



PEIRTA Newsletter

Prince Edward Island Retired Teachers' Association

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WINTER 2009

From the President

Welcome to our first newsletter in 2009. We had a very exciting year during 2008 and I feel that we were able to move our organization forward. Our annual meeting in early November was well attended and provided a forum for the dissemination of much information. Our committee chairs accounted for their various responsibilities in a very informative and professional manner. I really felt that our membership was quite impressed and found membership in our organization a very positive experience. The resolutions which were passed in Summerside are

now being acted upon.

As we look forward to 2009 we find that we are faced with old and new challenges. We will continue, as in the past, to monitor our pension, insurance, and organizational structure. We will be aggressive in presenting your views to government and whatever other organizations we may find in our domain. We will continue to keep you informed through our newsletter, website, and area meetings during May, 2009. Our executive will be looking to new areas for exploration of benefits for RTA Members. We will also be looking to enhance our image in the public view. It is absolutely incredible the amount of quality volunteer time that is offered by our membership. I feel that we receive more national than regional recognition in this area. Maybe it is time for your executive to find ways to change this for the better.

This spring each area will have the opportunity to elect its representative to the RTA executive.



Because there are many well qualified people to fill these positions, I know that you will do so with due diligence. As you are well aware, the strength of your executive and the strength of your voice in public is found in those you elect as your representatives. I am proud to be a member of our present executive and I challenge you to put an even stronger group in place in 2009. You will begin this process at your spring socials in May.

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Visit our website at

www.peirta.com

From the Editor

It was great to see a good turnout at the annual meeting in November, and to come away feeling that we are really moving forward as an organization. Jim and his executive are to be commended for their work on the constitution/bylaws, and for taking the initiative to incorporate the PEIRTA. Many of you will recall that it was through incorporation in 1945 that PEITF acquired legal status as representative of all public school teachers in the province. Our incorporation will give

the PEIRTA the same legal right to speak for retired teachers, and will enable it to become a more effective advocate for our members. It's a huge step forward for a group that until recently has been primarily a social club!

Those of you who were at the annual meeting know that we are actively promoting use of our PEIRTA website. Bill Oehlke, our webmaster, has plans for the site, and you will find an open letter from him on page 5. We are quite

aware that many of our members don't have ready access to a computer, or choose not to use one frequently, so we will continue to provide as much information as possible in the newsletter. However, since we publish only three times a year, there may be a good deal of information (if Bill's plans work out) that can be best communicated via the website. Between us we hope to keep you well informed and give you as many opportunities as possible to participate in the "doings" of the PEIRTA.

Letters to the Editor

Members of the PEIRTA are invited to submit letters to the editor and/or other material for our newsletter.

Letters to the editor must be no more than 200 words (revised). The editor retains the right to select material to be published, and to edit for length. Substantive changes will be approved by the author. All letters must be accompanied by the author's full name, contact information,

and one-line bio (e.g., Marg Stewart retired from Bluefield High in 2004).

Opinions expressed in letters to the editor and material authored by those other than official representatives of the PEIRTA will not necessarily reflect policies of the PEIRTA.

Our next issue will be published in late May. Send material to me at 34 Belve-

dere Avenue, Charlottetown, PE, C1A6A8. Or, better still, send me an email at margstewart@pei.eastlink.ca.

A few people have opted to view subsequent newsletters online, and our offer stands for anyone else who might want to do so. Send me an email and I will let you know when the next issue will appear on the RTA and PEITF websites.

PEIRTA Executive and Officers 2007-2009

President: James MacAulay (961-2818)	festival@eastlink.ca
Vice-President: Cindy McNally (859-3260)	johnmcnally@pei.sympatico.ca
Past President: John Rowe (838-2098)	rowe@pei.sympatico.ca
Secretary: Pat McCardle (892-1915)	patricia.mccardle@pei.sympatico.ca
Treasurer: Joyce McCardle (436-6960)	joyce.mccardle@pei.sympatico.ca

Representatives by County

Prince: Spurgeon Robbins (436-7335)	spurgeonrobbins@hotmail.com
Queens: Eldon Rogerson (628-3816)	erogerson@eastlink.ca
Kings: Aquinas Ryan (961-2782)	giryana@eastlink.ca

Pension Committee Representative: Frank McQuaid

Group Insurance Representative: Kimball Blanchard

Annual meeting approves constitutional changes

Editor's note ~ Below you will find the constitution for the PEIRTA— as amended and approved at the annual meeting in November, 2008. Once the necessary legal work has been done the various sections of this document will serve as bylaws for Prince Edward Retired Teachers' Association Inc.

