

The Retired Teacher

Nova Scotia Teachers Union

Volume 48, Number 3, April 2017

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From The Desk of the President...
Bill Berryman

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**A newsletter for the
retired teachers of
Nova Scotia**

A MEMBER OF ACER/CART

Act For Education

Once again a sincere thank-you to the many RTO members who attended rallies and marches, sent e-mails and letters, made phone calls, and in some cases arranged personal visits with their Members of the Legislative Assembly. On February 21, 2017 the McNeil government used its majority to legislate Bill 75: *The Teachers' Professional and Classroom Improvements (2017) Act*, and so ended the NSTU Work-To-Rule campaign that had commenced on December 5, 2016. It is my firm belief that the public now have a much greater appreciation of the difficult working conditions that teachers face on a day-to-day basis, and are more aware of the amount of time spent on activities outside their teaching duties.



Ad-Hoc Committee on Wellness

At the December 1, 2016 meeting, the RTO Executive approved an Ad-Hoc Committee on Wellness. The Committee is comprised of Vicky Parker, President Annapolis Branch; Wayne LeBlanc, President Yarmouth-Argyle Branch; Ambrose White, President New Waterford Branch; Eileen Coady, RTO Secretary, and is chaired by Alyson Hillier, Member-at-Large Halifax Metro. The Committee had its initial meeting on March 29, 2017 and discussed preparing for a full-day wellness symposium next year. This symposium will bring together representatives from the 23 Branches

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to establish an understanding of the importance of providing programming that encourages wellness and identifies resources to support developing these types of programs at the Branch level. The next meeting will be on May 3, 2017, when the committee will make its final decisions on the date, the venue, and the format of the symposium.

Adjustment to Retirement

At the Branch Presidents meeting on February 28, 2017 Fran Reddy Chisholm provided an overview of her workshop and answered many questions on the topic. During this workshop, members will be encouraged to think about the changes at this stage in their lives, everything from financial planning to personal activity levels and lifestyle changes and choices. Branch Presidents were very impressed with the content of the workshop and will organize presentations in their regions over the next year.

Seniors Pharmacare

In the last issue of the Newsletter I reported that the Nova Scotia government would not make any changes in Seniors Pharmacare for 2017-2018, and you have recently received your assessment which confirms that. The Department of Health and Wellness hired two consultants in January to develop a province-wide consultation plan to seek input from seniors on how to enhance and sustain the program for the next five years. The consultants met with the Seniors Advisory Council on February 3, 2017 with a draft proposal, and Council members were not pleased with the background information, the survey questions, and the timing of the public meetings. The consultants offered to make substantial changes and meet the Advisory Council on February 23, 2017. The meeting was cancelled on February 20, 2017 when Premier McNeil announced there was an agreement with the four Atlantic Premiers to explore new and innovative ways to make publicly funded drug plans stronger in all four provinces. The Premier also announced that there would be no changes in Seniors Pharmacare for the 2018-2019 year. Please be assured that the Advisory Council will continue to monitor the program to ensure sustainability, efficacy, fairness, and equitable access to a wide range of medications.

Shift – Nova Scotia's Action Plan for an Aging Population

On March 30, 2017 Premier McNeil announced the government of Nova Scotia would be investing \$13.6 million to implement this plan over the next three years. The federal government has also agreed to provide a further \$21 million, primarily housing initiatives for seniors.

As a member of the Advisory Committee which developed the plan in 2016, I believe the provincial government is prepared to lead a shift in thinking and practice that values, promotes, and supports how older adults make Nova Scotia a better place for all of us. Older adults offer knowledge, skills, experience, and connections that help people and communities thrive.

The action plan has three goals – value the social and economic contributions of older adults; promote healthy, active living; and support aging in place, connected to community life. There are a dozen priority commitments and fifty recommendations which will now be implemented through eight different government departments.

Deputy Minister of Seniors Simon d'Entremont and I presented the plan to the Halifax Metro Branches on April 6, 2017, and if requested we are prepared to provide the same presentation across the province.

Programs for RTO Members

I am pleased to report that the RTO has received a

**Check out
the RTO
website at:
<http://rto.nstu.ca>**

\$25,000.00 New Horizons Grant for Seniors from the federal government to enhance the Advance Care Planning workshop. Over the next few months, the Nova Scotia Hospice and Palliative Care Association will work with our ten members, trained to provide the presentation, to develop a more in-depth community workshop. In the 2016 budget the RTO allocated an annual \$10,000.00 Branch Initiatives/Program Fund to encourage Branches to respond to the needs and wishes of their members at the Branch level. Over the past year, grants for five Branches were approved for activities that promote physical and mental wellness, presentations by guest speakers, and a CPR Level A certification course.

AGM 2017

The RTO Annual General Meeting is scheduled for May 25, 2017 and will take place at the NSTU Building with the meeting commencing at 9:30 AM. There will be an election for RTO Treasurer, with nominations from the floor, as no nominations were received prior to the February 28, 2017 deadline. There will be debate on the 2018 RTO Budget and two resolutions from the Lunenburg County Branch. The AGM dinner will be held on May 24, 2017, beginning at 7:00 PM, at the Brightwood Golf and Country Club in Dartmouth. Bus transportation will be provided to and from the Lord Nelson Hotel and Brightwood.

Thank You

In May three RTO members will vacate their positions on the Executive. **Fred Jeffery** is completing his second two-year term as RTO Treasurer. Fred chaired the RTO Finance Committee and was very conscientious in his efforts to ensure the organization was careful with its money. He took great pride in balancing the accounts of the organization and Legacy Foundation. **Wendy Woodworth** has decided not to re-offer as Member-at-Large for South West Shore. Wendy has provided leadership as Chair of the RTO Communications Committee over the past two years, and the newsletter and website continue to reach new heights of excellence and provide the organization with a first-class profile. **Gary Archibald** will complete his two-year term as the RTO Representative on the NSTU Pension Committee. Gary served as Chair of the RTO Pension and Benefits

Committee and provided comprehensive reports which kept members well informed on developments with our pension plan, and he conducted an invaluable survey on teachers' pension plans across Canada. To each we extend a thank you for a job well done.

More Thank Yous

As I complete my first year as President, I realize that communication with our members is our number one priority. I am extremely pleased with the efforts of RTO Newsletter Editor Betty Anne McGinnis and RTO Webmaster Colin Campbell to keep the membership informed of the activities of the RTO, as well as new issues and developments affecting retirees.

I would also be remiss if I did not thank my fellow Executive members, provincial committee members, and Branch Presidents and their Executives who constantly work to advance, promote, and protect the welfare for our 7,200 members.



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From the editor. . .

Betty Anne McGinnis

Years ago I would, on occasion, find myself sitting in front of the TV to view an awards show – to cheer my favourites for their noteworthy achievements in movies, or music, or other artistic endeavour. I remember that the recipients of the awards would cling to the microphone and race through a list of colleagues, friends, relatives, and sometimes even pets. Their goal – that no one be left out, that thanks must flow to all who had contributed to this moment, to all who had provided the support necessary to maintain the dream. I recall situations when the pressure of time would usher determined winners from the stage – vanquished perhaps, but with a thank-you to Fluffy yet on their lips. Such an eviction always furnished a laugh.

Only in recent years have I come to understand more clearly the necessity to express gratitude. As I have dealt with personal crises and family tragedies, I have heard myself repeating ‘thank you’ many times over. The customary response is ‘no need for thanks’. But there is a need, and it is sustained by reasons. It revives those days when being polite was an integral part of our lives – when acknowledgement of those who helped us was the expectation, and the natural form of expression. Sadly, the thank-you is not as common these days, as if the hurly burly of our new century has chased it from mind.

A second and vital need for the thank-you arises from the heart. Saying ‘thank you’ allows the recipient to accept a gift or a kindness without encountering the feeling of embarrassment, or of laying pride aside. A thank-you helps both parties share in the process of giving. The adage – it is better to give than to receive – serves beyond a single purpose. An earnest thank-you possesses a value equal to the gift itself.



