

THE  
**bulletin**

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Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

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# THANK YOU SCHOOL REPS

by [Lesley-Ann Browne](#)

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I wrote an editorial last year about how quickly time passes. This Fall was no exception. Like eight of my colleagues at NLTA I spent three weekends this Fall on the road delivering the School Representative Seminars. There was a great deal of time and preparation that went into the planning of the seminars. This was above and beyond the usual work carried out within our roles at NLTA. Was it worth it? A most definite yes!

The School Representative Seminars were well attended, although some teachers did not or could not attend. The sessions covered information on the many services available to teachers from NLTA. Teachers who attended heard presentations on The Role of the School Representative, Professional Development, Benefits and Economic Services and Communications. One session allowed them the opportunity to provide their opinions on various questions dealing with the role of the School Representative, the Branch structure, and NLTA in general.

The nine sessions took place over three weekends in September and October. They were in Deer Lake, Clarendville, Plum Point, Grand-Falls/Windsor, Goose Bay, Corner Brook, Gander, and two in St. John's. Teachers from each of these areas traveled to attend the sessions closest to their areas. Some arranged to get to other locations if they could not attend the one closest to them.

Teachers who attended were pleased with the presentations and provided responses to issues that will be useful to staff and Executive. This information and their responses will be incorporated into future working plans.

Teachers went above and beyond by giving up their Friday evening and Saturday to attend these sessions. And I do not think that anyone will say it was not worth it. This is the first time in the history of the Association that we have ever held sessions such as these and hopefully we can continue. Meeting the teachers in the field, the people we work for, and providing them with an opportunity to know the services that are available to them needs to be an ongoing activity for the Association.

What did I, as a staff person, get out of the School Representative Seminars? After all, they were for the School Representatives. I got a great deal from them and firmly believe that we have started the new school year on the right track.

I had the pleasure and the opportunity to meet with teachers I would normally not have met. As Communications Officer, most of my time is spent writing and editing information and planning internal and external communications programs. The School Representative Seminars, however, gave me the chance to meet teachers in the field.

My purpose in writing about the School Representative Seminars in this format is twofold. First, I felt there were things that needed to be reported about the sessions and that they were a great success. We received warm welcomes wherever we travelled and there was a great deal of interest in what we had to say.

The other reason is that we have had so many contributions to The Bulletin this month that spacing is a problem. I had no where else in this issue to report on the sessions. I am not complaining – far from it. I view this as extremely positive as renewed interest in this publication means it is reaching the hands of teachers. It is a teacher's publication and who better to be contributing to each issue but the audience to which it was attended. I hope it will continue.

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# Masters Program by Distance Education

Did you miss our September Open Meetings?

As a result of the late publication of the [September issue](#) of The Bulletin you may not have made it to our local meetings held across the province. There is no reason for this to delay your receiving details of our programs. It does mean that you did not hear the vocal support for the course from our existing teachers who are very much more convincing than any paragraph of text.

Currently we have teachers studying with us in the following areas of the province:

Bellevue Beach	Grand Bank	Plum Point
Bird Cove	Grand Falls-	Port aux Basques
Black Duck Cove	Windsor	Port Saunders
Botwood	Happy Valley	Ramea
Carbonear	Harbour Breton	Recontre East
Charlestown	Hawke's Bay	Robert's Arm
Clareville	Kilbride	Roddickton
Comfort Cove	La Scie	St. Bernard's
Conne River	Lawn	St. John's
Cowhead	Manuels	Springdale
Deer Lake	Marystown	Stephenville
Dover	Mount Pearl	Torbay
Fortune Bay	Musgravetown	Whitbourne
Gander	Norman Bay	Woody Point
	Pinsent's Arm	

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## UPPER GULLIES

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### **Wherefore art thou Romeo**

Twenty-two Grade 6 students from Upper Gullies Elementary School, in Upper Gullies, began their study of Shakespeare in February 1999. They enjoyed it so much they insisted that they mount a production of Romeo and Juliet. With great enthusiasm and dedication, they set forth to do just that. And what a performance they gave! In late June, after four months of preparation, the students gave a performance for parents and relatives. A few days later, the class performed for the entire elementary population of the school. It was a hit both times and all were greatly impressed with the talent demonstrated by all of the students involved. "It was truly a worthwhile project," says Sophia Slaney, Grade 6 teacher and Guidance Counsellor. "An endeavour to be repeated in years to come."

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## BURIN BAY ARM

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### **School receives national leadership award**

This year students and staff at Berney Memorial Intermediate School in Burin Bay Arm returned to school with pride in their intramural program. The Canadian Intramural Recreation Association (CIRA) National Leadership Committee presented one of 12 National Student Leadership Awards to Berney Memorial. The award is presented to successfully applying schools of any level from across Canada who incorporate the CIRA Student Leadership Development Program in their leadership program, while promoting active living and leadership for life.

The Student Leadership Group of Berney Memorial definitely reflect the "for youth, by youth" concept of CIRA, where student leaders are encouraged to take an active role in planning and organizing school and community activities.

Gordon Brockerville, physical education teacher and vice-principal at Berney Memorial, indicated that he has promoted and conducted student leadership development through intramural programming over the years. However, it was rather informal. "In 1998-99, when we became a new school entity, we were able to conduct a series of mini-option courses, one of which was student leadership," states Brockerville. "In the intramural student leadership option we combined the theory and practice of leadership. Most students who registered for these options appeared to enjoy them. Unfortunately, due to teacher cutbacks we will not be able to continue the options during the current school year." As for the theory aspect to intramural student leadership, Mr. Brockerville hopes to be able to incorporate it into the regular physical education program.

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## MOBILE

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### **School receives instrument grant**

Mobile Central High School has been selected as a recipient of the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (CARAS) Music Education's BAND AID instrument grant.

The school wrote CARAS seeking help for the music program and band instruments. The school was successful in its attempts and have received a grant of \$10,000 for instruments. At a time closer to the delivery of the instruments a recording artist, chosen by CARAS, will visit the school to officially present the instruments.

Don Walsh, principal of Mobile Central High School, states that he is extremely pleased that the school has been able to obtain the grant. "It will help re-energize the schools' band and provide much needed funds for the music program."

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## BONAVISTA

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### **Students read their way across Canada**

During the past school year Mrs. Beverly Fisher's Grade 6 class at Matthew Elementary in Bonavista took part in an exciting reading program. The program, called "Reading are we, from Sea to Sea", was developed by Mrs. Fisher to encourage her students to read more and read more they did. The class accumulated enough kilometres to read their way around the equator eight times.

The 26 students started the program in September, their goal being that each student would read enough books to get across Canada (over 7,000 km). Each page read represented one kilometre on the map. Upon completing a book a student was required to tell the teacher about the book, then she moved his/her maple leaf marker across the charts that represented each province. When a student passed from one province to the next there was great excitement as he/she was presented with a gift from the government of that province (bookmark, pin, etc.) and a certificate from the teacher. Upon reaching Ottawa, each student received a book of prime ministers and a certificate from our MP, Fred Mifflin.

By the end of the year our original goal of getting everyone across Newfoundland was reached and five students were presented with medals for reading their way across Canada. As each student reached the west coast of Vancouver Island there was a big celebration, with a cake made by Mrs. Fisher and special presentations. Students were given books for each province they passed through on their return trip. One student completed the return trip and got back to Nova Scotia again before the school year ended. The rest of the students were scattered between New Brunswick and Saskatchewan.

As a spin-off from this program the students developed their own web site called Red Hot Reviews, in which they reviewed some of the books that they read throughout the year. This was a Grassroots Project and may be accessed through the Matthew Elementary School Home Page, [www.k12.nf.ca/matthew](http://www.k12.nf.ca/matthew).

The 26 students who took part in this "trip" read for the competition, for the prizes, for the challenge, and eventually for the enjoyment of it. "Each student should be proud of his/her individual accomplishment," said Mrs. Fisher. "I certainly was." Everyone agreed that Mrs. Fisher should use this again with her new students. As one student put it, "I think it is a great project because it promotes reading and helps you understand the geography of Canada. It is also a lot of fun!"

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## GLENWOOD

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### **Students take part in cultural exchange**

The Grade 5 class at Lakewood Academy in Glenwood had an interesting and exciting end to their school year last June. In May, as part of the Grade 5 Social Studies program, students went to the Migmag Reservation at Conne River. Students and their parents took part in their Annual Powwow, talked to native

students and Misel Joe, Chief of Conne River. Grade 5 teacher Edgar Lee said, "The students enjoyed the dances and the food, and as a cultural exchange this is the best type of event." The students also saw the canoe which the Migmag use to cross to Nova Scotia.

In June, the Grade 5 class travelled to the town of Terra Nova to release the salmon fry they had been raising in their classroom. Students had first hand experience at enhancing their environment. Ninety percent of the salmon eggs had hatched before they were released. As part of the same trip students went canoeing and swimming at Sandy Pond.

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## NAIN

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### **Recycling for the environment and the students**

In March of 1997, Jens Haven Memorial School, of Nain, began collecting and receiving recyclable beverage containers for the Green Back Trash to Cash program. A sub depot was set up and organized by the school Breakfast Program Committee. The initial goal of the committee was to raise sufficient funds to assist in the administering of the Jens Haven Memorial Kindergarten to Grade 6 Breakfast Program.

The Jens Haven Memorial School Breakfast Program Committee is a group of teacher volunteers who work to provide students in Grades Kindergarten to 6, who have had nothing to eat in the morning, with a cereal bar when they come to school. Due to the success of the recycling program and generous donations from other organizations, the Breakfast Program has been able to expand this year to include students in Grades 7 to Level III. These students receive a granola bar in the morning if they come to school without breakfast. The program is run on an honor system in that each student is trusted to inform their teacher in confidence if they didn't eat before coming to school. In turn they will receive the cereal or granola bar.

The response to recycling in the community of Nain has been overwhelmingly supportive. Residents have taken the initiative to clean up the environment as well as collect some extra cash for their children or themselves. There are still some beverage containers that do not reach the sub depot but many Nain residents are committed to recycling. The impact on the community has been obvious, in that the number of cans discarded around the community and the amount sent to the town landfill site has decreased significantly resulting in a cleaner environment for residents to live.

