

The Retired Teacher

Nova Scotia Teachers Union

Volume 49, Number 2, Winter 2018

The Retired Teacher is available online at rto.nstu.ca. To download Adobe Reader, go to www.adobe.com

From The Desk of the President...
Bill Berryman

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The Retired Teacher, a newsletter for retired teachers, is published by the Retired Teachers Organization, an affiliate of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union.

The opinions expressed in stories or articles do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policy of the Retired Teachers Organization or the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, its professional staff or elected provincial representatives.

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Submissions should be directed to the editorial staff c/o RTO Newsletter, 3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, NS B3L 4L7.

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A newsletter for the retired teachers of Nova Scotia

A MEMBER OF ACER/CART

On behalf of the RTO Executive I wish to extend best wishes to all RTO members for a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2018. With your continuing support and that of our twenty-three Branch Executives, your RTO Executive remains committed to fulfilling the RTO Mission Statement which states “the RTO is the official body representing the retired teachers of Nova Scotia and will advance, promote, and protect the welfare of its members.”



Teachers' Pension Plan

During the month of December 2017, RTO members received a copy of the fall newsletter from the Teachers' Pension Plan Trustee Inc. I received phone calls and e-mails from members concerned with the following paragraph in the newsletter:

“The Trustee of the Plan, Teachers' Pension Plan Trustee Inc, in its annual report has highlighted its own concerns about the Plan's financial status. It is important to note that the Plan's financial position is likely to further deteriorate going forward unless the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union and the Province together take very significant steps.”

The newsletter follows the November 2017 report from the Nova Scotia Auditor General which stated that due

(continued on page 2)

to a deficit of \$1.4 billion, action is needed to address the Nova Scotia Teachers' Pension Plan's serious financial condition. The report indicated that active teachers' contributions have increased by 33% since 2014 and the plan's deficit has remained essentially the same. Furthermore, the report states that retiring teachers may not get pension increases for the foreseeable future.

The RTO takes both documents very seriously and has requested this topic be addressed at a Liaison Committee meeting with the NSTU President and Executive Director on March 19, 2018.

Dr. Avis Glaze Report

The RTO Executive has serious concerns with the Dr. Avis Glaze Report entitled "Raise the Bar: A Coherent and Responsive Education Administration System for Nova Scotia". This report made several key recommendations, including dissolving seven English democratically elected school boards, the creation of a College of Teachers, and removing principals and vice-principals from the NSTU. It is our feeling that the report was not researched adequately and shows a bias towards Ontario where Dr. Glaze has spent her career in education.

It is interesting to note that Ontario is the only province in Canada with a College of Teachers after British Columbia decided to eliminate their College as being dysfunctional. Teachers in Ontario pay an annual fee and the benefit to government is that the apparatus of discipline and certification remains partly under their control, but is funded entirely by teachers. Teacher certification and discipline records are public with a handy search feature for any interested parent and future employer. It is even possible to see a calendar of future discipline hearings with details of the accusations. In many cases teachers are suspended without pay during the investigation and hearings.

Ontario, British Columbia, and Quebec are the only provinces where school administrators and teachers are not in the same union. Dr. Glaze mistakenly believed that a conflict of interest currently exists with both management and employees in the same union. The NSTU does not, nor has it ever, controlled or implemented discipline of teachers. Removing administrators from the NSTU will remove the "conflict", but it will replace it with grievances. This already occurs between

the NSTU and various School Board Human Resources departments, but now many of these issues will need to be handled by non-unionized school administrators. Examples from Ontario indicate a 41% increase in grievances and \$2.5 million cost increase for lawyers and arbitrators.

The RTO Executive firmly believes that Nova Scotia's current collegial model places emphasis on conflict resolution and healthy staff relations which creates a positive work environment that benefits teachers and students. The Glaze report is based on a superficial understanding of the Nova Scotia education system and makes recommendations of questionable value based on her experiences in Ontario.

This report will also be discussed at the March 19, 2018 Liaison Committee meeting and the RTO is prepared to provide whatever help is necessary as the NSTU fights to prevent the McNeil government from throwing the entire education system into a complete state of chaos for the foreseeable future.

Senior Pharmacare

At the November 30, 2017 meeting of the Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia, Marina Keeping, Manager Pharmacare Division, Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, provided an update on the program. Marina is presently working with the other Atlantic Provinces on the Atlantic Collaboration Committee which is looking at efficiencies across the four provincial pharmacare programs for consistency and continuity. At the present time each province is reviewing their formularies and trying to narrow them in order to save costs through bulk purchasing.

Marina indicated that there would be no increase in premiums or co-pays this year and the committee is hoping to complete its work in 2018. She indicated that she hoped government would wait until the committee provides recommendations before reviewing changes in Seniors Pharmacare in 2019.

On January 9, 2018, at a meeting with Minister of Seniors Leo Glavine, I asked the Minister if government would be prepared to wait for the committee to complete its task before making changes. The Minister agreed that government should wait and said "We do not want to relive the disaster of 2015".

Some good news on the cost of drugs emerged on February 1, 2018 when it was announced that an agreement had been reached whereby Canadians would see the prices of nearly 70 commonly prescribed drugs discounted up to 90% of their brand name equivalents. This initiative is expected to generate savings of up to \$3 billion for public drug plans as the agreement will triple the number of drugs discounted under the previous generic initiative. The Minister of Health and Wellness announced that Nova Scotia will save \$12 million annually.

Branch President Meetings

The second Branch President meeting of the 2017-2018 year will be held at the NSTU Building on February 27, 2018. These meetings are a great opportunity for the Executive to disseminate information and to seek input from the twenty-three Presidents. They also afford a great opportunity for Presidents to share topics of interest and best practices at the Branch level.

Over the past year the RTO Research and Review Committee has worked on wellness issues, including understanding and finding solutions for members who face social isolation. The Committee has provided the following questions to be discussed during the Presidents Roundtable:

1. What specific initiatives/activities are being undertaken by your Branch in terms of social isolation?
2. What initiatives/activities are working in your Branch?
What initiatives/activities are not working in your Branch?
3. What needs to be put in place to effectively address the social isolation of your members?

There will also be a question as a follow up to the October 30, 2017 Wellness Symposium when I will request how Branches are using the information provided at the Symposium to build and strengthen programming in their Branch.

At this meeting Branch Presidents will receive up-to-date reports from all RTO Committees and Programs, as well as presentations from two guest speakers. In the morning Mike Myette, Chief Executive Officer

211 Nova Scotia, will speak on the programme. In the afternoon there will be a panel discussion on Rightsizing with Phyllis Johnson, Realtor with Royal LePage, and some RTO Members-at-Large who have been involved with this activity.

AGM 2018

Evaluation feedback from the past few years indicate a strong desire to continue holding the Annual General Meeting in Halifax with the same arrangements. Therefore, the 2018 AGM is scheduled to take place at the NSTU Building on Wednesday May 16, 2018. A dinner for delegates and guests will be held the evening before at the Brightwood Golf and Country Club in Dartmouth. Hotel accommodations this year will be at the Future Inn at Bayers Lake. The April issue of the newsletter will provide further details and a registration form for these events.



Bill Berryman and Reg Johnston at the Wall.

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

From the editor. . .

Betty Anne McGinnis

A bit late, but Happy New Year! As 2018 progresses, we retired teachers can relax in the freedom we have earned. We enjoy travelling to exotic lands, golfing and sunning ourselves in Florida, skiing in our home province or elsewhere, reading to our heart's content, and sleeping in after school buses and bells. The joys of retirement.

No more looking forward to storm days. We aren't going anywhere. No more worry over what our service awards will be. We already have them. No more concern over government's latest actions. It doesn't matter anymore. IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE?

In the past two years we have been witness to the decimation of teachers' rights and benefits by this government. We have seen the loss of service awards. Now with the Glaze Report, we have seen an attack on professionalism. We have seen insults thrown at the NSTU, the latest—that government would hand over a sum of money to the NSTU to compensate for losing

administrators from union ranks. As Liette Doucet stated, "Our members are not for sale."

RTO members have walked beside NSTU members in the fight against government attacks. Attacks against the union are attacks against the profession. Attacks by individuals who assume they know best what the problems with education are, and how to fix them. When we began our careers, we knew we were in it for life. In one way or another, a teacher is always a teacher. As we continue with our well-deserved retirement pleasures, let us keep in mind that our colleagues are fighting for their professional lives.

Let us stand beside them once again, in whatever capacity is available to us. Active or retired—we will remain colleagues.

Thank you to all those who have contributed to this issue. Special thanks to the committee members Gary, Colin, Margie, Ambrose, and John, to Bill B and Bill M for keeping me on track, and to Paul for pulling it all together.

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



RTO Executive 2017-2018

| | | |
|---|--|--|
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RTO Branch Presidents 2017-2018

| | | |
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| Halifax City: Bob Hayter | Phone: 902-455-6476 | Email: rghayter@ns.sympatico.ca |
| Kings: Peter Sheppard | Phone: 902-681-5262 | Email: peter.sheppard1@gmail.com |
| Northside-Victoria: Cathy Anderson | Phone: 902-544-0704 | Email: cbanderson@nstu.ca |
| Richmond: Marlene Boyd | Phone: 902-625-3096 | Email: am.boyd@ns.sympatico.ca |
| West Hants: Phil Van Zoost | Phone: 902-798-3881 | Email: cpvanzoost@eastlink.ca |
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RTO — Important Numbers

| | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
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| NS Pension Services Corp.: 902.424.5070 / 1.800.774.5070 | Johnson Inc.: 902.453.1010 / 1.800.588.3885 | |
| Service Canada, Canada Pension Plan & Old Age Security: 1.800.277.9914 English / 1.800.277.9915 French 1.800.255.4786 TTY device | | |

Committee Reports

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The RTO Communications Committee met on February 7, 2018 for its third meeting of the year with all members present

The focuses of the meeting were *The Retired Teacher*, our provincial newsletter, and our RTO website. Editor Betty Anne McGinnis reported on the content for this newsletter. It is worth noting that 20 of the 23 RTO Branches have reports in this issue. This is the largest number of Branch reports ever. We thank those responsible for sharing their Branch news. The Committee encourages all Branches, as well as individuals to share their experiences in retirement.

Keeping the mailing list has become a major responsibility, but should become easier in the near future. We encourage people who have moved, or who have changed their address by Canada Post to let the RTO know through the NSTU receptionist as soon as possible.

A minor change you will notice is that our issues are now dated Fall, Winter, and Spring rather than by the months as there seems to be additional factors that affect when an issue can be printed and mailed. It is sometimes difficult to set a specific timeframe.

Webmaster Colin Campbell presented an update of changes on the RTO website. This site has a wealth of materials and information that ranges from deals and discounts, to RTO forms, from wellness information, to who is who in the structure of the RTO.

It even includes the RTO Operations and Procedures Handbook. We encourage members to check it out.

Colin has also agreed to assist Branches with updating their websites if he can do so.

Committee members also monitor other provincial retired teacher newsletters, and they reported on their findings to the meeting.

In the near future, the Committee will make recommendations to the RTO Executive regarding the printing of letters to the editor and the inclusion of classified ads.

Branches with newsletters include Yarmouth/Argyle, Colchester, Lunenburg, and Annapolis which has an electronic newsletter.

Branches with websites include Shelburne, Yarmouth/Argyle, Annapolis, Dartmouth, Halifax City, Halifax County, AER-Baie Sainte-Marie, Digby, and Lunenburg. It was noted some are dated and some consist of only one or two pages.

It was reported that a few Branches have developed Facebook pages and they are proving to be an excellent medium for sharing information with their members.

The deadline for the next issue of *The Retired Teacher* is May 5, 2018.

— Submitted by Gary Archibald
Chair, Communications Committee

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee held its second and third meetings on November 9, 2017 and February 7, 2018 respectively. Since our last meeting in September, a number of actions items were completed.

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

RTO retirement information required by the NS Pension Services Corporation was delivered to NSPSC in October as requested.

The committee reviewed the documentation required for the New Retiree Kits to be distributed at the Presidents' Meeting in May. The majority of the kits have been completed.

Committee Reports

Membership Committee

The following issues related to the membership database were addressed:

- A. Out-of-Province Members—after reviewing the membership lists of 13 Branches, it was determined that there was no duplication of members on both lists. Therefore, it was the determination of the committee that the 109 members on the O of P list are in addition to the total provided in the September membership report.
- B. Deceased Members—some Branches have reported that some deceased members have not been removed from their lists. This causes distress to survivors. The issue is being addressed.
- C. Outdated Contact Information—this is an ongoing problem that, to be rectified, requires full cooperation from Branches, our NSTU staff secretary, and Johnson Inc.

D. Membership Cards—if a new retiree has yet to receive a membership card, or has lost a card and requires a replacement, please contact Karen Staples, our NSTU secretary at 1-800 565-6788.

E. Members Who Pay Annual Fees—this information will be updated in the database.

It is hoped that all Branch Presidents, with the assistance of their membership committees, will scrutinize their Branch lists to identify the problems indicated above.

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

RTO Pins – \$5.00

RFID Credit Card Protectors – \$3.00

— *Submitted by Reg Johnston*
Chair, Membership Committee

RTO Committees 2017-2018

Pension and Benefits

Chair: Jack Boyd

1. Jack MacNeil – Glace Bay District Branch
2. Judy Knowlton – Dartmouth Branch
3. Blair Boudreau – Yarmouth/Argyle Branch
4. Frances MacEachern – Inverness Branch

Membership

Chair: Reg Johnston

1. Brian Faught – Cumberland Branch
2. Margaret Ludlow – Halifax County Branch
3. Garland Standing – Northside/Victoria Branch
4. Debbie Trask-Cushing – Digby Branch

Communications

Chair: Gary Archibald

1. Ambrose White – New Waterford Branch
2. John MacKay – Shelburne County Branch
3. Margaret Morrison – Glace Bay District Branch
4. Betty Anne McGinnis – RTO Newsletter Editor
5. Colin J. Campbell – RTO Webmaster

Research and Review

Chair: Bonnie Mahaney

1. Ann Jessome – Northside/Victoria Branch
2. Robert Selfridge – Kings Branch
3. Glynda Wimmer – Lunenburg County Branch
4. Wendy Woodworth – Yarmouth/Argyle Branch

Committee Reports

RESEARCH AND REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Research and Review Committee held two meetings since the last RTO Newsletter publication, one on November 9, 2017 and one on February 7, 2018.

Those in attendance at the November 9, 2017 meeting were Bonnie Mahaney (Chair), Wendy Woodworth (Recorder), Glynda Wimmer, Ann Jessome, and Robert Selfridge.

Copies of “Teachers Benefit Comparison Plan”, “Cross Canada Check Up”, and a survey of Teachers Pension Plans across Canada were distributed and discussed in terms of commonalities, differences, and enhancements.

Relations between NSTU Locals and RTO Branches were discussed and the committee determined that this is an ongoing issue. It was interesting to receive feedback from the October Presidents’ meeting, noting that relations varied among Branches. However, it is encouraging that Branches and Locals are making efforts to foster communication, interactions and relations.

Wellness is one of committee’s priorities, particularly as it relates to isolation. This topic was promoted at the Wellness Symposium and will be discussed at the February Presidents’ Meeting. The Committee recommended three questions be presented to Branch presidents to highlight what specific initiatives/activities are being undertaken within the Branches to address social isolation, what is working and what isn’t, and what needs to be put in place to effectively address the situation. These questions will be reported on at the Round Table Discussion.

