



JUNE 2005 VOL. 83 NO. 7

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AGM delegates tackle heavy issues

THREE NEW FACES ON PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE, A SECOND mandate for the Society vice-president, a fee increase, and an announcement by government to increase teachers' pension premiums—these were the highlights of the Society's 86th annual general meeting held May 26-28 in Winnipeg.

Seven Oaks teacher Pat Isaak was acclaimed as MTS vice-president. Elected to the position in 2003, Isaak was unopposed when nominations closed Friday, May 27. With 20 years teaching experience, she has held a number of positions in her local association as well as MTS.

Isaak was first elected to provincial executive in 1997. She worked on numerous committees and is currently vice-chair of the board for the Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund. She recently chaired the committee that organized the highly successful Walking In Both Worlds conference on Aboriginal education.

She will serve for the next two years with president Brian Ardern, who was returned unopposed as president in February of this year.

New exec members

Three new members were elected to the MTS provincial executive. Dave Nadjuch, Winnipeg; Pat Hamm, Prairie Rose; and Kyle McKinstry, Pine Creek, took three of the six positions that were open. Returned to executive were Pam Stinson, Portage la Prairie; Karen Wiebe, Pembina Trails, and Gerald Wylychenko, Kelsey.

Retiring executive member Paul LaRivière and outgoing provincial executive member Cheryl Heaman were thanked for their commitment and dedication to members.

James Bedford, Louis Riel, and Beth Geisel, Turtle River, were acclaimed to the Disability Benefits Plan Governance and Administration Board, while Corinne Barrett Kutcy, St. James Assiniboia, and Evan Casselman, Turtle Mountain, were acclaimed to the Disability Benefits Plan Case Management Committee.

Fee increase

A membership fee increase of \$17 a year was approved during the Saturday morning session. The annual fee will now be \$790, up 2.19 per cent from last year. The fee is part of an overall budget of about \$10.5 million.

Tremendous change

In his speech to delegates, MTS president Brian Ardern characterized the past year as one of "tremendous change."

Even before the minister of education Peter Bjornson announced a 1.1 per cent increase to the premiums of teachers' pensions (see story this page), Ardern said that pensions and member engagement have been a priority for MTS this year.

Ardern also highlighted a number of achievements, specifically in the areas of pensions, the disability plan, professional development and the rights of teachers and their local associations.

The Society achieved a major success, said Ardern, in solidifying the rights of local associations to speak out on education issues.

That right was upheld at a Manitoba Labour Board hearing

Tag team: Ken Pearce and Val Wake Barker after yet another intense session at AGM. Pearce and Barker are both former MTS presidents and are members of the ITA. They have been invited to co-chair debate at AGM for years now and are known for grace under pressure.

over a dispute between the Winnipeg Teachers' Association and the Winnipeg School Board. MTS and all local associations came to the aid of the WTA.

"Teachers of Manitoba have made it clear that we are not going to tolerate interference with our right to speak out on issues affecting our members and the public school students we serve. We will demonstrate our willingness to fight, we will pay the tab and we will do it together."

Ardern said teachers made progress on:

- Pensions, through a campaign to persuade the province to allow an increase in teachers' premiums to ensure the long-term viability of the pension plan. "Teachers have bent over backwards to help, with cards, letters and phone calls flooding into the legislature."
- Professional Development, where the Walking in Both Worlds Aboriginal education conference was a huge success. It "raised the Society's profile as a leading-edge provider of professional development opportunities."
- MTS fees, which have increased only \$49, or less than seven per cent, since 1997, while teachers' salaries have increased more than 21 per cent.

DBP on track

The MTS Disability Benefits Plan is on track to eliminate its deficit by the end of 2008, said governance chair Betty Ann Tiltman.

But a continuing increase in claims would derail that plan.

The DBP put a five-year plan into effect in 2003 when the deficit reached a record \$25.3 million. The plan included some reduction in benefits and an increase in fees.

Since then the deficit has been dropping. It was at \$12.7 million in August, 2004. The rate of reduction will be slower over the next few years.

At the same time, however, claims have continued to be higher than DBP officials would like. Last year claims increased just over seven per cent.

"A seven per cent growth rate is consistent with growth rates from prior years, but is higher than the plan can sustain if we wish to meet our five-year recovery plan requirements and avoid premium increases," the DBP report said.

The plan has implemented some wellness programs in an attempt to keep down claims. Over the next few years, the DBP will track claims in divisions that have its wellness programs and see whether they help reduce claims.

Also related to the Disability Benefits Plan, the Society purchased a building to allow plan staff to rejoin the rest of MTS in a single location.

In his president's address, Brian Ardern said, "This will be good not only for staff and teachers, but will result in the savings of tens of thousands of dollars in lease costs."

► See "support" page 3

Minister announces pension changes

Campaign success takes teachers 'part-way'

IN THE WAKE OF A MAJOR CAMPAIGN BY THE MANITOBA Teachers' Society, the provincial government has announced an increase in teachers' pension plan premiums.

Education minister Peter Bjornson made the announcement at the 86th Annual General Meeting of the Society. He said that premiums would be increased 1.1 per cent to help ensure the "sustainability of the fund."

MTS had been pressuring the province to increase premiums two per cent. That had been the focal point of an effort that featured a write-in campaign by public schools teachers.

"Government received that message," Bjornson said.

It will also continue to receive the message. Delegates voted to continue lobbying efforts to get the province to allow further increases

in contribution levels (see president's message, page 3, and mteach.org for more details.)

"They've got part-way there," said MTS vice-president Pat Isaak. "It is important that the government know we will continue to lobby for it to go the rest of the way."

The minister said the province would continue to work with teachers and the Society on a number of issues, including any further pension changes.

He also noted that the government has addressed many concerns in a number of ways and that the public school system is much stronger since the current government was first elected in 1999. **T**

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

You deserve the credit for pension change

Thanks!

Our annual general meeting is over and, as in other years, the minister of education brought greetings to the delegates. But this year he also brought an important announcement. Beginning in September, our pension premiums will rise for the first time in 25 years. This is a good thing—and the credit for making it happen belongs to many of you reading this.

MTS has been talking about the need to increase premiums for almost three years. Much has changed in the two and a half decades since our current rates were set, and like pension plans all over the world ours has been facing growing pressures. But it has been difficult to get government to act.

