

THE MANITOBA

# Teacher

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2018 VOLUME 97 NUMBER 2 NEWSMAGAZINE OF THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY



## How THEY Roll

TEACHERS TAKE ON  
ROLLER DERBY



## RISKY BUSINESS

WORKING TO SHIELD  
YOUNG BRAINS





# Meaning of Home



## Inspire your students and give back

The Meaning of Home is an annual writing contest for students in Grades 4, 5 and 6 in support of Habitat for Humanity Canada. Students across Canada are invited to submit a poem or essay explaining what *home* means to them. It's a great way to engage your students in an interactive and fun way, and it teaches youth the importance of safe, affordable housing.

### Why get involved?

-  Each entry results in a \$10 donation from Genworth Canada to Habitat for Humanity to build affordable homes in partnership with families in your community.
-  Winners of the contest get to designate a \$25,000 grant towards a Habitat for Humanity build of their choice and win other great prizes like a pizza party, iPad and additional grant for their school.
-  Curriculum kits are provided to help students improve their critical thinking, communication and creative skills.
-  Your participation helps low-income Canadian families build strength, stability and self-reliance through affordable homeownership.



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Contest opens for entries January 7, 2019.



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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

**NORM GOULD**

**A**s I write this column I'm headed home from an informative two-day trip to Thompson and The Pas – the first leg of MTS latest regional consultations with members. It was, as it always is, a pleasure to meet with teachers in the north, many of whom traveled considerable distances to attend. It's hard to overstate my appreciation for their time when I'm sure it would have been easier to head home after a long day.

These meetings, and those that follow into October, represent an invaluable source of information for The Manitoba Teachers' Society. Through them we will hear directly from our members about the reality of teaching in a challenging and uncertain time.

Your perspective has never been more important, particularly as we anticipate the provincial government's educational review in 2019. I urge you to use every opportunity, especially regional meetings, to articulate the nuances of classrooms rapidly growing in both size and complexity.

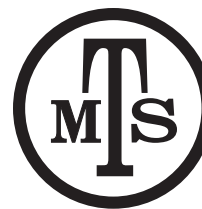
While the topics of conversation are definitely intense, I can assure you it's not all doom and gloom at regional meetings. I hear about the challenges you face, yes, but I also hear in your voices an unwavering commitment to kids, and a tenacious belief in what it means, even in the toughest of times, to be a teacher. Regional meetings are above all else an opportunity to come together, to share the load, to feel our strength, and maybe even have a laugh or two.

So what am I thinking about, flying home from the north, getting ready for the next regional meeting tomorrow? I'm thinking about all I heard these past two days, about the need for support for students with a wide range of needs, about growing classrooms, about a lack of resources. I'm thinking about my responsibility to achieve understanding among those who fund public education, so that they understand how their review, and the decisions that flow from it, will impact public education in Manitoba.

How could my energy wane when I'm consistently awed by the dedication and passion of a membership like ours? How could I shy away from a fight when I know you never would? How could anyone run out of gas with fuel like that in their tank? In speaking to me about your experience you place your trust in me, to tell your story, and I promise you I will.

So please plan to attend a regional meeting – I'd love to see you there. And if you can't, don't hesitate to reach out and share your unique perspective with me. Together we will paint a vivid, tenuous, but relentlessly hopeful picture of Manitoba's classroom – the future of our province.

*Norm Gould*



**The  
Manitoba  
Teachers'  
Society**

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Phone: (204) 888-7961  
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Published seven times a year (September–June) by The Manitoba Teachers' Society. Articles and views published herein do not necessarily represent the policies nor the views of the Society.

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### Publications Mail Agreement

40063378 ISSN 002-228X

### Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

Information Management  
The Manitoba Teachers' Society  
191 Harcourt Street  
Winnipeg, MB R3J 3H2  
email: mts-im@mbteach.org



Canadian  
Educational  
Press  
Association







## INSIDE MTS

### THERE'S A LOT GOING ON BEHIND THE CURTAIN

**BOBBI TAILLEFER**, GENERAL SECRETARY

October is traditionally a time when people examine and acknowledge those aspects of their lives for which they give thanks.