Brian Strickland, a teacher at Jens Haven, says the Recycling Program has proven to be a very productive venture, thanks to the committed and enthusiastic teacher volunteers and the support of the Nain residents. In the past two years the program has contributed approximately \$20,000 into the school Breakfast Program. With these funds, the school Breakfast Committee is wisely planning a long term budget that will enable the breakfast program to continue in future years when funding may be limited. "The program's success shows the dedication and commitment of the many teacher volunteers that give up their free time to work together toward a positive goal."

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## ST. JOHN'S

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### **World Teachers' Day proclaimed**

World Teachers' Day 1999 was proclaimed by NLTA President Fred Andrews and Premier Brian Tobin at a special ceremony and assembly at Vanier Elementary in St. John's.

World Teachers' Day was proclaimed to keep alive the recognition of teachers to society. The United National Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has designated October 5 as World

Teachers' Day to make the public aware of the enormous contributions of teachers who devote their lives to educating our children. October 5, 1999, marked the 6th anniversary of World Teachers' Day.

The assembly at Vanier Elementary was attended by students and teachers as well as invited guests from the community. Brian Shortall, Director of the Avalon East School Board, Walter Noel, MHA for the district, and Wayne Noseworthy, Executive Director of the NLTA were on hand for the special ceremony. The Grade 6 choir, directed by Rhonda Wicks, performed for the occasion and Ms. J. Dohey brought greetings from the French Immersion students. Mr. George Tucker, Principal at Vanier Elementary, was master of ceremonies for the event and graciously hosted the ceremonies at his school.

The theme for this year's World Teachers' Day, chosen jointly by Education International and UNESCO, was "Teachers, a force for social change".

### **Heritage Fair enjoys great success**

Another successful Heritage Fair/Cultural Days was held at Macdonald Drive Junior High School in March last year. Under the direction of the Social Studies Department, the week long event was to give presenters an opportunity to expose students to aspects of culture or cultural expression.

Students were invited to bring items from home to exhibit in the Museum a new addition for the event. Parents, students and staff had an opportunity to view Newfoundland antiques, relics and objects while visiting the museum during the night of the Heritage Fair.

Four participants from the school were selected by judges to represent the school at the Regional Heritage Fair at All Hallows School on May 15. The student participants were: Laura Button Fishery in Greenspond; Anfali Kamra and Bhavna Kaushik Fairies; Elizabeth Drover Easter Traditions; Eoin Mulcahy One Room Classrooms.

Mary van Thiel, co-chair of the Heritage Committee said that the event was a great success. "One significant part of the event was that Laurier LaPierre, a renowned Canadian, was special guest from CRB Heritage Canada for our opening ceremonies," states van Thiel. Plans are already underway for this school year's event.

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### **NLTA SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED**

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Six Newfoundland and Labrador students who completed high school last June have been awarded NLTA scholarships for 1999-2000. They are Damian Drover (Baie Verte High School), son of Geraldine Drover, Baie Verte; Adam Foran (Holy Heart of Mary High), son of Elizabeth Foran, St. John's; Jonathan Kavanagh (Holy Heart of Mary High), son of Geraldine and John Kavanagh, St. John's; Susan Pike (Carbonear Collegiate), daughter of Glenda Pike, Carbonear; Jeremy Rose (Prince of Wales Collegiate), son of Robert Rose, Paradise; and Mark Tucker (St. John Central High), son of Ruth Tucker, Burgeo.

The scholarships are awarded annually to dependents of active, retired, disabled, or deceased members of the NLTA and are valued at \$1,000 each. Awards are based on achievement in the scholarship exams administered by the Department of Education and are made in accordance with the Schools Act (Scholarship) Regulations.

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### **NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR**

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### **Johnson Family Foundation Community Historyboards Program completed**

The Community Historyboards Program has reached its conclusion and 70 communities in Newfoundland

and Labrador have received an exterior Historyboard.

The Community Historyboards Program was conceived in 1992 by Paul Johnson, Johnson Family Foundation (JFF), as a province-wide project. By 1994, sufficient feelers about the project had gone out in the community that the Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (MANL) approached JFF about partnering in the project. The Johnson Family Foundation also approached the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association to assist in reaching members and communities across the province.

Invitations were sent to 134 communities across the province in the Fall of 1995. Each was invited to form a committee to undertake research into their community's history. The resulting outdoor interpretation panel, or "Historyboard", was provided free to the community.

The 70 Historyboards are located in Arnold's Cove, Avondale, Battle Harbour, Bay Bulls, Bay de Verde, Bay Roberts, Bonavista, Botwood, Brigus, Burin, Burnside, Carbonear, Cupids, Ferryland, Fogo, Forteau, Fortune, Gambo, Gander, Grand Bank, Grates Cove, Greenspond, Harbour Breton, Harbour Grace, Heart's Content, King's Cove, La Grand 'Terre/Mainland, L'Anse au Loup, Labrador City, Lamaline, Logy Bay-Middle Cove-Outer Cove, Long Harbour, Marystown, Moreton's Harbour, Mount Pearl, Norris Point, Old Perlican, Petty Harbour-Maddox Cove, Pilley's Island, Placentia, Plum Point, Point Leamington, Port de Grave, Portugal Cove-St. Philip's, Ramea, Renews-Cappahayden, St. Alban's, St. Anthony, St. Bride's, St. Lawrence, St. Vincent's-St. Stephen's-Peter's River, Salmon Cove, Salvage, Spaniard's Bay, Springdale, Sunnyside, Tilting, Torbay, Tors Cove, Trepassey, Trinity, Twillingate, Wabush, Wesleyville, West St. Modeste, Westport, Whitbourne, Winterton, Woody Island, Woody Point.

The average cost for each community's Historyboard was \$3,915 with the first being shipped in June of 1997 and the last in September of this year. The key to the success of the Community Historyboards Program was that communities were encouraged to select what it was about their communities they wanted to have displayed on their Historyboard. This approach resulted in a very successful final project which incorporated local cooperative efforts to preserve the heritage of the communities of Newfoundland and Labrador.

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## CANADA

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### **The Youth Millennium Project**

The Youth Millennium Project runs in Canada from September to December 1999 and internationally from January to December 2000. It invites any group of youth aged 11 to 14 to discuss what they feel are important global problems and create a local project (plan of action) in response to these issues. The plan of action will then be carried out by the youth as a group. Each group will be matched with national and international companion groups.

The project will culminate in the Youth Millennium Conference to be held in Vancouver from July 16-20, 2001. At least one youth from each country will be randomly selected to participate, all expenses paid.

The Youth Millennium Project is open to anyone born from 1986 to 1989 inclusive. Schools and all groups involving youth, such as recreational, educational, religious, sports-related groups, etc., are invited to participate. For further information contact The Youth Millennium Project, Canada Support Office, Room 173 1855 West Mall, Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z2, Tel: 604-822-5028, Fax: 604-822-8108, or by e-mail: [ymp@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:ymp@interchange.ubc.ca).

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NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR  
**TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION**

ON LOCATION REPORT  
for The Bulletin

To have your story told in On Location News... please complete this report and submit to:

Lesley-Ann Browne, Editor, [The Bulletin](#),  
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association,  
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL, A1B 1W1

Name

Position

School

School  
Address

Postal Code

Telephone

E-mail

Event Date(s)

Type of Event

Event  
Description

Colorful Quote(s) from Participant(s)

Most Significant Result of the Event

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## WE APOLOGIZE

Due to the late printing of the September issue of The Bulletin, many teachers did not have the opportunity to view the advertisement from Northern College re. information sessions being held across the province.

Our apologies to Northern College for any inconvenience this caused and to teachers who did not receive the information in time to attend the sessions.

# PREPARING FOR BARGAINING

by Perry Downey

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As we settle into another busy school year, the date August 31, 2001, seems too far into the future for most teachers to focus any attention on it. For most, the focus is currently on planning and everyday survival in the classroom. What does the date August 31, 2001 actually represent? It is the expiry date of both the Labrador West and the Provincial Collective Agreements. It is therefore incumbent upon your Association to begin planning and preparation strategies for the next round of collective bargaining.

As with any bargaining agent, the ultimate goal is to complete the entire collective bargaining process before the expiration of a collective agreement. Therefore, when considering the entire collective bargaining process, your Association must consider an appropriate time frame to: (i) select a Collective Bargaining Committee, (ii) effectively gather information from the membership, (iii) develop a set of opening proposals, and (iv) negotiate a new collective agreement. As the official bargaining agent for teachers throughout the province, the Association's goal is to accomplish all of the above on or before August 31, 2001.

During its August 1999 planning meetings, the Provincial Executive agreed that Collective Bargaining Preparation would become one of its four major priorities for the 1999-2000 school year. During discussions of the process, it was proposed that the following timelines be considered for implementation:

1. Appointment of Collective Bargaining Committee – Fall, 1999.
2. Membership input into opening proposals – Fall, 1999 through Spring, 2000.
3. Develop and finalize opening proposals – Fall, 2000.
4. Begin negotiations – late Fall, 2000 or early Winter, 2001.
5. Complete negotiations – on or before August 31, 2001.

In accordance with Clause 43.01 of the Provincial Collective Agreement, notice to commence negotiations can be given in writing by either party "within the period of ten (10) months immediately prior to the expiry date" of the current agreement, i.e. on or after November 1, 2000.

Presently, the Collective Bargaining Committee, has not been officially selected; however, the selection process will occur as per the policy of the Association. Since the Collective Bargaining Committee is a standing committee of the NLTA, an Executive Council member will be appointed as Chairperson of the Committee and will, in turn, be appointed as a member of the Provincial Negotiating Team. The major role of the Collective Bargaining Committee will be to determine and implement the various means through which maximum membership input can be obtained. The information gathered must then be used to develop a set of opening proposals. After every opportunity for input has been exhausted and all submissions are considered, a sub-committee of the Collective Bargaining Committee will be selected to:

- i) "Prepare the actual wording of each article recommended by the Collective Bargaining Committee, and
- ii) Present the final draft of the opening proposals to the Collective Bargaining Committee for ratification."

The sub-committee will consist of the Chairperson of the Collective Bargaining Committee, one other member of the Collective Bargaining Committee, and a resource person from the NLTA Administrative Staff. The opening proposals, along with recommended priorities for negotiations will subsequently be presented to Executive by the Collective Bargaining Committee. Before Executive gives final approval to the opening proposals and priorities, a meeting of Joint Council will be held for the purpose of reviewing the priorities and general objectives established. This meeting will not examine specific wording changes, but would confirm whether or not the Collective Bargaining Committee and the Provincial Executive are properly attuned to the membership's wishes.

