

Speak Your Mind

What are the burning issues in your classroom, school or division? What gets your dander up? What's praiseworthy? *The Manitoba Teacher* is ready to hear from you. We welcome editorial contributions on topics of interest to Manitoba teachers. If you have an opinion piece, feature article or field report you feel is particularly relevant to our readership, please direct your submission to:

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Please allow four weeks for a response from our editorial staff.



**Society Stirs
Byelection Debate**
2

Opinion Poll Results
4, 5

My Experience as a Fish
7

Teacher

published by *The Manitoba Teachers' Society*

Bill 22 still hurts

Five months after its introduction, the effects of Bill 22 are still sorely felt among Manitoba school divisions. Teachers' associations have responded in a number of ways.

In the Morris-MacDonald division, teachers were hard hit by Bill 22. Their board chopped eight days—seriously impinging on inservices and parent-teacher nights. "It put a severe strain on an already strained relationship," says Geoff Robson, president of the MMTA.

The association plans a mail drop for late October. "We'll hit every mailbox in the division, explaining the eight-day cut and why teachers feel the need to withdraw voluntary services."

Robson says the superintendent and trustees have already "taken some heat" over the board's actions.

In Agassiz school division, the board also chopped eight days—in addition to cutting all money for field trips and sports trips. Al Tymko, president of the Agassiz Teachers' Association, says information meetings gave teachers a chance to ask questions and get a better understanding of what was happening.

A June rally in Beausejour drew about 400 teachers and other supporters. Tymko says the event was a success. "Darren Praznik (MLA Lac du Bonnet) was there, and I know it really registered with him."

As for voluntary services, the ATA has made it clear it will support teachers' individual choices. A number of them have decided to withhold. "We also have a number of committees that have traditionally met in the evenings," says Tymko. "These days, many teachers just can't find time for them."

Teachers in the Interlake school division have lost four

days. Interlake Teachers' Association president, Scott Kwasnitza, says the school board wanted teachers to help it determine placement of the lost days, but ITA members refused any part in the discussion.

The association's general membership passed a motion saying teachers would "not volunteer" for extracurricular activities during the 1993-94 school year. Members also signed a petition asking the board to join the association in lobbying government to reconsider cuts.

Administrators in the division were instructed to solicit volunteers for extracurricular activities and make assignments if volunteers weren't forthcoming. Members wanted the assignments in writing. "We took the obey-now-grieve-later approach," says Kwasnitza.

At a special general meeting held September 15, members gave overwhelming support for

filing a collective grievance.

"With only 30 hours' notice, about 120 of our roughly 200 members showed up," says Kwasnitza. "We couldn't have asked for a better response."

In the Evergreen division, the board has axed eight days from teachers.

"We beat the board to the punch," says association president Wally Johannson. "We got to the paper by Sunday and had our position published by Tuesday."

Later, students from Arborg got a letter into the paper letting the public know how the withdrawal of voluntary services affected them.

"This week, there were dances at three separate high schools," says Johannson. "At two of the three, teachers were not there to supervise."

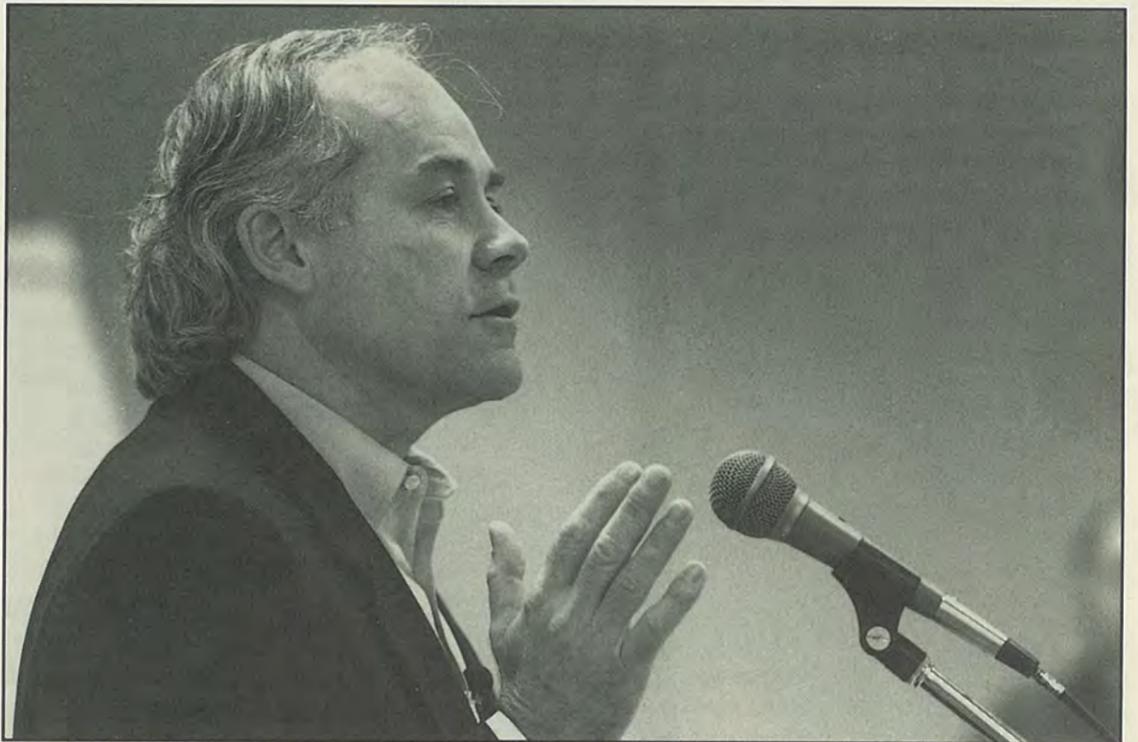
Teachers in the division and the ETA have since received a letter from the superintendent requiring them to participate in

extracurricular activities.

Marilynne Keil, president of the River East Teachers' Association (RETA) says while the main issue for members in her association is an increased workload at the high school level, losing two professional development days didn't help. "If many more days are taken during the life of the bill, there could be a strong stand by the association."

While Bill 22 has affected the majority of associations in Manitoba, some teachers have had their professional development days spared by their boards. Across the province, 20 out of 55 school boards have decided not to cut days.

For some, like teachers in the St. Vital School Division and Winnipeg School Division, the announcement was received gladly. Both of those associations officially expressed their appreciation.



Neil Brooks, associate dean, Osgood Hall Law School, says teachers shouldn't feel guilty about government deficits. At a recent collective bargaining seminar, Brooks said government propaganda about the deficit is really an excuse to cut social programs.



RETURN ADDRESS: THE MANITOBA TEACHER, 191 HARCOURT STREET, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA R3J 3H2



David Turner

Credit for change

What has history wrought for us this past month? Plenty.

The highlights of a frenetic September included a dramatic cabinet shuffle, a new education minister, five new MLAs and the release of a poll that vindicates the hard-working teachers of this province.

Let's start with the shuffle. Many judged the provincial government's move as an attempt to keep its byelection ship from breaking up on the rocks of public discontent over cuts in education and health care.

The shuffle announcement plus subsequent radio and TV ads were calculated to restore Manitobans faith in the "reasonableness" of government. But the government had listened too late. The ship went down. And teachers across Manitoba can claim part of the credit.

