

# The Apple Core

November 2016

## Upcoming Events

### GVTA Executive meetings:

- December 6
- January 10
- February 7
- March 7
- April 4
- May 2
- June 6

Held at NPC and begin at 4:00. All members are welcome

### Other Events:

- November—School visits by GVTA president
- December 3rd—Pre-retirement seminar in Carman, 9am—12pm
- December 7th—ESJ Book Club, 4:00 at CKs
- December 10th—Gym and Games night at GVC's Zone

Greetings, GVTA-ers;

By now, elementary and middle-years teachers have concluded writing report cards for Term 1, and they are eagerly anticipating student-involved conferences. Secondary teachers have concluded mid-terms, and are into the second half of Semester 1. Where does the year go?

I have been spending my lunch hours in November making trips out to school sites, and have been thoroughly enjoying my time. Thus far I have been to Fresh Start, Parkland, Blumenfeld, Border Valley, Emerado & GVC Tec, as well as a meeting with substitute teachers. By the time you read this, I'll have also met with Division Office teachers, clinicians, GVC, and more. The dates for the rest of my visits are in the November Executive Meeting summary, printed later on in this edition of *Apple Core*.

I come to schools not with grand plans, but just to see and to be seen. If you have questions for me, great! If not, that's fine too. I know that many are unable to attend our division-wide functions, and so we run the risk of being strangers to each other. I hope over the course of the year to make acquaintance with as many of you as possible. I have also enjoyed seeing former students and buildings - or at least parts of buildings - that I've never seen before from Blumenfeld's library to Emerado's 2<sup>nd</sup> floor to GVC Tec's greenhouse. Thanks for making me feel welcome.

I hope that these visits will become a semi-regular occurrence, and that we will have many opportunities throughout the year to meet. If you aren't around or available on the day that I'm scheduled to be in your building, please feel free to pick up the phone (204-384-5635) or send an e-mail <gvtapresident@gmail.com>. I'd be glad to connect with you at any time.

Cheers,

Joel

## ESJ Book Club Review

What a pleasant read “10 Mindful Minutes “ by Goldie Hawn turned out to be! The author demonstrated diverse and in-depth research skills and evidence of how important being present in the moment really is. Conversation tidbits included how we all as educators get so busy that being present is sometimes impossible, that in this state of awareness we really miss the boat and do a disservice to both ourselves and the students we teach. Practical ideas and strategies such as Mindful breathing, Empathy building activities, and happiness mining will help you and your students/children at home keep in the calm and rational state of mindfulness despite of the curveballs life throws our way. Practical strategies to help deal with fight or flight scenarios and to rationally deal with difficult dilemmas... A book packed with so much that it will remain “handy” on the bookcase for those times and to help us to get to “better”.

Our next book in review is “Inconvenient Indian” by Thomas King which has been getting great reviews, awards and is on our Canadian best seller list. Winner of the CBA LIBRIS Award for non-fiction book of the year.

I would encourage you to pick up Goldie’s book and be pleasantly surprised and inspired to be the better parent/educator that we would all like to be...

Thanks for the opportunity to serve as your Equity and Social Justice Chair in this way.

## Violence Prevention

### WSH Act Definition:

“Violence” means:

the attempted or actual exercise of physical force against a person; and

any threatening statement or behaviour that gives a person reasonable cause to believe that physical force will be used against the person.

### Meeting with MSBA, MTS and WSH on May 5, 2016

“If, in your view, an act of violence has occurred to you (or anyone else) as defined by the Act you should report it”

The employer must communicate to the employees the results of any investigation, including “control measures” that are being instituted.

Once the employer (including the principal) learns of a violent incident, they can’t unlearn it and the situation must be dealt with.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Manitoba's Education Administration Act "Schools Patriotic Observances Regulation" 472/88R states:

2(2) At the close of school on each day on which the school is in regular operation for instruction, or at the close of any opening exercises that the school may conduct, the pupils shall sing the first verse of "God Save the Queen".

I'm sure you're glad to have this brought to your attention! You're welcome!

