

Teaching is not a lost art, but the regard for it is a lost tradition.

Jacques Barzun

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GETCA Notes

Negotiations

The mediators for both the Public and Separate School Board Bargaining Units have written out which means that the two sides are too far apart for the mediator to make a recommended settlement.

There will be a meeting for Public School teachers on Jan. 6th, 2005 @ 4:15 in the Thickwood Amphitheatre to discuss future options.

A government supervised strike vote for the Public School Board teachers is tentatively scheduled for January 12th, 2005. A memo from your NSC has been distributed by your EPC Rep.

Institute Day

Due to scheduling conflicts with Keyano College the PD Committee is looking at moving Institute Day next year to a different month. As well both John Tait and Dolores Abraham have stepped down as PD Chairs, although they are both willing to stay on the committee to help whoever steps forward to take on the role of Chairperson. If you are willing to step forward as a PD Chair please contact John, Dolores or your School PD Rep.

ATA - Barnett House

1-800-232-7208

www.teachers.ab.ca

- Our GETCA Reps, Lesly Johnson, Nancy Ball or Jane Kumpf, have been working very hard on our behalf to make this years convention "TEACHING: From Pencil to PowerPoint" a huge success.
- The preview booklets will be distributed before Christmas and the Convention booklets will be distributed in mid-January.
- GETCA is still looking for artwork. Please contact Lesly, Nancy or Jane.
- GETCA is still looking for chairpeople. You can register online at www.getca.com or by contacting Lesly, Nancy or Jane.
- There will be \$5 bus passes available for use during the convention again this year for those who wish to purchase them. Contact Lesly, Nancy or Jane.
- Lesly Johnson has compiled a list of downtown hotels, their prices and contact numbers and e-mailed it to all of us. If you have not received it please contact your school rep. The Brier (National Curling Finals) start on March 5 so you should contact your desired hotel as soon as possible to ensure that you get the accommodations you want.
- A reminder that it is your professional responsibility to attend convention as it is a legal requirement of the School Act and the School Board pays us a convention allowance

For more information please contact **Lesly Johnson** at 791-6768 (H), 791-3121(W) or leslyj@shaw.ca; **Nancy Ball** at 743-8257 (H), 791-6990 (W) or ndball@shaw.ca; **Jane Kumpf** at 791-0089 (H), 799-5745 (W) or jkumpf@telusplanet.net

The Next Five Years

The election is now behind us and what happens next? I would hope that we all can build some relationships that will help us further the cause of Public Education here in Alberta. The PCs are back but perhaps not as "arrogant" as before with the message sent from some parts of the province. Premier Klein has fired Dr. Death (West) and seems to not want to pick a fight. The new Minister is not of the confrontational ilk and is also a teacher. This is also good. You in Fort McMurray still have direct access to a cabinet minister and that can be very helpful. Building positive relations in areas where you can agree will make the MLA much more open to championing our causes at cabinet and at caucus. Do not give up speaking for Public Education but if there is some common ground let Mr. Boutillier know that you as a teacher support his position. The good will that is created can go a long way.

While both division's labour situations look bleak we have seen memorandums in Calgary Separate and in Rocky View which were both nasty disputes so keep the faith folks.

Enjoy your well earned break and come back refreshed and ready for whatever awaits us.

PUBLIC EDUCATION WORKS -
With Fort McMurray Teachers
Greg Jeffery, District Rep.

The deadline for the next newsletter is February 11. If there are any important dates, quotes, articles or ATA news that you wish to have included in the newsletter please send them to Earl Clayton at eclayton@telusplanet.net.

Council Meetings

Council Meetings are held in the Reflections Dining Room at Keyano and start at 4:15 with food.

January 19
February 16
March 16
April 20
May 18
June 15

A Holiday Message

The Four Candles burned slowly.
Their ambiance was so soft you could hear them speak...

The first candle said, "I Am Peace, but these days, nobody wants to keep me lit."
Then Peace's flame slowly diminished and went out completely.

The second candle said, "I Am Faith, but these days, I am no longer indispensable."
Then Faith's flame slowly diminished and went out completely.

Sadly the third candle spoke, "I Am Love and I haven't the strength to stay lit any longer."
"People put me aside and don't understand my importance. They even forget to love those who are nearest to them."

And waiting no longer, Love went out completely.

Suddenly...
A child entered the room and saw the three candles no longer burning.
The child began to cry,
"Why are you not burning? You are supposed to stay lit until the end."

Then the Fourth Candle spoke gently to the little boy,
"Don't be afraid, for I am Hope, and while I still burn, we can re-light the other candles."
With shining eyes, the child took the Candle of Hope and lit the other three candles.

Never let the Flame of Hope go out.
With Hope in your life, no matter how bad things may be, Peace, Faith and Love may shine brightly once again.

Unknown

In this holiday season remember that teachers are like the fourth candle, relighting hope in children through their learning. Remember to take time this holiday to refresh yourself and ensure your candle remains bright and true. *Gary Marcellus*