Community College members ratify agreements

Community College members in the faculty and professional support bargaining units voted in favour of their tentative agreements on October 23. They were voting on agreements reached between the Nova Scotia Community College and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union on October 19.

Eighty-one per cent of faculty voted 85 per cent in favour of their agreement. Eighty-seven per cent of the professional support staff voted 97 per cent in favour of their agreement. Terms of both collective agreements are from September 1, 2008 to August 31, 2011.

“We felt this was the best deal possible for our members at this time,” says NSTU president Alexis Allen. “We will continue to press the important role our College members play in the post-secondary education system and the economy of Nova Scotia.”

“I am pleased that our dedicated and talented colleagues have ratified this new agreement,” says NSCC president Joan McArthur-Blair. “Their focus on student learning during the final stages of a complex and stressful negotiation process is proof of their professionalism, talent and commitment to improving lives through education.”

The NSTU and the College reached tentative collective agreements on behalf of the faculty and professional support staff averting a strike that was scheduled to begin Tuesday, October 20.

Both agreements contain a 2.9 per cent annual salary increase in 2008-2009, a one per cent salary increase in 2009-2010, and a one per cent salary increase in 2010-2011. There is also a one per cent adjustment to salary grids to be applied on September 1, 2008 that responds to industry-specific demands. Improvements that support continuing professional development include two self-directed learning days annually. Enhanced medical insurance benefits in both agreements bring them in line with those negotiated previously by the NSTU with the Department of Education on behalf of public school teachers. Enhanced sick leave accumulation provisions were also attained.

“This has been a difficult and challenging time for all of us,” adds Allen. “I thank and applaud our negotiating team, our Community College reps and members, and the NSTU leadership for their commitment and contribution to achieving a successful conclusion.”

The faculty bargaining unit includes some 760 members who teach at NSCC campuses across the province. The 165-member professional support bargaining unit includes professionals such as registrars, librarians, counsellors and training coordinators at NSCC sites across Nova Scotia.

At press time, the date for the official signing of the agreements had not yet been set.

executive highlights

- October 15, 2009
  - Filed table officers’ report;
  - Approved two amendments to operational procedures under Strike Procedures relating to Strike Pay;
  - Approved amendment to Community College nNegotiations operational procedures;
  - Invited Local Presidents and RRC Chair to attend information meeting of Community College reps on October 18;
  - Filled vacancies for Comité de programme académique and Distance Education Committee;
  - Appointed Substitute Teacher Committee for 2009-2010;
  - Extended a permanent intermediate staff contract to financial officer Melanie (Hartling) Waye;
  - Granted six out of province conference grants of $475 each, with two alternates;
  - Requested president write each superintendent to establish proper protocol regarding changes to student class assignment;
  - Recommended revisions to operational procedures for the election of the NSTU President for 2010;
  - Approved permits to teach to the Tri-County Regional School Board for substitutes.

October 15 Province House Rally

Follow-up aid agency of the 16-month negotiation process for Community College members:

- September, October, November 2008, March and April 2009: Further talks between NSCC and NSTU.
- April 18, 2009: All outstanding issues are resolved except for salary, term of agreement and medical benefits. The NSTU advises the College that there is no commitment to support an economic increase of 2.9 per cent beyond August 31, 2009.
- May 5: NSTU asks the Minister of Labour to appoint a conciliation officer to help the parties reach an agreement.
- May 27: A conciliation meeting is held, but the parties are unable to reach an agreement.
- June 23: Conciliation officer files a report, declaring an impasse.
- September 8: Provincial Executive authorizes NSTU president to conduct a strike vote, set for September 22.
- September 12: Community College NSTU representatives meet at Central Office in advance of strike vote.
- September 14 to 17: Strike Vote Information sessions for Community College members are held at all NSCC campuses in the province.
- September 22: Strike Vote. In electronic balloting, 91 per cent of Faculty members vote 93 per cent in favour of strike, 96 per cent of Professional Support members vote 99 per cent in favour of strike.
- September 23: Strike Notice filed with the Minister of Labour and Workforce Development.
- September 28 to October 1: Strike Protocol sessions for Community College members are held at NSCC campuses in the province.

Community College members march around Province House on October 15.
Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the recipients of the 2009 Prime Minister’s Awards for Teaching Excellence at a ceremony in Ottawa on World Teachers’ Day—October 5, and this year five Nova Scotia educators were among the 84 across Canada to receive Certificates of Excellence and Certificates of Achievement for teaching excellence.

Dr. Steven Van Zost received a Certificate of Excellence. Van Zost, teaches a variety of subjects at Avon View High School including film and video, advanced English, theory of knowledge (International Baccalaureate) in Grades 11 and 12. His integration of technology into the curriculum emphasizes student collaboration and prepares young people for careers in the 21st century economy.

Certificates of Achievement were given to Kent Brewer, Jason Fuller, Michael Diabo, and the teaching team of Shelley MacDonald and Carla MacEachern. Kent Brewer teaches Grade 11 and 12 electrical construction at Memorial Composite High School in North Sydney and he stresses the high standards for safety and work quality that students will be expected to meet in the workplace.

Prince Arthur Junior High School Music teacher Michael Diabo leads bands on “world tour” of local elementary schools to connect students to the community and immerse them in its diversity. Jason Fuller, who teaches advanced and regular streams biology in Grades 11 and 12 at Horton High School capitalized on new technology to augment biology instruction for students at his school and extended it to students across the region that would not otherwise have access. Thorburn Consolidated School Grades 4 and 5 teaching team Shelley MacDonald and Carla MacEachern introduced laptop technology with wireless access to all students and integrated it into all aspects of the curriculum.

The Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF) had a private session with the Dalai Lama after his public talk, Educating the Heart: The Power of Compassion, in Montreal on October 3. CTF President Mary-Lou Donnelly presented him with a framed copy of the Federation’s 2009 World Teachers’ Day poster along with the three winning student essays that focused on peace and the environment. The five-person CTF delegation included Donnelly, Heather MacIsaac, winner of the Federation’s 2009 World Teachers’ Day poster contest, as well as Daniel Jewson, Miguel Huard and Emily Ritson, the three students who won the CTF student essay contest. Shown with His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet (left to right) are MacIsaac, Donnelly, Ritson (Ontario), Jewson (Ottario) and Huard (Alberta).

MacIsaac, a faculty member at Marconi Campus in Sydney, was able to travel to Montreal and meet the Dalai Lama as part of her win of CTF’s World Teachers’ Day Poster Design Contest. The Green Street Program of the Canadian Teachers’ Federation organized the Peace: Live it. Teach it. poster contest and the Peace Education student essay contest.

On September 26, 2009 the Coady International Institute celebrated its 50th anniversary with a celebratory dinner at St. FX University in Antigonish. The NSTU has been a long-time supporter of the Coady Institute and purchased a table for the event. The NSTU hosted two Coady students at their table, Alphonso Munsang from Northern India who is an area coordinator with the Diocesan Social Service Society in her country and Sylvia Chivweta, a program Officer with the Mulumbo Early Childhood Care and Development Foundation in her home country of Zambia. Munsang (standing) and Chivweta (seated) are shown with NSTU executive director Bill Redden, 2nd vice-president Eric Bourliere (Colchester-East Hants), secretary-treasurer Dave Jones (Annapolis-Hants West-Kings) president Alexis Allen and provincial executive member Antigonish-Guysborough Amanda Marchand (seated).

The Canadian Association of Communiqué in Education (CACE) has awarded a prestigious BRAVO! Award of Excellence to the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and Nova Scotia School Boards Association for the Education Partners campaigns Public Education: Our Best Investment.