Photo by Melinda Cochrane

As my sixth year as editor comes to a close, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to several people. As always, the RTO membership, and Branch Presidents and Executives – all those who provide the news we print – are crucial to the success of this newsletter. Paul Hamer, our NSTU staff graphic designer who creates the layout, has survived a

year working with me, and for that he deserves a medal. Vicky Parker, Margie MacNeil, and Ambrose White – your service on the Communications Committee and your assistance in so many ways has been a blessing. Colin Campbell, I feel that we are old friends as we continue to share website and newsletter ideas. Wendy Woodworth, your two years as Chair of this committee has been a trial by fire, but with your calm demeanour, your patience, and your encouragement, you pulled us through. Bill Berryman, you have stood by me this year, this issue in particular, and helped me to achieve what I didn't think I could accomplish. And Bill McLaughlin, my friend and former colleague, you have carried the load this month when I was at my lowest. My thanks to you will arrive with homemade bread.

This opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to everyone has helped me feel much better about myself. The next time someone thanks you for gift or deed, please reply with a homely ‘You are welcome’. By doing so, you enhance the process of giving.

On a final note, I would like to acknowledge those retired teachers who passed away during the last year, as well as the active teachers who did not have the opportunity to experience the joy of retirement. They are missed.

Milestones

The RTO would like to acknowledge its members who have reached milestones in their lives. Members celebrating birthdays over ninety, anniversaries over fifty years, or any other occasion of significance are invited to send us a photo and a brief note. Your milestone could be published in any one of our three issues each year.



Mary McIntyre, Glace Bay, graduated from Morrison High School, attended Nova Scotia Normal College in 1942, and taught school for nearly forty years, mostly at the grade primary level. Mary is still active in her community, and has served as a guest speaker at the Glace Bay Historical Society meetings.

Happy 96th Birthday in 2017, Mary, from more than 7000 RTO members!



Dartmouth RTO member, Ruth Durrant, will be at the NSTC Reunion this August celebrating her 70th year of graduation from the Normal College. Congratulations, Ruth!

Congratulations to Dartmouth RTO members Laurie and Lorna Davidson who celebrated 60 years of marriage on August 14, 2016. All the best from your RTO colleagues across Nova Scotia!



Committee Reports

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee held four meetings this year in September, October, January, and March respectively, and continued its endeavors to provide the RTO membership with interesting, important, and timely information via *The Retired Teacher* and the website.

Three editions of the newsletter have been published and distributed. In February 2017, for example, 5396 copies were mailed and 1892 forwarded electronically. Editor Betty Anne McGinnis has been remarkably diligent in ensuring that RTO members receive an A1 product.

The website at rto.nstu.ca continues to expand under the dedicated direction of webmaster Colin J. Campbell. The number of user hits has increased, a slideshow has been added, and the website Scavenger Hunt has introduced more members to the large amount of information available.

Each year the RTO provides an honorarium to both the editor and webmaster in recognition of their excellent work. Well deserved!

My sincere thanks to Betty Anne, Colin, and other committee members, Margie MacNeil, Ambrose White, and Vicky Parker for contributing so effectively to the communication of RTO news to our RTO membership. The provincial executive deserves a hearty THANK YOU for their tremendous support. Thank you, also, to the Branches and members who have shared their ideas, news, articles, and photos with us.

I have very much enjoyed my two years as Chair of the committee and member of the provincial executive, and certainly appreciate having had this most interesting opportunity. Thank you all, and best wishes in continuing to be an active, strong organization.

— Submitted by Wendy Woodworth
Chair, Communications

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee held its fourth and final meeting of the year on March 22, 2017. Since our last meeting in January, a number of actions items were completed as follows:

As a result of the cancellation of the February 16 Presidents' Meeting due to weather and a conflict with the rescheduled meeting on February 28, I was unable to distribute the additional Medi-cards to the Branch Presidents. This will be done at the next meeting in May.

Envelopes containing Personal Inventory Pamphlets were distributed to Presidents at the February meeting. They were also reminded that if more copies were required they could be obtained on the RTO website at <http://rto.nstu.ca/Documents.html>.

The Wall (RTO display board located in the NSTU building) continues to be updated with new photos. As a reminder, Branches are requested to submit photos of local activities.

In February, the NS Pension Services Corporation requested an additional 200 information letters and RTO pamphlets for distribution. These were compiled and delivered to NSPSC on March 22.

The committee completed the New Retiree Kits to be distributed at the Presidents' Meeting in May. A hearty "thank you" to Toni Maggio, our NSTU secretary, for printing off the required materials and having them ready for the committee on March 22 so that we could complete the 400 packets for distribution.

The committee identified several items that it wanted brought up at the next Executive meeting in April.

A reminder that the following items are still available for purchase:

RTO Pins – \$5.00

RFID Credit Card Protectors – \$3.00

— Submitted by Reg Johnston
Chair, Membership Committee

Committee Reports

PENSIONS AND BENEFIT COMMITTEE

RTO Pension and Benefits Committee members Judy Knowlton, Jack MacNeil, Peter Lewis, Hilarion Melanson, and Gary Archibald will join RTO Vice-President John Donovan at the NSTU Pension Symposium scheduled for April 21, 22 in Halifax. The NSTU Pension Committee members, along with representatives of the various NSTU Locals, will be in attendance. Topics will include NSTPP changes, Structure and Valuation, Investing in Conjunction with the TPP, Longevity and an Overview, and My Retirement Plan website.

On the last day of April, the NSTPP Annual Report will be posted on the Pension website and retired teachers are encouraged to visit the site to read the report. There is a great deal of information on this website. The easy method to get there: Google NSTPP and follow along as a retired member.

The RTO Branch Presidents, as well as members of the NSTU Pension Committee, have received copies of the pamphlet, "What happens at age 65?" RTO members who are nearing that magic age may want to look at this publication. See your Branch President for a copy.

The Committee has completed the survey on provincial teacher pension and drug plans. The information was gathered by committee members from the various provincial pension websites. Copies of the survey will be shared with RTO Executive members and members of the NSTU Pension Committee at their April meetings.

RTO members are encouraged to visit the RTO website. Webmaster Colin has gathered a wealth of information worthy of review by retirees. Topics include health resources, wellness links, insurance plan, federal and provincial retirement resources, to name but a few. If you have a subject that you think should be added, please contact Colin or the Chair of the Pension and Benefits Committee.

—Submitted by Gary Archibald
Chair, Pensions and Benefits Committee

Nominating Committee

2017 RTO Executive Elections

Secretary and Treasurer Positions:

The deadline for RTO Secretary and RTO Treasurer was February 28. Only one candidate offered for the position of Secretary, so Eileen Coady was elected to this position by acclamation for a term of two years. There were no applications for the position of RTO Treasurer, so this position will be open for nominations from the floor at the RTO AGM on May 25, 2017. If no nominations are received at that time, the Executive will appoint a Treasurer who will serve until next year's AGM.

Member-at-Large Positions:

Elections for a Member-at-Large will take place in each of the following four regions prior to May 15, 2017: Strait, Chignecto Central, Halifax Metro and South West Shore. The results of these elections will be announced at the RTO AGM on May 25, 2017.

—Submitted by Jim Kavanaugh
Chair, Nominating Committee

RTO — Important Numbers

Newsletter Editor:	Betty Anne McGinnis (902) 798-6311 bettyanne@eastlink.ca
Webmaster:	Colin J. Campbell (902) 862-2409 colin@colinjcampbell.ca
Nova Scotia Teachers Union:	(902) 477-5621 1.800.565.6788
Teachers Plus Credit Union:	(902) 477-5664 1.800.565.3103
NS Pension Services Corp.:	(902) 424-5070 1.800.774.5070
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Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia

Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia **January 26, 2017**

1. Seniors Pharmacare Program – Marina Keeping, Manager, Pharmacare Administration and Kathleen Coleman, Director, Formulary and Clinical Practice.
 - In 2015-2016 total cost for program was \$174.4 million with government funded portion \$121.4 million (70%) and seniors' premiums and co-payments \$53 million (30%).
 - Total enrollment was 123,812 with 58,851 singles and 64,961 married.
 - Average cost per claimant was \$1,270.
 - For next 10 years enrollment forecast will increase between 2.5% and 3% per year.
 - 40 new drugs placed on formulary in past year.
 - Trend is to higher cost therapies (biologic, cancer, etc.)
 - Increased utilization by members will outpace savings provided by generics and patents expiring.
 - Program costs anticipated to grow between 3-5% per year.
 - Minister continues to advocate for increased federal involvement in Pharmacare.
 - Collaboration taking place at national and Atlantic level regarding negotiating best prices and selecting new drugs.
2. Seniors Pharmacare Consultation – Michelle Lucas, Communications N.S.
 - Len Preeper has been hired as a consultant to move this forward.
 - Developing a survey with background materials to be used in consulting all seniors in Nova Scotia.
 - Plan of action:
 - o Paper survey mailed to each program member
 - o On-line survey
 - o 15 community meetings across the province
 - o 2 stakeholder meetings (Seniors Advisory Council and Medical Practitioners in Nova Scotia)
 - o Broad advertising, media, social media promotion, stakeholder outreach
- Seniors Advisory Council members were very upset as Minister of Health Leo Glavine said we would be heavily involved in the process and were told that we would not see survey and background information before the public consultation.
- Seniors Advisory Council members requested Chair to meet with the Minister and the Minister backtracked. The Minister promised there would be a face-to-face meeting with the consultant and all information would be shared and our input will be appreciated.
- Seniors Advisory members were also very concerned about public meetings notice and timing and this will be discussed with the consultant.
3. Department of Seniors Action Plan for an aging population waiting for feedback and approval from Finance and Treasury Board.
4. Questions were raised over the Nova Scotia government signing a side agreement with the federal government on health care funding.
 - Announcement indicated Nova Scotia would receive 3.5% annual increase in health transfer payments.
 - Announcement indicated Nova Scotia would receive \$157.0 million for home care and \$130.8 million for mental health over the next 10 years.
 - There was agreement that if another province should receive better financial returns, Nova Scotia would also receive the greater benefit.

5. Department of Seniors has provided \$280,000 for Seniors' Safety Programs to 14 organizations in the province.
 - Most programs focus on senior abuse, health and safety issues for seniors, and crime prevention.
6. Discussion took place on the implications of Federal Government Bill C-27 – An Act to Amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985.
 - Government is soliciting agencies and businesses to have employees “surrender” their defined benefit pension plan to join a new target benefit plan.
 - Concerns are being raised by federal retirees and the National Pensioners Federation that this Bill would disadvantage current and future retirees.
 - Both groups have stated that there is a sacred trust for the federal government to protect the retirement income security that has been earned by millions of Canadians through their defined benefit pension plans.
7. AGE WELL and HACKING HEALTH have teamed up to launch a National Ideathon focused on identifying and investing in great new ideas (technologies and services) to support healthy aging.
 - This is a national competition to take place in Toronto, Montreal, Halifax and Vancouver, with the finale in Winnipeg on October 17-19, 2017.
 - Prizes will total \$75,000 in cash and in-kind services.
 - Details on the Halifax Ideathon will be released on May 13, 2017 at <http://agewell-nce.ca/agewellhh>
8. Concerns are being raised once again dealing with blood collection procedures in rural Nova Scotia and this will be a topic for the April meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Berryman

Chair, Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia

Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia

Special Meeting on Seniors Pharmacare

February 3, 2017

This special meeting was called to allow Council members feedback on a DRAFT Consultation Paper prepared by consultants Len Preeper (Think Well Research) and Katherine Roberts (Essence Communications).

1. Consultation paper had background information which led up to nine questions on the paper survey.
2. Consultation paper provided locations of 14 community sessions and suggestions for time of day.
 - Council members were adamant that these sessions should start in March and not February
 - Council members suggested morning and afternoon sessions for seniors
3. Council members were very upset that there were no questions on the present costs and how much seniors were paying.
 - Suggested that there should be an education piece on the 75%/25% split in the past and why it is 70%/30% now
4. I reiterated the four guiding principles as outlined in the Advisory Council's priorities for 2016-2017 – sustainability, fairness, equitability, and effectiveness
5. Survey questions could include the following:
 - Who should bear the costs of the program?
 - Should there be a fixed premium, or premiums based on a member's income?
 - Need to change look at income thresholds using line 236 vs line 150
 - Should GIS recipients qualify for a premium exemption?
 - Should the penalty be increased to a flat rate?
 - What is a fair low income threshold where single/couples are premium exempt?
 - What are your priorities in having a Seniors Pharmacare Program?

6. The community session will be dealing with the same topics, but will permit a more in-depth discussion
7. Consultants will review all the points brought forward and there will be a discussion between the Chair and Deputy Minister as to future meetings with the consultants.

*Respectfully submitted,
Bill Berryman*

Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia

MARCH 9, 2017

1. Caregivers Nova Scotia – Angus Campbell, Chief Executive Officer
 - Provided information on the Nova Scotia Caregiver Benefit and the Nova Scotia Supportive Care Program provided by the government of Nova Scotia
 - NS Caregiver Benefit provides \$400 a month for low income care recipients (\$22,125 single, \$37,209 couple) with a high level of disability or impairment and in a relationship with the caregiver. This is reportable income on annual tax returns.
 - NS Supportive Care Program provides \$500 per month to support eligible Nova Scotians who have cognitive impairment (difficulty thinking, concentrating, remembering). This is non-reportable income.
 - Both benefits must be approved by a continuing care coordinator
 - Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) is a federal benefit for low income Old Age Security (OAS) pensioners
 - o Annual income is less than \$17,544 for singles, widowed or divorced or \$23,184 to \$42,048 for couples
 - o Monthly average range from \$864.09 to \$520.17 per month
 - o Depending on the amount received from the NS Caregiver Benefit this could reduce the GIS or possibly eliminate it
2. Department of Seniors Action Plan For An Aging Population has been approved by the provincial government
3. Meeting with Cabinet Ministers
 - 50 recommendations will be implemented over a 3-year period and placed in the business plans of various government departments
 - Announcement will be made by Premier in late March
4. Deputy Minister of Seniors announced there would be no changes in Seniors Pharmacare for 2 years
 - Atlantic provinces have agreed to do research together to review public drug coverage to seek service improvements, cost containment, and more help for high cost therapies for rare diseases
 - With the buying power of 2.3 million people, provincial governments in Atlantic Canada will save money through bulk purchasing of drugs
 - Minister of Health continues to advocate for a National Pharmacare Program
5. Advisory Committee will have a presentation from the Nova Scotia Dental Association at the April 20, 2017 meeting on oral health care for seniors
 - Presentation will deal with policy implications and discussion on seniors oral

- care coverage under a Provincial Oral Health Program
 - Becoming a major issue in nursing homes where dementia patients are not receiving proper dental care
6. All provinces except for Manitoba have agreed to bilateral deals with the federal government to replace the Canada Health Accord
 - The Canadian Health Coalition is not in favour of bilateral agreements and contemplates cuts in health care, more privatization, less patient protection, and varied standards of care
 - Provinces who have agreed to the deal will receive 3.5% annual increase in health transfers and extra funding for home care, mental health, and opioid addictions
 7. Hearing Aids for Seniors
 - Previously residents of Nova Scotia could purchase hearing aids on line from the USA with tremendous savings
- This was stopped by the Nova Scotia Audiologists Association claiming residents needed to have proper fittings, adjustments, up-to-date testing, and faced the possible risk of untested hearing aids
 - Department of Health will review this decision in conducting research on the topic, and will report back to the Advisory Committee
8. Advisory Committee continues to request Department of Health look at providing shingles vaccine for Nova Scotians over 60 years of age
 - Government is committed to review the issue and will conduct research on the benefits of the program
 - Committee was advised that Ontario now provides the vaccine free of charge to its citizens

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Berryman
Chair, Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia

Wellness Symposium

Fall of 2017

During the 2015-2016 year, the Research and Review Committee undertook a study of wellness. They studied the services provided to seniors in communities across the province by Public Health Services, Community Health Boards, local governments, and community groups. As a result of their work, the Committee presented a recommendation to the Executive that the RTO sponsor a Wellness Symposium. This motion was approved and an ad hoc committee was established to plan the event for the fall of 2017.

The committee consists of five members: Eileen Coady, Ambrose White, Wayne LeBlanc, Vicky Parker and Alyson Hillier (chair).

The Research and Review Committee defined wellness as a term "generally used to mean a healthy balance of mind, body, and spirit that results in an overall feeling of well-being." Using this as their guiding principle, the committee is preparing a day-long program to bring together representatives from all Branches in the province to establish an understanding of the importance of providing programs that encourage a healthy mind and body, and identify resources that will support developing these programs at the Branch level.

