



January 2012

Let's Go!



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President's Message

Kellie Baker

Please let me start by extending a warm welcome, and wishing you and your families a prosperous New Year. As fall passed us by ever so quickly and we find ourselves in the midst of winter, there is hope in the air for new and exciting adventures that may come our way. However, before going any further I would like to give a brief overview of some happenings so far this school year.

It all began with the PESIC conference in mid September; a chance for our teachers to be the ones learning and taking back what they have experienced to their students, communities and districts. At our BGM there was an election of 2011-13 Executive with a new position for a Post-Secondary Representative as well as a Webmaster/Newsletter Editor. Like New Year's babies, many new faces came on board with a few "seasoned" faces staying on to guide the way.

As the fall progressed, PESIC moved forward by increasing their student membership from 10 to 80, doubling Newfoundland and Labrador's PHE Canada memberships, working on behalf of PHE Canada to support them in seeking funding for various programs, completing an International UNESCO survey on Physical Education worldwide, creating and upgrading a website (www.pesic.weebly.com), and having an E-Live province-wide Executive meeting breaking down geographical barriers, just to name a few.

As the new year begins we leave behind the 12 "actions" we addressed over the fall and look ahead to meet the 21 other actions we have identified as requiring attention over the next few months. Many of the actions will require a great deal of research and writing by various committee members during their "free time", which we all know is at a premium. I would like to extend a sincere and heartfelt thank you to the PESIC Executive and District/Regional Representatives for their volunteer efforts to work on our behalves simply because they value NL Physical Education.

A new year is upon us with all its excitement and challenges. Such challenges can be made easier with your help. District/Regional Representatives are still looking for your assistance in growing the strength of Physical Education in your area (see back page for a complete list of PESIC representatives). Resolutions come and go, but joining PESIC would be one resolution that would be easy to keep and one that would be a rewarding experience to boot!

It's time to move forward to tackle some new initiatives. So, *Let's GO!*



Join our community at:
www.myvtc.ca

Learning from the Past, Building for the Future – PESIC Conference 2011

by Kellie Baker

September and October were busy months as we fell back into a new school year. There was the start up of many new things: a new school year, new students, new co-workers, new curriculums, and new initiatives. The September PESIC conference also provided some new experiences for the 130 delegates who attended the conference.

The 2011 Conference, *Learning from the Past, Building for Future*, kicked off in conjunction with the opening of MUN's School of Human Kinetics first ever Lecture Theatre. John Elkins' keynote address, "Building Bridges", resonated with the over capacity crowd in the new 135 seat lecture theatre. This theme ties in nicely with PESIC endeavours over the past year and a half – building bridges for the over 400 physical educators in Newfoundland and Labrador (*see Let's Go! March 2010 bulletin for a listing of what PESIC's been up to*).

As the conference rolled on, so did the weather; but not even the closing of the university could stop the conference. All sessions continued and from the feedback received about the conference, delegates got what they came for – professional development. The 2011 conference saw the largest variety of rhythmic activities offered this millennium. Sessions ranged from various forms of dance, to rope jumping, to rhythm sticks, to DrumFIT. There were several practical and theoretical sessions on differentiated instruction and inclusion, traditional and non-traditional activities, healthy active living and Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU). It was a truly diverse offering with half of the professional development targeted at an audience as broad as grades k-12.

And what conference would be complete without a social on Thursday evening which was held after HKR's "50 years within these walls" banquet at the Holiday Inn. The banquet was well attended by all generations of graduates, including one of the very first ever graduates. PESIC's social afterwards was a chance for people to mingle and reminisce about days gone by.

Friday's awards luncheon brought together NLTA President Lily Cole and Professional Development liaison George Tucker with the physical education community to celebrate our dedicated professionals. Ms. Cole's speech was heartfelt and poignant with reflections on how physical activity later in life has enriched her and her families' lives. Physical Educators also enrich the lives of the students in their care as evidenced by 2011 being the seventh year in a row that a Newfoundland and Labrador teacher received a provincial PHE Canada Physical Education Teaching Excellence (PETE) award, and 6 out of 7 times that those recipients have also been honoured with the National Award.

We have many up and comers as well, and PHE Canada's Dr. Andy Anderson Young Professional Award was awarded at the banquet and acknowledged at the luncheon. Let's not forget our provincial and service awards that offer PESIC a chance to pay tribute to our physical educators. Read Zoe Hamilton's article later in the newsletter for more award details.