Since this round of collective bargaining preparations is currently in its infancy, the Association is strongly encouraging all teachers to become involved. The Collective Bargaining Committee will be providing all teachers with opportunities for input as the opening proposals are brought together for the next round of bargaining. We look forward to your input and involvement as we prepare for the start of negotiations in 2000-01.

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Perry Downey is Administrative Officer, Benefits and Economic Services, with the NLTA.



## **SALARY INCREASE** effective November 1, 1999

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Teachers are reminded that the second salary increase under the current Collective Agreement will come into effect as of November 1, 1999. This is a 2% increase and the salary scale incorporating that increase is contained in Schedule C on page 42 of the Provincial Collective Agreement. Teachers' pay cheques for the first pay period in November (i.e. to November 15, 1999) will reflect this increase. All teachers should check to ensure that their new bi-weekly gross pay is correct in accordance with the new salary scale (i.e. annual salary in Schedule C divided by 26).

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# TEACHER SALARIES

## A Cross Canada Comparison

The following is a comparison of teacher salaries at the highest pay category in teacher salary scales across Canada as of June 30, 1999. The figures are the most current available and were provided to the NLTA by the Canadian Teachers' Federation. A more detailed comparison of major teacher salary scales in Canada is regularly carried out by CTF and is published in its Economic Services Bulletin.

Salary information contained in the following table is based on province-wide salary scales for the four Atlantic provinces, Quebec and Saskatchewan, while Territorial agreements are shown for the Yukon and Northwest Territories. For the remaining four provinces, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia, local collective agreements are in effect and a sample of salary scales from some of the largest urban centres is included.

Province/Territory	Agreement	Salary Category	Minimum	Maximum	Steps	
NF	Provincial	VII	\$39,477	\$54,514	11	
PE	Provincial	CVI	\$33,521	\$51,967	11	
NS <sup>1</sup>	Provincial	TC7	\$38,292	\$58,932	11	
NB	Provincial	CVI	\$35,080	\$53,979	11	
QC <sup>1</sup>	Provincial	19 yrs	\$37,510	\$56,979	15	
ON	ELEMENTARY Ottawa- Carleton	A4	\$38,077	\$64,779	11	
		A4	\$38,114	\$65,153	11	
	SECONDARY Ottawa- Carleton	A4	\$38,077	\$65,078	11	
		A4	\$35,710	\$64,400	11	
	Thames Valley					
MB <sup>1</sup>	Winnipeg	VI	\$37,856	\$57,309	10	
SK	Provincial	VI	\$34,734	\$55,964	11	
AB	Calgary	F	\$37,035	\$59,558	12	
	Edmonton	6	\$37,483	\$60,008	12	
BC	Vancouver	6M	\$42,713	\$64,093	11	
YT	Territorial	VI	\$48,658	\$69,900	11	
NT	Territorial	7	\$50,727	\$72,482	12	

<sup>1</sup> The ranking of pay categories for Quebec and Nova Scotia exclude the highest pay category requiring a doctoral degree given that most provinces do not have a similar category. As well, category VII for Winnipeg, in which there are relatively few teachers, was also excluded from that jurisdiction's ranking.

# SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS: PAST AND PRESENT

by Perry Downey

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Have you had at least one day substituting since 1989? If your answer to this question is yes, you should continue reading.

Substitute teachers, past and present, who have contributed to the substitute teachers pension plan, i.e. Government Money Purchase Pension (GMPP), should note the following:

1. Effective October 1, 1999, it will be mandatory for all plan members to register with Canada Trust for the Automated Phone Access Service in order to access their GMPP accounts for information and/or perform specific transactions by telephone. This step is necessary to ensure confidentiality and maintain security of individual accounts. If you have not acquired this service, you should contact Canada Trust at 1-800-668-2648. Once registered with Canada Trust, each plan member will receive an individual identification card and number. This identification card will allow each member to access their individual accounts via the Internet.

2. As you are aware, the GMPP plan, currently managed by Canada Trust, is designed to allow several groups of public employees, e.g. substitute teachers, casual nurses, casual NAPE workers, etc., not covered under a main pension plan to make pension contributions. As of July 31, 1999 there were 18,967 plan members.

During the most recent quarterly mailing of pension benefit statements by Canada Trust, approximately 2,000 were returned because of incorrect addresses. This brings the total of incorrect addresses to approximately 3,500 plan members. If you are/were a substitute teacher in the past 10 years and have changed your address, you should notify Canada Trust immediately, especially if you have not received a GMPP benefit statement. Canada Trust has placed all 3,500 incorrect address statements into a non-statement producing category until they have confirmation from plan members of correct addresses. If you are one of these 3500 members, no future benefit statements will be mailed from Canada Trust until they receive your correct mailing address.

3. As mentioned in 2. above, there are currently 18,967 plan members participating in the GMPP, however, approximately 8,000 accounts are classified as inactive. Inactive members would be any member who has not contributed to the plan for a period of one year. For each plan member, active or inactive, there is an administration fee of \$2.00 per month per plan charged to the overall GMPP plan. Therefore, currently the plan is being charged approximately \$192,000 per year to carry forward all inactive accounts. If you have not made contributions to your GMPP account in the past year, you should contact Canada Trust at 1-800-668-2648 to discuss the options available to you. Some of these options were discussed in the article "Substitute Teachers' Pension Plan" which appeared in The Bulletin, Vol. 43, No. 1, September 1999.

As a member representative on the GMPP Plan Committee, your Association is advising all past and present substitute teachers to contact Canada Trust for individual account inquiries and to seek the necessary financial advice when making financial decisions. Canada Trust's toll free number is 1-800-668-2648.

# RETIRED TEACHERS AS SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

by [Don Ash](#)

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Administrative Officers in Benefits and Economic Services receive many calls at this time of the year from retired teachers who are considering substitute teaching as a means of augmenting their pension income.

In a Provincial Government Cabinet directive on September 1, 1993, Chris Decker, then Minister of Education, wrote to Superintendents of School Boards "... I am writing to advise you that Cabinet has directed that a preference be given in hiring to persons other than those in receipt of a pension under the Public Service Pension Plan, Uniformed Services Pension Plan, the Teachers' Pension Plan, and the Members of the House of Assembly Pension Plan, unless there are no other persons qualified to fill the position, with exceptions to this policy to be subject to Cabinet approval..."

Where there are no other qualified substitutes to fill particular positions, retired teachers are sometimes hired as substitute teachers. Any retired teacher who is substituting should be aware and cautious of the following:

1. A retired teacher who is in receipt of severance pay may be re-employed as a teacher only after being out of service as a teacher for the number of teaching days representing earnings equal to severance pay. For example, a teacher who receives 40% of salary in severance must 'sit out' 40% of the school year (40% of 190 days equals 76 days). Any teacher who works as a substitute within this time period is required to refund the equivalent proportion of severance to government.

2. Article 49.08 of the NLTA Provincial Collective Agreement states, "substitute teachers who substitute for 20 teaching days or more on a continuous basis will be considered a replacement teacher for purposes of benefits under this agreement, with effect from the first day of such period of substitution."

If a retired teacher substitutes 20 or more consecutive days, he/she would be considered a replacement teacher and thus a contributor to the Teachers' Pension Plan. Their pension would be stopped, and Payroll would recover 20 days of pension previously paid to the teacher. The teacher would be an active contributor to the Pension Plan and their pension would be recalculated under the pension plan provisions at the time of their 'second retirement'.

3. A teacher who works as a substitute for a teacher on unpaid sick leave, or substitutes in a vacant position is considered a replacement teacher, and a contributor to the Teachers' Pension Plan, similar to number 2 above. The Collective Agreement defines the following, Article 42.01(f): "Replacement teacher" means a teacher who is hired to replace a regular teacher who has been granted leave without pay, or a teacher granted leave under Article 20". Article 42.01(j): "Substitute teacher" means a teacher who is hired in place of another teacher who is granted leave with pay in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement, or is absent on sick leave or is performing duties in accordance with Clause 29.03(b).

4. The Teachers' Pension Act [Section 24(4)] does not allow a retired teacher to substitute more than 65 days in any school year. The teacher will not be paid for substitute work done after 65 days in the aggregate.

School Administrators should help ensure that this information is brought to the attention of retired teachers who may be substituting in their schools. Any further questions can be directed to an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division at NLTA, Tel: 709-726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599.

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## **Teachers Invited to Submit Reaction to the Draft Special Education Policy Manual**

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The Division of Student Support Services of the Department of Education has recently released a "draft" Special Education Policy Manual and is seeking reaction from the field. Given the Association's involvement in the issues around Pathways during the past two years, the NLTA intends to submit a comprehensive response to the new Special Education policy. We intend to forward our submission to the Department of Education by November 30, 1999.

We invite any interested members to submit reactions. Your first-hand knowledge and experience is valuable in helping NLTA develop an informed and thorough response. If you require a copy of the document and would like to provide feedback please contact René Wicks, Administrative Officer for Professional Development, Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, Ext. 245; e-mail: [rwicks@nlta.nf.ca](mailto:rwicks@nlta.nf.ca).

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Johnson Incorporated

# "MEMBERS-ONLY" INTERNET SITE

by [Chris Spurvey](#)

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Over 35 years ago, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association (at that time, the Newfoundland Teachers' Association) and Johnson Incorporated, embarked upon what has evolved into a long-lasting and successful relationship. From the beginning of the NLTA Group Insurance Plan, the Association accepted that it was not able to operate such a large insurance program on a daily basis. Johnsons were engaged to carry out this task, and they have remained Plan Administrator to the NLTA Group Insurance Plan ever since. As Administrators and Consultants, Johnsons perform numerous insurance services in the areas of consultation, administration, underwriting agreements, payment of claims, and collection and distribution of premiums. Today, Johnsons administer the Group Insurance Plan for approximately 11,200 NLTA members.

In November of 1998, when Johnsons began creating an innovative and unique Internet service for their Preferred Clients, it was the natural conclusion that the NLTA should be the first group to enjoy the benefits of this original application. For almost two years, Johnson's Internet Team has dedicated themselves to this challenging undertaking and on October 18, 1999, the NLTA will officially be able to access the Johnson Incorporated "Members-Only" Internet site. Through this site, NLTA members will be able to both view and interact with their Group Benefits and Insurance information, and communicate directly with their personally assigned Service Supervisors --; in a completely secure environment, from the privacy and convenience of their own PC.