Information on the symposium will be available at the Annual General Meeting.



Branch Updates

COLCHESTER-EAST HANTS BRANCH

The past six months have been busy times for the Colchester-East Hants RTO. We rang in the new “school year” with our annual Bye to the Bells Breakfast, which we hold on the first day teachers return to the classroom. This has proved to be a popular way to signal the beginning of ten months of meetings, informative programmes, and social activities.



Donna Spacek



Heather Hill

In October, Peter Mattatall led a group of retirees on a tour of the area around Tatamagouche on the North Shore. Everyone met at Creamery Square, where they boarded the Road Train for a trip along the coast as far as Nelson Park on the outskirts of the village. Along the way, the “tourists” were treated to a running commentary about the various landmarks. A tour of some of the local businesses was followed by lunch in the dining car at The Train Station Inn. The day concluded with a visit to Sarah Bonnyman’s Pottery shop.



Helen Miller



Ina Beaver



*Lynn MacPherson
and Jan Zann*



*Jayne Campbell
and Tony Phillips*

Heather Hill was the impetus behind our very popular and well attended Talent Showcase 2016, held in November. Not only were retirees able to see the displays, but also they could purchase items. Among the assortments of wares were knitted shawls, finger puppets, bags, small quilts, art, watercolour landscapes, knitting, mittens, tea towels, and honey. As well, several had for sale note cards that showcased their work.



*Susan Gaudet and
Shirley Gaudet-Purdy*



*Peter Mattatall on the
Tatamagouche tour*

We celebrated the Christmas season with two social events. The first on December 6 was held at the Truro Fire Hall. Members supplied the ingredients for a splendid lunch, and Angela Dwyer-James brought her ukulele group to entertain. It should be noted that several members of that group are retired teachers. There was an eclectic mix of music from various sources, a witty seasonal monologue, and Christmas carols. The next

Branch Updates

day, retirees in East Hants met at Shooters in Enfield for a delicious pre-Christmas turkey dinner organized by Walter Farmer. Two lucky people had their meals paid for by the RTO Branch when their names were drawn from the “hat.” In his opening remarks, Walter said that the numbers had grown nearly two-fold since the East Hants people first got together.

On February 8, the Valentine Social held at the Best Western Glengarry provided members and their guests with a hot buffet meal, and two people each won a door prize. We enjoyed the toe-tapping music of retirees Wayne Delaney and Eric Weaver, as well as their humorous running commentary.

The final event for the year will be another social to be held on June 8 at Shooters in Enfield for the East Hants retirees. It has indeed been a most enjoyable “school year.”

DARTMOUTH BRANCH

Dartmouth Branch came out of hibernation on January 25 to enjoy a casual lunch at USTA (Turkish/Mediterranean Restaurant) at Portland Hills in Dartmouth. Thanks to Margaret MacDonald for making the necessary arrangements and enticing twenty people out to catch up on friendships.



Looking forward, Dartmouth RTO will join Halifax Metro Branches on April 6 to hear Simon d'Entremont speak on Action Plans for an Aging Population. On April 26, Halifax Regional Police will brief RTO mem-

bers on pervasive fraudulent scams and requests, and how to recognize and to deal with them.



Janet Latter, Ruth Lelacheur, Judy Knowlton, Sally Ritcey, and Linda Goldwater catch up on news at the Multi Branch Luncheon on April 4th

Friendships were renewed when Dartmouth hosted an April Luncheon at Brightwood with all Metro Branches included. In total, 105 RTO members enjoyed a delicious chicken dinner, with Chocolate Lava Cake for dessert. Alyson Hillier the Metro M-A-L presented Dorothy Smith (previous Metro M-A-L) with flowers as a thank-you for her work on behalf of the Metro RTO members. The 50/50 draw, with a take of \$79.00, was won by Bob Hayter of Halifax City. In addition, draws were made for 11 door prizes donated by Branches and RTO members.



Branch Updates

GLACE BAY DISTRICT BRANCH

Our first luncheon meeting of the new year was held on February 16 at Warden United Church Hall in New Aberdeen. Once again the buffet was delicious, plentiful, and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone in attendance. This gathering also serves as our Annual General Meeting (AGM) whereby the yearly financial statement is presented and the new executive is appointed. The executive remains unchanged except for Shirley Boutilier



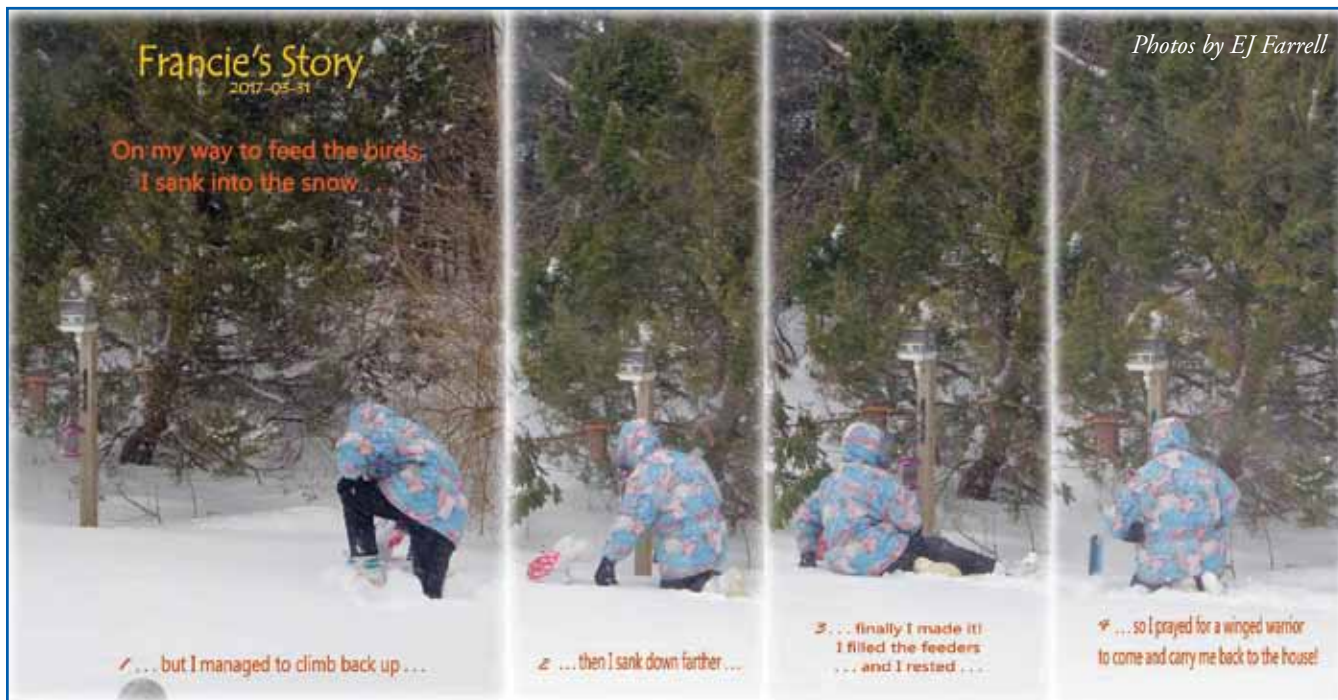
Members who enjoyed the fabulous buffet: (L-R) Linda MacKay, Sheila LeBlanc, Roy Rideout, Jane MacGregor, Cathy McKinlay.

who stepped down as Chair of the Communications Phone Committee after fifteen years of dedicated service. She was recognized for her lengthy contribution to the Branch with a rousing ovation. Her position on the executive was filled by Anita MacDonald.



Members of the new executive: Front row (L-R) Anita MacDonald (Phone Communications), Linda MacKay (Media Communications), Patricia (Puddy) Clyburn (Secretary), Peggy Whyte (Legacy Foundation). Back row (L-R) Jack MacNeil (Vice President), Wayne Hurley (Treasurer), Reg Johnston, (President). Missing at time of photo was Theresa MacDonald.

NORTHSIDE-VICTORIA BRANCH



Branch Updates

So sorry, but Northside-Victoria retired teachers are buried too deep in the snow to have any news to share. That is, those of us who didn't make the escape to sunnier climes!

