirement.

The Provincial Executive of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association is pleased to announce the appointment of **Gail Carroll** to the position of Coordinator, Employee Assistance Program for Teachers effective November 1, 2012.

Gail has worked in the area of employee assistance programs and mental health for over 20 years and has also been involved in writing policy for and designing Respectful Workplace Programs for organizations. Since 2006 she has been working in private practice where she offered short-term counselling including Critical Incident Stress Debriefing for EAP programs, Conflict Coaching for Respectful Workplace Programs and Workplace Assessment including harassment investigations, healthy workplace assessments and program design.



Gail Carroll

Prior to that Gail was Director of Employee Support Programs with the St. John's Nursing Home Board and has been employed as a Social Worker and/or Counsellor with the Hoyles Escasoni Complex, the Health Care Corporation of St. John's, Palliser Health Authority (Brooks Alberta), the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital (Edmonton, Alberta) and the Alberta Family and Social Services.

Gail holds a M.Sc (Psychology) from California Coast University and a Bachelor of Social Work from Memorial University of Newfoundland. She has also completed an Advanced Certification in Alternate Dispute Resolution, NQI (National Quality Institute) Certification in Workplace Wellness, and is a certified conflict coach and field instructor.

L'ANSE AU LOUP

School raises funds for Janeway Foundation Jamarama

On October 26, the students and staff of Labrador Straits Academy (LSA) in L'Anse au Loup, Labrador participated in the Janeway Foundation Jamarama.



K-6 students at Labrador Straits Academy participate in Jamarama.

Organized by the Labrador Straits Academy Student Council, the event raised \$326.09 which will be donated in honour of Cameron Buckle,

ON LOCATION

one of LSA's pre-school students who is presently a patient at the Janeway Hospital.

Terry Casey, Principal of Labrador Straits Academy said, "It was a fun-filled spirited event at our school today!"



Grades 7-12 students at Labrador Straits Academy participate in Jamarama.

SPANIARD'S BAY

Rockets win gold

Holy Redeemer School in Spaniard's Bay captured the girl's zone championship in slow pitch softball on October 19. The tournament took place at the Spaniard's Bay Recreation Complex with four teams participating. The teams were: Amalgamated Academy, Bay Roberts; St. Peter's School, Upper Island Cove; St. Francis School, Harbour Grace; and Holy Redeemer School, Spaniard's Bay. The Rockets had a 3-1 record going into the championship game and came out on top by defeating St. Peter's by a score of 12-9. St. Peter's walked away with the silver medal.



Members of the winning team: Front Row (l-r): Brittany McCabe, Mackenzie Chipman, Cheyenne Ryan, Morgan Sheppard, Alyssa Clarke; Back Row (l-r): Bailey Roberts, Jordyn Davis, Terri Gosse, Emily Earle, Kelsey Parsons, Kirstin Hiscock, Ms. Harrington (coach)

PAID ADVERTISEMENT



Elect Derek Drover NLTA Vice-President
Working with you to build the future today

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Why Elect Dean Ingram Vice President?

His Principles

- A Fair Wage, Pension Improvements, Reasonable Workload, and Adequate Leave Time are mandatory in our next Agreement
- Fiscal Responsibility within our Association's operations
- Constant and Clear Communication to and from the membership is critical – WE MUST LISTEN!!



Contact Information

Phone: 466-4593/427-2250

dingram@persona.ca

users.eastlink.ca/~deaningram

Follow me on Twitter @dean_ingram

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

NLTA Medal winner announced



Jessica Marche

Jessica Marche of Labrador City has been awarded the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Medal for the 2012 Spring Convocation at Memorial University.

Jessica graduated from Memorial University with a B.Ed. in Primary/Elementary Education. While completing her degree, she served as Vice President of the Primary/Elementary Education Society and worked at Memorial's campus daycare. Jessica possesses a pleasant demeanor, a professional attitude and excellent communication skills, and these qualities were quite apparent when she did an impressive job of representing both herself and the Faculty of Education when interviewed for a CBC news segment on teaching opportunities. During her studies in the Faculty Jessica maintained an excellent academic record and was named to the Dean's List for 2010-11. In addition to being awarded the NLTA Medal, Jessica also received the John M. & Elsa S. Morgan Scholarship for 2011-12.

Jessica demonstrated fine teaching in the classroom receiving an excellent review from her cooperating teacher for her internship placement in Phuket, Thailand. As an intern, Jessica was very involved in her school and participated in an array of extra curricular activities which demonstrated her enthusiasm and dedication in her teaching studies. Jessica also has a strong background in volunteerism. She participates as a school mentor in the Big Brothers Big Sisters School Mentor Program and was also a Project Lead for the Global Citizenship Initiative where she worked to develop a World Cultures Resource that can be used for teaching the Grade 6 "World Cultures" course in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Jessica is currently completing her BA at Memorial. She is also working at the MUN daycare and teaching classes with Bricks 4 Kidz.

The NLTA Medal is awarded annually to an Education student who, during his/her academic career, has made an outstanding contribution to the Faculty of Education and to the University. The recipient must be a graduating student and have a consistently good academic record in the professional courses required for the degree. The award is made by Memorial University on the recommendation of the Dean of Education.

School Rep Seminars 2012

The first in this series of NLTA School Rep Seminars took place this past fall to again provide school reps with the information they need to carry out their important roles.

Three seminars were held at the Sheraton Hotel in St. John's on October 12 and 13, the Mount Peyton Hotel in Grand Falls-Windsor on October 19 and 20 and the Greenwood Inn & Suites in Corner Brook on October 26 and 27.

Each session opened with special greetings from NLTA President Lily B. Cole. *The NLTA and You* video was then viewed while school reps and others in attendance enjoyed a Friday evening snack.

The first evening rounded out with a game of NLTA School Rep Feud when school reps got to show us what they know about the NLTA. Teams played against each other in attempts to win the most points and, of course, great prizes. This activity was a great lead in for the social where everyone got to relax and wind down for the evening. Saturday morning began with an informative presentation on the NLTA organizational and program structure. The key work of the Association in the areas of Benefits and Economic Services and Professional Development was reviewed at length.

School reps had the opportunity to ask questions on specific areas of interest and staff were able to give more detailed information.

The mid-morning session provided more specifics on the NLTA programs and services. This was an interactive session where school reps searched the NLTA website to find answers to questions on information contained on the website or in print. There were 50 questions in total and teams of people searched for the answers. There were prizes for the team(s) with the most correct answers. The purpose of the session was to show school reps the vast amount of information available to them on the NLTA website. While school reps are not expected to know everything, the information is certainly at their fingertips.

After a nutrition break school reps took part in a session called *Effective Communication Between You and Your Association*. In small groups, school reps discussed the most effective ways to receive communication from the NLTA, the least effective ways, and were provided with an opportunity to make suggestions for improving communication. A discussion also took place on the role of the NLTA Branch.

After a quick lunch school reps had the opportunity to review case studies and watch role-plays that

examined potential situations and issues. NLTA staff acted out the role-plays and school reps were able to comment on how the scenario should have occurred and what was the role of the school rep.

The purpose of the school rep seminars is to assist the school rep in their important role within the school. These sessions can be deemed a success with such feedback as: "Loads of fun. Great way to learn." "As a new teacher it really opened my eyes to what the NLTA does for teachers." "Great sessions, and I would recommend this to all reps." "Extremely informative and entertaining. Awesome job!"

The next series of School Rep Seminars 2013 will take place October 4-5 in Goose Bay, October 19-20 in St. John's, and October 25-26 in Gander..

CANADA

Imagineaction funding availability

Imagineaction is offering a funding window to schools for students in grades 5-12 to support projects on "Discover Your Democracy – past and present". Register now at www.imagine-action.ca/NewsArticle.aspx?id=12. If you have any questions please contact info@imagine-action.ca.

Imagineaction offre des subventions aux écoles pour des projets élaborés et menés par des élèves de la 5e à la 12e année sur le thème « Découvrez votre démocratie : passée et présente ». Inscrivez-vous dès maintenant www.imagine-action.ca/NewsArticle.aspx?id=12. Vous avez des questions? Communiquez avec info@imagine-action.ca.