Bylaws for Prince Edward Island Retired Teachers' Association Inc. (PEIRTA)

Revised November 6, 2008

1. NAME

The name of the organization shall be Prince Edward Island Retired Teachers' Association.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Association shall be:

- a) to maintain and increase professional and social contacts,
- b) to keep informed of developments in education,
- c) to meet with government and negotiate better terms for retired teachers,
- d) to meet with outside organizations/merchants to obtain social/financial benefits for retired teachers,
- e) to maintain a liaison with the PEI Teachers' Federation,
- f) to furnish recommendations and advice to the Provincial Executive and other committees of the PEITF on matters affecting the welfare of retired teachers.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Active

Any teacher who

- a) was a member of the PEITF at the time of his/her retirement,
- b) is in receipt of a pension pursuant to the PEI Teachers' Superannuation Act, or,
- c) was eligible for such pension on his/her retirement shall be eligible for active membership.
- d) PEITF retired professional staff in receipt of a pension pursuant to the PEI Teachers' Superannuation Act shall be eligible for membership.

Affiliate

- a) A retired teacher shall be eligible for affiliate membership in the Association if he/she is in receipt of a teacher's pension from outside PEI.
- b) A retired teacher's spouse receiving pension pursuant to the PEI Teachers' Superannuation Act shall be eligible for affiliate membership in the PEIRTA.
- c) A retired teacher who held a valid PEI teaching contract at any time during his/her career shall be eligible for affiliate membership in the PEIRTA.

4. RIGHTS, PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The rights, privileges and responsibilities shall be extended as follows:

- a) To active members the full rights, privileges and responsibilities of membership.
- b) To be an executive member, a retired teacher must be an active member in good standing of PEIRTA.
- c) All PEIRTA members will automatically be members of ACER-CART, the national retired teachers' organization.
- d) To affiliate members the full rights, privileges and responsibilities of membership except the right to hold office in the PEIRTA.

5. DUES

- a) Membership dues shall be established by resolution at the annual meeting of the Association.
- b) Affiliate members shall pay the same dues as active members.

6. MEMBERSHIP YEAR

The membership year shall be from January 1 to December 31 of any given year.

(Bylaws, cont'd)

7. EXECUTIVE

- a) The executive committee of this Association shall be: President, Vice-President, immediate Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, and one representative from each county.
- b) Members of the executive committee, with the exception of the Past President, shall be elected for a term of two years at the annual meeting of the Association.
- c) The incoming executive committee will assume office January 1 of the calendar year following the election.
- d) The signing authority for the PEIRTA shall be any two (2) of the President, Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer.

8. COMMITTEES

- a) Whenever a vacancy occurs in the Executive Committee through any cause, the executive committee shall name a member to fill the vacancy until the next annual meeting.
- b) The Executive Committee shall appoint from time to time such committees as may be necessary to carry on the work of the Association.

9. ANNUAL MEETING

- a) The annual meeting shall be held within the first seven days of November each year or at such other time as determined by the executive.
- b) The new executive will be elected every second year at the AGM.
- c) Between the AGM and January 1 of an election year, a transition meeting of the past executive and the in-coming executive shall be held.

10. LIAISON BETWEEN THE PEIRTA AND PEITF

- a) Minutes of PEIRTA meetings will be forwarded to PEITF.
- b) The PEIRTA shall submit a financial statement annually to the Provincial Executive of PEITF.
- c) PEITF may select a member to attend executive, special or annual meetings of the Association.

11. AMENDMENTS

After a one-month notice of motion to amend the Constitution has been given to each member, the Constitution may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the members present at any regular session of the Annual Meeting of the Association.

Get involved!

Would you like to represent retired teachers at the executive level of the PEIRTA? Go to your county social in May and stand for nomination as a county rep. Or run for one of the executive positions when you attend the 2009 AGM in November.

Food for thought

Believing that teachers' hefty salaries are driving up taxes, and deciding that teachers should be paid only to do what they do anyway (babysit), someone did the math. Submitted by Joyce McCardle, and slightly amended.

We can get [babysitting] for less than minimum wage. So let's give teachers \$3.00 an hour for the hours they work, not any of that silly planning time. That would be

\$19.50 a day (7:00AM to 3:30 or so PM with 25 min. off for lunch) for each child the teacher babysits. NOW...

How many do they teach in a class— 30? So that's \$19.50 x 30 = \$585.00 a day for 180 days a year!!! We're not going to pay them for any vacations. LET'S SEE....That's \$585 x 180 = \$105,300 per year.

What about those special teachers and the ones with Masters

degrees? Well, we could pay them minimum wage, and just to be fair, round it off to \$7.00 an hour. That would be \$7 x 6 1/2 hours x 30 children x 180 days = \$245,700 per year.

Wait a minute--there's something wrong here! Average teacher salary= \$50,000/180 days = \$277/per day/30 students = \$9.23/6.5 hours = \$1.42 per hour per student.

