

The Retired Teacher

Nova Scotia Teachers Union

Volume 45, Number 2, February 2014

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

From the Desk of the President...
Jim Kavanaugh

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

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

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On behalf of the RTO Executive I would like to extend best wishes to all RTO members for a happy, healthy and prosperous 2014. With your continuing support and that of the twenty-three Branch Executives, your RTO Executive is committed to fulfilling the RTO Mission which states "The RTO is the official body representing the retired teachers of Nova Scotia and will advance, promote and protect the welfare of its members".



Get Well Wishes

We would like to extend get well wishes to our Newsletter Editor, Betty Anne McGinnis, who experienced some health problems over the holidays. Betty Anne has done a phenomenal job of editing and producing a first class newsletter. We thank her for her past efforts and look forward to her return to these responsibilities. We were very fortunate to have Glace Bay District Branch President and past Communications Committee member, Reg Johnston, step up and fill the Newsletter Editor void in Betty Anne's absence. We are very thankful to Reg and greatly appreciate his generous willingness to take on the very onerous task of editing and producing this edition of our newsletter. Thanks must also be extended to NSTU staff member, Sonia Matheson, for her invaluable assistance and to Communications Committee Chair, Gary Archibald, and his committee for their great work.

(President's Message—continued on page 2)

February 2014, The Retired Teacher 1



**A newsletter for the
retired teachers of
Nova Scotia**
A MEMBER OF ACER/CART

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(President's Message—continued from page 1)

Group of IX

We are very pleased to be one of the nine Senior Organizations in Nova Scotia that have membership on the Group of IX that has a mandate to advise and provide feedback to the Nova Scotia Provincial Government on seniors issues through the Provincial Department of Seniors. On December 12, 2013, Health and Wellness Minister Leo Glavine was quoted in Hansard saying **“We’re moving the Department of Seniors in with the Health and Wellness...”** We were surprised and shocked to read this comment and, on December 16, I wrote Minister Glavine to express our concerns. The following are some excerpts from my letter. “Firstly, the Group of IX, within the Nova Scotia Department of Seniors was established, among other reasons, as a sounding board for government to seek input and feedback from seniors’ groups that represented a large portion of Nova Scotia seniors on issues that were of concern to the senior population in Nova Scotia. That is, the Provincial Government committed to **consult with the Group of IX through the Department of Seniors whenever issues affected Nova Scotia Seniors.** Yet, to our knowledge, the stated intention to fold the Department of Seniors into the Department of Health and Wellness was done **without any consultation with the Group of IX.**

Secondly, health issues, albeit extremely important, are only one of a myriad of many other important issues facing seniors in Nova Scotia. Obviously, these many non-health/wellness issues would not be within the purview of the Department of Health and Wellness and could not be appropriately addressed.

We are hoping that your comment simply reflects a thought option that requires, among many things, serious face to face consultation, and possibly reconsideration, with the Group of IX through the Nova Scotia Department of Seniors.”

My letter went on to request Minister Glavine to meet with the Group of IX to discuss the Government’s intentions regarding this most important issue. To date, I have not received a response.

Community Transit Nova Scotia

The RTO was pleased to become a member of Community Transit Nova Scotia and recently gave permission to this organization to contact our 23 Branches encouraging each to join in order to support their important initiatives. CT-NS is committed to advocate for the need to provide affordable, safe public transportation for all Nova Scotians, especially the elderly, poor and disabled. They have been lobbying the provincial government to take the lead in this important issue and have struck a positive relationship

with the Dept. of Energy. In May, then Minister Charlie Parker released the provincial sustainable transportation strategy “Choose How You Move” outlining the province’s vision for transportation and CT-NS had a great deal of input into this document. Many of our members are reaching the point where it is becoming impossible to drive and are looking for alternative means to get to medical appointments, shopping etc. It is imperative, therefore that we continue to support the important work being carried out by CT-NS.

Pensions

There is nothing new to report since our last issue on the very important issue of teacher pensions. We will keep you advised should developments arise.

All the Best in 2014!

Jim Kavanaugh



This picture was taken off the coast of West Africa aboard the Carnival Sunshine, during its trans-Atlantic crossing from Spain to New Orleans. The happy couple in front are Joanne Murphy, a member of the Halifax County Branch, and Jack Matheson from the South Shore Branch. This photo was taken moments after Jack asked for Joanne’s hand in marriage. From the smiles all around, it is obvious that Joanne’s answer was YES! In the background are friends of the newly engaged. From left to right are Ray Stapleton, Northside-Victoria, Audrey Stapleton, Northside-Victoria and John Donovan, New Waterford. We all wish a lifetime of happiness for two wonderful people.

RTO Executive 2013-14

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RTO Important Numbers

Nova Scotia Teachers Union 477.5621 / 1.800.565.6788	Teachers Plus Credit Union 477.5664 / 1.800.565.3103
NS Pension Services Corp. 424.5070 / 1.800.774.5070	Johnson Inc. 453.1010 / 1.800.588.3885
Service Canada, Canada Pension Plan & Old Age Security	1.800.277.9914 English / 1.800.277.9915 French / 1.800.255.4786 TTY device

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership Committee

The Committee reviewed the procedure for access to the RTO database. While there have been no reported breaches of confidentiality regarding the database, the Committee thought it would be appropriate to have a written procedure in place. The Executive agreed and has adopted a procedure that will go into effect in the fall of 2014.

The Committee has been busy with other matters as well. These include: RTO banners are available; contact the chair, Peter Lewis. It would be a good idea to also contact your Member-at-Large to arrange transport of the banner to your event. The Executive meets most months of the school year; thus a banner could be obtained one month and returned the following month.

The Committee reminds members the RTO cannot issue T4 receipts as membership in the RTO is voluntary; this is a Revenue Canada rule.

Pins are available at \$5.00 each. Contact Lise Meunier at NSTU either at lmeunier@staff.nstu.ca or by phone at 1-800-565-NSTU (6788). They make excellent prizes!

In February, the Committee Chair will be contacting the Pension Services Corporation to ascertain the anticipated number of 2014 retirees. We then send an RTO package to the Pension Services Corporation for inclusion in the materials that are sent to retirees when they apply for their pension.

The Committee is looking at ideas for increasing membership. Details will follow later. The Committee is also cognizant of the fact that as our members get older, that contact is important for social and information purposes. Car-pooling can also assist those who find it difficult to arrange transportation to meetings. Some branches already provide some of these services. Some branches also show appreciation to their calling committee members with a token of appreciation from time to time. It is important to thank all of those who contribute to the success of RTO. "We cannot do it without you!!"

—Submitted by Peter Lewis, Chair

4 February 2014, *The Retired Teacher*

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee members have been active since the 2013 Annual General Meeting and members appreciate the support shown by so many during the transition period to a new treasurer. The work of previous treasurer Pierre Belliveau over the years is certainly appreciated. He left the RTO in a great financial state.

Currently there are approximately 7000 RTO members paying their annual membership fee of \$36.

During the financial year of 2013, the budget forecast was \$257,364 of revenue. The actual revenue earned during the year was \$255,326.

Regarding expenses, the budget was \$222,100 and at this time it appears as if expenditures will come in under budget.

There will be a full financial report presented to RTO membership at the Annual General Meeting in May.