Coincidentally, it is also a time at The Manitoba Teachers' Society that those of us surrounded by the activity in the union give quiet thanks. We see the hundreds of members and staff who put extreme effort – much of it unnoticed -- into helping thousands of other members.

The first two months of the school year – indeed, in many cases, much of the summer as well – is a coordinated dance as staff and teacher volunteers put together major events such as the MTS PD Day conferences in October.

Every year that activity, with its dozens and dozens of sessions, comes and goes with few glitches that participants ever see. It's as if it just happens, like the first day of autumn.

But when we pull back the curtain on it, and other events, we see the inner workings of a machine powered by hundreds of volunteers and staff planning, organizing and overcoming seemingly endless obstacles. All for a single day in October planned for our members.

For that one day, it all begins many months before when the various Special Area Groups of Educators begin booking space and speakers and sending their material on to staff at MTS. They, in turn, begin preparing the online program, making additions and changes throughout the summer before it goes live at the beginning of September.

Even after that, unanticipated changes are being made every day – speakers cancel, venues get changed -- and MTS staff and organizers are answering hundreds of calls from participants with questions about sessions, how to register and asking for a password reset!

Actually, taking the long view backward, we can see that the work of volunteer teachers to provide professional development began many,



many years ago, as illustrated by the MTS anniversary article on pages 14 and 15 of this edition.

Beyond MTS PD Day, our gratitude extends to many more members, such as those who volunteered to be part of the Society's Teacher-Led Learning Team, conducting workshops for colleagues throughout the province.

At the beginning of October, the TLLT members had done or booked more than 35 specialized workshops, training and preparations for which began well before summer.

And the list goes on.

Also behind the curtain at this time of year are staff, Local Presidents and Local Executive members who have organized and attended the regional meetings conducted by the MTS president, Norm Gould. Thanks also goes to all members on standing committees who

are meeting for the first time at the beginning of the school year. Others attended MTS seminars in August to help in their work with Locals.

Nobody does it for the accolades they receive because, well, there aren't that many. They do it because they are passionate about the teaching profession, public education and helping their colleagues. They also believe in strengthening The Manitoba Teachers' Society and, in the end, know it will be students who benefit.

The best we can give our member volunteers, their families and our staff is our heartfelt gratitude and an acknowledgement that we know what they are doing behind the curtain and how much they contribute to the profession and the union. And for most volunteers, that's no doubt enough.

Thank you, Merci and Meegwetch.



BY ANNE BENNETT

# Dangerous liaisons

**G**iven how much time we spend there, it's no surprise that many of us find romance at work. We see the same people every day, develop a shared history and create strong bonds. Add a dash of stress and a pinch of volatility and, voila! Comrades become comrades in arms.

That's exaggerating of course, but in its 2015 Office Romance Survey (sample size 2,300) Vault.com found 51 per cent of respondents reported having had an office romance at some point in their careers. Another 23 per cent indicated being involved in one in the past year, while 20 per cent revealed they were in a relationship with a coworker when they participated in the survey.

If you feel like there's a party going on and you weren't invited, consider this: the same closeness that makes a workplace relationship enticing can make a breakup intolerable. Walk down a hallway, they're there. Go to the staffroom, they're there. Attend a meeting, they're there.

The fallout can impact work performance, relationships with peers, even the trajectory of your career. And while it's true that many healthy, long-term relationships have developed in workplaces

— including schools — the prospect is perilous, with significant personal and professional implications.

Barbara Bowes, a Winnipeg-based human resources consultant, has handled numerous cases of office amour gone sour.

