

THE MANITOBA

Teacher

MARCH 2017 VOLUME 95 NUMBER 5 NEWSMAGAZINE OF THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY



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Teacher

MARCH 2017 VOLUME 95 NUMBER 5 NEWSMAGAZINE OF THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

NORM GOULD

Teaching can be frustrating at times. Not so much the work we do in the classroom, but how some people view us from afar. We've all heard the comments: summers off, winter and spring breaks, blah, blah, blah.

What we sometimes forget is that those are minority voices. Voices backed by zero clues as to what we do.

I discovered that just before the beginning of Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week last month when I heard some morning radio clowns yucking it up at the expense of teachers. I fumed for a day or two and then it became clear their views were shared by almost no one.

During the appreciation week I was asked by other media to speak about the impact teachers have on their students and how long-lasting that impact can be.

One morning I was on 103.1 Virgin Radio with Ace Burpee, talking about teachers and the work we do in and outside the classroom. The hosts called on listeners to send along shout-outs to the teachers that influenced them and what they remembered. Their social media feeds were flooded with glowing comments about teachers who changed their lives.

From there I was on a panel at CJOB in the afternoon (not the knowledgeable morning show) where the experience was much the same. It was obvious from that discussion most people are aware of what we do, the hours we spend that they never see and the impact we have on our students.

The next morning on CTV Manitoba's breakfast show, it was the same.

Altogether the experience far overshadowed the few minutes of ridicule I had heard the week before. It also supported research MTS does on behalf of teachers. Our regular polling of public opinion has shown that an overwhelming number (88 per cent) of Manitobans have a positive view of teachers. In our poll last year less than eight per cent viewed teachers unfavourably.

No doubt a large majority of those who listened and watched the reports on appreciation week were not in the eight per cent. The discussions sparked remembrances for everyone, including me, to think back at the teachers who had a positive impact on the way conduct our lives and think about the world.

I still remember when a high school drafting teacher asked me what wealth was. I said it was money. He questioned the answer, wondering if wealth wasn't also family and friends and health the other less tangible riches in our lives. It seems like a small thing, but shows that so-called small things are important and carried with our students for years.

While it's hard to ignore thoughtless criticism of what we've chosen and love to do in life, we can be confident in knowing that caring teachers have touched more people in a positive way than uncaring critics. Students, former students and parents across the province and country do appreciate what we do.

And not only during one week in February.



The Manitoba Teachers' Society

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INSIDE MTS

CLASSROOMS REFLECT JUSTICE, FAIRNESS, EQUALITY

BOBBI TAILLEFER, GENERAL SECRETARY

As of late, I have become increasingly concerned about the recent political events that have occurred to the south of our border and, it has nothing to do with political ideology or party politics. My despair, and I do not use the word lightly, is centered on the lack of decorum, respect and courtesy towards women, minorities, vulnerable groups and anyone else that may spark the ire of the newly-elected president. That despair has only been exacerbated by the confirmation of an Education Secretary who is a billionaire and who clearly does not believe in public schools. She never attended public school, nor did she send her children to public school. This leads me to wonder as to the effect this will have on America and its schools and what, if any, will be the echo effect here in our society.

Our own history of education in Manitoba has been quite tumultuous in the past, as is evidenced by a particular part in the 1890s which is called the Manitoba School Crisis. Conflict arose around questions of religion and bilingualism in schools and redress was being sought from the courts and the federal government. These battles were hot issues for all Manitobans and they divided communities and families.

A quote from then Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier illustrated how these issues could better be resolved. Rather than hard-lined ways that had been undertaken prior to his election, the new Prime Minister was a proponent of “sunny ways”. He is quoted as saying “If it were in my power, I would try the sunny way. I would approach this man Greenway with the sunny way of patriotism, asking him to be just and to be fair, asking him to be generous to the minority, in order that we may have peace among all the creeds and races which it has pleased God to bring upon this corner of our common country. Do you not believe that there is more to be gained by appealing to the heart and soul of men rather than to compel them to do a thing?”

I agree with Laurier, issues are always better resolved by asking that people be just, fair and generous to those who are marginalized. This should apply to personal decisions as well as to governments when they decide on policy.

The Manitoba Teachers’ Society was created, almost 100 years ago, by teachers who shared the same vision as Laurier. Those teacher leaders wanted to promote public education as a means of providing all children, regardless of

their personal circumstances, with a solid education as an investment in our society. The Manitoba Teachers’ Society remains firmly attached to those values and we will do everything we can to make sure that public schools are well-resourced, properly staffed and open to all of Manitoba’s children. We also value and remain committed to fairness, justice, equality and diversity and work to ensure that these ideals are reflected in our schools for the benefit of students and teachers alike.

It is my hope that we will not embrace the cynicism espoused by the political leadership of our neighbours to the south. This may be difficult as some of our own want to raise a debate about Canadian values while not even being able to elaborate what these might be.

I believe that Manitoba teachers have it right; I believe that our classrooms reflect values that appeal to the best in all Manitobans. While it seems ridiculous to have to say this in 2017 – The Manitoba Teachers’ Society (members and staff) still believe in decorum, respect and courtesy.

NOTICE OF CALL

This notice is given in compliance with Bylaw II of The Manitoba Teachers’ Society.