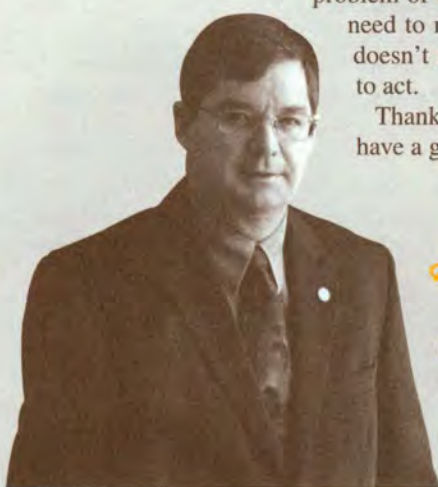
This past January, we made an effort to get our members engaged. We used *The Manitoba Teacher* and sent letters out to every teacher in the province. We visited schools, and local associations and councils. We railed at the politicians and asked our association presidents to help us spread the word. This work has borne fruit and I want to say a personal thank you.

Legislation is now before the House that will see pension premiums increase by 1.1 per cent. Our hope is that this legislation can be in place by September so that we can begin paying the new premiums at the start of the school year. If this happens, you'll be paying 1.1 per cent more, in tax deductible dollars, into your pension plan.

A portion of this money will go directly into the Pension Adjustment Account to pay for increased cost of living adjustments. This represents a significant increase, of approximately 18 per cent, to that account—but we should not be fooled into thinking that we have achieved a COLA solution. Despite the fact active teachers will be putting more money than ever before into the Pension Adjustment Account for retired teachers, the cost of living adjustments will continue to be abysmally low. While more money will be available for a COLA, there are more and more retired teachers who will be drawing on it. Our pension plan is a victim of the same set of demographics affecting pension plans the world over.

I wish I could say that this takes care of our pension plan and that we can move on to other issues. That isn't the case. We need to carefully review premium levels to ensure we are contributing enough. We need to continue to explore ways of dealing with the extraordinarily difficult problem of COLA. More than anything, we need to make sure that another 25 years doesn't pass before we get government to act.

Thanks again for all your help and have a great summer,



Brian

Brian Ardern is the Society's 2005-2007 president

Wpg teachers rock MTS bonspiel

THE SKABAR RINK OF THE WINNIPEG TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION WALKED away with the top honours at the 37th Annual MTS Curling Bonspiel. The annual rock throwing fest was held March 18-20 at the MacGregor Curling Club and hosted by the Pine Creek Teachers' Association.

"We had a great time as hosts," said Pine Creek Teachers' Association president Kyle McKinstry. "We would like to thank all of the entrants for their sportsmanship and dedication to a terrific wellness event."



Again, the first event winners were the Skabar rink from Winnipeg Teachers' Association: skip, Robert Skabar; third, Kim Link; second, Greg Link; lead, Laura Skabar.

Second event winners were the Olson rink from Seven Oaks Teachers' Association: skip, Warren Olson; third, Karen Mozdzen; second, Bernie Gowryluk; lead, Pat Zborowsky.

The bonspiel's third event went to the Habeck rink from Louis Riel Teachers' Association: skip, Philippe Habeck; third, Shannon Burns; second, Normand Chatel; lead, Candice Rigaux. **T**



Above: Pat Isaak (vice-president, MTS), Randy Chambers (vice-president, PCTA), Brian Ardern (president, MTS), Kyle McKinstry (president, PCTA), at the opening ceremonies of the 37th annual MTS Bonspiel. Right: Catherine Penfold of MacGregor Collegiate gives wonderful rendition of national anthem at the opening ceremonies of 2005 MTS Bonspiel.

MTS 'Edu-gators' win first ever game

Portage-sponsored hockey tournament sees outstanding play

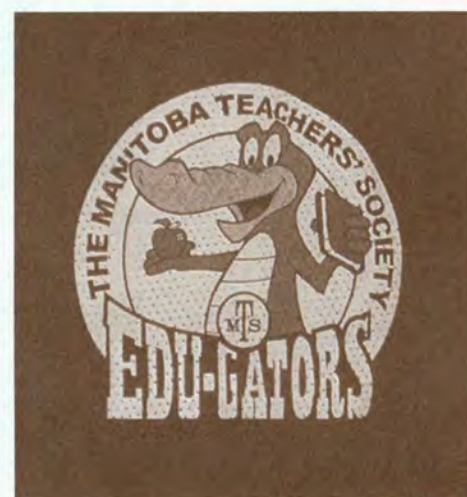
THE SEVENTH ANNUAL MTS HOCKEY TOURNAMENT HELD IN PORTAGE THE WEEKEND OF APRIL 9 and 10th and was another big success.

The tournament saw the MTS Edu-gators, led by MTS staff officer Rejean LaRoche, Pine Creek President Kyle McKinstry, and the outstanding goaltending of MTS employee Dave Johnston, win their first ever game. The Edu-gators were within range of a second win, against Portage, only to see the host squad collapse into a defensive shell after gaining a small lead.

"It's always disappointing to see teams resort to that 'trapping' style of play," noted Edu-gator captain, Brian Ardern. "But we had an awfully strong team this year and had to expect something like that. We brought Pat Liss, a Winnipeg teacher out again this year, along with Frank Thiessen."

But it was the Edu-gators big line of Joel MacRobert, Dick Comte and Rolly Boissonneault that did most of the damage. The trio accounted for 20 of the 21 goals scored by the team. The other goal was scored by Kyle McKinstry, the "Blind Cannon," who actually managed to hit the net with one of his 33 shots.

Head organizer Scott Boychuck and The Portage Teachers' Association did a terrific job of hosting the tournament, which saw 16 teams and as many as 300 players take part. A great time was had by all and everyone is looking forward to next year's tournament. **T**



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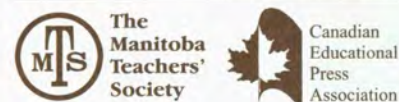
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ÉFM Elections

Close to 170 delegates of the Éducatrices et éducateurs francophones du Manitoba (ÉFM) met at the agency's 2005 AGM April 22 in Winnipeg. Richard Alarie was re-elected president for a one-year term. Suzanne Jolicoeur was elected vice-president.