The committee looked at the document SHIFT-Nova Scotia’s Action Plan for an Aging Population and discussed the supports in place. All were in agreement that this was an excellent document showcasing numerous proactive supports.

Detailed discussion took place regarding formulation of a Getting Home Safely Hospital Discharge Checklist. A draft checklist was developed and presented to Executive at the December 6 meeting for approval,

with the recommendation that the checklist be placed, for access, on the RTO Webpage. This checklist was approved by the RTO Executive and has been placed on the RTO Webpage under Wellness Links.

Copies of a thesis study summary by Myrna Brown, BEd Student— “Retired Teachers Identity and Usage of IT” —was discussed. Committee members were not surprised to find that for teachers who were socially active and had positive identity, retirement was a positive, satisfying experience. It was interesting to note that, although there was no significant disengagement or social isolation among these members, it could take up to two years to fully adjust and transition. This research data emphasises that teachers can lead fulfilling and happy lives upon retirement. As well, it could remove some of the apprehension among teachers regarding retirement and the expectation that there will always be an immediate transition and adjustment.

A committee member raised questions concerning the membership data base, asking why two bodies, rather than one, were calculating the member information, and why the existing program was chosen to compile the member’s data/information. These questions were discussed with the Chair of the Membership Committee, Reg Johnston. It was agreed that the questions and suggestions would be forwarded on to the RTO Executive for clarification and consideration. The RTO Executive will schedule a meeting with the committee member.

The Research and Review Committee held their first meeting of 2018 on February 7. Those in attendance were Bonnie Mahaney (Chair), Glynda Wimmer (Recorder) and Wendy Woodworth. Robert Selfridge and Ann Jessome sent regrets.

Findings from a thesis study completed by Jennifer Oldford, BEd student and entitled “Healing Art: A Qualitative Exploration of the Use of Visual Arts by Students Processing Traumatic Events” were discussed. It was noted that the retired teachers who participated in the study believed in the importance

Committee Reports

of developing relationships with their students and in providing them with opportunities to engage in meaningful art-making experiences as a way to foster and enhance these relationships in a positive, non-threatening manner. It was noted that art experiences, as well as enhancing learning, may help students deal with traumatic experiences within an environment of safety, choice and minimal judgement, and that teachers can play a very important role in supporting student healing.

A large portion of the meeting focused on the Branch Initiative Program (BIP). We reviewed the procedure and application for Branches to apply. Our main area of concentration was the Follow – Up Report for Branch Initiative Grants, which Branches must submit upon completion of their event or activity. The RTO Executive suggested that the committee develop a form of data collection to correlate the components and categories of the completed BIP reports. The committee decided to look at the information/data in reference to the events, programs, participants, format, location, purpose, and specific activities related to the event. After much discussion it was agreed that a spread sheet listing various categories and items would be the most effective means of collecting and interpreting the data. A draft mock up spread sheet of

what could be featured was developed. This will be presented to RTO Executive for consideration and recommendation, at the February 26 meeting.

President Bill Berryman provided the committee with an article from the New Brunswick Society of Retired Teachers— “Wellness – Knowledge Exchange as the Foundation to Achieve Personal Wellness”. We agreed that knowledge is the key to achieving any level of personal wellness. Interesting to note that, as well as the physical and emotional components of personal wellness, it encompasses social, environmental, intellectual, career, spiritual, and financial wellness. We agreed that the key to achieving any level of personal wellness was the ability to access, review, refine and utilize the knowledge related to these components, and that it was important to look for balance and to begin to make small changes that can be incorporated into your present lifestyle.

I would like to thank committee members, Glynda, Robert, Wendy and Ann for their input and contributions. The Research and Review Committee held two comprehensive and productive meetings. Numerous topics were discussed, reviewed and considered for follow-up action or recommendations.

— *Submitted by Bonnie G Mahaney,
Chair of the Research and Review Committee*

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Since the last issue of *The Retired Teacher*, the Finance Committee met in November, December, January, and February. Committee members review the monthly financial statements of The Legacy Foundation and RTO Organization. Each line of the Organization Budget is reviewed at each meeting. The Committee is now preparing the 2019 Budget and notes, for the RTO Organization, which will be presented at the AGM in May. As well, the financial statements for fiscal 2017, which ended on December 31, are being reviewed and notes prepared. These will also be presented at the AGM in May.

The Committee notes an increase in Branch Initiative/ Programs (BIP) applications. Some applications have

already been received and more are anticipated as the Committee has had inquiries from several Branches. The very well received Wellness Symposium held late in October is largely responsible for this increased interest. For fiscal 2018, \$13,000 is available for BIP grants. Each Branch can apply for a grant of up to \$1000 using the form available for this purpose. These forms have been distributed to Branch Presidents and are available on the RTO website.

The Committee and its Chair, Treasurer Peter Lewis, wish to thank the Executive and all Branches for their continued support and cooperation.

—*Submitted by Peter Lewis,
RTO Treasurer*

Communications Committee



Standing L-R: John MacKay, Colin J. Campbell, Ambrose White. Seated L-R: Betty Anne McGinnis, Gary Archibald, Margaret Morrison.

FINANCE COMMITTEE



Standing L-R: Bill Berryman, Jim Kavanaugh, John Donovan. Seated L-R: Eileen Coady, Peter Lewis, Linda MacNeil.

Membership Committee



Standing L-R: Brian Faught, Garland Standing. Seated L-R: Peggy Ludlow, Reg Johnston, Debbie Trask-Cushing.

PENSIONS AND BENEFIT COMMITTEE



Standing L-R: Jack MacNeil, Frances MacEachern. Seated L-R: Judy Knowlton, Jack Boyd. Absent: Blair Boudreau.

RESEARCH AND REVIEW COMMITTEE



Standing L-R: Robert Selfridge, Ann Jessome. Seated L-R: Wendy Woodworth, Bonnie Mahaney, Glynda Wimmer.

TABLE OFFICERS



Standing L-R: Peter Lewis, Jim Kavanaugh. Seated L-R: Eileen Coady, Bill Berryman, John Donovan.

RTO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – MAY 16, 2018

The RTO Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held at the NSTU Building on Wednesday May 16th, 2018 at 9:30 AM. The AGM Dinner will be held at Brightwood Golf and Country Club, School Street, Dartmouth on Tuesday May 15th, 2018 at 7:00 PM. Busses will be available for transportation from Future Inns at 6:00 PM to Brightwood and back at 9:00 PM.

Accommodations: A block of rooms in the name of the Retired Teachers Organization (Block Code: 1805 RTO) has been reserved at Future Inns (Bayers Lake) for delegates requiring accommodation. **The room rate is \$107.00 plus tax with free parking.** A hot breakfast of \$10.00 per person per night is available at the Redwood Grill on the premises. Please call the hotel at 1-902-443-4333 or 1-800-565-0700 prior to **May 1, 2018** 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.

2018 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 Tuesday, May 15, 2018 at 7:00 PM

Guest(s) name (if any) _____

Yes, I will require transportation for _____ people from Future Inns to Brightwood

Yes, I will require transportation for _____ people from Brightwood to Future Inns

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

Dietary restrictions (eg, gluten free) _____

Tickets must be purchased by May 1, 2018 in order to determine numbers for dinner. Dinner tickets in your name will be held and given to you when you arrive at Brightwood.

RTO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

_____ Yes, I will be attending the AGM Business Meeting at the NSTU Building on May 16, 2018. A registration desk will be set up at 8:30 AM to distribute voting cards. AGM material will be sent electronically prior to the meeting. 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 1, 2018.

Mail to: Karen Staples, Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, N.S. B3L 4L7

Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia

Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia

October 26, 2017

1. Presentation from Reg Johnston, Chair Community Transportation Nova Scotia
 - Reg stated that Community Transportation is important to every community and the key to forwarding community transportation in Nova Scotia was to have a singular voice from a concentrated group.
 - Community Transportation's mission is "To facilitate transportation options that lead to healthier and more connected communities throughout Nova Scotia by partnering with community organizations, governments and businesses."
 - Community Transportation's vision statement is "To have an accessible transportation network for everyone in Nova Scotia and to effectively facilitate transportation options that lead to healthier and connected Nova Scotia communities."
 - Rural Transportation Association (RTA) provides affordable and accessible transportation services in 17 rural areas and small communities across the province.
 - > These community based, non-profit transportation providers assist people to access basic needs and services in their rural communities.
 - > The services include fixed routes in small communities, and door-to-door in rural areas.
 - A joint task force of Community Transportation and the Rural Transportation Association are working together on regulatory issues, operational risks, and standardizing practices.
 - The collaboration will result in streamlined services, reduced cost, and the elimination of barriers.
- The two key issues the joint task force is working on are tagging and crossing municipal barriers.
2. Hearing Aids
 - Important to get information to older adults and families (people wait 7 to 11 years before doing something about hearing loss).
 - Critical that older adults speak to hearing health care providers first before spending any money on hearing aid or listening device.
 - Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres, located in 24 communities across the province, provide testing with open referral policy (phone number 1-888-870-3330).
 - Hearing Aid Society of Nova Scotia provides hearing aids for low income adults who meet the eligibility criteria.
3. Bill C-27
 - Advisory Council members oppose Federal government Bill C-27 which will permit federal private sector and Crown Corporations to convert from Defined Benefit pension plans to Target Benefit pension plans.
 - The Nova Scotia Department of Finance has stated that there are no plans to make changes in Nova Scotia at this time.
 - This is an active campaign to oppose this legislation led by the Canadian Coalition for Retirement Security.
 - The bill has passed first reading in Parliament, but there is little information to indicate when the government plans to call the second reading.
4. SHIFT – Nova Scotia's Action Plan For An Aging Population
 - Deputy Minister has presented to Deputy Ministers of Seniors in Canada, National Association of Pensioners, Future of Work and Housing Conference and Aging 2.0 Optimize Conference in San Francisco.

- Deputy Minister has reviewed all recommendations with 8 other Deputies and will do the same in March 2018.
 - Department of Seniors is establishing a Social Innovation Lab on Aging to facilitate seniors wanting to start up new businesses.
5. Senior Navigator
- Pilot has been completed and now being evaluated to decide if wishing to continue as a paid position or volunteer.
 - Need to consider role of 211 in making final decision.
 - Many different models in province and the consultant's final report did not provide recommendations.
6. 2017 – 2018 Priorities
- Draft document was reviewed and will be finalized in November.
7. Letter to Minister of Health
- Following motion was approved unanimously:
 "That the Chairperson of the Seniors Advisory Council write a letter, on behalf of the Council, to the appropriate government personnel requesting that the medical doctors in Nova Scotia be given direct representation on the Nova Scotia Health Authority."
8. Heating Assistance Rebate Program
- Program through Service Nova Scotia commenced on October 16, 2017.
 - Grants up to a maximum \$200 available with thresholds of \$29,000 for single households and \$44,000 for family households.
 - Last year program provided grants to more than 41,500 individuals and families.

Bill Berryman

Chair, Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia

Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia

November 30, 2017

1. Seniors Pharmacare – Marina Keeping, Manager Pharmacare Division and Lara Grant, Manager Insured Pharmaceutical Programs, Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness

- Marina is working with the other Atlantic Provinces on the Atlantic Collaboration Committee which is looking at efficiencies across all four provincial programs for consistency and continuity
 - > Presently looking at each province's formularies and trying to narrow them in order to save costs through bulk purchasing
 - > Concerns continue about diminished impact from patent expirations and generic pricing policies
 - > N.S. Seniors Pharmacare projecting 5 to 6% growth over the next few years and an increase of beneficiaries by 3% yearly
 - > Will be reporting on Committee's recommendations at April 2018 meeting
- Discussion taking place on a possible National Pharmacare Program similar to New Zealand with a limited formulary
 - > Federal government is participating with the provinces and territories
 - > Canada has little international buying power as it represents only 4% of the world's population
- How do drugs get on the formulary
 - > First of all, drugs need to be approved by Health Canada
 - > The Canadian Drug Expert Committee reviews the new drugs looking for efficiencies and costs before providing recommendations to the province
 - > The Pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance negotiates prices with the pharmaceutical companies
- Marina provided the 2016 – 2017 statistics

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Number of beneficiaries | 133,539 |
| Number of claimants | 119,163 |
| Total number claims paid | 4,094,535 |
| Total amount paid by government | \$153,658,400 |
| Average claim per claimant | 34.4 |
| Average amount paid per claimant | \$37.53 |
- Drug Assistance for Cancer Patients Program has increased the allowable income amount from \$15,720 to \$25,000
- Concern continues about increased costs for

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- biological or orphan drugs
2. Hearing Aids
 - Shane Donovan, new senior corporate and policy strategist with the Department of Seniors, is working with the Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres to look at strategies about the costs of new hearing aids and issues around warranties for repairs
 3. Seniors Housing – Brendan Maguire, Member of the Legislature for Halifax Atlantic
 - Brendan has been tasked by the Minister of Housing to look at issues/concerns about housing for seniors in the province
 - Council members provided him with suggestions on how to allow seniors to age in their own homes:
 - > Examples included renovations, home heating subsidies, snow removal, lawn care, transportation to get to doctors' offices and pharmacies, etc.
 - Council emphasized the vital importance of a new communication policy to inform seniors of what is available to them
 4. Department of Seniors Update
 - Deputy Minister presented SHIFT – Nova Scotia's Action Plan For An Aging Population to 1,000 delegates at the Aging 2.0 OPTIMIZE in San Francisco on November 14-15, 2017
 - The World Health Organization has taken an interest in the recommendations of SHIFT
 - The Department paid for 800 television "spots" to promote seniors and SHIFT
 5. Seniors Advisory Council Priorities 2017-2018
 - Council members finalized the priorities and they can be located on the RTO website
 - Council members approved a document tracking the priorities with names of guest speakers and dates for presentations
 6. Adult Capacity and Decision Making Act – Tina Hall, Team Lead and Senior Solicitor, Nova Scotia Department of Justice
 - This act replaces the former Incompetent Persons Act on December 28, 2017
 - Purpose of the Act:
 - > Recognize that adults may experience impairment in their capacity
 - > Provide a fair and respectful framework for protecting the safety and security of adults whose capacity is impaired and who as a result may be vulnerable
 - > Promote the dignity, autonomy, independence, social inclusion and freedom of decision-making for adults
 - > Ensure the least restrictive and least intrusive supports and interventions are considered before an application for representation is made or a representation order is granted
 - Principles of the Act:
 - > An adult is entitled to make his or her decisions, unless the adult's incapacity to do so is clearly demonstrated
 - > An adult is not incapable of making decisions merely because the adult makes or would make a decision that another adult would consider risky or unwise
 - > An adult is entitled to communicate by any means that enables the adult to be understood, and the means by which the adult communicates is not relevant to a determination of whether the adult has capacity
 - > Where an adult does not have capacity to make a decision, the adult's autonomy must be preserved by ensuring that the least restrictive and least intrusive form of representative decision-making is provided
 - Act sets out clearly who is eligible for a capacity assessment and the Nova Scotia Public Trustee will provide financial assistance for legal costs
 - Legal Aid will be available in the situation of the court granting a representation order
 - Act sets out clearly the duties and responsibilities of the representative as well as limitations on the representative's authority
 - Court may order a representative to submit reports on:
 - > Financial matters, accounts, and activities where the representative had decision-making authority over the adult's finances
 - > Observations and opinion regarding the adult's capacity

- > Personal care and health care to the extent the representative has authority over them
- Act provides transition from former guardianship orders to representation orders and former guardians become representatives
- The various safeguards incorporated into the act ensure that decisions made will respect the rights and dignity of the adult to the fullest extent possible.

