

# Rielity Check

Louis Riel  
Teachers' Association  
www.lrta.ca

March 2010  
Editor : Deb Barry

## A Simple Gesture of Thanks

Marcela Cabezas – Teacher on Maternity Leave

*Thank  
you*

Becoming a parent ushers in a time of endless thanks. You are tremendously thankful when the little bundle of joy arrives into the world happy and healthy. You give thanks to family and friends for the little things they do to make your life easier. And boy, are you ever thankful when your baby starts sleeping through the night!

Significant changes in our lives often make us sit back and take stock of people and things we used to take for granted. As I look back upon the months that I have spent at home with my baby, I am astonished at how far he has come along since day one. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to stay at home with my son for a full year and I have to thank the LRTA for bargaining for this gift on my behalf. Before this recent life change, I paid little attention to certain articles in our Collective Agreement. Sadly, it isn't until you need something that you start to care about it, and Article 6.01 is incredibly important to me now. If you don't know what Article 6.01 is, perhaps it's time to blow the dust off of your copy of the Collective Agreement and take a peek. You might be surprised to find something inside it that directly affects you as you transition into a new stage of your career or life.

There are many articles in our Collective Agreement that we take for granted in our busy lives as teachers. Regrettably, many teachers just care about Article 4.00, the salary schedule. A paycheque is deposited into our bank account at month's end, but rarely do we ever take the time to ponder the time and effort it took to reach that sum on our behalf. We seldom stop to give thanks to the few who gladly volunteer their time seeking out the best for us all. Our Collective Agreement is filled with evidence as to how the LRTA works tirelessly on our behalf considering things we need before we even realize we need them.

So as my baby begins to stir from his afternoon nap and that moment of quiet reflection is overtaken by his cries for food and snuggles, my final thought for you is this; what have you done lately to give thanks for the work done on your behalf? Are you a council representative for your school? If your answer is yes, my thanks go to you. Are you an LRTA committee member? If so, thanks again. Now more than ever, I understand that time is a luxury. Giving thanks doesn't require a grand gesture or huge time commitment; it can be something as simple as attending one meeting per year. The LRTA's Annual General Assembly is coming up on April 21<sup>st</sup>. It may not seem like a lot, but a simple gesture of thanks goes a long way. Your attendance at that one meeting speaks volumes to the few who work diligently on your behalf to make your job and workplace the best it can be. I'll be at the meeting, will you?

**Editor's Note:** It was less than 15 years ago that maternity leave was 6 months and there was no top up. That was when I had my second child. Mothers taking maternity leave relied on EI (called Unemployment Insurance back then) and received less than 60% of their salary.

## President's Message

**Don't forget the 100 Day Social – Friday, March 19!** I am looking forward to seeing many Louis Riel Teachers' Association members and friends gathered at the Norwood Community Centre. I am certain the winners of the ½ day release prizes will be very pleased they came out. Thanks to Social Chair, Michelle Angst, and her committee for hosting such a lively wellness event for our members.

Frank Restall and his organizing committee have been very busy organizing the MTS Bonspiel, hosted by LRTA, the weekend of March 19-21. We will welcome curlers from around the province. Drop into the Granite Curling Club over the weekend and visit with friends from across Manitoba.

**'Tis the season to commence the building of the LRTA 2010 - 2011 Executive.** All positions are one year terms so every position is vacant. Elections will take place at the AGA April 21, 2010.

**The Table Officer positions are:**

**PRESIDENT,  
VICE PRESIDENT- COLLECTIVE BARGAINING,  
VICE PRESIDENT – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, and  
SECRETARY-TREASURER**

**The Committee Chair positions are:**

**ÉDUCATRICES ET ÉDUCATEURS FRANCOPHONES DU MANITOBA**

<b>EMPLOYEE BENEFITS</b>	<b>EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE</b>
<b>PUBLIC RELATIONS</b>	<b>SOCIAL</b>
<b>MEMBER AT LARGE (3)</b>	<b>LRASA REPRESENTATIVE</b>

**Nominations will be accepted until Wednesday, March 24, 2010, 12:00 noon. Nomination forms are available through your Council Rep and once completed are to be sent to**

**Madeline McKenzie – LRTA Office - 929 5780 (fax)**

Vote for one option.