2005-2006 Executive

President:
Richard Alarie

Vice-President
Suzanne Jolicoeur

Secretary
Yzabel Nadeau

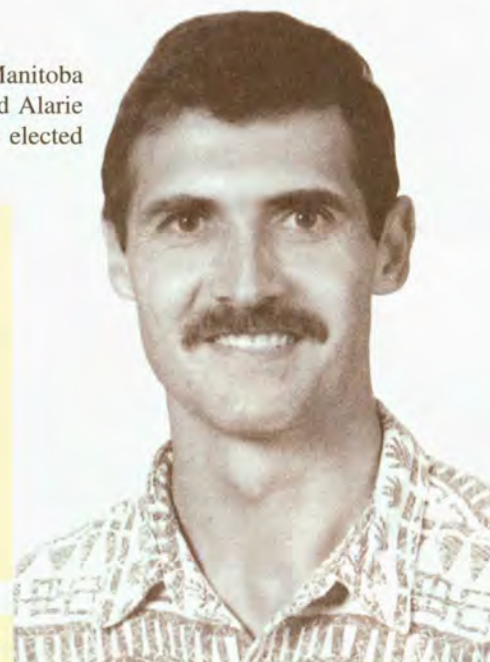
Member-at-large
Amadou Cissé

Member-at-large
Rosanne Laurencelle

Member-at-large
Mireille Gallant

Member-at-large
Jean-François Godbout

Member-at-large
Claudette Pétrin



Richard Alarie

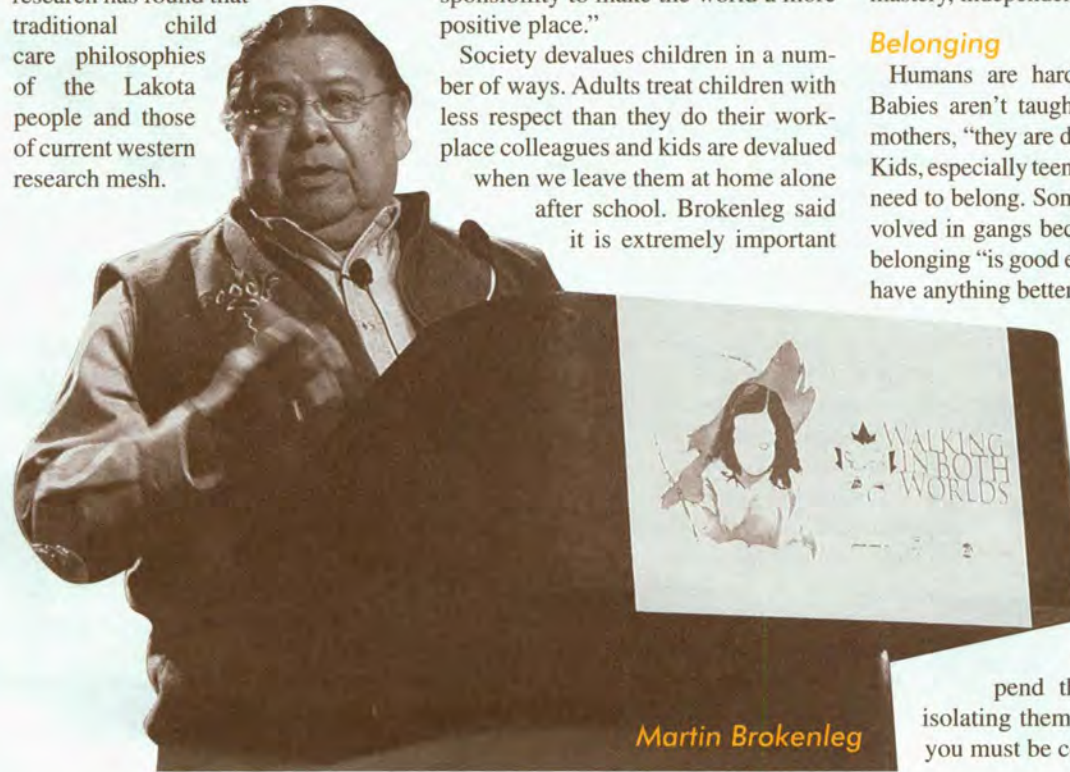
Brokenleg says 'all children are at risk'

George Stephenson

THE IDEA THAT ONLY CERTAIN students are "at-risk" is a fallacy, said Dr. Martin Brokenleg, a keynote speaker at the MTS conference on Aboriginal education.

"All kids are at risk at sometime in their lives," Brokenleg told 800 delegates to the Walking in Both Worlds conference. And all kids have the same basic needs to help overcome problems.

Brokenleg, an author and professor of Native American studies, said his research has found that traditional child care philosophies of the Lakota people and those of current western research mesh.



Martin Brokenleg

Kids are at risk because in western culture they are deemed as being unimportant in many ways. For example, he pointed to the United States as being only one of five countries in the world that allows the execution of children. He also said the demonizing of young people who commit horrific acts such as the shootings at Columbine High School allows adults to disavow responsibility.

"We are off the hook," he said. "The adults in our society have some responsibility to make the world a more positive place."

Society devalues children in a number of ways. Adults treat children with less respect than they do their workplace colleagues and kids are devalued when we leave them at home alone after school. Brokenleg said it is extremely important

for children to have human presence in their lives. He cited studies that show the average mother spends only about three minutes a day in meaningful conversation with her child. The average father spends about 49 seconds.

"If a child spends two evenings a week at home with their parents, that child is invincible to problems," he said.

There are four traditional ways of meeting the needs of children, to reclaim kids who are at risk, he said. They are ensuring feelings of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity.

Belonging

Humans are hard-wired to belong. Babies aren't taught to crawl to their mothers, "they are designed to belong." Kids, especially teenagers, have a strong need to belong. Some teenagers get involved in gangs because the feeling of belonging "is good enough if they don't have anything better," he said.

When young people are in crisis, our first response should be to show them they have a place of belonging. Instead, we do the opposite, giving them time-outs or suspend them from school, isolating them. To help students, you must be connected to them.

"If you are connected to that child, you can change the direction of their life. If you aren't, there's nothing you can do."

Mastery

Adults have to give children a sense of mastery over their problems, Brokenleg said. Kids at some point plead to let them do things themselves. They should be given the responsibility to figure out problems and come up with solutions. "The quality you want in a child is the belief they can solve their problems."

Independence

Children should be nurtured to recognize their own personal power. Brokenleg said this is "not self-sufficiency, but self-responsibility." You teach children to be responsible, to make choices based on discipline. And by discipline, Brokenleg does not mean punishment. "The essential difference is one is based on education ... but punishment is based on revenge and doesn't work."

Punishment might give you an obedient child, but you "want a responsible child, not an obedient child."

