



November 24, 2011

Issue No. 7

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

An invitation to all Council Reps—please mark your calendars to join us at the next Council meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 20th at 6pm. We will be hosting Christmas Cheer. You are invited to bring a friend to Council and a backpack for those in need. See below.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Greetings everyone

Congratulations Lucille Charrois! You were very quick on the draw and I am assuming that you are humming or singing Denver stuff like Poems, Prayers and Promises on a daily basis ☺ Friday past was the last day of the anti-bullying campaign and I and Kathy were representing our ATA at the Safe and Caring Schools breakfast on Wednesday morning. This event was attended by many, with messages from Mayor Mandel and Thomas Lukaszuk, our new Minister. All two hundred placemats were of children's art work depicting safe and caring spaces and events in their lives and the simplicity makes it seem as though the children have the answers that we adults keep searching for. One thing that is certain is that we teachers are the best chance that many of our kids have to learn how to deal with bullying or malicious behavior. They need to be taught how not to get caught up in the cycle that causes permanent damage to relationships that even on good days can be fragile. I think that we could consider making this anti-bullying campaign a year-round event in our sites and use the assigned week next year to celebrate the accomplishment of banishing such behavior forever! The links below were provided this past week at the special breakfast and hopefully they will assist us in helping each other, our kids and their parents:

www.standuptobullyingnow.ca www.twitter.com/SafeAndCaring www.standuptobullyingnow.ca

It would be so good if all of us could find a while in our staff community to talk about how we care for each other and find ways to make every staff room and classroom a most welcoming place for everyone who crosses the threshold. If we believe that we are truly sacramental because of our work as Catholic teachers, then this should be a joyful challenge. In my visits to staffs, I have said that in our system we have the best conflict resolution policy that was ever written.

"Reconciliation" is a gift to us and, as staffs that work and play together, we should unwrap it and use it whenever there is a break in relationship. A significant change in folk's mental health would probably be the greatest result.

Please continue caring for each other. ~Sandy

Ps : Minister Lukaszuk will be hosting a phone-in "town hall " for parents and interested parties on November 29th at 7:45 pm. Phone in 15 or 20 minutes beforehand to register. 1-888-789-9572. Code 5634664. He will be looking for input into the new Education Act!

WE WILL PAY FOR YOUR SUB!

Are you interested in a half day professional development opportunity? 150 Intervisitation grants are available to you to observe a colleague in another educational setting of your choice. The Local will cover the ½ day cost of your sub. To apply, please access the form on our website:

www.local54.teachers.ab.ca and email the completed form to Jan at jan.bossmine@ecteachers.ca

Once received, you will be assigned a grant number. You MUST have a grant number before you can do your Intervisitation.

BRINGING HOPE TO THE HOMELESS

On Tuesday evening, 20 of our teachers—elementary, secondary, substitutes, administrators and consultants—prepared and served a snack at the Mustard Seed Church. This event was planned by our Social Justice Committee under the energetic leadership of our chair, Sandra Esposito (Sr. Annata Brockman School). As a follow up activity, we invite each school to prepare a backpack, which we will deliver to the Mustard Seed before Christmas. See below.

ONE BACKPACK PER SCHOOL!

Here's a social justice activity we hope every school will take on! The Mustard Seed needs winter backpacks. Please collect these gender neutral items from teachers on your staff and place them in a backpack: Wool/thermal socks; gloves, toque & scarf; toilet paper; 2 bus tickets; soap; deodorant; travel toothbrush & toothpaste; small, warm blanket (attach to the outside if it won't fit inside.); \$5 coffee gift card; lip balm; emergency candle and matches and pocket hand warmers. Your school rep will bring your backpack to our Dec. 20th Council meeting.

Meetings & Events

Monday, November 28, 2011
ARA Committee Mtg., 4:15pm,
Room 215, Barnett House

Tuesday, November 29, 2011
School Opening Mass Debrief
Mtg., 5pm, Joey Tomatoes
Restaurant, 112th & Jasper Ave.