Currently, the RTO Executive is preparing the 2015 budget to be presented for approval at the AGM. The 2014 Budget of \$249,952 Revenue and \$236,220 Expenditures was approved at the 2013 Annual General Meeting.

—Submitted by Fred Jeffery,
RTO Treasurer



COMMITTEE REPORTS (cont'd)

Communications Committee

The RTO Communications Committee continues its work at overseeing the production of *The Retired Teacher* and the RTO website. The Committee met on January 8, 2014 with all members present except for newsletter editor Betty Anne McGinnis who is recovering from an illness. Reg Johnston has kindly agreed to fill in for Betty Anne for this issue of *The Retired Teacher*.

Webmaster Colin Campbell reported he had managed to take the RTO logo and make it brighter and crisper and a better quality of the ACER/CART logo has been received. Colin reported on updating of the RTO web pages such as Pensions, Seniors Homecare, Continued Healthcare, minutes of various meetings, etc. The Deals & Discounts page was also updated in November, 2013.

It was suggested that the Volunteer Section of the website, while well used now, is underutilized as there are many organizations looking for volunteers and many retired teachers looking for a place to volunteer their time. RTO members are encouraged to use this page for themselves and their organizations.

The Committee spent a great deal of discussion on the procedure and action plan for the next issue of *The Retired Teacher*. Without our editor many changes have to be considered. Committee members certainly appreciate the increased assistance of NSTU Staff Member Sonia Matheson and "guest editor" Reg Johnston.

The Committee is always looking for new ideas to make the newsletter and webpage more meaningful for its members. Should anyone have a suggestion please do not hesitate to contact a committee member. An example of this is a suggestion from Doug Cameron to do mini profiles of the various people filling leadership roles in the RTO. This will be incorporated in the Spring issue.

The Committee is also interested in featuring a retired teacher. Should you know of someone worthy of being featured let the committee know.

Assessment Committee

The third meeting of the Assessment Committee was held on January 8 at the NSTU Building. There were a number of items on the agenda.

At present there is no Travel Insurance coverage for a branch member serving as an alternate replacement for a Branch President at a Presidents' Meeting. The RTO Executive is looking into the possibility of extending this coverage for these replacements.

A discussion took place about the past and current role of the Assessment Committee. What does the term "assessment" mean?

How does it relate to the RTO in its present form? How do we clearly define its role? Should it remain as a Standing Committee of the RTO? Should it be given a different name and mandate? The name Research and Review Committee was suggested as an idea. All Committees, including the Assessment Committee, are being reviewed by the Executive to determine if they are still the appropriate committees needed to carry out much of the work of the RTO.

The role of ad hoc committees in the RTO was also discussed. The committee forwarded suggested guidelines for ad hoc committees to the Executive for discussion and consideration.

The committee developed a questionnaire to help Members-at-Large review their role. This questionnaire was approved by the Executive and will be completed by the seven Members-at-Large.

Committee members were assigned the task of reviewing sections 3-7 in the RTO Operations Handbook.

—Submitted by George J. Landry, Chair

The deadline for the Spring newsletter will be March 28, 2014.

—Submitted by Gary Archibald, Chair

COMMITTEE REPORTS (cont'd)

Pension & Benefits Committee

The Pension and Benefits Committee met for the third time in early January. The committee continues its concern over the two-tiered pension arrangement for teachers. When the new COLA protocol was initiated in 2006, the RTO had no vote in the matter since none of the, then current, RTO members were to be affected by the changes. Only active NSTU members cast ballots. However, since that time, many of our current RTO members are receiving pensions under the “Variable” rules and are receiving less cost-of-living increases than those who retired prior to 2006. The chart below was obtained from the NS Pension Services Corporation. It is a historical document that shows how the two groups of retirees have benefited over the last 8 years. The math will indicate that, since 2006, the group of retirees who enjoy the “CPI Minus 1%” version have received 4.2% more than the group with the “Variable” method.

It should be further noted that the actual Cost of Living Adjustment is a calculation made by the federal government and the RTO has no input in changing the method of calculation. Moreover, it is a COLA for Canada as a whole, even though some provinces have greater increases in the cost of living than other provinces.

It seems reasonable to say that very few teachers expected the economic downfall of 2008. Nevertheless, the downfall did take place and the RTO continues to support the finding of an equitable solution. If retired teachers are affected by any changes in the pension plan, retired teachers expect to be consulted in a meaningful manner by the decision makers. But the RTO is only as strong as its members. Support from individual members of the RTO is invaluable.

The committee would like to remind teachers that our RTO (<http://rto.nstu.ca/>) website and the NS Pension Services (<http://novascotiapension.ca/teachersplan>) website offer excellent resources for RTO members. Each site has numerous internal and external links that are invaluable when searching for answers.

The Pension and Benefits Committee will continue to monitor the quarterly and annual reports. Some of these reports may be viewed at the NS Pension Services website if you choose the column on the left and click on the tenth item down that list.

Hopefully, a full report for 2013 will be available by April and can be presented at our Annual General Meeting in May.

—Submitted by Al MacKinnon

Historical Document
ns pension Services Corporation
Teachers' Pension Plan
Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)
HIST.0015

Historical Rates

Effective Date	COLA Method	
	CPI Minus 1%	Variable
July 1, 2013	0.0%	0.0%
July 1, 2012	1.8%	0.0%
July 1, 2011	1.1%	0.0%
July 1, 2010	0.0%	0.0%
July 1, 2009	1.1%	0.0%
July 1, 2008	1.1%	1.0%
July 1, 2007	0.5%	0.7%
July 1, 2006	1.0%	0.7%
January 1, 2006	1.3%	N/A
January 1, 2005	0.7%	N/A
January 1, 2004	2.2%	N/A
January 1, 2003	0.6%	N/A
January 1, 2002	2.0%	N/A
January 1, 2001	1.5%	N/A

Change in the Calculation and Timing of the COLA

In accordance with the Teachers' Pension Plan 2005 Agreement the timing of the COLA payment changed in 2006 from January 1 to July 1 of each year. Also under the Agreement, Variable Indexing was introduced. Existing pensioners were given the option of switching over to the Variable Indexing Method or remaining under the old method of CPI Minus 1%. From July 1, 2006 onward we show the COLA rates for each method.

The River Cruise Craze

Special savings for RTO Travel Club members

It's all about taking it slow. And that's what's so ironic about river cruising – the world's fastest-growing cruise trend. But taking it slow doesn't only refer to the speed of these long, luxurious ships – it speaks to the entire experience. "There's nothing more thrilling than exploring the mighty rivers of Europe by riverboat," says Kim Pettis, manager, Maritime Travel, Sunnyside Mall, Bedford, NS. "I simply can't imagine a more wonderful way to experience Europe's ancient treasures."

For many travellers, the slow chug along such legendary waterways as the Danube, Rhine

or Rhone is just the right pace for getting a feel for the terrain. "In a very real way, these river routes are pathways into history," says Kim. "You're getting the same views experienced centuries ago when rivers were the main mode of transportation and trade. That's why so many of Europe's famous cities were built along these waterways." Most river cruise ships accommodate no more than 150 passengers – so personal and attentive service is a given onboard. Fresh, local ingredients and wines are another important element of the river cruise experience – as is the fact that the fine wines



are complimentary with meals. For some, the river cruise experience will take them to the tranquil waters of Cambodia and Vietnam. A thousand limestone islands in a tranquil bay ... an oxcart ride through Cambodian rice paddies ... a glimpse of ancient temples embraced by the forest ... These are some of the moments in time experienced on a river cruise through Vietnam and Cambodia. The destination is nothing short of breathtaking, and a river cruise is the most civilized way to discover these Asian gems.