The conference is now over and fall has passed us by. It's time to move on and tackle some new initiatives. Help us continue to build bridges toward offering quality physical education to the children and youth of Newfoundland and Labrador. There are many ways to get involved, it's only a matter of picking one. Join a district or regional committee, become a member of PESIC and PHE Canada, contact your district or regional representatives with words of encouragement, questions or concerns, send an article or good news story to the *Let's Go* newsletter, post something on the VTC, check the PESIC website regularly, offer a quality physical education program, and/or nominate someone for the PETE Award or Dr. Andy Anderson Young Professional Award. Remember, it takes many people to build bridges big enough and strong enough to span our great province and our country alike.

Kellie Baker teaches physical education at Memorial University and is the current PESIC President.

Mat Trucks

Equipment: Folded gymnastics mat
4 or 5 scooters per team

This game is great for any age group. To begin, put teams in their "garages", areas around the gym equally spaced. Next, challenge them to make a truck using the above materials and take a practice lap around the gym. One scooter under each corner and one in the middle is the best design. The Race! Teams return to their garage to get set. On Go! Teams race around a designated track and the first one back wins. Discuss strategy and optimal number of riders and pushers. Race again ensuring everyone has a turn being passenger and driver. Great for anyone with mobility difficulties as they can be a passenger and help make repairs. Encourage safety: no crashes; no careless driving; exhibit good sportsmanship. You could add traffic cops and play red light, green light. Also great to use in relay races!

~Zoe Hamilton

The Ghost of the Classroom Past

by Jacinta McGrath

If you are sitting right now as you read this article, I want you to think about the most comfortable chair you have ever sat on. Think about how it contours the shape of your body as you sit down. I want you to take a few moments to rate this chair out of a score of 0 - 10 ; 10 being the best, most comfy chair your backside has ever rested on.

Switch back.

Now think about the chair you are probably sitting on right now, or more importantly the chairs in your classroom that your students sit on – day in and day out. Using the same rating scale as above, I now want you to think about the score you would give these delightful hard plastic, or better yet, wooden seats. Probably not the same rating, right?”



The above exercise was the opening of a Professional Development session that I attended in the fall of 2010 – led by Mr. John Elkins, Program Specialist with the Eastern School District. Thanks to John, every time I sit down on one of these not-so-comfy chairs the activity above resonates in my mind and I cannot help but to feel for our students who are expected to sit in these seats each day for an hour or more at a time and appear focused and content all the while.

The chair rating activity is not the only thing that I came away with after attending John’s session that day. He also talked about how boys learn differently than girls – how boys naturally need to be moving more to take in pertinent information. John also discussed the importance of movement in education and how when our bodies are engaged, our brains are engaged.

Fast-forward.

Classroom setting, Fall 2011. Light green fresh paint, posters galore, vase of flowers, SMARTboard, motivational sayings and 17 bright orange, hard plastic chairs. 4:00 p.m. – I pull up a seat in my classroom to offer some extra help to a student in my Biology class. Ten minutes in I am trying desperately to keep my focus on mitosis and meiosis when in the back of my brain I hear John’s voice whisper, “Rate your chair... ‘Rate your chair’”. I get through the extra help session with some much needed stretching and toe tapping. Immediately afterwards I say to myself, “Self, you



must do something about this, or John Elkins and his chair rating activity will haunt you for the rest of your life.” So I scurried about the school trying to come up with a solution and a fix for a better classroom setting for my eager to learn students – all the while, a miniature ghost of John Elkins sitting on my shoulder whispering... “Rate your chair... Rate your chair!”

Don’t you love it when you experience one of those Oprah “light bulb moments”? In a hurry, I busted open the door to my Physical Education office and right there, right in front of me resting on the floor was the answer I was looking for; two new exercise balls. I had read some time ago about the benefits of exercise balls and how they were being introduced to many classrooms around the nation in an effort to help students focus better, develop better posture and concentrate more while in class. So I decided to put the theory to the test.

That very evening I brought the exercise balls up to my own classroom and laid them on the floor. The next morning I had Grade Eight Science, first period. My first two students to walk into my classroom were active, fourteen-year-old boys bursting with energy. They first eyed the exercise balls and then looked at me – “Cool, Ms., can we sit on those?” “I guess so, if you want to”.