Bill Berryman

Chair, Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia

Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia

January 25, 2018

1. Community Governed Nursing Homes – Judy Heffern, Managing Director
 - A 30-member non-profit organization which controls 80% of the non-profit nursing home beds and 58% of all nursing home beds in Nova Scotia
 - Founded in 2011 to support Nursing Homes which are community governed
 - Mission is to support and promote community-governed nursing homes
 - Vision is success through collective capacity
 - Values are collaboration, equality, accountability, transparency and innovation
 - Organization is a member of the Department of Health Long Term Care Finance Committee which hopes to promote effective use of resources, invest in a sustainable future and explore opportunities for shared services
 - Providing media training for administrators of homes to promote visibility and be a strong advocate for seniors
 - Willing to work with the SAC in responding to the new Continuing Care Strategy
2. Report from Department of Seniors
 - SHIFT document will be reviewed with Deputy Ministers responsible for implementation through a March Report Card
 - Pilot being developed with Salvation Army to assist seniors with home maintenance, snow shoveling and lawn care
3. Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia – Lloyd Brown, Chief Executive Officer and Linda Bird, Director of Programs and Services
 - Working with Centre For Small Business to help seniors become entrepreneurs
 - Age-Friendly Grants will be disbursed on February 1, 2018
 - Silver Economy Summit will take place at the new Halifax Convention Centre on March 6-7, 2018 and the theme will be Technology of Aging
 - Continue working with Community Transportation Nova Scotia on recommendations from SHIFT document
 - Three year Dementia Strategy funding has allowed Society to deliver more information and provide support and services to Nova Scotians with dementia
 - Info Line has knowledgeable and caring staff who understand concerns and needs of dementia clients
 - > In 2017-2018 there were 2,749 contacts of which 871 were new
 - > Over the past three years there has been 49% increase in calls
 - First Link is a proactive service with direct referral from a health care provider or 811
 - > Provides confidential, timely support and education helping families prepare for the challenges ahead and avert crises
 - > Over the past three years there has been a 60% increase in referrals
 - Through TV commercials, newspaper ads, videos, social media, website initiatives and Access Nova Scotia onsite electronic communications, the Society is connecting with the public to reduce stigma and inform the public where to get help
 - Five Community Coordinators provide presentations, workshops and awareness breakfasts across the province except the Tri Country area
 - New projects are providing support and advice for Difficult Conversations and new materials for Palliative Approach to Care
 - Society is bringing U-First training to Nova Scotia which is a 6-hour education program

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ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES ENSEIGNANTES ET DES ENSEIGNANTS RETRAITÉS
CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED TEACHERS

National Pharmacare Program

At the conclusion of the ACER-CART Annual General Meeting in Ottawa on June 2-3, 2017, President Brian Kenny proposed four priorities for the organization in 2017 – 2018. One of the priorities was “to develop strategies and produce resources for retired teachers and seniors supporting a one Canadian purchaser national pharmaceutical formulary”.

Background

Canada is the only developed country in the world with a universal health care program that doesn't include a universal prescription drug plan. Next to the United States, we have the second highest prescription drug costs in the world. Canada has widely varying prescription drug coverage and uneven access to prescription drugs, and often Canadians pay different rates for the same medication, depending on where they live. The idea of a nationally funded prescription drug program was recommended as the second half of a universal health care program in the Royal Commission on Healthcare report in 1964.

A national pharmacare plan is badly needed and long overdue. Today, 3.5 million Canadians can't afford to fill their prescriptions. A 2015 Angus Reid poll found that 26 percent of Atlantic Canadians said they or someone else in their household hadn't taken medication as prescribed because they couldn't afford it.

Canada is not benefiting from the current system, but pharmaceutical and private insurance compan-

ies are. Pharmaceutical companies can charge higher prices for commonly used drugs because they sell to so many buyers. Private insurance companies benefit by charging employers, unions and employees to administer private drug insurance plans.

In a study entitled *Pharmacare 2020: The Future of Drug Coverage In Canada*, it was revealed that New Zealand's national drug program allows it to bring prices down by bargaining with drug companies for the entire country. An example of cost savings is the brand name anti-cholesterol drug Lipitor. For a year's supply in New Zealand the cost would be \$15 versus a minimum \$811 in Canada. A year's supply of the generic version of Lipitor would cost \$140 in Canada, more than nine times greater than the New Zealand price tag.

The only place where prescriptions are covered for all Canadians is in a hospital. Every provincial and territorial government provides different coverage for its citizens. Most subsidize the cost of medications for vulnerable Canadians, such as those over 65 years old and recipients of social assistance and disability benefits. Many also provide catastrophic coverage, but only for those facing the most astronomical prescription costs.

We need a national pharmacare program that covers all Canadians! One in five Canadians pay out of pocket for their medications, either because they don't have a prescription drug plan or because they have a plan that doesn't cover the full cost of medications they need. It is estimated that one in ten

Canadians does not fill prescriptions because they are not affordable.

Canada needs to combine the purchasing power of all governments (federal, provincial, territorial) under one Canadian purchaser in support of a national pharmaceutical formulary. The Pharmacare 2020 study indicated that the combined purchasing power of a national pharmacare program would save from \$4 billion to \$11 billion a year in prescriptions. By using evidence and information systems to guide drug coverage and prescribing, there would be a further savings of \$5 billion a year by reducing the problems of drug overuse, underuse, and misuse.

The Next Step

In 2015 Angus Reid polled Canadians on this issue and an overwhelming majority of 91 percent—including 92 percent of Atlantic Canada—said they believe our public health care system should include a universal prescription drug plan. Several national health care commissions have recommended the same, along with the Canadian Medical Association, Canadian Federation of Nurses Union, Canadian Doctors for Medicare, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Canadian Health Coalition, Council of Canadians and the Canadian Labour Congress.

What is now necessary is the political will of all governments to provide a one Canadian purchaser national pharmaceutical formulary. At the Council of Federation meetings over the past three years, all provincial and territorial governments have stated categorically that they are in favour of a national pharmacare program. At the present time the federal government covers the costs of prescription drugs for members of the Armed Forces, the RCMP, Veterans and Indigenous peoples— approximately fifty percent of the total costs of prescription drugs in Canada. Why is the federal government resisting the implementation of a national pharmacare program?

It is now our responsibility to lobby Members of Parliament and inform them of the tremendous cost savings of such a plan and complete the unfinished business of our national medicare system. We need the Trudeau government to commit to the implementation of a national publicly administered

universal prescription drug plan for every Canadian in every province and territory.

Bill Berryman
Regional Representative – East
Chair, ACER-CART Political Advocacy Committee



Tim MacEachern, Teachers Plus Credit Union, and Bill Berryman.

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- for staff in long-term care focusing on understanding behaviour associated with dementia
- Society is researching a design for dementia-friendly communities with dementia-friendly activities at pilot sites within the communities
- In order to implement dementia-friendly communities, it will be necessary to provide dementia education to the professional sector, municipalities and general public so that everyone can take part in creating accessible, inclusive spaces for people with dementia
- The goal of the Alzheimer Society is to change social and physical environments so that neighbourhoods are places where people living with dementia and their care partners feel valued and empowered

Bill Berryman
Chair, Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia

FEATURE TEACHER

Celebrating Iris Richards

Iris (Martell) Richards was born in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia on April 1, 1921. She began her teaching career at the Halifax Ladies College where she taught Latin and English for two years. In 1944 she moved to Yarmouth, teaching first Grade 6 followed by Grade 7, Grade 9, and then high school Latin and English. In 1980 she became a leader in the Laubach Literacy Canada program. She finished her 40-year teaching career administering literacy assessments in three schools, and working with children who needed support in reading. Iris' husband Albert passed away before the end of her teaching career.

As one of her students, I recall her saying, "If you don't know Latin, you don't know English". When I entered Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High, the practice was to group students alphabetically. There were enough students taking Latin to form one large class and one smaller group. Since my surname began with a letter towards the end of the alphabet, my Grade 10 Latin class of leftovers made up that smaller group. This meant that we each got more of Mrs. Richards' attention. Love it or hate it, there was no escape. She was committed to making sure that all her students succeeded—no excuses. If you didn't get it the first time, you could count on Mrs. Richards to require you to practice, practice and practice until you did. Quizzes and tests were frequent. Any errors had to be corrected and one would line up at her desk at lunch time to have the corrections heard and reviewed. This kind of attention continued through grades 10, 11, and 12. She was a teacher one could not forget.

As much as Iris Richards was committed to her teaching career, she has been committed to her community as well. She has been recognized for 75 years of service in the Girl Guide movement. In 1980, she began to volunteer at the Yarmouth Regional Hospital Gift Shop. When vision problems became an obstacle there, she began to volunteer at the information desk, a job she continues to do today.

Iris is an honorary member of the Kritisophian Club, the longest continuously running ladies' literary society in Canada. She was a long-time member of the Yarmouth Community Chorale, and she continues to sing in the choir of Holy Trinity Anglican Church. She serves on the Board of the Yarmouth Public Library and has received an honorary Doctorate Degree from the University of Kings College. In October 2017, as part of the opening of Hook Canada Red, Iris was selected as a new Life Member of the Rug-Hooking Guild of Nova Scotia. Iris was one of the founding members of the Carpet-baggers and a great supporter of rug-hooking in her community.

Iris Richards is an inspiration to all who know her. She remains actively involved in her community at the age of 96, and is remembered by generations of those who were fortunate enough to have her as a teacher.

*Submitted by David Sollows
Yarmouth Branch RTO*



Iris Richards



Girl Guides



Elaine Howatt, Iris Richards, Ann Jones



President of Rug Bees, Elaine Howatt; Iris Richards; Director of Rug-Hooking Guild of NS, Ann Jones

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.



Marjorie (Schrader) Cunningham celebrated her 60th anniversary as a Graduate of the Provincial Normal College, Class of 1957. Her reunion photo was taken at the Little White School House on the campus of NSCC, Truro, during the NSTC Reunion in August 2017. Joanne (Goreham) Newell and Carolyn

d'Entremont also attended the reunion. Congratulations, Marjorie, from your retired colleagues across the province!



Remembrance Day Brian Noble at the Carleton Legion.

Find 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 **April 10, 2018**. 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 **Renda Vandertoorn, Kings Branch RTO**. Congratulations!

1. Who stars in the Feature Teacher in this issue?
2. Who is the author of the latest government report that drastically threatens education in NS?
3. Who is the Chair of Community Transportation Nova Scotia?
4. Name one of the sponsors of the Scavenger Hunt.
5. What is the date for the 2018 AGM?
6. Name one of the photographers featured in This Land Is Your Land.
7. Name the two countries which are highlighted for tours by Maritime Travel.
8. Name the two high schools which are hosting reunions this year, as noted in this newsletter.
9. Who is **YOUR** Branch President?
10. Which Branch is hosting the 2018 RTO Golf Tournament?

Branch Updates

AER Baie Sainte Marie Branch

Our annual fall luncheon was held at Clare Golf and Country Club in Comeauville on Thursday, October 26, 2017. Over fifty members were in attendance, and our invited guest speaker was Gary Archibald, Member-at-Large for the Southwest Nova region. He discussed such matters as the Seniors Advisory Council, the Adjusting to Retirement session, the Wellness Symposium, the possibility of a workshop on financial advice for retired teachers, and the present situation regarding our pension. It was a very enjoyable, delicious lunch which included a 50/50 draw and two door prizes.



*Our new Executive includes:
Top left to right: Wilfred Boudreau, Wayne Gaudet (treasurer), Michael German (secretary), André Turbide (president), Gary Archibald (invited guest).
Front row from left to right: Jocelyne LeBlanc Tidd, Patricia Melanson, Loretta Blin, and Doris Theriault.*

Annapolis

In December, the Annapolis Branch held its annual Christmas meeting at the End of the Line Pub in Bridgetown. Members chose one of four entrees for a hearty lunch, held a business meeting, and then enjoyed a Christmas carol singalong, followed by a Canada 150 Trivia Game. John Montgomerie won a free lunch at our next meeting!

President Wendy Rodda and husband Howard Selig's company, Valley Flax Flour, won the Outstanding Innovator Award for their Shake and Smoothie Booster,

from the Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce on November 2, 2017.

Al Peppard, retired principal of Middleton Regional High School, has spearheaded a feeder school history project at MRHS that includes pictures of all 27 of the original schools that were absorbed into the high school when it opened in 1949.

With the cooperation of Dr. Tim Webster at NSCC's Applied Geomatics Research Group, the location of each school was plotted on a large Map. Mr. Gushue, current principal of Middleton Regional High School, prepared a place to display the project and arranged for and funded the hard-mounting and hanging of the project in the school library. A commemorative program was prepared and photo contributors were acknowledged. A reception was held in the school library on December 11. The photo contributors, former staff members, project leaders, school board representatives, and other community leaders were invited and acknowledged. Over 40 people were in attendance at the grand opening.



In November, former AVRSB teacher and bestselling author Don Aker was invited to attend the Vinschool 2017 Book Fair in Vietnam, where he gave talks about his young adult novels to students in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. "One of the most heartening things I've discovered as a teacher and a traveller," says Don, "is that, regardless of how different our cultures might
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Branch Updates

(continued from page 20)

be, children everywhere are very much the same.” Working with an interpreter, he also conducted a reading workshop for parents concerned about their children foregoing books for electronic devices. To give him a taste of Vietnamese culture during his stay, Don’s hosts arranged tours of various cultural exhibits, among them

the Vietnam War Museum in Ho Chi Minh City. “My time at that museum,” Don says, “was one of the most moving experiences I’ve ever had. I wish every world leader bent on war could be forced to spend a day there.”

As you can see, a busy group down in the Annapolis Valley!

Antigonish/Guysborough Branch

On Oct. 2/17 retired teachers gathered at the Keppoch Mountain Lodge for a hike along their beautiful trails. For those unable to walk a transport truck was available to take them to the summit and back. Mother Nature cooperated with a warm sunny day. The scenery was spectacular. After the hike to the top, members gathered in the lodge to relax and enjoy their lunch with colleagues and friends.

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L-R Maria Stewart, Sharon and Peter Whitmee, Laureen Murphy, Nancy Turniawan, Keah Schurman, June Noble, Linda Sorrel, Wendell Schurman



L-R Maria Stewart, Laureen Murphy, Keah Schurman, Nancy Turniawan, Wendell Schurman, Linda Sorell



L-R Bernie and Patricia Currie, Michel and Zane de Noncourt



L-R June Noble, Wendell and Leah Schurman



L-R Donnie Campbell and Henry van Bommel

Branch Updates

(continued from page 21)

A good time was had by all on Dec.15/17, when the Antigonish-Guysborough RTO held its annual Christmas dinner at the historic Royal Canadian Legion in Antigonish. The dinner was a traditional one of roast turkey with all the trimmings. It was a great time for the 90 guests to chat with friends and colleagues. A 50-50 draw and door prize were presented to the lucky winners. A couple of mother-daughters retirees were in attendance. Our newest retiree, Nikki Callaghan, was in attendance and was recognized by President Penny Hemens. Special thanks to Chrissy Arbuckle and Mary MacDougall for planning and organizing the event, as well as to our media person Michel de Noncourt for the photos.