Maritime Travel offers special savings on select river cruises through AMA Waterways and Avalon Waterways - \$100 off per couple. Most river cruise lines, appeal to more mature travellers in search of high-end cultural experiences; however, they also offers a number of multi-generational themed cruises that appeal to families of all ages.

Maritime Travel
We Know Travel Best.™

Join the  **RTO**

 **Travel Club**

Discover a World of Travel Benefits...including:
Pay in 12 or 24 equal payments when you use your HBC credit card. Receive a \$50 per person Travel Card for use toward vacation packages and cruises. Save up to \$200 per couple on European Tours with Trafalgar Tours, Insight Vacations, Globus-Cosmos and Collette Vacations! 24/7 Emergency Assistance, and much more!

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FEATURE TEACHER

FRED COURTNEY

Fred Courtney, past president of the Glace Bay District Branch Retired Teachers Organization, keeps adding his name to another sports hall of fame. In May 2013, Fred was selected to enter the Glace Bay Hall of Fame for Sports and Community Volunteers as an athlete in hockey and baseball. This follows his induction into the Cape Breton Sport Hall of Fame in 2011. Fred was also inducted into the above halls as a member of the 1955-1956 Glace Bay "Cinderella" Junior Miners hockey team.

Fred was an iconic sports personality who developed his early athletic skills on the ponds and fields of Donkin. As a teenager growing up in Donkin, Fred starred in soccer, hockey and baseball. It was, however, in hockey that his name garnered media headlines and attracted a whole new generation of fans, both young and old. Fred became a hero to aspiring young hockey players; and his scoring exploits, rink-length dashes and blazing shots, helped fill rinks with fans. Fred was a prolific, dynamic athlete with powerful, fluid strides who helped save the Glace Bay Miners Forum, which sponsored the Junior Miners, from an almost certain financial ruin in 1955-1956. Fred was scouted by the New York Rangers but decided family was a priority, and therefore, made the decision to come home to play hockey.

In 1954, Fred began working with the Dominion Coal Company as a mine surveyor in No. 20 Colliery. In 1969, however, he took advantage of the Devco Scholarship Program and received his education degree from Acadia University. In 1973, Fred began his teaching career at Donkin Morien District High School. For 20 years, he coached the school's bantam hockey teams. Fred became a role model and mentor to many impressionable student-athletes during his tenure at the school. Fred retired from teaching in 1993.



Currently, Fred plays clarinet in the famous Donkin Citizens Brass Band, which performs at numerous functions throughout the year. He is also Corps Sergeant-Major with Glace Bay's Salvation Army and performs many duties. A charismatic community leader, Fred spearheads the Salvation Army's "Red Kettle" campaign during the Christmas holidays. He has attracted an army of volunteers to watch over the kettles.

Fred is married to the former Jean Foster and they reside in Glace Bay. They have one daughter, Elaine, and two sons, Raymond and Glenn, as well as seven grandchildren.

*—Submitted by Barry Verbeski
(retired school teacher)*



Turkish Delight

Since retirement, my wife and I have been doing plenty of travelling. During our excursions, we were encouraged to visit Turkey by fellow travellers, so we decided to do so this past September. We were rewarded by an amazing experience - let me explain why:

History – With the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, Turkey became a republic and its first president, **Mustafa Kemal Atatürk**, led it down a road to modernization and democracy. Today it is a fast-paced, modern, economic powerhouse waiting for a seat in the

European Union. Istanbul is a bustling, energetic metropolis that spans the Bosphorus Strait making it a two continent city between Europe and Asia. It has one of Europe's best public transportation systems making it easy for the traveller to get around. It is clean, safe and friendly. Like Canada, all Turkish citizens enjoy universal medical coverage and government pensions. Women enjoy equal rights.

People – The people were friendly, helpful and very respectful. They knew how to take “no” for an answer and even smiled about it. Our journey covered about a third of the country, and no matter where you went, the friendliness of the people never wavered; it was a pleasure to mingle with them.

Natural Wonders – Perhaps the most surprising element of our trip was the incredible natural beauty of the country. The geographic location of Turkey allows for all European climate zones to be condensed into this region on a small scale. From the temperate cool climate of the north (with snow in winter) to the tropical Mediterranean in the south; to the flat, arid, central plain, the traveller is treated to a changing natural vista on a daily basis. We truly enjoyed the crystal clear, aqua-marine Mediterranean portion of the trip. Turkey has very strict laws governing its maritime shores and as such takes great pride in being recognized as the most pristine coastline on the Mediterranean Sea.



Each day provided a geological treat. On the road from Kanakale to Ephesus, we made a stop at Pamukkale, the site of an ancient Roman town (20,000 pop.) built around a natural hot spring. Due to the high concentration of calcium carbonate in the water, the residue solidified upon contact with the air and formed, over the millennia, a massive, pure white cliff face. However, what was most amazing about the site was the fact that terraced pools of crystal-blue, warm water dotted the rock formation. Hundreds of people were lounging and wading in these pools creating the illusion that they were playing in a snow bank. Amazing!

Upon reaching Cappadocia, the absolute highlight of our tour, we were treated to another indescribable scene – the community was built among massive, inverted, cone-shaped rock formations. In fact, some of the homes were built inside of the cones complete with several floors. At one time 1200 Christian churches were located in the city, many of them built in the cone-shaped rocks. We took a sunrise balloon ride over the site and were overwhelmed by the spectacle below. From a height of 6000 ft. you could see two massive volcanoes which stood as sentinels to the east and west of Cappadocia. We also visited an underground city built by the early Christians to escape persecution by the Romans. It was carved out of solid rock and had 14 levels!

Man-Made Wonders – Being a student and teacher of ancient history, I was especially thrilled to visit the ancient Greek ruins of Troy and the Roman ruins at Ephesus. The latter defied belief because of how well the ruins were preserved. During the reign of Julius Caesar, Ephesus was the capital of Asia Minor with a population of 250,000 and ranked behind Rome and Alexandria in importance to the empire. It was a wealthy, bustling, maritime fortress that provided protection to the western empire.

The stunning beauty and grandeur of the “Blue Mosque” and the Byzantine Basilica of St. Sophia cannot be captured by mere words. These neighbouring edifices, located in Istanbul, were imposing monuments to man's architectural ingenuity.

Several months have passed since our return from Turkey and the subsequent writing of this piece, but the memories have not diminished. Looking back at the copious photos and hours of video, we are still filled with the wonder of the experience. For those of you looking for an amazing adventure and not troubled by distance to destination, then I highly recommend Turkey - it is a treat that you will simply find delightful.

—Reg Johnston, Glace Bay District Branch



Elections

DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS: APRIL 30, 2014

Nominating Committee:

The following positions are open for the year 2014-2015 and these positions will be filled at the RTO/AGM in Halifax on May 29, 2014. Application forms can be found on the RTO website @ <http://rto.nstu.ca>, and in this RTO Newsletter. To be an eligible candidate, a member must file with the NSTU office a notice of candidacy for the position sought, no later than February 28, 2014.