Imagineaction school-community project subsidies

Teachers can submit their project applications until November 30, 2012 to be eligible for \$500 subsidies. Social action projects must be student-led and completed by June 30, 2013.

Pour être admissibles à une subvention de 500 \$, les enseignantes et les enseignants doivent présenter leur demande avant le 30 novembre 2012. Les projets doivent être achevés au plus tard en le 30 juin 2013.

MURIEL FRANCES (NOEL) KING, 1942 – 2012

On August 22, 2012, our world changed forever as Muriel passed away in the presence of her loving family. Muriel was a loving wife, mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, sister, sister-in-law, aunt, friend and neighbour.

In the peaceful, quiet, early morning hours of that Wednesday, Muriel gently slipped away to rejoin her brother Selwyn and parents, Harold and Annie Noel (one of the four founders of the RTANL). Muriel was the eldest of six children, three of whom followed their mother's example as a teacher.

Muriel graduated from MUN in 1963 with her B.Sc. and BA(Ed.) degrees. She married Arthur King on May 4, 1963 and both moved to England for four years. In 1963 she began teaching Mathematics and Science at Reading Secondary School in England. After returning to Newfoundland in 1967, once her children Peter and Jennifer were in school, Muriel began 19 years in volunteer, substitute and replacement teaching positions in the metro St. John's area.

In 1985 she returned to full-time teaching at Macdonald Drive Junior High School. In 1987 she transferred to Mount Pearl Junior High School, where she taught Science for 10 years (one year as Acting Department Head). Muriel retired in June 1997.

During her retirement, Muriel was secretary of the RTANL. She was a member of the Retired Teachers Bowling League from its inception 13 years ago. She was a Past-President of St. Mark's Anglican Church ACW, active in deep water fitness and enjoyed a lifetime of playing bridge and also travelling (especially cruises). She was actively conscious of her nutrition and health needs and worked at being the healthiest she could be.

One of her co-workers wrote me a note saying, "her kindness and consideration for others was inspiration for all to see". Muriel, in our memories of her, remains a teacher, a traveller, a bowler, a bridge player, a swimmer, a reader, a support and source of strength, a mentor, an advisor, a listener, a lifetime companion and a faithful servant of God.

With grace, peace and her faith, Muriel ended her four-year battle with ovarian cancer.

I'm Free

*Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free
I'm following the path God laid you see,
I took His hand when I heard His call
I turned my back and left it all...*

(Miller Center tapestry)

(Submitted by Lois Jones (Sister))



Muriel King



Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medals Awarded to NL Educators

Three educators from Newfoundland and Labrador have been awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal to mark the 60th anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the Throne as Queen of Canada.

Beverley Park, Deborah Pinto and Frank Shapleigh join 30 teachers from across Canada who will be honored by their respective teacher organizations and the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF). "We are delighted to honour these teachers from the Yukon to Newfoundland and Labrador who have been identified by their teacher organizations and CTF for this prestigious medal which honours their contributions to the teaching profession," explains CTF President Paul Taillefer.



Beverley Park

Beverley Park

Beverley Park's life and her work reveal a commitment to excellence, an interest in human rights, and a strong sense of identity as a Canadian – matched with a recognition of her place and the place of her country within the global community.

Beverley has worked in education for nearly 30 years. Her educational experiences have taken her from a small community on the west coast of Newfoundland to a small village in the north of Uganda.

Beverley began her teaching career in Burnt Islands on Newfoundland's southwest coast where she taught French from Grades 3 to 10. After only one year with the Board, and at the age of 22, she was hired at District Office as French Programs Coordinator. Four years later she moved to St. John's to teach Mathematics and Science in French Immersion at a junior high school in the capital. After another four years in the classroom, that Board also hired her as Coordinator of their French Programs.

Following this school/district experience she accepted a position to design and deliver programs

for the Provincial Professional Development Centre, an interagency centre operating out of Memorial University. When the Centre closed due to government cuts, Beverley joined the staff of the NLTA.

Throughout her career Beverley has provided educational leadership in her province, throughout the country and around the world. At home, among other things, she has been active in safeguarding and promoting the rights to French education and of francophone teachers in a vastly minority milieu.

Beverley also initiated and developed a program for school-based leaders in her province, Leadership at Work. This program was and is extremely successful and the Ministry of Education has now adopted it and provides funds to school districts to support the program. It has also been adopted in districts in New Brunswick and Manitoba.

Beverley has been a member of CTF's international SODEP teams and participated in several John Thompson Fellowship teams. Through the Canadian Teachers' Federation, which programs are tailor-made to fit the context of the country or countries in which they are offered, Beverley has led the consultation-design-delivery process in Malaysia, in Mali, Guinée, Burkina Faso and in Togo assisting leaders to establish and sustain viable teacher associations in frequently hostile environments.

In every role Beverley has shown a passion for what she does. This extends beyond her own enthusiasm to create an infectious energy that inspires those around her. An examination of Beverley's life and her work reveals three discrete but overlapping themes: a consistent commitment to excellence in everything she does, an interest in issues of social justice and human rights, and a strong sense of identity as a Canadian, matched with a recognition of her place and the place of her country within the global community.



Deborah Pinto



Frank Shapleigh

Deborah Pinto

Deborah Pinto's uncommon selflessness, dedication to the welfare of those in her community, and professionalism as a teacher make her a worthy recipient of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. To paraphrase Charles Dickens, *mankind is her business*.

Deborah has dedicated her life to teaching students whose abilities are not to shine academically. Entering her 30th year in teaching, she feels as inspired and committed as she did when she first began and takes great pride in stating that she gets to know not only her students, but their families and parents as well.

Deborah began teaching in 1982 and has successfully team taught students with special needs for many years, 25 of these at Holy Heart Regional High School. Challenges faced by these students have included spina bifida, cerebral palsy, autism spectrum, global and cognitive delays, ostio-genesis imperfecta, muscular dystrophy, acquired brain injury, visual impairments, Maple-sugar urine syndrome, Williams syndrome, and Dravett's syndrome.

Deborah's ultimate goal is for students to develop capabilities which will enable them to function as independent members of the family, school, and community. Her students participate in educational and social activities to increase and improve their communication, social, functional and academic skills. Instruction is individualized and designed to meet objectives that have been identified based on the strengths and needs of each student (as outlined in their Individualized Educational Plan).

Deborah has successfully embraced the inclusion model and has coached and served as teacher monitor for 16 years in volleyball, softball, track, and basketball, and has taught students the Duke of Edinburgh Program for 12 years at Holy Heart. She has been involved in school community transition efforts with students with special needs and has successfully placed these students throughout the community for over 20 years. Deborah has also completed the first training institute for the Co-Op programs offered by the school board in 1992. She served as teacher moderator for student council from 1987-1990, served as teacher coordinator for Recycling since 2001 and as yearbook moderator from 1992-2009. Deborah has also served as teacher representative on Holy Heart School Council, presented at school board sponsored workshops, mentored new teachers since 1990, and has been guest presenter for MUN special education courses. As well, she began the first Safe Grad for Grade 12 students at Heart Heart and has been a volunteer with Holy Heart's Breakfast Program since its inception.

(cont'd on page 10)

Deborah has always been very active in her community. She is a volunteer at The Gathering Place and Habitat for Humanity, and is actively involved with St. Teresa's Parish in St. John's. In 2007 she donated bone marrow and stem cells to a young boy who survived leukemia. She was recognized nationally in Ottawa as awards recipient for Atlantic Provinces in 2008 and is a regular plasma and platelet donor. She has been a volunteer with the Heart and Stroke and Kidney Foundations, participated in walks for Kids Help Phone and MS Society walkathons, and volunteered with the Easter Seals Association, Cerebral Palsy Association, the Learning Disabilities Association, as well as many other organizations. Deborah served as a lay reader, a communion minister and Children's liturgy leader at St Kevin's Church in Goulds from 1988-2006 and was also involved in the Women's Catholic League in the Parish during the same time.

Frank Shapleigh

A giant among innovators, Frank Shapleigh had a major role in building the infrastructure and knowledge base for Newfoundland and Labrador's education technology. He exemplifies ALL attributes of a highly respected educator. His passion for learning and sharing has been his hallmark.