Members who choose to access the site will be able to view their Group Insurance Plan in "real time". This means that the information presented to a member is the exact same as that maintained in Johnsons databases --; that is, the most current information in existence. Members will no longer have to wonder if their coverages have changed, or be unsure as to the status of a claim. They will see each of their Benefits described fully, including rates and premiums per pay period. And all of this important information will be available with just a mouse click at [www.johnson.ca](http://www.johnson.ca). For additional convenience, this site will be accessible through a link from your own web site, [www.nlta.nf.ca](http://www.nlta.nf.ca).

An individual's Benefit and Insurance arrangement is a very private matter. Every measure possible has been taken to ensure that any data communicated via the site is completely safe and secure. In fact, this site is as secure as any bank or financial institution. Security measures taken include: the use of a fire wall to protect internal systems from any type of unauthorized access; user ID and password restricted entry; data encryption; and server authentication. Having used only the latest technology in security endeavors, teachers can feel confident that the site --; and any communication through it --; is completely secure.

The "Members-Only" Internet site, as unique and unprecedented as it is, is just another step in Johnsons continued commitment of providing its clients with the very best customer service possible. As such, this site will remain ever-evolving and growing. Johnsons are currently in the process of implementing additional features designed to further enhance the level of service and convenience it provides to its clients. It is anticipated that in time this site will be used to conduct e-commerce activities, and to allow clients to personally make changes to their Benefit Plans (a confirmation letter from Johnsons will follow all transactions).

To gain access to the "Members-Only" site, simply e-mail your name, address and telephone number to [nlta@johnson.ca](mailto:nlta@johnson.ca). Alternatively, you can simply fill in and return (by mail or fax) the postage paid reply card which you'll be receiving soon.

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Chris Spurvey is Co-ordinator, Corporate Internet, with Johnson Incorporated. He can be reached by e-mail at [cts@johnson.ca](mailto:cts@johnson.ca).

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# APPLYING FOR EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

**Academic Year 2000-2001**

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The deadline for applications for educational leave (academic year 2000-2001) is February 1, 2000. Teachers who are interested should **apply to their school districts** in accordance with [Article 20.03](#) of the Collective Agreement using the following application. **School districts** should forward approved applications to: Mr. Gary Hatcher, Director of School Services and Professional Development, Department of Education, P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NF, A1B 4J6. In accordance with the Collective Agreement, the Educational Leave Committee will make its selection by March 1, 2000. Please note that only the information contained in the application will be used by the Committee in the selection process and that additional information will not be considered. The successful applicants will be notified before the end of March. Please take particular note of the eligibility requirements (20.01) and of the continuing employment commitment if your application is accepted (20.07). The corresponding article in the Labrador West Agreement is Article 32.

## **EDUCATIONAL LEAVE SELECTION CRITERIA: 2000-2001**

### **General:**

- (1) An attempt is made to award leaves so there is no disruption among the various school districts of the province in relation to the teacher population of those districts;
- (2) There is an attempt to allocate leaves to males and females in the proportion that each group is represented within the teaching force.

### **Specific:**

- (1) Financial: (a) number of dependents; (b) other awards, scholarships, fellowships, etc., received during period of leave.
- (2) Education History: (a) certificate level; (b) degrees held and dates conferred; (c) major field of study; (d) date of last course taken; (e) opportunity to upgrade at local level.
- (3) Years of teaching experience.
- (4) Professional involvements.
- (5) The educational needs of the district as recommended by the Director.
- (6) The educational needs of the province.

The general criteria are quite clear in intent and govern the overall selection of leave recipients. Numbers 1 through 4 of the specific criteria are designed to give a detailed profile of the applicant, including the concept of need and the professional background. In addition, the educational needs of the school district and the province are considerations which may vary in weight or nature from year to year.

It is important to realize that the program of study which the applicant intends to pursue is one of the factors considered in deciding on the allocation of educational leaves, and when leave is granted to an individual it is granted on the basis of the information contained on the application form. **If a successful applicant finds it necessary to change his/her planned program of study from that indicated on the application, the Selection**

**Committee will then reconsider the granting of the leave before making a final decision.** All leaves granted are awarded on that basis.

Considering the above, it is to the applicant's advantage if acceptance to the program indicated is obtained prior to applying for the educational leave. Many programs are extremely limited in the number of seats available, so applicants should be reasonably sure of acceptance before listing a particular program.

No one factor of those listed in the above criteria dominates the Committee's final decision. Each member of the Committee, after thorough discussion of all the factors and after reviewing in detail the information on each applicant, has input to the final selection. Every effort is made to apply the criterion in a consistent fashion, and some aspects of the procedure may be computer-assisted.

## **POLICY REGARDING AWARDING OF EDUCATIONAL LEAVES**

- (1) The maximum leave to be awarded any one teacher shall be 2 1/2 university semesters.
- (2) Leave shall normally be awarded for a duration of 1 or 1/2 university semesters.
- (3) A teacher will be eligible to receive an additional award five years after receiving an award.
- (4) Notwithstanding the above, a teacher may receive additional awards if that teacher is pursuing a program of studies at the request of the Educational Leave Committee or a program of studies which the Committee has identified as one to receive priority.
- (5) In any given year if the number of leaves available exceeds the number of "first-time" applicants, the additional awards will be given to applicants who have received an award previously.

## **Article 20 --; Educational Leave**

20.01 Subject to the other provisions of this article, a teacher who has been employed in Newfoundland as a teacher for five years or more may be eligible for educational leave up to one year.

20.02 There shall be an Educational Leave Committee consisting of five members, two of whom shall be appointed by the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.

20.03 Teachers who are eligible for educational leave and who wish to obtain such leave shall make application to the school board. Only applications which are approved by the school board shall be forwarded to the Educational Leave Committee.

20.04 Prior to January 1 each year, the Minister shall notify the Educational Leave Committee of the number of teachers who may be granted educational leave in the coming school year. In any event, the minimum number of teachers who may be granted leave shall be 30 per year, or the equivalent.

20.05 The Educational Leave Committee shall, not later than the first day of March of the year of the award, select those teachers who are to be granted educational leave. The number selected by the Committee shall not exceed the number indicated by the Minister in accordance with 20.04.

20.06 Leave granted under this article shall be at the rate of 2/3 salary.

20.07 Upon completion of the educational leave, a teacher shall return to the school board from which leave was granted, for a period of not less than double the period of leave granted.

20.08 A teacher granted educational leave shall, subject to Article 9, on return be given the same position or comparable position in the same school, unless it is mutually agreed between the teacher and the school board that the teacher return to a particular position.

20.09 The period in which a teacher is on educational leave with pay shall be considered as full time taught.

20.10 Nothing in this article shall be deemed to preclude leave privileges which may be available to teachers under Article 19.

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## APPLICATION FOR EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

September 2000 --; August 2001

NAME:   
S.I.N.:   
DATE OF BIRTH:   
HOME ADDRESS:   
PHONE: (Home)   
PHONE: (School)   
SCHOOL DISTRICT:

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PRESENT TEACHING CERTIFICATE:

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DEGREES/DIPLOMAS:

Degree/Diploma: <input type="text"/>	Major Field of Study: <input type="text"/>	Date Conferred: <input type="text"/>
Degree/Diploma: <input type="text"/>	Major Field of Study: <input type="text"/>	Date Conferred: <input type="text"/>
Degree/Diploma: <input type="text"/>	Major Field of Study: <input type="text"/>	Date Conferred: <input type="text"/>

CURRENT TEACHING ASSIGNMENT:

DATE OF LAST COURSE TAKEN:

NO. OF YEARS TEACHING:

In the Province:  Elsewhere:

List dependents, giving ages:

List of other awards, scholarships, fellowships, etc., which will be received for the period of leave:

List of professional involvements for the past three years:

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**DATES FOR WHICH LEAVE IS REQUESTED:** (Period: September - December 2000; January - April 2001; May - June 2001)

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First Choice:

Second Choice:

Educational Institution:

What program of study do you intend to pursue?

Have you been accepted for this program of studies for the semester(s) indicated? Yes  No   
(If yes, please attach confirmation of acceptance from the educational institute.)

**PURPOSE FOR LEAVE:**

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(Give an indication of your educational goals, area of study to be pursued, etc. Attach an additional sheet if required.)

**I hereby certify that I fulfill the requirements for educational leave as outlined in Article 20.01 of the Collective Agreement and accept the obligation imposed by Article 20.07.**

Date:  Signature:

**NOTE TO TEACHERS:** Please forward to your School District and from there it will be forwarded to: Mr. Gary Hatcher, Director of School Services and Professional Development, Department of Education, Confederation Building, P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NF, A1B 4J6. Application must be received by the Selection Committee by **February 1, 2000.**

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# CONTINUE AND CHANGE

by [Nancy Parsons Heath](#)

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Continue and change seems to be the current state of affairs in much of the education system and it is certainly a good description of STEM~Net this fall. Many of our programs have been underway for some time, but, at the same time, there are so many new activities here that much of what is going on throughout the network is barely recognizable when compared with what was happening just a couple of years ago. STEM~Net and its related projects now employ 18 people. There are significant changes in the Policy Board Membership, as well, to reflect the new Mission, Mandate and Strategic Plan that was adopted last year. Details can be found in the "[About Us](#)" link on our web site.

The web site is constantly changing. Major additions in recent months include TUCOWS mirror sites, a revamped Resources section, a web site of commonly used Internet software that users can download, and instructions for configuring the more commonly used Internet software packages.

The technology available to teachers and students and the uses for it are continually improving. This is both a challenge to keep pace with and a widening window of opportunity for all those involved. The DirecPC technology changeover is in progress and the benefits of the new equipment are becoming apparent. STEM~Net is now running two MeetingPoint servers to support the real-time interactive components of web-based distance education courses. The four AP courses of the Vista project have now been joined in this delivery mode by Art Technologies 1201. Yet another activity is an online professional development pilot program for Art teachers.

STEM~Net and the Lewisporte-Gander School District are two of the partners in an Internet Caching Pilot project that is being carried out here and in the Hastings-Prince Edward School Board in Ontario. Other partners include CANARIE, Telesat Canada, Rebel.com and IDC. The new network will improve Internet access to schools by broadcasting Internet content via satellite and storing web sites on local servers.