And so the story begins. Each child to follow that day was envious of the first two and immediately put a schedule in place as to who could sit on the exercise balls in the classes to follow. Those two bustling junior high boys expelled a lot of energy that class as they were constantly shifting position and bouncing a little with every movement – but amazingly, they were focused and intent on what was being covered that day in class. After a couple of classes, one of my students said, “Ms., wouldn’t it be cool if we could all have one of those exercise balls to sit on – that would be so awesome. Then we wouldn’t have to argue over who gets to sit on them each day!”

The same reaction was garnered from my senior high Biology class. “Ms., are you really going to let us sit on one of those for the entire class?” “Can I take this with me to all of my classes?” “So, we can really move on this during class time?” “I heard somewhere before that these can actually make you focus more, Ms. is that true – can something so fun also be beneficial to our learning?”

cont’d on page 4



With the success of the first week I decided this was worth a serious investment. Two weeks after the initial introduction I had my classroom equipped with an exercise ball for every student. The kids were ecstatic and eager to embrace this new classroom setting.

As parents were walking into my classroom on Parent/Teacher night they were commenting, “Oh, so this is the class with the

exercise balls. I have heard all about those and how much the kids love them”... “I wish I was only going to school now and not thirty years ago”.

Outside of the initial joy my students experienced, I have seen improvements in my classroom – kinesthetic learners who once had a difficult time sitting for any period of time do appear to be more focused, some have even made improvements on recent test scores.

I also thought this would be a good opportunity to share some research material around the benefits of using exercise balls in the classroom with my students. They were so enthused and impressed with the findings that one student even commented, “Wouldn’t it be cool if we all learned better by having so much fun?” With that said I brushed off the ghost of John Elkins from my shoulder and replied, “Yes, that would be very cool”.

Jacinta McGrath is a Physical Education Teacher and Assistant Principal at Stella Maris Academy in Trepassey.

Keeping it Going: PESIC Communication and Collaboration

by Mervin Parsons

As always, PESIC will be once again publishing a “Let’s Go” newsletter to keep physical educators informed on what’s going on in the province surrounding Physical Education. However, new this year PESIC has also launched its very own website, www.pesic.weebly.com, to upgrade this material more readily to its members. This newest form of communication is a welcomed addition as it is a more effective way to keep connected by offering weekly updates to news, happenings, photos and stories from all around the province to anyone in the province with a few clicks of a mouse. Just visit pesic.weebly.com to see how we have been working to connect PESIC with our members as well as with other provincial organizations across the country. What you will find:

- a listing of all the district and regional committees;
- spotlight on schools from around the province featuring submitted pictures, stories, special events, etc.;
- conference testimonials, resource materials and pictures;
- last year’s *Let’s Go!* newsletters;
- documents including membership forms for PESIC and PHE Canada as well as PESIC grants to attend professional development; and
- two pages of links to organizations within Newfoundland and Labrador such as the NLTA, VTC, Department of Education and Living Healthy Schools, as well as all physical education councils across the country.

To help keep these forums as up to date as possible, we need your assistance. If you have a game, short lesson plan, exciting news, a new twist on an old favourite, or stories or pictures you would like to share, please submit them to be considered in the next



publication or website addition. Please visit pesic.weebly.com or ask your district representatives for deadline submissions for these materials.

If you have any questions, or would like to submit materials, please send to the Webmaster/Bulletin Editor Merv Parsons at mparsons@lsb.ca.

Other ways in which you can get involved in PESIC’s mission to enhance information for its members also include:

NLTA Bulletin – Physical Educators are out there writing. Just look back at the April and June issues. You can put in an article highlighting the physical education, physical activity, and health initiatives going on in your school or community by e-mailing labrowne@nlta.nl.ca.

PHE Journal – Anything you write for NL can go nationally! Send your articles along to jjmaker@gmail.com.

Mervin Parsons is the School Health Promotion Liaison Consultant for the Labrador School Board as well as the current PESIC Webmaster and Newsletter Editor.