Not that the Society plays partisan politics: our members across this province come in every conceivable political stripe. The Society is not beholden to any political ideology. We defend the interests of teachers and students—period.

But this government seriously needed a reality check on its attitude toward education—and teachers were happy to oblige. We put education on the byelection agenda. We made voters think about public schools before they cast their ballots.

Our message was simple. Cuts to public schools put all our children at risk. The public agreed. And that's heartening—because it shows that the public values a quality education system.

Teachers across Manitoba have been shocked by this year's loss of professional development days, at the destruction of free collective bargaining and at the government's short-sighted education cuts.

Do we relish taking an adversarial stance? Hardly. The Society would prefer sensitive and enlightened discussion. But we must defend the interests of teachers and our students.

The public has certainly got the message. Results of our summer poll show that most Manitobans feel positive about teachers, believe teachers have a difficult job, recognize they are not overpaid and agree they should be paid for professional development.

Will government change its tune on education? Perhaps. It has already softened on some health care cuts because of continued pressure.

But until teachers see some honest evidence of a change of heart toward public school funding, we must let government know where we stand.

It's the Society's duty to do just that.

David Turner is the Society's 1993-94 president.

■ Question & Answer ■

Q My husband and I started teaching the same year. Recently, someone pointed out that because I took maternity leave, my pension will be less than his. I was appalled. How can this be?

A Many teachers find themselves in the same position, and the Society believes it's patently unfair. Manitoba is the only province that does not recognize maternity leave in the calculation of pensionable service.

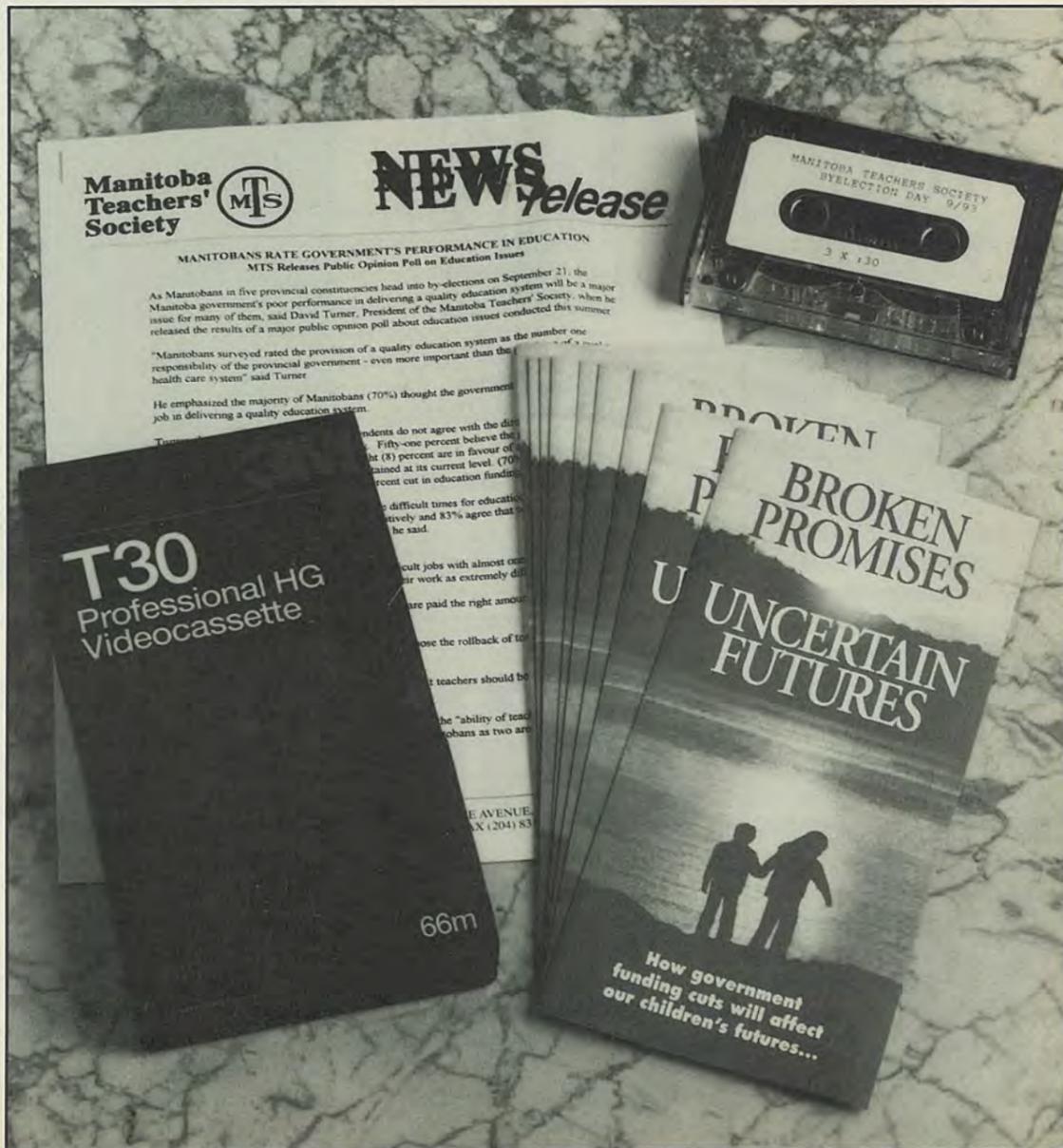
But the Society is fighting for—and expects—change.

In 1989, the Supreme Court of Canada in *Brooks v. Safeway* said maternity leave should be treated no differently than sick leave when it comes to access to employee benefits. (Manitoba has recognized sick leave as pensionable service since the late '70s.)

The Society, in its talks with the provincial government, has proposed teachers be able to purchase leave by paying normal contributions during the period of their maternity leave—and have government pay half of the resulting pension, as in the case of sick leave. The government has consistently refused.

At its last meeting, the Society's provincial executive passed a motion authorizing legal action against the Province if it does not relent.

The Manitoba Teacher



□ Manitoba teachers' concerns over government funding of education were brought home to voters by the Society's public awareness activities in the September 21 byelections.

Society stirs byelection debate

Political action by The Manitoba Teachers' Society kept the recent provincial byelections from becoming a single-issue debate, says Society president David Turner.

Health care issues figured prominently in pre-election debate. But Turner credits the Society's strategically timed news conference, hard-hitting radio and television advertising and extensive mail drop with keeping public school concerns in the minds of voters during the September 21 byelections.

Turner, who released a Society-sponsored poll midway through the run-up to the byelection, said Manitobans ranked the provision of a quality education system higher than health care issues. (For detailed polling results see centrespread.)

"Clearly, the respondents are not satisfied with this government's performance on education," he said. "That was confirmed in the results

of the byelection."

Turner says the poll—combined with MTS radio and television advertising—sent a clear signal to government that Manitobans expect a new attitude toward public school funding.

Government nervous

A mail drop to 26,000 households in three byelection constituencies brought the Society's position home to voters. The brochure responded to government's claim that like the family budget, when government expenses exceed income, something has to be cut.

"We agree," says the brochure. "But let's cut the frills—not the necessities."

The Manitoba government—clearly nervous about education issues—threw a new education minister into the mix early in the byelection campaign.