GrassRoots 1999-2000 is underway and this year there are two funding options for Block Projects. You can earn up to \$5,500 in GrassRoots funding. This year also sees the introduction of the GrassRoots Microsoft Software Incentive. The [GrassRoots Communities@ca](#) competition also returns for a second year. Teachers may now register on the web site. This year's new Millennium Challenge will have an environmental theme and details will be posted on the web site under "What's Happening". Students may visit the site now to play the "CanadaSpell" and "Word Search" games, two online interactive activities.

The War Monuments project has been relaunched with a new mandate to have 2,000 Monuments on the site by November 11, 2000. Contributing information about monuments in your area would make an excellent project for Veteran's Week, 1999. Details and a submission form can be found on the web site.

The SchoolNet News Network/Redaction de Rescol team is busy gearing up for the year and are developing a guide that helps teachers use SNN and RDR in their classrooms. The monthly publications and the mentorship program are looking for students to participate and contribute. SNN/RDR also held a Student Journalism Weekend in Ottawa in early October in partnership with Carleton University's School of Journalism.

I recently complained to someone that I couldn't get time to write something I had been trying to work on for several weeks. From his District office viewpoint, he understood my dilemma all too well. He replied, "It seems that in education today, to get at the real substance of education the stuff of creativity and innovation

is the challenge. The mundane maintenance of the system is ever present." If we let the mundane maintenance take all our energy, we will only continue, not change. If you have an idea for how STEM~Net can help you be innovative or creative in your classroom, please send them along. We will do our best to help. You can reach me at [nancy@stemnet.nf.ca](mailto:nancy@stemnet.nf.ca).

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Nancy Parsons Heath is Director, STEM~Net.

# THE KEY TO REMAINING WELL

by Kathy Burford

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In the May/June 1999 issue of The Bulletin an article titled "[Teachers Taking Action](#)," provided information about how to be active and keep fit. The importance of starting such a program was emphasized in enhancing and maintaining your health and wellness. This school year, there will be more articles that relate to teacher health and wellness and you will be encouraged to take steps to improve your health and, in turn, your personal well-being.

This article contains ten important areas which offer suggestions that you can begin implementing today. If you have already started to make pro-active choices to take better care of yourself, then you already know the rewards of making such a decision. If you haven't started yet, it is never too late to consider some of what is suggested and to start doing something positive for yourself.

## **Get adequate sleep and plan periods of rest**

A teacher's day is typically long and often stressful. If you find yourself continually staying up late, and then going to bed unable to sleep because your mind is still going over the day's events, you are headed for exhaustion and possibly burnout. If you rely on coffee during the day, you might reduce your consumption to only a cup in the morning. Alcohol, as well, disrupts sleep and should not be consumed at least several hours before retiring. Planned physical activities are helpful in helping a person relax more in the evening so that falling asleep becomes easier. Naps after work can work against you by making it more difficult to drift off to sleep at bedtime.

Outside of the classroom, you may be the teacher who always volunteers for additional activities only to find yourself regretting it afterwards. You may find yourself in this position because: a) you have always done it and no one else knows how; or, b) no one else volunteers and you have a hard time saying "no". Unfortunately, many teachers who have followed this path find themselves exhausted with little energy left to cope with the demands of living. Alternatively, just try saying, "no, I'm not able to take that on at this time," and use the time to rest and re-charge your batteries.

Find a balance of work and play in your daily planning and organize your time and energy more realistically. A good way to start is by being aware of your own energy limits. A person will do more efficient and effective work by taking reasonable rest breaks.

## **Eat well and maintain a healthy weight**

You are what you eat and if you are not eating well it will show up in how you feel. Take the time to become informed about healthy foods. Limit or eliminate most fats in your diet as well as the temptation to eat fast foods and pre-packaged meals. Increase your consumption of fresh fruits, vegetables, and grains in your diet. Pay attention to your calories. A little exercise or physical activity is a good strategy for controlling or maintaining a healthy weight.

## **Learn relaxation, breathing, & visualization techniques**

An easy, no cost, efficient way to better your health is learning deep breathing when you begin to feel uptight and edgy. When a person is under stress their breathing becomes shallow. Deep breathing for a few minutes will drain away tightness and tension and is a quick way to calm oneself. Another relaxation method is to sit comfortably in a chair for a 5-10 minute period and tighten and relax your muscles beginning with the toes and moving through sections of your body, ending with your face and forehead muscles. Then stretch your head from side to side to relieve any tension in your neck which will help relax

you at the same time. Many people are often surprised, when tightening their facial muscles and relaxing them, to find there was tension there in the first place. When you are in a relaxed and calm state, think of a pleasant place, or a pleasurable situation. These thoughts can easily be retrieved and used for calming when you are faced with a frustrating or annoying situation. It will help you to have a few moments to gain perspective and handle a situation in a calmer manner.

### **Pay attention to your attitude & don't sweat the small stuff**

How often do we go through life reacting to people and events outside of our influence and control? While we don't have external control, we do have internal control over how we react and deal with people and situations. If we are finding ourselves overwhelmed with external matters and are in a negative frame of mind, it is time to stop and reflect on what is really important. Is it worth being bitter and getting sick over things that we can't change?

### **Develop a sense of humour and get a life**

Norman Cousins, a renowned physician dealing with his own serious illness found that laughter helped him get well. He watched funny movies during his long hospital stays and subsequently regained his health. Laughter heals and is the shortest distance between people. Have you ever laughed so hard that your facial muscles ached or tears ran down your face? Do you recall how you felt afterwards? Do you find that you take yourself and perhaps your work too seriously?

### **Be active and keep yourself fit**

Many illnesses are avoidable if people would be willing to trade inactivity for physical activity. Some teachers have reported that when they started regular physical activities, they noticed positive improvements in their physical stamina, ability to cope with stress, reduction in blood pressure and weight and increased energy. If, for example, you can become involved with walking, skating, lawn raking, biking, skiing, running, or whatever you like to do, three times a week for 30 minutes each day, you will likely notice the benefits. Over time, you can increase the number of days per week as your time and body allows. But if you are a person who has not done any physical activity for a time, be sure to check with your physician before you begin. And of course, any physical activity should be done with warm up stretching, comfortable shoes and clothing.

### **Learn to let go of negativity**

How often do we harbour grudges that seem to "eat away" at our spirit? Grudges, big and small, can keep us stuck forever in a negative cycle. If this is something that applies to you, make the effort to get beyond the issue and turn your attention to getting on with living.

### **Maintain a balance between work and home and learn to play and have fun**

Managing your time is a skill. It takes work but when you are in the driver's seat you are in control. Find time to play and have fun doing activities that you find enjoyable and relaxing.

### **Maintain caring relationships with friends and family**

Nothing zaps energy more than spending time with negative or abusive individuals. Teaching involves relating to different kinds of people. Some of these encounters may not necessarily be favourable, but keep the negative ones down to a minimum. Outside of school, maintain and develop relationships that make you feel good as a person. In the long run, spending time with positive and caring people will carry you through the more difficult encounters. If at all possible, avoid, limit, or restrict your time with negative and energy-draining individuals. Plan time in your life for positive relationships for they will boost not only your energy level but also your self esteem.

### **Listen to your body when it is speaking to you**

Our bodies are finely tuned instruments that work for us rather than against us. When we are ill, it is

important to use our illness as an ally and to ask what our body is trying to say. Do we need to slow down? Are we putting too much energy in one area of our lives at the expense of another? Have we neglected our spirit and are unhappy with our present choices? There is no time like the present to take stock and review our values, needs, hopes and desires. Being aware opens the door to our many positive choices towards wellness.

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Kathy Burford is an EAP Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact [Kathy Burford](#) (ext. 242) or [Claudette Coombs](#) (ext. 265).

# INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

by Wilbert Boone & [René Wicks](#)

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A 50th Anniversary Symposium on the Sustainability of Small Rural Schools across the North Atlantic Rim was held on August 11-14, 1999 at St. Anthony Elementary School in St. Anthony. This is one of the events to help celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Memorial University of Newfoundland as a degree-granting institution ([www.mun.ca/celebrate](http://www.mun.ca/celebrate)). This Symposium was designed to bring together teachers, school administrators, policy makers, researchers, community leaders, and others who have an interest in the sustainability of small rural schools. This international event featured keynote speakers and presenters from islands, regions and countries across the North Atlantic Rim, with 190 participants attending this four-day event.

The theme of the Symposium was Small Rural Schools in the Global Community. Small rural schools are unique educational institutions that exist across the North Atlantic Rim and around the world. This Symposium focused on the sustainability of these small rural schools in an era of declining enrollments in Newfoundland and Labrador. A special video production, Learning From Each Other, profiling small rural schools in the Northern Peninsula/Labrador South Region and Iceland was premiered at the beginning of the Symposium on August 11. Dr. Terry Piper, Dean of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, gave the keynote address focusing on the theme of the Symposium.

The 50th Anniversary Symposium was organized around four main strands. On the morning of August 12, Dr. Jean Brown, Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, was the plenary speaker on Educational Leadership in Small Rural Schools. Later that day, Mr. Sigurjon Myrdal, Associate Professor, Iceland University of Education, was the plenary speaker on Teacher Education/ Professional Development for Small Rural School Teachers. Friday morning, August 13, Dr. Ken Stevens, Chair of TeleLearning and Rural Education, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, was the plenary speaker on The Role of Information and Communications Technology in Small Rural Schools. Friday afternoon, Dr. Mildred Brown, Former Director of Policy and Strategic Planning, Department of Development and Rural Renewal, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, was the plenary speaker on Community Economic Development and the Role of the Small Rural School.

In addition to the plenary speaker, each of the four strands included 10 to 12 concurrent sessions with a variety of speakers including teachers and principals from small rural schools, school district office personnel, researchers and government officials and concluded with a panel discussion providing different perspectives on the following topics: Changing Leadership Roles in a Rural Context; Challenges of Professional Development in a Rural School District; Small Rural Schools in a Digital World; and Education to Stay versus Education to Leave.

The 50th Anniversary Symposium concluded on August 14 with keynote addresses by Mr. Dennis Parsons, Director of Education, Northern Peninsula/ Labrador South School District, and Dr. Doug House, Sociology Professor, Department of Sociology, Memorial University of Newfoundland, focusing on The Sustainability of Small Rural Schools across the North Atlantic Rim in the 21st Century. The final speaker was Dr. Bruce Sheppard, Associate Dean of Graduate Programmes and Research, Faculty of Education, who provided a synthesis of the proceedings and made recommendations to all the major stakeholders involved in primary, elementary and secondary education (K-12) in Newfoundland and Labrador as well as other jurisdictions.