And they even try to EDUCATE kids! WHAT A DEAL!

PEIRTA goes hi-tech . . . A word from our webmaster

Editor's note~At the AGM in November, Bill Oehkle, our webmaster, addressed the membership and, among other things, offered a "subscriber service" which would allow members to receive an email when something new is to be posted on our website. The following is a letter that he sent out after the meeting, and we would like to share it with our readers.

Hi,

Thanks for submitting mailout information for **peirta.com** updates. Please confirm that this email has reached you so I know that I have recorded your email address properly.

I received many email notification forms after the AGM and feel the website has potential to become a very valuable resource for our membership and will therefore encourage new membership as well as be of service to you. Please let other retired teachers who might not have been at the meeting know about the website at **peirta.com** and this mailout service. You might want to even forward this letter to them if you have their email addresses. They can contact me via email at **oehlkew@islandtelecom.com**.

I think that in the very near future Kimball Blanchard will provide a very useful article about group insurance that will be posted on the site. Frank McQuaid and/or Michel Plamondon will provide useful information about our pension plan, and that info will be posted to the website for your convenience.

We also hope to soon have a "mini forum" section on the website where

retired teachers can post questions, via the webmaster, and answers to those questions will also be posted in a timely manner. Kimball Blanchard has indicated he will respond to questions on the forum. If you would like to send me any questions/concerns regarding group insurance, I will post them for Kimball to peruse. Please indicate your name with your question.

If you are an active volunteer in your family or community, please let us know about the activity or service that you provide so that we can post it to a special section on the website. We would like to acknowledge your continued service and post it to encourage others to remain active, and we would like to inform the general public of your continued service. I would need your name, a brief description of the service, and your community.

If you operate a small business or provide a service for a fee or for free (musical group, tutoring, etc.), let us know, as we are considering posting advertisements for same on the website. If you have a business website, we can post a notice with your URL, or even a banner. Contact info (name, phone number, postal address, email address) would need to be sent to me. All submissions will need to be approved by executive before posting to the website. The advertisements may be for free or there may be a small fee based on the nature and scope of the business/service.

Suggestions for the website are welcomed.

Bill Oehkle
155 Peardon Road, Montague PE

Volunteers wanted

The PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada has set up an after-school homework club for immigrant students. The program began January 20, and is designed to assist students who do not have an appropriate study environment at home by providing them with a quiet, supervised place where they can do homework, ask questions, and develop study skills. Volunteers are needed to supervise. If you have some time and think you might be interested, check out additional information and contact information on our website at **www.peirta.com**. While the club will be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00pm to 5:00pm, there is no minimum time commitment—whatever you could offer would be most appreciated. If you don't have easy access to our website, call 902 628 6009 for details or to volunteer.

LOVE TO SING?

Join the **Teachers in Harmony and Friends Choir!**

Rehearsals are held every Friday afternoon from 4-5pm in the lecture theatre at Colonel Gray High School in Charlottetown. We sing in 4-part harmony, learn a great mix of songs, and perform at church concerts, Christmas Daddies, annual meetings, retirement dinners, nursing homes, Delta Christmas Brunch, even the East Coast Music Awards! We have a lot of fun, reconnect with old friends, and make new ones. Call Judy at 367-8944 for more info, or come to a practice—you'll be warmly welcomed!



PEITF—The early years (Instalment 2, cont'd from Spring 2008)

Two milestones in the history of the Prince Edward Island Teachers' Federation stand out. The first occurred in 1945, when the Federation was incorporated by an act of the legislature and acquired legal status as representative of all public school teachers in the province, rather than being self-proclaimed as such. Membership became mandatory (with the right to opt out), ensuring a larger membership and greater financial stability.

At this time, there were 674 teachers, 460 schools, and approximately 19,000 students. The student-teacher ratio was 28.2/1. The median annual salary was \$633.

An even more significant milestone was reached in June, 1972, when the Federation, with Jim Blanchard as President and Sterling Stratton as General Secretary, convinced first teachers, then government, that they should have collective bargaining rights—making teachers the first public sector group to do so. There would now be an orderly, legal process for salary negotiation, with binding arbitration as the dispute settling mechanism. What Jim called “collective begging” would be replaced by “collective bargaining.”

The first collective agreement for teachers was signed in October, 1972, and many of the clauses in the present-day memorandum date back to that agreement.

That same year, school consolidation resulted in the creation of five new school districts. Two new Federation staff positions were created—the same ones that currently exist. Further consolidation in 1994 resulted in the three school districts of today,

and the Federation was again reorganized, resulting in the structure we now have.