- 1) President [2-year term]
- 2) Vice-President [2-year term]

Elections for Member-at-Large:

- 1) Annapolis Valley: Annapolis/Kings/West Hants [2-year term]
- 2) Cape Breton: Sydney and Area/Northside-Victoria/Glace Bay District/New Waterford [2-year term]
- 3) South Shore: Lunenburg/Queens/Shelburne [2-year term]

Branch Presidents must receive applications by April 15th, 2014. Only one candidate per Branch is eligible. If, in a particular Branch, more than one candidate offers for Member-at-Large, then an election at the Branch level must be held. Only one name goes forward. A Returning Officer (appointed at the February Presidents' Meeting) is named. After April 30, 2013, the Returning Officer calls a meeting of the candidates, with three voting delegates from each participating Branch, conducts an election, and submits the winning candidate's name to the Nominating Committee Chair by May 15, 2014. Names of winning candidates will be announced at the AGM 2014 in Halifax.

—Submitted by Bill Berryman, Acting Chair
Nominating Committee

Retired Teachers Organization Nomination for Provincial Executive Positions Elected at AGM DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS February 28, 2014

Nominations for 2014:

[check one]

President [Two-year term]

Vice-President [Two-year term]

[Please Print]

Name of Nominee: _____

Branch to which Nominee belongs: _____

Address of Nominee: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Please attach resume including the following:

RTO Branch Activities: _____

RTO Provincial Activities: _____

Other (Including NSTU Local and/or Provincial activities):

Signature _____

Return to:

**RTO Nominations Chairperson
Nova Scotia Teachers Union
3106 Joseph Howe Drive
Halifax, NS B3L 4L7
or Fax 902-477-3517**



~ THE WALL ~

The Retired Teachers Organization (RTO) now has a display wall at the NSTU building. It is on the second floor near room 208 – near the large meeting room. This display is intended to provide information about the RTO and how it is working on behalf of retired teachers, as well as, showcasing retired teachers. Retired teachers are a large group doing many interesting things. We are a busy group of people-volunteering, working, organizing activities, travelling, etc. The RTO Wall will be a great place to post pictures and information about our organization. The Membership Committee asks the branches to contribute to this endeavour by sending contributions to the Committee. We are looking forward to receiving your input so that we can all share in the activities of retired teachers. If you send a picture(s), please attach the names of those in the picture(s) and briefly describe the event pictured. This will make your picture(s) of more interest to others. You can email the photo to either of the below; there is no need to send a hard copy. It is quite easy if you have a smart phone – just “click and send”. We will do the rest!

The Wall will be updated on a regular basis when the information is provided by Branch Presidents or any other member of the Organization.

**CONTACTS: Peter Lewis, 11162 Rt. 6; RR#3, Pugwash, NS B0K 1L0
Email: lewisp@ns.sympatico.ca**

OR

**Lise Meunier, RTO, 3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, NS B3L 4L7
Email: lmeunier@staff.nstu.ca**

The Wall will only be as good as those who make contributions to it.
We look forward to yours!



NOTICE

Notice of RTO
Membership dues paid.
(Formal receipts are not
issued as the deduction
is not accepted by
Revenue Canada.)

The professional dues
for a member of the
Retired Teachers
Organization (RTO)
of Nova Scotia
for the year
2013-2014 were \$36.



Donald Doucet, Desire LeBlanc and Andre Turbide review some of the plans for the RTO Golf Tournament being held at the Clare Golf Club September 17, 2014.

The RTA/RTO Presidents:

Past and Present

—we appreciate their service—

1966-1967	C.L. Fillmore
1967-1968	Margaret Zinck
1968-1970	Dorothy Curtis
1970-1972	Laurie Sarty
1972-1974	John Oliver
1974-1977	Donalda Fraser
1977-1978	Graham Hennessey
1978-1982	Margaret Fitzgerald
1982-1983	Alice MacMillan
1983-1984	Pius Nearing
1984-1986	Jessie James
1986-1988	Marion MacKinnon
1988-1990	Allison Dalton
1990-1992	Roy Rideout
1992-1994	Dorothy Lawrence
1994-1996	Shirley Bradshaw
1996-1998	Joseph Maidment
1998-2000	Elizabeth Miller
2000-2002	Douglas Manzer
2002-2004	Phil Hughes
2004-2005	Walter Farmer
2005-2007	Thomas Gaskell
2007-2008	P. Earle Muise
2008-2010	Phyllis Côté
2010-2012	Randy Holmesdale
2012-	Jim Kavanaugh

Branch Presidents Meeting

Meeting

A total of 23 Branch Presidents or designates attended the fall meeting of the RTO Branch Presidents at the NSTU Building on October 28 and 29, 2013. Prior to the meeting an orientation session was conducted by President Jim Kavanaugh, Vice-President Bill Berryman and Past-President Randy Holmesdale to four Branch Presidents attending their first meeting.

Branch Presidents received reports from nine committees as well as reports from two affiliations – ACER/CART and Group of IX. Questions were asked on some reports and answers were provided by the chairs of the committees. Each Member-at-Large conducted a regional meeting of Branch Presidents within their region to discuss attendance at the NSTU Pre-Retirement Seminars and joint activities amongst the branches.

President Jim Kavanaugh provided a comprehensive and informative session on the findings of the RTO ad hoc Pension Committee. Branch Presidents were provided with extensive information on the 1993 agreement, the Walker appeal and the 2005 agreement. President Jim re-emphasized that RTO strongly believes that the NSTU and the government cannot make retroactive changes affecting pensioners' benefits without consulting the affected group of retirees.

—*Respectfully submitted,*
Bill Berryman, Chair, Branch Presidents Meeting

New Branch Presidents



New Branch Presidents (l-r) Blair Boudreau, Yarmouth/Argyle; Shirley Jeffery, Pictou; Reg Johnston, Glace Bay District; Gail Walsh, Cumberland; and Ross Thompson, Halifax (sub).



Branch Presidents (l-r) Glenn Demone, Lunenburg; Francis MacEachern, Inverness; Debby Trask Cushing, Digby; and Blair Boudreau, Yarmouth/Argyle.



Branch Presidents (l-r) André Turbide, AER-Baie Sainte-Marie; Mary Hammond, CPX; and Derek Hayne, Antigonish/Guysborough.



Branch Presidents (l-r) Alex Doggett, Queens; Judy Whalen, Northside-Victoria; Bernadette Hollohan, Sydney & Area; and Phil Van Zoost, West Hants.

Branch Updates

ANNAPOLIS COUNTY BRANCH - Two challenges that all RTO executives face in planning purposeful events for their members to socialize are selecting convenient locations and providing relevant guest speakers. Our last meetings proved successful on both counts. Last June the Senior Safety Officer from Bridgetown made a presentation on protecting ourselves from identity theft stressing the use of a shredder for all paper items with our name on them, using RDIF containers for credit cards, and never releasing financial information online.