Generosity

Children should have a sense of generosity, to give to others because it is the right thing to do. Such a sense is instilled through experience, he said, adding that real generosity has a cost. Giving something that has no value to you is not generous. **T**

PD support at AGM

From page 1

Delegates to the MTS Annual General Meeting voted in favor of a plan to "negotiate clauses to support and ensure PD autonomy for teachers."

While school boards receive money from the provincial government for teachers' professional development, the boards aren't required to spend it on PD.

The resolution called on negotiators to bargain member release time to participate in teacher-directed professional development.

Delegates also supported a policy that the government "review regularly, with Society involvement," the boundaries of school divisions and districts.

Provincial council also passed a resolution to investigate the status of principals and vice-principals within the organization.

A nine-member committee will look into the issue and report back to next year's annual meeting. Currently all administrators are members of MTS but also are members of local associations and the Council of School Leaders (COSL).

MTS executive

The Society's provincial executive members for the coming year are:

President:

Brian Arden, Thompson

Vice-president:

Pat Isaak, Seven Oaks

Members at Large:

Dave Nadjuch, Winnipeg
Pat Hamm, Prairie Rose
Kyle McKinstry, Pine Creek
Pam Stinson, Portage la Prairie
Karen Wiebe, Pembina Trails
Gerald Wylychenko, Kelsey
Paul Olson, Winnipeg
Peter Wohlgemut, Border Land
Adam Grabowski, Park West
Bryan Harley, Beautiful Plains
David Rondeau, River East Transcona

Life memberships

At the annual dinner Thursday night, Life membership was conferred on Art Reimer, former MTS general secretary; Mariette Ferré, retired Society staff officer; Gail Eliasson, former MTS provincial executive member and Sandy Millen, former MTS president. **T**

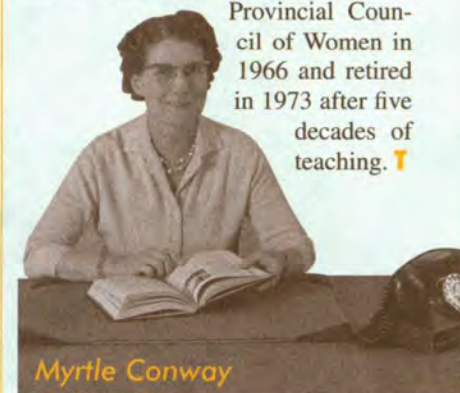
Former MTS president passes

Myrtle Conway, 1908-2005

Dr. Myrtle Conway, president of The Manitoba Teachers' Society from 1951-52 and a former CTF president, passed away in Victoria B.C. on April 5, 2005.

Conway was born in Miniota, Manitoba. She finished high school at 15 and by 19 had her B.A. and Normal School certificate. In 1928, she took her first job in a two-room school.

She served as secretary of the Poetry Society of Winnipeg for five years, became president of the Manitoba Provincial Council of Women in 1966 and retired in 1973 after five decades of teaching. **T**



Myrtle Conway

Aboriginal contributions should be celebrated—Blackstock

George Stephenson

CANADIAN SOCIETY SHOULD ACKNOWLEDGE AND HERALD THE achievements and contributions of the Aboriginal founders of North America, the MTS conference on Aboriginal education was told.

Cindy Blackstock, executive director of First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, said much of Canadians' day-to-day lives involve contributions from Aboriginal people.

"Without indigenous knowledge, Canada would not be Canada," she said, citing the contributions of a variety of foods, forms of government, materials, transportation routes and inventions.

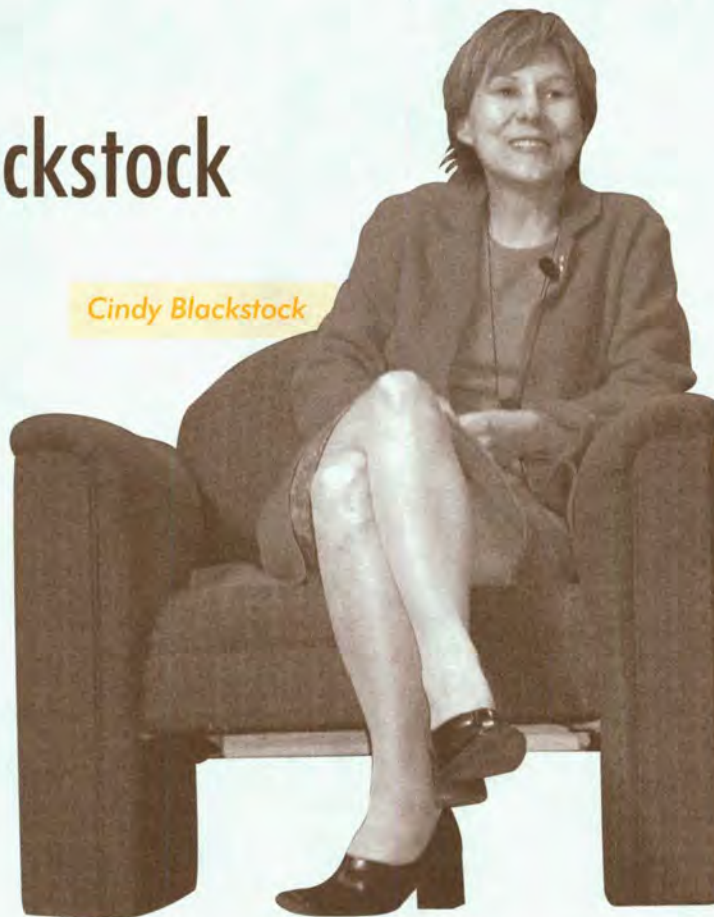
She said if even more indigenous knowledge had been adopted earlier, women would have had the vote, medicines would have been available and clean water and air would be the norm.

The keynote speaker on the second day of the conference, Blackstock told the more than 800 delegates that much in Canada would be different if society embraced some traditional Aboriginal values.

She said a whole community would be involved in looking out for all children, we would value knowledge more than information and our goal would be to grow old and wise so we could teach our children.

"People wouldn't be in retirement homes, they would be in the classroom," she said. **T**

Cindy Blackstock



Manitobans picked for Project Overseas

FOUR MANITOBA TEACHERS WILL BE HEADING OUT OF THE country this summer to train colleagues in developing countries.

Ian Mac Intyre, Kim Dudek, Calvin Moore and Joanne Calver will be joining 44 other Canadian teachers in Project Overseas assignments sponsored by the Canadian Teachers' Federation and its member organizations.

