



# and now...your "Local" news!

a special edition of the Intercom – Issue 22

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## WHEREFORE "ART" THOU?

The Local office at Barnett House is a place where much valuable work, *by teachers and for teachers*, is done. We would love to frame and display original artwork created by you, our teachers. If you are willing to donate or even just lend us a piece of your personal artwork---a watercolour, sketch, photograph, oil painting---we would be proud to adorn our walls with it! Please call or email Kathy to discuss. (780 451 1196)

## NEW TEACHER MENTORSHIP NOTES

Our most recent session for first year teachers and their mentors was delivered by Françoise Ruban and Joni Turville of the ATA's Professional Development department. Participants took a look at the Teaching Quality Standards, discussed the impact a good mentorship program can offer, and created a Mentorship Action Plan outlining their goals, timelines, and responsibilities.



Staff of St Nicholas School with two-time Olympic torch bearer, Steve Jani.

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## Catching the Olympic Spirit!

*Schools throughout Edmonton Catholic showed their Canadian pride by involving their students and staffs in all kinds of Olympics-related events and activities. Here is a good news story provided by Norma Jani, one of our Council representatives.*

At St Nicholas School, we seized the Vancouver 2010 Olympic theme to get our students more active during the lunch hour. Each homeroom represented a different country and, three days a week, their team played a sport in the gymnasium. Points were awarded not only to the winning team, but for participation by teachers and students as well. Classes also had the chance to get extra points by making flags or costumes of their country. On January 13<sup>th</sup>, as the torch passed through Edmonton, the school held an opening ceremony, emceed by first-year teacher Jarrett Brophy. Norma Jani, Assistant Principal, spoke about the torch and its cross-country travels and Principal Dave Bouma declared the games open. The Olympic Games also provided an excellent opportunity for cross-curricular instruction. In Social Studies classes, students researched past games and reviewed current events. Our Religion classes have looked at justice, fairness, equality and how individuals use their God-given talents. Language Arts focused on stories of athletes and past Olympic events, while Math classes provided opportunities for students to do work centering on the results of athletes and countries. Student art projects involved the creation of Olympic posters and flags. One of the highlights of the St Nicholas Olympic experience took place on Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, when Steve Jani, of Fort McMurray---a two-time torch bearer---brought his torch to the school and gave students the opportunity to ask questions and have their photos taken. All in all, a few exciting weeks of positive energy!

## THE LUCK OF THE DRAW!!

Many teachers who stopped by the Local's booth at Teachers' Convention last week entered our draw for a "Sub for a Day."

We drew two names out of a very full box of entries and the lucky winners were:

**Angela Dewing** (St. John Bosco) and

**Maria Enders** (St. Joseph) Congratulations! Enjoy your day off!

## THIS MONTH'S CONTEST: CONVENTION TRIVIA

The brother of teachers **Dave Zacharko (LSS)** and **Ron Zacharko (St. FX)** presented a session at Teachers' Convention last Friday.

What is this Zacharko's first name and what was the topic of his presentation?

The first correct response (two words only---name and topic) emailed to

[kathy.macisaac@ecteachers.ca](mailto:kathy.macisaac@ecteachers.ca)

will win this month's dinner at a local restaurant.



# Message from our President

Greetings and Happy "Post Convention and Olympics!" Our convention was considered "one of the best" by many who dropped by our booth last week and the usual convention buzz added to the great atmosphere that is created when friends and co-workers connect during this special time of our teacher year. A huge thank you to all GETCA workers! In this special edition of our Intercom, I am drawing on some words from Fr. Max Oliva, a recent speaker to the administrators of our district. His talks were inspirational as he spoke to the beatitudes in the workplace and the leader's role in caring for those entrusted to our care. Once a month he writes a newsletter which is received by thousands in the workplace and we can only hope that his words have a trickle down effect in transforming our world.

This month, he looks at the fifth commandment, "You shall not kill," and while it has huge significance to the American workplace it is easily applied to our Alberta advantage. He writes on the commandment in light of the effect on the human spirit, relationships and family life when people lose their jobs and ability to provide for those they love and care for. As we meet with our MLAs in the coming weeks, we could mention that as decisions are being made in the legislature, the conversation could take a different course. Have them insert Alberta in the quote attached and if health care continues to be privatized, then the rest of the quote will apply directly to us as well. Pfeffer writes: "Layoffs literally kill people. In the United States, when you lose your job, you lose your health insurance, unless you can afford to temporarily maintain it under the pricey COBRA provisions. Studies consistently show a connection between not having health insurance and individual mortality rates."

In addition, when people lose their jobs their sense of self-worth takes a serious 'hit'. They get angry and depressed. "*Lay Off the Layoffs: Why Downsizing is Bad for Business*," by Jeffrey Pfeffer (*Newsweek*, February 15, 2010) I will have Fr. Max's article for school reps at our next Council meeting. In many of our school communities we have families who are still suffering from the impact of last year's massive cutbacks and we see the effects on the "spirit". The quiet of this Lenten season gives us time to keep these families in our minds and be aware of each other's deeper needs as we go about the hustle and bustle of the school day. In our "busyness," may we find time to take the extra moment needed to ask "How are you doing?"... And mean it. ☺ Take care of each other ~Sandy