Source: [https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/\\_pdf-regs.php?reg=472/88%20R](https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/_pdf-regs.php?reg=472/88%20R)

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### **Workplace Health and Safety Update**

Jacque attended the MTS/MSBA Workplace Safety and Health training for school reps on October 14th in Altona. The topics covered were Inspections by Darren Thomas from MSBA and Regulations by Darren Hardy from MTS. The afternoon session dealt with Harassment Prevention and Violence Prevention. It was enlightening in many ways as a person new to WSH. Our divisional meeting outlined the concerns that are specific to GVSD. All school boards are obligated to offer training to all employees on a yearly basis. That includes returning employees but more importantly new employees and those who substitute for employees. The hierarchy of regulations is as follows; 1)Legislation 2)Collective Agreement and 3)Board Policy. The lower ones cannot override the ones above. The supervisor is the person in charge of the facility. In the case of schools, that is the principal. In the area of WSH, the principal is considered an employer and therefore has the greatest degree of responsibility and control over the operations in her/his facility. Workers are responsible for their own actions or inactions. This includes taking reasonable care to protect themselves, but also reporting all concerns in the area of Safety and Health every time an event occurs. This also includes any issues falling under the area of Violence and Harassment.

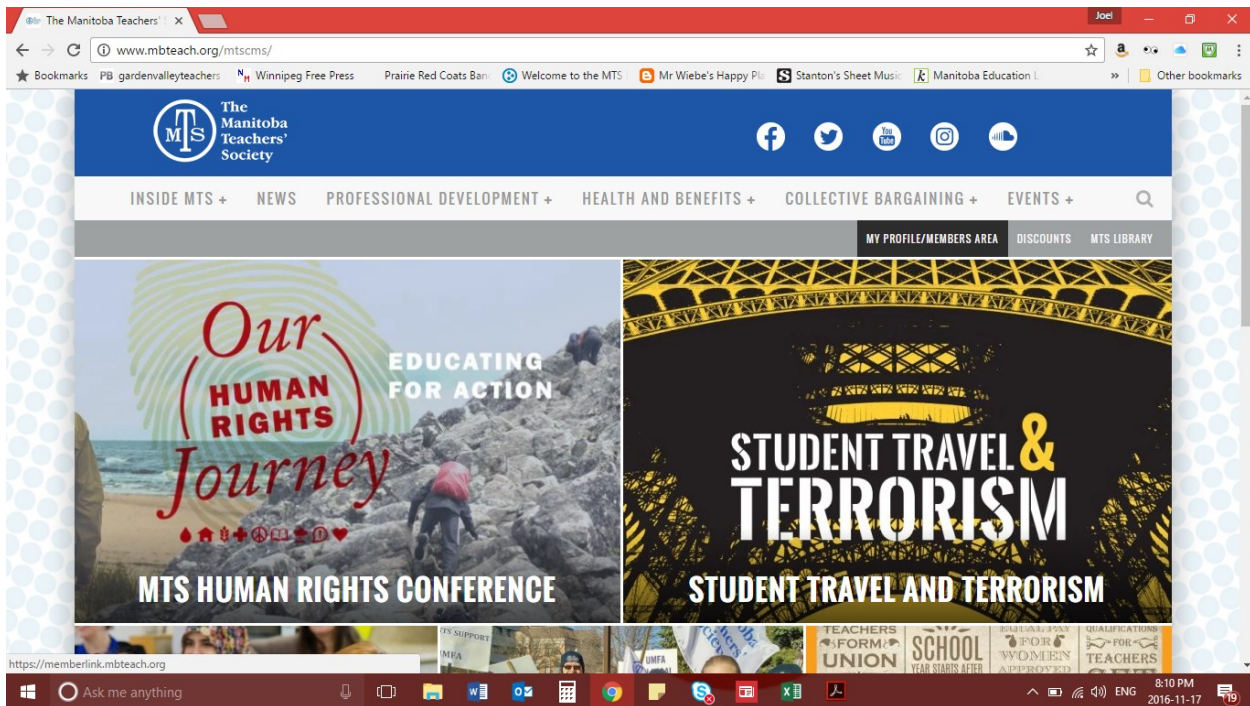
### **Substitute Report**

Joel organized a meeting for substitute teachers at Parkland School on October 27th. There were about 25 people in attendance and about 8 others emailed regrets and/or concerns. Almost all who attended would also fall under the category of retired teachers. Many topics came to light—positive issues as well as concerns. Joel took some of these items forward as action items and some of informational items. It would be productive if some concerns were brought to the board directly at a liaison meeting. Some future organizational possibilities were put forward to the group. Nothing was decided upon, but a survey may be put out. As of now Joel will be accepting emails and another meeting will be held in the future.