Last week's three-day blizzard 'officially' dumped 46 cm in total on our part of Cape Breton, but this photo belies that conclusion. I made a composite of 4 pics of my sister as she made her way to the bird feeders. To put things into perspective: my sister is quite tall, and the feeders are high up on the pole. The top of her head would normally reach the purple feeder; if she were standing on the ground, she would have to reach up to fill it.



On the first day of spring we had a major snow storm, but it was followed immediately by a glorious Silver Thaw. There is an old farm across an abandoned hay field next to my house. The beauty of Northside-Victoria!

Should there be a thaw, we hope to have a Breakfast Meeting near the end of April, and our June closing will quickly follow.

Our President, Cathy Anderson, walked a few picket lines with our NSTU colleagues during the short walk-outs, as did many of our RTO members. Although things didn't work out in the manner that we would have preferred, at least the brave actions of the NSTU's Work-to-Rule campaign shone a harsh light on the unreasonable expectations the province has of teachers. Perhaps this Committee will be able to find solutions. Fingers crossed.

SYDNEY AND AREA BRANCH

A heartfelt thank-you is extended to all RTO Sydney and Area members who support our dinner and lunch meetings. The Executive works vigorously to put on these events, and it is gratifying that we receive your



support. Our next meeting will be an afternoon event at the First United Protestant Church, Sydney River, on June 6, 2017. Emails and phone calls will inform members of the time. Please visit the RTO website rto.nstu.ca for pertinent information on health care, insurances, and general information.

On March 25, members and their guests gathered together at the First United Protestant Church for a luncheon. The Provincial RTO provided funding and it was much appreciated. Members enjoyed a delight-



Branch Updates

ful lunch served by the ladies of the hall, and were entertained by the popular Bisson Sisters who sang old and new Cape Breton songs and melodies of the past. Several members went home with door prizes to finish off a great day.



Rev. Dana Feltmate, our guest speaker, spoke on mental health. His focus was why it is necessary to stay 'in the present' of our life to avoid anxiety and depression. He provided members with exercises to help them remain focused and concentrate on 'the now'. At one time or another we all suffer from anxiety and depression. Staying focused and concentrating on the important things in our lives is essential to our well-being. Members found this to be a valuable presentation.

The RTO is honouring members who are celebrating their 60th-or-over wedding anniversary, or who are 90-or-over years of age. Names may be forwarded to the Executive. Thanks, and here's to a fine, calm day.

WEST HANTS RTO BRANCH

On March 21 the West Hants Branch of the RTO held its Spring Lunch meeting at the Three Mile Plans Community hall, with 70 members present. After a wonderful meal we received several presentations. Provincial President



of the RTO, Bill Berryman, presented the members with updates on many issues and organizations with which the Provincial RTO is involved.

Mary Ruth Cochrane received the Ostrich Award for 20 years as a volunteer and as a co-founder of the Well Women's Promotion Team of West Hants.



Health Educator Pat Miller presented West Hants members with an educational session on Alzheimer's disease. Pat is the Health Care Educator for the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia, and services the Annapolis Valley. Pat gave a very practical talk on the understanding of the disease, its early warning signs, and methods of helping those with Alzheimer's.



YARMOUTH/ARGYLE

Spring is in the air, and it's time to shake off that cabin fever and hit the great outdoors. The golf courses in Yarmouth and Pubnico are now open for play – FORE!

A great meal was served at our spring luncheon, with special guest speaker, Neil Rogers, who discussed the benefits of volunteering for Meals on Wheels. This is

Branch Updates

also the time of the year that our Branch seeks a new slate of officers to cover the next two years. A new Member-at-Large will be elected in our area to represent us at the provincial level.



Tri Star Industries

The Branch had a tour of Tri-Star Industries, which builds and assembles ambulances for the Province, as well as markets around the world. It was quite interesting to see how these vehicles are put together from the ground up, including the technology that operates them.

Our bowling get-together was very enjoyable, with Milton Fraser rolling up an impressive 105 single high score. The group had a great time, and this type of low-impact activity helps promote an active lifestyle. In the future we will endeavour to make it a weekly morning get-together.

To promote wellness, the Branch would like to start a 30-to-60-minute walking group in Yarmouth, and another in Argyle. In June, a kayak-and-canoe day on one of our local lakes will take place. Our first-day-of-summer breakfast will soon arrive, always a popular event.

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SYDNEY & AREA INITIATIVE GRANT

Sydney and Area Executive, Margie MacNeil, Diane Davis, Tina MacNeil, and Bernadette Hollohan were disconcerted that a blizzard was forecast for Sydney on March 23, the day of our luncheon under the auspices of RTO Initiative Grant Funding. However, through the work of the Executive, the flexibility of everyone involved, and plain good luck, we were able to postpone until the following day when the sun shone and the event proceeded as planned.

Held at the First United Protestant Church, the luncheon was very well attended. The ladies of the guild had decorated the hall beautifully. Members enjoyed a delicious lunch and the camaraderie of both old and new friends – fond memories of days gone by blended with life's current events. The day was made even better with the Bisson Sisters displaying their singing talents, a repertoire of Cape Breton songs, old and new.

Our guest speaker, Dana Feltmate, minister of the church, spoke to the members about mental health. In his easy-going manner, he proposed ways that we could concentrate and focus on the important things in life. Dana introduced exercises to help us calm down and relax, to put ourselves in a place where we should be. He reminded us that at one time or another everyone is exposed to stress and depression. In dealing with these conditions, some suffer more than others. Anxiety and depression take us out of the realm of 'a good thing'. Our minds wander and the importance of the real issue is lost. This is where meditation and concentration play relevant roles, as they can help us to remain focused, and can return us to the calm, peaceful place where we should be. Our spirituality helps us to maintain focus and composure, and keeps us in the present.

Dana's message was very well received. I recommend that all Branches take advantage of the RTO Initiative Funding Grant, as it provides the opportunity for members to get together and discover more about themselves. Sydney and Area RTO would like to thank the Provincial RTO for providing this funding, as the event it sponsored for us was worthwhile for everyone.



Guest speaker Dana Feltmate



Stephanie Black, Sandra Morrison, Carol MacEachern, Ann Johnston and Wanda Gillis



Marie and Bernadette Bisson



Joy MacInnis, Mary Helen Adams, Carol MacDonald, and Joan Corbett.



Karen LeBrun-Smith and Martha Hood

WEST HANTS INITIATIVE GRANT

The West Hants Branch of the RTO held a winter wagon ride at Castle Frederick Farm in Upper Falmouth, Hants County on Sat. Feb 18. After the snow storms, we had a winter wonderland before us. On a beautiful afternoon, fifteen RTO members joined for the ride up the South Mountain, through logging roads to a secluded mountain cabin. We walked the last 50 metres to the cabin where we were greeted by a warm fire and cozy kitchen and bunkhouse. Everyone enjoyed a hot midday lunch of chile, roll, apple crisp, and beverages, prepared by a restaurant in Windsor. With a wonderful view of the Avon Valley, great company, and the singing dog on the wagon up and down the mountain, we can say it was a great afternoon. Thanks to the RTO Branch Initiative Grant for providing funding for our winter venture.





NOVA SCOTIA
55+ GAMES 2017
LUNENBURG COUNTY

"Fun, Fitness and Friendship"

SEPTEMBER 13-16, 2017

45's • 5k run • 8-ball pool • badminton •
candlepin bowling • contract bridge and duplicate
bridge • cribbage • curling and stick curling • darts
• floor shuffle-board • golf • horseshoes • men's
and women's hockey • mountain biking • pickleball
• scrabble • skip bo • women's soccer • swimming
• tennis • track and field • washer toss

Registration for all 55+ Games events will begin on April 3, 2017. Visit the website for more information. Deadline for registration is July 28, 2017. Registration can be done on-line.

www.2017ns55plusgames.ca

55plusgames2017@gmail.com

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COMMITTEE APPLICATION Deadline for Application – May 30th

The RTO has four (4) standing committees. They are:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Research/Review | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pensions & Benefits | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you are interested in serving on one of these committees, please check which one; or if more than one, use numbers to reflect priority choices, i.e. 1, 2, etc.