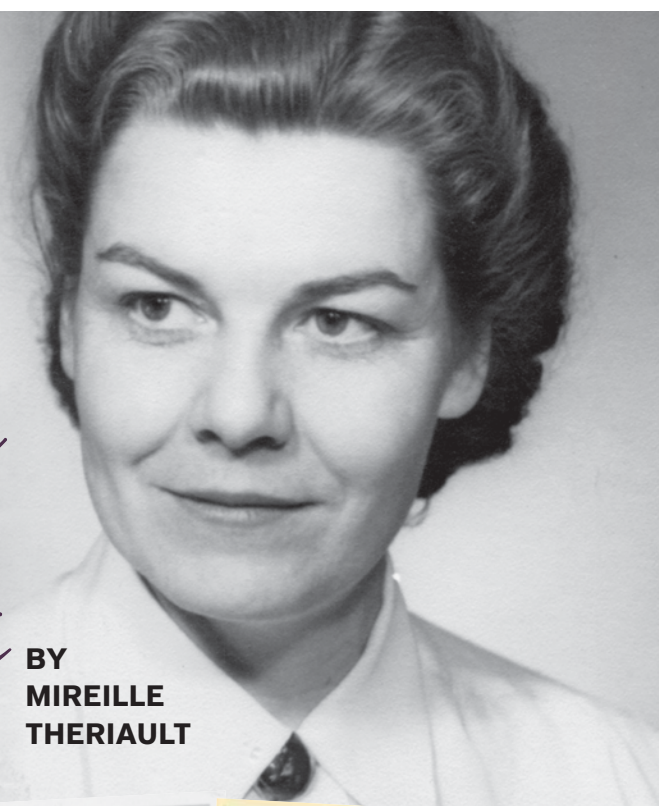
The 98th Annual General Meeting of the Provincial Council of The Manitoba Teachers’ Society will be held at 9:00 a.m., May 25, 26 and 27, 2017 at the Fairmont Hotel, Winnipeg.

The Provincial Council consists of representatives named by teacher associations and Les éducatrices et éducateurs francophones du Manitoba plus the members of the current Provincial Executive. The number of delegates representing each association depends on the number of members in that association.

Bobbi Taillefer
General Secretary

Eight Decades of Teaching

BY
MIREILLE
THERIAULT



She doesn't see what all the fuss is about but despite her modesty, teacher Isabella Dryden is unique.

After four decades in the classroom and in educational planning, she has spent another three decades in retirement – teaching.

At 99 years, Miss Dryden has had bestowed upon her all manner of praise, plaques and certificates of achievement. Much has been written about her volunteer spirit since she joined Creative Retirement more than thirty years ago.

Even as she approaches her own Centennial, Isabella teaches classes three days a week during Fall, Winter and Spring terms and twice a week during the summer for Creative Retirement. As one of their longest serving volunteers she was awarded an Honorary Lifetime Membership. And that was back in 1996.

Now she will have to endure at least one more bout of accolades. On March 23, the Educators of Business and Information Technology (EBIT) will host a special evening at McMaster House in her honour.

It has been a long journey for an 18-year-old who arrived in 1937 at a one-room rural school after graduating from Central Normal School.

From travelling by horse-pulled buggy to juggling students in grades 1 to 10 through their lessons all the while managing to be the nurse, cook, caretaker and social committee, she's seen and done it all. The four years she spent at Errol School near Lenore, followed by another year at Bardal School near Sinclair, Manitoba, provided experiences for a wealth of anecdotes. Many of those stories she tells with a rueful smile and a lasting fondness for those children,

while others still bring tears to her eyes.

As many teachers know, the first few years can be particularly difficult.

"I put a lot of pressure on myself," she says. "I stayed one year at the second school and I had a breakdown and so I left teaching and moved to Ontario and took an Administrative Secretarial course," she says matter-of-factly.

"I worked in various positions; in an office for a manufacturing company and then as a secretary for the Chief Librarian of the Windsor Public Library. I was there for a few years but I knew I always wanted to go back to teaching."

She returned to Manitoba in 1947, first for a year at Ross Consolidated School (two-rooms this time with only grades 1 to 6) and then home to Virden where she settled into the relative luxury of teaching Grade 5 for

Keep yourself active, physically



It has been a long journey for an 18-year-old who arrived in 1937 at a one-room rural school after graduating from Central Normal School. Even as she approaches her own Centennial, Isabella Dryden teaches classes three days a week during Fall, Winter and Spring terms and twice a week during the summer for Creative Retirement.



another year. She says it was a wonderful experience but knowing she had training in that area, the board approached her to teach shorthand, book keeping, economics, law and typewriting.

"I wasn't certified to teach (business/vocation) even though I had the business training. I said 'Well, I'll try it for one year but I would like in a letter, in writing, saying that if I am not happy teaching in the high school, or I'm not doing a good job that I can have my grade 5 class back'."

For Miss Dryden, not doing a "good job" wasn't an option.

"I decided I needed my degree and I needed to strengthen my teaching experience in the area of business. I guess it would be for 15 or 16 years every summer I would go to school for special courses." There were some courses from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois

offered by the Department of Education in Winnipeg, but with no business education courses offered in Manitoba, she attended summer sessions at the University of British Columbia. She spent five more summers earning an undergraduate degree in Business Education at the University of Alberta. Following that, she enrolled at the University of North Dakota to work on her Masters Program.