The 2009 BRAVO! Award of Excellence was presented to NSTU publications coordinators Paul McCormick and Angela Murray and NSSBA communications manager Sharon Findlay-MacPhee, members of CACE, at the annual CACE conference and business meeting, which took place October 4 to 6 in Montreal.

A source of both individual and group prestige, the BRAVO! Program showcases Canada’s best work in the field of educational communications and provides the opportunity to be recognized by fellow members and colleagues for outstanding work. Award of Excellence projects score 85 per cent or higher and demonstrate excellence in research, planning, execution and evaluation.

Public Education: Our Best Investment lobby campaign called for a continued investment in public education. The education partners, NSTU, NSSBA, Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators (ANSEA) and the Nova Scotia Federation of Home and School Associations (NSFHSA) asked the public to urge their MLAs to put education first in last year’s provincial budget. It reminded both the government and the public that during difficult financial times education is an investment that guarantees dividends for all Nova Scotians. The campaign involved a news conference, a print and radio ad campaign and a website.

CACE represents communications professionals who work in private and publicly funded school boards, colleges and universities, teachers’ associations, and government departments and ministries across Canada. Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, CACE provides networking and professional development opportunities for its members and acknowledges their contributions to the success of the educational system in Canada.
Celebrating literacy and Mi’kmaq History Month with first Mi’kmaw board book for babies

In celebration of Mi’kmaq History Month, the Read to Me! Program launched the Mi’kmaw version of Sheree Fitch’s popular baby book *Kisses Kisses Baby-O*, translated by Mi’kmaw linguist Bernie Francis, and the Mi’kmaw edition of the Read to Me! bag at Indian Brook House of Learning on October 2. The Mi’kmaw bag contains *Wëska’qelmut Appejajunu* (Kisses Kisses Baby-O) and other books and reading resources for Mi’kmaw families. *Wëska’qelmut Appejajunu* is the very first Mi’kmaw board book for babies.

“It is important that our literacy resources reflect the diversity of culture and language in Nova Scotia,” says Carol McDougall, Director of the Read to Me! Program. “I am excited to add the Mi’kmaw bag to our growing collection of literacy resources.”

“Having books in Mi’kmaw help maintain our language and culture,” says Francis. “Sheree’s book provides a good foundation for early literacy for Mi’kmaw families.”

Since 2008, this book has been provided with sponsorship from the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and the Nova Scotia Nurses’ Union and is now available in three languages: English, French and Mi’kmaw.

“The teachers of Nova Scotia understand how important it is to root education in culture,” says NSTU president Alexis Allen. “We’re proud to be a part of enhancing early literacy in the Mi’kmaw language and our continued support of increasing literacy rates in Nova Scotia.”

“We recognize the health, education and social benefits of early literacy,” says NSNU president, Janet Hazelton. “Literacy is an important determinant of health, and nurses in Nova Scotia are very pleased to offer continued support of the Read to Me! Program and the legacy of long-term health benefits it can provide to our communities.”

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**OCTOBER GIVEAWAY WINNERS!**

The winners of the Pumpkin People are: Jane Wilson of Portland Estates Elementary; Ruthann Organ of Felix Marchand Education Center in Louisdale; and Kim Laybolt of Oldfield Consolidated in Enfield.

**2009-2010 PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS SCHEDULE CONFIRMED**

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<tr>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
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<tr>
<td>12 &amp; 13  (Thursday &amp; Friday) - Cape Breton (Delta, Sydney)</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2  (Tuesday &amp; Wednesday) - Bridgewater - Days Inn (formerly Wandlyn Inn)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 &amp; 17  (Monday &amp; Tuesday) - Amherst (Wandlyn Inn)</td>
<td>8 &amp; 9  (Tuesday &amp; Wednesday) - Halifax (NSTU Building)</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 &amp; 19  (Wednesday &amp; Thursday) - Halifax (NSTU Building)</td>
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<td>26 &amp; 27  (Thursday &amp; Friday) - Annapolis (Old Orchard Inn)</td>
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The Teacher has three sets of books to give away. Each set contains the English, French and Mi’kmaw version of the book. Please send an email with your name, address and school/campus name to theteacher@nstu.ca with “KISSES BOOK SET” in the subject line by December 22 to be entered into the draw.
Dear Colleagues:

Following a difficult set of negotiations and a great deal of hard work, I join you in your relief that the NSTU and the Nova Scotia Community College were able to reach a tentative collective agreement, and that our NSCC Faculty and Professional Support members have ratified the deal. The goodwill and spirit of cooperation shown between the NSTU and the College during this trying time greatly assisted in reaching the agreement.

This has been a difficult and challenging time for all of us. First, I wish to thank and applaud all of our Community College Reps who worked so hard behind the scenes, and maintained cool heads under intense pressure. Heart thanks as well to ALL of our Community College Faculty and Professional Support members who seamlessly continued to provide the highest quality of education and services to their students during this most anxious time.

I commend our NSTU leadership at all levels for their guidance and wisdom, our NSTU staff who worked flat out to keep on top of the ever-changing developments, and our public school teachers who attended the rally and loaned their support in terms of phone calls, letters and emails to MLAs and members of government. The Retired Teachers Organization also loaned their support which was very much appreciated. Thank you all. It was impressive and encouraging to witness, in such concrete terms, that we remained steadfast in our mission to see our members fairly treated.

Our negotiating team must be commended for its keen strategizing and tireless determination. In particular, I’d like to thank Community College President Louis Robaille and Provincial Executive rep Damian Hall, who participated in the strike vote information sessions, the strike school sessions and the tentative agreement sessions. Your focus, commitment and contribution are greatly appreciated.

As you know, our September 22 strike vote gave us a strong mandate to move forward and sent a clear message to the Department of Education that we meant business and were not backing down. On October 2, the NSTU and NSCC met again, but no deal could be reached. On October 8, we called upon the Community College and Minister of Education to agree to binding arbitration to settle outstanding issues, and at the same time, we set a strike date of October 20. On Tuesday, October 13, following attendance at Question Period in the Legislative Assembly, I met with Premier Darrell Dexter, and was joined by executive director Bill Redden and assistant executive director Bruce Kelloway. We outlined to the Premier the issues and the principles of a binding arbitration process.

Despite our efforts, the province refused binding arbitration. We did not despair; rather, we remained steadfast in our mission to see our members fairly treated.

A well-attended and enthusiastic rally outside the House of Assembly on October 15 further displayed a tremendous show of support and strength on behalf of our membership. It was a bitter cold evening, but that did nothing to quell the high energy, robust chanting and feeling of solidarity experienced by the gathering of Community College members, local presidents, Provincial Executive, NSTU staff, teachers and public supporters.

It was down to the wire when the two sides met late into the evening on Sunday, October 18 and finally negotiated an acceptable deal, worthy of our Community College members.

Dear Colleague:

Suite à une série de négociations difficiles et à un énorme travail, je partage votre soulagement que le NSTU et le Collège communautaire de la Nouvelle-Écosse aient été en mesure de parvenir à une convention collective temporaire et que les membres de la faculté et du personnel de soutien professionnel du CCNÉ aient ratifié cet accord. La bonne volonté et l’esprit de coopération dont ont fait preuve le NSTU et le collège durant cette période éprouvante ont beaucoup contribué à la conclusion favorable de cet accord.