Here are the procedures for the election:

Candidates will be entitled to the following:

- an election statement (one 8 1/2 X 11 sheet)
- translation of the election statement
- distribution of the election statement

- Joe Smith
- John Citizen
- Jane Doe
- Fred Rubble
- Mary Hill

- The expenses for the above will be borne by the Association.

Materials to be distributed **must** be submitted to the Chair of the Nomination Committee, Madeline McKenzie, by noon (12:00 p.m.), Wednesday, March 24, 2010. **It is highly recommended that you send in your election statement as early as possible to facilitate translation and printing.** Materials arriving after March 24, 2010 will be translated and copied if time allows.

No other campaign materials are allowed.

**No campaign materials may be distributed at the Annual General Assembly.**

A written report on nominations will be distributed to each school in the Association after March 24, 2010.

The LRTA is an Association made up of members who are highly regarded in the community, in part because as professionals we are diligent workers and in part, because we are passionate about our jobs and kids! Nevertheless, there may come a time during your career when you need help. You may need assistance with a situation, a colleague, an ethical dilemma, or perhaps you need a third party evaluation of something. As a member of the LRTA you can call or write us anytime. All communication is confidential. We offer guidance, a listening ear and a helping hand as you manoeuvre through whatever may be troubling you at the time. We are here for you. Please call (929 5782) or write any time!

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a relaxing Spring Break. Whether you find yourselves on the slopes of Whistler, a warm beach in the Caribbean or in the great city of Winnipeg, take time for yourself.

Bonne semaine de relâche à tous et à toutes. Vous l'avez mérité.

*Madeline McKenzie*

# Louis Riel Teachers' Association Annual General Assembly

**Come out to support your Association!**

**Vote** – Do you want VISION CARE? ,

**Vote** on the 2010 – 2011 budget and proposed changes to LRTA policies,

**Review** of the Extended Health Plan and its provisions,

**Vote** for the 2010-2011 LRTA Executive, and

**Consider** the recommendations of the LRTA/MTS Feasibility Committee that studied disassociation from MTS.

**April 21st 2010, 4:30 pm**

**Louis Riel Arts & Technology Centre**



## Ally Training

The LGBTQ Ally Training Program is designed to certify Allies who identify themselves as being able to provide support of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/ transsexual, questioning) individuals. Through this one hour session, participants are engaged in a number of activities to provide a sense of empathy, build camaraderie with other participants, and provide them with information on how to best support LGBTQ individuals.

Training is designed as an education and cross-cultural competency program, available to students, faculty, and staff (in separate training sessions)

The program provides information on anti-LGBTQ bias and discrimination, empathy-building and group building, terminology, and how to serve as an Ally (intervening in bias, what to do if someone comes out to you)

After training, Allies are offered an optional commitment to the Ally Pledge:

Only responsible for being a visible ally of LGBTQ individuals  
and intervening in bias and discrimination.

**Come to a training session Monday, April 12**  
**8:30 – 3:30 PM**  
**in the Glenlawn Seminar Room.**

## Substitute Teacher Professional Development

Are you a new education graduate dreading that first day of being a sub? Are you a recent retiree wondering how subbing is different than regular teaching? Or are you a current sub trying to navigate the ups and downs of the job?

This course is for anyone interested in learning more about substitute teaching as a real profession. You will learn about such topics as pros and cons, booking and hiring, deductions and pensions, daily trouble-shooting and helpful contacts. Regardless of the school division(s) that you work for, the information offered here will be practical, relevant and specific.

The format will be a combination of lecture, group-work and discussion. Feel free to ask your most stressful questions, network with new-found sub colleagues and revel in the fact that subs are real teachers too. This is currently the only training session offered in the province that is taught by, for and about subs.

The instructor has over five years of subbing experience in all grades and subjects. She is interested in eventually creating several sub supports such as a website, handbook and special area group.  
Instructor: Heather Arklie

Prerequisite: some experience in classroom as teacher candidate or certified teacher.

Thursday, May 6, 2010  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m. \$20  
Room 207, Louis Riel Arts & Technology Centre  
5 deBourmont Avenue

## Social Justice is Everyone's Concern

Bill Young, Equity and Social Justice Chair

When the Nazis came for the communists,  
I remained silent;  
I was not a communist.

When they locked up the social democrats,  
I remained silent;  
I was not a social democrat.