Rather than any kind of linear path, her curriculum vitae becomes a dizzying criss-cross of dates, particularly during the 60's and 70's of her many teaching positions, personal studies, and new responsibilities that came with a major shift in her career path in 1967. By then she was the Department Head of Business Education at Virden Collegiate.

At the end of one school day she received

what began as a rather cryptic phone call.

"It was a gentleman from the Department of Education. His name was Mr. Addy. 'I'm on my way to Virden' he says. 'I'd like to speak with you. Are you going to be at the school after classes?' Anyways, this great tall gentleman came and he asked for a tour of all the classrooms that I used and I thought. 'What is going on?' Eventually he said 'I've come to invite you to be a member of the staff of the Vocational Branch of the Department of Education and give leadership in the Business Education Program.'" She had two weeks to consider the offer.

"I thought about it for a long time and it seemed at though just as one door closes, another opens, so I decided I would join the staff and I worked there for quite a few years." She led workshops for teachers, wrote

... intellectually and spiritually"



curriculum and worked with curriculum committees, all while pursuing her own education.

“Later on they asked if I would assist with the curriculum in Industrial Arts, then curriculum in Vocational Industrial Programs as well as the Business Education Programs. It was a lot of hard work.” She gestures widely and lets out a little shriek to evoke the sheer breadth of the tasks set before her.

But there was even more to come and her new students would be teachers themselves. At their invitation, she taught both summer and regular sessions through the 1970s at Red River Community College and the University of Manitoba in a new joint Faculty of Education program. She is particularly pleased to have been part of this new initiative, having had no choice but to pursue her own Business Education degree elsewhere over so many years.

At her retirement from the Department of Education in 1983, her co-workers made particular note of her many lasting contributions to fellow teachers, especially in helping create Special Area Groups for teachers.

Lea Mansell, a long-time friend and EBIT member who is on the organizing committee for the event in her honor confirms Isabella has never missed a Special Area Group (now, Special Area Groups of Educators) conference yet.

“Even this year at the age of 99 she was there the whole day.”

It is for this unfaltering dedication that EBIT established the IDATE (Isabella Dryden Award for Teaching Excellence) award in 2000. \$500 goes to a graduate of the Business/Technology Teacher Education Program. Donations to the scholarship fund can be made through the EBIT website beyond the March 9 registration deadline for the dinner event.

All are welcome to the soiree which will no doubt attract fellow business teachers and past students, but likely a few of her current pupils too. Not only has she taught a variety of courses from basic keyboarding to advanced applications using one new edition of Windows after another since 1984, she developed the curriculum. Being a life-long learner isn't just advice she gives others, it's a necessity for her own classroom.

She has worked with students of all ethnic

backgrounds and learning levels but what they have in common is praise for Isabella's ability to make technology accessible and relevant to their lives. From 2007 to 2010, she taught EAL to International students from some 13 different countries.

Just last year, she was asked to lead a class on how to use laptops with a group of seniors through the Chinese cultural centre. She quickly realized that the material was too advanced for their level of English so she went about completely re-writing it all.

That dedication and skill in adapting materials and methods to the needs of her students has earned her top marks among senior learners. Warmth, humour and patience is what has always elevated her from instructor to beloved teacher regardless of the age of her pupils.

Perhaps her most lasting lesson for everyone who meets her is to embrace life on every level. “Keep yourself active, physically, intellectually and spiritually” she says. Just as she has guided her many students, she says she's always felt a strong and comforting spiritual presence at her elbow, leading her through one doorway to the next.

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The
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BY MATEA TUHTAR

If you're ever visited a Folklorama pavilion in the summer and thought that it would be a perfect event for your students to experience, then Folklorama Teachings could be exactly what you're looking for. Running year round, Folklorama Teachings is a subset of the Folklorama talent program, bringing in artists who, through workshops and performances, will take your students on a cultural adventure they'll never forget.

"Folklorama is a celebration of culture," says Debra Zoerb, executive director of Folklorama. "Our mission as an organization is to celebrate our diversity and cultural understanding. Folklorama Teachings is an important part of that mission."

The program offers a roster of entertainers from a range of cultures including African drumming, a Chinese Lion Dance troupe, East Indian dance dramas, and First Nations Bear Dance Troupe. They offer classroom workshops and school assembly performances, and they can even create a mini-Folklorama festival for the entire school.

"In terms of format, we can do whatever a client wants," says Zoerb. "It might be part of a larger curriculum discussion that they're having, or they might want to recognize a special day like Chinese New Year, or St. Patrick's Day." Schools can also book performers to prepare students before an international trip, such as Sturgeon Heights Collegiate who booked Cuban

performers for a dance and music workshop at the school before an upcoming band trip to Cuba.

Many schools also have a mandate of celebrating cultural diversity and Zoerb says that Folklorama Teachings is a great way to facilitate that learning. "They might want to have a conversation about cultural traditions and living in a multi-cultural society so they can have that through the vehicle of bringing in an artist who can share their cultural traditions, but also create a larger conversation about why those traditions are important. Conversations about where we're similar and how we're different and why that diversity makes us who we are as Canadians."

Whatever a teacher's or school's goal or budget may be, Folklorama Teachings can put together a program to meet their needs. The program is open to kids in grades K-12 and artists will adjust their performances as needed, depending on the age of the students. No matter which format is booked by a school, Folklorama Teachings tries to include an interactive component to their presentations.