All four will meet in Ottawa in early July for few days of orientation. Then, it's off to their assignments.

Calvin Moore, a first-time participant, will head to Dominica for a project on literacy; action research; testing, evaluation and measurement; and math.

Joanne Calver is off to St. Vincent and the Grenadines for her first Project Overseas assignment on teaching and evaluation, science, multi-grade teaching

and education administration.

Ian Mac Intyre will be returning to Freetown, Sierra Leone for a project that will involve 120 teachers from that country. It centers around social studies, language arts, math and science instruction.

Kim Dudek will be back in Ulaan Baatar, Mongolia to in-service colleagues there on English as a Foreign Language courses.

Mac Intyre, Dudek and Moore are members of the River East Transcona Teachers' Association. Calver is with the Evergreen Teachers' Association. **T**

For details on how you can apply for Project Overseas, see page 6.

Walking in Both Worlds — A Gathering on

Conference keynotes a big hit

Thought-provoking sessions wow crowd of 800 at Convention Centre

Stories by Raman Job

THE MTS CONFERENCE ON ABORIGINAL education kicked off with a high-energy, feel good party at Winnipeg's Aboriginal Centre and wrapped up with a thought-provoking town hall in front of 800 participants.

From point to point in between—keynotes from Dr. Martin Brokenleg and Cindy Blackstock, plus the aboriginal village, the workshops, the art display, and the dancers and musicians—it all left a big impression on the attendees.

"It was a reaffirmation of what I'm doing," said Mike Beaulieu, a senior years history teacher at Isaac Beaulieu Memorial School in Sandy Bay. "I listened to Dr. Martin Brokenleg talk about the need for belonging and I strongly believe in that."

Beaulieu was part of a big delegation from Sandy Bay which was able to make the trip to the Walking in Both Worlds conference in Winnipeg. "Our professional development committee put a proposal together and our entire delegation was able to come. It's good to be here."

One of the units Beaulieu teaches is on systems of government of the Huron in southern Ontario and the Nomadic Cree on the plains. He talks about how they operated, how that changed when the Europeans arrived—and how the effects are still felt today.

"I can see in my home reserve a need for leadership skills. We had an Indian agent there until the '70s, so the process

of teaching people to govern themselves was not there. There is a need for leadership. Over time it is getting better, though."

Beaulieu said he also appreciated Cindy Blackstock's powerful presentation. "I loved the quote when she said, 'Youth don't always listen to their elders, but they imitate them.' It's absolutely true."

Paul Bennett, a Senior 1-4 teacher at Transcona Collegiate, said Brokenleg's presentation was the highlight of the conference. "Explaining aboriginal spiritualism through his concepts really brought it home to me and my colleagues," he said. "We also really enjoyed the smudge tent—especially the discussion of the personal aspects of spiritualism."

Anna-Marie McAleer and Kyla Vincent both teach at Linwood School in St. James. They attended the conference together.

"I was looking for ideas to integrate into everyday teaching," said Vincent. "Authentic ideas, not just add-ons."

Both were impressed by Brokenleg's discussion of the medicine wheel. "He was very inspirational," said McAleer. "We thought, if we can develop that, those would be wonderful concepts to pass on to our students. It really shone through for us."

"We loved the aboriginal village, loved the performers, the artists, the gallery," said Vincent, who had the good fortune to ask the closing question at the Friday town hall.

"Even at the opening ceremonies Wednesday," she says, "they were so welcoming. We were embraced into the friendship dance. We enjoyed it very much—and we're impressed with the invitation to join in the summer pow-wow."

"The whole conference has been a great experience," said McAleer. "We have a lot to take back with us." ■



1. Fancy shawl dancer at opening ceremonies.

2. Dancer at Aboriginal Centre.

3. MTS vice-president and conference chair Pat Isaak with student fiddlers.



Aboriginal Education

Townhall showcases sage advice from aboriginal leaders

TAKE THE PLUNGE EARLY—THAT WAS THE message from CBC Canada Now host Ian Hanomansing as he called for questions during “Moving Forward,” the closing town hall at the Society’s Walking in Both Worlds conference.

Soon after the opening statements, a participant asked panelists Cindy Blackstock, Fred Sanderson and Susan Swan to “give me the first step I can take back Monday morning so I can start to make a change.”

“Be a witness,” said Blackstock, a conference keynote speaker. “Talk about social activism. What does it mean? What do we do when we see racism? Teach kids the history of colonization.”

Blackstock’s comments echoed her earlier remarks about the need for Canadians to “recognize the harm” as a first step in reconciliation between aboriginals and the larger society.

She advised conference participants to “collectively declare” that aboriginal peoples are free. “It starts right here,” she said.

“Life was not meant to be complicated,” said Fred Sanderson, a teacher and member of the Métis nation of Manitoba. “We have to treat all children like our kids. Look beyond race. Don’t put labels on them. It’s not about the color you are. We’re all people. We all want to be treated the same.”

In his opening statement, Sanderson recalled the huge impression a violent incident left on him when he was in Grade 3. He and some other classmates were forced to kneel down in front of the class and were beaten with a pointer because of an incident at an outdoor sandbox.

Winnipeg Police Sergeant Susan Swan was complimented on her resilience after touching on her experience

with violence while growing up. She told participants she was “very dependent” on the aboriginal spiritual teachings she learns and shares with her daughter. “Every day is a healing journey. I still don’t know what I want to be when I grow up,” she said.

Swan said one key action teachers could take to help raise awareness of aboriginal issues—and instill pride in their students—is to bring aboriginal role models into the classroom as often as possible.

“Thank you for sharing your stories,” said Hanomansing at the close of the hour-long session. He complimented panelists and conference participants for speaking with “eloquence and honesty” in “such an open setting.”

Aboriginal elder Linda Blom closed the conference with a song she received 25 years ago during a four-day fast in the forest. She has since shared it in many international venues. “It was given to me to sing not just to the Ojibwas or the Crees, but to the world.”

Blom encouraged all conference participants to think about their own healing journeys. **T**

8



4. Town hall participants Cindy Blackstock, Fred Sanderson and Susan Swan.

5. Anna-Marie McAleer and Kyla Vincent (St. James-Assiniboia) at opening ceremonies.

6. Mike Beaulieu (Sandy Bay) in the Walking in Both Worlds aboriginal village.

7. Paul Bennett (River East Transcona).

8. Keynote speaker Dr. Martin Brokenleg.

9. The aboriginal village awaits the throng of 800 participants.

10. Ian Hanomansing, the host of CBC’s Canada Now, moderated the closing town hall.

‘Bear hunt’ draws kids to teachers’ tent

Teddy-toting tykes were all smiles

THOUSANDS OF BEAR-HUNTING KIDS, moms and dads made their way through the mud, tall grass, trees and cave at the MTS Teach Your Bear tent on May 30.