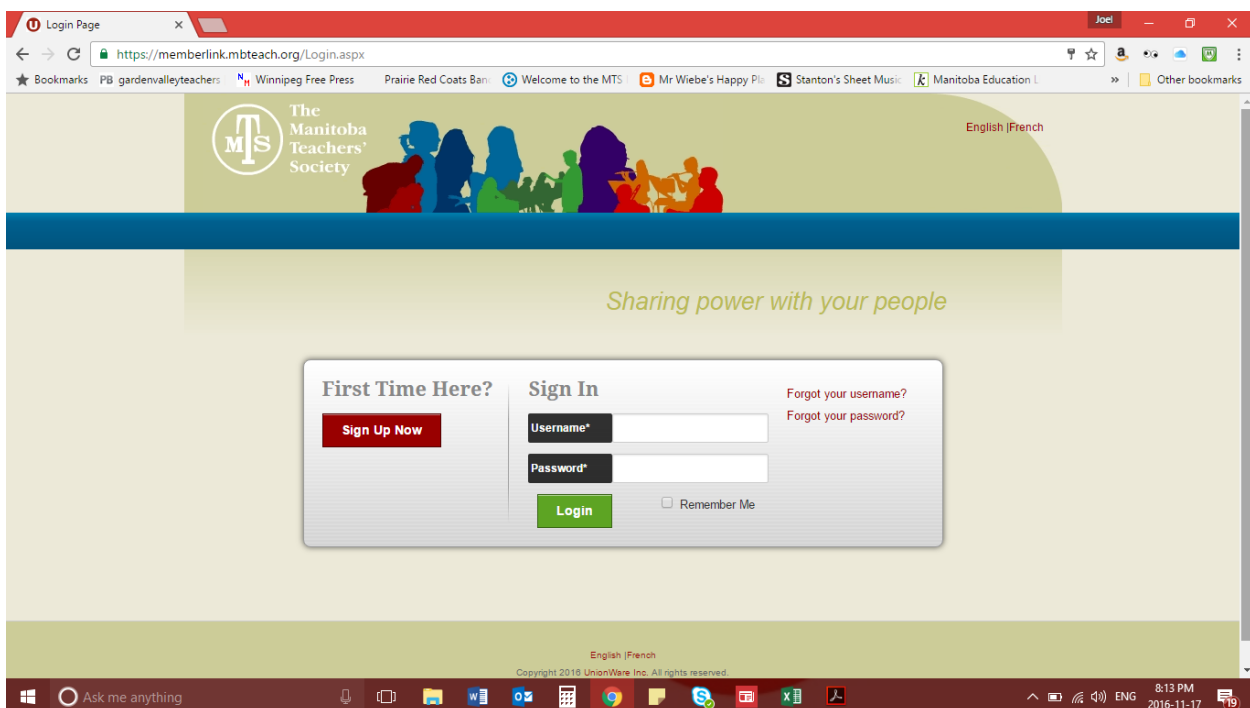
Are you looking to receive *The Manitoba Teacher* and *Balance* magazines electronically instead of a physical copy in your mailbox?

Follow these easy steps:

1. Go to the new mbteach.org website, and click on “My Profile/Member Area” in the grey bar on the top right.



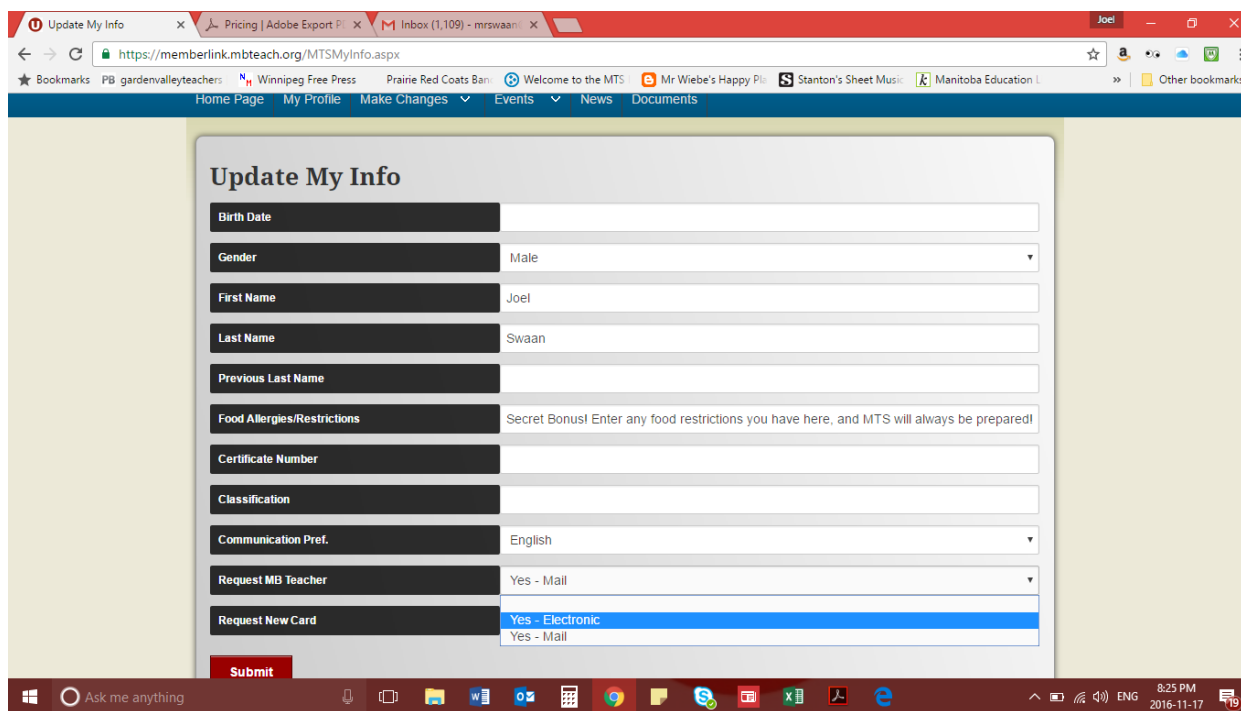
2. Enter your Username and Password. If you've forgotten either of these, there are helpful links on the right for you to click on.



3. Once you've logged in, click on "Make Changes" in the blue menu bar, followed by "Update My Info" in the dropdown.



4. On the tab beside "Request MB Teacher", click on the dropdown to choose "Yes - Electronic" instead of "Yes - Mail". Click "Submit" and your mailbox will stay that much emptier, and so will a landfill somewhere!



\* As a bonus, if you need a new/replacement MTS Card, click on the dropdown beside "Request New Card". Change it to "Yes" and click "Submit"; it will arrive shortly in the mail!



Present:

Joel Swaan (PKD) – President, CB Chair	Rick Schroeder (NPC) – VP, Ed Finance Chair
Mary Eberling-Penner (PCS) – Secretary	Rhonda Peters (NPC) – Treasurer
Raffaele Bagnulo (NPC) – PD Chair	Josh Neufeld (JRW) – Member-at-Large
James Driedger (NPC) – ESJ Co-Chair	Caitlin Parr (GVC) – Social/Wellness Chair
Anny Froese (PDS) – Ed Finance Co-Chair	Sarah Quickfall (GVC) – Benefits Chair; CB Co-Chair
Gwen Heinrichs (DO) – Member-at-Large	Wes Reimer (BVS) – Member-at-Large
Jacqui Kusnick (ECS) – PD Co-Chair	Karla Rootsart (SWD) – PR Chair
Joe Lindhorst (NPC) – ESJ Chair	Laura Unger (WES) – Member-at-Large
Dale Martens (NPC) – Benefits Co-Chair	Joanne Unrau (HFS) – PR Co-Chair
Jacque Mitchell (SUB) – WS&H Liaison	Mike Urichuk (ECS) – Social/Wellness Co-Chair

**Reconciliation** – Executive and General Meetings now open with the following message:

*As is customary before each of our Executive and General meetings we must recognize our history as an organization and as settlers to these lands in the Red River Valley.*

*Garden Valley School Division buildings are located on Treaty 1 lands: the original lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis nation.*

*Garden Valley Teachers' Association respects the Treaties that were made on these territories, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.*

**School Visits** – The first set of School Visits will occur in between this meeting and the December Executive Meeting. School visit dates are set for the lunch hours of November: 2 Fresh Start, 9 Parkland, 14 Blumenfeld, 15 Border Valley, 16 Emerado, 17 GVC Tec, 18 (8am) DO Liaisons, Facilitators, RRTVA Director, 18 (noon) Clinicians, 21 GVC, 22 Hochfeld, 23 J.R. Walkof, 24 Edelweiss, 28 Plum Coulee, 29 Prairie Dale, 30 Southwood; December: 5 WES, 6 NPC.

**Grievances with regards to Maternity Leave top-up** – Three grievances have been filed with the division regarding top-up within the first 27 weeks of Maternity Leave.