Branch Updates

CPX Branch

The CPX roots go back to the 1940s when several active and retired female teachers who taught in Halifax City formed a social group that met at their homes. As the years progressed, this group of women grew in numbers.

In 1953—the year of Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation—the group wanted to honour this very royal occasion by naming their *teachers* club CPX.

C for Coronation

P for Pedagogy

X for Retired



Gift Bags

CPX holds three social meetings a year—one in the fall, one at Christmas, and one in the spring. Each year at the Christmas Dinner the group holds a minute of silence which follows the reading of the names of members who have passed away during the year. Sick and shut-in members are visited during the Christmas Season and are presented with a potted plant, a greeting card, or both.

The special Christmas project each year is the donation of gifts to the

residents of Ivy Meadows Continuing Care. Each member is asked to donate a gift for a male or a female resident. The members include the trimmings for the gift wrapping. These gifts are collected by Michelle Ellis, an Ivy Meadows Continuing Care representative, who distributes them to the residents on Christmas day.

In 2017 the CPX donated \$1000.00 to the IWK Hospital's Youth Mental Health Program.

In 1956 a group of retired teachers were looking to establish an association of retirees across the province. They looked to the CPX for their inspiration, and sowed the seeds for the current RTO. CPX exists today under the umbrella of the RTO. Any female teacher who has taught in the *old* city of Halifax automatically becomes a member of the CPX.

If you would like to attend any of our CPX functions, please contact Mary Hammond, President CPX, Phone (902) 852-3146 or Barbara Burke, Chair of Telephone and Membership Committees, Phone (902) 443-3275.



CPX Executive members

Colchester-East Hants Branch

Most everyone likes a success story, and retired teachers are no different. The Colchester-East Hants Branch RTO has two such stories—one big and one small.

The former Colchester-East Hants school area includes a large chunk of central Nova Scotia. It extends from Uniacke up the *corridor* area to Truro, across to Tatamagouche, and southwest to Kennetcook. Prior to 2015, retired teachers in the East Hants area met yearly at the Rawdon Fire Hall for a meal and a chance to socialize with other retirees. After Shirley Nicoll, a retired teacher, began to host an annual dinner theatre to support the Rawdon area's medical clinic, many retired teachers in the East Hants area began to attend that event. However, this chance to meet other retirees came to an end when the dinner theatres were no longer staged. Walter Farmer, a retiree who lives in Enfield, said there was "a lack of opportunity for fellowship" as well as "an aging membership and unwillingness to travel during winter months" to attend the RTO Branch's Christmas and Valentine socials. It was obvious to him and Shirley Nicoll that there was a desire to get together with other retired teachers.

In the spring of 2015, Walter began to reach out to retired teachers in the East Hants area to invite as many as possible to an *a la carte* lunch at

Branch Updates

Colchester-East Hants Branch (continued)

Shooters in Enfield. About thirty former teachers came to that first event. In December of that year, roughly the same number attended a pre-Christmas turkey dinner. Meanwhile, Walter said his database was growing with the names of retirees interested in what he was undertaking. By 2016, the numbers increased for the June spring lunch and the turkey dinner in December. In June of the following year, fifty retirees from both East Hants and Truro attended the *a la carte lunch*. The numbers have continued to grow, from thirty at the first event to between 65 and 70 who attended this past December's turkey dinner.

Walter is very pleased with the growth of this event. As he said, the idea was to "connect with as many members as possible from the East Hants area. Good food and good fellowship have helped us to cater to retirees from both East Hants and Colchester."



A small, but successful, activity took place at the November regular meeting in Truro. It has always been our practice to have a short programme to honour those who died in the world wars. This year, President Peter Mattatall put together a challenging trivia game to test the knowledge of those present. Retirees were asked to divide into groups, and each was supplied with a paper and pencil to record the group's answers. It has often been said that teachers know everything. Well, this fun game proved beyond a doubt that this is a fallacy. Only one person among those present got every answer correct! In spite of not knowing every trivia question, many remarked that it was an enjoyable way to recall the role that Canadians played in the wars. If Peter puts together another trivia game for a future November meeting, perhaps retirees will be encouraged to do some research, and more will achieve a perfect score.

Dartmouth Branch

Dartmouth Branch welcomed 54 members in the Vidito Room at Brightwood on a sunny October day. We were treated to a wonderful meal of ham, scalloped potatoes, and turnip mashed with carrot, followed by apple crisp for dessert. The cost of the meal was subsidized by the Branch because of the success of our 50/50 draws. Four door prizes were donated by the Branch and members. Our lucky 50/50 winner was Jean Hiltz. During the meeting, Margaret MacDonald spoke briefly about her work with immigrants learning English, and thanked those who had donated books and other supplies to the "Literacy Drive" which assists the families in their new environment.



Waiting for lunch!

Many thanks to the Halifax County RTO for hosting their annual Fine Arts and Craft Market in early November. Many Dartmouth members participated as vendors, and our members found lots of new items to purchase. After shopping was a great time to meet old friends and enjoy conversations over coffee.

In December, Brightwood was festively decorated as 84 RTO members

Branch Updates

Dartmouth Branch (continued)



Celia Morgan, Nora Muise, and Judy Knowlton at the Fall luncheon.

from Dartmouth and surrounding Branches gathered for a traditional turkey dinner, with gingerbread for dessert. Members had an opportunity to shop for last minute gifts, as craft vendors Shelagh Radcliffe, Cecilia Morgan, Ruth LeLacheur, and Judy Knowlton offered their handmade wares. The generosity of members shone again as donations were accepted for the food bank and Feed Nova Scotia. Many thanks to Ruth Durrant who looks after the delivery details to the organization. The Branch, Branch members, and vendors provided an assortment of bags and containers which housed door prizes for eight lucky recipients. Our 50/50 winner was Duncan MacLeod.



Kay Sawler, Margaret MacDonald, Dawn Hemsworth, Anne Hughson, Pat Teasdale, and Marlene Bezanson display items gathered for Literacy Drive.



Audrey Matheson sells Jean Hiltz a lucky 5050 ticket.



Gail Langille, Hilde Carson, Janet Latter, and Donna Myers-Keating at the Christmas luncheon.



Ruth LeLacheur sells mittens with a smile.



Margaret MacDonald delivers books and school supplies to a delighted staff at ISANS.

Branch Updates

Digby Branch

In October on a sunny, but very chilly and windy day, Digby Branch members explored the Point Prim Lighthouse and area with retired teacher Greg Turner of Gael tours as leader. Greg related the history of the lighthouse and the shipwrecks in its adjacent waters. He also provided access to the top of the lighthouse with its magnificent views. Then, led by Greg, the group hiked through trails by the lighthouse to rugged cliff tops and lovely water vistas. This outing sharpened an appetite for the good lunch that followed in Digby at Sydney Street Pub and Café.

November brought Digby Branch members to a tour of the Fundy Y complex in nearby Cornwallis and a vigorous water aerobics class. After the class, some took advantage of the hot tub to ease joints and to socialize. The social time continued at lunch back in Digby at the Shore Thing Restaurant.

These events, planned by Events Committee members Jane Power-Grimm and Ann Robichaud, were well attended and greatly appreciated by RTO members and guests.



Branch Updates

Glace Bay District Branch

On Thursday, December 14, the District Branch once again held its Christmas dinner meeting at St. Leo's Church Hall. Retired teacher, Mickey Gouthro, enhanced the holiday spirit by singing the Christmas classics. A large turnout of members enjoyed a delicious turkey dinner with all of the trimmings. Keeping with tradition, the meeting was highlighted by the presentation of gifts to committee volunteers who had donated their time to the organization over the past year.



Mickey Gouthro sings the Christmas Classics



(L-R) Anita MacDonald, Wayne Hurley, Patricia Clyburn and Mickey Gouthro display the festive spirit.



(L-R) Gail Gouthro, Patricia (Puddy) Clyburn, Belinda Hoffman and Rachael MacDonald enjoy the mood.



(L-R) Reg Johnston, Laurie MacIntosh, Jack MacNeil and Arlene MacDonald.



Fred Courtney (L), Steve Campbell, Marilyn Campbell and Diane Hicks look forward to a delicious meal.

Branch Updates

Halifax County Branch

Halifax County RTO enjoyed a busy and productive fall. Our annual RTO Fine Art and Crafts Market was held on the first Tuesday in November, November 7 this year. Vendors provided a variety of quality hand-crafted items for sale at the Dartmouth East Community Centre from 10 in the morning until noon. The coffee room provided the opportunity for retirees to reunite with fellow teachers, and—while sipping tea or coffee and choosing from a delicious selection of morning pastries and biscuits—enabled them to share memories and catch up on their latest adventures.

Vendors all agreed that they had a most successful and enjoyable day. The vendors, the retirees, as well as friends of the RTO, graciously donated door prizes. Many in attendance left with lovely prizes and one very lucky individual left with cash as the winner of our 50/50 draw.

On December 8, members and friends had an opportunity to enjoy an elegant Christmas Afternoon Tea at Oakwood House on Lake Banook. This historic Victorian house was decorated beautifully for the Christmas Season and set a

holiday mood. Everyone enjoyed a Christmas trivia game as well as delicious tea, sandwiches, and sweets served on fine china. Very elegant.

Our Branch presented three sessions on Advance Care Planning this fall. Your executive is making plans for sessions in March, April, and our AGM in May.

March: An afternoon of bridge and other card games

April: Caregivers Nova Scotia will be invited to present to our members

Ongoing: Beth Raymond will offer a session on Advance Care Planning later in the spring. If you are interested, please contact her mbraymond@eastlink.ca

If you are not receiving emails and communication from our Halifax County RTO Branch, please notify our communications officer, Bea Fourgnaud, bfourgnaud@hotmail.com

We remind you that our events are inclusive and members from any Branch are welcome to attend.



Branch Updates

Inverness Branch

The RTO Inverness Branch met for our fall AGM meeting on November 2, 2017 in Port Hood, with 64 members attending, many of them new members.

The installation of three new officers took place and the outgoing members were thanked for their service. Roy Sturmy gave a very informative session on the Wellness Seminar that he and Cecille Miller had attended.

The members enjoyed a delicious roast beef dinner, prepared by the Port Hood CWL. As usual, the door prizes were a big hit.

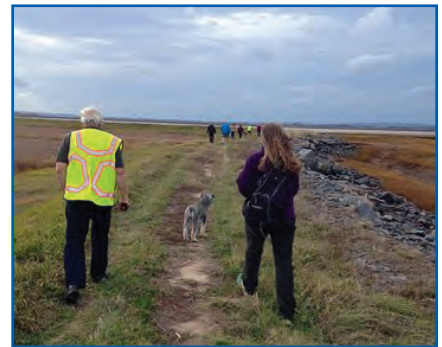


Kings Branch

Active retirement has been a catch phrase for the Kings Branch RTO this past fall. Our walking group met every Monday afternoon into December when cold weather and snow slowed the group down. Hopefully, they will come back together with snowshoeing. We explored hiking diverse places in the Annapolis Valley, including walks along the dykes in Avonport, exploring the Wolfville Watershed Reserve, Rails for Trails, Miners Meadow Marsh, Kentville ravine with beautiful old

growth hemlocks, and many more trails.

An important event for the Branch was the presentation on Adjusting to Retirement by Fran Reddy Chisholm. Many of the participants had been retired for several years, others were new to it. Fran had much to say for all of us, and caused us to reflect on our own circumstances, and how we might make adjustments to enjoy our retirement even more.



Avonport Dyke, November 6th, 2017. Peter Sheppard and Brenda Sheppard, Group of Kings County Retired teachers in the distance



We enjoyed another paint night, our second one this year. The painting was of a sailboat moored off Bachman's Island in Mahone Bay as the sun set on a warm summer evening. It was a difficult image, but everyone enjoyed the challenge. Good company and refreshments added to the evening.

Several retirees gathered at the Kings Arms in Kentville to enjoy an evening at the pub. If noise was any evidence of a good time, these members enjoyed themselves. Pub nights

Branch Updates

Kings Branch (continued)

have been a favourite social time for Branch members for many years now.

Our Annual Christmas Dinner brought a very successful year to conclusion. Over sixty members joined together for an excellent turkey dinner. We held it in the Apple Dome/Kings Mutual Centre in Berwick. The preparation of the meal was watched over by retired teacher Bert Leighton, who along with many other retired teachers, is a member of the Local Lions Club which hosted it.



Scott's Bay Beach Hike, November 20th, 2017 Barry MacKenzie, Anne MacKenzie, Terry Webber (holding Lily) and Joanne Porter



Wolfville Watershed Nature Preserve at Gaspereau Mountain, October 16th, 2017. Yvette LeBlanc (with Chelsea), Cheryl Webber (holding Lily) and Pam Brown (with Lulu)

Branch Updates

Lunenburg County Branch

The Lunenburg County Branch RTO held a very successful and well-attended Christmas Dinner at the Hebb's Cross Fire Hall on December 6, 2017. Seasonal entertainment was provided by Hank Middleton and Sharon Jackson, and members came from many areas (including Wales) to socialize and enjoy a turkey dinner with all the trimmings.

The Activity Committee is working hard to plan other events in the near future. These could include a Paint Night session and a visit to Parkview Education Centre to view the latest changes.

Three groups in the Branch continue to provide activities for retired members—monthly Book Club, weekly Kaffeeklatsch group, and weekly RT's and Cues (Pool Players).



New Waterford Branch

The RTO New Waterford Branch met for its Christmas Meeting on December 11th at the KOC Hall in New Waterford. There was a large turnout for the event and all were in the Christmas spirit. The wonderfully decorated hall added to the festive atmosphere. A turkey dinner with all the trimmings, including a great dessert, was served by the KOC members. Donations were collected for World Vision and the local Combined Christmas Giving Charity. Raylene Hinchey came away as the even-split winner. The regular committee reports were delivered, including a Provincial report by John Donovan and a Wellness Symposium Report by Beth Pheifer. The agenda was completed and members mingled in the spirit of the day before departing for home.



Branch Updates

Northside-Victoria

The Northside-Victoria Branch began the new school year with a September lunch meeting. It's always great to see the *summer glow* on faces and to exchange news and views both with old cronies and recent retirees as we welcome them into the fold. Door prizes and an even-split draw sent a few members home extra happy.

Two of our members attended the Fall Wellness Symposium and they plan a presentation in the spring.

Our annual Christmas dinner is everyone's favourite! It marks the beginning of the holiday season and everyone is festive. Members arrive early to chat, but also to listen, to sing along, and, for some, to dance a bit to the delightful music of our very own TC5 pre-dinner show—although on this occasion, reduced to TC4 status with the absence of the drummer. After a delicious turkey dinner with all the trimmings and dessert, the even split and door prizes were dealt out, and



the TC5 Minus 1 *sang us home* with a beautiful singalong of favourite carols. I'm not impartial, but you must believe me when I say that the RTs of Northside-Vic have the most beautiful, melodic, harmonic singing voices you'll ever hear. The group brings listeners to tears and puts everyone into the Christmas spirit.

At all our regular meetings we collect for the six food banks in our spread-out, mostly rural geography. This year's Christmas donation sent

a trunkful of non-perishables and approximately \$280 cash to one of our local communities.

