

The Apple Core

February 2017

Upcoming Events

GVTA Executive meetings:

- March 7
- April 4
- May 4
- June 6

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

Other Events:

- February 27th—Early and Mid Career Benefits Seminar 4:30-7:00 pm at McMaster House
- March 1st—ESJ Book Club, 4:00 at CK's
- March 3-5th—MTS Bonspiel in Brandon, MB
- March 6th—Early and Mid Career Benefits Seminar, 4:30-7:00 pm in Morris. Pre-registration required

President's Address

Greetings, GVTA-ers!

I hope you are all enjoying the current set of warm spring days; here's hoping that this time spring sticks around! I also hope you have had a moment to fill out the MTS Workload Survey, and to return it to the MTS Representative in your building. These surveys are critically important for negotiations at home and around the province.

Included in this month's Apple Core is the MTS Volunteer Form. The Manitoba Teachers' Society has a number of working committees which benefit from the participation of members from across Manitoba. A list is provided on the Form of the various ways in which you can become involved. If you have any questions about the role of any of the committees, feel free to ask me. It is most helpful if this form is returned to MTS by May 27th, as the new provincial executive selected at MTS AGM will be responsible for selecting their committees in June.

The GVTA Executive continues to work hard on your behalf. One of the ways we are doing this is by re-evaluating our Practices and Procedures. This month's executive meeting summary sheet appears later on in this Apple Core, and it addresses the Practices and Procedures that we discussed at February's meeting (A.1 through B.3). In March, we will be discussing the following list. Please feel free to pass along feedback through an executive member at your school, or to me directly:

Events:

- B.4 MTS sports events. The GVTA reimburses ½ of the entry fee of one GVTA team in each MTS sports event. If more than one team enters, a lottery determines which team receives the reimbursement.

continued on the next page....

- B.5 *Executive training / grant*. During the fall, an executive training workshop takes place. The President applies to MTS for an executive training grant to help cover the costs.

Scholarships and Awards:

- C.1 *Education scholarships*. At both the GVC and NPC graduation ceremonies, a \$1500 scholarship is awarded to one graduate entering Education. The treasurer keeps the pertinent applications and procedures.
- C.2 *Stanley Agricultural Society donation*. \$120 is donated to the Stanley Agricultural Society as prize money for education-related competitions held at the Winkler Harvest Festival.

Executive and Committee Meetings:

- D.1 *Frequency*. The Executive generally meets the first Tuesday of each month during the school year.
- D.2 *Meals*. The GVTA usually supplies meals or snacks at its meetings.
- D.3 *President/GVSD Superintendent*. The GVTA president meets monthly with the GVSD superintendent to discuss concerns.
- D.4 *School closures*. If the division closes schools, executive or committee meetings on that day will be postponed by one (1) week unless consensus on another date is reached.

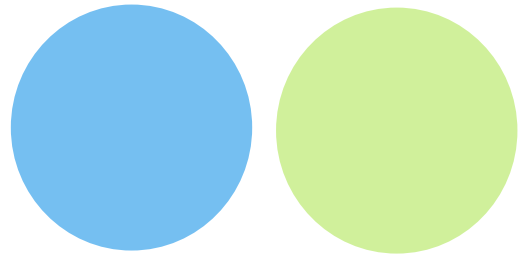
General Meetings:

- E.1 *Food/Refreshments*. The Social / Wellness Committee organizes and arranges this for attendees. \$200 is usually set aside for this purpose; monies are drawn from the General Meeting budget line.
- E.2 *Prizes/Draws*. The Executive may from time to time, direct the Public Relations Committee to purchase and provide incentive items for distribution at General Meetings. \$300 is usually set aside for this purpose; monies are drawn from the General Meeting budget line

Fees:

- F.1 *Substitutes*. The daily fee of a substitute is pro-rated based upon the fraction of the school year that day represents.
- F.2 *Part-time teachers*. GVTA fees for part-time teachers are pro-rated based upon the portion of time they work.

Cheers,
Joel
204-384-5635
gvtapresident@gmail.com



MTS Bonspiel 2017

Hosted by the Brandon Teachers' Association

When: March 3rd - 5th, 2017

Where: Riverview Curling Club, 420 Maryland Ave. Brandon, MB

\$200 per rink (Includes 4 dinner tickets).

Contact: Cale Dunbar - btabonspiel@gmail.com, 204-483-0301

Deadline: Reserve spot for association by Tuesday, January 31st.