"You can bring in dancers and do a demonstration of that particular dance form and why certain elements of it are important to the cultural and folklore traditions that they're preserving through their craft," explains Zoerb. "We have African drummers and Taiko drummers and they'll come in with gear and equipment for everyone to try. A story teller might

come in and share some of their stories and traditions and talk about the craft of storytelling and encourage students to tell their own stories."

Last year the program presented at a school that was interested in learning pan flute from the Andean mountain range. "So this artist wanted to have a pan flute demonstration and really wanted to have the students try it, so he came up with a way of actually using PVC piping and made his own pan flutes that he was able to bring to the students."

The Andean mountain range culture is very specific and unique to the region, even though it extends through seven South American countries such as Venezuela, Colombia and Chile. "So there is a unique culture that comes from the mountains regardless of political geography," says Zoerb. "Folklorama is a celebration of culture, not countries, because countries can change but culture is something that's maintained over centuries." Some of the other cultures that are part of the Folklorama family but aren't based on any geographic area are the Tamil culture which is based on language, and the First Nations and Metis cultures which are from Canada, but don't associate themselves that way.

Serenity Sul is a K-4 French Immersion Phys-Ed teacher at R.W. Bobby Bend School in Stonewall, who booked Folklorama Teachings to come out to her school for two days this past October.



“We decided to have the Aboriginal hoop dancers come in to tie in our movement for Phys-Ed and the aboriginal aspect for our school,” says Sul. The performers did workshops for individual classes and then followed up with a school assembly the following day. “They were fantastic and afterwards kids were taking hoola hoops out at recess and dancing and recreating the hoop animals. They kept talking about it.”

It’s that feedback that Zoerb finds most rewarding. “Sometimes we’ll get notes and letters from students and that’s the thing that we love is how the performances generate conversations. So after a presentation a student might start thinking about their own cultural traditions: ‘What does my family do that is really about our culture? And what does my friend do with their family?’

Just to know that young people are having these conversations about diversity and about what it means to be Canadian. Particularly in this day and age where there’s a lot of discussion about nationalism and losing borders... a lot of the folks who are in our roster are immigrants and their stories of being Canadians but also preserving their tangible heritage is something they live and breathe every day. We absolutely are going to do everything we can to facilitate that and reach as many young people as we can with that message of diversity.”

For more information on Folklorama Teachings visit <https://www.folklorama.calteachings>



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Keynote Presenters

Lisa Lunney Borden, St. Francis Xavier University
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CRISIS RESPONSE

BY JUDY OWEN

SCHOOLS ACROSS MANITOBA HAVE EXPERIENCED TRAGEDIES SUCH AS STUDENT SUICIDES, VIOLENT INCIDENTS AND UNEXPECTED DEATHS OF STAFF AND PUPILS. THESE HARDSHIPS ACTIVATE THE DIVISION'S CRISIS RESPONSE TEAMS.

The first day of school is usually one of chattering kids in the halls and staff smiling as they welcome new and familiar faces into their classrooms.

But it was a far different scene last September at Collège St. Norbert Collegiate.

Tears were streaming down faces as students and staff learned popular 45-year-old teacher Mike Slobodian had been killed while cycling to school after being hit by a dump truck.

"Lots of tears, lots of shock," recalled Seine River School Division superintendent Mike Borgfjord.

"You go from a start of the year where people are really excited to start the year and really looking forward to going and it's just a voidness."

Like other schools across Manitoba that have experienced tragedies such as student suicides, violent incidents and unexpected deaths of staff and pupils, Slobodian's death activated the division's crisis response.

Its clinical team of social workers, psychologists and consultants were notified and information shared with the collegiate's own response team. A plan of action was formed.

Counselling services were immediately offered, with team members doing daily checks with staff at the start and end of the school day to find out how they and the students were coping. Counselling was available outside school hours and extra staff was on standby to fill in for teachers who might need time off.

"It's a big blow to the staff," Borgfjord says of Slobodian's death. "He taught there more than 20 years. He was a very popular teacher, with students, staff and in the community."

Bringing students and staff together right after something happens is important.

"A healing process is part of a community and making sure there is support there," he says. "Obviously, the atmosphere is different, but there's a certain camaraderie and sense of

family when something like this happens."

Feeder schools were also notified as staff and students often have connections.

"It's the hidden impact from a distance away. What do you not notice and what do you notice?" Borgfjord says. "I know we offer lots of support, but it's never just one school. It's always a bigger area."

The division's involvement lasts more than days or a few weeks.

"One of the other things we think about is checking in six, eight weeks after the tragedy to offer some extra support for staff because there's often a hangover," Borgfjord adds.

Sadly, the division's response team was again called into action a month following Slobodian's death when Collège Lorette Collegiate student Colin Roer died after being thrown from a car during a highway rollover.

After the 17-year-old's death, the school was open in the evening so anyone in the community could get counselling.

It's common to receive offers of help from educators across the province.

"We are open to going outside," Borgfjord says. "As a rural superintendent, when something happens you often get lots of offers of support from other school divisions as well. We haven't had to take anyone up on it."

Winnipeg school divisions usually have larger response teams and more access to resources. Often those services have to be used more frequently than in rural school divisions.

In the past two years, two highly publicized tragedies rocked students and staff at Kelvin High School and Collège Garden City Collegiate.