A Tea is in the works for our dedicated *phone-callers* for early March, at the home of one of our members.

For years our Branch's mid-winter breakfast meetings have been doomed by weather cancellations. But we are determined to have one this year—in April.

It's election time in Northside-Victoria. All executive positions are up for grabs. None of the incumbents is eligible to reoffer. We thank them for their dedicated service to our Branch.

In closing, I shall not make any personal comments about our current weird weather patterns of snow bombs, freezing rain, torrential rain and flash freezes, but if you're in the area, you can come for a skate on the lovely rink created by nature—*inside* my garage!



Branch Updates

Queens Branch

The festive holiday season was in full force in December when members of the Queens RTO Branch got together for their annual end of the year social which included dinner and music. They were entertained by the talented South Shore Ukulele Players. The retired teachers were handed songbooks and at times, were invited to sing along. It was a fun evening for the members and their guests.



Richmond Branch

Members of the Richmond RTO are shown here enjoying the Christmas Dinner & Social held on December 5, at the Seal Cove Restaurant in Louisdale. A large crowd attended and Santa also made a special appearance. Once again this year he brought many gifts for those not on the *naughty* list. A great time was had by all!



Branch Updates

Shelburne Branch

The members of the Shelburne County Branch of the RTO are having a great year! We started off in September with the annual breakfast, and then we hosted the annual RTO Provincial Curling event at which we welcomed members and guests from all over the province. It truly was a well-organized and fun-filled event. We were encouraged to see many RTO members and NSTU members in attendance.

The Shelburne Branch of the RTO also had its annual Christmas holiday turkey dinner meeting at the Sandy Point Lighthouse Community Hall on December 8. This picturesque venue, with its delicious food and impeccable service, treats our members well. The 40 RTO members and guests in attendance enjoyed the opportunity to mingle and catch up on great memories and fellowship.



Sydney and Area Branch

It is safe to say that winter is upon us—snow, rain, freezing rain, and you know the rest. You may as well enjoy it! The Sydney and Area Branch continues to provide pertin-

ent information and assistance to RTO members at local meetings and events. On the evening of November 28, members and their guests arrived at the Pensioners Club in Sydney, with friendly smiles ready to engage in the festivities of the night. It was great to meet old and new friends, and to maintain the camaraderie with each other as retired teachers. The beautifully decorated hall brought out the Christmas spirit in all.

their families. Members and their guests were treated to a delicious turkey dinner with all the trimmings and ten door prizes were awarded. Sylvia Campbell was the winner of



Martha Hood, Greg Bishop, Corinne Coleman, Janet Penny

During the meeting, deceased teachers were remembered individually and fondly, as it is important to honour them. Condolences went out to



Sandra Gabriel, Tina McNeil, Bernadette Hollohan, Wanda Gillis

Branch Updates

Sydney and Area Branch (continued)

the even-split.

Our guest speaker, Paul Sarty of Johnson Inc., gave an excellent presentation on travel insurances in and out of the country. He emphasized the importance of being prepared in the event of sickness or an accident



*Diana Davis, Tina McNeil,
Bernadette Hollohan*

while travelling. He stressed the need to gather all the information you can about travelling before you leave on a trip and to have the number of our insurance company on hand. His presentation was worthwhile and informative.

Knowing RTO members are always willing to help out, Dr. Greg Myatt asked for volunteers to help out with the spring games at the University College of Cape Breton.

In keeping with the spirit of giving, members donated food items and money to the food bank in the area. A donation was given to the Horizon Achievement Centre in Sydney.

A special invitation goes out to

the newly retired to participate in the RTO events. Our Executive—President Bernadette Hollohan, Vice-President Margie MacNeil, Treasurer Diane Davis, and Secretary Tina MacNeil—extends to you wishes for an enjoyable winter.



*Rick Farmer, David Gabriel,
Candice Sarty, Gloria Farmer*

West Hants Branch

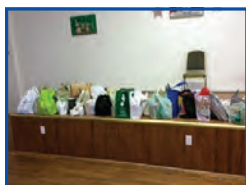
On December 3, 2017, ninety-nine members of the West Hants Branch met at the Three Miles Plain Community Centre for a wonderful turkey dinner and business meeting. Members brought donations of food and essential items for the local food bank and Harvest House. Reports were presented on the October Presidents meeting, the Branch Initiative Trip to Lunenburg, the Adjustment to Retirement Workshop and the Wellness Symposium.

Six items were discussed under new

business, with the need of a new President and Vice-President for the May AGM being highlighted. The Ostrich Award was presented to Reta Zwicker, for the hundreds of quilts she has made over the years for the homeless and needy. Reta has purchased most of the materials herself, with some donations, to complete this wonderful act of kindness and love.

West Hants RTO members acknowledge the sudden passing of fellow Branch member Lynn Hebb on

January 7, 2018. Lynn has been a very active and supportive member of our RTO Branch for the past 12 years. I had the great privilege of knowing and working with Lynn for 42 years—as a teacher, as his administrator, and as Vice-President of our RTO Branch. Lynn never backed away from a challenge and so often volunteered to help out with RTO activities. We have lost a wonderful RTO member, a caring person, and great friend. We miss him.



Branch Updates

Yarmouth/Argyle Branch

Lovely fall colors and warm temperatures on October 18 enticed sixteen members to Ellenwood Park for an enjoyable walk to the lakeside cabin and along the trails, followed by an outdoor picnic.

Several of our Branch members, along with those from Shelburne, Clare, and Digby, attended the Adjustment to Retirement seminar in Meteghan in October 25. Everyone appreciated the presentation and discussion led by Fran Reddy Chisholm.

Maureen Duffy-Mason and Sharon Sullivan represented Yarmouth/Argyle at the provincial Wellness Seminar in Halifax in October, and have spear-headed a Branch committee which is planning activities for the next several months. Other ideas based on member responses to an interest survey distributed at our December luncheon will be incorporated into the events.

On November 11, Remembrance Day wreaths were laid on behalf of our Branch in three locations: by Brian Noble in Carleton, Blair Boudreau in Wedgeport, and Gary Archibald at the Yarmouth Cenotaph.

Thanks to the Shelburne Branch for hosting the Provincial RTO Curling Bonspiel in December. A team from our area enjoyed the fun.

Feed them and they will come! Our October ham luncheon at the Lions' Hall, the popular Dumping Day Breakfast in Pubnico in November, and the delicious turkey dinner in Yarmouth December 15 showed the largest turnouts we have had in some years. The seventy guests at the October event included two international high school students and their coordinator, John McKinnon, who addressed the gathering. The November breakfast was held at the Dennis Point Restaurant that overlooks the wharf where dozens of laden lobster boats readied to depart for the first day of their fishing season. About seventy members enjoyed the buffet and the sights of our local economic backbone in action.

Seasonal piano music by Raymonde Doucet and lovely table decorations crafted by Stephanie Eldridge provided a very festive ambiance to our December Christmas luncheon, where 88 attendees shared the holiday spirit. Our thanks to Pat Gascoigne who donated the home-baked cakes for our last two luncheons.

Through four newsletters each year, and telephone calls for luncheon attendance, our Branch communications reach all of our 270+ members. Group emails go out in the interim to those members who have provided email addresses, and a new closed Facebook group is growing in popularity. We strongly recommend that our members contact Past President Wayne Leblanc to be included in these two electronic media, to ensure that they receive the latest in RTO news and activities in a timely manner.



Ellenwood Walkers



Ellenwood Park



Ellenwood Outdoor Picnic



Dumping Day Breakfast



Christmas Luncheon



❄️ ❄️ TRUE ❄️ ❄️ SNOWBIRDS

Can you imagine living by choice—from the first of November to the end of March—in a town where people are excited when twenty centimeters of snow is forecast? Yes, excited!

After skiing, as you pick up a few items in the local grocery store before walking to check for mail, there is a definite buzz. Everyone you encounter is smiling and talking about how many centimeters may fall. Temperature is also under discussion, as cold is needed for great fluffy powder.

Imagine that school is never cancelled, planned events are not postponed, nor does the free ski-bus stop running because of snow-covered roads. On a snow day, some businesses open late because the owner has gone to ski a few early morning powder runs. They put a sign out, Gone skiing.

Where is this magical place?

It is Rossland, BC.



Rossland

The city of Rossland, set in South Eastern BC, in the West Kootenay Region, is just a pretty place surrounded by mountains. It has a rich history. In 1897, people were lured by the discovery of gold. It became a thriving mining community. It was incorporated as a city and for a while was the third largest in BC, and one of Canada's largest.

Years ago Rossland had passenger rail service to Spokane, Washington, as well as service to the smelter (now Teck) in Trail for workers and others. The tracks were finally removed in 1966. At one point, Rossland had its own Stock Exchange.



Snow Ghosts

The city displays a variety of architectural styles. These range from small miners' houses to grand old buildings—such as the bank—which were designed by the British architect, Francis Rattenbury. Today, as everywhere else, huge houses are being built in new sub-divisions.

The names of the mines can be found on streets, restaurants, and, of course, as the names of the ski trails. Some of the buildings have survived from early times. The Miners' Hall hosts many events and has had recent renovations. The Mining Museum is a good place to visit, and there are many publications tracing Rossland's history.

The city of Rossland has many community events which include a Winter Carnival which has been held since 1898. The census shows a population of 3500. However, that number is suspect for at all events there are always wall-to-wall people—babes in arms to the very elderly. The entire population must show up.

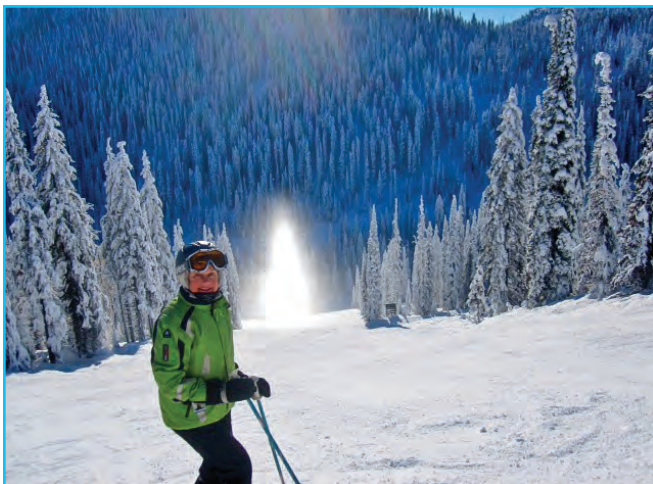
One can attend live theatre, variety shows—which include ballet and other types of dance—and a variety of music and song performances. The school system seems to work well. It consists of a French school, a ski academy, a lot of home-schooled children, and English public schools. The politeness and poise of the children and young adults impress me.



Grey Chair

The lifestyle offered here is incredible. Not only is the Alpine skiing a huge attraction, but there is also Nordic skiing and snowshoeing, with a series of cabins or warming huts and extensive trails for hiking and biking. Since 1993, Rossland has been the Mountain Bike Capital of Canada. In the midst of a snowfall, it is not unusual to see a cyclist riding a Fat bike. People tend to be very engaged with outside pursuits. If you are interested though, there are Book Clubs, Pickleball, and even a knitting group which meets at the library.

The Alpine Ski Area is Red Mountain Resort. It is located on Red, Granite, and Grey Mountains—a mere



Solar Pillar

three kilometres from Rossland—which is a plus on a snowy day. It is one of the oldest ski areas in North America. It dates to the creation of the Red Mountain Ski Club (RMSC) in the first decade of the 1900s. It is in the Monashee Mountains just north of the US border. It has a reputation for light dry powder with a yearly snowfall of 750 cm.

Red has a great history. In December, 1947, a single-person chair lift began to operate. It is believed that the only other one in Canada was at Mont Tremblant in Quebec. It was made possible by engineers and workers from the smelter, along with local ski enthusiasts. This first lift made possible the later developments on Granite and Grey.



Skiing off Piste

In 1968 the first World Cup Race ever held in Canada was hosted here. Nancy Green grew up here and learned to ski on Red Mountain. Red has attracted a great following over the years. We know many visitors who, like ourselves, come for the ski season. Many own houses and condos, and a car in storage.

These *come from awayers* include Aussies, Kiwis, Brits, and Japanese. Young folks from all over seek employment for the winter so they can ski or board. They wear name tags which identify their country or province. Chatting with people on the chairlift is interesting—a lesson in geography. Today we chatted with a young lady from Scotland. From December to April the population swells, much like some of Nova Scotia's coastal towns such as Chester.

How were we so lucky to end up here? During the ski season in 2013, before my partner, Ralph Chancey, was due to retire in June, we talked about where we might spend a winter where people did winter, that is,

(continued on page 39)

embraced it, rather than shut everything down if there was 5-10 cm of snow in the forecast. This seems to be what happens in NS now.

A skier we knew at Sun Peaks in BC suggested Red. Although we had never heard of it, we secured a rental that April for the next season (2013-2014) from Kijiji. We immediately bought the Early Bird Senior Couple Pass for \$725. That is cheap. The good news—at 75 years of age we ski free!

We drive out to arrive for the first of November to settle in. One realizes what vast countries Canada and the US are. Some years we have done some Nordic skiing and ice skating before the Alpine skiing starts. Last year we went to Mexico for a couple of weeks at the end of November. Once we have a bit of snow, everyone hopes it will keep coming. It is difficult to wait patiently for the opening date of the ski resort.

The winter only people tend to be a social group that quickly becomes part of the community. After five years, Ralph and I know more people here than we do in Bridgewater. It is gratifying to check at the post office the first day you arrive and have folks welcome you back.

Hockey fans will no doubt have heard of the Trail Smoke Eaters as they won the World Championship in 1939 and again in 1961. We buy season tickets for the present-day Smoke Eaters games. They have an avid fan base.

I am busy at the moment planning our Annual Valentines Social. It seems to be a larger gathering each year. If people have just left the hill, they come in ski clothes. It is the one time in the year that I make Italian Love Cake.

The Rossland area is truly beautiful. There is 360-degree skiing on the mountains, much of which is scary steep. We still stop and ooh and ah about the surroundings. One never tires of it.

There is so much more to discover about the area, both on and off the mountains. We are certainly happy with our choice of a winter place. We say we will continue to come as long as we can ski. When we are unable to ski I think we may come

for the ambiance and for the friendships we have forged. We are happy to be real snowbirds.

—Submitted by Carol Draper
West Hants Branch



Breathtaking view

US DRIVING TRAVEL TIPS



Many people who travel south for the winter do so in their own cars. This allows them to take supplies from home that they might not be able to buy in the south—good pepperoni, cheese, HP sauce, and even canned tuna. By the time one heads out of the cold weather for southern climes, their vehicle is full of their favorite *stuff*. Just don't arrive at the U.S. border with lamb or goat—seriously.

A few years ago when we first started to make that southern trek, we were carefree, and stopped for lunch at a diner or moderately priced restaurant. We ate suppers at a restaurant near our hotel. That was the first year. Since then we have honed our travel regimen.

It takes about an hour out of precious driving time to stop at a diner or chain restaurant. It also takes a bite out of the wallet. There are better options. Even if you're not on a budget, there are other considerations

We buy a bagged salad of broccoli, kale, brussel sprouts, cabbage, and a salad dressing. We like this salad because it is crunchy. We pour the salad dressing in the bottom of two shallow Tupperware bowls, and then split the salad into the bowls. On top we add chicken, or shrimp or boiled egg, or some other protein. These go in our cooler. At lunchtime, one eats on the go. The other person eats after the next change of drivers.