[Please Print]

Name: _____

Branch: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Signature

Please attach resume including the following:

RTO Branch Activities: _____

RTO Provincial Activities: _____

Other (Including NSTU Local or Provincial activities): _____

Why you wish to serve on this committee(s): _____

**Return to: RTO Nominations Chairperson
Nova Scotia Teachers Union
3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, N.S. B3L 4L7
or Fax 902-477-3517**

Committee Responsibilities

There are four standing Committees. Except for Communications, which has six members, there are five members on each Committee, including the chair, an Executive member who reports regularly to the Executive. The success of the RTO depends on the participation of members from all parts of the province. The duties are briefly outlined below:

Research/Review Committee - The mandate of this committee is to provide in-depth analysis and research in areas identified by the Executive. The committee will also review and evaluate the effectiveness of the RTO in areas identified by the Executive.

Communications Committee - This Committee's responsibilities are to publish *The Retired Teacher* Newsletter at least three times a year and to keep the RTO Website up-to-date. The Committee must ensure that the newsletter contains reports from the RTO committees, a President's message, pictures and reports from the Branches, and information for those interested in offering for RTO Executive and committee positions.

Membership Committee - This Committee's responsibilities are to ensure the membership database is current and accurate and, as active teachers retire, to establish procedures to recruit new members to the RTO. The Committee prepares materials, including Branch membership lists and application forms which are presented to Branch Presidents at their meetings.

Pension and Benefits Committee - This Committee's responsibilities are to keep RTO members up-to-date on pension and insurance matters and to propose improvements in pension and insurance matters to the RTO Executive. This Committee prepares information which is regularly published in the RTO Newsletter. As well, the Committee seeks discounts and special offers for RTO members.



Yoga

by Lisa Bayer



Lisa's Fibromyalgia, Grade IV Osteoarthritis (artificial knee and partial ankle), Depression, and Environmental Illness are a part of who she is, but because she found Yoga in 2010, they no longer define her. Lisa became a proud 2012 graduate of the BSYS Yoga 200-hour Teacher Training Program. Passionate about the mental and physical benefits one receives from yoga, she has continued her education with certification in Chair Yoga and Pre-Natal Yoga. She obtained her 500-hour Yoga Teacher Training certification with specialization in Yin, the Energy of Yoga, Ayurveda, Anatomy, and Therapeutic Restorative Yoga. She is honored to be a part of the BSYS 200-hour and 500-hour Yoga Teacher Training Faculty as well. Lisa teaches Yoga at Breathing Space Yoga Studio, Windsor, NS, where they offer many different styles of yoga. There truly is a class for everyBODY. Included are Chair Yoga, Gentle Flow, Fully Alive, Vinyasa, Core-based, and Yin. Visit in person at 80 Water Street, Windsor or the website: Windsor@breathingspaceyoga.ca, or call 798-0880. No matter where you live, you can find your place for Yoga.

Yoga is a Sanskrit term meaning to yoke the body with the mind, and the mind with the spirit, unifying all aspects of ourselves so that we may live in a state of wholeness and integration. It also means discipline. We are all aware of the external distractions and stress that can pull us away from our center and into an imbalance.

Most of society is imbalanced, signs of which include stress, over-eating, under-eating, over-exercising, under-exercising, emotional instability, anxiety, depression, and addictions.

First we try to improve the efficiency of the respiratory system, to increase oxygen to all tissues. We do this by stretching our internal breathing muscles (more room in the thoracic cavity), and strengthening those muscles so we can bring in more air with each breath, and also exhale more completely, releasing toxins.

Please try this with me now. Sit upright, gaze softly, become aware of your breath flowing in and out through your nostrils. Observe the temperature of the air as you breathe in and the temperature as you release that breath. Notice if one nostril is more open than the other. Observe which parts of your body move as you inhale and exhale. Be present with your breath—only the breath you are on right now matters. The breath you just completed is gone and you aren't thinking about the next breath. Our current breath is what matters. This is our life force. In times of stress and anxiety, come back to the breath, one breath at a time, and be in the present.

Slowing down and consciously breathing offers us many benefits:

- Revitalizes
- Cleanses the lungs
- Lowers blood pressure
- Encourages a calmer emotional state
- Clears and boosts energy channels
- Enhances rest and relaxation
- Improves brain function
- Calms an agitated mind
- Improves sleep
- Soothes the central nervous system
- Keeps us in the Present

Proper posture, both seated and standing, is the foundation to our yoga practice (and really our lives). Good posture gives us energy and strength and when the body is properly aligned, we also feel a sense of ease. The same can be said for deep-breathing. Most of the time we breathe quite shallow and short.

*“and i said to my body, softly.
i want to be your friend.’
it took a long breath.
and replied
i have been waiting my whole life for this.”*

Nayyirah Waheed

The true meaning of yoga is vastly different from the common media representation of yoga. With these two contradictory messages, it can be confusing for people who want to learn more about yoga. Do I have to be fit, thin, and flexible? Will I get hurt if I go to a class? Must I do a headstand to be really practicing yoga?

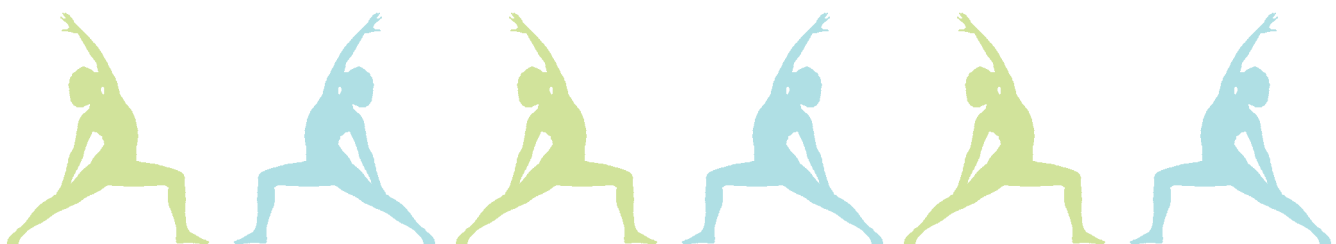
Ultimately it is up to us teachers, those of us blessed to share this ancient holistic practice, to help steer the perception of yoga on a more balanced course. To be clear, the answer to the questions above is a resounding NO.

I came to teaching from a place of overflowing gratitude. Yoga has changed my life, and from that place of gratitude I desire to give back, to share that possibility of transformation with others. Just over six years ago I found yoga and a deep well opened within me. I began to listen to, trust in, and follow my inner wisdom. I opened physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

Beyond all the poses and the physical benefits lies the true gem of yoga—connecting to your beautifully unique Spirit. As a teacher I get to weave deeper wisdom into my offerings through themes, poems, readings, chants, and breathing practices. It is here where the true meaning of yoga ignites.....yoking the body to the mind and the mind to the spirit.

The art of breathing, exercise, and meditation, has been proven to help everyone improve their physical and psychological well-being. Studies suggest that the regular practice of yoga, which is considered a low-impact activity, can reduce joint pain, increase the flexibility of joints, and promote sleep through lowering stress and tension. Yoga also helps improve balance as well as build muscular strength. Both male and female attend our classes, with an age range of 16-85.

Yoga can change lives. Yoga can make you both emotionally and physically healthier, stronger, and more balanced. Yoga can light the way to being more compassionate, more serving, more concerned, more human. Yoga is not exercise, yoga is a way of life!



reunions



NSTC Alumni Reunion 2017

Schedule of Activities



Friday, August 18

(All at the Best Western Glengarry, Truro – MacDonald Room A, B, C)

- **Check in** at the (time according to their check-in policy)
 - **6:00 – 8:00 pm – Registration** (Registration will also take place Saturday morning from 9:00 am to 11:00 am – same location)
 - **7:00 pm – Music** with Don Hollett '55
 - **7:30 pm – Official Opening of Reunion 2017** – Guest Speaker – Joseph Francis MacKenzie '67. 'Father Joe'
 - **8:00 pm – Faculty/Staff Tribute** – A great time to thank those who helped us through our years at NSNC/NSTC.
 - **8:30 pm** – Listen to the music of Judi Cleveland '67
 - **9:00 pm – Music with Grads** – Mix and Mingle, socialize with your friends, meet new friends, bring your instruments and share your musical talents and share your memories of your days at NSTC/NORMAL
 - **Friday notes:**
No supper provided on site on Friday. Friday evening activities are all at the Best Western Glengarry Hotel. Cash bar available for Friday evening events.
- **10:00 am – Executive Meeting** following Annual Meeting
 - **Silent Auction** – Don't forget to drop by the Little White Schoolhouse to bid on your favorite items!!
 - **11:30 am – Class photos** – Location MacLeod Room AB. All Alumni registered to attend the Reunion are welcome to participate in class photos. Photos will feature honored years, executive, those who taught in a one-room schoolhouse, and "other" years – so everyone gets in at least one photo!
 - **12:30 – 1:30 pm – Lunch** – (Salon D) (or on your own)

Afternoon

- Plan an activity with your Grad Class; visit the Truro Farmer's Market; Tour the old Normal College Site, now the Colchester Library from

NSTC Reunion

Ashley MacIsaac and Friends in Concert

Saturday, May 27, 2017 7 p.m.