Turner says the cabinet shuffle, new education minister, and byelection results were clear signs that the Society's teacher

advocacy and public relations efforts worked. "Obviously, the Province felt the pinch of our very pointed awareness campaign." ♦



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TEACHERS CARE

The Manitoba Teachers' Society

New counsellor joins EAP

Merika Graham, the newest member of the Society's Educator Assistance Program (EAP) has been trained in three areas—marriage and family therapy, psychology and social work.

"Here in EAP, we do both psychotherapy and counselling," she says. "If I had to pick one term to describe myself, I'm most comfortable with the label 'psycho-therapist.'"

With a Ph.D. in counselling psychology, a master of social work, and accreditation by the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, Graham has held a

number of distinguished positions in the counselling field.

Currently on leave in her position as area service director for the child guidance clinic in River East School Division, Graham also teaches in the University of Winnipeg/Interfaith Pastoral Institute marriage and family therapy program.

She is quick to point out the benefits of the Society's EAP service—access to two full-time counsellors, male and female; absolute client confidentiality; and a variety of techniques.

Graham says practical solutions are important to EAP

counsellors. "People usually have the drive and inner strength to help themselves," she says. "We help them channel that energy so they can facilitate their own healing over the six to eight sessions they spend with us. Of course, we also have outside resources to draw on."

Graham is passionate about her interest in counselling. "I've always been interested in life stories," she says, "and I'm fascinated by people's abilities to cope and bounce back—sometimes amidst incredibly difficult circumstances."

Teachers turn to EAP for a number of reasons, says



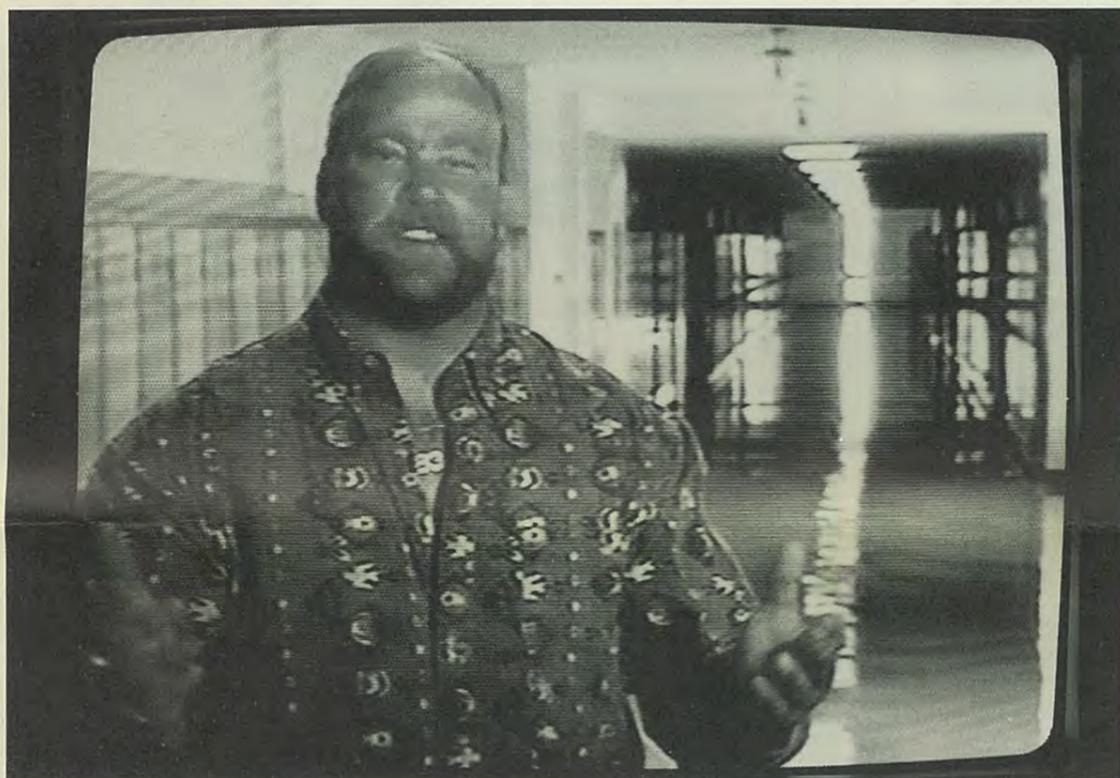
□ Merika Graham, EAP's newest counsellor, with Dan Rosin.

Graham. "Many times they need help with a relationship—whether marital, family or job-related." Although EAP was designed to treat people for relatively short terms, it can refer members to other sources for longer term treatment.

"Sometimes a person just needs to reframe the problem—and that may take only one visit."

Graham now shares counselling responsibilities with Dan Rosin until Jocelyn Goodine returns from sabbatical next June. Both Graham and Rosin can be reached by calling the Society at 837-5801 in Winnipeg, or at 1-800-262-8803.

All communication with EAP is strictly confidential. ♦



□ The metro PR chairs, with help from supporting associations, produced two video spots promoting the image of teachers. The Manitoba Teachers' Society endorsed the videos and provided funding for airtime.

Teacher's flair yields anniversary logo

Do artists visualize the world differently? You bet.

Just ask Wayne Stinson, Grade 9 to 12 art and science teacher at Stonewall Collegiate.

Last fall, Stinson visualized the Society's 75th anniversary between the pages of a book. He captured that theme in an innovative logo design which got the winning nod in the 75th anniversary logo contest sponsored by MTS last year.

Now, Stinson's design has found its way onto coffee cups, T-shirts, buttons, notebooks and the front page of *The Manitoba Teacher*.

How did he approach the challenge of developing the anniversary image?

"I saw the T as the spine of a book whose pages fanned out away from the observer," says the former ad agency art

director. "After a couple of roughs, I knew I was on to something. I worked up a comprehensive layout and made my submission."

What did his winning entry yield him? "Recognition, a coffee cup and a lot of personal satisfaction," he says.

Stinson earned his fine arts degree at the University of North Dakota. "I really value that training," he says. "There are so many fields you can branch off into if you have artistic flair."

His advice to young people with an artistic bent? "Feed it, develop it, and it will stay with you for a lifetime," he says.

Coffee mugs and T-shirts bearing Stinson's winning design can be purchased through your local association president.

See the boxed item on this page for details. ♦



□ Wayne Stinson, teacher and former advertising agency art director, developed the Society's 75th anniversary logo, which is now found on a variety of items.

75th Anniversary Mugs and T-shirts

Now available through your local association president.

Souvenir Coffee Mugs

\$5.00 each
(including all taxes)

75th Anniversary T-shirts

White with MTS anniversary logo
Extra large only

\$12.00 each
(including all taxes)

Manitobans rate government's performance in education

MTS Releases Public Opin

As Manitobans in five provincial constituencies headed into byelections on September 21, the Manitoba government's poor performance in delivering a quality education system was a major issue for many of them, said David Turner, president of The Manitoba Teacher's Society. Last month, he released the results of a major public opinion poll about education issues which was conducted this summer.

"Manitobans surveyed rated the provision of a quality education system as the number one responsibility of the provincial government—even more important than the provision of a quality health care system," said Turner.

He emphasized the majority of Manitobans (70%) thought the government was doing a fair to poor job in delivering a quality education system.

Following are more detailed statistics.