We also pack our own supper in the cooler—chili or paella, spaghetti, or some other satisfying dish. When we arrive at the hotel, we have bowls to portion out our supper and use the hotel room microwave to heat it. This saves both money and time. The other reason to supply your own food is the health issue. What do you do if the lunch at Sal's Diner causes you to make frequent stops at roadside or at gas stations? Do you feel like paying for an extra hotel night if supper keeps you in the bathroom the next morning?

Restaurant food—even if it tastes good and doesn't upset your stomach—can have other effects. For one thing, you can feel sleepy and listless after a lunch that includes deep-fried foods. Not a happy way to spend the afternoon behind the wheel. Restaurant food isn't the easiest to digest at the best of times. Your body is in a static position for many hours. It needs all the help it can get. And relieve your back. Get out at stops and walk around the parking area and stretch, stretch,

stretch. Five minutes of this achieves wonders.

Most car seats today are comfortable, but are not designed for 10 – 12 hours of continuous driving. Consider switching drivers every three hours. This allows drivers to arrive at their destination less tired. It's also a good safety precaution—tired drivers make mistakes.

We researched and determined that some sort of extra back support in the car is needed for the road. For the money, we found the best pound-for-pound—or bead-for-bead—device at good old Canadian Tire. These bead *beds* have been around for ages and, at \$20, work really well. We put carabineer clips on them for quick installation.

When stopping for gas, try to find gas stations that have a metal housing around the slot for inserting your credit card. It has been suggested that the ones that have a flashing light—often green—may have a skimmer attached. If you grab the plastic exterior and it comes off in your hand, it is probably a skimmer. Many gas stations have a secure metal housing with an image of a security lock alongside. These are supposed to be approved as tamperproof. Some pumps will ask for your ZIP code. You may feel you have to go into

the station to use your card. Not so! Should it require your ZIP code, enter the digits of your POSTAL code and then add two zeroes to the end. If your postal code is B4N 2Y7, enter 42700 when prompted for your ZIP code. This way you don't need to go into the station and expose your card to yet another machine.

Another good idea when travelling by car is to make sure you fill up when you reach half empty. Some highways can be shut down in an instant which, in cold weather, could mean several hours of idling before traffic begins to move. In a situation like that, you don't want to run out of gas.

Being prepared for the simple things we take for granted—but that are not so simple in another country—can make travelling enjoyable and worry-free.

—Submitted by Dave Jones
Kings Branch RTO



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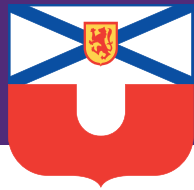


JOHNSON 
INSURANCE

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N S T U
INSURANCE TRUSTEES

NSTU - MEDOC® Group Travel Plans

Frequently Asked Questions

Every year active and retired NSTU members travel within and outside of Canada. Depending on the time of year, this travel may be for visiting family and friends or escaping the Nova Scotia winter. Whatever your reasons for travel and wherever you may go, it is important to have travel insurance, particularly if your travels take you outside of Canada. Below are a number of frequently asked questions on the topic:

Q: What does the NSTU Group Insurance Program offer with respect to emergency out-of-province/country travel insurance?

A: NSTU MEDOC® Out-of-Province/Canada Emergency Medical Insurance

The NSTU Group Insurance Program offers the MEDOC® Group Travel Plan to both active and retired NSTU members. It is insured by Medavie Blue Cross and provides year-round coverage. A 35 day annual Base Plan can be purchased and provides coverage for an unlimited number of trips up to 35 consecutive days per trip during the policy year (September 1st to August 31st). For longer periods of travel, you can purchase a Supplemental Plan for additional protection to cover the period of time that you will be away. The Supplemental Plan provides coverage for one single trip longer than 35 days and includes the annual Base Plan coverage. Premium payments are made through monthly payroll or pension deduction to the policy renewal, which is September 1st.

NSTU MEDOC® Trip Cancellation / Trip Interruption Plan

The NSTU MEDOC® Trip Cancellation / Trip Interruption Plan is also available to active and retired NSTU members. This plan insured by Medavie Blue Cross, helps protect travellers against unforeseen circumstances that may prevent or discontinue a trip. This is also an annual plan that provides the following:

Trip Cancellation – up to a maximum of \$5,000 per insured person per annual coverage period.

Trip Interruption – up to a maximum of \$5,000 per insured person for each covered trip.

- Up to a maximum of \$3,500 for lodging, meals, car rental, telephone calls and taxi costs (\$350 per day).
- Up to a maximum of \$1,000 for loss of, or damage to, baggage and personal effects during a covered trip.
 - Personal effects – actual cash value or \$500, whichever is less.
 - Document replacement – up to a maximum of \$200.
 - Baggage Delay – up to \$400.

Q: What should you know and do if you have a medical emergency while outside of Canada?

A: If you or an eligible family member have an unexpected illness or injury and you are insured under the NSTU MEDOC® Out-of-Province / Canada Emergency Medical Insurance Plan, it is extremely important to call or, if you cannot, have someone call for you the Medavie Blue Cross travel assistance provider at 1-800-563-4444 in Canada and USA or collect at 1-506-854-2222 elsewhere in the world. These numbers are on your ID card(s). Therefore, it is important that you bring this card with you when you travel and share the numbers with a family member or travel companion. You should also have access to your family's provincial health cards when you travel.

The travel assistance provider will ask a number of questions including some information that is on your ID card like your policy number. They will also provide a file or claim number before you finish the call with them. You should mark this number down as it will need to be provided each time you call. The travel assistance provider will also coordinate with any medical facility you are in or being transported to. They will also confirm coverage and approve medical testing and treatment.

If you choose not to call the travel assistance provider, eligible expenses will be reimbursed at 80%, except in extreme circumstances when you are unable to call.

For a trip cancellation or interruption claim, you must use the same contact numbers as indicated above for the medical coverage. Once you have contacted the assistance provider, you will be asked to provide additional information on the situation which may include proof of eligible expenses incurred and documented evidence that an eligible risk was the cause of the cancellation or interruption.

Preparation is the key to a smooth claims experience if you and/or an eligible family member have a medical emergency or have your trip cancelled or interrupted. Preparation should include the following:

1. Have all travel documents accessible.
2. Have your travel insurance ID card available and share its location with your family or travel companions.
3. Always call the travel assistance provider in the event of a claim.
4. Bring along your benefit booklet(s) for reference should you need them.

If you have any questions, please contact the Administrator, Johnson Inc. at (902) 453-9543 or 1-800-453-9543 (toll-free).

RTO GROUP TRAVEL SURVEY

As you may be aware, the RTO, in partnership with Maritime Travel, has a Retired Teachers Travel Club. At present Maritime Travel offers special rates to club members for designated travel opportunities and offers a \$50. travel voucher to the member and his/her spouse as a bonus for joining the club. These rates are not advertised to the general public and are only available to Club members.

At the present time the Travel Club does not offer group travel opportunities designed exclusively for RTO members and their travel companions.

The purpose of this survey is to determine if RTO members would have interest in taking advantage of group travel opportunities designed specifically for members and their travel companions. If the results of the survey show that there is significant interest in this type of travel, steps will be taken to begin developing group travel opportunities. Deadline for survey responses – March 31, 2018.

Fill in the survey and send your response by mail to

John Donovan , 171 James Street , New Waterford N.S. B1H 2X7

or by email - **johndonovan46@hotmail.com**



SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Are you a member of the Maritime Travel RTO Travel Club? Yes No
2. Have you redeemed the \$50. travel voucher available to RTO Travel Club members? Yes No
3. Would you be interested in taking advantage of group travel opportunities, either guided or otherwise, targeted toward RTO members? Yes No
4. Check off travel options that might appeal to you.
*Check off **all** that are of interest and prioritize your top 3 choices.*
 - travel within Atlantic Canada
 - travel within Canada
 - travel to New England
 - travel within the USA
 - travel to Europe/ Great Britain
 - ocean cruising
 - river cruising
 - winter travel to the Caribbean or Central America
 - special interest travel such as NYC Broadway Shows or a Niagara Wine Tour
 - other: _____
5. What factors would most influence your interest: *Prioritize the most important factor.*
 - logistics and convenience
 - destination and format of the trip
 - cost/ affordability
 - other _____
6. Additional comments: _____

LIFE...after Retirement

Changing Life in Paramos, Guatemala – One House at a Time

My first involvement with Guatemala occurred in 2015 after the team leader in NFL suffered a heart attack shortly before Christmas. The team was heading for Guatemala the latter two weeks of January to do in-servicing with teachers. The leader was to do the administrative part. This period of time was the last two weeks of their vacation. The school year starts the first of February. A friend with whom I had gone to L'Universite Ste. Anne called to see if I might be interested in doing this portion of the in-servicing. Never having been there, I readily agreed.

The second trip was a home-building trip that involved another team with two team leaders. Our goal was to build eight houses in under two weeks. Once there, it was decided that two teams of six would work best. Each morning of a build—some days we worked around the school doing upgrades—we would go to the



A view of a home's interior

school's industrial arts shop, load up the panels that the students had made, and head to the building sites in the mountain villages around Paramos and get to work. The site had previously been prepared with

a concrete slab and we constructed the house on it. The school's social worker, who is familiar with all the villages, had chosen the family to receive the house.

Similar to Habitat for Humanity in Canada, the family is expected to help whenever possible. Sometimes there was no dad and the mom and older children helped out by carrying the panels, painting the house, or in whatever way



they could. At the first house on which I worked, there was no dad present. We learned that he had left six months previously and had not been seen since. However, news travels fast. He heard of the house-building and half way into the project he appeared and worked with us. Not one of the five children—who ranged in age from three to fourteen—nor their mother was happy to see him. By showing up to assist with the building, he could lay claim to the house. None of us were happy with his presence.

Should any reader think the home is fancy, I will dispel that



A child working on his future home

thought. It is as rough as an unfinished garage or woodshed. However, for people who live in homes made of corn stalks woven together, this is a palace, solid and able to be locked—and we supply the lock. And the concrete floor is superior to the dirt floors in many homes.

The most dire situation I witnessed was a home with crumbling corn stalk walls, a dirt floor, not one stitch of furniture, a Sterno type of stove, and a bag of what I assumed was rice. There were five children in that family and, again, no father. The children would scour the dump to find pieces of carpet upon which to lie or to cover themselves at night when the temperature dropped down to nine degrees. The family for whom we were building was even less well off. I have told people that the trip was a roller coaster of emotions for me. That was one of the moments when I felt rage. Rage that we, here, spend huge sums for something we don't need just because there is a newer model that has a couple of new features.

As I looked into that home, I decided that I would put up the money for a home for such a family, and that I would return to build it. I later decided to whom the house would be dedicated. To

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this end, I have held two fund raisers—cooking at Ella’s Jamaican Kitchen last October, and at The Food Muster recently. A third was held on November 13 at the same location. The goal of the cost of a house was surpassed. Money raised over and above the cost of the house will help with the fund-raising

of another member who hasn’t reached the goal of \$3,000. The amount provides beds, mattresses, bedding, curtains, a kitchen table and four chairs. A final fundraiser

will be held on February 12 at the Food Muster.

I have received a request from the school to try to get 30 individual pupil desks, 2 teacher’s desks

and 2 chalk boards. This is my goal. When I go, I will take three quilts for the children’s beds. One was donated by a friend who was with me at a church function in Stewiacke.

The patterns on the ones I bought are suited to a girl and a boy. The other is non-specific. The team goes in early May. I am excited because my younger daughter will travel with us. This makes it even more special for me.

What began as an administrative in-servicing trip has evolved into a passion to provide basic homes for the people of Paramos in Guatemala. This passion has spread throughout my family and my community.

*Jim Harpell
Colchester-East Hants RTO*



Building panels



The new and the old

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Halifax, NS B3J 3K1

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MARITIME TRAVEL

For Your Bucket List — Come explore Greece and Ireland with us!

Here are two of Maritime Travel’s favourite destinations, plus the inside scoop straight from our globe-trotting counsellors!

Greece ... Thailand ... Australia ... Dubai ... Ireland ... If it’s on your bucket list, chances are Maritime Travel’s intrepid travel counsellors have already been there. At Maritime Travel, when we say We Know Travel Best, it’s our promise to you. Travelling is a requirement of the job because our counsellors are expected to have global knowledge of travel trends and to be able to advise clients as to their best choices based on first-hand experience. Here’s a quick overview of just two of the bucket-list destinations we’ve been checking out lately.

Irish Adventure Self-drive Holiday with Royal Irish Tours

*Recommended for you by Marg Crowdis,
Manager, North Sydney, NS*

Phone: (902) 794-7251

Email: mcrowdis@maritimetravel.ca

“I just love Ireland. I think it’s the perfect destination for a self-guided vacation because of all the wonderful experiences you can enjoy on your own terms — whether it’s a whiskey-tasting, a visit to Blarney Castle, or learning about your Irish ancestors and tracing your family tree. And with your own car and B&B vouchers valid over 1,000 homes in every part of the Emerald Isle, you simply can’t go wrong!”

The 8-day ‘Go as you Please’ Irish Adventure holiday with Royal Irish Tours has an open itinerary, giving you the freedom to travel where and when you wish during your stay in Ireland. You’ll be provided with a rental car and a B&B guide and the rest is up to you!

Greek Island-Hopper Holiday with Globus

*Recommended for you by Larissa Newell,
Charlottetown, PEI*

Phone: (902) 368-3712

Email: lnewell@maritimetravel.ca

“A dream come true best describes my familiarization trip to Greece. The photos simply don’t do it justice. It was so much more than I ever expected, and with something new and amazing to experience every day, I don’t think I can pick a single highlight. I’ll be back for sure!”

Stunning scenery, sun-soaked beaches, the crystal-clear Aegean Sea, and glorious Greek cuisine are yours to experience on the Globus Greek Island Hopper 10-day tour from Athens to Athens!



BRANCH INITIATIVE GRANT

Cumberland Branch Initiative Grant

The Cumberland Branch was pleased to receive a Branch Initiative Program grant. Esther Boyd was a key organizer, setting up a program with guest speaker Jillian Reid, a nutritionist from Amherst's Superstore. Jillian spoke on preparing meals for one or two people, noting nutritional values of food that will best support healthy living. Many questions followed her presentation. Each attendee received samples of healthy snack choices and recipes. In addition, printed information was provided on preparing small portions and storing extra meals in the freezer. The presentation was well received by members. Signing up for cooking classes at the Superstore was suggested as a possible future event. The Branch thanks Jillian Reid for her excellent presentation and Esther Boyd, Past President, who organized the event.



Jillian Reid, Nutritionist from Amherst Superstore; and Esther Boyd, Past President of the Branch

West Hants Branch Initiative Grant

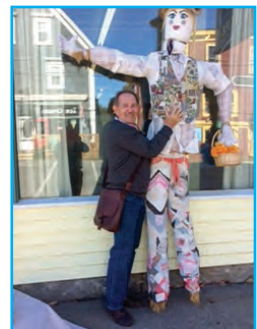
On October 19, 2017, twenty members of the West Hants Branch boarded a bus in Windsor and headed to the south shore of Nova Scotia to the town of Lunenburg. The journey down Highway 14 was a trip that showed off the beauty of our Province. With crystal clear lakes that reflected the shore lines and buildings, one could feel part of a post card. Adding to the scenery, the colors of the fall leaves were spectacular.