This fall, the German Bakery in Annapolis Royal was the venue for our meeting. Food was delicious and our guest, Gary McOrmand, consultant with Investors Group, offered us excellent advice on dealing with our RRSP's and giving suggestions about ensuring our financial health. The social highlight of our year is always the Not-Back-to-School-Breakfast welcoming our newest members. The breakfast room at the Eden Golf and Country Club was crowded with nearly fifty members. Besides catching up on latest personal news, Albert Johnson quizzed us on our knowledge of interesting Annapolis County historical trivia - much of it happening before our time, believe it or not!



The "Not-Back-to-School-Breakfast" meeting at the Eden Golf and Country Club in September.

DARTMOUTH BRANCH - Last fall, our membership donated \$300 to the Dartmouth East Boys' & Girls' Club to support their worthy programs. Cooking classes at Sobey's, Baker Drive were a culinary hit for those attending. At Brightwood, our Yuletide luncheon, in December, saw about 70 members enjoying a tasty turkey dinner and plentiful door prizes offered by our branch and members. We acknowledged, Tina Dickson, Events Co-ordinator, with a gift, thanking her for our meal selections for each gathering. The carol sing-along led by our vice-president, Jo-Ann Cuvelier, gave a joyful start to our holiday season. That day, generous food and monetary donations were received for F.O.O.D. and FEED Nova Scotia.



E. Margaret MacDonald, Dartmouth Branch President, presents a cheque to Executive Director John Burton of the Dartmouth East Boys' and Girls' Club while Peter, one of the staff members looks on.

SYDNEY & AREA BRANCH - Sydney and Area RTO enjoyed a delicious turkey dinner at Brookshaven Hall on Tuesday, December 3. It was a great way to welcome the Christmas season, as many Yuletide gifts were distributed to its members. Our guest

(Branch Updates—continued on page 15)

Branch

Updates

speaker, RTO President Jim Kavanaugh spoke about pension matters and many other issues that are pertinent to the health and welfare of members. About 100 people attended the event and it certainly was enjoyed by all.

A warm welcome was extended to Tina MacNeil, who takes over as the position of Secretary on the Executive. It was noted the dedication and hard work of Carmel Williams, who previously served in that position. Carmel had been involved with NSTU for most of her teaching career, both locally and provincially. Her kindness, knowledge, proficiency, and dedication will certainly be missed on the Executive. Best of luck to you Carmel- you are the Best!!

At the Christmas dinner, members were urged to consider holding positions in the RTO, both locally and provincially. If anyone was to become involved with the Sydney and Area RTO, I'm sure your experience would be worthwhile. Your participation would be welcomed and certainly appreciated. Recently retired teachers are also encouraged to participate. It is not necessary to have NSTU experience.

Volunteers are needed to set up the webpage for Sydney and Area. If you are tech minded, then please come forth and show your skills.

Members were reminded to give the Executive up to date email addresses, new street addresses etc., as this is essential in order to get information out to its members.

A curling event is being considered to help cope with the winter blues. Any members who have an interest or "know-how" in curling, please contact Bernadette at bmhollohan@yahoo.com. Also, a brunch is being planned for some time in April. You will be contacted about his event. Hope you can attend!

Chin up with all the snow and the cold winds of winter. If you are staying here, and not going to other warmer destinations, enjoy!!

WEST HANTS BRANCH - This past December, West Hants held their annual Christmas dinner meeting at the Three Miles Plain Community Hall. As usual we had a strong representation of our members, somewhere in the vicinity of 114 to 117. As we get older, numbers above 100 are hard to figure out, so says our dinner register Charles Levy. For a number of years our executive has canvassed our business community for door prizes. This year a letter was

written to the businesses that have supported us in the past, not asking for a donation but thanking them for their previous support and for their ongoing community support. The overwhelming response from the businesses was how wonderful to be appreciated and thought of. What did we do about door prizes? We asked the members attending the Christmas meeting to bring a small item to be used as a prize. We had over 60 items to give away.

A second activity we encourage our members to become involved in at this time of year is to bring in food or regularly used house item to be given to a community organization. This year our members agreed to support Harvest House. This is an organization that helps support low income and homeless adults in the West Hants area. Several hundreds of items were brought in and greatly appreciated.

Finally we held our free meal draw. Funds raised from this activity over the year go to a local school related program. Our March luncheon will feature two of our members demonstrating hobbies they enjoy to the members.

(Branch Updates—continued on page 16)



Branch

Updates

YARMOUTH/ARGYLE BRANCH - The Yarmouth/Argyle Branch held its Fall Luncheon at the local Knights of Columbus Hall with over seventy-five in attendance enjoying a delicious buffet. On the opening of lobster season a very successful Dumping Day breakfast was held at a local restaurant overlooking the Sanford Wharf.

A first edition of the "Beyond the Classroom" newsletter was circulated and a second will be published shortly. The executive has spent time reviewing the membership list of the Branch to keep member information as current as possible.



On November 11 Branch members laid wreaths at the Yarmouth Cenotaph and the Wedgeport Cenotaph in memory of those who gave so much for us.

Plans for the new year include Branch bowling and curling tournaments, a cooking class, and sessions on use of Ipads and travel.



Yarmouth has two Remembrance Day Services honouring our veterans - one service well over 1000 people are in attendance at the Mariners Centre and the other one about 300 people surround the Town's cenotaph. Here RTO Member and Yarmouth Town Councillor Ken Langille prepares to MC the service held around the cenotaph.

Personal Inventory
for

Updated by _____



Produced by
Retired Teachers' Organization
3100 Joseph Howe Drive
Halifax, NS B3J 4L7
rtonstu.ca

PERSONAL INVENTORY PAMPHLET

Last year, the Personal Inventory pamphlet was produced by the RTO and made available to RTO members. This document provides the opportunity to make things easier for our loved ones left behind after our passing. Please take the time to fill this document out and make sure the appropriate people can locate it when the time arrives.

This document is posted on the RTO website at rto.nstu.ca as well as printed copies are available from Lise Meunier at the NSTU Office at lmeunier@staff.nstu.ca.

Everyone is encouraged to fill one out and please feel free to make it available to your family and friends as well.

Talent Showcase 2013

The Colchester-East Hants RTO held a Talent Showcase on November 5th, 2013. Organizers, Heather Hill and



Colleen Glasgow, were very pleased with the positive response from all the retired teachers invited to participate in this event.

Talents including art, woodworking, photography, quilting, scrapbooking, honey products, jewelry, rug hooking, mittens (recycled sweaters), candy, Christmas ornaments and scarves were featured. Some of the participants sold their crafts, others demonstrated their talent, and a few gave great information about getting involved in a craft or art.

The RTO members and guests were very enthused with the displays, some buying gifts or getting inspired. This is an event we hope to do again and we will be asking members to participate.

—Submitted by Bob Jordan



SCAVENGER HUNT



Find the answers to the following questions and submit your entry to the editor by email bettyanne@eastlink.ca, or mail to Betty Anne McGinnis, 6571 Highway 1, Ellershouse, NS B0N 1L0. Prizes have been generously donated by NSTU, Medavie Blue Cross and Manulife. **Submissions must be received by March 21.** A random draw among those entries with all answers correct will determine the winner.

