



RIELITY CHECK

A publication of the Louis Riel Teachers' Association (www.lrta.ca)

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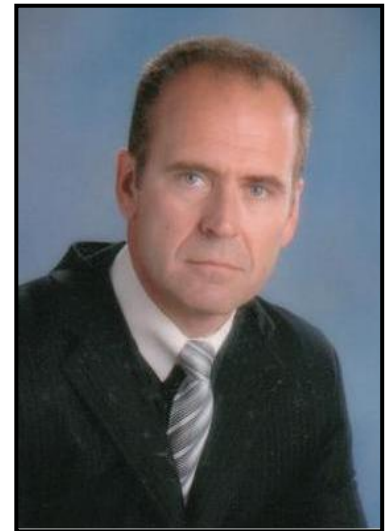
APRIL/MAY 2013

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

PRESIDENT – Frank Restall

The Louis Riel Teachers' Association Annual General Assembly was held on Wednesday April 17th. Thank you to all members who took time from their busy schedules to attend the assembly and participate in the business of our Association. The strength of our Association continues to be the active involvement of our membership! A report of the 2013 AGA appears later in this newsletter. Please mark your calendars...the 2014 LRTA AGA is scheduled for Wednesday, April 16th, 2014!

On the heels of our own AGA is the 94th Annual General Meeting of the Manitoba Teachers' Society Provincial Council. The meeting will take place Thursday, May 23rd to Saturday, May 25th at the Fairmont Hotel. Twenty delegates and two alternates from the Louis Riel Teachers' Association will join delegates from other Associations around the province in shaping the future direction of the Society. Resolutions have been tabled for debate, the budget that determines your MTS fees for 2013 - 2014 will be passed and elections to the Provincial Executive will take place.



The 22 LRTA representatives elected by LRTA members to attend AGM and work on your behalf include:

Carl Antymniuk	Cheryl Bazin	Lynne Bérard	Jaclyn Condon
Sean Fitzmaurice	Jack Fraser	Bob Gaudes	Shannon Gibson
Maeve Hawash	Dallas Henson	Tara Law	Bernard Mazerolle
Lindsay McDonald	Paul Nelson	Valérie Remillard	Jodi Samms
Catherine Strifling	Alison Ward	Sue Wilton	Barry Wittevrongel
Rob Wood	Frank Restall		

Have you marked the LRTA Retirement Reception at the Legacy Center on June 12th in your calendars? Come out and say 'good-bye' to colleagues who are retiring from our profession. The LRTA Retirement Reception is always a wonderful social opportunity for members to wish the retirees well and to touch base with other colleagues before the start of summer.

Although the LRTA Retirement Reception is the last Association social event of the year, special thanks must be extended to Alison Ward and her entire Social Committee for hosting the "Bring Your 'A' Game" social on April 18th. The committee worked diligently to ensure that a great time was had by all. The social was such a success that LRTA members are already enquiring about plans for next year!

The LRTA Appreciation Dinner on May 9th was also a great success. The Appreciation Dinner permits the Association to honour and pay tribute to LRTA members, MTS Staff and others who give of themselves for the betterment of the collective. An invitation to the dinner was sent to Mr. Paul Taillefer, President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation. Unfortunately, Paul was unable to attend but provided a message to be shared at the dinner and with the entire LRTA membership. That message appears later in this issue of the Rielity Check. →



...PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (continued from page 1)

Appreciation is also the subject of another article in this issue. Peter Mansbridge wrote the article "Those Who Can, Teach". The article appeared on March 6th of this year and was written during tumultuous days of struggle between the Ontario provincial government and the teacher unions. Mr. Mansbridge's appreciation of what we do is clearly evident and I encourage all members to make this article a "must read".

The 2013-2014 Association calendar is nearly complete and will soon be forwarded to Council Reps, school administrators and the Division. The Association is asking that no school activities be scheduled on Council meeting days – or on Wednesday, September 25th, 2013 (New Member Celebration), Wednesday, April 16th, 2014 (AGA), Wednesday, April 30th, 2014 (LRTA Appreciation Dinner) and Wednesday, June 11th, 2014 (LRTA Retirement Reception).

In less than two months, this school year will draw to a close. The year-end places many demands upon members and that time is soon approaching. Strive to maintain balance in your lives, and now, more than ever, take care of yourself and take care of each other!

Frank Restall

President, Louis Riel Teachers' Association



The LRTA is
here for you

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Please don't hesitate to contact us!