Ceci a été une période pénible et éprouvante pour nous tous. Tout d’abord, je voudrais remercier et applaudir les représentants du Collège communautaire qui ont travaillé très activement en coulisses et qui ont su garder la tête froide en dépit des pressions intenses. Nos remènagements les plus chaleureux également à TOUS les membres de la faculté et du personnel de soutien professionnel du Collège communautaire qui ont continué à fournir un enseignement et des services de la plus haute qualité à leurs élèves durant cette période difficile.

Je veux féliciter aussi les dirigeants du NSTU à tous les niveaux pour leurs bons conseils et leur sagesse, le personnel du NSTU qui a travaillé très fort pour se tenir au courant de l’évolution constante de la situation et les enseignants des écoles publiques qui ont participé à la manifestation et apporté leur soutien par des appels téléphoniques, des lettres et des courriers aux députés provinciaux et aux membres du gouvernement. L’organisation des enseignants retirés a également apporté un soutien qui a été très apprécié. Merci à tous.

Nous avons été ravis et encouragés de constater, en termes très concrets, que les membres de notre Collège communautaire n’étaient pas isolés.


Comme vous le savez, le vote de grève du 22 septembre nous a donné un mandat puissant pour aller de l’avant et envoyer un message clair au ministre de l’Éducation pour indiquer que nous ne plaisantions pas et que nous n’allions pas revenir sur notre position.

Le 2 octobre, le NSTU et le CCNÉ se sont rencontrés à nouveau, mais aucun accord n’a pu être conclu. Le 8 octobre, nous avons appelé le Collège communautaire et le ministre de l’Éducation à accepter un arbitrage exécutif pour régler les questions en suspens et, en même temps, nous avons fixé la date de la grève au 20 octobre. Le mardi 13 octobre, après avoir assisté à la période des questions orales à l’assemblée législative, j’ai rencontré le premier ministre, Darrell Dexter, en compagnie de notre directeur exécutif, Bill Redden, et de notre directeur exécutif adjoint, Bruce Kelloway. Nous avons présenté au premier ministre les enjeux et les principes du processus d’arbitrage exécutif.

En dépit de nos efforts, la province a refusé l’arbitrage exécutif. Nous n’avons pas cédé au découragement ; au contraire, nous sommes restés résolus à accompagner notre mission d’obtenir un traitement juste pour nos membres.

La manifestation enthousiaste et de grande envergure qui s’est tenue devant l’assemblée législative le 15 octobre a été un témoignage extraordinaire de soutien et d’espoir pour nos membres. Ce soir-là, même le froid glacial n’a pas réussi à étouffer l’intensité de l’énergie, la vigueur des slogans et le sentiment de solidarité éprouvés à l’occasion de ce rassemblement réunissant des membres du Collège communautaire, des présidents de section locale, des membres du Comité exécutif provincial et des membres du NSTU, des enseignants et des sympathisants.

C’était vraiment la toute dernière chance lorsque les deux parties se sont réunies tard dans la soirée du dimanche 18 octobre et ont finalement réussi à négocier un accord accepté, dignes des membres de notre Collège communautaire.

Nous devrions être fiers d’avoir tenu bon et d’être resté forts et unis face à une telle adversité et aussi d’avoir su mobiliser nos connaissances et notre créativité pour parvenir à un règlement juste. Le Nova Scotia Teachers Union, qui a aujourd’hui 114 ans, est plus puissant et plus riche en expériences que jamais. Et il est prêt à affronter l’avenir.

Alexis Allen addresses the crowd during a rally for Community College members on October 15.

Rally at Province House October 15.

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Global Payment cards have a reward
System (Choice Rewards); for every
dollar you spend you earn 1 point.

Earned points can be redeemed towards
Travel (which have no blackout periods) gift cards or merchandise.

TEACHERS PLUS INFO CENTRE

1. Check your mail box to look for your Skip a Payment letter.
2. Our office will be Closed November 11, 2009.
3. IWK Bowl-A-Thon was a huge success on October 24, 2009; Teachers Plus Credit Union had 3 teams participating.
4. Want a salary increase of $7,700? Ask us about the “benefits” of our “masters plus incentive” program.
5. The Holiday season will soon be here...Need extra cash?? Apply now for a personal line of credit for all those special purchases, we are open Wednesday and Thursday evenings for your convenience.
6. 2009 Annual Sweepstakes...Direct Play & Win starts Monday, November 2, 2009 until Friday, November 20, 2009. Make sure to use your Debit card often, so you increase your chances to WIN!!!
7. If you would like to book an appointment to talk to someone about opening a Tax Free Savings Account, we are open Wednesday and Thursday evenings.
8. Looking for an ATM, we have an ATM locator on our website.

In 2019, will you remember what you got for Christmas in 2009?....Probably NOT...So this Christmas give the gift that keeps on growing/giving.....invest in your children and grandchildren’s future by investing in their RESP....They will thank you later!!!

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In the recent book *Overcoming the Fear of Fear: How to Reduce Anxiety Sensitivity* Dr. Sherry Stewart from Dalhousie University and I talk about the need for maintaining a healthy vehicle (i.e., one’s body) to reduce and maintain reduced levels of anxiety. We also discuss how stress can increase the likelihood that we experience anxiety. Stress can arise from major life events (loss of a loved one, lack of employment, financial problems, serious injury or illness) or from daily hassles (traffic jams, housework, home repairs, noisy neighbours, too many emails). Work is a common source of stress and research shows that teaching is one of the most stressful occupations with its long working hours, demanding workload, staff shortages, challenging students and, sometimes, challenging co-workers. In a study conducted by Smith et al. (2000), which assessed the stress levels of various jobs in the UK, teaching came out on top with 42 per cent of teachers describing themselves as being “highly stressed”.

Regular exposure to stress can impair one’s physiological and psychological functioning (Taylor, 2003). Therefore, although stress is unavoidable, which we why we need to manage it effectively. This requires that we take good care of ourselves, especially the vehicle in which we live—our body. Just like we take good care of the car we drive, we need to live healthy lives. As the old saying goes, “We are what we eat”. Thus, our body performs better when it has proper fuel (nutrition), good ventilation (breathing), and periodic breaks (rest). A vehicle works best, however, when operated regularly at a level that brings the motor up to its regular working temperature. For the human body, this means regular physical exercise at a level that increases the heart rate.

Research shows that regular physical exercise is important in the prevention and treatment of many medical disorders, including coronary artery disease, hypertension, diabetes, various cancers, obesity, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (Smits et al., 2008). Research also attests to the benefits of physical exercise in the prevention and treatment of psychological disorders. Regular exercise has been found to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression; feelings of anger, time urgency, and time pressure; and to enhance cognitive performance and concentration; self-image; feelings of confidence and perception of mastery; and sleep quality (DiLorenzo et al., 1999). Regular physical exercise is associated with an increase in endorphins both during and after exercise (Harber & Sutton, 1984). Endorphins contribute to pain relief, stress reduction, immune system enhancement, and post-treatment of the aging process (Salmon 2001).