**“Little things you may not even know you're doing will give you away. Whether you like it or not, people will talk. If you're in a relationship with a co-worker, you need to work twice as hard to maintain neutral or transparent behavior, and it isn't easy.”**

*- Barbara Bowes, HR Consultant*

She says even the stealthiest of couples will find efforts to hide their relationship futile, and even damaging to their reputations.

“Little things you may not even know you're doing will give you away. Whether you like it or not, people will talk. If you're in a relationship with a co-worker, you

need to work twice as hard to maintain neutral or transparent behavior, and it isn't easy.”

Tony Marques, a labour lawyer with Myers LLP, agrees. He says that despite our best efforts to keep a relationship under wraps, our colleagues are perceptive, and will quickly draw conclusions. “Human beings are pretty well-attuned to behavior norms, and can tell when something's “off”. That's when rumours start flying and workplace culture suffers.”

Marques also points to heightened vigilance in the wake of the #metoo movement as something to consider.

“One person's romance is another person's sexual harassment,” he says, “so individuals need to be extremely careful and entirely confident that their behavior does not constitute harassment.”

While the easiest way to avoid the pitfalls of workplace romance is to avoid dating a colleague, as studies like Vault's prove, a lot of us have, and will continue to do so. Given that, Marques says it's imperative that employees understand their workplace harassment policies, and, in the case of principals and vice principals, their division's conflict of interest policy as well.

“If, for example, a principal develops a



fondness for a teacher at their school and the feeling is reciprocated, the conflict of interest policy may dictate that the principal formally disclose the relationship. While this may seem an invasion of privacy, it's important to be transparent, both for the sake of that principal's relationships with colleagues and their career."

In the case of relationships between principals and teachers, things can get particularly dicey.

"The parties involved have to be very careful," says Bowes. "In addition to issues related to having the balance of power, the principal needs to be conscious of any perceived appearance of favoritism towards the teacher. And the teacher needs to be conscious of appearing to be in receipt of favoritism. Even where none exists, the perception alone can be highly corrosive to workplace culture."

There's also the potential for staff to feel that their principal could share personal information about them with the other teacher involved. "It can be extremely detrimental to morale," she says.

Clearly, it isn't realistic to expect that colleagues won't date, so when sparks fly in the staffroom, Bowes and Marques offer some advice:

- set firm personal boundaries – if attention is unwanted, make that clear. If the attention persists, speak to your principal or, if the principal is part of the problem, a staff officer with The Manitoba Teachers' Society

**"Heightened vigilance in the #metoo movement is something to consider. One person's romance is another person's sexual harassment, so individuals need to be extremely careful and entirely confident that their behavior does not constitute harassment."**

**- Tony Marques, Labour Lawyer**

- avoid personal touching in the workplace, as well as seclusion – meeting behind closed doors, or body language that excludes others from interactions
- remember that relationships can end, sometimes messily. So it's important to consider the impact that outcome could

have, personally and professionally.

"You might find it unbearable working in an environment where you have almost daily contact with a former partner," says Marques. "While it's possible to find a position somewhere else, it isn't easy or instant."

If you're considering entering into a relationship with a colleague, Ralph Ramore, MTS department head for the Educator Assistance Program (EAP), recommends taking time to examine why the relationship is so compelling.

"We're only human, and when some aspect of our life is not going well, we can be vulnerable. It's a good idea to think about why you're feeling the way you do. Ask yourself: Am I stressed-out or depressed? If I were better-rested or felt more appreciated would I be making this relationship choice? Recognizing the drivers of our behaviours can be helpful in exercising our best judgement."

Finding love at work is possible, but it can be problematic. By considering the implications, using good judgement, behaving respectfully and communicating openly, you can avoid the professional pitfalls of office romance gone wrong.





# TACKLING *THE* RISK

STORIES BY JUDY OWEN, PHOTOS BY MATEA TUHTAR

Bill Johnson and Rick Henkewich know the sport of football, especially when supported by public schools, will always be under the spotlight when it comes to the risk of concussions.