This survey was conducted among a random sample of 800 adult Manitobans in early June 1993. The margin of error on a sample of 800 is $\pm 3.5\%$ nineteen times out of twenty.

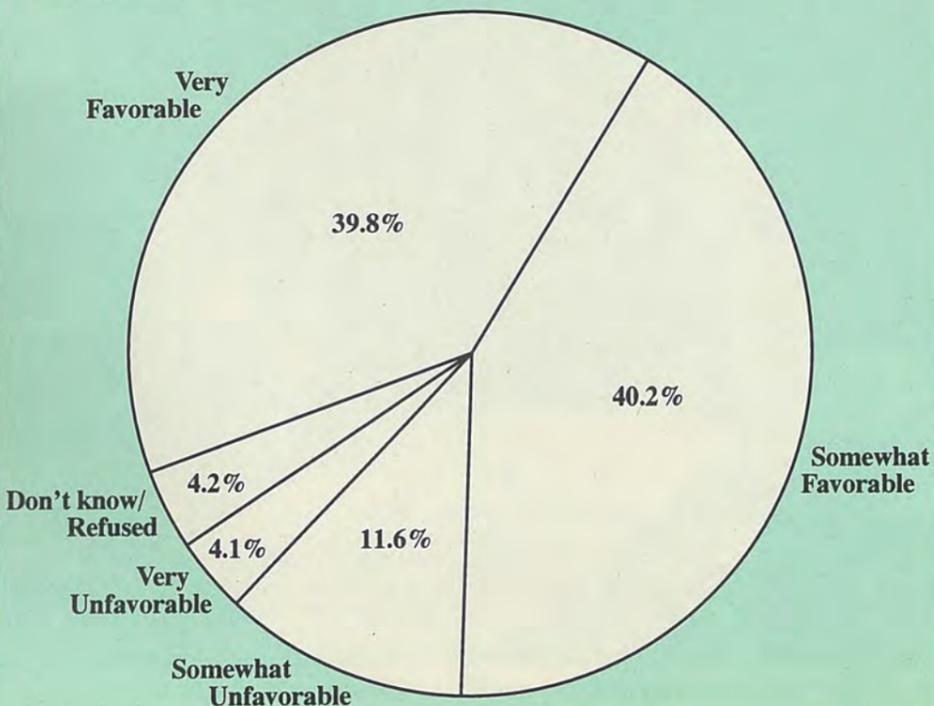
I'm going to read you a list of responsibilities that the Manitoba government is facing. Using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means not at all important and 5 means extremely important, please tell me how you would rate each of these responsibilities.

	Not at all Important	1	2	3	4	Extremely Important	DK/Ref
Providing a sound educational system	0.8%	0.4%	6.3%	14.3%	77.6%	0.7%	
Creating jobs	3.0%	3.9%	9.9%	17.8%	64.2%	1.1%	
Reducing the Manitoba deficit	2.8%	6.1%	20.0%	17.7%	51.5%	2.0%	
Keeping taxes low	2.7%	6.8%	32.4%	18.6%	37.9%	1.5%	
Delivering quality health care services	0.8%	2.6%	6.3%	19.0%	70.3%	1.1%	

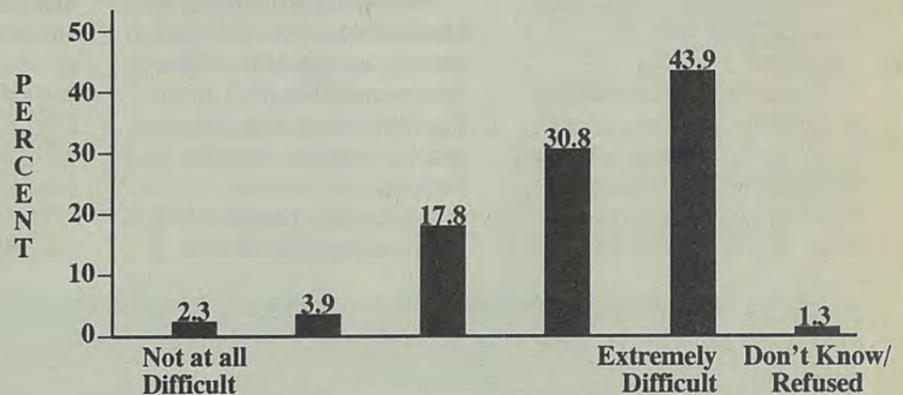
Now thinking of these same responsibilities, please tell me, for each one, whether you think the Manitoba government is doing an excellent job, a good job, only a fair job or a poor job?

	Excellent	Good	Only Fair	Poor	DK/Ref
Providing a sound educational system	1.8%	24.4%	48.9%	20.6%	4.2%
Creating jobs	0.7%	10.0%	42.4%	40.1%	6.8%
Reducing the Manitoba deficit	1.7%	15.1%	37.3%	36.3%	9.6%
Keeping taxes low	2.0%	25.6%	40.7%	28.8%	2.9%
Delivering quality health care services	4.2%	34.6%	36.2%	23.0%	2.0%

Generally speaking, how would you describe your feelings toward school teachers? Would you describe your feelings towards them as very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable?



Now I'd like you to consider for a moment the level of difficulty of the work performed by school teachers. Using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means not at all difficult and 5 means extremely difficult, please tell me how difficult you think the work performed by teachers is?



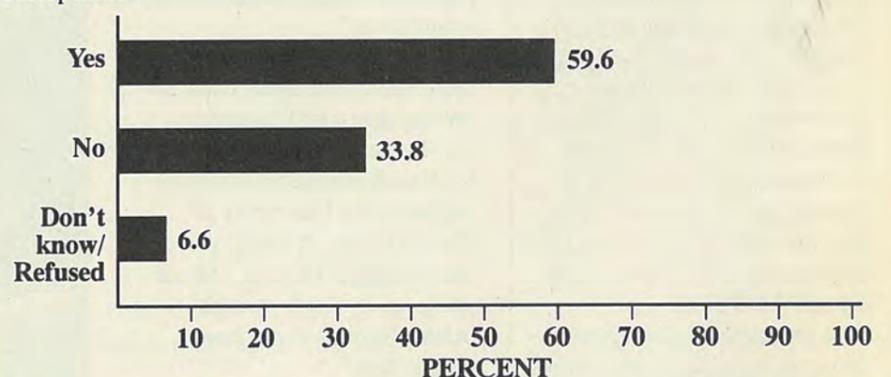
Thinking about the average salary for school teachers, in your opinion would you say that they are paid too much, about the right amount or too little for the work they perform?

	Too much	Right Amount	Too Little	Don't Know/Refused
School teachers?	21.7%	49.9%	21.7%	6.7%

Now I'd like you to think for a moment about the work performed by school teachers. In your opinion what do you believe is the most difficult aspect of a teacher's job?

Discipline	46.9%
Dealing with students and their problems	13.6%
Dealing with curriculum/teaching	9.8%
Keeping students focused	4.9%
Teacher stress	3.0%
Mutual respect	2.3%
Teacher/student ratio	1.7%
Communication with students	1.6%
Dealing with the parents	1.9%
Meeting everyone's expectations	1.0%
Students with special needs	0.8%
Other	4.3%
Don't know/Refused	8.1%

Do you think that teachers should be paid for upgrading of their skills or professional development?



Would you personally be willing to pay more taxes to improve the quality of public education in Manitoba?