Physical exercise is recognized as a valuable coping technique for managing stress and anxiety (Ingledew & Sullivan, 2002). Exercise may confer a prophylactic effect by increasing our resilience to stress (Salmon, 2001). Strohle and colleagues (2009) investigated the anti-anxiety effects of acute exercise in 12 patients with panic disorder, and 12 matched healthy controls. They compared the effects (panic attack frequency, anxiety and somatic symptoms) of a 30-minute moderate aerobic treadmill exercise (30 minutes at an intensity of 70 per cent of maximal oxygen uptake) on chemically-induced panic attacks. They found that induced panic attacks were less frequent following prior exercise, occurring in only five participants after exercise (four patients and one control) as compared to 15 participants prior to exercise (nine patients and six controls). In both patients and healthy controls, the severity of the induced panic and anxiety was reduced by exercise. Brooks et al. (1998) compared the anti-anxiety effects of physical exercise to a tricyclic antidepressant (i.e., Clomipramine), and a placebo in a sample of 46 outpatients diagnosed with panic disorder. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions. The exercise condition consisted of a 10-week graded aerobic exercise program where participants were asked to walk/run a four-mile route between three to four times per week. Results showed that both the exercise group and the Clomipramine group showed significant improvements at post-intervention (i.e., 10 weeks) for all measures of anxiety as compared to the placebo condition.

In 2001, Druce et al. described the results of three randomized trials of older aged women who met the diagnostic criteria for panic disorder. Two of the three women also presented with depressive symptoms. The women had been encouraged to participate in regular physical exercise after failing to show significant treatment gains following psychological and/or pharmacological interventions. All three women adopted a graded exercise program increasing in duration (30 to 60 minutes), frequency (one to three times per week), and/or intensity. One woman chose to adopt brisk walking and jogging while the other two women chose swimming. Results showed that the exercise program reduced symptoms and panic attacks completely resolved after two to three months of exercise participation.

Although the aforementioned studies focused on anxiety, several studies have demonstrated the benefits of physical exercise in reducing symptoms of depression; stress, anger, and cynical distrust; and improving social functioning and vitality among persons with substance use disorders. Moreover, prospective studies have shown that physical exercise is associated with a reduced risk for developing depression even after controlling for age, economic status, and educational level (Smits et al., 2008).

In short, regular physical exercise appears to be a cost-efficient way of preventing and treating both physical and psychological problems. So how much exercise do we need? Health Canada’s Physical Activity Guide (2007) advises 60 minutes of low-intensity activities every day to stay healthy or improve your health. The time needed depends on effort. Intense exercise, such as jogging, can be dangerous. Low-intensity activities, such as brisk walking, can be beneficial. Normal exercise, such as swimming, can be beneficial and can be done on any day of the week. Vigorous intensity exercise, such as aerobics, running, or swimming, can be done on any day of the week. Regular exercise, such as 30 minutes of walking or 15 minutes of running, can be done on any day of the week. Therefore, it is recommended that we exercise for at least 30 minutes per day, five days a week, and for a total of 150 minutes per week.

In addition, physical exercise can protect us from the ravages of daily stress. In the film *La Dolce Vita*, one of the characters says, “I want to live my life so that it cannot be ruined by a phone call.” Practicing good stress management is one way of ensuring that no one event completely derails us, and good stress management begins with a healthy body. As John Locke said: “A sound mind in a sound body is a short but full description of a happy state in this world.”

**Dr. Watt has a doctoral degree in clinical psychology. She has conducted research, published, taught, and practiced in the area of anxiety and related disorders for over ten years. She is an Associate Professor of Psychology at St. Xavier University in Antigonish and an Adjunct Professor of Psychology at Dalhousie University. Her research interests include investigating and treating anxiety-related disorders, including health anxiety and panic, and cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) approaches to treatment. Dr. Watt maintains a limited clinical practice treating patients with anxiety and pain-related disorders.**

**REFERENCES**


**Margo C. Watt, PhD, R. Psych.**

**Associate Professor of Psychology (St. FX), Adjunct Professor of Psychology (Dalhousie)**

**RUNNING HEAD: Healthy vehicle, Healthy mind**

**INTERNATIONAL TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH SEARCH ASSOCIATES**

Plan to attend the 14th annual SEARCH Associates International Teacher Recruitment Fair Friday, January 29 to Sunday, January 31, Delta Chelsea Hotel, Toronto. This is the only SEARCH 24 international job fair in Canada during the recruiting season. Hundreds of jobs. Sixty (60) recruiters representing over 80 schools in over 30 countries will be in attendance. Please go to the SEARCH Associates website www.searchassociates.com and click on 2010 FAIR SCHEDULE and Toronto fair for more information.

Information sessions will be held at MSVU in Halifax, Saturday, November 14 at 2:00 p.m. in Evaritus Hall Room 316.

Please check www.searchassociates.com under LATEST NEWS for updates.

Contact Ray Sparks at raysparks@eastlink.ca for additional information.

**The Early Intervention Program (EIP) invites NSTU members to sign up for our Wellness email list at Be_Well@nstu.ca.**

Please contact Erin at ekeefe@nstu.ca to provide her with your NSTU email address. The Be_Well@nstu.ca list will provide information about the EIP and other wellness topics.
“OVERDRAFT IS NOT A ROCK BAND”

Teach your students basic financial skills. Make it part of your teaching plan at THE CITY.

Designed for teachers and ready to use in the classrooms, THE CITY is an award-winning online resource to teach teens about financial matters through scenarios and interactive tools. To get your students started, go to themoneybelt.gc.ca/thecity

WIN A SMART Board. Register on THE CITY before December 31st and get a chance to win a SMART Board for your class. Go to themoneybelt.gc.ca/thecity
Discussions with teachers about the Internet in the classroom often come back to a particular refrain: “Students just don’t know how to do research anymore; all they use is Google and Wikipedia.” It’s certainly true that students need to learn better research skills, in my own time as a teacher. I was frequently amazed to see supposed “digital natives” who did not have the slightest clue how to do a Boolean search, how to judge the likely usefulness of a Google hit before clicking on it, or how to open links in a new page so they wouldn’t have to navigate back to Google if it didn’t pan out.

Forbidding students from using Wikipedia, though, is a bit like telling them not to use the library. In fact, Wikipedia is a lot like a library: it has a lot of different things in it, assembled by a variety of people from a variety of sources; some of them are useful, some less so. We don’t forbid students from using the library; instead we teach them how to find what they need there, and to judge whether a source is useful and reliable.

Henry Jenkins, Head of Comparative Media Studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), suggests that learning to use Wikipedia is a good way for students to acquire what he calls New Media Literacies, particularly those termed Collective Intelligence (collaborating with others in creating, obtaining and judging information), Judgment (assessing the reliability and usefulness of information), Networking (finding, synthesizing and spreading information) and Negotiation (moving between different contexts, forms and communities).

The main concern teachers have with Wikipedia, of course, is its reliability. It’s true that because of its open structure, Wikipedia is susceptible to error—but in practice it seems to be less so than one might expect. In fact, a well-known article in the magazine New Media and Society found it to be on a par with the Encyclopedia Britannica in its science articles. Roy Rosenzweig, Professor of History and New Media at George Mason University, found it was about as accurate as Microsoft’s professionally-developed Encarta encyclopedia and compared well to the prestigious American National Biography Online. More importantly, the problems Rosenzweig finds with Wikipedia—its articles often favour lively detail over historical significance, they adopt a positivist approach rather than reflecting the ongoing debates among historians—are common to all tertiary texts such as an encyclopedia. In effect, Rosenzweig is saying that Wikipedia is no worse as a source than a high school history textbook, most of which share similar flaws.

While the problem of reliability should not be ignored, Wikipedia can be used to teach students to be critical readers. As a consequence of its openness, Wikipedia offers many ways to judge the reliability of its articles. To begin with, any Wikipedia user who is concerned about the quality of an article can place a cleanup banner, for instance, that the tone of the piece may not be fully neutral, that it may lack corroborating sources, or that the author or a contributor to the article may have a conflict of interest with its subject. In this way Wikipedia is no different from any other source (particularly any online source), in that it must be approached critically and skeptically.