Since 2001, Frank has been Coordinator, Communication and Connectivity Services with the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI). In this position, he oversees many aspects of CDLI's distance education programming and services. Through his work and tireless commitment to "finishing the job" CDLI has assisted with the development of a distance education program that has as its base a well-developed network and computer technology infrastructure. In addition to his direct responsibilities, Frank has and continues to be a rich professional learning resource for both CDLI distance education teachers and teachers through our provincial K-12 school system. Frank has made a significant contribution to our provincial K-12 school system, is well-respected among his peers for the work he has and continues to do.

Prior to joining CDLI, Frank was a Training Officer with STEM~Net at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Computer Education Consultant, Lighthouse School Coordinator with the Department of Education. He taught Physics, Computer Technology and Mathematics at St. Paul's High School in Gander from 1972-89 and taught Physics and Mathematics at St. Michael's High School in Grand Falls from 1968-70.

Frank has been an instructor and/or facilitator for numerous programs and courses at Memorial University including the Technology Education Diploma, Diploma in Rural Education, Summer Institute in Computer Studies in St. John's, Gander, Grand Falls, and Corner Brook, as well as the Summer Institute in Physics and Microcomputers and the Summer Institute in Physics.

Frank has been a member of the Senior High Technology Working Group, STEM~Net/CDLI Advisory Board, and the DELT Media Technology Committee. With the Department of Education he has served as a member of the Senior High Technology Education Working Group, the Intermediate Technology Education Working Group, Computer Studies Curriculum Implementation Committee, and has been chair of the Senior High School Computer Education Committee. He has also been a member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Science and Technology Advisory Council, and the Physics Subcommittee of the Science Council with the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.

Frank has received numerous awards during his career including the NLTA Technology Education Special Interest Council Leadership Award in 2011, the Early Innovator Award at the 2010 EDGE Conference, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Barnes Award in 1992, the Atlantic Provinces Science Teaching Award (High School) in 1990, Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society Paul B. Whalen Science Teacher Award in 1987, and the Dermott Bradbury Science Teaching Award in 1985.

The Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal is a visible and tangible way to recognize 60,000 outstanding Canadians of all ages and from all walks of life, who have built and who continue to build this caring society and country through their service, contributions and achievements.

Earlier this year, the Government of Canada invited partnering organizations – including CTF – to select candidates from within its Member organizations to receive this prestigious national honour.

Additional information on the medal is available at www.gg.ca/diamondjubilee.



NLTA AWARDS 2012-13

Each year your Association honours several of its members with four prestigious awards. Please take a moment to read about them. If you feel that someone within your school qualifies for nomination for one of these awards for the 2012-13 school year, please contact your school representative who will forward the name and information on this person to your branch president or the appropriate special interest council president.

Special Recognition Award

This award was instituted by Johnson Inc. to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the NLTA. It is presented annually to an active or life member of the Association who, while a teacher in the province, has made a major contribution to the **cultural, social and/or community life** of Newfoundland and Labrador. The award recognizes contributions in the areas of the arts (music/literature/visual arts), community service, and/or municipal politics. Nominations must come from branches or special interest councils and must be **received at the NLTA Office by January 15th.**

Allan Bishop Award

This Award was also established during the NLTA Centennial Year to recognize outstanding service to the NLTA at the **provincial** level and it is named after former NLTA President and long-time staff member, Allan Bishop. The award is open to any active or life member of the Association, except that current members of the Provincial Executive are ineligible for the award and a provincial past president is ineligible for the award within three years of his/her presidency. Nominations must come from branches or special interest councils and must be **received at the NLTA Office by January 15th.**

Bancroft Award

This award, named in honour of James Frederick Bancroft, the first president of the NLTA, was established in 1980 during the 90th anniversary of the Association. The award was established to recognize the outstanding service given to **branches** by the dedicated and talented teachers whose efforts have helped make the NLTA the strong association it is today. Nominations must come from branches and must be **received at the NLTA Office by January 15th.**

Barnes Award

This award was established in 1987 and is named for Dr. Arthur Barnes, a long-time supporter of the Association, who, in 1920, became the first Minister of Education. The award was established to recognize outstanding professional development services provided by teachers at the special interest council level. Nominations must come from special interest councils or branches and must be **received at the NLTA Office by January 15th.**

All nominations for the above Association awards must be typed on the proper nomination form which can be obtained from your local branch president, the NLTA Office, or printed from www.nlta.nl.ca and must be submitted by the deadline indicated in order to be considered.

NL Teacher Presented Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence

On October 3, **Christina Cox**, a teacher at Holy Cross Junior High in St. John's, was presented with a 2012 Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence at an awards ceremony in Ottawa.

"Good teachers help lay the foundation with which we interpret and navigate the world. They make a valuable contribution to Canadians being among the brightest and most innovative citizens in the world," said the Prime Minister in a news release. "It is a real privilege today to honour educators who have imparted their knowledge and inspiration to us and our children, helping all of us become the best we can be."

Christina teaches Language Arts for Grades 7 to 9 and is noted in the news release as being one of those teachers who does it all – Heritage Fair, Robotics Competition, Apple Learning Initiative in the Classroom, and Virtual Film Festival. It goes on to say that she seizes every opportunity to get students involved in activities that will get them trying new things and as technology changes, she continuously re-evaluates her approach to teaching. "Always ready to try something new, she never stops looking for new ways to engage her learners. She is keenly aware of what any particular student needs and will be the first to respond."

Christina integrated a Media Awareness Program within the Language Arts Curriculum that was sponsored by CDLI. This project challenged student thinking regarding Internet safety, identity theft and information sharing.

Christina encourages students to discover their province's history through Heritage Fairs and in two consecutive years, students have been selected to attend the National Heritage Fair Camps.

Christina's main commitment to her students has been through the Skills Canada Competence program where she provides students with oppor-

tunities to improve in a variety of areas from robotics to résumé writing and webpage design. Through the Skills Canada program, Christina became involved in the First Lego League NXT Robotics initiative. Her students have participated and won in various categories, and in 2009 a group of students was nominated for a position at the World First Lego League Robotics Competition.

Christina also has her students involved in the Amalgamated Virtual Film Festival, which has students preparing videos on topics ranging from copyright and permission to use. One of the groups won first place, and not only did each of the members receive prizes of their own, they also won a new computer for the school!

Christina was among 94 teachers/educators from across Canada, 27 of which travelled to Ottawa to receive their Certificates of Excellence (national-level) from the Prime Minister and attend three days of celebratory and professional development activities.

The Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence honour outstanding elementary and secondary school teachers who, through the innovative use of information and communications technologies in the classroom, help students develop the knowledge and skills to succeed in the digital economy.



Prime Minister Stephen Harper presents Christina Cox with her Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence.

NL Principals Receive Victor May Award

On September 25, **Terry Casey**, Principal of Labrador Straits Academy in L'Anse au Loup, and **Peter Burt**, Principal of Presentation Junior High in Corner Brook were honoured as co-winners of the Victor May Award. This award is presented every year in the Western School District, and acknowledges Terry and Peter as Distinguished School Administrators of the Year for 2011-12.

This award is named after the late Victor May, former principal of Elwood Primary in Deer Lake, who died in 2002. The award is given to a school administrator who exemplifies characteristics similar to that of Mr. May – including a strong academic focus, innovation, promoting teacher growth, strong leadership and fostering character development and a social conscience. The recipient(s) is chosen by the School Administrators Council (SAC). Victor May's wife, Sadie and his daughter, Melissa, presented the awards to Terry and Peter.

In his acceptance speech, Terry Casey said he was a strong believer in working to achieve. "I try to instill this work ethic in our students and teachers every day. For anyone that knows me, I do not believe in 'things being handed to you on a silver platter'. One has to work, and often work damn hard at times to see things through to the end. I attribute my work ethic and my sense of commitment to values instilled in me by my parents."

Janice Butt, Chairperson of the Labrador Straits Academy School Council, nominated Terry for the award. Terry thanked Ms. Butt for the nomination and said that he has never done anything to be recognized in his 27 years in education. "I am very passionate about my job, and I work hard to improve the well-being of the students, treating all objectively. I awake every morning with a sense of energy, loving to go to work, meet the students as they enter the school, and await what the day brings."