Yes	61.6%
No	31.7%
Don't know	6.1%
Refused	0.6%

on Poll on Education Issues

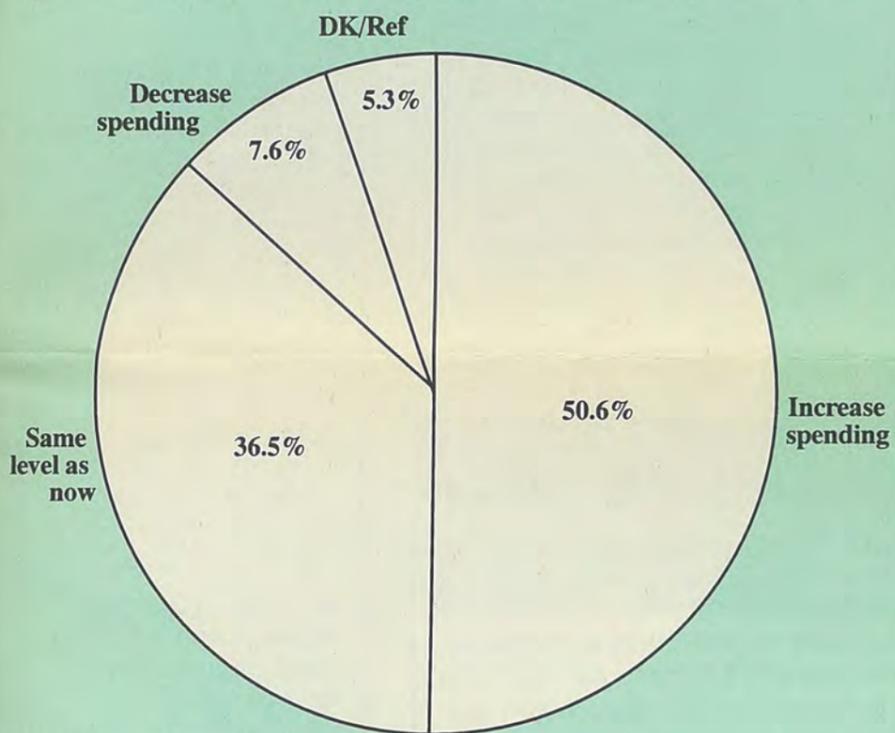
Now I'm going to read you a list of current issues in education. Using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means not at all concerned and 5 means extremely concerned, please tell me how concerned you are about each of these issues.

	Not at all Concerned		Extremely Concerned		DK/Ref	
Discipline in the classroom	1.4%	2.3%	11.2%	19.9%	63.5%	1.7%
The level of violence in our schools	2.1%	2.5%	6.1%	16.1%	72.0%	1.2%
The amount of time spent on the teaching of basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics	4.5%	5.1%	15.8%	18.3%	53.8%	2.7%
The number of children per classroom	5.2%	10.1%	27.3%	20.5%	27.1%	9.9%

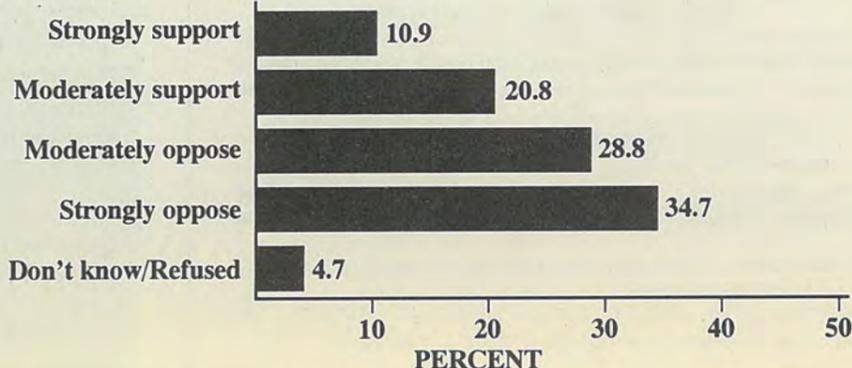
The Manitoba government recently announced a two percent reduction in education funding for this year? Would you say you strongly support, moderately support, moderately oppose or strongly oppose this reduction?

Strongly support	9.8%
Moderately support	18.2%
Moderately oppose	25.6%
Strongly oppose	43.8%
Don't know/Refused	2.7%

What do you think about Manitoba government spending on education? Do you think the government should increase spending on education, education funding should remain at the level it is now, or spending on education should be decreased?



As a result of funding cuts by the provincial government a number of public school divisions have announced that teachers will be required to teach more courses next year, and at the same time will have their salaries rolled back. Would you say that you strongly support, moderately support, moderately oppose or strongly oppose this action by the Manitoba government?



It has been suggested that more of the funds required to operate public schools should come from the income tax paid by Manitobans to the provincial government, and less from local property tax. Would you say you strongly support, moderately support, moderately oppose or strongly oppose this suggestion?

Strongly support	19.6%
Moderately support	42.1%
Moderately oppose	18.1%
Strongly oppose	10.5%
Don't know/Refused	9.6%

Using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means not at all affected and 5 means strongly affected, please tell me how you think each of the following areas of education will be affected by the reduction in education funding by the Manitoba government.

	Not at all Affected		Strongly Affected		DK/Ref	
The overall quality of education	10.1%	7.9%	24.2%	22.1%	32.6%	3.1%
The ability of teachers to give individual attention to students	9.7%	7.8%	19.4%	22.4%	36.9%	3.9%
The concerns of special needs students	5.3%	6.2%	15.3%	22.0%	45.9%	5.3%
The provision of extracurricular activities such as sports, music and drama by teachers	9.4%	8.5%	22.6%	21.5%	33.7%	4.3%

Now I am going to read you a list of statements various people have made. I'd like you to tell me how you personally feel about each statement by telling me whether you strongly agree, disagree or somewhat disagree with each of the statements?

	Str Agree	Agree	Dis-Agree	Str Dis-Agree	DK/Ref
The reason we have unemployment is that our educational system hasn't trained people to adapt to the changing work place.	11.5%	40.2%	35.7%	9.7%	2.9%
The educational system is providing young people today with a better education than their parents received.	12.0%	51.6%	27.8%	4.9%	3.8%
Our educational system places too much emphasis on purely academic education. We should be placing more emphasis on technical and vocational training.	14.4%	55.7%	21.8%	2.6%	5.5%
The educational system should be placing more emphasis on teaching children <i>how</i> to learn, rather than concentrating on teaching basic facts and concepts.	18.1%	57.8%	16.1%	1.8%	6.2%
Too much of the education dollar is being spent on administrators and school trustees. The number of school divisions throughout Manitoba should be cut.	20.3%	47.1%	19.8%	1.8%	11.0%
If parents want their children to participate in activities such as music, band, and sports then they should pay for it themselves.	7.9%	44.9%	36.4%	7.4%	3.4%
Most school teachers care a lot about the quality of education their students receive.	14.6%	67.8%	13.1%	1.9%	2.7%
The amount of time spent on subjects such as music, art and sports should be cut dramatically, so there is more time for teaching children the basics like reading, writing and mathematics.	9.5%	39.2%	39.1%	9.0%	3.1%
It's important to maintain the number of public school divisions because local school boards have the best understanding of the needs of their particular district.	5.7%	45.2%	35.5%	6.0%	7.5%

CONFERENCES-WORKSHOPS-BULLETINS

A Stress/Burnout Workshop will be held Saturday, October 23, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at McMaster House, 191 Harcourt Street, Winnipeg. Dan Rosin, Ph.D. and EAP counselor will teach you to recognize the causes and symptoms of stress and show you what to do to offset the negative effects of distress. Bring your sense of humor. To register, call Helen Smail at 837-5801 or 1-800-262-8803.