Wikipedia has a number of other features for judging the reliability of an article, though they are less obvious than the cleanup banners. For instance, almost every Wikipedia article is rated based on its accuracy, completeness and style. These ratings follow a somewhat eccentric scale from Stub (a basic draft) to GA (good article) to Featured (exemplary article). Articles can also be nominated for “Featured Article” status on the grounds of being “professional, outstanding, and thorough; a definitive source for encyclopedic information.” (Unlike to this rating scale can be found at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Version_1.0_EDitorial_Team/Assessment](). These ratings are found on the article’s Discussion page, accessible through one of the tabs at the top of the page.

Another useful tab for verifying reliability is the one leading to the History page. This page summarizes all of the edits that have been made, allowing a reader to see the changes that have been made to the article since its creation.

Aside from teaching students to check the reliability of articles, teachers can introduce students to the idea that knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but rather is constantly evolving—and students can be part of that evolution. Using the Edit tab, which is the source of Wikipedia’s fame, teachers can have students edit an article with the aim of raising its rating.

Win one of six iPod Nanos and be automatically entered for two grand prizes of a netbook computer!

Simply go to NSTU’s new InfoCentre and update your personal data. You will be automatically entered in each of two remaining draws to be held on November 16 and December 20, 2009.

Visit www.nstu.ca and click on the InfoCentre button soon for more chances to win!

FOOTNOTES


OVERSEAS SCHOOLS
TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

Are you
• A certified teacher in Nova Scotia
• A new teacher graduate seeking full-time experience
• A retiree still interested in teaching

Why not consider
• Teaching Nova Scotia curriculum in overseas schools
• Seeing the world while working in a rewarding school environment

Teaching/administrative opportunities are available immediately in
• China (High School Program)
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• Kuwait (Primary – High School Program)
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Compensation includes
• Basic salary
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• Fully furnished apartment (including utilities)
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• Medical Insurance Plan
• Work Visa

For further information contact coveyfp@gov.ns.ca

NOVA SCOTIA LEADING DISABILITIES CONFERENCE
Hosted by the Learning Disabilities Association of Nova Scotia
May 13 & 14
World Trade and Convention Centre, Halifax

This month’s FRESH giveaway is Why Didn’t I Learn This in College? (Teaching and Learning in the 21st Century). It is written by Paula Rutherford and published by Just ASK Publications.

Here are six possible answers to the question posed by the title:
1. I knew it for the test, but then I forgot it.
2. I didn’t take that course.
3. I think I did, but that was a long time ago.
4. I wasn’t listening that day.
5. At the time, I didn’t think it was all that important.
6. They forgot to mention it.

One review says, “This is a great resource for any teacher, particularly a novice teacher. This book is very organized and user friendly... The book goes beyond theory and infuses standards as well as best practices in the comprehensive ideas presented in the book. It is one we plan to use throughout the year in our teacher induction program.”

To register for NSLEC offerings please go to the NSLEC website: www.nselc.ednet.ns.ca

Contact 2009

Shown in the photo above are the NSTU delegates who attended CONTACT 2009 last summer from August 4 to 7 at the University of Prince Edward Island. The CONTACT (Conference on New Techniques and Classroom Teaching) 2009 theme was Contemporary Classrooms and was hosted by the Prince Edward Island Teachers’ Federation. CONTACT is a regional conference organized by the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, the New Brunswick Teachers’ Association, l’Association des enseignantes et des enseignants francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick, Prince Edward Island Teachers’ Federation and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers’ Association (NLTA). The conference provides teachers with the opportunity to remain current in their profession and make contact with colleagues from the Atlantic region. Next year’s conference will be hosted by NLTA.
Sheet Harbour Consolidated School receives $50,000 grant

Sheer Harbour Consolidated School recently received a $50,000 grant from the Indige Love of Reading Foundation. Pictured (back row) are the grant application co-writers Judith Graham and Shelly Leslie, and (front row) students Hannah Glascoven, Lauren Jodrey and Noah Hazes, sharing a story written for the grant application by PTA Chair and local librarian Lynn Lowe. For more information on the Indige Love of Reading Foundation, visit www.loveofreading.org.

New CTF Resource

The Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF) and two national partners, the Commission nationale de parents francophones and the Association canadienne d’éducation de langue française, recently launched Dream Big, It’s Elementary!

The new CTF bilingual resource aims to provide exogamous families of children aged 6 to 12 with support in order to develop, nurture and improve their children’s French language skills and build their children’s identity.

Among the million Francophone Canadians living in provinces or territories where French is a minority language, more and more are forming couples and starting families with non-Francophone partners. This is why there is an English section of this bilingual booklet, specifically geared for the Anglophone parent who might have been raised in an Anglophone unilingual environment or exposed to the French language all her or his life. In addition, this section might be helpful for people of French descent who are no longer able to speak the language as well as for parents who are learning and maintaining their French language skills.

For further information visit the CTF website at www.ctf-fce.ca.

Curriculum Corner

The Curriculum Committee met for the first time of the 2009-2010 school year on October 2.

This year’s committee is chaired by Elizabeth Thomas (Digby), and includes Mary Ann Allen (Cumberland-East Hants), Donald Rice (Lunenburg County), Ernestine Oakley (Halifax County), Michael Soares (Richmond), Dayna Engeland (Cape Breton), and Grant Dunn (Annapolis). Angela Gillis is the provincial executive member and Ron Brunton is NSTU staff liaison.

The mandate of the Curriculum Committee is to:

• Study the curriculum and all proposed changes
• Report findings to make recommendations to the Provincial Executive
• Inform teachers of trends and developments in curriculum
• Consider resolutions referred by Annual Council and make recommendations
• Review NSTU Policy and make recommendations to the Provincial Executive

At this meeting, we reviewed the curriculum resolutions adopted at Council 2009 as well as NSTU Policy and the recommendations made by the 2009-2010 Curriculum Committee. The Committee invited Ann Blackwood, Director of English Program Services for the Department of Education, to join the committee in conversation about many of the issues in curriculum raised by classroom teachers, by NSTU leadership and through resolutions to Annual Council. Accompanying Ms. Blackwood were Donna Karsten, Mathematics Coordinator for the Department and Nancy MacDonald, Curriculum and Technology Integration Consultant.

Some of the topics discussed were: updates about the available supports for struggling readers and writers, resources for teachers of multi-age classrooms, the status of the Grade 9 Social Studies curriculum, the use of multi-age classrooms, the status of the provincial literacy and mathematics assessments.

We had an extended discussion with Nancy MacDonald concerning available Internet resources and the school board policies preventing teachers and students from having access to websites and social media sites. Donna Karsten provided an extensive overview of the upcoming “de-spiraling” of the P to 9 mathematics curriculum.

Ms. Blackwood said the support for struggling readers and writers is both a Canadian and a Nova Scotian priority. The aim to education in the provincial budget forced the Department to reduce the funds available for support and intervention from $2.9 million to $4.4 million. Regional school boards have the authority to allocate their portion of this funding as they see fit. While the approach taken by each board varies greatly, the Department’s Literacy Support Consultant, Janet Porter, monitors how the funding is used.

Some boards are finding it increasingly difficult to meet the needs of their students in multi-age classrooms. The Department is ensuring these challenges are considered in the design of curriculum in all subjects areas, including elementary mathematics. Resources will be developed and made available electronically to teachers. The Department would also welcome ideas and suggestions from teachers.