Terry congratulated his co-winner, Peter Burt, saying it was an honour to share the award. He went on to thank his vice-principal, Colleen O'Brien, as well as the staff and students at Labrador Straits Academy. He attributed his success in part to the love and support

of his wife, Rosina. "It is not easy running a school and also being away from home. As administrators we have to be cognizant of our time away and make an effort to balance out our work and home commitments. It is her love and support that means the world to me."

In his acceptance speech, Peter Burt said it was an honour for him to receive this prestigious award. "For me to have my name attached to Victor May's legacy as a highly respected school leader is quite humbling. It is also a pleasure to share this award with Terry Casey. Terry's work has been exemplary and it is wonderful that he has been recognized for his tireless efforts."

Peter thanked his school's Leadership Team and the School Council for nominating him for this award. He also thanked all those who have had an impact on his career to date. "My parents instilled a strong work ethic and I have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with wonderful mentors and colleagues throughout my career. However, the person that I want to thank most of all is my wife, Sheila. The life of a school administrator is often quite hectic and demanding on our personal and family time but she has always been there to support me through the challenges that accompany these roles."



l-r: Terry Casey, Victor May Award Co-Recipient; Sadie May, wife of the late Victor May; Melissa May, daughter of the late Victor May; and Peter Burt, Victor May Award Co-Recipient.



I Wish I Would Have Known That Twenty Years Ago

by PERRY DOWNEY

For the past three years, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association has been sponsoring a full day Financial Information Seminar to teachers in various regions of the province. To date, the NLTA has held seminars in Corner Brook, Gander, Clarenville, Marystown, Port aux Basques, Labrador City and St. John's with over 300 teachers who have attended.

These seminars are being provided as a result of feedback that the NLTA has received over the years from hundreds of teachers who have attended a Pre-Retirement Seminar. Many of those teachers, within the last two years prior to retiring, have suggested that the information provided at the Pre-Retirement Seminar should be provided to teachers much earlier in their career. As a result, the Financial Information Seminar provides teachers with the relevant information they need to consider much earlier in their teaching career. The seminars are thus intended for teachers who have less than 28 years of teaching service; however, all teachers, regardless of the amount of service they have, are invited to attend.

On Saturday, October 27, 2012, I had the opportunity to deliver a Financial Information Seminar to 26 teachers in the Bay D'Espoir region of the province.

Teachers from English Harbour West, Hermitage, Harbour Breton, Seal Cove, Gaultois, Milltown and Conne River, gathered at St. Joseph's Elementary School in Harbour Breton for a full day seminar.



A scenic view of Harbour Breton.

A special thank you is extended to all the school representatives, the branch presidents, and the Provincial Executive member in the area for helping to promote the seminar and to encourage teachers to attend. A special thank you is also extended to Terry Baker, Principal of St. Joseph's Elementary, and his School Council for hosting the event and for providing the morning snacks and lunch during the day.

Teachers who registered and attended the seminar were provided valuable information regarding financial planning, their Teacher Pension Benefit Statement, their Group Insurance Benefit Statement and Group Insurance Plan, the importance of upgrading education, severance pay, sick leave, workers' compensation, EI, as well as estate planning, loan consolidation, and some of the investment opportunities that currently exist which are available through various financial institutions. A Group Insurance Plan Benefits official from Johnson Inc. was in attendance to assist teachers with their group insurance concerns, changes, or questions that they had regarding their own insurance coverage. In addition, a Wealth Management Advisor from the



Participants at the NLTA Financial Information Seminar at St. Joseph's Elementary in Harbour Breton.

Newfoundland and Labrador Credit Union was also present to provide valuable financial information and advice to the group.

If you and other teachers in your area are interested in attending or hosting a full day Financial Information Seminar, please contact me (contact information below) or your school representative or branch president. Future seminars are currently being considered for Grand Falls-Windsor, St. Anthony, the Labrador South Coast, and the Happy Valley-Goose Bay regions of the province. Teachers from these areas are encouraged to register and attend these valuable seminars once a date and location is announced.

From the feedback received from teachers who have already attended a Financial Information Seminar, the seminars are very valuable and have helped them tremendously with their financial planning and preparation, both while working and as they prepare for their retirement years.

Perry Downey is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA. He can be reached at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 226 or pdowney@nlta.nl.ca.

“Thank-you for your continued support. I look forward to serving you as NLTA President.”

Jim Dinn

*“Alone we can do so little;
together we can
do so much.”
Helen Keller*



For more information please email:
jamesdinn@nf.sympatico.ca

Visit Jim on Facebook through his website:
www.jimdinn.com

Or follow him on Twitter:
[@JimDinn](https://twitter.com/JimDinn)



When “Just get over it” or “Suck it up” Doesn’t Work... Mental Health Matters!

by JUDY BERANGER

“I read an article in which a woman stated that if she knew her child’s teacher suffered from depression, she would pull her child from that teacher’s class. I have taught school for thirty years and struggled with depression for longer than that. It was because of this attitude and the stigma attached that I hid my condition. I carried the shame like a burning flame inside and it hurt more than the depression itself... it has only been in the past couple of years that I let go of the shame long enough to talk about it. Sometimes I was moody and unfriendly as I struggled to keep afloat.” (Out Loud – Essays on Mental Illness)

Good mental health means that overall we feel good, are respectful to ourselves and others, and stay away from negativity and gossip. We enjoy life and address challenges and obstacles to our goals in assertive and respectful ways. Raising awareness and understanding of good mental health is critical. The impact of poor mental health on our families and schools is huge and vigilance in the face of the invisible giant named “Stigma” can make a real difference.

When my family doctor first suggested I showed signs of having a “clinical depression” I recall being surprised and shocked! “What? Me depressed?” (Out Loud – Essays on Mental Illness). Reactions like this are common as the need for treatment often goes unrecognized or denied because of stigma and resultant feelings of guilt and shame. Most physical ailments are seldom stigmatized and thus are quickly treated. The majority of mental health issues go untreated and unaddressed! *Out Loud*, an insightful book of essays written by people who have experienced mental illness, sensitizes the reader to what mental illness is and highlights the courage demonstrated by those who work toward recovery.

Impact On Our Schools

Whole systems can be compromised when mental health issues go unaddressed. Relationships with colleagues and/or students deteriorate; disrespect and bullying can surface; physical health problems increase; and fatigue, sleeping problems, headaches and anxiety are common. Being a team player is sel-

dom on the radar of a person who is ignoring mental health problems and not taking responsibility to seek help. Those suffering from untreated mental health problems will often be more reactive and blaming, one day supportive, another day not. The euphemisms we sometimes say tongue in cheek – “suck it up” or “get over it” – seldom, if ever, work in these situations and in the long term can create a rumbling or active volcano waiting to erupt.

It is difficult, but possible, for staff to remain respectful in these situations. A realistic goal may be to be empathetic and supportive – as opposed to reactive and negative – to ensure that the situation does not deteriorate to a new-time low. A person dealing with mental health challenges does not respond well to changes in life. Unresolved grief, increased workload, students who are challenging, transfers, heightened emotions due to job stress, prolonged sick leave, new relationship or leaving a relationship, having a child, buying a new home, moving neighbourhoods, changing schools and deciding whether or not to retire, all need to be recognized as stressful events. A teacher or student in the throes of avoiding significant change is like a Sherlock Holmes, except with a stained magnifying glass seeing only negative outcomes through the lens. Misunderstandings, negativity, blaming, and gossip thrive in this environment.

Both medical and counselling resources are available to promote recovery for those who are addressing mental illnesses. Bipolar disorder, for example, is cyclic, while others, like depression and schizophrenia, can occur in episodes with symptom-free periods. Recovery time varies as the problem may have gone unaddressed for a long time. The Canadian Community Healthcare Survey reported that only 32% of all respondents who had experienced a mental health disorder said they had consulted a health professional in person. Imagine the effect and havoc this has on schools when relationships are compromised and disrespectful behaviour surfaces.

I developed a reputation for sleeping a lot. I didn’t know I was doing that to escape ... but sometimes I was fun-loving and friendly and I caught glimpses of the

person I really was. I liked that person but she never stayed for long. (Out Loud)

The entire family or staff can be affected by mental illness of one member. Not only can it consume the person's life, it can drain energy from others around who may sometimes have to duck the unexpected bullets.