In May 2015, two Grade 12 Garden City students who had been dating committed suicide within a few days of each other.

The Seven Oaks School Division's crisis-response team, including every social worker and psychologist in the division, assisted the collegiate's team. In total, 60 to 70 experts from within and outside the division offered support and resources for students and staff.

"Every situation is different, but we're always looking at who's affected most, how they're affected, how can we support them," Seven Oaks School Division superintendent Brian O'Leary says.

Some students were flagged as being ones to talk to and keep an eye on.

"You're interviewing lots of kids to see how they're doing," O'Leary says. "You're also coaching the teachers teaching them to keep an eye on them. Are they noticing changes in behaviour? You're asking kids to support one another."

"It's a whole lot more than, 'Are you doing OK? Great.'"

The division's protocol isn't that different than others in the province, except in one regrettable way.

"I think, unfortunately, we've had a little more experience than some others," O'Leary notes. "I think we have probably learned some lessons that others haven't had to learn, so I think we've got a pretty high degree of expertise in how to respond to situations."

Division officials have shared that knowledge and did a debriefing with all of the Winnipeg school divisions after the suicides. O'Leary also did a presentation for superintendents from across Manitoba to let them know what was learned from the experience.

"Anytime there's a tragedy in the school it has an impact on the whole school," he says. "And I think how we manage it, how we respond, through that we're teaching lessons in humanity that are probably amongst the most important lessons we're teaching."

"Pulling together as a community. Showing

compassion. Reaching out. I think those are huge lessons for kids and the community.

"I hope no school goes through what Garden City did, but there was, I'd say, after that a feeling it's a school with a very, very strong sense of community and sense of caring for one another within the school."

The school also went into response mode earlier this year on Jan. 25, when police were called after a young male with allegedly no ties to the school entered the building with a knife. He got into an argument with a male student and sliced his hand. The school went into a hold-and-secure response. The suspect fled and was captured. The student was taken to hospital and didn't suffer serious injury.

Another school stabbing had a very different outcome.

On June 2, 2015, former Kelvin High School student Brett Bourne was stabbed on the school's property during the lunch hour by a 17-year-old student. Bourne, also 17, died and the student was charged with second-degree murder.

Student witnesses told media they saw some teachers giving Bourne CPR.

Sylvia Savoie, area services director for the Winnipeg School Division's clinical support services, said each school in the division has a student services team made up of guidance counsellors, resource teachers and clinical staff such as a school psychologist and social worker.

When a serious incident such as Bourne's stabbing occurs, that school team is helped by clinicians from other schools. WSD's psychology department has about 40 staff and there are 30 social workers.

Up to 12 clinicians joined Kelvin's guidance counsellors during the week after the stabbing to offer "multi-layered support," Savoie recalled.

A three-tiered approach was used to triage students and staff.

Classroom teachers helped identify students and other staff who were the most impacted, including friends of the students involved and those who witnessed it. They were given immediate counselling.

A second tier is students who weren't at school at the time, but may have known the students involved or the stabbing could have triggered something from their own history, Savoie says.

The other tier was students who potentially needed follow-up.

"Every day, you'd go through the three-tiered list; what was the contact, how was it going, did we need to refer them to an outside agency?" Savoie says.

Clinicians met with students inside the school and anywhere else they were needed.

"PART OF A GOOD TRAUMA RESPONSE IS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS. FOLLOWING A TRAUMATIC INCIDENT THE SCHOOL IS FLEXIBLE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE AFFECTED AND THEN RESUMES ITS STRUCTURE AFTER THE TRAUMA."

**- SYLVIA SAVOIE,
WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION'S
CLINICAL SUPPORT SERVICES**

"We had a social worker who sat outside with kids," Savoie says.

"Part of a good trauma response is to meet the needs of students. Following a traumatic incident the school is flexible to meet the needs of the people affected and then resumes its structure after the trauma."

The school team met twice daily in the early days after the stabbing to give updates about how things were going. Handouts and lists of numbers for outside resources were available.

Contact was made with neighbouring schools with related siblings and help offered. Parents were also kept informed as much as they could be.

"Sometimes it's hard when there is a criminal investigation, you're limited in terms of what you can share," Savoie notes.

Because the incident happened in June, connections were made with outside agencies to bridge long-term support for students and staff, especially during the summer. A WSD social worker followed up with the "neediest" kids in July to ensure they had support.

Borgfjord, O'Leary and Savoie don't think traumatic incidents at schools have necessarily increased over the years, but the level of expertise and help definitely has.

"I think the system responds better," Borgfjord says. "I think it's more fluid."

"Even in the education community, there's a much greater network of people who want to help out; people who have gone through their own experiences offering support."

"You have to have a plan, but organic in nature so that it fits the needs of individual places. I think that's where education's been getting better over the years. It's challenging. It's challenging for everyone."



BY JENNIFER MCFEE

Giving VOICE to INDIGENOUS art

Art can give a unique voice to much in society from history to human rights to culture in general.

However, a University of Manitoba professor noticed that one voice could barely be heard: Indigenous art.

Joanna Black, a University of Manitoba professor of curriculum, teaching and learning in the faculty of education, decided that needed to change.

Receiving support from the University of Manitoba's Indigenous Research Program and the Faculty of Education Research Development Fund, her project, Contemporary Indigenous Art and Art Education, began.