Additional entries from all associations accepted until Monday, February 27th.

Download an entry form at mbteach.org



Equity and Social Justice Report

Monthly Report:

- Both ESJ committee chairs will be attending the winter ESJ seminar in Winnipeg coming up on 24 Feb.
- Pink T Shirt day is coming up on February 22. Here are some online resources you can access for your classroom:

<https://pinkday-mb.ca/collections/pink-day-2017/products/pink-day-schools>

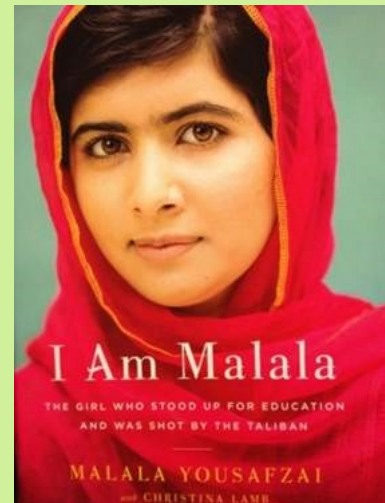
<http://www.redcross.ca/in-your-community/manitoba/manitoba-events~campaigns-and-fundraising/every-day-is-pink-day-in-manitoba>

ESJ Bookclub:

The ESJ Bookclub is happily reading through the school year. Last week we had a great discussion on the first half of book Presence by Amy Cuddy and how it could connect with Equity and Social Justice issues and topics we as teachers consistently come across during our workdays. How can we advocate better for ESJ topics or issues? The author gives us really interesting and helpful insights to help us to be more “present” in those important times when opportunities to solve inequities present themselves.

The next book “I am Malala” delves into the memoirs of a young woman who was shot for wanting to educate herself in present day Pakistan....

<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/17851885-i-am-malala>



We here at the ESJ committee hope you have an excellent month and encourage you to read more and educate yourselves more on issues and concerns that all stakeholders in education are dealing with....

Respectfully,

Joe Lindhorst ESJ Chair

Benefits in Retirement

(submitted by Sarah Quickfall)

If you choose to continue coverage through the Manitoba School Employees Benefit Plan (MSPEBP), you must make sure to apply within **90 days** of retirement to be enrolled in the MSPEBP Blue Cross Retiree Plan. If, while an active teacher you were covered by a spousal plan, you are still eligible to join the retiree plan if you have worked in a school division for at least five years.

Highlight of Benefits

Ambulance: same as active teacher plan

Extended Health: Benefits remain the same as active teacher plan

Prescription Drugs: Coverage is increased to \$2000

Vision: Coverage for vision care items (glasses, contacts, etc) ceases. You are still covered for 80% of an eye exam up to \$100.

Dental: there is no coverage for dental services in the retiree plan

Travel: Travel benefits remain the same as active teacher plan but coverage is for a 60 day travel period.

For more information regarding the Retired School Division Employee plan please see the full plan description on the Manitoba Public School Employee Benefit Plan website:

<http://mpsebp.ca/manitoba-public-school-employees-retiree-extended-health-benefits-plan-retirees/>

Life Insurance

Your *group* life insurance ceases when you retire but you do have the option of converting it to an individual plan without providing medical evidence. This must be done within **31 days** following the termination of your teaching contract.

Questions about converting your group insurance can be directed to:

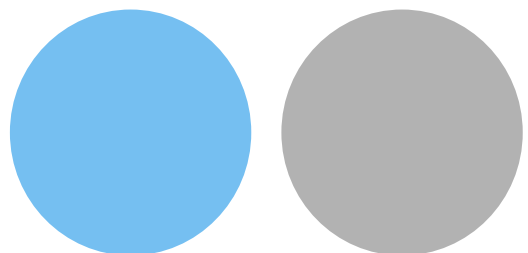
Deborah Capek

204-297-6224

deborah@capekfinancial.ca

Optional Life Insurance

Additional insurance you can purchase that will cover you and your family. Can be purchased in units of \$10,000 up to a maximum of \$250,000. For more information, please call Mercer at 204-947-0055.



TRAF PENSION TIDBITS

(submitted by Dale Martens)

Your pension, as financed by the Teachers Retirement Allowance Fund, is going to be the financial culmination of your teaching career. And there is more to it than just laying on some beach somewhere waiting for the cheques to roll in. Before you plant yourself on the sand, here are a few of the questions that you may need to get answered:

- Should I buy back parental or maternity leave?
- How many days can I teach once retired?
- What do I want to happen with my pension when I pass away?
- How do I apply for my pension?
- How much will my pension be?

