

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT Greetings Fellow Teachers:

As more meetings are attended and items acted upon, we need to look around and congratulate each other on the amazing amount of work that is done in our schools! At every level there are seemingly countless tasks taken on and carried out with careful attention to detail. Given the extraordinary complexity of our classrooms, I am astounded by the "extras" that are provided for the students in our care. The clubs, teams, bands, choirs, travel, concert preparation, community gatherings, Parent Council activities, along with the work done at our Local, are just a few of the things that give color and timbre to our Catholic school communities. In addition to all of this, we are also asked to be cognizant of the political and economic forces that are bearing down upon us. To overcome the feeling of powerlessness, it is imperative that all teachers in the province make their voices heard! The easiest way is to visit stopthecuts.ca and add your name to the list. Let our decision makers know that a 300 million dollar hit to education will be extremely detrimental to the children of our province and, as their advocates, we protest in the strongest manner. We are part of a group of 40,000 Alberta teachers whose working conditions will be greatly affected by such cuts. Speak now and speak loudly!

Take a quick look around your staff room this week and give someone a high five, pat on the back, or a warm hug. Let them know how grateful we are to be working together as community in this great enterprise. Take care of each other. ~Sandy

THE NEW VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL IS....

Greg Carabine of Austin O'Brien High School, who won our by-election by a narrow margin over Azza Ghali. Thanks to both candidates for a credible campaign and exciting vote count. Welcome aboard, Greg!

45 NEW TEACHERS TAKE THE PLEDGE!

Congratulations to all beginning teachers who took part in our New Teacher Welcoming and Induction Ceremony last week. To their principals and family members, as well as trustees and District personnel who attended to show their support...thank you! Kudos to our committee members for organizing a beautiful evening: Melanie Mercier(Chair), Renee Shevalier-Lavin, Jonathan Sharek and Jan Bossmin.

WHOSE SHOES? -in last week's special edition of the Local News

Those were Amber Nicholson's shoes! (Amber is our Social Justice Committee Chair). Who guessed it? After 51 emailed guesses it was: Patti Liogier of CES who wins a \$25 gift card to Earl's!

A SUGGESTION FROM YOUR SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE!

November is "Shop Local First" Month. It may be "just shopping", but being a consumer who thinks local first hugely impacts jobs, the environment, community well-being, and much more. Did you know that every \$100 spent in a locally-owned business generates about \$48 worth of local economic growth? The same \$100 spent at a global retailer generates only about \$13. Find out more at www.KeepEdmontonOriginal.com Can you increase your shopping at local and independent stores by 10% this month?

GRANTS FOR NEWLY APPOINTED ADMINISTRATORS

The Local is awarding three \$250 grants in aid to the following new administrators to defray costs in attending the ATA's 2009 *Leadership Essentials for Administrators Conference*, Nov. 16-17, in Calgary: Nicoletta Papanicolas (St. Vladimir), Marcia Dolinski (St. Catherine) and David Warawa (St. Hilda). Congratulations!

Meetings and Events

Monday, Nov. 9, 2009

Debrief Meeting of the Opening Mass Committee,

Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2009

Remembrance Day Holiday

Monday, Nov. 16, 2009

New Teacher Mentorship Steering Committee Mtg., 4:15pm, Room 402, Barnett House

Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2009

ARA Committee Mtg., 4:15pm, Boardroom, Barnett House

Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2009

Debrief meeting of the 2009 Teachers Retirement Reception Committee, 4pm, Room 402, BH

Monday, Nov. 23, 2009

Possible ARA Committee Mtg., 4:30pm, Room TBA, Barnett House

Website:

www.local54.teachers.ab.ca

Kathy MacIsaac, Exec. Director
kathy.macisaac@ecteachers.ca

Sandy Gillis, Local President
sandy.gillis@ecteachers.ca

Jan Bossmin, Office Manager
jan.bossmin@ecteachers.ca

Council Dates:

Tuesday, Dec. 15/09
Tuesday, January 19/10
Tuesday, Feb. 16/10
Tuesday, March 16/10
Tuesday, April 20/10
Tuesday, May 18/10

Included in this mailing: Article on budget cuts to education by Harold Neth...1 per rep..post & share
Printed on the reverse: Excerpts from guest speaker at New Teacher Welcoming

Excerpts from address to newly-inducted teachers on October 29th (given by Sandra Esposito, St. Francis Xavier High School)

Four and a half years ago, wide-eyed, unsure, excited, and yes, riddled with student loans I sat on the other side of this podium in one of the chairs that you all fill this evening, not really knowing what to expect or what was coming my way. And, I can tell you all tonight, that the journey has been full of every type of emotion that you could possibly imagine. If you open yourselves to truly experiencing all that your journey has awaiting you, then you, too, will feel as proud and as passionate about your career as I do today.

It has been noted that a candle is like a good teacher-it consumes itself to light the way for others. I assure you that you will find yourself consumed by teaching. There are so many ways to give of yourself within a school and I encourage you to do so. Share your many talents and inspire others to do the same. Bring youthfulness and vigour to all that you do and remind your colleagues about why they, themselves, chose this career. Become involved and seize opportunities to be a leader and to be led. Join a committee, coach a team, plan a school event or simply be a presence in the school. It becomes obvious very quickly that much like our students, we too learn the most about how important we are to others outside of the classroom. And, I truly believe that that most important part of you that you can offer a student and a colleague are your time and your talents.

Have fun and be fun! Clarity can overcome you when you see the world through the eyes of a child. It always amazes me how honest a child is, and how raw their emotions are. Many lessons can be learned from laughing with your students until it hurts, coaching a team to a win, wearing a smile even when it is difficult and reminding yourself and your students that you too once were young and loved that teacher who was fun! Just remember, don't steal someone's coffee thinking that it is fun or funny!

Find a mentor or ten! Heavens knows that you will need all of the help that you can get at some point or another. Make sure that you pick good helpers ... you know those with a wealth of daily lesson plans and a hard drive full of "stuff" for you to use! In all seriousness, of the two thousand plus teachers who teach in the Edmonton Catholic School District, most, if not all, are extremely wise and can offer invaluable knowledge to you. Take this bountiful knowledge and use it, add to it and then share it with another wide eyed and exhausted teacher that is bound to come your way.

Be cognizant of the leadership opportunities and support networks that are in place. This ATA Local is led by profound leadership and knowledgeable people. They work diligently to support you and your fellow colleagues. Consider taking one of these leadership roles: serve as a school representative, join an ATA committee but most of all, support your Local and fellow teachers in this crucial time for teachers. Be proud of your role and note the importance of what we all do to others outside of the profession.

Finally, model yourself after the greatest teacher of all – Jesus. "He never taught a lesson in a classroom. He had no tools to work with, such Smart Boards, maps or computers... He used no syllabi, kept no grades, and His only text was ancient and well worn..." But how wise this man was! Many of the practices that we learn in university were exhibited by Jesus so many years ago. The best models for teaching were used by him; he was what he taught, he was comfortable with people of all kinds, he was compassionate toward the learners, he had a strong self-concept, and most of all he knew his learners. Jesus was motivated by love and showed this in all that he did. He truly exemplified the notion of how we, as teachers, teach to show that learning and never being filled shows wisdom; but teaching and never being weary, shows love.

In closing, I would like to offer the words of Mother Teresa who said to be faithful in the little things for that is where your strength lies. There is definitely nothing "little" about the exciting path that lies ahead of you but do have faith in every moment of each day. I encourage you to grab hold of the moments that await you and that will take your breath away; let them build you up into teachers who are full of faith, wisdom and give of yourselves in so many ways. Again, on behalf of the Local, I congratulate you and am honoured to say **welcome** to best job in whole world!