"They found that it would be really important due to addressing Indigenous culture within education," said Black, who teaches visual art education.

The aim is to help develop the methods and curricula of educators, working with Indigenous authorities.

"We felt it was very important to be guided by Indigenous experts within the field of visual art, within our province and beyond."

With a focus on collaboration, Black looked into the possibility of hosting workshops at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. WAG representatives embraced the idea, so they began working together to create six two-hour sessions to be held on site.

"We've outreached to teachers within Manitoba to come and take six workshops at

the Winnipeg Art Gallery. These educators are from public schools and private schools, as well as from alternative education and country schools. We have five different boards of education involved," Black said.

"We limited it to 30 art educators. At the high school level, they're visual art educators, but they're also educators within K to 8 who are generalist teachers. Some have been trained in visual arts and some have not but have an interest and dedication to bringing Indigenous art culture into their classrooms."

Throughout the process, professional artists have explored the structure of curriculum and art education with the teachers. Together with the artists, the teachers aimed to develop curriculum that

honours the Indigenous tradition.

"Along with the professional artists in the workshops, we've also invited elders to open our workshops and to offer wisdom from their personal points of view," Black said.

"Alongside the elders ... we also have individuals who are talking about Indigenous culture to frame and contextualize our art education studies."

Throughout the process, Black also collaborated with Indigenous artist Leah Fontaine.

Offering a thought-provoking perspective, Fontaine is currently pursuing a bachelor of education to add to her other credentials, which include a bachelor of arts in theatre, a bachelor of fine arts and a master's degree in native studies.

Combining her different areas of expertise, Fontaine created a methodology that uses medicine wheel concepts to interpret art from an Indigenous perspective.

"Having these workshops will help develop a frame of reference to work with teachers so we can learn to celebrate our future together rather than just focus on colonialism," Fontaine said.

"We can celebrate the future of how we can create partnerships and relationships. I figure that art is a way to help conciliate because it's a way to bring everything into harmony. The people who don't know the history and the people who do know the history need to work together. We need to develop ways of working with our histories

WAG PD DAY

For any teachers who would like to bolster their knowledge of art education, the Winnipeg Art Gallery offers other professional development opportunities during the school year.

The next PD Day at the WAG is set for Thursday, April 13 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. This interactive session, entitled Art Museums 101, will focus on how art museums can support learning in the classroom.

For more information, visit www.wag.ca or email youth-programs@wag.ca to register.



Leah Fontaine. Indigenous artist



Allison Moore, youth art educator at the Winnipeg Art Gallery

and the stories from our people to make art more accessible for all of our students.”

In general, Fontaine said she often senses some reluctance to address Indigenous topics if teachers haven’t learned the history.

“I think art will help with that because it’s fun and it’s not so threatening,” she said. “Art is a vehicle to understand, and resisting does more damage than good.”

For Allison Moore, youth art educator at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, it’s often easier to see the bigger picture by creating these connections.

“The idea is that we listen to these artists talk and we look at their artwork to see the themes that they’re dealing with. They all practise different ways of working, and they all have different stories that they share with us about their life,” she said.

“From that, we’re hoping that the teachers will be able to distill some major themes that they can take back to their classrooms and work with their students to make some artwork.”

Moore hopes to create professional development opportunities at the Winnipeg Art Gallery based on the workshops’ successes.

“The curriculum is saying that this is important right now. It’s giving voice to

Indigenous artists and providing us with different perspectives on our country’s history. It’s building empathy and understanding between all of us who live here,” she said.

“There is an underlying systemic racism that we’re not even aware of necessarily. That’s why it’s really important to talk about this with each other and learn from one another. If we’re educating the next generation, we’d better get it right.”

Expressing similar sentiments, Black is optimistic about the impact of this project.

“The whole purpose of it is becoming informed, honouring the Indigenous tradition and culture, and then bringing it to the students,” Black said.

“It is a focus on contemporary art and engaging educators about what is happening currently within our era.”

At present, Indigenous artists are creating significant work that has the power to resonate with students of all backgrounds, she added.

“For the Indigenous students, I think it’s important to reach out to them about what professional artists are doing and what issues they’re addressing with their own culture,” Black said.

“For non-Indigenous students, it’s important to be informed about the historical context, the context of contemporary art and the groundbreaking work that professional Indigenous artists are doing. It’s important to explore the ideas and honour them and educate, to open up what’s happening up right now.”

The topic is timely for today’s teachers, yet at the same time, it forges connections to the past and the future.

“We’re hoping that the teachers learn more about Indigenous culture, history, residential schools, treaties. We hope they learn ideas of reconciliation, how it’s so important and embedded in education, as well as the contemporary Indigenous visual art practices,” Black said.

“So we’re not just looking at art but how the art has come about through this historical cultural context. It’s like the tip of the iceberg here, but it’s wonderful that we’re able to do what we’re doing. It’s a start.”

Looking ahead, Black is hoping to continue with her research and is exploring the possibility of offering more workshops next year. Anyone who is interested can contact her at Joanna.Black@umanitoba.ca.



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Snow Angels land on seniors' sidewalks

BY MATEA TUHTAR

After a snowfall they arrive swiftly and anonymously. The only sign they leave behind are footprints in the snow and freshly uncovered sidewalks and driveways. They're the Snow Angels and they're making a big difference for some Winnipeg home owners who would be snow bound without their help.