1. What is the RTO Mission?
2. Who became engaged on a cruise ship off West Africa?
3. Where did Fred Courtney, our Feature Teacher, hone his early athletic skills?
4. What is the deadline for nominations for the RTO provincial elections?
5. Who is our provincial RTO Treasurer?
6. Who was the RTO President from 1972-1974?
7. Who is the NSTU Desktop Publisher?
8. Where is "The Wall" located?
9. Who was the first President of Turkey?
10. Who is the President of the Lunenburg Branch?

DEALS & DISCOUNTS — for NSTU/RTO Members!

Subject to change without notice. Latest update: January 2014



ACCOMMODATIONS

- ▶ **Delta Halifax and Delta Barrington (Contract Hotel)**
- ▶ Belgravia Bed & Breakfast
- ▶ Best Western Plus Chocolate Lake Hotel
- ▶ Cambridge Suites, Sydney
- ▶ Digby Pines Golf Resort & Spa
- ▶ Future Inns Halifax Hotel & Conference Centre
- ▶ Hampton Inn by Hilton Sydney
- ▶ Keltic Lodge Resort & Spa
- ▶ Liscombe Lodge Resort & Conference Centre
- ▶ Lord Nelson Hotel & Suites
- ▶ Park Place Hotel & Conference Centre
- ▶ The Farmhouse Inn
- ▶ The Prince George Hotel
- ▶ The Waverley Inn
- ▶ Westin Hotel

PERSONAL CARE

- ▶ At Home Rehab
- ▶ Coastal Sports & Wellness
(**Massage / Naturopathic Doctor**)
- ▶ Cresthaven Laser & Skincare Clinic
- ▶ Enlighten Laser & Skin Care Clinic
- ▶ Erin Balodis, Naturopathic Doctor
- ▶ Eterno Laser & Medispa
- ▶ Maritime Massage Health Clinic
- ▶ Medicine in Motion
- ▶ Natural Path Massage Therapy
- ▶ Remedy Facial Bar & Spa
- ▶ Spring Garden Cosmetic
- ▶ Stress Busters Massage Therapy & Wellness
- ▶ SunME Swimsuit Spa
- ▶ Touch Therapies

BOOKSTORES

- ▶ Blue Griffin Books
- ▶ Tattletales
- ▶ Woozles

MISCELLANEOUS

- ▶ Banana Republic
- ▶ Benjamin Moore Bayers Lake
- ▶ Big Apple Fashions
- ▶ Budget Rent-A-Car Maritimes
- ▶ Comfort Orthotics by: 4th Generation
- ▶ COSTCO
- ▶ Discount Car and Truck Rentals
- ▶ Discovery Centre
- ▶ Dulux Paints (1)
- ▶ Dulux Paints (2)
- ▶ EOA Scientific
- ▶ Erinn G. Moore, Family Law Practice
- ▶ Esprit Dartmouth Crossing Outlet
- ▶ Event System Rentals
- ▶ Frame Express
- ▶ Garden View Restaurant
- ▶ GCR Tire Centres
- ▶ Grand & Toy
- ▶ Homelife Real Estate Centre Inc.
- ▶ Hotel Discount Program
- ▶ Intrepid Travel
- ▶ Irving Oil
- ▶ Lung Association of Nova Scotia
- ▶ Midas - Total Car Service
- ▶ Neptune Theatre
- ▶ OG Event Filming
- ▶ Oh My Sole!
- ▶ Papa Mario's Pizza
- ▶ Park 'n Fly - Halifax Stanfield Airport
- ▶ Quality Footwear
& Mahone Bay Trading Company
- ▶ Rogers Wireless (AML)
- ▶ Scotia Auto Glass
- ▶ SoftMoc
- ▶ Soles in Motion
- ▶ Tall Ship Silva (Halifax)
- ▶ The Sackville Sports Stadium
- ▶ Ultramar Refinery
- ▶ What's for Supper?
- ▶ Winsby's
- ▶ Wong's Tae Kwon Do

*For detailed information on each business
go to <http://rto.nstu.ca>*

From the Editor...



Happy New Year to one and all; I hope 2014 is filled with good health, happiness and prosperity.

As most of you are unaware, our regular editor, Betty Anne McGinnis, was struck with a sudden and serious illness during the Christmas holidays. It was with shock and profound sadness

that I learned of this unfortunate occurrence and I want to wish Betty Anne a speedy recovery.

I first met her, decades ago, at an NSTU May Council. I was immediately struck by her affable personality, wry sense of humour and ready laugh. Over the ensuing years I grew to appreciate her genuine devotion to unionism, commitment to excellence and dedication to serving our membership. She is truly a remarkable lady.

It was therefore an honour, when the chair of the RTO Communications Committee, Gary Archibald, called me and asked if I would fill in for her until she was back on her feet. Without hesitation, I replied that I would do whatever was necessary to help. "The Retired Teacher" is the preeminent means of communication between the RTO provincial executive and our ever-increasing membership. How could one refuse?

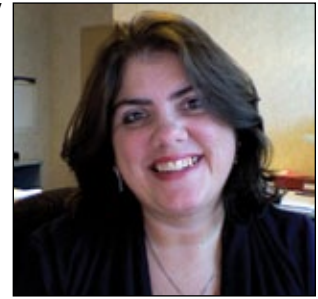
I served on the Communications Committee for two years; joining the same year Betty Anne became editor of the newsletter. It was great seeing her again! It was not long before the other committee members learned what I already knew—Betty Anne would do a fabulous job.

I must confess, however, that there was some degree of trepidation about the decision, realizing I had very big shoes to fill. Still, I looked forward to the challenge. With the tremendous support of the Communications Committee and NSTU Desktop Publisher, Sonia Matheson, we were able to get the job done without compromising quality. A hardy thanks to all who assisted in this endeavour.

Finally, it is with regret that I must inform those who participated in the first "Scavenger Hunt", that due to the absence of Betty Anne, I was unable to acquire the name of the contest winner. Therefore, that announcement will be made at a later date.

PROFILES OF OUR PEOPLE

In coming issues of *The Retired Teacher*, we will be profiling some of the individuals who work behind the scenes to make this publication a success. The RTO Communication Committee is pleased and fortunate to have the services of Sonia Matheson, the NSTU Desktop Publisher, overseeing the production of our



publication *The Retired Teacher*. The Committee has requested that Sonia provide a brief bio so RTO members can become more familiar with her and her interests.

Sonia Faye (Dominey) Matheson, (born in Kentville, 1965), NSTU Desktop Publisher (1989 to present); Married to Bruce Matheson (May 2005), resides in Halifax.

In 1985, I was blessed to have a wonderful son—Keith. He is my life's greatest accomplishment and continues to give me so much more—even now that he is busy with a career and "life of his own". He's a teacher with the Conseil scolaire acadian provincial and teaches Math and Science at École

secondaire du Sommet in Bedford. He and his lovely wife Jessica, have two amazing little boys, Xavier (2)



and Maxime (6 months). I never thought having grandchildren could be so incredible! I might just be the proudest grandmother out there!

I was a single mother for most of Keith's life, until 2001 when I became a single mother of more than one and became a foster mom to Matthew. Matthew is a Professional Engineer now living and working in Calgary; but he still texts, calls and visits us often! He is doing great and will always be considered part of our family!