The 50th Anniversary Symposium was hosted by the Centre for TeleLearning and Rural Education, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland, in partnership with the Northern Peninsula/Labrador

South School District, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, and the Department of Education, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. In consultation with the Special Celebrations Agency of the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, the 50th Anniversary Symposium was recognized as an official Soiree '99 event. It was also endorsed by the Viking Trail Tourism Association, the Town of St. Anthony, the Regional Office of the Department of Development and Rural Renewal, the Nordic Economic Development Corporation, and the Red Ochre Regional Board Inc.

The planning for the 50th Anniversary Symposium was supported with financial contributions from the Canada-Newfoundland Economic Renewal Agreement [the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Department of Development and Rural Renewal] and Human Resources Development Canada, Regional Office, St. Anthony, NF.

### **Video Comparing the Education Systems in Iceland and Newfoundland and Labrador**

During the opening session a new video was premiered and provided a comparative view of our education system with that in Iceland. Iceland is an island culture with a vibrant marine economy, boasts a population with 100 percent literacy, and produces students who demonstrate very high achievement in many areas.

In April 1999, a group of educators from the province visited Iceland to study the education system. Some interesting findings:

Compulsory education is from ages six through 16.

Students attend school for 170 days a year.

- In addition to 170 teaching days, teachers have 11 days of professional development during the school year. They also have 150 hours of paid planning/PD time during the summer. Of this 150 hours, they may avail of 40 hours of designated institutes or courses which may be used for advancement along the salary scale.
- Most Icelandic children attend pre-school from ages two through five. The pre-schools offer a curriculum developed by the Ministry of Education and are staffed by certified teachers. The pre-schools are often attached to or in close proximity to the compulsory school.
- Most communities have a Music School which offers instruction in instrumental performance. In many isolated communities, teachers from the Music School deliver the music curriculum in the compulsory school.
- Swimming is compulsory. All schools have access to a quality pool, most of which are heated by thermal springs.

The video was produced by the School of Continuing Studies, Memorial University of Newfoundland, in cooperation with School District 2 and the NLTA, with major funding provided by Industry Canada. Copies will soon be distributed to all school districts.

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Wilbert Boone is Managing Director, Centre for TeleLearning and Rural Education, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland. René Wicks is Administrative Officer, Professional Development, with the NLTA.

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# Invitation for Input

## Search for New Dean – Faculty of Education Memorial University of Newfoundland

Memorial University is currently conducting a search to replace the Dean of Education, Dr. Terry Piper, who recently accepted a position at another University.

The Dean of Education holds a very important position in the educational community. The person who takes on this position is the Chief Academic Officer of the only Faculty of teacher education in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. As such, the Dean is responsible to the students and professional colleagues in the faculty, to the teaching profession in general, to the Department of Education, and to the entire community.

In keeping with this widespread responsibility, the search committee invites the input of those affected by this important decision. Two questions will be the focus of our discussions:

- What do you believe to be the key issues, challenges and opportunities for Memorial University's Faculty of Education in the next five years?
- If these are indeed the issues, challenges and opportunities, what kind of person would best provide leadership as Dean of the Faculty? (Personal characteristics, experience, background, preparation, etc.)

**You may forward responses by November 30, 1999 to:**

[Beverley Park](#), Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association,  
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NF, A1B 1W1,  
Fax: 726-4302 or 1-877-711-NLTA (6582)

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## NLTA AWARDS

**BANCROFT AWARD** In recognition of outstanding service given to NLTA at the branch level by an active member and to teachers within two years after retirement from teaching.

**BARNES AWARD** In recognition of outstanding professional development services provided at the Special Interest Council level. (Nominations must come from NLTA Special Interest Councils or other professional development groups.)

**ALLAN BISHOP AWARD** In recognition of outstanding service to the Association at the provincial level by an active or life member of NLTA.

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD** In recognition of a major contribution made by an active member of NLTA to the cultural, social and/or community life of Newfoundland and Labrador. Consideration is given to achievements in, or contributions to: the areas of the arts (music/literature/visual arts); service to community, church and service organizations; municipal politics; etc.



Each of these four awards will be presented during the 1999-2000 school year.

For further information on the criteria for these awards, details on the nomination procedure, or nomination forms, contact your branch executive. Nomination deadlines: **January 15** for Bancroft Award, **December 31** for all others.

# TEACHER ISOLATION

By [Deborah Court](#)

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I have been perplexed and fascinated for many years by the phenomenon of teacher isolation. After years as a classroom teacher and university instructor in Canada, during which I experienced and then studied the phenomenon, I am now teaching in Israel where, despite a warm-blooded and outgoing culture, teacher isolation also is endemic.

People learn through intellectual and emotional engagement with one another, and there is no question that isolation hinders professional learning and change in educational systems. Isolation, teacher autonomy and professional interaction wrestle with one another on the professional learning ground and the score is, at best, still tied.

It seems to me, after many years as an educator, that learning involves phases of interaction and the sharing of ideas, solitary study and/or practice, more interaction and more practice. We give students in classrooms opportunities for group work, individual work, class discussion and homework, honouring these solitary-interaction phases. For teachers, the solitary phase is done in the company of students, as the teacher tries out new materials and teaching approaches. The interaction phase, which should involve teachers learning together, is often short-lived, hit and miss or non-existent. Opportunities for teachers to learn together, and sometimes motivation to do so, are inadequate or lacking. Both as a teacher and as a principal I noted the reluctance of some teachers to participate in professional development activities. If given the choice, many prefer to spend the time organizing their classrooms or marking students' work. This is partly due to lack of time to complete basic tasks, but the phenomenon of isolation is more complex than that.

If the "egg-crate" structure of schools and a too-rigid timetable, especially in secondary schools, create the physical conditions for isolation, there must be strong motivation by teachers and by administrators to overcome it. Teachers need not only formal professional development activities but structured opportunities for peer observation and discussion. These ideas are not new.

In Israel I have been impressed to see an especially strong system of "hishtalmut" --; varied, regular and frequent professional development activities and courses that are an integral part of the system. But there, as in North America, teachers tend to retreat whenever possible to their own classrooms, guarding their autonomy, learning mainly against the sounding board of their students, and often resisting change. Teachers in Israel have told me that one reason they resist innovations is because of the bandwagon nature and faddishness that often infects educational change. This criticism is to be respected, and teachers' conservatism in the face of changes that come and go is understandable.

Another factor affecting teachers' willingness to engage in professional interaction is their fiercely guarded professional autonomy. As relatively low-status professionals, with knowledge that is to a great extent practical (theory operating at a tacit level and thus difficult to explain and expose to the public), teachers are prey to public criticism and scape-goating. They must, to some extent, build walls of professional autonomy in order to do their jobs without interference.

Teachers, like other human beings, harbour insecurity, and many appear to have a deep-seated fear of criticism. Allowing another person to watch one teacher, or engaging in frank discussion of classroom problems which might show that one is less than perfect as a teacher, can be very threatening. It may be that, as teachers, our feelings of self-worth are strongly tied to our jobs, because it is difficult to do the job of teaching without investing one's feelings. In carrying out our professional duties, our lives are inevitably entwined with those of our clients and our perceived faults and failures strike at our very hearts. "You didn't

try hard enough. You didn't care enough"; or sometimes, "You weren't smart enough. You didn't know enough". Criticism, sometimes against logic, strikes us in this way. Innovation may be seen as criticism of what we used to do; the need for suggestion or guidance may feel like unforgivable weakness. And so we close our doors, build protective shells of isolation and do not share ideas and discuss problems very often with colleagues. Reflection and learning are hindered by feelings of guilt and inadequacy.

Teacher isolation is clearly a many-faceted phenomenon which requires on-going attention by administrators, researchers, program planners and, most of all, by teachers themselves. Several things can be done.

First, I believe one of the keys to breaking patterns of isolation is the continuing development of qualitative/interpretive research in schools, by university-based researchers together with teacher-researchers. Such research, which necessarily involves dialogue and mutual investigation by researchers and teachers, can help to change the culture of isolation by putting some of the control into teachers' hands, and by fostering inquiring attitudes about teaching and learning.

Second, administrators can encourage a culture of discussion and the sharing of ideas, both informally and in structured formats. They can concentrate intensively on problem-solving together with teachers, rather than on top-down evaluation. They can encourage flexible timetabling that allows professional visits and occasional team-teaching.

Teachers themselves can maintain awareness of the phenomenon of isolation, attempt to analyze how it works in their own professional lives, and act against its negative aspects. I remind myself frequently of my tendency to want to be alone in my classroom with my students, to develop ideas myself and not to interact at the level of actual practice with other teachers. Sometimes I have to bite my tongue and listen to others about how, what, when and why they are teaching, force myself to contribute ideas to a discussion, and moderate the rather strange belief that I am either always right or always wrong!

Breaking isolation is a matter of changing attitudes and changing culture. Such changes do not come quickly but they can be brought about.

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Deborah Court is a Canadian teaching qualitative research methods at Bar Ilan University in Israel. Her research interests include qualitative investigation of teachers' values and practical knowledge. She can be reached at [d\\_court@inter.net.il](mailto:d_court@inter.net.il). (This article appeared in Education Canada, Volume 39, No. 1, Spring 1999. It has been reprinted with permission from Deborah Court.)

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# THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

by [Ann Shortall](#)

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Since 'coming out of the classroom closet', my role as an educator has evolved in several ways. I always aspire to be a teacher promoting tolerance for all; however, now I have also become an advocate driven to dismantle homophobia in our schools. While this role may be frustrating and even frightening at times, these personal feelings are placated by the recognition that our education system is becoming far more tolerant of lesbian and gay students than ever before.

I have given several workshops to both adults and youths. My audiences within the education system have included junior high and high school students, as well as teachers, teacher interns, and guidance counsellor interns. I have also received numerous letters by e-mail and phone calls from teachers, parents, and students. Nearly all the people I have come in contact with over the past four years have treated me with respect for the work I am trying to do. Helping gay and lesbian youth gain acceptance and safety in our education system has always been my main objective.