"A Workshop on Learning Styles: An Introduction" with Dr. Kathleen Butler will be held November 1 and 2 from 9:00 a.m.

to 4:00 p.m. at McMaster House, Winnipeg. Cost is \$95 for two days. Maximum enrolment is 50. **"A Workshop on Learning Styles: Intermediate Session"** will take place November 3 and 4 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at McMaster House. Cost is \$95 for two days. Maximum enrolment is 30. Prerequisite is the introductory workshop. **"A Workshop on Learning Styles for Administrators"** will be held November 5 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at McMaster House. Cost is \$40. Maximum enrolment is 50. Registration deadline for all of the above

workshops is October 22. For more information contact Linda Asper or Vivian Banks at 888-7961 or 1-800-262-8803.

The seventh annual conference of the Manitoba Council of Reading Clinicians will be held at Villa Maria, 100 Place Villa Maria, St. Norbert, Manitoba on **November 5**. For more information and registration, contact Susan Koloski, 131 Reay Crescent, Winnipeg, R2K 3R2, or call 661-2000.

Good Governance in Difficult Times—The Key to Making Touch Choices, Getting Good Results, will be presented by the Canadian Comprehensive Auditing Foundation (CCAF), at the Westin Hotel in Ottawa, November 7-9, 1993. The conference will focus on good governance—how to achieve it, how to support it, and its importance to organizational performance. Registration is limited. Contact Suzanne Seebach at (613) 236-6713; fax (613) 236-2150.

Aboriginal Peoples: The Untapped Workforce is the title of the Community Legal Education Association's 5th annual conference on human rights issues to be held

Friday, December 10, 1993 (International Human Rights Day) at the Norwood Hotel, 112 Marion Street, Winnipeg. The conference will focus on employment equity, the Human Rights Acts, and attracting and keeping Aboriginal employees. For more information, contact the CLEA at 943-2382.

Teachers—The Heart of the Middle sponsored by The Saskatchewan Middle Years Association will be held March 17-19, 1994. Keynote speakers are Neila Connors and Kathy Hunt. For more information, contact Patti Rodger, Box 335, Avonlea, SK, S0H 0C0; phone (306) 799-2133 (s), (306) 868-4633 (h); fax (306) 799-2162.

Training in geomatics for high school and college geography teachers will be offered by Natural Resources Canada during the second week of May, 1994. It will last a maximum of four days and will likely include one weekend. Registration is expected to be no higher than \$100. Information and registration packages will be mailed to school boards soon. For further information, contact: Canadian Centre for Training in Geomatics; Surveys, Mapping

and Remote Sensing Sector; Natural Resources Canada, 615 Booth Street, Room 169; Ottawa, Ontario; K1A 0E9. Phone (613) 947-0147, Fax (613) 947-0146.

Shaftesbury High School 25th reunion will be held at the Winnipeg Convention Centre, July 2, 1994. All former students and staff are invited. For more information, call the school at 888-5898 or write to Shaftesbury High School, 2240 Grant Avenue, Winnipeg, MB, R3P 0P7.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MEDIATION SERVICE A Community Resource for Conflict Resolution will be offering the following workshops for educators:

ANGER MANAGEMENT/NEGOTIATION

This one-day workshop is designed to introduce educators to basic anger management strategies when dealing with hostile students or parents. November 12 and on December 3 Fee \$100.00

MEDIATION TRAINING

In this three-day workshop participants will be introduced to the skills necessary to mediate a wide variety of school related disputes. November 23, 24, & December 2, 1993 Fee \$225.00

These workshops will be conducted by Adrian Challis and a trainer from Mediation Services

For more information call Loralyn or Dave at 774-2469.

Alberta Middle School Association "Celebrating Life in the Middle"

Holiday Inn - Crowne Plaza - Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
April 21-24, 1994

- Keynotes:** James A. Beane - National - Louis University, Wisconsin
A leader on Middle School Curriculum Development
Dr. Stephen Murgatroyd - Professor and Author, Alberta
North America's foremost authority on T.Q.M. in education
Gerry Smith - Principal, River Oaks School, Ontario
Sue Swaim - NMSA Curriculum Chair, Colorado
- School tours:** Mary Butterworth, Edmonton
John D. Bracco, Edmonton
Kate Chegwin, Edmonton
Riverview Middle School, Devon

THE NEW BASICS

Educating for the 21st Century
'Doing more with less and better'

- Preparing the Community; The Parents' Role in Middle Schools
- Strategies and Starting Points: Implementing a Middle School Program
- Creating Active vs. Passive Learners and Learning
- Focussing on Essential Learning Behaviors
- Characteristics of Middle Level Learners
- Using Multiple Intelligences to Expand Opportunities for Learning
- Developing Effective Middle Level Teaching Teams
- Curriculum Considerations for the 21st Century
- T.Q.M. and Schools of Excellence
- The Role of Technology in Learning
- Improving Learning Through Community Based Partnerships
- Assessment as Instruction: Designing Authentic Tasks
- Student Led Conferencing
- Taking Learning from Home and School to the Community
- The Evolving Role of the Counsellor
- Facing Fiscal Reality - Doing More with Less and Better
- Re-Engaging Parents and the Community
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Registration - \$200 Cdn. before Jan. 1, 1994; \$225 Cdn. after Jan. 1, 1994
Travel and accommodation assistance:
call 1-800-268-7391 - Marlin Travel, Edmonton

For further information or registration contact: Stephen Lindop at
(403) 987-2204, AMSA, Box 750, Devon, Alberta T0C 1E0

*This conference is sponsored by the Devon School District and the
Alberta Middle School Association.*

You're NOT a member of a S.A.G.??

The Manitoba Teachers' Society is currently reviewing Special Area Groups and their relationship with the Society. We are asking members of SAG executives and other "interested teachers" for comments and opinions. If you are not a member of a SAG, you may not have any direct access to this review. The reasons you may have for non-membership are of interest to us. If you have anything to contribute such as praise, criticism, or simply commentary on our SAG structure, please send your comments to:

Ron Banister, SAG Task Force Chairperson
191 Harcourt Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3J 3H2

MARYANN GATHERAL, international consultant of California, will be presenting two workshops in Winnipeg. On November 4, Gatheral will present **Listening Skills (K-12)** and on November 5, **Thinking Skills (K-12)**. See some of the latest research on these topics.

DAN MISCISCO, educational consultant from Vancouver, will present a seminar on November 19 on **Managing to Win in the Classroom (K-12)**. This action-packed seminar features proven proactive techniques that will provide a positive classroom climate.

Place: International Inn, Wellington & Berry, Winnipeg, MB
Time: 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Registration fee: \$90 per seminar.

Cheques payable to Quality Learning Connexion.