In 1989 I began working at the NSTU in the Special Associations department—which included working on *The Retired Teacher*. I left that department in 1997 to begin working on *The Teacher* publication (continuing with the RTO of course!). I coordinate the advertising, distribution and layout for *The Teacher*, now in its 52nd year. Due to some health issues I'm not as active as I once was, but I do enjoy getting out when I can ... close to home or weekends away, movies, and spending time with my favourite people!

THE RTO FOUNDATION and LEGACY FUND

The Retired Teachers Foundation was formed at the 1995 AGM of the RTA (now the RTO) with the expressed purpose of honouring the work of former Nova Scotia teachers by awarding an annual grant or grants to institutes that provide medical or educational training to sick or challenged Nova Scotia children. On occasion, the selection committee has struggled with the meaning of the word “challenged” and has made grants to groups that might better be described as organizations as opposed to institutes.

The distributed funds are derived from the interest accrued annually from the foundation’s assets. Applications forms are made available online at the RTO website, in the February issue of the RTO newsletter, and from any member of the provincial executive of the RTO. The Foundation is a registered charity and, as such, can only consider applications from groups or institutes that have their own charity number.

The board of directors of the foundation are the members of the RTO provincial executive, and the table officers of the foundation are the table officers of the RTO. One additional member of the board is a member appointed by the NSTU, and the agent of the foundation is the treasurer of the RTO. As a registered charity, the board can only submit proposed changes to its charter after they have been approved at an AGM of the board. Proposed changes must not change the expressed purpose of the foundation.

The executive of the RTO has appointed two of its members

to an ad hoc committee with the mandate to review the guidelines and objectives of the foundation for desired revisions, to seek ways to raise the profile of the foundation and to examine methods of increasing foundation funding. These members are Herbert Seymour and John Donovan. Proposed amendments have been formulated and will be brought to the AGM for consideration. These proposals have the intent of clarifying what constitutes a valid application for a grant and to make sure the process is as open as possible.

The committee has received permission to submit an article for inclusion in a future issue of the NSTU publication *The Teacher*. We will use this opportunity to reach out to active teachers in asking for their financial and personal support in furthering the aims of the foundation. Foundation materials were made available to all RTO members through our group mail out and any branch or member requiring additional materials can contact their member-at-large.

The committee has researched ways of having donations made online and by other alternative methods. These methods involve complexities that will require time to resolve. Since its inception, the foundation has been awarding grants to the Enfield District Care Society, Education Nova Scotia, IWK Hospital, Youth Peer and Parents Program, Highland Community Residential Services, Valley Early Childhood Development Program, Best buddies of Halifax, and the Queens Development Association.



RTO Past President Randy Holmesdale presents a cheque to Sarah Crisp, Program Coordinator of Valley Child Development Association on behalf of the RTO Foundation Grant.

In summary, legacy grants are made from the annual interest accrued on the foundation funds. At its inception, the foundation received seed money from the RTA (now the RTO); applications for grants must be submitted before the end of March in each calendar year. Applications are considered and grants are awarded at the AGM of the foundation. The date of the AGM is published in the February issue of the RTO newsletter and all members of the RTO may attend the meeting as observers.

Donations are made in the name of deceased teachers and are accepted from members of the public as well as from RTO branches and RTO members. Materials are available to inform the deceased teacher’s family that a donation has been made. Donations are processed by the NSTU on behalf of the RTO. The foundation is allowed to receive donations of property, or gifts, as well as money.

—Submitted by John Donovan and Herbert Seymour

**Retired Teachers Organization
FOUNDATION GRANT
Application Form**



Name of Applicant _____

Address _____

_____ Postal Code _____

Phone No. _____ Fax No. _____

Federal Charitable Status Number _____

Program Coordinator _____

Brief Description of Program _____

Number of children involved in this program _____

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

How will this grant make a difference? _____

Regular source(s) of funding for your organization _____

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

Signature _____ Date _____

Please submit form with additional information

no later than March 31, 2014 to:

RTO Legacy Foundation

c/o President, RTO, 3106 Joseph Howe Drive, Halifax, NS B3L 4L7

The recipient of the grant will be chosen by the Board of Directors at the April 14, 2014 meeting to be held at 4:00 p.m. at the NSTU Building. All RTO members are welcome to attend.

ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT

An Elementary School Teacher had twenty-five students in her class. She presented each child in her classroom the first half of a well-known proverb and asked them to come up with the remainder of the proverb. It's hard to believe these were actually done by first graders. Their insight may surprise you.

- 1 Don't change horses.....until they stop running.
- 2 Strike while thebug is close.
- 3 It's always darkest beforeDaylight Saving Time.
- 4 Never underestimate the power of.....termites.
- 5 You can lead a horse to water but.....how?
- 6 Don't bite the hand thatlooks dirty.
- 7 No news isimpossible.
- 8 A miss is as good as a..... Mr.
- 9 You can't teach an old dog new math.
- 10 If you lie down with dogs, you'll.....stink in the morning.
- 11 Love all, trust.....me.
- 12 The pen is mightier than the..... pigs.
- 13 An idle mind is.....the best way to relax.
- 14 Where there's smoke there's.....pollution.
- 15 Happy the bride whogets all the presents.
- 16 A penny saved is.....not much.
- 17 Two's company, three's... the Musketeers.
- 18 Don't put off till tomorrow what.....you put on to go to bed.
- 19 Laugh and the whole world laughs with you, cry and.....you have to blow your nose.
- 20 There are none so blind as..... Stevie Wonder.
- 21 Children should be seen and not spanked or grounded.
- 22 If at first you don't succeed get new batteries.
- 23 You get out of something.....only what you see in the picture on the box.
- 24 When the blind lead the blind..... get out of the way.
- 25 A bird in the hand..... is going to poop on you.

**For updates on Deals & Discounts
and RTO Events, check out the
RTO website at:
<http://rto.nstu.ca>**

Living Well

AFTER RETIREMENT

Transition Into Retirement



Moving into retirement years can present challenges for members. Transitioning from an all-consuming career to a personal life plan is new

territory to navigate. Although planning is essential, your retirement is an experience that won't reveal its true identity until after you've actually retired. Thus, the planning in advance is done with the knowledge that your retirement life will grow and develop over time. The bonus is that you get to design your own outcomes, and you have the freedom to make adjustments, as you evaluate your satisfaction with your plans.

Current literature describes this phase of life as retiring, rewiring and preparing for your second adulthood. We are seen as in the center point of adult life, as we move from a work career to a customized career that can be a blend of former work experience and leisure activities. Due to the early age of people retiring and the increased life expectancy, your retirement years may actually outnumber your work years.

Planning for retirement is guided by the desire to enjoy life to the fullest. In working with members, I've observed that enjoying life includes many components. The strong desire to influence students' development and to participate in the lifelong learning is an important value which continues into retirement. The trend to focus mainly on leisure and recreation planning, omits the heartfelt needs of members to contribute to the lives of others. In retirement years, many members participate in paid or volunteer work that involves assisting others in learning. After a period of rest and recovering from teaching, many seek out a

way to make a contribution to people in their communities. This can also address the need to maintain contact with colleagues. Many members join professional organizations and community activities with former work partners, and also new acquaintances.