This was just the beginning of a wonderful day. Once in Lunenburg, we were greeted with the picture-perfect image of the town. The waterfront and harbor were alive with boats of all shape and sizes. The sun shone warm and brightly. As we began our tour of Lunenburg, we realized we were in the middle of a movie shoot called "Lock and Key" starring Danny Glover. Unfortunately they did not need any more extras, but it was enjoyable to watch.

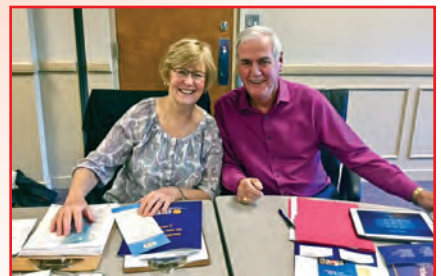
We broke off to visit the town at our own speed and interest. There are many historical and interesting sites. There were still some—too many—shops open. An interesting stop was St. John's Anglican Church that was destroyed by a fire in 2001 and was rebuilt in 2005. *Bluenose* and *Picton Castle* were two of several tall ships in the harbor that recalled the rich heritage of the town.

On our journey home we travelled through the scenic town of Mahone Bay. With the renowned three churches and the many shops, it took no effort to enjoy the beautiful town. Once on the road again, we returned home after a wonderful day of sightseeing and fellowship.

We would like to thank the Provincial RTO for the Initiative grant.



Presidents' Meeting



Thank You, Don

This past week, after 42 years of dedicated service, Don Connolly retired as the host of CBC Radio's Halifax Information Morning show. Judging by my conversations over the years, many teachers were avid followers, and will miss his sincere and insightful interviews, as well as that heart-warming phrase in the dead of winter— "All schools in the South Shore district..."

Last Friday, January 26, I was able to attend his final broadcast at the Cunard Centre in Halifax, and I'd like to share with you a series of fortunate events that led me there.

For many years, my morning alarm was CBC's Information Morning show. When I was teaching, I often heard the opening lines at 6:00 am. Now that I'm retired, I sometimes miss the first part of the show, but always manage to catch at least part of Don Connolly and, these days, Louise Renault. One of my favourite segments of the show has always been the contests. And although I seldom found time to phone or mail in while prepping for a day of teaching, I did manage to enter a few. Curiously, the three contests that I actually won a prize for are all connected.

Years ago, I phoned in an answer to IM's Friday morning "Say What?" contest, identifying an interview from the previous week, from a single, usually quirky quote. Don read my submission on air and I won, receiving as a prize a CBC coffee mug. That mug soon became my favourite, and I spent many weekday mornings, sipping coffee and catching a precious fifteen minutes or so of peace before getting my kids up and ready for school.

That fifteen minutes set the tone

for the day, helping me slide into my routine, keeping me connected with my fellow Nova Scotians, and sometimes giving me little nuggets I could use in my global geography class. No matter if the tidings were good or bad, exciting, heart-warming, or hilarious, the voice that made them a part of my day was, more often than not, Don's.



Then, a few years later, after my favourite CBC mug had sadly met its demise, I entered another Info Morning contest, this time by email. In the spirit of the upcoming Olympic Games, we listeners had to come up with a uniquely Nova Scotian event.

A little background: Not long before this, my brother had taken a position teaching at St FX, and never having taught before, nor having had any teacher training, he was at a loss as to how he could get his large class of first year biology students comfortable enough with each other to work in groups. I passed on some ice-breaker activities from my years of teaching high school. The one he tried with his students was a sort of information scavenger hunt—find someone whose middle name is John, or someone who has a dog and two cats, that sort of thing.

When I called him that weekend to see how he'd made out with his class, he was amazed at how easy it had been. "No problem at all," he reported, "They asked maybe two of my

assigned questions, then the questions shifted gears—"So, who's yer father?"

"Oh, then you'd be Annie McDonald's second cousin! She's my aunt on me mother's side!" This went on for about a half an hour and then, once they'd got it all sorted out—who was related to whom—we were grand!"

So, based on my brother's experience, for my uniquely Nova Scotian event, I submitted "the Cape Breton Genealogical Relay," where groups of four Cape Bretoners were put into a room, and the first group to establish how they were all related, won gold.

Again, Don read my submission, and declared it the winner, and I was in line for a Roots ball cap as my prize. On a whim, I had asked if, in lieu of the ball cap, I might be able to get a replacement for my much-missed CBC mug.

A week or so later, a package arrived from CBC. Inside was the Roots ball cap, and a carefully wrapped CBC mug with a note inside. It read, "We're all out of prize mugs, but I washed this one out for you. Enjoy, Don."

Just a week ago, as part of Don Connolly's farewell activities, CBC's Information Morning held another contest "T-Shirts for Tales" and again, I entered. The idea was to relate some special moment, or connection that made Don and the show stand out in the listener's memory. So, I told the story of my earlier contest submissions, and Don's lovely gesture, giving me his mug.

Again, my submission earned a prize, this time one of Don's own collection of Information Morning T-Shirts along with a note from him. My mug from Don eventually joined its predecessor in mug heaven, but I did manage to pick up a commemorative mug at the Cunard Centre. Now



(continued on page 49)

reunions

NORMAL COLLEGE / NSTC REUNION



Join us in Truro, August 17-19th, 2018, for Reunion 2018. We invite all grad years and years ending in '8', in celebration of our service in education, proud graduates of Normal College and NSTC.

Grads are encouraged to become Alumni members of NSTC. The \$25 per year membership greatly supports the enormous costs to celebrate reunions each year, and supports costs associated with newsletter publications, postage and related costs. Through membership, we can maintain contact with you, through our newsletter publications and other updates. As well, when a decade year and each year comes around, we will know where you are, in preparation for your decade and other grad year celebration.

Please access our website at www.nsteacherscollege.ca and also feel free to contact us at alumni-nstc@uniserve.com. Come, reconnect with your classmates, visit Truro, have fun. As one grad stated, "Let's count the wrinkles after all these years!"

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I can sit in my kitchen, wearing my T-shirt, listening to CBC radio, and sip coffee from my new CBC mug.

Before I exited the Cunard Centre, last Friday, I left a small gift for Don. As I couldn't find an appropriate retirement themed mug, I washed out and wrapped up one of mine, with a note of my own. I hope he gets to enjoy his mornings in retirement, sipping coffee and listening to Information Morning like the rest of us lucky Nova Scotians.

Thanks, Don, for years of companionship.

Submitted by Susan Aliphant, Lunenburg County Branch



Windsor Regional High School Reunion 2018

Attendees from
1964 to 1971
Alumni 1968

August 4, 2018. 6 pm. Legion Hall, Windsor NS

 wrhs2018.ca

 info@wrhs2018.ca

 WRHS CLASS of 68 REUNION



BC Silver High School Reunion 2018



All BC Silver grads and teachers are invited to attend this year's reunion. Years 1964 to 1971.

The tentative date is June 15th and 16th, 2018

The 15th will be a social get together.

The 16th will be something like a Harbour cruise in the afternoon and a dinner/dance in the evening.

This may change...

We would love to see you there...

Let us know if you want to attend by sending an email to bcsilver.reunion@gmail.com and we will keep you up to date on events and planning.

Or visit us on our Facebook page at:
<https://www.facebook.com/bcsilver.reunion>

PROGRAMS

Adjustment to Retirement

Adjusting to Retirement workshops have been held in the South and South West Regions. Members from Queens, Lunenburg, Shelburne, Yarmouth/Argyle, and Meteghan River were among those attending.



Advance Care Planning

Many RTO members have taken training in Advance Care planning presentations.



In the Photo: front row Beth Raymond, Halifax County; Colleen Cash, Executive Director Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care; Margie Mac Neil, Cape Breton

Back row: Alyson Hillier, RTO MAL; Bonnie Mahaney, Shelburne; Brian Noble, Yarmouth/Argyle; George Landry, Richmond; Ester Boyd, Cumberland.

Missing from photo: Ann Cosgrove, Dartmouth; Chrissy Arbuckle, Antigonish; and Mary MacDougal, Antigonish.

RTO Wellness Symposium

On Monday, October 30th, 63 members of the RTO gathered at the Brightwood Golf and Country Club for the first Wellness Symposium. The Symposium was an opportunity to bring delegates from every Branch across the province together to learn more about how we, as an organization, can support our members to live healthy and productive lives in retirement.

The event was organized by an ad hoc committee. It was designed to support Branches as they assist their members to become more familiar with the work being done in this province—the organizations in place to provide services to seniors, and the methods by which other Branches conduct successful events to engage our members. The committee was composed of Eileen Coady, Ambrose White, Wayne LeBlanc, Vicki Parker and Alyson Hillier (chair).

Simon d'Entremont, Deputy Minister for Seniors, opened the day with an update from the province and specifically spoke to the recently released document, *Shift*, Nova Scotia's Action Plan for an Aging Population. He spoke candidly about the need for all government departments to work together to meet the needs presented by changing dynamics in

this province. Delegates had an opportunity to ask questions. It was evident that Simon is well-informed on the issues for seniors in the province, and is one of the best advocates for addressing their needs.

Following the nutrition break two separate sessions were conducted. Angus Campbell, Director of Caregivers Nova Scotia (CNS), addressed a group on how this not-for-profit organization can support those who provide care to family and friends with peer support and education to ease their journey as a caregiver. Anne Corbin, Executive Director of Community Links, led the second session and discussed the importance of aging well by maintaining social connections, staying physically active and continuing to learn new things.

The afternoon sessions were designed to give the delegates suggestions and tools for planning and leading wellness activities in their own Branch.

Four presenters, Vicky Parker—formerly Annapolis Branch, Sharon Sullivan—Yarmouth Argyle Branch, Margie MacNeil—Sydney and Area District Branch, and Jane Power-Grimm—Digby Branch, spoke to the group. They outlined the programs they have

PROGRAMS

conducted, special considerations they have employed to engage members, and funding suggestions, such as applications for Branch Initiative Grants. Delegates found this aspect to be very helpful and welcomed the opportunity to learn from their colleagues.

The event wrapped up with a *mini Seniors expo* which featured a number of community groups and organizations who offered suggestions for programs and services which can be shared throughout the province with our members. Participants in the expo included representatives who spoke about Dementia and Alzheimer's, Preventing Falls, Fitness in the Kitchen, the Nova Scotia Heart and Stroke Foundation, Nova Scotia Hospice and Palliative Care, Community Transit, Fraud and Scams, Care Path and Benefits, Nova Scotia Department of Communities (grants), Nova Scotia Centre on Aging, 211 and Emergency Contacts, and a Nutritionist.

Delegates completed evaluations on the day's events and their responses were very positive and indicated that the activities of the day had provided them with the information, resources and suggestions to lead their Branches in activities to promote positive aging programs in their Branches.

A number of organizations and businesses also contributed to this successful event: Lawton's Drug Stores, Teachers Plus Credit Union, Nova Scotia Teachers Union, Brightwood Golf and Country Club, and Nova Scotia Department of Seniors.

The RTO Executive and the Ad Hoc committee are grateful to all who contributed to the success of this event.

—Submitted by Alyson Hillier
Chair, Programs





The Canadian Press

*Published Wednesday,
February 7, 2018 3:01 PM
EST*

OTTAWA — The new, gender-neutral lyrics to O Canada are official.

Canadian Heritage Minister Melanie Joly says the one-line revision to the national anthem became law today, one day ahead of the opening of the Winter Olympics in South Korea.

The new wording changes the second line of the anthem's English version to "in all of us command" from "in all thy sons command."

Yarmouth Argyle International students who spoke at the Branch luncheon.



*Back: Wayne LeBlanc, Yarmouth/Argyle RTO Branch Past President, Pawel Smolinski (Poland) Graduating from YCMHS; John MacKinnon, NSISP Program Manager and EAL Consultant
Sitting: John Austen (Australia) grade 10; Ida D'onofrio (Italy) grade 10; Duc Tran (Vietnam) Graduating YCMHS*



The 2018 AGM

is scheduled to take place at the NSTU Building on Wednesday May 16, 2018. A dinner for delegates and guests will be held the evening before at the Brightwood Golf and Country Club in Dartmouth. Hotel accommodations this year will be at the Future Inn at Bayers Lake. Resolutions will be posted on the RTO website.



John MacKay, Liette Doucet, Cynthia Copp.

20th Annual Retired Teachers Golfing Tournament



Mountain Golf Club.

Wednesday, September 12, 2018.

Shotgun start 12:30 pm for 1:00 pm.

Fee of \$70, includes green fee, power cart and full meal

Sponsored by Colchester-East Hants RTO.

Deadline:

Applications, index and fees should be received by August 24, 2018. Please register early. Our cut-off number this year is 124 allowing for some spousal non-teacher partners of retired teacher golfers.

Prizes:

- Overall Gross Tournament Winner
- Overall Net Tournament Winner
- 1st Gross and 1st net in each division
- Special Competition in each Division
Closest to Hole, Closest to Line,
Hole-in-One.

- Please enclose fee & index with application
- Putting Contest with Prizes, a Fund Raiser
- Host Motel Super 8 Motel (902-895-8881) Special price \$99 per room including a free breakfast buffet.
- Spousal (Non-Teacher) partners may golf with a retired teacher golfer or in another twosome, provided their partners are in another twosome.



Golf Carts: Provided for ALL golfers.



Inquiries & Registration:

Chester Sabean,
12901 HWY 2
Lower Onslow, NS B6L 5G1
902-897-7274 or 902-897-7758
cdeesabean@eastlink.ca

OR:

Bob Jordan -
RTO-CEH@uniserve.com

Directions: This 18 hole course is located at 1195 Pictou Road at East Mountain, just outside Bible Hill and Valley.

For travellers from Halifax/Cape Breton/Valley just leave highway 104 at Valley and go north on Pictou Road for about 3 minutes.

March Surprise

Written by Brian Forbes, retired educator and former NSTU President

We have been here before.

Many of us remember 1994—how the Savage government bullied teachers into accepting a draconian contract, under threat of legislation that they promised would be much worse.

Believing the NSTU to be weak and divided in the wake of the 1994 debacle, the Education Minister, in November 1995, introduced myriad amendments to the Education Act that would have completely transformed public education in Nova Scotia—essentially imposing his personal vision of site-based management on the school system.

He expected to encounter little resistance. He was in for a *November Surprise*.

In its analysis, the NSTU concluded that the proposed amendments would expand the powers of the Minister, infringe on contracts and the collective bargaining process, and negatively affect the duties and responsibilities of teachers.

Realizing that the legislation, if it were allowed to stand, would enfeeble the NSTU and render it incapable of fulfilling its mission to protect the economic and professional interests of teachers, and the quality of public education, the union mobilized its members and called a vote to authorize an illegal strike. It received a mandate from an astonishing 88.8% of the members.

Caught by surprise, the Minister blustered, complained, and obfuscated his way through more than a week of posturing and dissembling, but—faced by a determined and united teaching force—he eventually backed down, and withdrew every amendment to which the NSTU had objected.

Today the teachers of Nova Scotia find themselves in a very similar predicament.