There are a few different ways to get the information you need...

Attend a seminar!

Every year MTS offers regional seminars for Early and Mid-Career teachers. This year there is one taking place on Monday, March 6 at Morris School. The start time is 4PM and you probably already received an email about it. Teachers 48 and older will automatically receive an invitation from MTS to attend a regional Retirement Seminar. These are usually scheduled in the fall.

Go online!

Visit traf.mb.ca and register for Online Services. This allows you to view personalized information like your total contributions and years of service. It also allows you to access a pension estimator that will forecast your monthly pension at various ages. A tax calculator will forecast the income tax you will pay. You can even watch a retirement seminar online.

Mountains of general information - like TRAF's investment holdings -are also available on the TRAF website.

Make an appointment!

If retirement is drawing close, TRAF encourages people to have a one-on-one meeting with one of their Member Service Specialists. Besides regular office hours, they are generally available on alternating Saturdays from September to June.

See you on the beach!!!

* * * * *

Something that many people don't realize is that you can make voluntary contributions to TRAF, much like you might invest in a mutual fund within an RRSP. TRAF's investment portfolio is similar to a balanced fund. Like any investment, voluntary contributions should be carefully considered with your financial advisor. All the pertinent information is available on the TRAF website.

12 Days of Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

To celebrate the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Recommendations and Report in 2015 here are 12 suggestions for what individuals can do to support reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

On the first day of Reconciliation make a commitment to read the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 recommendations.

On the second day of Reconciliation make a commitment to learn about the *Indian Act* and how its policies have contributed to the decline of culture, family units, and traditions and stymied positive socio-economic conditions for Indigenous Peoples.

On the third day of Reconciliation make a commitment to learn about Indian residential schools.

On the fourth day of Reconciliation make a commitment to learn about the history and culture of the Indigenous Peoples in whose traditional territory you live.

On the fifth day of Reconciliation make a commitment to visit an art gallery that features Indigenous art.

On the sixth day of Reconciliation make a commitment to discover Indigenous authors, past and present.

On the seventh day of Reconciliation make a commitment to attend an Indigenous cultural event such as a powwow. June 21 is National Aboriginal Day which means there are events all across the country.

On the eighth day of Reconciliation make a commitment discourage uncivil dialogue regarding Indigenous Peoples or any other group for that matter.

On the ninth day of Reconciliation make a commitment to only purchase authentic Indigenous art.

On the tenth day of Reconciliation make a commitment to never practice cultural misappropriation.

On the eleventh day of Reconciliation make a commitment to rid your vocabulary of offensive colloquialisms.

On the twelfth day of Reconciliation make a commitment to continuously expand your Indigenous Awareness.

If you are looking for some free resources to continue on your path of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, here are three free ebooks.



GVSD Staff and Families

Come and Go
Bowling Night!

Feb. 24th
5-8pm

Winkler Bowling Lanes
Pizza, snacks and pop provided



Cash Bar



TEACHERS' RETIREMENT ALLOWANCES FUND

The 2016 Benefits Statements are now available to all members who had service on June 30, 2016. If you are a registered member of Online Services, you have access to your Statement by selecting “My TRAF Documents” and “Benefits Statements” through your Online Services account.

If you would like to view your Benefits Statement in French, select “Français” through “Language Preference”.

If you are not yet registered for Online Services, sign up at traf.mb.ca.

Le Relevé annuel de prestations 2016 est maintenant disponible aux participants ayant accumulé du service au 30 juin 2016. Si vous êtes inscrits aux Services en ligne vous pouvez maintenant accéder votre relevé en sélectionnant “My TRAF Documents” et “Benefits Statements” par l'intermédiaire de votre compte aux Services en ligne.

Vos Relevé de prestations sont disponibles en français en sélectionnant “Language Preference” et cliquez “Français” comme langue préférée.

Vous pouvez vous inscrire aux Services en ligne à traf.mb.ca.

Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund

Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund

Johnston Terminal, 330-25 Forks Market Road, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 4S8

[\(204\) 949-0048](tel:(204)949-0048) | [\(800\) 782-0714](tel:(800)782-0714) | info@traf.mb.ca | www.traf.mb.ca

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President's Visits & Meetings – To accommodate the increased number of school visits that the GVTA President is making this year to three, and collaborative meetings that our executive is having with Western Teachers' Association, the president's meeting budget has been increased by an additional \$700.