I began teaching in 1968, four years before the first collective agreement. At that time, there was no liability insurance for teachers, no service gratuity, no province-wide group health plan, no maternity or parental leave, no co-pay for pension, no deferred salary plan, and very little sick leave.

Salaries

One of the biggest issues for the Federation has always been teacher salaries. For years Government decided what 2/3 of a teacher's salary should be, and the district could pay the other third—or not! Since the total salary depended upon the ability and will of the district to pay this supplement, there were huge inequities across the province. Teachers in Charlottetown and Summerside, for example, generally made more than teachers in rural areas. There was unequal pay for men and women, and married men made more than single men. There was no recognition for experience, and there was some desire among teachers to be paid more for greater “efficiency.” (Imagine measuring that!) Teachers with the same license were paid different salaries depending upon the number of students in the district, and those teaching higher grades got more than those teaching lower grades. For a twenty-two-year period, from 1920-1942, there was no increase to the salary paid by government, and sometimes teachers actually took a loss from one year to the next because a particular district cut the supplement they were supposed to pay.

After incorporation in 1945, things began to change for the better. During the 50s, urban and rural supplements were equalized, salary equity for men and women was achieved, and administrative allowances were introduced. Briefs with proposed salary scales were presented almost annually to Government, and had the support of some “outside experts.” Substantial gains were made throughout the 60s—twice just before elections, and eventually to address serious recruitment and retention concerns—so that by the time I began teaching, the median salary was \$4174, with some recognition for higher qualifications. My starting salary, with an Arts degree and teacher training (which made me more highly trained than most), was \$4750. But we still lagged behind the region (27% behind Nova Scotia, and 13% behind New Brunswick), and according to Jim, in 1971 there were still 400 teachers who were not receiving their full supplements.

After we gained the right to collective bargaining, salaries rose regularly. Within ten years starting salaries for Certificate IV teachers had more than doubled, and were triple what I had earned. Ten years later they had doubled again, and we were finally pretty much on par with our neighbors. Then in 1994 came the infamous broken contract, and the 7.5% rollback, and we were way behind again. Even though our next several agreements were generally as good as those in neighboring provinces, we continued to lag behind. By 2004 average salaries were once again more or less on par with salaries in the region, although actual parity depends upon where individuals are on the grid.



**Prince Edward Island
Teachers' Federation**

Phyllis Horne



I want to thank your Executive for giving me this opportunity to briefly bring you up-to-date on current PEITF issues.

I trust that by the time you read this newsletter you will have had your first month of the premium holiday from your Health Insurance Plan. You helped to build up the Trust Fund of this plan, so it is great that you get to enjoy three months of free premiums. John Cummings has replaced Ken MacRae as a Group Insurance Trustee. The subcommittee will be meeting again in February to continue the work of finding a solution for all partners in the Health Insurance Plan.

The structure of the Investment Advisory Committee has been formally changed. Michel Plamondon

is now the only representative from PEITF, with Shaun MacCormac going to meetings as an alternate. They both have lots of experience with this group and will represent the interests of active and retired teachers well.

Shaun MacCormac and I have met with Pat Mella, the kindergarten commissioner, and the Early Childhood Educators to discuss concerns around the transition of kindergarten into the public school system by 2010. PEITF policy states that we support a publicly funded, full day

kindergarten program taught by certified teachers in the school system. We

have stated publicly that we expect government to recognize the expertise and training which present early childhood educators have and to give these educators sufficient time to get additional training.

President Jim MacAulay and Executive are working hard for you. They meet at the PEITF office on a regular basis and keep us informed about their issues. We look forward to continuing with this collaboration, as all of us will be your members in the future.

2008 County Socials

Dates have been set for our Spring Socials.

Prince County—May 1

Queens County—May 7

Kings County—May 14

\$5.00 registration

Venues have not yet been booked, and programs have yet to be planned. Details (time, place, etc.) will be posted on our website in April, and an ad will appear in local papers. Please contact your county rep if you plan to attend. And remember, in accordance with our new bylaws, county reps (for next executive) will be nominated at these socials and elected at the 2009 annual meeting.

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**PEIRTA
2007- 09
Executive
and
Officers**



Back row, l-r: Aquinas Ryan, Spurgeon Robbins, Joyce McCardle, John Rowe, Eldon Rogerson

Front row, l-r: Cindy McNally, Jim MacAulay, Pat McCardle



**2008
AGM**



2008 Annual Meeting

Resolutions approved as presented

- 1. PEIRTA to be incorporated
- 3. Dues to be set at \$1.00/month
- 4. County socials to replace Spring Fling
- 5. County reps to be nominated at county socials
- 6. PEIRTA financial records to be reviewed by outside agent

Resolutions approved with amendments

- 2. Constitution to serve as bylaws for PEIRTA Inc.