The Definitions

A mental health issue becomes a disorder when the intensity, length of time, or effect on the person's life and thinking is negative, considerable, ongoing and prolonged. A mental disorder causes major changes in a person's thinking, emotional state and behaviour and disrupts the person's normal way of functioning, of being in relationships and quality of work. A mental health problem is a broader term that includes both mental disorders and symptoms of mental disorders. The problem may not be severe enough to warrant diagnosis of a disorder but may still cause changes in a person and disruption to ongoing relationships. The symptoms are not static and can improve or worsen over time.

A mental health crisis, such as suicidal and self-harming actions, can often be avoided if the intervention is **early** enough. One couple talked about the experience of losing their teenage son to suicide. They were aware of some dark poems he had written referring to suicide. They chose not to address this with their son so as not to be blamed for "snooping". They now say their lack of knowledge about depression has robbed them of their son.

Are Mental Health Problems Common?

The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) reports that about one in three Canadians will have a mental health problem at some point in their life and a Government report says that one in five will experience some problem with their mental health in the course of a year. Both agree that one in three will have a mental health problem in their lifetime with the majority of episodes presenting between the ages of 18 to 65. Schools are not exempt! Seventy-eight percent of those diagnosed with depression will keep it to themselves for fear of reprisals (Ipsos Reid, 2007) and 2 out of 3 will **NOT** seek help (Great West Life). According to Statistics Canada, it is estimated that nearly 50% of the 72 million workdays that people are absent per year are attributed to mental disorder-related leaves. Imagine the outcomes on our schools when help is not sought!

The two most common mental health problems are depression and anxiety. Others include post-traumatic stress, bipolar/manic depression, agoraphobia,

alcohol/drug dependence, seasonal affective disorder, eating disorders, schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders. It is not uncommon for mental health problems to occur in combination (e.g. anxiety disorder with depression; depression with drug misuse or alcohol or gambling). When one is not at peace and in turmoil it is almost impossible to be life giving and present to others.

My sister has bipolar disorder and has medication for the chemical imbalance. She often "forgets" to take it and we are beside ourselves not knowing what to do. She gets angry easily and often has trouble at work.

Commitment to early treatment is crucial. Lack of understanding promotes fear and keeps family members from providing supports, often because they just don't know what to do.

How Can I Help?

The biggest challenge is to identify, accept and name when you know something is wrong. Precursors can be a sad, angry person who exhibits angry or disrespectful behaviour. Saying less in these situations is helpful and being clear about what is important right now is realistic. The Mental Health Commission suggests five basic actions that can often help.

1. Evaluate the situation to see how best to help. Assess the risk of suicide and/or harm to self or others, ensuring personal safety and reducing or removing any identified risks.
2. Listen non-judgmentally to understand what is being said, building trust and safety, encouraging the person to talk freely and comfortably. The "just get over it" or "suck it up", whether said seriously or in jest, will not work when mental health problems are present.
3. Provide ongoing assurance and information, and encourage constant contact with the physician and other appropriate supports.
4. Encourage professional help, self-help strategies, reaching out to friends, family and other supports.
5. With professional help, new coping strategies are developed, relationships improve and there is more openness to move forward.

Focusing toward optimal health in our schools is part of the solution. Life's challenges, if addressed, can often serve as a catalyst to sharpen our sense of purpose in safe and caring schools.

Judy Beranger is a Wellness and Employee Assistance Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers. For confidential assistance contact Judy Beranger (ext. 265) or Gail Carroll (ext. 242). Suggestions for future articles for this section are welcomed.



Thirty for Sixty

by BEVERLEY PARK

Anyone who grew up in Newfoundland and Labrador will acknowledge that card playing is a part of our culture. The game may have varied depending on the region of the province, the number of available players, or whether it was a fundraiser or community card game (which was usually 45s), but most of us would be familiar with some version of the ritual that is playing cards.

I grew up watching my parents and my sister and brother-in-law play every Saturday night during the first two periods of hockey. After supper the table would be cleared for a “mostly” friendly game. I would straddle my sister’s chair and watch carefully as she sorted the cards, bid her hand, (taking the lead from her partner, Dad) and finally played it out trick for trick. A lot of my friends were in their homes doing the same thing. If, as a kid, you were really lucky, you might be asked to deal the cards out or, triumph of triumphs, actually play a hand if someone had to go to the washroom or put a log in the stove. At age eight or nine that was as much a rite of passage as having a place at the grown-ups’ table for Christmas or Thanksgiving Dinner.

While it was meant to be recreational (remember, this was pre-Internet!), card playing was very instructional. But, like most of life’s lessons, the lessons I learned from cards were mainly through some kind of strange osmosis and I was certainly not conscious of them at the time. A light bulb went off on Thanksgiving weekend when my sisters came to visit and it was suggested (after a marathon day of shopping) that we have a game. Again, let me underline that this was “mostly” friendly.

As soon as the cards come out, the posturing begins. One says, “I’ll tell you right now, I’m not very good at cards.” The other winks across the table: “I’ll be your partner – they won’t have a chance.” This is all about setting expectations – for oneself and for the opponents. If I say from the outset that I do not play well, this is a pre-emptive strike. Following that pronouncement, if I make a particularly good play, I probably won’t get credit and it will be chalked up to luck. If I make a mis-play, I will be forgiven. On the other hand, if I set myself up as an expert and then

make a mistake, it is considered unforgivable – most especially by my partner! Any particularly good plays made by the self-proclaimed expert go unnoted as they are merely as one would expect! The lesson in this: We should let our actions speak for themselves. If, in playing the game, we prove ourselves to be good players, the result will speak for itself. If we are not doing so well, then we should learn from our mistakes and carry on. If the opportunity presents itself to straddle the back of someone’s chair and observe a master player, we should take advantage of it!

As the game went on, bearing out the above-noted dynamic of the supposedly “not-so-good” player having the more than occasional stroke of luck and the card shark being much less of a threat than one would expect, I realized that the opponents’ overconfidence was causing them to under-estimate the strength of the competition. The lesson in this: Don’t be fooled into thinking that there is a perfect correlation between overt signs of confidence and actual competence. Conversely, do not assume that because someone is quiet or unassuming that they are less than excellent! Again, actions speak louder than words – even words spoken loudly. Sometimes the loudly (apparently) confident person is covering up for insecurity; the quiet individual may not like to be in the spotlight, even if he or she has many reasons to have a light shone on them.

Of course, a big part of most games is the bidding. Some people, the risk-takers (some would say reckless players), will make a large bid on the bare minimum, on the off chance that their partner will have a good hand or that the kitty will be kind to them. They are prepared for the payoff when it all goes right; they’re prepared to go in the hole when it doesn’t. Contrast this with the person who has the top cards (in 120s or auction, the five, jack and ace of hearts) and has to be coaxed into having a say. These two somewhat contradictory bidding styles point to a common lesson. “Nothing ventured; nothing gained” supports the kind of risk-taking behaviour of the former. “There’s no point in having it if you don’t use it!” encourages the reluctant bidders. In one instance the bidder is counting on the help of others; in the

other case the bidder is not even counting on himself – when all signs says he should! We should all learn that: 1) sometimes we absolutely have to trust that others will come to our aid; and 2) sometimes we absolutely have to trust ourselves. Oh yes, and the corollary to this is: When you find yourself deep in a hole, stop digging.

I was sitting across the card table on the brink of exhaustion from too little sleep, too much shopping and the emotional and mental energy of having a grueling fall schedule leading up to Thanksgiving. It was the Don Cherry moment: the play-by-play commentary that follows each hand, when one of my sisters offers up the little gem of wisdom that set off the light bulb that illuminated all these lessons from cards. She said, “You can’t play what you haven’t got!”

Were truer words ever spoken? I have given many seminars on keeping balance and making sure that we take time to restore our physical, mental and emotional energy. Why? Because we can’t give what we don’t have!

I am hoping to have a weekend soon for a “mostly” friendly game of cards. I am going to try and go 30 for 60 (better still, 60 for 120) and double the time I get for myself! I would encourage you to do the same. But remember, if you do play cards – no dealing the ace to the bottom of the pack, no telling across the table and no going slam without the joker. Those are my house rules. Some of you will know exactly what I mean; some of you will not have a clue...lessons for another time!