THOSE WHO CAN, TEACH

CBC News Article • March 6, 2013 • By Mark Bulgutch and Peter Mansbridge

Anyone familiar with my educational background will know that my relationship with teachers was cool. Not cool as in hip and trendy. But cool as in frigid and icy. The fact that I didn't finish high school is my fault. I had teachers who tried to get through to me. Mr. Bank, Ms. Bruce and Mr. Westinghouse were among those who tried, oh how they tried. But some challenges, like me, were just too much.

I put that on the record to make it clear that although a lot of people trace their success to a teacher who provided a spark, I don't. Still, I cringe when I hear and read all the teacher-bashing that's out there. I live in Ontario where the provincial government and the teacher unions have been locked in serious battle for several months. I'm not taking sides in the dispute. Not at all. →



...THOSE WHO CAN, TEACH (continued from page 2)

But my goodness, the things some people say about teachers. Based on what I hear on radio talk shows, and comments on the internet, there are way too many people who truly believe that teachers are grossly overpaid and under-worked.

What a strange attitude. Never mind that teachers are grooming the next generation of Canadians, the ones who will grow up to support our pensions in our old age. Maybe we can't think big-picture. The little-picture is pretty simple. Teachers are grooming our children. Yours and mine. Do we really want to trust the most precious parts of our lives to underpaid and overworked drones?

I keep seeing comparisons to what teachers make to the average industrial wage. And guess what? Teachers make more than the average. Of course they do. They've gone to school for at least four years of post-secondary education. The average teacher has been working for 11 years. They should be making reasonably good money. They're raising families too.

Then there's the under-worked part. That argument usually starts with July and August. Teachers get the whole summer off. No doubt about it; that's nice. But they need the break. I know there are lazy teachers. Just as there are lazy bankers, letter carriers, doctors, and yes, lazy journalists. But overwhelmingly, teachers are not lazy. In Ontario, the teachers stopped participating in extracurricular activities as part of their fight with the government. What an uproar that caused. School plays, sports teams, newspapers, chess clubs, fashion shows, and on and on. None of them possible without teachers freely giving their time. Critics are anxious to count the summer against the teachers, but they never count all those extra hours in their favour.

And sure, classes go from about 9am to 330pm, but anyone who thinks a teacher works six and a half hours a day, doesn't know many teachers. Preparing for class takes time. Talking to kids after school takes time. Meeting with parents takes time. Marking takes time. I can't imagine reading through 60 essays on why Hamlet is so sad and writing helpful comments in the margins.

We send teachers children from broken homes, from abusive homes, from negligent homes. We send teachers children from homes where both parents work, or where the only parent works, or where no parent works.

We send teachers children who leave home without breakfast and whose grasp of mathematics is grounded in the reality that welfare money sometimes runs out in 28 days or 29 days, and can't be stretched to cover 30 or 31.

We send teachers children who are new to Canada, children who stare blankly ahead unable to understand a single word that is being spoken.

And we ask that those teachers turn each of those children, each of our children, into productive little citizens. We ask that even though there are 28 or 29 other students in the classroom, even though there are students misbehaving, even though some parents don't support teachers by re-enforcing lessons or by making sure homework is done, or even by insisting that the student listen to or respect the teacher.

So argue the fine points of teacher contracts all you like. I'm not saying teacher unions are always right. I'm just saying running down teachers is wrong.

** In a nod to full disclosure it should be noted that both Mark and I have daughters in the teaching profession. While we are obviously proud of what they do, it's equally important to note our views expressed above were shaped long before our daughters started working. In fact, some of these thoughts can be found in speeches I made years ago. Finally, thanks to the many people who have reacted so positively to this column.*



Canadian Teachers' Federation

Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants

April 29, 2013

Good evening,

I want to thank Frank Restall for the gracious invitation to attend this event. Unfortunately, my duties draw me to New Brunswick where CTF is holding its annual Francophone Symposium but I do want to share a few thoughts with you this evening.

The recent Conservative attack ads questioning Justin Trudeau's leadership abilities because he was **just a drama teacher** have made many people reflect on teaching and teachers.

Never has this type of political smear campaign elicited such a response from the Canadian public. The CTF has received phone calls, email, tweets and Facebook messages which showed a landslide of support for teachers. They came from teachers, parents and students from all over the country.

I have done many interviews in the past weeks where I reiterated the importance of all professions and the crucial contribution of teachers. I also condemned bully or intimidation tactics used by our political leaders while inviting them to be more positive models for the country's youth. The response has been overwhelmingly positive and supportive of teachers. Last Friday, I did a CTV interview where the host signed off with, "**The Conservatives now know – Don't slag a teacher.**"

I took away two messages from this enormous outpouring of public responses. Firstly, the general public has finally shown that they've had it with the politics of division, the politics of fear.

Secondly, and most importantly, this is a clear and genuine statement of support for teachers and the teaching profession.