One prevailing concern from all groups and individuals with whom I met is that while they genuinely wanted to support lesbian and gay youth, they have neither the resources nor knowledge to do so. Being a lesbian teacher did not instinctively qualify me to address the issues, needs, and frustrations experienced by lesbian and gay youth. However, through interviewing youths for my Master of Women's Studies degree, and coordinating the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Questioning Youth Group (LGBQ), I have been able to determine their concerns. These students shared many practical ideas which could be used to make them feel more supported and safe in our schools.

Gay and lesbian youth probably feel most isolated when derogatory terms such as 'fruit', 'fag', 'dyke', or 'queer' are freely used in the school environment. Further, if teachers ignore these remarks, students reported they not only felt unsupported, but afraid if they were faced with the need to depend on these adults for safety. Never forget there are gay and lesbian students in your classrooms and schools. If you hear these discriminatory terms, teach students that homophobic remarks, labels, or jokes exhibit prejudice and are hurtful; similar to discrimination based on race, gender, or religion. The words we use are powerful tools. Non-gender specific words like 'partner' in discussions of relationships teaches gay and lesbian students that you recognize there are diverse people in our society; and perhaps you are their ally. This approach also benefits heterosexual students. Students are learning that tolerance and acceptance are values you believe in for all students.

"Educators significantly influence the experiences of [gay and lesbian] students in school. It is the educator who chooses how to teach the prescribed sexuality curriculum; it is the educator who challenges or winks at homophobic comments or jokes among students; it is the educator who comforts or ignores a student suffering " (Sears, 1992)

Teachers and guidance counsellors should also have classrooms and offices which are lesbian and gay friendly. While resources are limited in all schools, a simple anti-homophobia poster would send a clear message to students that you are supportive of them. Free anti-homophobia posters are available at both the NLTA and Newfoundland Gays and Lesbians for Equality (NGALE) offices.

Myths, stereotypes, and prejudices surrounding homosexuality are rampant and have a powerful effect on both students and teachers. Gay and lesbian youth often accept these misconceptions as fact, preventing them from developing a positive self-esteem. When these myths are debunked, and youths have made peace with their sexuality, they are as likely as their heterosexual peers to look forward to happy, productive lives. It is important to examine your own beliefs about homosexual people. If you realize that your beliefs are

based on opinions rather than facts, it is imperative to commit yourself to unlearning any negative feelings you may have grown up with and internalized. Homosexuals are not immune to these feelings either; we too grew up in a society where gays and lesbians were scorned and ostracized. Informing yourself about gay and lesbian issues breaks down these negative notions.

One free resource is the internet; there are many terrific web sites with informative ideas about supporting youth. Issues such as coming out, providing a safer school environment, and identifying risk factors for lesbian and gay youth are dealt with on these sites. Accessing the web may also make you aware of famous people who are or were gay or lesbian. Research lesbian and gay writers, scientists, artists, athletes, etc. and include them in your class discussions where appropriate. Incorporating positive role models in your lesson plan sends the message that we are viable, productive members of society. Two informative web sites geared toward youth are: The Rainbow Classroom Network ([www.dezines.com/rainbow/](http://www.dezines.com/rainbow/)) and WeAreFamily ([www.waf.org/](http://www.waf.org/)).

Many gay and lesbian youth feel concerned that there are no books in their libraries to help them through confusing feelings regarding their sexuality. Young people often go to the library before they are ready to talk to others, only to be disappointed by the lack of information available. One of the best books I have read for both students and adults is *Free Your Mind: The Book for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Youth --; and Their Allies* by Ellen Bass and Kate Kaufman ([www.harpercollins.com](http://www.harpercollins.com)).

While all youths are encouraged to report verbal or physical violence, many lesbian and gay students are afraid to report any form of harassment based on sexual orientation for fear of being discovered as gay or lesbian by friends, family, and peers. However, all students should be aware that any form of violence is against the law, and that violence against people because of sexual orientation is considered to be a hate crime in Canadian courts.

All the students I interviewed stated that much of the prejudice against lesbians and gays originates from the misconception that they have never met anyone who is homosexual. People fear the unknown, and gays and lesbians are often viewed not only as different, but a threat to Newfoundland families and values. Most people know homosexuals; they probably just don't know their sexual orientation. While one gay or lesbian can never speak for all (we are as diverse as heterosexuals), inviting an adult into your classroom can help students realize that there are others struggling with similar issues and fears. Of course, any speaker you invite into your classroom should be equipped to handle the topic professionally. A teacher should first consult with the speaker, ask for credentials, and have input into the agenda of the lecture or workshop.

Lesbian and gay students often come out for the first time to a supportive teacher. If this happens, it is best to help the student share his or her feelings by using open-ended questions such as the following: What concerns do you have? Can you share some of your feelings? Do you have other people you can talk to? It is harmful to ask questions or make statements such as: How do you know? Have you tried dating the opposite sex? You may be just going through a phase. You need counselling. Any of these comments leave the student with feelings that you believe homosexuality is not as valid or worthy as heterosexuality.

As teachers we often forget the enormous power we hold over many of our students. However, we all remember some of our teachers; usually the most influential who affected our lives forever. Take hold of that memory if a gay or lesbian student approaches you about their sexual orientation.

"Words are more powerful than perhaps anyone suspects, and once deeply engraved in a child's mind, they are not easily eradicated." (May Sarton)

The Living Heritage Institute

# EIGHT DAYS IN JULY

by Rosemary Webb

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All it took was eight days in July (11-18) attending the Living Heritage Institute in Edmonton, for me to become both surprised and enthusiastic about teaching Canadian history. Thirty teachers ranging from elementary to high school, from every province in Canada participated in this Institute. One teacher even managed to make the trip from the Yukon. This Institute was extremely well planned and organized and each day had a definitive theme as follows: setting the focus; sharing the story of heritage; telling the story of heritage; visions and perspectives; technology based learning; experiencing heritage; heritage lives; and celebrating heritage.

Introduction and background to the Heritage Minutes was provided by Patrick Watson. Mr. Watson is currently the director of the Heritage Minutes as well as "The Canadians --; Biography of a Nation" shown on the History Channel.

The concept of the Heritage Minutes was developed using the techniques of successful commercials, where the message is presented in 30 to 60 seconds, targeting an audience of adolescents and pre-adolescents. Each heritage minute presents history dramatically, for the purpose is not simply to impart information but more importantly overcoming problems and making myths. They are little known stories of people who made everyday contributions to our lives. Midwives, teachers, workers and everyday people who helped to improve the lives of Canadians.

The focus for day two was sharing the story of heritage and teaching social studies and history through cooperative and collaborative learning (Kagan's strategies). We visited the Edmonton Public Schools' Archives and Museum during the afternoon and viewed classrooms from the 1920's and 1950's, as well as a reconstructed schoolhouse from the 1880's.

During the evening each teacher was required to give a ten minute presentation about a heritage site or a feature in their Province. A carousel method was employed, so we presented to a series of small groups. Our Newfoundland site was a popular venue and our provincial participants and topics were as follows: Randy Head (Social Studies Department Head, Beaconsfield High, St. John's), Cape Spear, Newfoundland. A National Historic Site. The story of the lighthouse and the guns at this site; Peter Laracy (Principal, All Hallows Elementary, Cupids), The Water Witch. A historical background to this shipping disaster and a poetic recitation; Rosemary Webb (Elementary teacher, St. Peter's Elementary, Mount Pearl), A slide presentation showing Newfoundland's History and Culture from A to Z.

On day three we viewed some heritage minutes produced by two teachers with their Grade 5 class in Regina, Saskatchewan this year. Patrick Watson gave us some valuable advice when developing a script and producing a video with an elementary class.

We also had the opportunity to design our own "heritage minute" in small groups using the story board technique. This session took place at the Alberta Provincial Museum so that we could utilize actual artifacts. Our group was given a Torah, the Jewish Bible, as the basis for a story plot. Other artifacts included a miner's hat, a porridge bowl and a needle case. Each item became the focus for a possible heritage minute.

I attended a session given by Judith Schultz, a writer for the Edmonton Journal. She recently published "Mamie's Children", a histography (history plus biography) of her grandmother's life.

Another session was spent at the Alberta Provincial Museum in the Gallery of Aboriginal Culture. We sat in a circle inside a large "teepee", spending time practising the oral tradition, telling and listening to creation stories.

A day was also spent at the Edmonton Public Schools' MicroCentre. We were given the time to explore various web sites, including the Heritage Project ([www.heritageproject.ca](http://www.heritageproject.ca)) --; an excellent web site that you should definitely check out.

We had an opportunity to attend a Resource Fair with Laurier LaPierre (historian, author and broadcaster) as the feature speaker. He inspired everyone who heard him, reminding us that Canada is populated by people of diverse backgrounds and heritage. Laurier ended his speech with these words, "Let Canada be the inspiration of your life, dream large dreams, so as to have a large life in our large country." A message to live by.

We attended a session titled Literature: An Aesthetic Experience given by Roberta McKay from the University of Alberta who shared basic ideas, concepts and strategies for the integration of literature into the teaching of Canadian history and heritage. Roberta read us "The Ghost Train" which graphically portrayed the hardships of a Chinese worker on the railroad in the last century.

We also attended the National Heritage Fair Exhibition and were present for the opening ceremonies. There were models, dioramas, Internet projects and music performed by individual students. Our Province was very well represented and our participants attracted quite an audience.

The final day was essentially for closure --; reviewing, reflecting and formulating action plans. We had used ideas and activities from two learning resource kits during the Institute, and we were invited to select one of these resources for our own schools. The first set of materials was entitled "We are Canadians" and it focused on the diversity of people who have made Canada their home throughout history. This is an excellent resource for Elementary and Junior High classes. The second set, "Canadians in the Global Community", is a valuable resource for High School classes.

Our Newfoundland representatives resolved to give a joint presentation on the Heritage Project at our Fall Humanities Conference in St. John's. The Living Heritage Institute was indeed eight days well spent. My interest in Canada, its history, geography and peoples will remain with me forever. Next year the Heritage Institute will be held in Ottawa during July. If you teach Canadian history it is certainly worth submitting an application.

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Rosemary Webb is a teacher at St. Peter's Elementary in Mount Pearl.