Beverley Park is Senior Administrative Officer, Professional Development Division, with the NLTA.

*I don't have the five in my hand
Not a leg to stand on
But what the hell...30 for 60
And I don't have the Jack or Queen
But I got on my good poker face
And life's about chances
And the King's in the kitty...30 for 60
I'm 65 now and I'm still in the hole
Life's just a game...It's a grand piece of fun
I've little else to go on...
But I recall my old man used to say
What the hell I'm going 30 for 60*

(written by Al Pittman, adapted by Ron Hynes)



PAID ADVERTISEMENT

ELECT

Jeanne Williams



**for NLTA
Vice-President
A Strong Leader
Who will listen
and
take action**

What are teachers saying – “Let Me Teach”

Together we can make it happen

Over 20 years NLTA Commitment:

- 8 Years NLTA Provincial Executive
- Current Negotiating Team Member

Over 20 years Teaching Commitment:

- St. Bernard’s Elementary, Grades K-6
Grade 5 & Teacher Librarian
- Discovery Collegiate, Grades 8-12
Technology & Teacher Librarian
- Roncalli Central High, Grades 7-12

**For more details see my website
jeannewilliams.info**



CONTACT 2012

More Than Just Clowning Around

by PAULA COURAGE

There was circus music! There was a popcorn stand! There was a fire juggler and a ringmaster! And there was so much more. Before entering the main doors, I was so excited to be there. But, don't be fooled. This was not the Wonderbolt Circus. I was, instead, just arriving at the CONTACT 2012 conference in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Its theme was *Cirque du School-eh?* and it did not disappoint.

CONTACT (Conference on New Teaching and Classroom Techniques) is an annual conference presented by the teacher associations of the four Atlantic provinces. They rotate every year and the home province chooses a theme and organizes the events. The sessions are facilitated by teachers from each of the four provinces, providing a first-hand and in-depth look at exactly what is happening in our classrooms and in those of our neighboring provinces. If this year was any indication, the planning committee goes above and beyond the call of duty. In addition to the circus theme, there was live music, karaoke, theatre and a beautiful dinner and dance, all on the stunning grounds of St. Francis Xavier University. I was extra lucky this year. I attended the conference as both a delegate and a presenter.

When I was approached to prepare a presentation on student engagement, classroom environment and instructional strategies for some sixty K-12 colleagues of the Atlantic provinces, I wondered how I could adapt what I know and do at the primary level to offer choices and ideas for junior high and high school teachers alike. What I very quickly came to realize is that nothing I would deliver at the conference could ever measure the level of professional development I was experiencing during the planning stages of my presentation. Having the opportunity to deeply reflect on my own teaching practices was the best PD I could have imagined. Not only did I become more in tune with what was working in my classroom, I became acutely aware of the underlying principles that make it work. It was these principles and values that made my task quite simple. Explain WHY the things I do work for me instead of focusing solely on WHAT

works. Consequently, I was able to devise a list of guiding principles on which my teaching practices are built. This list surprised, impressed and inspired me. Sharing this with the delegates of CONTACT 2012 hopefully sparked an interest in finding the tools to attain the same principles, or encouraged them to discover their own underlying principles and values.

My Guiding Principles

1. Every student every day gets the opportunity to contribute in my class.
2. A variety of assessment practices ensures every child knows they are really good at something.
3. Well established routines for the beginning and end of the day allow the students to know what is expected of them and what to expect.
4. A focus on respect and positivity creates a safe and caring atmosphere.
5. Let your students see who you really are.
6. Say their names frequently. Your name validates you, makes you present.

A fellow delegate and presenter spoke of the importance of creating our own vision statement to move forward from ordinary to extraordinary. He assured us it would take time to fully evaluate what truly drives us to do what we do and to sum that up in a short catch phrase. I have realized that my principles are a step in that direction. My plan now is to eventually create my personal vision. His vision for his students is F.E.A.R Factor: To have **F**un, **E**ngage and **A**chieve in a **R**eal-World Way. The whole CONTACT experience helped me to appreciate the magnitude of such a task that I may have otherwise deemed unnecessary and an unwise use of time.

I share this experience to impassion you to reflect on what works in your classroom and more importantly, why it works for you. Having allowed myself the time to do this, I have a far better understanding of who I am as an educator. These are the steps that helped me to prepare my presentation and inevitably, to become a more effective teacher.

1. Take a look at what you do already and give yourself a big pat on the back. If there is one thing I know, it is that exceptional teaching practices are alive and well in our province.
2. Make a 3-column table with the headings: student engagement, instructional strategies and classroom environment. Keep it on your desk for immediate access.
3. Every time you find yourself or your students engaged in what you are doing, jot down the activity under one of the three categories. Watch closely as the list lengthens over the course of a couple of months.
4. Start asking yourself, “**Why** do these things work for me?” “What’s really happening?”
5. Allow yourself time to deeply observe and reflect. This step is crucial.
6. Write your own list of guiding principles for your teaching. These statements encompass everything on your list.
7. Create a vision statement that defines who you are as an educator (work in progress for me).
8. Share your experiences with your colleagues, parents and students.

At the beginning of my career someone somewhere said something about teachers being life-long learners and that I will learn far more than I could possibly teach. I never forgot this. I get a tremendous amount of joy and knowledge by fully engaging myself in this profession. CONTACT 2012 provided me with an invaluable opportunity to become a more effective teacher. If it is not there already, put the CONTACT conference atop your professional to-do list. Preparing a presentation to share with colleagues helped me see my teaching through a new lens. The sessions allowed me to converse with innovative teachers and I welcome this new challenge to create a vision statement for my students. Who knew joining the circus could be so much fun?

Paula Courage teaches Grade 2 French Immersion at Beachy Cove Elementary in Portugal Cove-St. Philip's. She can be reached at paulacourage@esdnl.ca.

CONTACT

August 2013

Prince Edward Island

Details will be available in the new year.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Elect Gabriel Ryan FOR NLTA Vice-President I Will Represent **YOU**



gjryan60@yahoo.ca

<http://gabrielryan.weebly.com/>

<http://www.facebook.com/gabriel.ryan.104>

<https://twitter.com/GabeRyan>

Facing Online Hate

Preparing Youth to Deal with Hate on the Internet

by MATTHEW JOHNSON

More than any other part of our lives, the Internet has revolutionized how we communicate. It allows us to keep in touch with friends and family, invites us to participate in building the biggest encyclopedia in history and lets us publish what we write, sing or film to a worldwide audience, creating *YouTube* videos that make musical careers, blogs that turn into movies and *Twitter* feeds that become TV shows.

The power the Internet gives us to instantly make whatever we say available to anyone who cares to watch or read it has its dark side as well and one that goes beyond hoax sites and email scams. Along with those who use the Internet to commit financial crimes, a small but dedicated segment of the population is using the power of the Internet to spread messages of hate: hate against Jews, Blacks, gays and lesbians, Muslims, Aborigines, Roma, and Catholics. As Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, put it, “wherever you have contentious kinds of historic issues, or classic hatreds, we’re beginning to see it percolate online.” The rise and spread of hate on the Internet and the need to prepare youth to deal with it when they encounter its various forms are the reasons why Media Awareness Network (MNet) created *Facing Online Hate*, a new online tutorial for professional development to help educators and community leaders approach this issue through key concepts of media literacy.

Facing Online Hate focuses specifically on how young people are exposed to hate on the Internet, the persuasive techniques used by authors of hate material, the effects that exposure may have on them, and strategies for helping them to deal with online hate when they encounter it. We chose to focus on young people because youth – and in particular, young men aged 12-17 – are most likely to commit hate crimes offline, and because organized hate groups, both online and offline, consciously

target young people. Teenagers are prime targets for hate groups because many are looking for groups or causes that will give them a sense of identity. Identity seeking is a natural part of adolescence but, taken to its extreme, this can provide a toe-hold for hate mongers and hate groups of all kinds are skilled at identifying those youth most likely to be vulnerable to their message.