First United Church

Prince St. Truro, N. S.

Price per ticket Adults: \$40.00 Students: \$20.00

*Advanced tickets available at
the First United Church*

Tickets also available at the door

*All proceeds will go to the alumni of the
Nova Scotia Teachers College and the First
United Church Restoration Fund.*

Saturday, August 19

(All at the Best Western Glengarry, except as noted)

- **Breakfast** (see note below regarding Saturday and Sunday breakfasts)
- **9:00 am – Annual Business Meeting** (Salon E, G) – Get up to date on all aspects of the Alumni Association!

reunions

2-5 pm and meet Maxine Bezanson '55 at the library, between 2-4 pm, to find out what it was like to be a student in the good old days at the Normal College; stroll through Truro's beautiful Victoria Park; shop downtown and at the Truro Mall; visit downtown Truro and enjoy the many Blueberry Festival activities; see Margie if you'd like a drive around the Truro area.

- 6:00 pm – Reception and Social (Salon DEG) Music by Jaidon Seymour, Saint Peter's, daughter of Grad, Pauline 'Bona' Seymour '95.
- 6:30 pm – Dinner and Awards at Best Western Glengarry
- 8:30 pm – Coffee House/Institute Night/Tunes & Tankards – Depending on the time period you attended, one of these terms may roughly represent what you can expect on Saturday evening. If you have a talent/instrument to share, bring it along. Dance to Jim Aylward '91 and his band Sweet Revenge. This is bound to be a great time with fun for all! Don't miss it!!

Saturday notes:

The afternoon is a great time to get together with friends and relax. If you need a space to meet, check with one of the organizing committee who will be glad to help. Cash bar available for the Social, Dinner and into the evening.

Sunday, August 20

- 10:30 am Church Service at First United Church, Prince Street, Truro. Participation with Grads of the Normal College/NSTC. We will sit as a group at the church, meeting in the foyer of the church at 10:15 am.

Special Notes

Silent Auction – The silent auction will be setting up in the Little White Schoolhouse on Friday. Drop off your donation items for the auction – don't forget to visit on Saturday to bid on your favorite items!!

Saturday and Sunday Breakfast – For those staying at the Best Western Glengarry breakfast is included in your room price. For those staying elsewhere, you may purchase a breakfast voucher at the Best Western Glengarry front desk, or enjoy breakfast on your own at another location

A block of rooms at the Best Western Glengarry has been reserved for Alumni. The cost is \$133.99 per night for up to two people (plus \$10/person for additional occupants) and requires advanced registration before July 19, 2017. Please book directly by calling 800-567-4276 or 902-893-4311. Hot breakfast is included with each night's stay.

Please be aware that Banquet tickets will NOT be available on site. Banquet tickets will only be available in advance by pre-registering.



PRESIDENTS' MEETING



Did You Know

1 If you create an account with Medavie Blue Cross, you are able to track all usage of your health benefits covered by Medavie. You can submit claims on line with fast service. Google Medavie Blue Cross Member Centre.

2 Check your reimbursements for health expenses not direct-billed. Medavie does make mistakes! However, they are also quickly corrected once notified.

3 Contract hotel is the Delta beginning July 1.

4 AGM is May 25. All retired teachers are welcome to attend.

5 There is an opening for Treasurer of the RTO. Your name can be put forth at the AGM. Get involved!

6 Retired teachers have regained their access to closed NSTU website information, as per the NSTU By-laws.

7 We have a new feature. Milestones. Check it out!

8 The Toronto Maple Leafs made the play-offs!!!

2017 RTO Golf Tournament

Granite Springs Golf Club

www.granitespringsgolf.com

4441 Prospect Rd, Bayside, NS



19

Saturday, September 16, 2017, 1 PM

Hosted by: Halifax City Branch, RTO

Fees: 18 holes of golf, power cart and meal - \$80 (includes taxes and gratuities); Meal only option - \$20 (includes taxes and gratuity)

Format – 2 person scramble playing in groups of 4. 2 person teams should have one RTO member. - Shotgun start 1PM. Please arrive at least an hour prior to the start.

Prizes – 2 Trophies will be awarded for Low Net and Low Gross. All other prizes will be awarded as draw prizes.

*Registration form available on RTO-HFX website. **Please send registration and cheque - payable to Halifax City Branch, RTO no later than Tuesday, August 30th to: Donna Mastin - 835 Bridges Street, Halifax, NS, B3H 3Z6***

IMPORTANT: Any questions regarding registration should be directed to:
David Cunningham dcunningham@nstu.ca 902-225-0620

“Big News”

Written by Brian Forbes, retired educator and former NSTU President

One of my literary heroes is Henry David Thoreau (1817 – 1862). I first met him in my teens through reading his essay “On Civil Disobedience”, which no doubt helped to give a left-of-centre cast to my subsequent political views. But Thoreau is perhaps best known for *Walden*, recounting his two-year experiment in simple living in a small cottage which he built for himself on the shores of the now famous Walden Pond, near Concord, Massachusetts.

Thoreau was educated at Harvard, but spent most of his life in Concord, seldom venturing more than a few miles beyond its boundaries. Yet one of the striking features of *Walden*, as well as his *Journals* and other writings, is the width and depth of learning displayed therein. The book is crammed with observations of natural phenomena, allusions to classical mythology and eastern religions, philosophical and historical references, literary citations, shrewd commentary on human nature and customs, local lore, homely advice and practical tips on a variety of matters, all contributing to an extended argument for living in harmony with nature, one’s self and one’s fellow human beings. Obviously Thoreau’s intellectual horizons were far broader than his geographical ones. Just as obviously, his education did not end with his graduation from Harvard. In fact his formal education was just the beginning of a lifelong dedication to learning, pursued in the company of such Concord luminaries as Emerson, Hawthorne, Ellery Channing and Melville, and enthusiastically shared in conversation with his neighbours, in public lectures and in his writings.

In the chapter of *Walden* entitled “Reading” Thoreau reveals one aspect of his relentless quest for knowledge, wisdom and understanding. “Most men,” he says, “have learned to read to serve a paltry convenience, as they have learned to cipher in order to keep

accounts and not be cheated in trade; but of reading as a noble intellectual exercise they know little or nothing; yet this only is reading, in a high sense, not that which lulls us as a luxury and suffers the nobler faculties to sleep the while, but what we have to stand on tip-toe to read and devote our most alert and wakeful hours to.”

Later in the same chapter he writes, “It is time we had uncommon schools, that we did not leave off our education when we begin to be men and women. It is time that villages were universities, and their elder inhabitants the fellows of universities – if indeed they are so well off – to pursue liberal studies the rest of their lives.”

My granddaughter has the same insatiable curiosity, especially about Nature, as Thoreau apparently had, which I believe is the mainspring of genuine commitment to a lifetime of learning. She is in love with plants and wild animals (contemporary and prehistoric) and keeps “nature journals”. Recently she was perusing my one-volume full-colour edition of Audubon’s *Birds of America*, revelling in the beautiful reproductions of the great artist’s paintings and reading the accompanying notes. Suddenly she charged upstairs shouting, “Grampy, big news about bald eagles!” “What?” I asked. “Some of them have brown heads!” Then back she went to enjoy the book some more.