Tuesday, December 6, 2011
Economic Policy Committee
Meeting, 4pm, Room 402,
Barnett House

Wednesday, December 7, 2011
Executive Mtg. #4, 4:30pm,
Room 402, Barnett House

Thursday, December 15, 2011
Substitute Committee Mtg.
#02, 4pm, St. Joseph HS, Room
TBA. A SMARTBoard PD
session will follow the mtg.

Tuesday, December 20, 2011
Council mtg. #03, 6pm,
Auditorium, Barnett House.
This is our Christmas Council
Cheer; we invite you to bring a
friend.

**December 24 – January 8,
2012**

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS
Local office closed

Monday, January 9, 2012
Local office reopens at 8:30am.
Happy New Year!

WEBSITE:

www.local54.teachers.ab.ca

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Kathy MacIsaac, Exec. Director

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Quote of the day:

"Every man dies; not
every man lives."

We hope that as
November ends you take
the time to live a little.☺

OUR COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

“Membership has its NEGOTIATED privileges”

Don't leave home without it... and I do not mean a popular charge card, I am referring to your Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan (A.S.E.B.P.) membership card.

While on an extended visit to a Spanish speaking country this past summer I experienced a “medical emergency.” I barely walked into a private clinic where the doctor completed an examination of my physical and financial condition. When asked if I had medical insurance I promptly replied, “yes”. He entered my name into the system and informed me that I did not have coverage... in his country.

I sent my husband back to our residence with clear instructions as to where he would find my A.S.E.B.P. card. Thank goodness I had it with me. On the inside of the card it stated, “In the event of a medical emergency outside Canada, call the nearest Emergency Access number.” Toll free. So I did.

The operator took some basic information and because of my location in the West Indies she passed me through to an insurance representative in Quebec. I was assigned a case number and informed immediately that the treatments I had received were covered. Any time I needed information, all I had to do was call in and cite my case number, which I did... a lot.

The insurance company acted as a liaison between me (the patient), my doctor who only spoke Spanish (staff were found to speak with him in Spanish), the private medical clinic, Alberta Health, and Alberta Blue Cross. All I had to do was focus on getting better.

The time arrived when I was well enough to be discharged, I of course nervously waited for a bill but none came. Everything had been taken care of by the benefit plan.

Anyone who has travelled knows how stressful things can be just doing the travelling. When you find yourself needing to be hospitalized in a foreign country, it is just plain scary. Thank goodness for that little card that says, “In the event of a medical emergency” ~an ECT Local member

LAST WEEK TO ENTER THE LOGO CONTEST!

By now all school sites have received their Local coffee mugs. To find out how to enter our contest to win an iPad2, please visit our website: www.local54.teachers.ab.ca Deadline for entries is Wednesday, November 30th.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS FOR THE CITY'S REUSE CENTRE AVAILABLE

The Local has purchased 2 cards with a total of 50 visits so that this wonderful opportunity is available to all teachers. Email jan.bossmmin@ecteachers.ca if you would like to use the card for a 2 week period.

CARING FOR OUR MEMBERS

Please advise the Local office of instances of bereavement, illness or births, so that the Local can have a Mass offered or flowers sent on behalf of all teachers. Contact: jan.bossmmin@ecteachers.ca The Mass request form is on the Local website.

PRE-RETIREMENT WORKSHOPS SCHEDULED! – Only 19 spaces left!

Heather Johnson, pension consultant, will be presenting a two-part Pre-Retirement Workshop from 5:30-9pm in the Barnett House auditorium on Monday, January 23 (Part 1), and Monday, January 30 (Part 2). The workshops are free of charge, sponsored by the Local, and are limited to 75 participants. Teachers are welcome to bring their spouses. Email to register: jan.bossmmin@ecteachers.ca Please indicate if you will be bringing your spouse to these sessions.