- **Teachers** make all other professions possible;
- **Teachers** shape the future of our children and our communities;
- **Teachers** are respected and valued.

So as you sit here tonight, I want you to reflect on the important role which you play in creating and supporting a just and caring society.

I also want to tell you how proud I am to have had the privilege to represent Canadian teachers, professionals whose selfless dedication to their students and to the profession make Canada one of the leading educational jurisdictions in the world.

Finally, I want to thank the leadership of the LRTA for recognizing your immeasurable contribution to the future of our nation. Please enjoy the evening and celebrate your crucial role in Canadian society and be proud **to be just a teacher**.

Sincerely,

Paul Taillefer



ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY HIGHLIGHTS

The Louis Riel Teachers' Association AGA was held April 17th, 2013.

The 2013-2014 LRTA Executive will be comprised of:

President	Frank Restall	LRTA Office
VP Collective Bargaining	James Bedford	Dakota Collegiate
VP Professional Development	Bob Gaudes	Samuel Burland School
Secretary-Treasurer	Jodi Samms	Glenlawn Collegiate
ÉFM	Bernard Mazerolle	École Julie-Riel
Employee Benefits	Carl Antymniuk	Samuel Burland School
Equity and Social Justice	Cheryl Bazin	Collège Jeanne Sauvé
Public Relations	Shannon Gibson	École Henri Bergeron & École Van Bellegham
Social	Alison Ward	Frontenac School
Members-at-Large (3)	Tara Law	École Julie-Riel
	Rob Wood	Shamrock School
	Scott Wood	Glenlawn Collegiate
	Jack Fraser	Archwood School
	Sue Wilton	Lavallee School
LRASA		
Past President		

Your LRTA fees for 2012-2013 will be \$90 (a \$10 reduction from the previous year). Fees are deducted from your October and November pay cheques.

POLICY B-8, IMPLEMENTATION OF BENEFIT PLANS, the Extended Health Benefits Plan was reaffirmed.

POLICY B-8, IMPLEMENTATION OF BENEFIT PLANS, That, the Louis Riel Teachers' Association include Vision Care in the Extended Health Benefit Plan. **(This proposed change was not approved by the April 23 in-school vote.)**

Thank you to Lorrie Restall and Darlene Karalash, AGA recording secretaries, and to Pam Deverdenne, Dallas Henson, Joe Laxdal, Lois Mackay, Sally Robin and Elsie Yip, scrutineers for the April 2013 Annual General Assembly. Also thank you to the election moderator, Barry Wittevrongel, and to Deb Barry for ensuring an effective screen presentation.

And finally, most importantly, thank you to all of the LRTA members who came out to the AGA to take care of LRTA business! As an Association is only as strong as its membership, your participation and support is greatly appreciated!

Reminder! Next year's LRTA AGA – Wednesday, April 16th, 2014



SAVE THE DATE...



The Louis Riel Teachers' Association
30th Annual
TERRY FOX TORCHLIGHT RUN
Friday, September 27th, 2013
Watch for more details in the June edition of the Rielity Check!



DRAFT Calendar of Events 2013 – 2014

September

Tuesday, 3rd Opening Day
Wednesday, 11th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 18th LRTA Council Meeting
Wednesday, 25th LRTA New Member Celebration
Friday, 27th LRTA Terry Fox Torchlight Run

October

Friday, 4th LRTA Executive Retreat
Wednesday, 16th LRTA Council Meeting
Friday, 25th SAGE
TBA Maternity/Parental Leave Seminar

November

Wednesday, 6th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 20th LRTA Council Meeting

December

Wednesday, 4th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 18th LRTA Council Meeting
Monday, 23rd through Friday, January 3rd Winter Break

January

Wednesday, 8th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 15th LRTA Council Meeting

February

Wednesday, 5th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 12th Pre-Retirement Seminar
Wednesday, 19th LRTA Council Meeting

March

Monday, 3rd through Friday, March 7th Operation Donation
Wednesday, 5th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 19th LRTA Council Meeting
Monday, 31st through Friday, April 4th Spring Break

April

Tuesday, 8th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 9th LRTA Council Meeting
Wednesday, 16th LRTA Annual General Assembly - ATC
TBA Maternity/Parental Leave Seminar
Wednesday, 30th LRTA Appreciation Dinner - ATC

May

Wednesday, 7th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 14th LRTA AGM Binder Meeting
Wednesday, 21st LRTA Council Meeting
Wednesday, 21st through Saturday, 24th MTS AGM

June

Wednesday, 4th LRTA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, 11th LRTA Retirement Reception
Wednesday, 18th LRTA Council Meeting

DRAFT * Proposed – May 1st, 2013. Subject to changes.