When they came for the trade unionists,  
I did not speak out;  
I was not a trade unionist.

When they came for the Jews,  
I remained silent;  
I wasn't a Jew.

When they came for me,  
there was no one left to speak out.

[Martin Niemöller](#) was a [Protestant pastor](#) and social [activist](#), imprisoned by the Nazis.

Hate violence begins with the common use of biased language which bystanders fail to interrupt. Bias motivated language, when allowed to go unchecked, creates an atmosphere where prejudice thrives and words escalate to threats and violence. According to data collected by the Rainbow Resource Center, youth in a Manitoba school can expect to hear a homophobic slur every 14 minutes throughout the school day.

Students who engage in name-calling or tell demeaning jokes don't have deeply thought-out and deep-seated bias towards particular groups. Often, they're just picking up on the messages they hear repeated again and again in the schools.

How can you speak out? The BC Teacher's Association has put together 10 suggests for intervening. Their suggestions can be found at: Ten things you can say or do when you hear "That's so gay!"

<http://bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=6120>



Robert F. Kennedy: Champion of Social Justice

## Should Teachers Transport Students? A Legal Opinion



At the 2009 Annual General Meeting of the Manitoba Teachers' Society a resolution was passed that directed the Society to get a legal opinion related to the risks involved when teachers transport students. The legal opinion obtained says that a school division has liability insurance through the Manitoba Schools insurance program of \$30 million. This is general liability insurance and although we have been told it would defend a teacher involved in a motor vehicle accident, we have not seen the policy. The teacher's own coverage under the Manitoba Public Insurance program is the first payer. This means that, as is the case with any motor vehicle accident, the teacher, if at fault, would have to assume the financial penalty to their MPI premium rates as well as a surcharge on their license should there be an accident related to the transportation of students.

Divisions do not pay the premiums for insuring teachers' vehicles as having a car is not a condition of employment. Teachers would assume any risk for the transporting of students for school-related activities and their personal insurance coverage becomes a first payer while conducting divisional activities.

Teachers also put their welfare at risk when transporting students as the opportunity is greater for allegations of misconduct to be made, especially in a one-on-one situation.

Depending on the circumstances it is also possible for the employer to impose discipline, possibly up to termination, if for example, serious injury was the direct result of improper conduct on the part of the teacher.

### **Can a teacher be successfully sued for negligence?**

#### **Depends.**

If the accident occurs in Manitoba with Manitoba drivers, MPI has no fault insurance and the teacher cannot be sued.

If it involves an accident out of province, then the teacher may be sued in accordance with the law in the jurisdiction where the accident occurred. All persons injured due to negligence of the teacher, including student passengers, could sue the teacher in the jurisdiction where the accident occurred (provided it was not a 'no fault' jurisdiction). MPI would be required to defend the case on behalf of the teacher up to the limits of liability under the MPI policy. Many US jurisdictions award damages in amounts exceeding that typically carried by Manitobans and the teacher would be personally responsible for any award exceeding their coverage limit unless the Manitoba Insurance Program \$30 million provided coverage.

If the accident occurs in Manitoba with an out of province vehicle, there is a possibility that the teacher could be sued in the state or province where the injured party resides, in accordance with the laws of that jurisdiction. Injured student passengers who are residents of Manitoba would not be able to sue.

If a teacher is injured, s/he would have to use up sick days and/or be on disability depending on the number of accumulated days available to the teacher. Only a handful of Associations have Short Term Disability Plans that carry a teacher to Disability Benefits if s/he does not have enough days to cover off the waiting period. (Louis Riel teachers are covered by Short Term Disability Insurance). MPI benefits would also be available to an injured teacher.

If the Division is negligent in some way, the Society could assist a member in bringing an action against the division for damages. Some associations (Louis Riel) also have an on-the-job injury clause which could be accessed for reclaiming sick days and medical expenses.

Some teacher collective agreements have specific provisions that speak to having to reimburse the division for any money that they may have received from MPI as a result of a claim for wage replacement. (According to the Louis Riel Teachers' Association Collective Agreement (Article 6.00), sick leave is not payable to a teacher whose illness or injury results from a motor vehicle accident and is receiving wage loss replacement benefits from MPI to the extent that such benefits and paid sick leave exceed the teacher's normal salary. In such cases the teacher shall reimburse the Division the amount of benefit received from MPI.)