Last year the McNeil government imposed a contract of its own design on teachers after they had courageously refused to accept three tentative agreements, and

had engaged in an unprecedented partial withdrawal of services—in public discussion somewhat erroneously labeled *work to rule*. A year later, emboldened by its success in passing the odious Bill 75 and being re-elected, albeit with a substantially reduced majority, McNeil and Minister of Education Zach Churchill have announced acceptance of all of the recommendations of the made-to-order report of an Ontario-based consultant. The report was completed in a mere eleven weeks from her appointment and strangely mirrors the previously published ministerial *Action Plan* from 2014.

The most problematic recommendations of the Glaze Report:

- 1) Dissolution of school boards and centralizing of authority and administration in the Minister's hands;
- 2) Removal of principals and vice principals from the NSTU which leaves those educators without union representation, and exchanges the current collegial model of school administration for a business model; and
- 3) The establishment of a *College of Educators*—patterned after the Ontario College of Teachers—responsible for teacher certification, professional standards, professional development and discipline. Currently these areas are managed effectively and, for the most part, collaboratively by Province, Boards and Union. There is no need to erect a massive, costly and self-aggrandizing bureaucracy for the same purpose. Interestingly, Dr. Glaze acknowledges that “Professional educators ... should have significant presence” in the college, but there should be “substantial representation from business, labour, industry, and others.”

Each of these recommendations is repugnant to the interests, the vision, and the values of Nova Scotia teachers, and cumulatively would only serve to make their professional lives more difficult and stressful. At the same time, it is remarkable that in her entire assess-

ment of the Nova Scotian education system and what is needed to make it better, Dr. Glaze does not so much as mention the very real inadequacies so eloquently and passionately identified by hundreds of teachers a year ago in their submissions to the Law Amendments Committee—underfunding, inadequate resources, lack of appropriate supports for special needs students, too much testing, redundant reporting, excessive clerical tasks and data entry, and so on. Not a single one of the report's recommendations recognizes any of these issues, or proposes remedies. It is all about governance and administration.

Furthermore, the rationale offered for these recommendations includes three egregious factual errors:

- 1) There is a conflict of interest in the NSTU being responsible for discipline of its own members (it isn't);
- 2) The norm is for school administrators not to belong to the union which represents teachers (this is so in only two provinces and no territories in Canada, and has recently been considered and rejected by Alberta and Saskatchewan)
- 3) Nova Scotia students are performing poorly on national and international standardized tests (the

very results Dr. Glaze cites to support that claim demonstrate that it is not the case);

Obviously the NSTU and teachers cannot accept such a massive and maladroit restructuring of public education without a fight.

It is my observation that the saying "Once a teacher, always a teacher" is almost universally true. I do not know of very many of my retired colleagues who have ceased to take an interest in educational issues. Many of us have sons and daughters who have gone into teaching and will be detrimentally impacted by these proposals if they are allowed to stand. I encourage all of my fellow retirees to familiarize themselves with the recommendations of the Glaze Report, and to add their voices to those of active teachers in their attempt to dissuade the government from persisting with its ill-advised plans, and, instead, to materially address the real problems standing in the way of student success, as identified by real teachers.

And if push comes to shove, as it very well may, I hope we will all stand prepared to lend active and substantial support to the cause of teaching, teachers and students. Who knows? Maybe Messrs. McNeil and Churchill will find themselves on the receiving end of a *March Surprise*.

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

Karen Staples at kstaples@staff.nstu.ca

or 1-800-565-6788 at the NSTU Office for the RTO Newsletter mailing list.

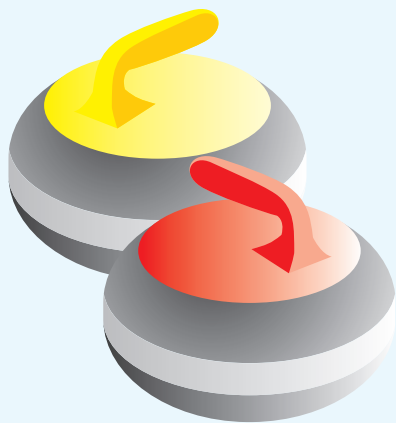
Please copy your changes to

Betty Anne McGinnis at bettyanne@eastlink.ca or 1-902-798-6311.

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

RTO CURLING BONSPIEL 2017

The Shelburne Branch of RTO hosted the Curling Bonspiel at the Shelburne Curling Club. Twelve teams took part in this fun event (over 60 curlers) with curlers from Barrington, Shelburne, Pubnico, Liverpool, and some from as far away as Amherst. Each team curled three 6-end games. At the end of each draw points were tallied based on the points system. Events included “Draw to the Button”, “Double Take Out”, and “Triple Take Out”. There was live entertainment on Friday evening. Muffins, cheese, and fruit were available on Saturday morning with chili lunch and rolls served at noon. Door prizes were drawn at noon on Saturday. Bonspiel prizes were awarded to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd place teams. Congratulations to the winning team consisting of Earle Goodwin, RTO Shelburne Branch; Linda Goodwin; Reah Langille, NSTU; and Jon Langille. Second place went to Clark Acker, Guest; Matt Haliburton, NSTU; John Huskilson, NSTU; and David Osborn, Guest. Third place winners were Matt Kind, Guest; Andrew Blades, NSTU; Nathaniel Feintel, Guest; and Ian Squires, NSTU. The Bonspiel was a huge success!!! Those who attended had two fun days of curling and fellowship. The event was a great time to meet fellow RTO members, some of the NSTU members, and guest curlers. A huge thank you to Elizabeth Acker and Sandra Walsh and their team of volunteers for their organization and efforts. A special thank you to sponsors Manulife, Johnsons, and RTO.



RTO CURLING BONSPIEL 2017



This Land Is Your Land...



Winter Woods, Brickton, Annapolis County, by Kathy Stocker



Tor Bay, Guysborough County, by Cheryl Millard



Sherbrooke Village Street, Guysborough County, by Cheryl Millard

This Land Is Your Land...



Silver Thaw, Baddeck, by Colin J Campbell

The RTO Newsletter invites all members to send us their photos of our beautiful province. In each issue we will 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.



Carding Mill, Bridgewater, Lunenburg County, by Verlene Silver-Corkum

44TH NSTU ANNUAL BOWLING TOURNAMENT 2018

APRIL
21ST & 22ND
2018



BIBLE HILL
BOWLACADE
JENNIFER DRIVE

For Active,
Retired, & NSCC Teachers

HOSTED BY: Colchester East Hants Retired Teachers Organization

No bowling experience necessary! Cash prizes available!

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MARCH 9, 2018

TEAMS: 5 – 8 members. New & existing teams invited to participate. Not on a team? Contact Chester or Sandra to be placed on a team

REGISTRATION: Including team captain/members' names, please send \$260.00 payable to:

RTO Colchester East Hants Branch C/O Henry Shand

973 College Road, Valley, Nova Scotia, B6L 3G5

henry.shand@ns.sympatico.ca 902-897-4380

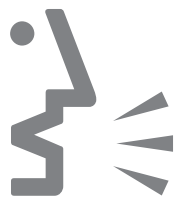
HOTEL OF CHOICE: *Comfort Inn*, Robie Street, NSTU Bowling Special Rate \$102.99+tax per night with teacher/government ID.

For further information please contact:

CHESTER SABEAN
902-897-7274
cdeesabean@eastlink.ca



SANDRA TRITES
902-899-2747
tritzee@eastlink.ca



Teacher to Teacher

Sharing the Wisdom of Experience



by Debbie Bailey and Cynthia Prasow

In 2016-2017, we contacted retired teacher organizations across Canada to request that they distribute a survey to their members. The intent of the survey was to gather the wisdom that seasoned educators had collected over their many years in schools, and to share this experience with practicing teachers, particularly those new to the profession. We received 658 completed responses representing every Canadian province and territory. As we read through the many pages of detailed responses, the following major themes emerged.

Professionalism and the Art of Teaching

Respondents wrote about what it means to be a teacher. They saw it as a challenging, rewarding, and honourable career, and a role that requires qualities such as optimism, persistence, kindness, resilience, humour, determination, and integrity. They wrote about the joy of being with young people and the importance of valuing every child. “Teaching is the most rewarding career that one can choose. You have the ability to have a positive impact on many lives.”

Developing Positive Relationships

There were extensive comments about the importance of relationships with students, colleagues, parents, and the community. “Teaching and leading in education is all about relationships. Building positive, compassionate, empathic relationships with those you wish to serve will assist the learning process.” Ensuring that students felt safe, accepted, and respected was emphasized. “I learned that children appreciated fairness and consistency. They won’t always remember what you taught them, but they will remember how you treated them.”

Finding a Mentor

Retired teachers strongly urged beginning teachers to seek out a mentor to discuss their challenges and to celebrate their successes. “Ask for help from your fellow teachers...they will (think) that you are asking for help because you want to be the best you can be.” Finding the right mentor is important. “Find a teacher who exemplifies all that you admire in the teaching profession and make a connection with them.”

Creating a Space for Teaching and Learning

A clear message was that all students have the potential to learn, and that they learn at different rates and in different ways. “The best teachers are those who are able to allow their students to be who they are while giving them opportunities that are varied enough for the individuality of the student.” Respondents shared a wide range of suggestions for ensuring the classroom was one in which each student could succeed. The importance of the teacher having sound curriculum knowledge, strong classroom management skills, and a willingness to plan carefully for learning was emphasized. Classrooms need to be places where children are engaged participants. “Students will learn if they perceive there is a need, that the learning is relevant to their lives, and if they are interested.”

Challenges and Solutions

While passionate about their profession, retirees shared some of the challenges they faced. Respondents also provided suggestions on how to weather these challenges. “As you grow in your profession, surround yourself with positive, optimistic colleagues. It doesn’t mean you shouldn’t have a critical eye... but the temptation to become jaded and cynical will be there. Stay focused on your students.”

Work-Life Balance

Many respondents saw teaching as a vocation which can be all-consuming. “Balance your passion and commitment to your career with excellent self-care. Stay grounded with a variety of personal pursuits.” The benefit of doing so is that, “...you’ll be a better teacher, especially in the more challenging moments.”

(continued on page 62)

(continued from page 61)

Lifelong Learning

Teaching is a constantly changing career that requires educators to be open to new ideas, to be willing to take risks, and to be thoughtful about implementing change. Our respondents stressed the need to be a reflective practitioner – learning from students, colleagues, parents, and one’s own work. “Teachers need to understand that to be a great teacher is always a state of becoming, that they need to be...in constant search of ways to better help their students to learn.”

We hope the above summary provides an indication of the richness of the comments shared by respondents. We want to thank the participating retired teacher organizations for their willingness to distribute the survey. Most importantly, we want to thank those retired teachers who took the time to complete the survey so thoughtfully and openly.

*Debbie Bailey: retired teacher and administrator
Calgary Board of Education*

*Cynthia Prasow: Director, Student Experiences,
Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary*

New Presidents



*Penny Hemens, President Antigonish/Guysborough;
Wendy Rodda, President Annapolis; John Armstrong,
Vice-President Queens; Dan Thimot, Vice President
Lunenburg; Back row: Brian Noble, President
Yarmouth/Argyle; John MacKay, President Shelburne*



New Seniors' Exam

Only 4 correct answers required to pass.

1. How long did the Hundred Years' War last?
2. Which country makes Panama hats?
3. From which animal do we get cat gut?
4. In which month do Russians celebrate the October Revolution?
5. What is a camel's hair brush made of?
6. The Canary Islands in the Atlantic are named after what animal?
7. What was King George VI's first name?
8. What color is a purple finch?
9. Where are Chinese gooseberries from?
10. What is the colour of the black box in a commercial airplane?

(answers on next page)



Nominating Committee

Member-at-Large Positions

Member-at-Large positions are open for nomination in the following three regions for the 2018-2020 term.

1. **Cape Breton-Victoria** (Glace Bay District, New Waterford, Sydney and Area, and Northside-Victoria Branches) 2-year position

2. **South Shore** (Lunenburg County, Queens, and Shelburne County Branches) 2-year position

3. **Valley** (Annapolis, Kings, and West Hants Branches) 2-year position

In addition to inclusion in this issue, the application form for a Member-at-Large is posted on the RTO website at rto.nstu.ca. Interested candidates must submit a completed application to his/her Branch President by April 1, 2018. If a Branch has more than one candidate offering, then an election at the Branch level must be held by April 30, 2018. No more than one name may be offered by each Branch in a region. A Returning Officer for each region holding a Member-at-Large election shall be appointed at the February Presidents' meeting. Each Returning Officer will then conduct an election for Member-at-Large in his/her region after April 30, 2018, but prior to May 15, 2018. The Returning Officer shall conduct the election by calling a meeting of the candidates and three voting delegates from each participating Branch. Immediately following the election at this meeting, each Returning Officer shall submit the name of the successful candidate to the RTO Nominating Chair. The names of the elected Members-at-Large will be announced at the RTO AGM on May 16, 2018.

*Submitted by Jim Kavanaugh
Chair, Nominating Committee*

RETIRED TEACHERS ORGANIZATION

Member-at-Large Application

Deadline for Application: April 1st 2018

Name of Region: _____ RTO Branch (Applicant): _____

Applicant Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

RTO Branch Activities: _____

RTO Provincial Activities: _____

Other Activities (Including NSTU Local or Provincial activities): _____

Signature of Applicant

Date

PLEASE SUBMIT THIS APPLICATION TO YOUR BRANCH PRESIDENT NO LATER THAN APRIL 1st.

MAL Form A. Rev. 2.2017



ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. 116 years | 6. Dogs |
| 2. Ecuador | 7. Albert |
| 3. Sheep and Horses | 8. Crimson |
| 4. November | 9. New Zealand |
| 5. Squirrel fur | 10. Orange (of course) |



**Retired Teachers Organization
FOUNDATION GRANT
Application**



Name of Applicant: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Program Coordinator: _____

Federal Charitable Status Number: _____

Brief Description of Program: _____

Number of children involved in this program: _____

Percentage of total number of children in the program who are sick and/or challenged: _____

How will this grant make a difference? _____

Regular source(s) of funding for your organization: _____

- Note:
1. By signing this application, you will also be authorizing the Retired Teachers Foundation to verify your business number and check any other relevant facts about your organization.
 2. Please attach a one-page letter to elaborate on information requested in this form

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Please submit completed form no later than March 31, 2018 to:
RTO Legacy Foundation Chair
Al MacKinnon P.O. Box 181, Whycomagh, NS B0E 3M0**

The Retired Teachers Legacy Foundation

The Retired Teachers Legacy Foundation, as established by the RTO Executive in 1994, shall support sick and/or challenged children of the Province of Nova Scotia.

Objectives of the Legacy Foundation:

1. To operate a fund exclusively for the benefit of sick and/or challenged children in the province of Nova Scotia.
2. To solicit; accept; receive; acquire by grant, donation, legacy gift, bequest; or otherwise; any kind of real or personal property and to enter and carry out agreements, undertakings, and conditions in connection therewith.
3. To disburse annually the interest on deposits.

Guidelines:

1. This annual disbursement is to honor the life and work of former teachers in Nova Scotia.
2. This annual disbursement is to benefit sick and/or challenged children younger than the age of 21 years.
3. This annual disbursement may benefit institutes which are defined as a society or organization founded for an educational, medical, social or similar purpose.
4. This annual disbursement may benefit charitable organizations that work for the benefit of sick and or challenged children.



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!**