Couples retiring together face extra challenges. If your relationship was troubled before retirement, it'll be more difficult after retirement. Even a healthy and satisfying relationship goes through an adjustment period. Couples retiring together should discuss their plans well in advance. The wishes, hopes and dreams of one can be very different from the other. The numbers of hours spent together exceed the amount of together time at any other stage in the couples' life. Preparing for this phase requires open and honest discussion, and planning and experimentation to negotiate a lifestyle that works for both parties. Ongoing communication and commitment to the relationship will influence how couples manage the relationship in their retirement years.

Other family members need to be considered in this planning. Members in a caregiver role can get totally involved in providing care for aging parents or boomerang kids. Nurturing is important and must be managed in a way that doesn't put the caregiver's health at risk. Developing personal boundaries is essential as family members and community volunteer activities have endless requests for retiring members. This is a time to learn to say no appropriately, and yes to well-chosen people and responsibilities.

Many retired members recommend that you shouldn't make long-term commitments for the first year. It takes a year beyond your teaching career to realistically evaluate your own energy level and interests. Members recount many stories of being involved in activities that they had never imagined during their teaching careers. You deserve the time to rest, and experiment with what will hold your interest in this phase of life.

In conducting focus groups with retired members, there were consistent themes in their recommendations for members facing retirement. Many recommended a daily routine with a consistent start time and activity for each day. After all those years of living by the bells and the bus schedule, the need for structure in the day was frequently noted. Also the opportunity to contribute to your community and the variety of ways to do meaningful volunteer work or paid work was emphasized.

Leisure time and travel are important, but not the mainstay of the day-to-day lives of retired members. Time to live a healthier lifestyle, especially including daily exercise and balanced diets, was highly valued by retired members. Lifelong learning is experienced in many valued ways and is an ongoing pursuit.

The emotional transition into retirement will involve both leaving behind a known way of living and creating a new beginning. This adjustment will continue over time with you developing the curriculum for your own life. Expect that life will be good and full of opportunities. Your customized plan can be developed, evaluated and adjusted as you experience it. Your life will be a blend of using skills that you enjoyed in your previous career, and participating in leisure activities that have meaning for you. Time and flexibility to be involved with family and friends is treasured by retirees.

It has been a privilege to work with members as they transition into retirement and in the following years as they design their customized lifestyle plans. The members' commitment and creativity and contribution to the community is inspirational. Of course there are the values that have sustained members throughout their career. Their values are lived out in customized ways in their retirement years.

—Submitted by Fran Reddy Chisholm, MSW, RSW
Supervisor, Counselling Services, NSTU

HAPPY RETIREMENT!

Group of IX

November 28, 2013

At the November 28, 2013 Group of IX meeting there were several presentations of interest to Nova Scotia seniors.

Fran O'Brien, Administrative Director, Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and Anita Muise, Manager Shared Services (Capital District Health Authority) presented stats comparing blood collection services in the Capital Health District with blood collection services provided by independent phlebotomists.

Then Nancy Delaney, Manager of DI and Lab (Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness) made the following comments.

- ◆ Government involvement due to independent phlebotomy business expanding and impacting provisions of publicly funded lab services, request to increase resources to manage increase in samples and access to services with quality and patient safety concerns.
- ◆ Independents have reduced wait times but it now takes Capital Health 3 times longer to analyze samples due to quality issues.
- ◆ Government is reviewing diagnostic imaging, pathology and lab medicine services throughout the province. Role of government is in areas of policy, funding and accountability.

Doctors Nova Scotia have concerns with the 90 minute turnaround limit, patients requesting too many blood samples and the need for hospitals to adjust testing time when a patient is fasting.

The RTO will be a member of the Capital Health Blood Collection Citizen Committee.

A second presentation was made re Geriatric Physician Resource Consultation by Dr. David Gass, Physician Advisor (Nova

Scotia Department of Health and Wellness) and Ruby Knowles, Executive Director Continuing Care (Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness).

- ◆ Questions arose why there are 3,000 geriatric specialists in the United Kingdom (population 60 million) and only 300 geriatric specialists in Canada (population 35 million).
- ◆ There are 11 geriatric specialists in Nova Scotia with 10 based in Halifax and one in Cape Breton.
- ◆ The Department of Health and Wellness is producing a proposal describing a regional geriatric medicine framework for the 2014 budget process. The working group consists of the Department of Seniors, District Health Authorities, Doctors Nova Scotia and Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine.
- ◆ At present time primary health care is provided to geriatric patients by the family physician/primary health care team with regional consultation provided by family physicians with Canada Health Care of the Elderly certification and provincial consultation provided by physicians with Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada certification.
- ◆ Questions that need answers include what are the barriers for seniors in accessing geriatric medical resources, how can the model improve access to geriatric medical resources and allow

seniors to remain more independent in their own homes and communities and should the Department look at payment models or fee charges for physicians wishing to become geriatric specialists.

Other issues:

- ◆ RTO will be leading discussion on having government provide shingles vaccine at next meeting on February 27, 2013
- ◆ Should the Department of Services re-engage the Seniors Safe Driving Committee?
- ◆ Ruby Knowles will be making a presentation at a future meeting on government strategy on supporting home care and long-term care in nursing homes and residential facilities
- ◆ Some companies in parts of the province are tendering home maintenance, yard maintenance and snow clearing for seniors
- ◆ Seniors 50+ Expo will be held on June 13 – 14, 2014
- ◆ Seniors over 65 can receive free pneumonia shots
- ◆ CARP and Saint Mary's University looking at research on longevity and living healthy longer
- ◆ Department of Seniors providing \$250,000 for Positive Aging Grants

—Respectfully submitted,
Bill Berryman

RTO Members Contact Update

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

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

You should also update your information with Geraldine MacMillan at gmacmillan@staff.nstu.ca or 1-800-565-6788 at the NSTU Office for the RTO Newsletter mailing list. Please state whether you would like to receive an electronic subscription opposed to a paper copy by leaving your email address.

RTO Executive (2013-14)



Seated (l-r): Randy Holmesdale (Past President), Bill Berryman (Vice-President), Jim Kavanaugh (President), Dorothy Smith (Secretary and Member-at-Large—Halifax Metro) and Allan MacKinnon (Pension Committee Rep). Standing (l-r): Gary Archibald (Member-at-Large—South West Shore), George Landry (Member-at-Large—Strait), Herbert Seymour (Member-at-Large—South Shore), Bill Wagstaff (Member-at-Large—Valley), John Donovan (Member-at-Large—Cape Breton-Victoria) and Peter Lewis (Member-at-Large—Chignecto-Central).

RTO Dinner & Annual General Meeting May 28-29, 2014

The 2014 Retired Teachers Organization Annual General Meeting and dinner will be held in Halifax/Dartmouth with a similar set-up as last year.

The **AGM Dinner** will be held at Brightwood Golf and Country Club in Dartmouth on Wednesday, May 28. Buses will be provided for transportation to and from the Delta Halifax Hotel.

The **Annual General Meeting** will be held at the NSTU Building on Thursday, May 29. A luncheon break will be provided.

Accommodations will be at the Delta Halifax.

There will be a registration form in the April RTO Newsletter with more information to follow.

NOTICE

RTO members are welcome to take part in the 39th Annual NSTU Provincial Bowling Tournament being hosted by the Colchester-East Hants Bowling Teams in Bible Hill, April 26-27, 2014.

For further information go to the RTO website.

RTO Pins are available through your Branch Presidents.

Price is \$5.00 each!



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