Consciously or unconsciously, hate groups (as well as “lone wolf” creators of hate material) draw on a number of basic psychological mechanisms to attract and indoctrinate believers. Some of these techniques work to make people more interested in or sympathetic to the group’s message, while others are used to make those who are already part of the group more committed. This approach, which inducts someone into the ideology of hate through a series of small steps, is called the *slippery slope* because each progressive step makes the previous ones seem more reasonable and justified. Young people, especially those who feel adrift or lack emotional support, are particularly vulnerable to hate groups’ efforts to provide a surrogate family to their members. Research has shown that members of hate groups, such as skinheads, will often act as mentors or “big brothers” to vulnerable youth providing a sympathetic ear, an explanation for their problems and a way of taking action. Once they associate themselves with a hate group, new members will find themselves being radicalized further by two factors: a general tendency for views to become extreme in any closed group, and efforts of the group’s leaders to make it seem as though they are under threat from outside forces, such as the government. Similarly, all forms of hate material use *dehumanization* of enemy groups to make any actions taken against them seem not only justified but necessary.

One of the ways in which hate groups disguise the true nature of their message is by representing it as

legitimate political debate – what some scholars have called “reasonable racism.” Young people, who are still in the process of learning about political issues and developing critical thinking skills, are particularly vulnerable to these appeals. For that reason, it’s important to teach them to recognize the elements that distinguish ideologies of hate from legitimate discourse: the characterization of one or more groups as “the Other,” a narrative of victimhood, the appeal to a glorious past, and an appeal to divine or natural sanction.

“The Other,” which is dehumanized and portrayed as being simultaneously inferior and threatening, is at the heart of all messages of hate. These groups justify their hatred by portraying themselves as being victimized by the Other; the ultimate example of this is often the accusation that the Other is responsible for the loss of the group’s proper place in the world at some time in the past. This place in the world is often justified by either an appeal to religion, in which the group is portrayed as chosen by divine favour, or by a garbled application of biology, anthropology, genetics – even quack sciences, such as phrenology (which studies the relationship between a person’s character and the structure of the skull), live on in ideologies of hate.

While hate groups’ messages have not changed over time, the ways in which they reach their audience has. No longer limited to printing flyers and posters or selling self-published books by mail-order, thanks to the Internet hate groups are able to distribute their message to a potential audience of millions. With the easy availability of blogging platforms and simple Web publishing software, hate sites have proliferated to as many as 14,000, according to a 2011 study.

While most hate sites are simple screeds, the more sophisticated ones mimic popular commercial websites with many offering audiovisual material and discussion forums and featuring professional-looking design and graphics. Most of these websites are not aimed at general audiences but rather are used for “narrowcasting” – targeting a specific group with content that is known to resonate with them. Narrowcasting also makes the target feel as though he is part of a community with shared ideals and values. One way hate groups do this is through the media most popular with youth: music and videos. Many teenagers turn to musical genres and subcultures to help define their identities and hate music producers take advantage of this by spreading songs and videos not just on hate sites but on file-sharing sites and mainstream services, such as *YouTube* and *iTunes*.

(cont’d. on page 24)

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Why Elect Dean Ingram Vice President?

His Experience

- 10 Years as a member of Provincial Executive
- Past Group Insurance Trustee, Finance and Property Chair, Teacher Health and Wellness Chair, Chair Staff Negotiations, Pooled Investment Fund Committee Member, Deferred Salary Leave Committee, Negotiating Team Member, Member of Canadian Teachers’ (National) Diversity and Human Rights Committee
- Chair of Collective Bargaining Committee
- 6 Years as Table Officer (6 Years representing the Province on a National and Regional Stage)
- 8 Years Experience at the Branch Level



Contact Information

Phone: 466-4593/427-2250
 dingram@persona.ca
 users.eastlink.ca/~deaningram
 Follow me on Twitter @dean_ingram

PAID ADVERTISEMENT



Elect Derek Drover NLTA Vice-President

Dedicated... Decisive... Dependable... Proud to be a teacher!

While websites and music can be effective in communicating this style of message, social media is tailor-made for it. The greatest advantage of social media is not that it allows hate groups to reach youth, but that it allows youth to disseminate hate material themselves. The ability of social media to help youth find friends and mentors is key to developing the sense of group identity that's so important in building sympathy and loyalty.

Perhaps most pernicious are the sites delivering what scholars call *cloaked* hate: these sites, which present themselves as being neutral and educational, communicate a subtle message of hate where their true nature only gradually becomes apparent. To achieve this, cloak sites put on as many of the trappings of legitimacy as possible – using a dot-org Web address, for example, or having an official-sounding name. We should not underestimate the ability of these sites to misinform young people. A 2003 study reports that when students in a first-year University class were asked to critically evaluate the site martinlutherking.org, a cloaked site created by the hate group Stormwatch, almost none were able to recognize that it was biased or identify the point of view of its author. As well as material produced by organized hate groups, youth also encounter hate in more mainstream settings. Some online environments popular with youth, particularly those that cater to teenage boys, can even be described as *cultures of hate* – communities in which racism, misogyny and other prejudices are normalized.

Fortunately, there are a number of concrete strategies that teachers and community leaders can use in preparing youth to recognize and critically engage with hate when they encounter it online. As well as teaching youth to recognize the characteristics of an ideology of hate, we can also teach them to recognize and decode the various persuasive techniques hate groups use, such as employing misinformation, denialism and pseudo-science, building group solidarity through appeals to nationalism or religion, casting their members in a hero narrative, using scare tactics, and of course portraying their perceived enemies as a dehumanized Other.

Besides teaching students critical thinking skills, we can also fight online hate by helping them to develop empathy: this can be done with the whole community as a preventative measure or as an intervention with youth who are already involved in hate. It's also important to make people aware of how rare hateful behaviour really is: research has shown that people are more likely to engage in activities like bullying when they believe that many people act this way, and are less likely if they believe that fewer

people do. Young people can also be taught how to take positive steps to fight online hate when they encounter it, such as by reporting hate content on social networks or video-sharing sites.

As with so many issues, though, teaching kids to deal with online hate means teaching them media and digital literacy skills. Youth have to learn basic principles of media literacy to understand, for instance, that *media are constructions that re-present reality*: the media they encounter online, and in particular the sources they turn to when seeking information, were created by individuals who may well have a particular agenda in mind. Similarly, understanding that *media contain ideological messages* – about values, power and authority – *which have social and political implications* can help young people to understand why a song, video or game may have more impact than they believe. Understanding that *audiences negotiate meaning* can also make clear why what may be an offhand comment or friendly teasing to one person may be deeply hurtful to another. It's also an introduction to the idea that different groups have had different experiences in history and have different relationships with mainstream society. Teaching youth the key digital literacy skills of *evaluating and authenticating online information* is essential to prepare them to recognize both overt and cloaked hate.

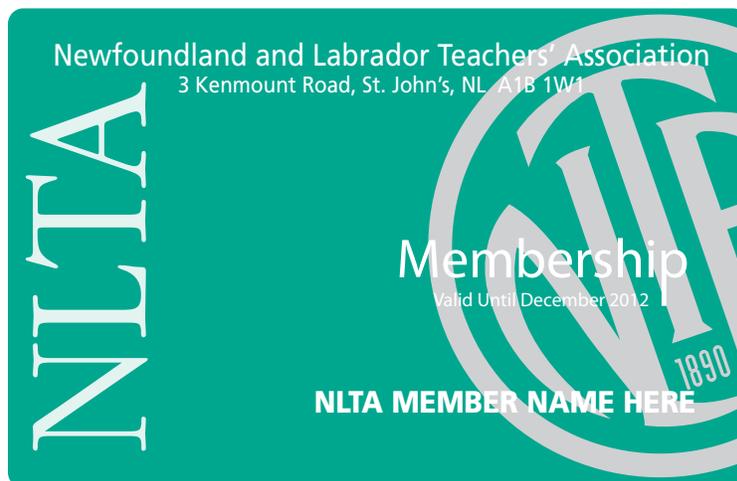
To prevent hate from flourishing we can all play a role in creating cultures of tolerance, respect and empathy for others in our schools and communities. However much we wish it, online hate isn't going away. It can be a difficult subject for teachers, parents and community leaders to address but it is better that youth learn about it from us – before they learn from someone else.