Snow Angels is a pilot program for Take Pride Winnipeg, a non-profit organization that focuses on using leadership and advocacy to educate citizens and beautify the city of Winnipeg. The program launched in September 2016 and aims at matching high school student volunteers with seniors in need.

And the need is definitely there. "We've been overwhelmed by the response from home owners," says Tom Ethans, executive director of Take Pride Winnipeg, explaining that with this program.. "Seniors who are physically or financially unable to do the work themselves would be matched up with a student who would take care of their property for the winter."

Snow Angel programs already exist in other Canadian cities, and with over 67cm of snow falling in Winnipeg in December alone, the program couldn't have come at a better time.

Janet Schindell is a Home Economics teacher and Volunteer Coordinator at Collège Garden City Collegiate who has 19 kids signed up for the Snow Angels program this year, mostly in grades 10 and 11. She says the snowfall this winter has been keeping her students quite busy.

"Some of them are even helping at school when we've had a couple of bad storms and needed to help the custodial staff cleaning up. They have been great!"

Schindell's group of volunteers is responsible for ten homes in the Garden City neighborhood. The students work in pairs and mostly shovel after school or on the weekends on their own time.

"As soon as it snows 5cm or more the kids are obligated to shovel snow which includes the front step, front walk, around the garbage cans, and any specific spot the homeowners request such as



their driveways or back drives. If a plow goes by and creates a windrow kids are obligated to clean that as well," explains Schindell. She communicates with her students through twitter and will tweet out "Time to shovel!" after a snow fall, though she won't make them go out during a storm.

The homeowners provide supplies and shovels and the feedback has been very positive. "The seniors absolutely love it, they're so thankful for the help," says Ethans. "They offer money and we have to tell them no it's a volunteer thing, we're doing it because we care."

The students are also loving the program. "They don't have much contact with the homeowners, so that's why we call them angels – they just appear and disappear, no one really knows who's doing it," says Schindell, noting that parents need big thanks as well for helping the kids with shoveling and giving them rides.

The Snow Angel program counts for volunteer hours for the kids, who at Garden City have the expectation of having 55 volunteer hours to graduate.

This pilot year includes 17 Winnipeg schools participating in the program, and Ethans hopes the program keeps growing. This winter schools can apply for the program until all the snow is gone.

"We need more schools who want to help out. We have a lot more homeowners registered than we have volunteers. Be a good neighbor! If you have a senior on your block, and you see that they need help, we encourage you to reach out and offer your help."

Take Pride Winnipeg!

Take Pride Winnipeg!'s annual cleanup campaign, Tim Hortons Team Up to Clean Up event kick off for schools is April 11, 2017 which is open to all students. This year the event will also feature a fashion fest where students show off outfits from recycled materials. The event is at the MTS Center and includes educational booths that teach kids about environmental issues followed by 2 hours of entertainment. For more information visit: <https://www.takepride.mb.ca/>



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PORTFOLIO



Working hard or **Hardly** working

BY GEORGE STEPHENSON

With the unveiling of the next provincial budget and the subsequent furor/support for its destructive/beneficial consequences, we will hear a lot about the “hardworking taxpayer.”

There is no concern greater for a politician – no matter what party or persuasion – than that timeless hardworking taxpayer. They pop up in speeches about issues from infrastructure to health care to how much some cabinet minister spent on orange juice.

A search of the term hardworking taxpayer turns up tens of thousands of results.

That sweat-browed, diligent villager is forever in the politico’s embrace, ascendant to the top rung of the ladder of importance. The only time they take a secondary position is when a politician resigns to spend more time with their family. The more churlish among us might think that, conversely, politicians run for office because they want to spend less time with their family.

But no, that would be a bit harsh. They, of course, get into politics to protect their BFF, the hardworking taxpayer. Sometimes families just have to take one for the team.

It’s never explained, however, just who is this hardworking taxpayer. And how do they know? And who judges whether they’re hardworking?

The recent release of data from the last Canadian census had a lot of information

about population growth across the country, but nary a word about whether there has been growth in the hardworking taxpayer segment of the population.

It really should be a question on the long-form census. Then again, most people probably think they are that hardworking taxpayer. Even Manitoba’s premier had to answer questions affirming how hardworking he was.

Faced with queries about how much time he spends soaking up the sun at his hacienda in Costa Rica, Brian Pallister made clear to the media that he, too, is a hardworking taxpayer working hard for hardworking taxpayers.

To prove his point, he invited the media to his office. He showed them a table covered with dense books about arcane policy stuff – no Harry Potter here – that he read and marked up while pondering the Costa Rican highlands. Point proven. It would take a lot of hard work to lug a steamer trunk full of all those books back and forth. Yikes! Somebody invite that man into the 21st Century. Show him the magical qualities of the iPad; hundreds of volumes you can carry in a small valise. No extra luggage charges.

It probably doesn’t matter how many books he reads, most people don’t probably envision politicians when they hear the cliché hardworking taxpayer. In fact some politicians – does the president of the United

States ring a bell? – don’t pay taxes at all because they know how to game the system. Are they also fighting for the hardworking tax dodger?

Well, that probably wouldn’t make a very enticing sound bite.

No, speechwriters join hardworking to taxpayer to conjure some image of some tank-topped worker pounding away on an anvil while a shower of sparks shoot out of a wall in the background.