But the imaginary obstacles couldn’t stop them from eventually finding and squeezing that big ‘ol bear’s nose.

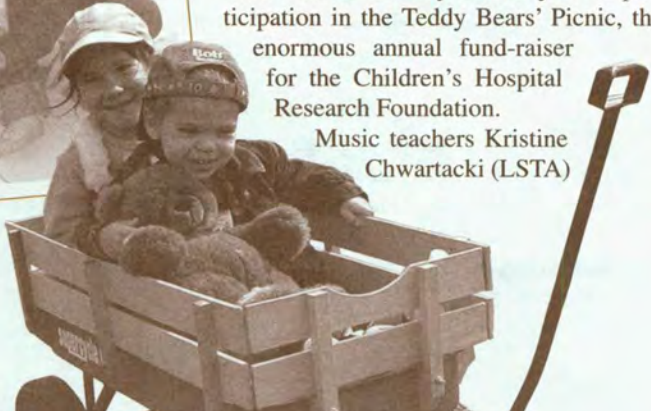
This was the Society’s ninth year of participation in the Teddy Bears’ Picnic, the enormous annual fund-raiser for the Children’s Hospital Research Foundation.

Music teachers Kristine Chwartacki (LSTA)

and Bill Quinn (LRTA) lead the drama and the fun, guiding audience after audience through “bear hunts” at the Society-sponsored tent.

MTS volunteers, 34 in all, directed visitors to the tent and handed out thousands of shiny mylar stickers and Anniken books. The bear-toting tykes and their older brothers and sisters were all smiles. Parents took home the Society’s Literacy for Life guide.

About 35,000 people attended the picnic, up from a rain-soaked crowd of 6,000 last year. **T**



what	date/location	details	contact information
Retirement Tea	Gladstone, MB Friday, June 24, 2005 from 2:45–5:00 p.m.	A retirement tea at the Gladstone Elementary School to honour Donna McLaughlin.	For further information contact Daryl Shipman at 1-204-385-2613.
Summer Institute courses	July 4–15 University of Manitoba	Summer Institute—Issues in Inclusive Special Education for School Administrators.	Visit the website at www.umanitoba.ca/summer/calendar/institutes/special_ed.shtml .
International Confederation of Principals biannual conference	July 10–14 The Cape Town International Convention Centre Cape Town, South Africa	Presented by The South African Principals Association (SAPA) and the South African Heads of Independent Schools Association (SAHISA).	For more info e-mail info@icp2005.com .
MTS Administrative Workshop	July 12–15 Winnipeg, Manitoba	More information on this workshop will be posted at mbteach.org by the end of May.	Contact Judy Berard at 888-7961 x224 or (800) 262-8803 x224 or jberard@mbteach.org .
Manitoba Families for Effective Autism Treatment (MFEAT) annual conference	November 3–4, 2005	Topics will include basic Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), social skills, play skills, ABA in the classroom, and Aspergers Syndrome.	Please watch our website for further information: www.mfeat.ca
Building Inclusive Schools	November 17–19, 2005 Ottawa, ON	This Canadian Teachers' Federation conference presents a broadly defined vision for inclusive schools. A civil society thrives in a culture that values and supports diversity. Children and youth must not be excluded by culture, race, language, socio-economic status, sexual orientation or ability. Featured speakers are Stephen Lewis, Tomson Highway, Michael Bach and more. Registration is \$428, or \$321 before June 24.	Register online at www.ctf-fce.ca or contact CTF at 1-866-283-1505 x115, email: jgall@ctf-fce.ca .
The Canadian Association for Young Children Association (CAYC) is hosting the national conference 2006, "Canadian Children—Canadian Ways"	April 6–8, 2006; Victoria Inn, Winnipeg, MB	This national conference will include strands focusing on: Inquiry, Literacy, Reggio Emilia, Children and Poverty, Health (Spiritual and Emotional) and Learning through the Arts. We are working on: Tours, Workshops, Institutes and Speakers including Barbara Reid, Wayne Serebrin, Fred Penner, Pat Tarr, Martha Friendly, Meg Hickling and more. Check out the website (www.cayc.ca) as upcoming speakers get posted.	Gerrie Prymak at (204) 668-1515, gprymak@merlin.mb.ca . Margaret Smith at (204) 254-4509, rasmith@autobahn.mb.ca

For more PD opportunities, go to www.mbteach.org/pdbulletin.htm

Project Overseas needs you!

How would you like to help teachers in a developing country? Are you interested in learning more about global education issues? Can you see yourself volunteering in Africa, Asia, or the Caribbean? If yes, Project Overseas (PO) might be for you!

Each year about 50 Canadian teachers are chosen to volunteer on CTF's Project Overseas. On PO, Canadian teachers give their time and talent to offer professional development in-service programs in partnership with teacher organizations in developing countries. Based on requests from CTF's partners overseas, teams of Canadian teachers are formed in January and in-service projects take place in July and August.

CTF needs English and French speaking Canadian teachers at the primary, elementary, and secondary levels who are interested in volunteering to offer in-services in a wide-range of subjects in countries throughout Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean.

Application criteria include:

- membership in a provincial or territorial teacher organization which sponsors PO and is a member of CTF;
- an appropriate teacher's certificate;
- at least five years teaching experience in Canada, Canadian citizenship, and excellent health.

PO is a volunteer experience. Administrative, travel, and living expenses are borne by CTF, provincial and territorial teachers' organizations (which are CTF members), CIDA, and the Wild Rose Foundation. No salaries or honoraria are paid to participants in PO and the sponsors do not cover costs associated with substitute teachers or release time.

To apply:

Applications and information will be available from MTS staff officer Nancy Kerr this September. The deadline for applications is the end of October, 2005.

Phone: (204) 888-7961

Email: nkerr@mbteach.org

The Manitoba Teachers' Society Discounts

See mbteach.org/discounts2.htm for a complete list of discounts available to MTS members

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For more information, please contact Matthew Wahoski (204) 461-1412 or Jeff Michie (204) 697-1400.