The Grade 9 Social Studies curriculum is currently still in development. Although social studies has historically had a very content-driven curriculum, there have been some thoughts to moving the curriculum toward skills development, similar to the science curriculum.

The LDR and MDR continue to be workload issues for teachers. The Department maintains that they are meant to provide some consistency across the province for the documentation of what teachers are doing to support student learning. The Department is working with the boards to revise the records to simplify record keeping. Currently, the provincial LDR forms are available online and can be downloaded to ensure a quick, to the point, record for these students.

The Grade 6 math assessment will take place in May 2010. The Department anticipates the introduction of the Grade 9 assessment in 2012-2013. There is some discussion about the placement of these assessments, which currently are taking place in Grade 3, 6, and 9. Some feel that Grade 8 may be a better year for the mathematics assessment, for example.

We also discussed Internet use within our schools. Boards across the province are exploring a variety of strategies in dealing with this resource. One issue discussed was access to social networking sites such as Facebook. Although some teachers see potential for such a site, students must create a login and give out personal and potentially dangerous information. Furthermore, this personal information is stored on servers in the United States and is therefore accessible to the US government under the provisions of the US Patriot Act. The Department has pledged to work with boards, via the board technology directors, to ensure that policies advance positively and provide teachers and students with the means to integrate a wide variety of technologies into the curriculum and to demonstrate the appropriate use of these technologies.

Donna Karsten presented a draft copy of the proposed mathematics curriculum for Nova Scotia Grade Primary to 9. She emphasized that the curriculum review is in its developmental stages. The next step will be to solicit feedback from national and international experts concerning the content, sequencing and developmental appropriateness of the curriculum. Teachers will then be asked to review the resulting draft with respect to how manageable the new curriculum is for teachers to deliver to students. This consultation with Nova Scotia teachers will take place later this academic year and pilots are planned for the 2010-2011 academic year.

The Curriculum Committee will hold its next meeting on January 8. The Committee has invited Shannon Delbridge, Director Policy Branch, Department of Education. The focus of the conversations with Ms. Delbridge will be around the models for professional learning and instructional leadership.

Elizabeth Thomas
Chair, NSTU Curriculum Committee
« DÉFICIT N’EST PAS UN GOUPE ROCK »

Enseignez les règles élémentaires de la finance à vos élèves. Rendez-vous dans LA ZONE pour intégrer ces notions à votre plan d’enseignement.

Conçue pour les enseignants, LA ZONE est une ressource en ligne primée et prête à utiliser qui permet de sensibiliser les ados aux connaissances de base en matière financière, grâce à des scénarios et à des outils interactifs. Pour en faire profiter vos élèves, rendez-vous à laclikeconomik.gc.ca/lazone

>> GAGNEZ UN TABLEAU SMART Board
Inscrivez-vous dans LA ZONE avant le 31 décembre et courrez la chance de gagner un tableau interactif SMART Board pour votre classe. Rendez-vous à laclikeconomik.gc.ca/lazone
**Coming events**

**November is...**

Osteoporosis Month (www.osteoporosis.ca); Diabetes Awareness Month (www.diabetes.ca); Crotis and Colitis Awareness Month (www.cccfa.ca); CPR Awareness Month (www.heartsandstroke.ca).

**NOVEMBER 11**

**Remembrance Day**

Each year, Canada marks Veterans' Week from November 5 to 11. It is a time to honour and remember all those who served Canada in times of war, military conflict and peace. Throughout the week, commemorative events and activities will be held in communities across Canada, including many schools in Nova Scotia. For study guides, activities and teacher resources for Veterans' Week, go to www.vac-acc.gc.ca/cyouth.

The following are just a few of the public events taking place in Nova Scotia on November 11, Remembrance Day. A Remembrance Day parade and ceremony, under the direction of the Royal Canadian Legion Zone 14 will take place at the War Memorial at the Grand Parade in Halifax, beginning at 11 a.m.; In Inverness, a Remembrance Day ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Park on Highway #2 will begin at 10:30 a.m. followed by a reception; and in Millbrook, young people will honour Mi'kmaw veterans on Remembrance Day. Stories and histories of Mi'kmaw veterans collected by the Millbrook Youth Group will be exhibited at the Glooscap Heritage Centre, beginning at 12 noon. The opening ceremony, community feast and speaking circle will celebrate these stories. For more information, visit www.glooscapheritagecentre.ca.

**NOVEMBER 15 TO 21**

**National Bullying Awareness Week**

This year’s National Bullying Awareness Week’s theme is Stand Up! (to bullying). Organized by Bullying.org Canada, this is the seventh annual Bullying Awareness Week. This Week has received support from businesses like Family Channel and organizations like the Canadian Teachers Federation. Since its inception in November 2003, Bullying Awareness Week has grown in support and is increasingly recognized by schools, individuals, organizations and communities as a time to celebrate and promote solutions to the problems of bullying. For more information, visit www.bullyingawarenessweek.org.

**NOVEMBER 20**

**National Child Day**


The Public Health Agency of Canada has provided National Child Day activities and ideas for parents, students and educators. Those resources are available at www.phac-aspc.gc.ca. Another source of information is the Canadian Child Care Federation website at http://www.cccf-fccg.ca/nationalchildday/nov20_en.htm.

**NOVEMBER 26**

**Discovery Awards for Science and Technology**

Discovery Centre will hold its seventh annual Discovery Awards for Science and Technology November 26 at the Westin Nova Scotian, with special guest CSA astronaut Chris Hadfield, the first Canadian to walk in space and now Chief of NASA’s International Space Station Operations in Houston. Discovery Centre will also introduce two new inductees into its Science Hall of Fame—Brian Hall, a global trailblazer in the field of skeletal and evolutionary development and Oswald Avery (posthumously), a pioneer in immunology, best known for his early work with DNA.

The Discovery Awards dinner is a major fundraiser for the Discovery Centre. Funds raised will help the Centre enhance school outreach programming, public programming and school workshops. The funds will also enable the Centre to develop new exhibits and bring travelling exhibits to Nova Scotia. Tickets can be purchased online at www.discoverycentre.ns.ca or by emailing Linda Laurence at laurence@discoverycentre.ns.ca (902-492-4422 ext. 23).

**DECEMBER 1**

**World Aids Day**

Universal Access and Human Rights - or I AM - is the theme for this year’s World AIDS Day, one of the most recognised international health days. World Aids Day marks a key opportunity to raise further awareness in communities and across the world about the state of the pandemic, and critical next steps that must be taken to halt its spread. This year’s theme was adopted as an attempt to make it easier to understand HIV and AIDS from a human rights perspective—that access for everyone to HIV prevention treatment care and support is a critical part of human rights. Among the key slogans accompanying this year’s Universal Access and Human Rights theme include, I am accepted; I am safe; I am getting treatment; I am well; I am living my rights: Everyone deserves to live their rights; Right to Life and Right to Health. You can find more information at www.worldaidscampaign.org.

**DECEMBER 6**

**The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women**

December 6 is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women in Canada. Established in 1991 by the Parliament of Canada, this day coincides with the grim anniversary of the death of 14 young women who were tragically killed because of their gender on December 6, 1989 at l’École Polytechnique de Montréal.

In addition to commemorating the 14 young women whose lives ended in an act of gender-based violence that shocked the nation, December 6 represents an opportunity for Canadians to reflect on the phenomenon of violence against women in our society. It is also an opportunity to consider the women and girls for whom violence is a daily reality, and to remember those who have died as a result of gender-based violence. Finally, it is a day on which communities can consider concrete actions to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. For more information, go to the Status of Women Canada website at www.swc-cfc.gc.ca.