## **Newslink**

Newslink is a 15-minute daily newscast produced by Newsworld exclusively for Cable in the Classroom. It is designed for teachers and students and combines the stories and information of the CBC's acclaimed news service with an outlook that is fresh and young. From Parliament Hill to the coffee shop, from Bill Clinton to the Spice Girls – Newslink covers the issues that interest young people, while at the same time it sparks debate about the critical issues facing this country, challenging students to think for themselves.

It's a news and current affairs teaching tool that's fresh and new everyday – and it's accompanied by a stimulating lesson plan that is available on the internet at [www.newsworld.cbc.ca/newslink](http://www.newsworld.cbc.ca/newslink). The lesson plan is developed by Ron Jeffery, BA, M.Ed. – a social studies curriculum leader in Calgary.

All of the video in Newslink is copyright-cleared for use in Canadian classrooms. For more information call (403) 521-6041, or e-mail us at [newslink@calgary.cbc.ca](mailto:newslink@calgary.cbc.ca).

## **Read Up On It**

The Read Up On It kit, now in its 11th year, is an annual bilingual guide to the best in Canadian literature for children and young adults and is based on the National Library of Canada's Canadian Children's Literature Collection ([www.nlc-bnc.ca/services/eclsc.htm](http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/services/eclsc.htm)). The free kit is designed to encourage young people to read, on their own or with their families, and to read books by Canadian authors or illustrators.

The electronic version of this year's and past editions of Read Up On It can be found on the National Library's web site at [www.nlc-bnc.ca/ruoi/eruo.htm](http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/ruoi/eruo.htm). Free copies of the 1999 Read Up On It kit are available from: National Library of Canada, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0N4, Tel: 613-995-7969, Fax: 613-991-9871, TTY: 613-992-6969, e-mail: [publications@nlc-bnc.ca](mailto:publications@nlc-bnc.ca).

## **The Canada Post School Program**

The School Program is a comprehensive educational initiative that explores this country's postal heritage while exposing elementary school students to the pleasures of reading and writing letters. The Program also supports Canada Post's efforts to promote literacy, its cause of choice since 1990.

The School Program engages students in letter writing, informs them about stamp collecting, and introduces them to the central role Canada's postal system has played in the life of the nation. The School Program provides valuable teaching aids for any English, history or other social studies classroom. With additional components being developed over the coming months, the program to date includes: an exciting curriculum-based resource kit containing lesson ideas, teaching guides and proposed activities; a secure pen-pal program that uses a computer-matching process to promote correspondence between students – and teachers – across the country; and an informative speakers' program through which Canada post employees visit schools to talk about the postal service and their work.

Contact Cindy Daoust at 613-734-8888 for more information about the Canada Post School Program.

## **Hit the Books 1999**

This year's newly designed activity books continue to use the popular baseball theme to guide students through challenging and informative literacy activities. Complete with posters, stickers and bookmarks, these products are a popular resource with both students and teachers.

All items are bilingual. Thanks to continued support from the National Literacy Secretariat, we are pleased to offer these resource materials free of charge! To order, contact: Canadian Teachers' Federation, 110 Argyle Avenue, Ottawa, ON, K2P 1B4, Tel: 613-232-1505, Fax: 613-232-1886. You can also order via our web site: [www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca).

## **Action Guide on International Year of Older Persons**

An Action Guide on International Year of Older Persons (in English and French) for teachers has been developed by the United Nations Association in Canada, a non-profit organization that helps inform and educate Canadians about United Nations activities, with generous support from corporations including Manulife Financial and the Royal Bank. The following sections are included in the Action Guide: [Strengthening the Ties Between the Old and the Young](#); [The United Nations and the Question of Aging](#); [Canada and Older Persons](#); [IYOP Questions and Answers](#); [IYOP Quiz](#); [Action Ideas](#) – with detailed activity plans for the classroom; and [Resources](#). The Action Guide is available on the web at [www.unac.org/](http://www.unac.org/).

### **Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador**

Is the reference section of your library missing volumes of the Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada's only provincial encyclopedia?

With Volume 1 of the Regular Edition no longer available, you should check your encyclopedia section for copies of Volumes 2-5. Like Volume 1, no more copies of Volume 2 (Fac-Hoy), Volume 3 (Hu-M), Volume 4 (N-R), and Volume 5 (S-Z) will be printed.

If your library requires all five volumes it is possible, still, to reserve a complete set. A limited supply of the five-volume, Deluxe Edition boxed set remains. To reserve copies contact ISER Books, Tel: 1-888-FOR-NFLD (367-6353), Fax: 709-737-7560, or by mail at Room A1044, Arts and Administration, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St John's, NF, A1C 5S7. Additional information is available on our web site at [www.mun.ca/iser/](http://www.mun.ca/iser/).

### **Quick Handle Marks**

Two Ontario English teachers have put together a collection of tests and writing exercises that quickly evaluate how well students are doing, yet without producing a crushing load of papers to grade. Before the tests, students are provided with a set of instructions, model responses, practice sheets and a marking scale. There are even masters so teachers can make overheads to teach the best approaches to tackling materials.

The various tests cover mechanics such as punctuation, grammar, proper sentence structure and parallelism – all at a senior level – and there are additional tests that evaluate language, coherence and organization.

[Quick Handle Marks](#) is a very useful package for \$20. For further information contact Teacher Tool Kit Press, P.O. Box 22002, 45 Overlea Blvd., Toronto, ON, M4H 1N9.

### **The All About Series**

The All About Series is a comprehensive set of non fiction research books (73 titles) for young learners (ages 4-12). Solely Canadian in content, this customized series affords readers the opportunity to appreciate and learn about their country – Canada. The All About Series was created to provide young learners with current, relevant reference material that they can read.

There are seven topic strands (Canadian Animals, Provinces and Territories, Capital Cities, Geographical Regions, Attractions, Famous Canadians, Sports). The series capitalizes on the young learners natural enthusiasm and an affinity for the topics presented. The series invites readers to explore and discover the fascinating world of non fiction, while linking these discoveries to their own personal lives.

This series can be purchased by using the toll free number 1-800-661-2859 or e-mail: [reidmore@compusmart.ab.ca](mailto:reidmore@compusmart.ab.ca) or visit the web site: [www.reidmore.com](http://www.reidmore.com).

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# Editor's Choice for Resources on the Web

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## Check out these web sites

[www.cepan.ca](http://www.cepan.ca)

A web site and forum for information about education issues by the Canadian Educational Policy and Administration Network. A service of the Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA) in cooperation with Industry Canada's SchoolNet, the Canadian Education Association, the Canadian Association of School Administrators, and the Canadian Association of Principals.

<http://canada.teachers.net/>

Available from the Canadian.teachers.net homepage, Canadian.teachers.net offers a message board ("chat board") and its own e-mail discussion group, on-line professional topic chats, discussion boards and e-mail discussion groups for every grade level, job postings, a huge collection of lessons, and more.

[www3.nf.sympatico.ca/patrick.howard/pages/Default.htm](http://www3.nf.sympatico.ca/patrick.howard/pages/Default.htm)

A new resource for junior and senior high school language arts teachers. "Conversation in the Language Arts" provides English teachers with links with the Canadian Council of the Teacher's of English (CCTE), the NCTE in the United States, as well as other English teachers' organizations in the UK and Australia. Sites have journals and publications available on-line.

[www.educationcanada.com](http://www.educationcanada.com)

The Education Canada Network (ECN) lists education opportunities across Canada. It is a free service to all visitors who can browse job postings, and post, edit and renew their own résumé.

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## **Western Business and Information Technology Educators (WBITE) Conference**

**February 17-20, 2000**

Vancouver, B.C. Hosted by the British Columbia Business Education Association. Theme: Building Global Connections: Technology, Business and Economics. The conference will include a choice of 49 speaker sessions presented by business experts and post-secondary and secondary educators from Canada and the U.S. For information, visit our web site at: [www.bctf.bc.ca/psas/bcbea/wbite2000](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/psas/bcbea/wbite2000).

## **SAC AGM and Conference**

**April 5-7, 2000**

Hotel Gander. Contact Wayne Witherall, Principal, Gander Academy,  
Tel: 709-256-8662, Fax: 709-256-8551; or George Tucker, Tel: 709-726-3682 (s) or 709-753-4001 (h),  
Fax: 709-726-1012.

## **Forum 2000**

**April 8-15, 2000**

Ottawa. Applications are invited for 16 teachers from across Canada to attend the Forum 2000 Teachers' Conference. During a week of intense activity teachers learn how the Canadian system of government works, through presentations, observations of student simulations such as a Cabinet meeting and a federal-provincial conference, and activities organized especially for teachers. Fee for the conference is \$760 (does not include transportation). Bursaries are available. Application deadline is January 21, 2000. For further information contact P.O. Box 2103, Station D, Ottawa, ON, K1P 5W3, Tel: 613-233-4086, e-mail: [forum@forum.ca](mailto:forum@forum.ca), web site: [www.forum.ca](http://www.forum.ca).

## **New Frontiers, New Traditions**

**July 2-8, 2000**

St. John's. Join colleagues in a national conference whose aims encompass the development of interest of girls in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), the recruitment of young women into STEM career paths, and the retention and leadership of women in these fields by ensuring their career objectives are met. The event, 8th in a series of national conferences, is being organized by Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter and Memorial University's Chair for Women in Science and Engineering. Submissions are also invited for presentations, workshops or posters in any of the conference focus areas. For information on the call for papers (summaries due by November 12) and on the conference, check [www.mun.ca/cwse](http://www.mun.ca/cwse), or contact Carolyn J. Emerson, Conference Chair, Tel: 709-737-7960, [emerson@engr.mun.ca](mailto:emerson@engr.mun.ca).

## **Trout River Come Home Year**

**July 19-30, 2000**

The Trout River Come Home Year Committee would like to extend an invitation to all former teachers to the community of Trout River to come join in the festivities. For further information, contact any one of the following: Carole Hall, Tel: 709-451-3521; Millie Crocker, Tel: 709-451-5220; Ivy Crocker, Tel: 709-451-3236; or Jenny Parsons, Tel: 709-453-2485.

## **Eastern Horizons Conference**

**October 19-22, 2000**

Hotel Newfoundland, St. John's (tentative location). This conference will be a celebration of Canadian children's and young adult literature featuring presentations by a variety of Canadian authors, illustrators and educators, highlighting some of the best literature from across the country. Contact Heather Myers, Children's Librarian, A.C. Hunter Public Library, St. John's, Tel: 709-737-3317.

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