I hope, for the sake of Emma and children everywhere, that we will always have “uncommon schools” that encourage reading that requires them to “stand on tip-toe”, and nurture the kind of enthusiasm for learning that sees a randomly encountered unexpected fact as “big news.” After all, as Robert Louis Stevenson said, “The world is so full of a number of things, I’m sure we should all be as happy as kings.”



Scavenger Hunt

Find the answers to the following questions and submit your entry to the editor by email bettyanne@eastlink.ca, or by mail to Betty Anne McGinnis, 6571 Highway 1, Ellershouse, NS B0N 1L0. Prizes have been generously donated by Medavie Blue Cross, Johnson Inc., NSTU, and Manulife. Submissions must be received by **May 20, 2017**. A random draw among those entries with all answers correct will determine the winner. **Be sure to include your name, RTO Branch, mailing address, and phone number.** The winner of the February contest was **David Houghton, Kings Branch RTO**. Congratulations!

1. Who wrote the Yoga article in this issue?
2. Which Branch submitted the two resolutions to the AGM?
3. In the President's message, Bill Berryman states the government's proposed increased for the 2018-2019 Pharmacare cost. What is the increase for seniors for that year?
4. Name one of the three members leaving the RTO Executive this year.
5. What is the date for the NSTU Pension Symposium in 2017?
6. Johnson's ad features a contest with what exciting prize?
7. An Ad Hoc committee has been struck to organize what special event for the fall of 2017?
8. Who was the guest speaker at the Sydney and Area Initiative Grant event?
9. The NSTC Reunion will hold most of its events at which Truro hotel?
10. What is the title of our new feature acknowledging events in the lives of retired teachers?



WEBSITE SCAVENGER HUNT!

All answers can be found on your RTO website. You may enter both Scavenger Hunt contests, doubling your chance to become a winner. Please be sure to state which contest your answers are for. Prizes have been donated by Medavie Blue Cross, Manulife, NSTU, and Johnson, Inc. Email to bettyanne@eastlink.ca or mail to Betty Anne McGinnis, 6571 Highway 1, Ellershouse B0N 1L0. Deadline for entry is **May 20, 2017**. Good luck! Congratulations to February's winner – **Irene Sharkey from the Sydney Branch**.

1. Which Membership Authorization form must be completed by a surviving spouse/partner of a retired teacher?
2. In what year did the RTO establish the Retired Teachers Legacy Foundation Fund?
3. How many 2017 Resolutions have been posted on the RTO Website?
4. In what year was the latest Positive Aging Directory published?
5. Who was acclaimed as RTO secretary for the 2017-2019 year?
6. What is the volume and number of the February 2017 newsletter?
7. Which of the Federal and Provincial Retirement Resources on the website Link directs the user to Vehicle Permit renewal information?
8. What is the location of the 2017 RTO Annual General Meeting?
9. How many regions will hold Member-at-Large elections this spring?
10. Which RTO Branch will host the annual Golf Tournament in September 2017?

2017 AGM Resolutions



Lunenburg County Branch

Resolution (#1):

BE IT RESOLVED that the following changes be made to Article V – Section C (constitution), Election of Members-At-Large; so that all members of each Branch within a region have the opportunity to vote for their MAL representative and not just three members of each Branch. To accomplish this, the following changes will need to be made: subsection vii: keep current wording up to *casting a vote*, and change *casting a vote* to read *will oversee the vote, as directed by the Returning Officer, of their Branch Membership*.

Brief:

If we are to be truly a democratic organization, then we must provide the opportunity for all members to cast a vote for their MAL. All members matter and they should have the opportunity to exercise their democratic vote.

Resolution (#2):

BE IT RESOLVED that the RTO strike a committee to study and make recommendations as to how Branches within a Region could alternate their MAL representative from Branch to Branch within the respective Regions.

Brief:

It is apparent a process should remain in place to ensure that all Branches have the ability to elect a Regional Representative. A level of protection for smaller Branches and the ability of larger Branches within a Region not to be outvoted by Branches with smaller memberships would ensure a more equitable election process. As the current provisions do not provide for a rotation of MALs, this creates an unfair election process as it is not representation by population. The Committee, to be made up of members of different-size Branches and not just the Provincial Executive, is to report back to the 2018 AGM.

RTO Members Contact Update

RTO Members are asked to notify their Branch Presidents of changes in their contact information, including phone numbers, email, and mailing addresses.

Branch Presidents can be reached through both the RTO Newsletter and the RTO Website at <http://rto.nstu.ca>

Also, please update your contact information with
Toni Maggio at tmaggio@staff.nstu.ca
or 1-800-565-6788 at the NSTU Office
for the RTO Newsletter mailing list.

Please state whether you would like to receive an electronic subscription—
opposed to a paper copy—by leaving your email address.

RTO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – May 25, 2017

The **RTO Annual General Meeting** (AGM) will be held at the NSTU Building on Thursday May 25, 2017 at 9:30 AM. The **RTO AGM Dinner** will be held at Brightwood Golf and Country Club, School Street, Dartmouth on Wednesday, May 24, 2017 at 7:00 PM. Buses will be available for transportation from the Lord Nelson Hotel at 6:00 PM to Brightwood and back at 9:00 PM.

Accommodations: A block of rooms in the name of the NSTU Retired Teachers Organization (RTO) has been reserved at the Lord Nelson Hotel for delegates requiring accommodation. **The room rate is \$80.00 plus tax** with free parking and a free breakfast. Please call the hotel at 1-902-423-6331 prior to **May 5, 2017** to make reservations and book your room under the RTO block. **You will need to show your RTO card at the hotel reception desk.** There is no direct billing, therefore delegates must pay for their room prior to checking out. Those who are eligible will be reimbursed after filling out the RTO expense form.

Registration: Please complete the registration form below or copy from the RTO website, rto.nstu.ca, if you plan to attend the RTO AGM Dinner and/or the RTO Annual General Meeting. Entrance to the Annual General Meeting is the front door of the NSTU Building which is wheelchair accessible and close to the elevator.

2017 RTO AGM REGISTRATION

Name _____
Surname First Name
Address _____
Postal Code _____ Branch _____
E-Mail (needed to send AGM Documents) _____

RTO AGM DINNER

_____ Yes, I will be attending the AGM Dinner at Brightwood Golf and Country Club on Wednesday May 24, 2017 at 7:00 PM

Guest(s) name (if any) _____

Yes, I will require transportation for _____ people from the Lord Nelson to Brightwood

Yes, I will require transportation for _____ people from Brightwood to the Lord Nelson

Dinner Ticket(s) _____ @ \$25.00/person = _____ (cheque/money order payable to RTO)

Tickets must be purchased by May 5, 2017 in order to determine numbers for dinner. Dinner tickets in your name will be held and given to you when you arrive at Brightwood Golf and Country Club.

RTO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

_____ Yes, I will be attending the AGM Business Meeting at the NSTU Building on May 25, 2017 at 9:30 AM. A registration desk will be set up at 8:30 AM to distribute voting cards. AGM material will be sent electronically. Hard copies will be available at the registration desk.

Guest (is an RTO member) will be attending the RTO AGM Yes _____ No _____

Registration form and Dinner payment(s) must be received prior to May 5, 2017

Mail to: RTO AGM, 3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, N.S. B3L 4L7

This Land Is Your Land...



*Big Tancook Island, Lunenburg County
by Vicky Parker*



New Waterford bird's eye view toward Lingan, Dominion, and Glace Bay, CB by Colin J Campbell



*Song Sparrow – Country Harbour,
Guysborough County by Cheryl
Millard*



*Halifax Public Gardens by
Colin J Campbell*



*Apple Blossoms – Newport Corner,
Hants County by Betty Anne McGinnis*

The RTO Newsletter invites all members to send us their photos of our beautiful province. In each issue we will dedicate a page to showcase the life, landscape, and seascape of Nova Scotia. Photos will be matched to the season, to correspond with our three issues, and must be your own photography. Please include your name and the location. Not only will our newsletter continue to share information and stories with members, but your photographs will remind us why we have chosen to retire in Nova Scotia, and encourage us to explore its wonders for ourselves. Please email photos to bettyanne@eastlink.ca or mail to Betty Anne McGinnis, 6571 Highway 1, Ellershouse, NS B0N 1L0. Photos sent by mail will not be returned.



Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:
3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, NS B3L 4L7

**RTO Pins are available
through your Branch
Presidents.
Price is \$5.00 each!**