GVTA President Election – Watch for notices coming soon with information on our upcoming annual election for GVTA President. Our policies dictate that we inform the division of the next year's president by March 30th. To facilitate this, there will be a nomination period in March, followed by an election if more than one nomination is received. GVTA Past-President Rick Schroeder (NPC) is the chair of the Nominating Committee, and will receive any and all questions about the process.

Policies & Procedures – The GVTA Executive is reviewing our current practices and procedures document. If members have any suggestions or concerns about the current policies, they should be in touch with Joel. Next month we will look at policies B.4 through F.2. This month we looked at the policies that:

- a. Provide Honorariums to GVTA Executive officers and committee chairs and co-chairs
- b. Provide reimbursement to executive members for mileage at the MTS rate
- c. Provide the GVTA President and Treasurer with home internet service
- d. Provide the GVTA President with a cell phone allowance of \$30/month
- e. Allow for reimbursement of expenses with submission of receipts
- f. Provide the GVTA President with a laptop, and the Treasurer with a laptop and printer
- g. Provide for the disbursement of PD expenses and honoraria according to joint GVSD/GVTA policy
- h. Provide for wages to part-time and substitute teachers who work for GVTA or MTS on behalf of teachers during a regular school day
- i. Allows for the President to take personal leave from executive duties on days when leave from teaching duties has been granted by the division
- j. Confirm the practice of schools hosting the GVTA Fall Picnic on a rotation, which is open to all divisional staff
- k. Confirm the practice of purchasing retirement gifts for GVTA retirees
- l. Confirm the practice of hosting a fall BBQ for teachers who are new to the GVTA

MTS Workload Survey – All teachers in the province have should received the MTS Workload Survey through their MTS school rep. Please return it in a timely manner to your rep, who will ensure that confidentiality is maintained as the form makes its way back to MTS. If you are a teacher on contract and haven't received a form, please let Joel know. These forms provide crucial information to the Collective Bargaining Committee.

Collective Bargaining Committee – This committee has begun to meet. Thank you to the members on the committee who serve their colleagues. 2016-17 members are Joel Swaan (PKD), Chair; Sarah Quickfall (GVC), Co-Chair; Rick Schroeder (NPC), acting *ex officio*; Dale Martens (NPC); Curtis Harms (PCS); Anny Froese (PDS); Joanne Unrau (HFS), Southwood Unit Rep; Janice Krahn (PKD); Mary-Anna Aaldyk-Doerksen (WES); Jessica Askin (DO); Josh Neufeld (JRW); Mike Urichuk (ECS); Melanie Howe (GVC); Pam Klassen-Dueck (BVS); and Jim Parry-Hill (SUB)

Pink Day/Day of Pink – There are two Anti-Bullying Days recognized by wearing pink. Pink Shirt Day is coming up on February 22nd, and Day of Pink will be on April 12.

Next GVTA Executive Meeting – Tuesday, March 7th, 2017 – NPC Room #103 @ 4:15pm; all members welcome.

2017 VOLUNTEER FORM

****It is only necessary to submit this form once a year.**

Please complete and forward this form via email to: icarroll@mbteach.org.

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone #: _____

Email Address: _____

Association: _____

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

School Phone #: _____

Years of Teaching: _____

Areas of Interest: _____

My present position is:

Teacher

Principal

Vice-Principal

Clinician

Substitute

Other

Volunteer Positions Available:

Aboriginal Voice and Action

Collective Bargaining

Curriculum and Teaching

Disability Benefits Plan

Disability Benefits Plan Investment Committee

Disability Benefits Plan Case Management

Education Finance

Equity and Social Justice

Group Benefits

Outside Body Representation

Professional Development

Professional Conduct Committee

Review Committee

SAGE Council

Teacher Education and Certification

Teacher-Led Learning Team

Workplace Safety and Health

Young Humanitarian Awards

Please advise which Society Committees you have previously served on and for which years.

The above information will be used for the purposes of processing your volunteer application i.e. sharing the information with the Provincial Executive as well as communicating with you. Should you be appointed to a committee, this personal information will be kept confidential and secure. In order to facilitate communication among committee members, this personal information may be distributed to the other members of the committee on which you are serving.

I agree to this usage of my personal information _____.

Signature