But what about the single parent working for poverty wages who doesn’t even earn enough money to pay taxes? The hardworking non-taxpayer. There are lots of people who don’t pay taxes for a whack of different reasons, from age to ability. We assume politicians are supposed to care about them, too, but it just doesn’t paint the picture they want.

Maybe it would just be better if they dropped that trite and tired symbolism altogether. They weren’t elected to just look out for taxpayers, hardworking or not. And using the cliché only reinforces the idea that paying taxes is nothing more than a useless burden. It’s an easy justification for harsh measures.

They could instead talk about all the valuable and well-used services that hardworking taxpayers receive for their much-appreciated contributions.

But, then, that might take some hard work.

NOT JUST ANY OLD JOE

AT A REGULAR PRESS BRIEFING, U.S. PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S PRESS SECRETARY TOLD THE MEDIA THE PRESIDENT "HAD AN INCREDIBLY PRODUCTIVE SET OF MEETINGS AND DISCUSSIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER JOE TRUDEAU OF CANADA."

PERHAPS PRESS SECRETARY SEAN SPICER ONLY REMEMBERS THE OLD MOLSON AD: "MY NAME IS JOE AND I AM CANADIAN." APPARENTLY WE ARE ALL JOE TO SEAN SPICEGIRL.

Where is the Spell Czech when you really need him?

To back up a claim that the U.S. media are downplaying terrorist incidents, the White House released a list of more than 70 acts it claimed supported its position.

While the list included numerous incidents that were widely covered, it also included something that was downplayed.

The list contained dozens of typos and misspellings. Among the mistakes the writer made, they misspelled attacker as attacker 29 times and misspelled San Bernardino in California.

It's not unusual. The president's tweets often contain spelling mistakes – like unpresidented for unprecedented – and even his official inauguration poster had to be pulled back because it contained a spelling error (the use of to, instead of too). The Department of Education seemed to follow his lead, correcting the misspelling of an American historian with the tweet: "our deepest apologizes for the earlier typo."

American students, teachers and parents aren't the only ones who should be worried about confirmation of Betsy DeVos as the U.S. Secretary of Education.

Grizzly Bears should be shaking in their dens, too.

During her confirmation hearings, DeVos - who has never attended public school or had her children attend public school - didn't have any objection to guns in schools.

For example, she said that in a school in Wyoming "there's probably a gun in the school to protect from potential grizzlies." Grrrrr.



Betsy DeVos



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REFRESH

BY RAMAN JOB, PUBLIC RELATIONS FACILITATOR

PRIVACY THAT FITS IN YOUR POCKET

How would Edward Snowden message you?

Ever wonder which app Edward Snowden would use to text or call you? It's unlikely for sure, but Snowden does have a favourite messaging app – Signal for Android or iPhone. In 2015, he gave props to this hyper-secure messaging app that lets you send private messages, make voice calls, share photos and create group chats – all with complete end-to-end encryption and no SMS or MMS fees (but data charges do apply). “We cannot read your messages, and no one else can either,” says the website of Open Whisper Systems, the developers of Signal. “Everything is always end-to-end encrypted and painstakingly engineered in order to keep your communication safe.”



Glenn Fleishman of MacWorld says, “Signal from Open Whisper Systems is the current hands-down winner for secure messaging, including texts, voice calls, and media...Signal is tied to a phone number for authorization, but all messaging happens via secured connections between devices.”

When you install Signal, you may not find many of your friends there. But if you need to set up a secure connection between

you and another person and privacy is an absolute must, it should be your go-to. Newest rumoured feature rollout for 2017? Encrypted video calling.

But isn't WhatsApp encrypted too?

Yes, you don't have to be into Spy vs. Spy (remember MAD magazine) to enjoy reasonable encryption for your private communications. If you're using WhatsApp, the hugely popular messaging system bought for \$16 billion by Facebook in 2014, you already have most – but not all – elements of Open Whisper Systems encryption baked in. WhatsApp lets you send PDFs, documents, spreadsheets, slideshows and more, without the hassle of email or file sharing apps. WhatsApp can also handle documents up to 100 MB. Imagine that. A **word of caution:** You may have heard of a controversial “backdoor” vulnerability in WhatsApp first covered by The Guardian. Experts have differing takes on how (or if) this a vulnerability, but it would be worth your time to google and read “How to protect your online conversations with Signal's end-to-end encryption” which addresses both Signal's first-rate encryption (referred to above) and WhatsApp's vulnerabilities. Best quote? “WhatsApp can be made secure, but it requires configuration and awareness to prevent using it in a less secure way.”

Tech teachers dream on!

Last month, we brought you 13 tech dreams from teachers across the province. But Manitoba teachers continue to dream, and here's what we couldn't quite fit in last round.



John Evans

Manitoba teachers amaze me with their creativity and commitment in the classrooms across the province. I really want to see how Maker Ed and coding will continue to grow in Manitoba schools, particularly in the senior years.



Mike Nantais

I'm really looking forward to continue using and exploring new platforms and ideas for helping my students – aspiring teachers – connect with other educators. These connections will help them connect their future classrooms to others for powerful learning experiences. The main reflective space for my students? Blogs.



Reg Reimer

I'm so excited about Prairie Rose School Division's launch of OverDrive. It improves access to reading materials across the division!



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