.....
Matthew Johnson is Director of Education, MediaSmarts.

Facing Online Hate is part of the *Diversity and Media Toolbox*: a comprehensive suite of anti-hate resources produced by MediaSmarts for schools and communities. The *Toolbox* contains classroom lessons and an interactive student module to complement the *Facing Online Hate* tutorial.

NLTA Membership Cards Expire December 2012

**In order to receive your new
NLTA membership card go to
www.nlta.nl.ca and click
"Membership Card" and
follow the instructions.**



For further information contact:
Lesley-Ann Browne, NLTA Communications Officer
726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 ext. 228
labrowne@nlta.nl.ca



Taking a Stand for Teachers is Taking a Stand for Public Education

by PAUL TAILLEFER

The last few years have been very difficult for teachers in Canada and around the world.

In Canada, we have witnessed continued threats to the integrity of our democratic organizations, threats to collective bargaining, and continued efforts to de-professionalize teaching.

The financial crisis has impacted public education as governments of all stripes try to balance the books, on the backs of teachers, under the banner of “austerity measures” which can only be characterized as an attack on the democratic principles that have made Canada a great country.

Education International, the voice of 30-million educators around the world, believes that in order to attain quality in education, governments must provide working conditions which support teaching and teachers. These conditions include smaller class sizes, more opportunities for professional growth and development, salaries which are comparable to those in other professions and high quality induction programs.

Furthermore, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD's) 2011 background report for the International Summit on the Teaching Profession, *Building a High-Quality Teaching Profession: Lessons From Around the World*, stressed the importance of meaningful teacher

engagement in the development and implementation of educational reform, which aims to enhance quality in education.

For its part, CTF believes that to ensure the quality of public education, policy decisions need to be informed by teachers' professional knowledge and expertise instead of being informed by people with little or no background in public education.

Canadian students' highly acclaimed success on international measures demonstrates that teachers play a major role in assuring our future in this global knowledge economy as it rests in the hands of public education and the practitioners who are the experts in teaching and learning.

However, the question remains: “Are teachers being properly supported in the monumental task with which they have been confided?”

Teachers need to educate many more students with varying learning needs and with mental health challenges against a backdrop of changing demographics such as student ethnicity or family structures.

They must contend with advances in knowledge that need to be reflected in school curricula in a learning environment where new media and technology are incorporated into the classrooms.

They must take into account changes in the labour market that affect what students need to know and what they must be able to do, as well as deal with changes in student and parent expectations.

Teachers must also try to mitigate the effects of poverty and other socio-economic factors.

This is no small feat. But despite the challenges they face in today's globalized world, teachers and their organizations have consistently shown the way forward.

It is not about educating for the 21st century. It is about making the 21st century better for all humankind. Standing up for teachers is in effect standing up for public education.

Paul Taillefer is President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation.



Educational Leave Application 2013-14

The Educational Leave Application for the 2013-14 academic year has been mailed to schools and is available on the NLTA website at

www.nlta.nl.ca

For further information contact:

Professional Development Division, NLTA,
726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 or mail@nlta.nl.ca

RESOURCES

FREE FINANCIAL LITERACY RESOURCES

The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada (FCAC) now has three FREE Financial Literacy Resources available to teachers and the general public. These resources are available in both French and English.

1. ***The City*** is a classroom-ready high school resource available on-line and in print formats. It has been approved by the Department of Education in Newfoundland and Labrador as a supplementary resource for Career Development. Many teachers are already using *The City*.

2. ***Financial Basics Workshop*** is a set of materials designed to be a 5-6 hour workshop. It comes complete with a Presenter's Guide, slides and student workbooks. Many teachers across Canada are using *Financial Basics* as supplementary material for courses which contain financial literacy outcomes (for example Career Development, Human Dynamics). Teachers who wish to use *Financial Basics* may order sufficient quantities of workbooks to equip each student with his/her own copy. No photocopying is needed.

3. ***Financial Toolkit*** is a comprehensive resource for adults. It is modular and available on-line and in print format. There are also educational videos as part of the package. Teachers may choose to use *The Toolkit* as a resource for themselves and then use certain sections, activities or videos to supplement other financial literacy material in their classes.

For additional information on the above FCAC materials and information on how to order print copies or access on-line materials, please go to www.itpaystoknow.gc.ca and click the side bar entitled Educational Programs.

Should you wish to discuss these programs and their potential use in your classroom or school, please contact Margo Connors (margoconnors@live.ca).



LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGING (CHALLENGING) TIMES

November 13, 2012

Holiday Inn, St. John's. Join internationally renowned author, consultant and presenter, Dr. Andy Hargreaves, as he describes his experiences studying schools from around the world to draw out what we can learn from existing practices of these inspirational schools. This topic is relevant to all educators interested in developing their leadership ability and fostering leadership in others. Presented by the Atlantic Canada Connected Community (ACCC) and the NLTA. Registration Fee: \$175. For more information contact cwhiteaccc@gmail.com.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION SIC CONFERENCE

February 21-23, 2013

Grenfell College, Memorial University, Corner Brook. Theme: *What's Your Summit? Reaching New Heights*. Registration deadline for "Call for Presenters" is **November 17, 2012**. For more information contact Roland Peddle at r_peddle@hotmail.ca or Shannon Sweetland at ssweetland@wnlsd.ca.

SAC 2013 CONFERENCE

May 15 (evening), 16, 17, 2013

Delta Hotel, St. John's. SAC will be launching their website with all information in the next few weeks. Follow them on Twitter @

https://twitter.com/2013_sac for all major announcements leading up to the launch. For more information, contact: Kyran Dwyer, Principal, St. Matthew's Elementary, kyrandwyer@esdn.ca.

COSS WORKSHOP:

FALLEN ANGELS: WHAT CAUSES CHILDREN TO BECOME VIOLENT AND HOW CAN WE PREVENT IT?

October 10, 2013

Sheraton Hotel, St. John's. Featuring Dr. Kathy Seifert. Registration details will be available soon. For more information contact: Keith Adey, keithadey@nf.sympatico.ca or Tel: 709-489-6491.

COSS WORKSHOP: TEACHING WITH WIT AND WISDOM

October 11, 2013

Sheraton Hotel, St. John's. Featuring international best selling author and speaker, Barbara Coloroso. Registration details will be available soon. For more information contact: Keith Adey, keithadey@nf.sympatico.ca or Tel: 709-489-6491.

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION SPECIAL INTEREST COUNCIL (TESIC) BGM & CONFERENCE 2013

November 7-8, 2013

St. John's, NL. Theme: Is There an App for That? Details will be available soon.

2013 Convention and Province-Wide Vote Deadlines

December 4, 2012

Province-wide vote for the election of President and Vice-President.

December 18, 2012

Run-off ballot for the election of President and Vice-President (if required).

January 3, 2013

Proposed change, amendment or repeal of NLTA By-Laws to be actioned by Convention must be presented in writing to the NLTA.

February 3, 2013

- All nominations for Provincial Executive for publication in Convention issue of *The Bulletin* must be postmarked or hand delivered to NLTA Office.
- Names of elected delegates and alternates to Convention should be forwarded to NLTA Office for printing in Convention issue of *The Bulletin*.
- Resolutions to Convention must be received at the NLTA Office.

March 3, 2013

Mailing of Convention issue of *The Bulletin*.

April 3-5, 2013

Biennial General Meeting

April 4, 2013

Final deadline for receipt of nominations for Provincial Executive.



Dates to Remember

November 2012

- Nov 7 **Deadline:** Project Overseas Applications
- Nov 15 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications
- Nov 15-16 Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's
- Nov 29-30 Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's

December 2012

- Dec 1 Financial Information Seminar, St. John's
- Dec 6-7 Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's
- Dec 20 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

January 2013

- Jan 15 **Deadline:** 2013 Christmas Card Contest entries
- Jan 15 **Deadline:** Receipt of nominations for Barnes, Bancroft, Allan Bishop and Special Recognition Awards
- Jan 17 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

February 2013

- Feb 1 **Deadline:** Applications for Educational Leave – teachers must make prior application to school board
- Feb 13-14 Provincial Executive Meeting
- Feb 14 Janeway Day in the Schools
- Feb 15-16 Joint Council Meeting