Send registration/further information to:
Suzanne Watson, R.R.#1, Dugald, MB
ROE 0K0
Tel. 853-7398/853-2166

Administration Workshops

Understanding Leadership through Self-reflection and Observation of Administrators is an adaptation of the Peer Assisted Leadership Program (PAL). Participants will (1) analyze their own and another colleague's instructional leadership behavior (2) review, support and gain insight from working with colleagues, and (3) learn what others are doing in their schools. The workshop will take place Saturday, November 6 and Saturday, November 13 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Auditorium at McMaster House, 191 Harcourt St., Winnipeg. Facilitators are Joe Degen and Christie Whitley. 15 hours credit in Leadership.

Mechanics of Running a School—Part 1 is for school principals and those who plan to be school administrators. This workshop will be held Saturday, November 20 and Saturday, November 27 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Dakota Collegiate, 661 Dakota Street, Winnipeg. Wayne Ruff and Dennis Wilson are facilitators. 10 hours credit in Management.

Being Well and Staying Well—The Administrator and the Organization will deal with aspects of wellness for administrators in the school system. These sessions will be held Saturday, December 4 and Saturday, December 11 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the auditorium at McMaster House, 191 Harcourt Street, Winnipeg. Facilitators are Kathy Lautens and Donna Wilson. 10 hours credit in Personnel.

Fees for all the above sessions are \$40. For more information, contact Linda Asper at 888-7961 or 1-800-262-8803.

My experience as a fish



□ Barbara Melnyk, JET teacher, with a group of students in Furen-cho, Japan.

by Barbara Melnyk

Fish and Japan. They go hand in hand. The Japanese catch fish, sell fish and eat fish. I happen to be one of those fish looking out from the glass fishbowl—my place in Japanese society. Fortunately, my fishbowl is equipped with a word processor, so I can tell you my story.

After I graduated from the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba in 1991, I joined the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET), a cultural exchange program run by the Japanese government. I found myself teaching English in Furen-cho, a small farming town in the north island of Japan, Hokkaido.

When I first set foot here, I was whisked into the world of the unknown. Here I was, a foreigner in the middle of nowhere, not knowing a word of Japanese. (Well, that's not entirely true, I knew the words

for garbage and pervert, but neither got me very far.) Eating raw fish and singing karaoke seemed like strange initiation rites, as did driving in the right seat of the car on the left side of the road—and fielding stares from young and old alike.

But I took my role as foreigner with grace.

Besides teaching students at the town's two junior high schools, five elementary schools—plus my two evening adult classes—I shared my culture: Canadian cooking classes, Ukrainian Easter egg decorating, Ukrainian dancing, Canadian folk dances and talks on life in Canada.

And that wasn't all. I also steeped myself in Japanese culture with lessons in flower arranging, Japanese harp, dried flower and paper art, pottery, karate. I even joined a Japanese chorus group.

I knew I would never get the wide range of teaching experience back home that I get here. I teach, entertain and try to add

an entertaining and interesting dimension to the English language in a country where rote memory learning is usually the only method of teaching, because of the large classes.

I work with a Japanese English teacher. Together, we try to show the students that English is a living language—

not just another subject to study and memorize in order to pass a test (a large part of the reason for learning here).

You've probably heard a very nasty rumor that Japanese students are disciplined, respectful and quiet. Don't believe it. They're like students in any other country. The only time they are truly quiet is when asked a question in English.

In Japan, "groupism" prevails and individualism is frowned upon. Students must wear uniforms with very strict guidelines. Perms, hair coloring or pierced ears are not allowed. Everyone must look the same.

Unfortunately, the uniforms enhance gender differences among the students, and the restrictions cause the students to rebel during summer vacation, when they are allowed to dress or wear their hair as they like.

Unlike Canadian students, Japanese children have their classes in the same room all day. Teachers' desks are in the teachers' room which is usually devoid of any couches or tables—and often full of smoke. Both teachers and students eat the same lunch prepared by the town's "school lunch centre," and students are

responsible for cleaning their school.

In many ways, Japanese schools are like community clubs. The administration and teachers are far more involved with students and parents. There seems to be a real family network. Students spend as much time on special activities as they do in academic instruction. They also go to school three Saturdays a month.

On top of this, many Japanese parents shell out thousands of dollars on *jukus* (cram schools) and private tutors. Entrance exams are extremely important as the student's future is largely determined by which high school he or she gets into.

So where do I come in?

Sometimes I'm still not so sure. I do know that the students and I mutually gain something from each other. I learn about myself through teaching, and learn as much—if not more—from my students as they learn from me.

The more I learn of the Japanese culture, language and people, the more I realize how much more there is to learn, how exciting it is, and how it draws me closer to myself.

To be continued next issue.

Damsels in Distress: A Manitoba Sequel

A conference on strategies for empowering young women

Join educators, counsellors, health care professionals, and other dedicated members of society who are committed to ensuring that adolescent women are prepared to meet and accept the challenges and opportunities of today's world.

Listen, learn and share your knowledge and experience with a host of experts on young women and their special needs.

****The conference sponsors gratefully acknowledge the following for permission to use the image of the Paper Bag Princess: ©1980. Robert N. Munsch, Michael Martchenko, Annick Press Ltd.*



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Respect is key, says top principal

"Humbled."

That's how Jeanne M. Gitzel felt when she received the 1993 Canadian Association of Principals Distinguished Principal/Vice-Principal's Award at the CAP National Conference in St. John's, Newfoundland, in May.

"I felt as if I were accepting on behalf of colleagues across Canada," said Gitzel, principal of Linden Meadows School in Winnipeg. "How can you choose one person among so many across the country who do such wonderful work in their schools?"

The CAP award recognized Gitzel for her educational and

community leadership, and for "qualities of administration which exemplify dedication and enthusiasm in the provision of programs which have been designed to ensure excellence in education." It included a \$5,000 contribution to the Canadian Association of Principals Foundation in Gitzel's name.

Gitzel hales from the small town of Basswood, Manitoba. She remembers playing school with her dolls as early as age two. Her success as a school administrator comes from her respect for individuals, she says. "Respect is absolutely essential, whether you're

dealing with students, teachers, parents or colleagues."

After graduating from Basswood Consolidated School and Crossley Collegiate in Minnedosa, Gitzel took her teacher training certification at Brandon University. She received her bachelor's degree at the University of Winnipeg, and her B.Ed. and post-baccalaureate degrees from the University of Manitoba.

Before she joined staff at Assiniboine South School Division, Gitzel taught at Onanole, Elphinstone and Portage la Prairie. She's been an administrator for 18 of her 33 years as an educator. ♦



□ Jeanne Gitzel, principal of Linden Meadows School in Winnipeg, received the Canadian Association of Principals' Distinguished Principal Award.

Society reflects on 75 years

The Manitoba Teachers' Society—a powerful force for educators in this province—celebrates 75 years of service to teachers, students and Manitoba's public school system.

In this issue of The Manitoba Teacher, we'll look at the genesis of this vast organization. And throughout the year, we'll take a look back at the personalities and events that shaped the Society—originally known as the Manitoba Teachers' Federation.

Adapted from *Chalk, Sweat and Cheers*, a history of the Manitoba Teachers' Society, by J.W. Chafe

On a hot July day in 1918, about 80 Winnipeg teachers found themselves marking papers at the old Normal School on William Avenue. One of them, W.E. Marsh of Belmont, invited all of them to a meeting in the basement gym to discuss forming a teachers' union.