"Get to Know" Bingo

by Donna Gibbons

This game can be played in any space and is appropriate for all ages. This is a game that teachers can use to help them and others get to know each other. To start, each student is given a bingo sheet/card similar to the one shown below. When the teacher says go, students go around to each other and ask the question listed on the card. If the question is applicable to a particular student, then they will sign under the question in the space on the bingo sheet. For example, if Bobby has blue eyes, you will ask him to please sign his name in the space where it asks this question. The first student who has their card completely filled with names,

wins. They cannot sign a space themselves (just in the middle) and people can only sign once – or depending on how many people are in the class.

Teachers can make this card applicable to their own class and subsequently their own school and community. Teachers can insert other rules such as if there are not many in their classes, then the same student can provide signatures in more than one space.

Donna Gibbons is a Physical Education Teacher at Bishop's College in St. John's.

"Get to Know" Bingo

Has blue eyes	Plays a musical instrument	Has a birthday in _____ Month	Whose last name starts with " _____ "	Has the letter " _____ " in their first name
Lives on _____ Street	Has the letter " _____ " in last name	Has a pet dog	Has red/orange hair	Has brown eyes
Plays in a hockey league	Has a sibling who went to _____ School	YOUR NAME	Is from _____ (place)	Is involved with _____ Activity
Has relatives in _____ Place	Has a birthday in September	Has blonde hair	Participates in _____ Activity	Has the letter " _____ " in their first name
Has the letter " _____ " in their first name	Plays on a school sports team	Wears glasses or contacts	Has the letter " _____ " in first or last name	Is or was in the Cadet movement
Has the letter " _____ " in last name	Has a tattoo or a family member with one	Has the letter " _____ " in last name	Birthday in _____ Month	Has travelled to _____ Place

VTC and Professional Learning

by Mervin Parsons

Are you looking for new lesson plan ideas, have an exciting game/activity you would like to share, information on current health topics, or would like to pose a question to fellow colleagues? If so, the Virtual Teacher Centre (VTC) provides just what you need. It offers an avenue where physical education teachers can communicate with each other and share resources such as lesson plans, activity ideas, assessment tools, smart board/PowerPoint presentations, and even YouTube links on physical education and health related topics. Another great benefit of the VTC is that it is easily accessible from anywhere at any time, and everyone has something they can offer no matter what your grade level or experience.

Recently, the VTC has undergone a number of changes to improve its overall look and navigational features for your convenience. One such feature is an enhanced search box which allows users to not only search using key words, but also includes a drop down menu, as you type, to help narrow searches by possible matches related to your proposed topic. This evolved feature allows users to find what they are looking for very quickly and effectively.

Whatever you decide to use it for, remember that it is an interactive web-based professional learning site where you can share



information. The VTC provides a wonderful professional learning environment where teachers can share best practices, leadership advice, and fulfill a current and relevant professional development opportunity. While it has many items to help you build your professional resource library, it's just as important to upload a file for the next person. Your input is valued and certainly appreciated as we work together to move forward in developing stronger programs in health and physical education.

To see what else the VTC has to offer and its upgraded features visit http://myvtc.ca/site_groups/special_interest_councils1/physical_education/default.aspx

If you have any questions regarding this site or would like to become a member, please contact John Elkins at johnelkins@esdnl.ca.

PESIC and PHE Canada Awards by Zoe Hamilton

Congratulations to all the award recipients from the PESIC Conference 2011. Their love for physical education is a consistent theme in the biographies of all these recipients. Awards winner for last year included the following:

District Teacher of the Year Awards

Labrador District

Terry Keeping Lake Melville School, Lake Melville

Western District

Rosemary Ryan St. Thomas Aquinas, Stephenville

Nova Central

Bob Dyckson Gander Collegiate, Gander

Eastern District

Derrick Baggs. Topsail Elementary, Topsail

Award of Honour

Robert Thompson . . . Holy Heart High, St. John's

Dr. Andy Anderson Young Professional Award

Dana Pittman: Sprucewood Academy, Grand Falls

Physical Education Teaching Excellence Award

2010-11 National Recipient

Jason Desai: Holy Spirit High, Manuels

2009-10 National Recipient

Mike Butler: Frank Roberts Junior High, Foxtrap

NLTA Barnes Award

David Constantine: Laval High, Placentia

More information on these and other awards can be found at www.phecanada.ca/awards. The deadlines for nomination for some of these awards is January 31st, so please visit the website for further details and the most up to date information.

Zoe Hamilton is a Physical Education Teacher at Davis Elementary in Carbonear and the current Vice President of PESIC and Awards Committee Chair.