As indicated above, ordinarily a teacher transporting students within Manitoba would not be sued as the law does not permit it. In the event that a teacher is transporting students outside of Manitoba or is involved in an accident with an out of province driver who sues in their home jurisdiction, MPI would defend the claim, subject to the teacher having valid insurance and subject to the limits of liability on the insurance. Student passengers would only be able to sue successfully if the accident happened outside Manitoba in a jurisdiction that was not no-fault. In all circumstances, teacher should contact MPI to ensure that their insurance coverage is adequate before agreeing to transport students.

**Victor and Marie Wyatt Bursary Application  
for courses taken between January 2009-December 2009  
by Robert Gaudes VP Professional Development**

The Victor and Marie Wyatt Bursary Committee is accepting applications for bursaries from teachers and administrators to pursue studies related to public school education.

**The Bursary is available to:**

Educators who are *currently* employed in the Louis Riel School Division,  
Educators who are *currently* on leave from the Louis Riel School Division.  
And Educators who have requested a leave from the Louis Riel School Division for educational purposes and who will be *returning to the division*.

**Bursary Criteria:**

- ◆ Tuition at registered universities or colleges (not including such things as parking, dental or medical insurance, or cost of books and supplies) will be considered.
- ◆ Payment is made directly to the individual,
  - After completion of the course(s), and only
  - After funding is approved by the Bursary Committee upon submission of all required information.
  - Bursary applications will not be accepted in two consecutive years. (e.g. 2008 applicants may apply again in 2010)
  - Maximum eligible tuition: \$1500.00

**Applications must include:**

Proof of course completion – Academic Transcript  
Proof that the course(s) fee(s) have been paid – T2202A Certificate

**Application form can be found at [www.lrta.ca](http://www.lrta.ca) under 'Bursaries'.**

**Deadline for submission: Friday, April 23, 2010.**

**Send completed form and all information to:**

Louis Riel Teachers' Association  
Attn. Vice President of Professional Development  
L.R.T.A. Office, 22 Varennes Ave  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2M 0N1



**Process:**

- ◆ Applicants will receive their letter of confirmation from the Bursary Committee. It will indicate the amount of bursary awarded by the committee.
- ◆ A copy of the confirmation letter is sent to the Winnipeg Foundation.
- ◆ A cheque from the Winnipeg Foundation will be mailed directly to the recipient.
- ◆ In February, each applicant will be issued a tax receipt from the Winnipeg Foundation indicating the amount of their award.



## Dates to Remember

March 19, 2010

“Rock On” Social

March 19 - 21 , 2010

MTS Bonspiel hosted by LRTA

April 21, 2010

LRTA Annual General Assembly

April 29, 2010

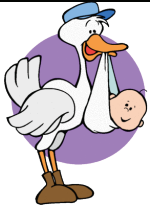
LRTA Appreciation Dinner

May 26-29, 2010

MTS AGM

June 17, 2010

LRTA Retirement Reception



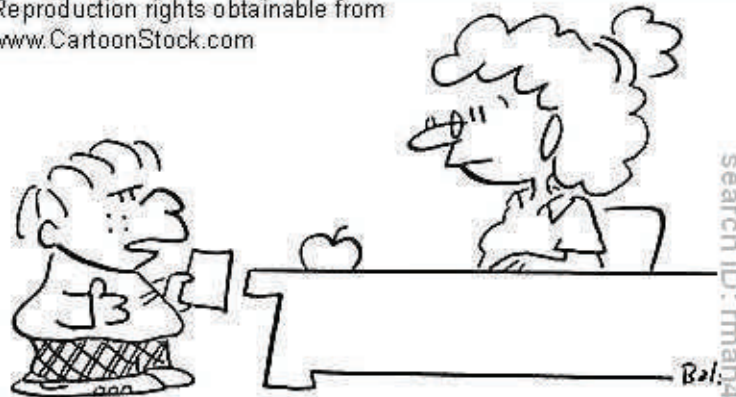
## Birth Announcements

### École Henri Bergeron

Lisa Ross and husband, Ray welcomed their first child, a baby girl, Ashlyn Eva Marie Ross on January 12, 2010.



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"I bring you an apple every day, and I still keep getting C-minuses! —  
What is this, *inflation*?"