Every year, YWCA Canada launches the December 6 Rose Button Campaign across the country. The Campaign takes its name from the original Rose Burton, created almost 20 years ago to commemorate 14 École Polytechnique murder victims. Money raised through the sale of the buttons supports anti-violence programs and services. More information is available at www.ywcacanada.ca.

**CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS**

**Submissions are encouraged from Nova Scotia's public school teachers and community college faculty and professional support staff. Please submit:**

AVISO
3106 Joseph Howe Drive
Halifax, NS, B3L1G7
aviso@nstu.ca

Manuscripts submitted should reflect AVISO’s mandate as a professional journal for Nova Scotia’s teaching profession. Manuscripts will not be returned. Any manuscript chosen to appear in AVISO may be edited for clarity, style, length and consistency. Contributor guidelines are available to interested writers on the NSTU Website – www.nstu.ca.

Please ensure email attachments are Microsoft Word, Rich Text Format or Text Only.

**DEMANDE DE MANUSCRITS**

Nous encourageons les soumissions des enseignants des écoles publiques et du personnel enseignant et de soutien des collèges communautaires. Veuillez envoyer vos soumissions à :

AVISO
3106, chemin Joseph-Howe
Halifax, NS, B3L1G7
aviso@nstu.ca


Les manuscrits envoyés par voie électronique doivent être en format Microsoft Word, Rich Text Format ou Texte seulement.

**Thank you!**

To the Educators of Nova Scotia for supporting the 2009 Terry Fox National School Run Day

You have helped to keep Terry’s dream alive for 20 years!
Youth play important role in combating climate change

By Kevin Harrison
PROGRAM OFFICER FOR DRIVEWISER AND CLEAN NOVA SCOTIA

From unstable seasons to melting ice caps to droughts and flooding, the world is experiencing a fundamental shift in weather patterns that many scientists have attributed to climate change.

Carbon dioxide is one of the biggest contributing factors to climate change. Most people tend to think of Canada as being a fairly “green” country, but most are surprised to learn that Canada is the third largest emitter of carbon dioxide in the world.

Much of climate change has been induced by human beings. We have grown a little too comfortable with our lifestyles, which are affecting the earth in a negative way. One of these lifestyles is our driving culture.

Here in North America, we have gotten used to large vehicles such as pick-up trucks and SUVs as our personal modes of transportation, but the problem with these vehicles is that they burn a lot more gas than conventional cars and thus emit notably more harmful emissions into the atmosphere.

Carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrous oxide and particulate matter create a toxic cocktail of chemicals that comes out of a vehicle’s tail pipe. The latter is responsible for causing health issues such as asthma.

This is undoubtedly not the kind of world we wish to leave behind for our children, but in addition to our generation making a change, our children can do their part as well.

Driving more efficient vehicles makes a positive impact on carbon dioxide emissions. While that may not be an immediate option for some people, especially our youth, making a difference can be as simple as changing our driving habits.

Inefficient driving practices such as speeding, jackrabbit driving (quick starts and stops) and idling all contribute substantial amounts of carbon dioxide emissions. As many youth at the high school level begin to learn how to drive, it is important to instill efficient driving practices—which double as defensive driving techniques—into their driving education not only for the purposes of reduced greenhouse gases, but also to save money. If they learn these techniques at a young age, they will likely stick with them throughout their adult years.

DriveWiser is a behavioural change program run through Clean Nova Scotia that helps youth and adults facilitate this process through education, and free presentations and workshops. We offer entertaining activities to help educate Grade 11 and 12 students who are starting to learn how to drive, or are considering getting their licences in the near future.

DriveWiser has been educating the public on fuel efficiency for three years now with help from Natural Resources Canada and Conserve Nova Scotia. Anyone interested in a free presentation or workshop for their class on this topic is encouraged to contact DriveWiser at 902-420-3474.
For many years now, the NSTU Group Insurance Trustees have made available to both active and retired members, a competitively priced Out-Of-Country/Province Travel Insurance Program. The MEDOC® Travel Insurance Plan offers NSTU members complete coverage for your travel insurance needs.

The Provincial Health Insurance Plan provides limited basic coverage while members travel outside of province. However, this coverage is not enough. If you have a medical emergency while travelling out of province or out of Canada, costs can easily escalate and it can cost thousands of dollars.

Some of the covered expenses under the NSTU MEDOC® Group Travel Plan include prescription drugs, x-rays, nursing services, air emergency transportation or evacuation, emergency dental services, bedside transportation, repatriation, return of vehicle, and board and lodging.

The MEDOC® Group Travel Plan provides year-round coverage. With a 35-day annual Base Plan, you are covered for an unlimited number of trips up to 35 consecutive days per trip during the policy year. For longer periods of travel, you can purchase a Supplemental Plan for additional protection to cover the period of time that you will be away. The Supplemental Plan provides coverage for one single trip longer than 35 days and includes the annual Base Plan coverage. Premium payments are made through monthly payroll deduction to the policy renewal, September 1. Effective May 1, 2008, the MEDOC® Group Travel Plan introduced a new, lower rate structure, while coverage remained the same.

NSTU Trip Cancellation/Trip Interruption Plan
Effective November 1, 2008, the NSTU Group Insurance Trustees introduced a Trip Cancellation/Trip Interruption Plan. This plan helps protect travellers against unforeseen circumstances that may prevent or discontinue a trip. Coverage highlights of this plan are:

- **Annual Plan**
  - Trip Cancellation - up to a maximum of $5,000 per insured person per annual coverage period.
  - Trip Interruption - up to a maximum of $5,000 per insured person for each covered trip.

- **Up to a maximum of $3,500 for lodging, meals, car rental, telephone calls and taxi costs ($350 per day).**
- **Up to a maximum of $1,000 for loss of, or damage to, baggage and personal effects during a covered trip.**
- **Personal effects - actual cash value or $500, whichever is less.**
- **Document replacement - up to a maximum of $200.**
- **Baggage Delay - up to $400.**

You must be enrolled in the MEDOC® Group Travel Plan in order to apply for Trip Cancellation/Trip Interruption coverage. For members purchasing Trip Cancellation/Trip Interruption coverage for the first time, premiums will be pro-rated from the date your coverage is effective until the policy renewal date (September 1). Like the MEDOC® Group Travel Plan, coverage will renew automatically on September 1 of each year. The monthly premium is very competitive with the convenience of year-round coverage.

It is easy to enroll. If you have any questions or pre-existing conditions, please contact Johnson Inc. for additional information at 453-9454 (local) or 1-800-453-9454.
Last Chance for Teacher PD Series Videos from Learning Resources and Technology Services

Learning Resources and Technology Services multimedia curriculum resources to schools anywhere in the province. Dubbing programs become a part of your school’s collection; we charge only for the price of the blank media used. For the Public Schools Branch newsletter Branching Out available online at http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca/branching.shtml.

Order pre-made titles from our lists online at http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca/media_library/expree/Video_Express.html

EBSCO Periodical database (http://search.epnet.com) EBSCO provides a series of online bibliographic and full-text databases so that you and your students can find information, pictures and citations on curriculum related topics.

EBSCO offers access to a wide variety of professional databases like ERIC and to a highly specialized collection of over 450 full-text journals, designed for professional educators. EBSCO is available to all teachers and teachers in Nova Scotia through computers connected to Ednet, or at home with passwords that can be obtained from your school.