Bargaining workshop gets top marks

Caribbean teachers keen on Canadian delegation

Raman Job

Relevant, enlightening and too short—that's how participants described the collective bargaining workshop held March 31–April 2 in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

"I can't emphasize enough how much of a learning experience it was for me," said one participant.

Another called the sessions "timely, relevant and extremely important" and went on to say the conference "gave all a working understanding of the issues involved in collective bargaining, which is the most important activity in the life of trade unions."

The three intense days of instruction were a joint effort of the Caribbean Union of Teachers, the Canadian Teachers' Federation and the Manitoba Teachers' Society. About 40 participants from all over the Caribbean attended.

Global picture

"We're all part of a global picture in terms of teachers' rights and the labour movement," says Tom Paci, head of the MTS welfare services department. "We gave them a Manitoba perspective—and learned a lot from our colleagues down there."

MTS staff officer Nancy Kerr has worked on MTS international programs for three years. She says part of the Society's mandate was to develop in-depth international projects.

"In spite of the challenges of long-distance communication," she said, "we did put together a solid three days—with a big hands-on component."

Paci says the bargaining simulation was a hit. "We created a fictional Caribbean country called the Republic of Tanada, and put on a very realistic bargaining scenario between the teachers' union and the government. They loved it."

"People played their parts to the hilt. They had very passionate arguments about why government had to do the right thing," says Kerr. "The 'government' reps played hardball, as well. It was fun, productive and got rave reviews from the participants."

Kerr says it was a thrill for her to see the project received so well. And the big take-away from the session for MTS staff?

Paci says the Canadian group was very impressed with the commitment and solidarity of the Caribbean teacher representatives. "It was my first experience with any sort of international work," he says.

"I realized that the experience transcends borders. Teachers are the same the world over. These representatives were giving huge amounts of their time and energy to better the lot of their colleagues. They give so much of themselves to their organizations and members."

"These people are my friends," says Kerr. "The whole endeavor came together so well. We couldn't be more pleased at the result." **T**

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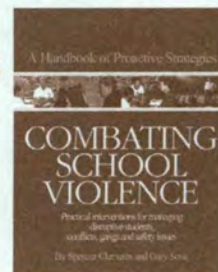
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Young Manitobans celebrated for their humanitarian work

Students 'perfect counterpoint' to negativity about youth: MTS president

Raman Job

"UPLIFTING" AND "INSPIRING" were the two words most used to describe the Society's 8th annual Young Humanitarian Awards ceremonies on April 11.

Parents, teachers, friends and relatives filled the Manitoba Theatre for Young People to see Will Purves, Stéphanie Jalbert, Laurie Boon, and the Grade 12 English Literature Class of Tec Voc High School accept awards for their humanitarian efforts.

Anika Campeau, a 2004 YHA winner who was honoured for her "Bracelets

with Heart" project, launched into her emcee duties with charm.

MTS president Brian Ardern brought greetings on behalf of all of MTS members. "These students are the perfect counterpoint to the negative things we hear about today's youth," he said. "They represent so many caring kids across the province."

The first recipient was Will Purves, a Grade 2 student at École Robert H. Smith School. For the past three years, Will has been researching worthy causes and bringing them back to his class as humanitarian projects.

While still in kindergarten, Will organized a Winnipeg Harvest food drive. In Grade 1, he launched a toy and book collection for St. Amant Centre. This school year, he coordinated a drive for leashes, blankets, toys, towels and supplies for the Pet Rescue Shelter.

The next recipient was Stéphanie Jalbert, a Grade 6 student at École Taché in Winnipeg. Stéphanie organized a large donation of clothing and toys for three families staying at L'Entre-temps, a St. Boniface women's shelter.

The inspiration for reaching out to families in trouble came after Stéphanie read about the tremendous suffering of women and children in concentration camps during World War II. She organized school fundraisers and personally went out to buy items for the families at L'Entre-temps.

Laurie Boon is a bright and optimistic Grade 12 student at Virden Collegiate Institute. She received a Young Humanitarian Award for her work with the elderly and dying. For two years, she has been regularly visiting the terminally ill at Virden Hospital. Laurie says it's an honour

to spend time with them. She took an eight-week training session to prepare for it.

Laurie has a special tenderness when it comes to people suffering from cancer. Her brother is currently fighting the disease.

Laurie was also on the steering committee of the spring 2004 Relay for Life in Virden. She contacted cancer survivors to participate in the event and organized a reception for them.

Since she was 12, Laurie has been volunteering at The Sherwood, a senior's home in Virden. She also fundraises for two seniors groups, the local Rebekahs and Oddfellows. At school, Laurie has been a peer helper for the last eight years.

This year's group award went to Jeff Anderson's Grade 12 English Literature Class at Tec Voc High School.

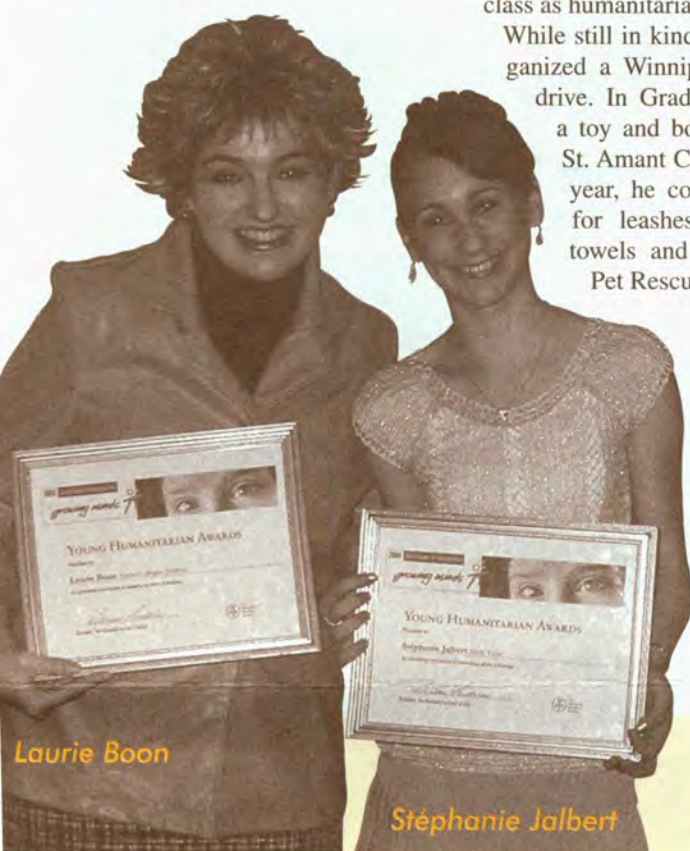
The class organized a massive relief dinner that raised over \$10,000 for tsunami victims. Students hit the phones for donations, arranged ticket sales, organized a silent auction, and recruited volunteers from every academic and vocational area in the school.