At the meeting, Marsh and others talked of the need for a teachers' organization, but didn't make a direct appeal for support on idealistic grounds. But they did say, in effect,

"Teachers' salaries are no better than laborers' wages. Unite and we can demand that they be raised."

Some wanted to do just that. Others squirmed in their seats and couldn't wait to extricate themselves from what looked like a Bolshevik meeting.

In the end, 17 teachers had pooled their dollars and met one noon-hour at the YMCA—and made history. The organization—or at least a potential organization—they formed was called the Manitoba Teachers' Federation (MTF).

It's official

The place: the concert hall of the Industrial Bureau, on the site of the present Federal Building at Main and Water streets. It was a long-condemned barn of a place, a landmark hang-over from the West's second railway age.

The time: April 22, 1919, at 7:30 p.m.

The organizers held their breath. This, the first general meeting, would determine whether the upstart organization would live or die. Their hopes were realized. Long before 7:30 p.m. the heavily-trodden, wooden floorboards began to creak. The teachers trooped in. Here's how A.J. Struthers remembered it:

"I must have let in a thousand teachers, all chattering with anticipation. Most of them, I think, were from the

country—women teachers in the city were fighting shy of the Federation because they were afraid it might affiliate with labor—as some of the men, especially Fred Tipping, wanted.

"Many of the Winnipeg principals felt as the women did. Incidentally, we had to be careful who we let in—the meeting was for teachers only, and they all had to show their receipts from the convention.

"We were not concerned about the general public—anyway most people had shown themselves massively indifferent to our doings. But some businessmen, certainly some school trustees, regarded this movement as a revolutionary Bolshevik plot to bring on a general strike—this was just three weeks before the famous general strike started.

"We didn't even allow

reporters in, although one from each of the three newspapers was admitted later on in the evening."

Officers elected

With great enthusiasm and a lot of good humor they went over the fledgling organization's constitution—clause by clause—scrutinizing every phrase "like a terrier watching a rat in a hole," as someone later said. Suggestions were shouted from all over the cavernous auditorium. Timid women found new voices. Wordings were changed and amendments adopted or defeated.

After midnight came the election of officers. Herbert Huntley was chosen first president of the MTF. The group then elected Miss B. Stewart as vice-president. The historic meeting ended at 12:30 a.m. ♦

Her "uncertain best"



□ Ethelbert High School principal Eleanor Boyce (third from left) with daughters of a local Ukrainian family, circa 1920.

Eleanor Boyce will celebrate her 95th birthday this year. Co-author of 14 textbooks, Boyce was a regular commentator on education issues in print and on radio and TV. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Manitoba in 1951 and was awarded the Order of Canada in 1977. Here, Boyce gives some candid commentary on her remarkable teaching career.

Retired teacher Eleanor Boyce has been a participant in and witness to much of the 20th century. Sure, she sometimes uses a cane to get around these days—and leaving the house is a luxury she chooses not to indulge in often.

Yet at 94, Boyce displays more wit and interest than many people in the prime of their careers. Her mind is sharp, her candor refreshing. She's not afraid to tell it like it is—and was.

"Ignorance fears nothing," says Boyce, who came to Manitoba from New Brunswick in 1919—the same year the Manitoba Teachers' Federation (MTF) was born. "I was 20 and had never taught a day in my life, but I was confident I wouldn't be a complete flop," she says.

Boyce chose to teach in the country. She thought rural people might be less critical of a young teacher who was just learning the ropes. Her first assignment was the principalship of a one-room high school in Ethelbert, Manitoba, just north of Dauphin.

"I gave it my uncertain best," says Boyce. "Although I had the requisite paper qualifications from the New Brunswick Normal School, nothing prepared me for the one-room high school, nor a village where Ukrainian was the main language. For those first three years I concentrated on familiarizing myself with the curriculum."

See yourself as Popeye

The concept of an "uncertain best" is something Boyce has always believed in. And, while

these days many professionals are loath to admit human foibles and acknowledge their mistakes, Boyce has a healthy I-am-what-I-am attitude to life.

"Try seeing yourself as Popeye," she says. "You are what you are. If someone tries to cut you down, it shouldn't bother you much. You know your own limitations—in a sense, you've already cut yourself down."

It's that brand kind of psychological self-defence that served her well in two of the most embarrassing moments of her career. The first was in a debate over Hilda Neatby's *So Little For The Mind*, a book that criticized modern education.

"I took the position that the changes Neatby deplored were natural—and I fell flat on my face," she says. "My opponent was more articulate and better prepared. I just couldn't compete. 'I know the ship is sinking, but the flag is still flying,' I said. The audience appreciated my admission of defeat."

Torn apart

During a CBC radio debate on "The Irish question" Boyce experienced that same sinking feeling. "I wasn't talking to save Ireland, I was talking for the \$100," she says. "My opponent tore me apart."

For Boyce, it's easy to look back and laugh—those incidents have become fond memories now. And there are many others. Like the time she was preparing a lesson in English on the uses of the infinitive, and a man showed up at her classroom door. She sat him down—as a guinea pig—and walked him

through her lesson.

The man told Boyce he had never grasped the infinitive before, thanked her for explaining it, then left. Shortly before class the next day, the same gentleman appeared again. "I told him 'Look, I appreciated your visit yesterday, but I've really got a lot of work to do today and don't particularly want to see you.'"

The man then introduced himself as the school inspector.

After becoming president of the Manitoba Teachers' Federation in 1942 and leaving part-way through her term to teach at the Manitoba Normal School, Boyce was offered the position of school inspector herself.

In 1948, she became the first female school inspector in the province. She spent long nights, driving the highways and backroads of the province—occasionally finding herself stuck in Manitoba gumbo or skidding down icy roads—so she could do the job.

The right thing

"Respect for students is so important," she says. "That's something that's changed from when I was an inspector. Often, I would see teachers belittle a student. Nothing hurts a youngster more than being laughed at by peers."

Boyce says today's teachers are doing the right thing by giving children opportunities to express themselves. It's something she has always practised—even when it wasn't in fashion. "My students could say anything they wanted to me, as long as they did it clearly, simply and politely. Back then, most school children didn't get that chance."

But respect from students toward teachers is also impor-

tant, says Boyce—and that's where she gives today's educators a failing grade.

Earn their respect

Boyce believes teachers should earn students' respect—and that requires a change in attitude. "You can't be their pal," she says. "Their friend, yes—but there's a difference between being friendly and being a pal."

Boyce retired from teaching in 1971, but continued tutoring, in many cases the grandchildren of her friends.

She still manages to get out of the house. And when she does, she dips into her reservoir of bright, self-effacing humor to respond to those who patronize her. At one of Boyce's first forays into a bingo hall, another player asked where she worked before retiring.

"At the university," said Boyce.

"That's nice, dear. Did you work in the kitchen?" came the follow-up.

"No, of course not," said Boyce. "They're very fussy about whom they hire in the kitchen." ♦

More from Eleanor Boyce

On preparation:

If a teacher doesn't know what she's aiming at, there's no telling what she'll hit.

On presentation:

If you are interested in your subject, you become interesting to your students.

On a new picture for this article:

No way. I wouldn't want to inflict a picture on your readers. It's bad enough they'll read about me.