ImagesProject (http://imagesproject.ednet.ns.ca) Need a photo to use in a school project? Visit the ImagesProject, a web-based collection of images for Nova Scotia public school use. Nova Scotia students and teachers who are on Ednet may freely download, use and modify images from the ImagesProject website for curriculum purposes.

We have limited copies of these professional development series focusing on literacy. They are available in VHS format only and on a first-come-first-served basis.

Focus on Spelling (120 min.)

This series introduces spelling in different subject areas. The Education Media Library has two titles in this series:

- Essentials: Tone, Structure, & Routines (40 min.)
- Poetry, Fun With Words (28 min.)

The three titles in this series will become an essential part of your literacy programs, offers practical tips and strategies for educators and parents, and provides outlines key principles of teaching spelling in her book, and demonstrates concepts on four videos in the series. The four titles in this series are: Learning Word (28 min.); Exploring Sounds (31 min.); Investigating Letters and Spelling Patterns (29 min.); and, Discovering Generalizations (31 min.), and are dubbed onto one two-hour tape.

Happy Reading (110 min.)

First grade teacher Debbie Miller takes you beyond comprehension instruction and shows how she sustains a thoughtful primary reading program that challenges and supports readers of all abilities and needs. The three titles in this series are: Essentials: Tone, Structure, & Routines for Creating Learning in Early Grades (41 min.); Explicit Teaching: Portraits from a Reader Workshop (27 min.); and, Wise Choices: Independence and Instruction in Book Choice (40 min.). The three titles are dubbed onto one two-hour tape.

Know It All (30 min.)

The Know It All professional development series will introduce you to a cross-curricular, collaboration approach for teaching information literacy in elementary and middle schools. These professional development videos model a variety of strategies for use in the classroom and will introduce you to the process of gathering, presenting and evaluating information in different subject areas. The Education Media Library has two titles in this series:

- Primary Learners: Introduction to Learning Skills in Early Grades (15 min.); and, Intermediate Learners: Watch the Learning Process Unfold (15 min.), and are dubbed onto one 30-minute tape.

Reading is Fundamental (RIF) Exchange (120 min.)

RIF Exchange is a video series designed to inform educators, librarians and parents about the developments and trends in children’s literacy. Each 30-minute video profiles exemplary literacy programs, offers practical tips and strategies for educators and parents, and provides enriching activities that spark children’s interest in reading. The Education Media Library has four titles in this series:

- First Steps Toward Literacy (50 min.); Poetry, Fun With Words (30 min.); Underst and Literacy Order (30 min.); and, Literacy and the Arts (30 min.), and are dubbed onto one two-hour tape.

The Road to Reading (29 min.)

Children do not magically become readers in Grade 1. Reading skills gradually emerge in preschool years as families share storybooks or play alphabet games and rhymes during their normal daily routines. If key adults in children’s lives are aware of the variety of the literacy experiences they can provide before children start school, then opportunities for supporting literacy development will not be missed, and the likelihood that all children will experience success in reading will improve. This program uniquely combines the personal experiences of real-life families with the wisdom of professionals to deliver easy and meaningful ways families can prepare children for the reading journey.

When Students Write (120 min.)

This series takes us into the classrooms at Bailey’s Elementary School in the outskirts of Washington, DC, where teachers wrestle with the questions of what it means to become a writer and what is valued in the role of developing students’ competence as writers. The four video tapes cover all the practical components necessary for establishing and implementing a successful writing workshop, including the importance of choice, creating a risk-taking environment, the difference between skills and craft, the writer’s notebook, the writing conference, revision, the role of literature, and much more. The four titles in this series are: Building a Writing Community (32 min.), Teaching Writing Skills in Context (25 min.); Literature That Supports Writing (30 min.); and, Craft Lessons to Stretch Young Writers (35 min.), and are dubbed onto one two-hour tape.

Education Media Library, Brunswick Place, 2nd floor, 2021 Brunswick Street, Halifax, NS B3K 2V5; (902) 424-2440; (902) 428-5828 (fax); email mediacir@ednet.ns.ca or visit http://lrt.ednet.ns.ca.

NOTICES

Green Street Youth Leadership Challenge

DEADLINE TO APPLY – NOVEMBER 20, 2009

Green Street’s Youth Leadership Challenge is providing an innovative opportunity for youth across Canada. In partnership with the Vancouver Foundation, Green Street is offering grants to dedicated change makers who want to improve their schools and communities. Green Street is challenging youth to think critically and develop a project that meets the needs of their communities.

For additional information, view the guidelines http://www.green-street.ca/ycf.html or contact info@green-street.ca.

Surveys Coming to 66 Schools in November

Story-six school districts participating in a Nova Scotia data collection project this month, administered by Dr. Ronald Ferguson, of Harvard University. Dr. Ferguson’s interest lies in raising achievement for all students, while narrowing gaps among students from different racial, ethnic and social backgrounds.

The Department of Education and school boards are doing this as part of the ongoing implementation of the provincial Racial Equity Policy. A Steering Committee, consisting of representatives of all school boards, the Department of Education, and the NSTU, is working with schools and school boards to effectively administer the surveys. Results and recommendations are expected later in this school year. For more information contact Susan E. Crandall, Director, Education Quality Services, Public Schools Branch, Department of Education at 902-424-1594 or CRANDASL@gov.ns.ca.

Scholarships for study in France, Germany, Brazil and Argentina

Nacel Canada Inc., a not-for-profit cultural exchange organization, will be awarding a number of full tuition scholarships to Nova Scotia students to travel to one of the above countries, live with a host family and attend local high school. The scholarships will be available to students aged 15 to 17 who will not be graduates from high school in September, 2010. They will be awarded in March, 2010 for the September, 2010 school year. Families of scholarship recipients are asked to host a cultural exchange student from another country during the time their son or daughter is away and have an opportunity to choose a student they feel will be a good fit for their family. Partial scholarships are also available for students of families who do not wish, or are not able, to host a student. The deadline for receipt of preliminary applications is December 18.

For more details visit www.nacel.ca/scholarship, or contact Kim Martinek at 902-252-6245 or at kmonteith_can@nacel.org.

Atlantic Path is looking for participants

The Atlantic Path is looking for 12,000 participants throughout Nova Scotia for a national study funded by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. The study will follow the health of 300,000 Canadians between the ages of 35 and 69 to determine what roles lifestyle, the environment and genetics play in the development of cancer and other health issues. To become a participant or to find out more, visit www.atlanticpath.ca. or call 902-494-7284.

Atlantic Path is looking for participants

To obtain the secondment application forms:

- Enter the NSTU members-only website
- Select “Union Affairs” from the menu
- Select “Secondments” from the drop-down menu

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Teachers’ Pension Plan Inc. Board of Directors

Call for applications...

The NSTU Provincial Executive is inviting applications from retired NSTU members for one (1) Director’s position on the Teachers’ Pension Plan Inc. Board. Operating under a Trust Agreement, this nine-member corporation oversees the administration of the Plan and the investment of the Plan’s assets.

The NSTU is currently seeking:

• One (1) retired member - A (3) three-year term, renewable for a second (3) three-year term If you are interested in this appointment, please complete this application form and indicate your knowledge or experience with the criteria below and other related information. Criteria for selecting persons for the above positions include:
  (a) Has considerable knowledge about the Teachers’ Pension Plan;
  (b) Has experience in and/knowledge about investments particularly the investments of pension funds; and
  (c) Has experience as a Trustee or has a working knowledge of trusts.

Applications must be received by NSTU Central Office by 12:00 noon, November 20, 2009.

Application form is available on the NSTU website at www.nstu.ca