**1<sup>st</sup> Year Teachers BBQ** – Joel will craft a survey for this year's New Teachers to determine how we can improve this event.

**Wellness Cards** – GVTA Policy is to acknowledge significant loss or illness with a card and/or gift. Cards have now been ordered, and distributed to school reps. All members are encouraged to speak to school reps if they know of a cause where a card should be delivered to a member – whether compassion or celebration. In October, 9 wellness cards were distributed to members.

**MLA Pre-Budget Consultation Meeting** – GVTA has been invited to speak at this public meeting with Winkler-Morden MLA Cameron Friesen on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. The President and Education Finance Chairs will draft a presentation.

**CAPSLE Conference** – There was discussion about using Association funds to send the President/Collective Bargaining Chair to the Canadian Association for the Practical Study of Law in Education Conference in Saskatoon from April 30-May 2, 2017. If funds can be located within the current budget, the association will do so, with the notion that the budget should account for this event in future years.

**UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** – Should teachers wish to do so, they can sign a petition in support of Bill C-262, an act to ensure that the laws of Canada are in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. A link to the petition is available at <<http://romeosaganash.ndp.ca/bill-c-262>>.

**“Welcome to a Safe & Inclusive Space”** – MTS has distributed cards, but there is a concern that they lack inclusion of many groups, and could cause political problems for the division. The president will discuss the cards with the Superintendent.

**Accountability** – The President, who receives 50% paid release time from teaching duties, was advised to keep track of time spent working on Association business as a matter of accountability and record keeping.

**Preferred Pharmacy Network** – There is the option upcoming for members to receive ongoing prescriptions by mail. News will be distributed to teachers in November.

**ESJ Book Club** – The December/January book is *The Inconvenient Indian* by Thomas King

**CLGs** – Twenty applications were approved at a cost of approximately \$16,000, and the CLG sign-up date is November 4.

**Social Night** – A Happy Holidays Gym & Games Night for members and families will be held on December 10<sup>th</sup>. More information to come!

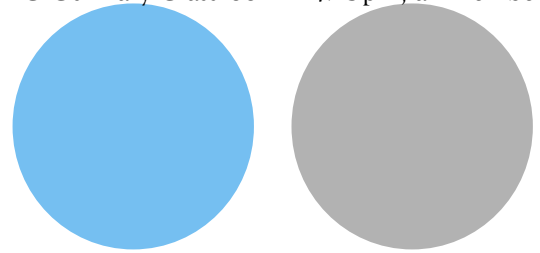


**GVSD-GVTA K-8 Preparation Time Committee** - Has completed its mandate, and six non-binding recommendations were made to the board.

**Pre-Retirement Seminar** - Teachers who are nearing retirement can register for a seminar in Carman on December 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9am-12pm.

**Substitute Teachers** - A meeting was held on October 27<sup>th</sup> of Substitute Teachers, along with the President and Substitute Teacher Representative to the Executive. There was the opportunity to discuss matters of importance to the group, and a plan to investigate how to proceed with meetings in the future which will go out via survey.

**Next GVTA Executive Meeting** - Tuesday, December 6, 2016 - NPC Culinary Classroom - 4:15pm; all members welcome.



## Celebrate Making it to the Winter Break!

GVTA is hosting a gym and games day at GVC on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. There will be a Volleyball Tournament in the gym and board games in the Zone. This is a family event so please feel free to bring your family!

### Volleyball:

**Location:** GVC GYM, start time will depend on number of teams participating

Co-ed Teams (do not have to be from the same school)

Register by e-mailing the co-chairs with a team name and the names of players OR an individual name and we will find a team for you. (Co-chairs [caitlin.parr@gvsd.ca](mailto:caitlin.parr@gvsd.ca) or [mike.urichuk@gvsd.ca](mailto:mike.urichuk@gvsd.ca))

Prizes will be distributed to most sportsmanlike, best team uniform, and the tournament winners.

Registration deadline: Dec. 5

A tournament schedule and format will be e-mailed out on the evening of December 6<sup>th</sup>



### Games:

**Location:** The Zone (upstairs of GVC), starting at 5 pm

Come and play games like Crokinole, Dutch Blitz, Cribbage, Survive: Escape from Atlantis, and many more!

Please feel free to bring your own games to share with others!

No registration required



**Pizza, snacks, and drinks for everyone!**

Looking forward to seeing you there!