Their determination and drive all came together on January 27, when the school hosted 600 people for its relief dinner. Over 200 hundred students made and served meals. Sixty more put on a relief concert that same night.

According to UNICEF, it was the most successful fund-raiser held by any school on the prairies. And it was organized in just 21 days.

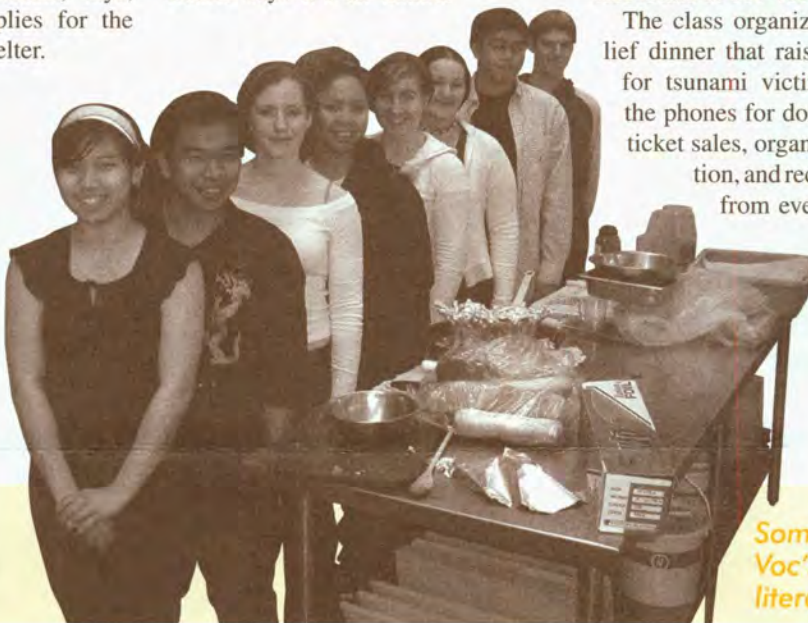
In addition to the inspiring stories, Miles Macdonell's Prodigy and fiddler Sierra Noble, a former YHA winner, provided the entertainment.

There were plenty of smiles, congratulations and pictures at the post-show reception. Media coverage was generous. **T**



Laurie Boon

Stéphanie Jalbert



Some members of Tec Voc's Grade 12 English literature class



Will Purves

The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work

Pick up the paperback—perk up your relationship

REVIEW

Gene Degen

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES FOR Making Marriage Work is a modern classic by Dr. John Gottman. In it, Gottman outlines the results of decades of intensive research on what makes some marriages thrive—and others fail. His discoveries enable him to predict whether a couple will still be together in five years with 91 per cent accuracy after observing them for as little as five minutes.

Gottman says relationships are co-creations that are continually developing. They need to adapt when we experience changes in our family stage and/or personal stage of life. It is an ongoing process that requires attention and energy. When educators are finding work stressful over a long period of time, their relationship may take a back seat, and can show the signs of strain.

Most people would agree that relationships need to be worked at, but what is the work that is likely to pay off? Dr. Gottman spells out his seven principles in his very readable paperback that I recommend highly. Some of his main points can be summarized

quite simply, providing a personal guide for relationship building.

Five of the principles relate to the quality of the friendship between the partners. Interestingly, the determining factor in whether they feel satisfied with the sex, romance and passion in their marriage is the quality of their friendship (so pay attention here). The first quality is to have an up-to-date knowledge of each other's inner life; fears, longings, resentments, stressors, and so on. What this mostly requires is that you pay attention.

Admiration system

Gottman calls the second quality "nurturing your fondness and admiration system." This involves frequently reminding yourself about what you like, respect, and appreciate about your partner. Our friends aren't perfect, and neither is our spouse, but in a successful friendship we focus most on what it is we like about them.

The third principle is "turning toward each other." This is simply acknowledging the many "bids" for attention that we make of each other,

from the most trivial to the most heartfelt. The words may be about taking the garbage out, but the way the message is responded to communicates how we feel about each other, and that is never trivial. The fourth principle is to "accept your partner's influence," or in other words, share power in a respectful way. Some call it, 'yield to win.' By yielding narrow self-interest, you may win a more nurturing relationship.

The last friendship building principle is to create shared meaning, both in the present by establishing routines and rituals (such as mealtimes) that are meaningful to both, and related to the future by discussing hopes and dreams. Our relationship is alive when it helps us to discover and express what is most important to us in life.

I find it interesting that while nurturing our friendship may be easier when we are not feeling overly busy, it does not necessarily require extra time. For example, it doesn't take more time to really pay attention to your partner, or to deliberately shift your thoughts from a familiar litany of complaints to

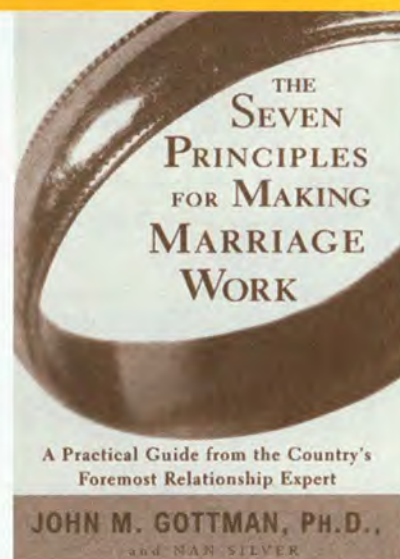
focusing on some appreciations. On the other hand, scheduling in regular time with your spouse to nurture the relationship can have a powerful impact.

Emotional currency

The last two principles deal with resolving conflict, which is a topic for another day. However, Gottman found that couples tend to be successful in managing conflict when the friendship is strong. You need to build up emotional currency in your relationship's account so that it is there to be used when differences arise. If you are presently stuck on a conflict with your spouse, maybe you need to work on strengthening the friendship instead of just focusing on the conflict.

We all want to be successful in our co-created relationships. If you would like outside support in your "project," contact the MTS Educator Assistance Program. **T**

Gene Degen is an MTS EAP counsellor. He can be reached at gdegen@mbteach.org.



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John M. Gottman, Ph.D., and Nan Silver
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