Quality Daily Physical Education School Recognition Awards 2011

by Zoe Hamilton

What does your school receive?

- The official title “QDPE” or “QPE” school
- The opportunity to purchase a banner to hang in the school gymnasium.
- National publicity for your quality programs.
- A one-year professional membership to PHE Canada that includes access to other Canadian experts and leaders, practical teaching tools, professional development opportunities, and leading-edge research.

For more detailed information and application check out www.phecanada.ca/awards/recognition-award-program

Application Deadline March 31, 2012

Congratulations to the following schools for their achievement for 2010-11.

Platinum Award

The **Platinum Award** is the highest level QDPE award presented to schools that provide all students with a well planned program of physical education instruction **3-4 times a week** for the entire school year. Platinum Award schools provide **a minimum of 150 minutes** of class instruction each week and meet all criteria set out in the award application form.

2010-11

Harbour Grace Primary Harbour Grace
Valmont Academy..... King’s Point
Immaculate Heart of Mary Corner Brook
Our Lady of the Cape..... Degrau, Cape St. George

Gold Award

The **Gold Award** recognizes the same level of quality programs as the Diamond and Platinum Award; however students receive less than the PHE Canada recommended physical education class time (150 minutes per week). Gold Award schools provide **a minimum of 100 minutes, 3 times per week** for the entire school year and meet all criteria set out in the award application form. The Gold Award is considered as a “stepping stone” to the Platinum and Diamond Award.

2010-11

Elizabeth Park Elementary Paradise
Humber Elementary Corner Brook

Secondary School Award

The **Secondary School Award** has been developed to address the curricular and scheduling requirements at the secondary school level. This award is presented to schools that offer **compulsory Physical Education** courses that are exceptional and enhanced by **intramural activities**. Schools must meet their provincial curriculum for Physical Education, as well as the criteria established by PHE Canada in order to assess how well the school is achieving Quality Physical Education.

2010-11

St. Mary’s All Grade Mary’s Harbour

Living Healthy in Topsail

by Derek Baggs

At Topsail Elementary our Active Living Committee plans many activities throughout the school year to support the healthy lifestyle theme, including Terry Fox Walks, Commotion Days, Wellness Wednesdays and Fruity Fridays, to name a few. One of the most enjoyable events is our weekly walks. Students, staff, parents, grandparents and the entire school community join in on a 2 km walk through the community around the school. Lots of cool fresh air this time of year, as well as lots of smiling faces.

Derek Baggs is a Physical Education Teacher at Topsail Elementary in Conception Bay South.



Become a PHE Canada Member

Membership to PHE Canada is **FREE** and offers an extensive array of information for Physical and Health Educators and those in related disciplines. One click on the page (www.phecanada.ca) will take you to information gateways on Physical Literacy, Intramurals, Dance, careers, free health education materials, and information on conferences. By signing up you would be helping your National organization increase their membership and strengthen their ability to increase the awareness of Physical and Health Education across Canada and even further. Take a few minutes to visit www.phecanada.ca/store/customer/account/create/?__store=en to fill out the form that will sign you up for this important membership that is at no cost to you.

PHE Canada National Conference

The last Physical and Health Education Canada Conference was in Toronto, October 23- 25, 2010. PESIC sponsored four teachers from various districts/regions to attend. The next PHE conference is **May 9-12, 2012** in Halifax. It's close to home so PESIC is hoping for a large representation of NL teachers. If you would like more information on this conference visit www.phecanada.ca/events/conference2012/about. PESIC is planning to be in a position to once again offer grants to help offset the cost of our members to attend. Go to pesic.weebly.com and click the "documents" tab for more information.



PESIC Executive 2011

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Post Secondary Student Reps	Lisa Murphy	c25lcm@mun.ca
.	Justin Noseworthy	Jcn375@mun.ca

The representatives listed above have been establishing committees in your area. If you are interested in being involved you should contact them via e-mail.

PESIC Apparel

Long sleeve shirt (Safety Yellow)
50% cotton 50% polyester
Sizes available: S, M, L, XL
Cost: \$15



T-Shirt (Maroon)
100% cotton.
Sizes available: Large, Extra Large and 2XL.
Cost: \$10.00



If you would like to purchase any of these items please email Trisha Keough-Boyer at tdboyer@nf.sympatico.ca.