Rather than shying away from the glare – the barrage of studies and stories about the risks and questions as to whether schools should support such sports – the executives are trying to stay one step ahead in decreasing head injuries.

Locally, officials and teams have implemented new training techniques, protocols and are trying out sensor-equipped helmets to measure impacts.

“There’s inherent risk in sports, especially in contact sports, but there’s also so many benefits that can be gained by these young people,” says Johnson, the executive director of Football Manitoba, the provincial governing body for the sport at all amateur levels.

“I have an 11-year-old son who plays tackle football and if I ever felt for a second that the risk outweighed the benefit for him I would absolutely pull him out of the sport.

“At this point, I feel that football is making some pretty serious progress in this regard and they’re being very innovative in their approach to minimizing this risk compared to a lot of other sports which maybe have their head in the sand.”

Concern about concussions in sports, particularly football and hockey, has escalated as more knowledge surfaces about chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE). The degenerative disease of the brain is linked to repeated head trauma and can lead to thinking and memory problems, behaviour changes and dementia. It’s only definitively diagnosed after death by studying brain tissue.

The National Football League began settling a class-action lawsuit in 2017 by thousands of retired players affected by concussions. The Canadian Football League is facing a \$200-million class-action lawsuit filed in Ontario Superior Court in 2015 by

some former players. Earlier this year, the CFL Players’ Association filed a grievance against the league for failing to protect current and former players from injury.

Henkewich is in his sixth year as commissioner of the Winnipeg High School Football League (WHSFL), which has had about 1,800 male and female players for the past two years. He plans to retire in December after being in football for more than 50 years, including Garden City Collegiate’s first head coach.

He’s welcomed the increase in more facts about head injuries, rules for coaches and concussion protocol.

“It’s our self-governance, too, that makes it safer,” says Henkewich, who played at Tec Voc and Sisler before attending Simon Fraser University in B.C.

“It’s our awareness that makes it safer. It’s the fact that our coaches understand what they have to do to make it safer. No coach wants to go home with that vision of a kid being carted off.

“We are doing everything possible to minimize everything. Does that mean we’re going to be eliminating injuries? No, never, ever going to happen.”

Football Canada has included concussion awareness into all coaches’ training, which includes mandatory programs such as Safe Contact and Making Head Way in Football. Coaches don’t receive their national certification until they pass the courses. Football Manitoba has an extensive section about concussions on its website [footballmanitoba.com](http://footballmanitoba.com) for coaches, parents and athletes.

Football Manitoba is also piloting a project this season in its league for players aged 8 to 15, requiring all coaches to wear an identification card showing they’ve passed the Safe Contact training, Johnson said. Plans are to roll it out across all leagues next year.

When the new programs became mandatory in 2015, the WHSFL held clinics for all coaches the first two years, Henkewich says. The first week of every season begins with



coaches focusing on safe contact and going through tackling and blocking procedures and ensuring fields are safe to play on.

The WHSFL also has a rule limiting the amount of contact between players at practices to 75 minutes per week. Most teams practice about two hours each day, four days a week (480 minutes).

Henkewich, who's also on the board of Football Canada, goes to three or four high school games each Thursday and Friday night.

"I watch what's going on," he says. "If I see something that I think needs to be addressed, it is addressed. It's addressed as a league issue so we will not single out a particular school or coach."

Doctors are at some high school games, but every game has a certified athletic therapist trained in the sideline diagnosis of concussion who has the final say on all injuries.

Most of the time trainers go on the field because a player is winded, Henkewich says. If the trainer thinks a player has been hit in the head but the athlete claims to be fine, an analysis is done. If the trainer doesn't feel confident about the player continuing, he or she doesn't and "the coach has no say in it," he adds.

"If post-game analysis shows he didn't have a concussion, that's fine. Parents understand that we have nothing but the best interests of the student athlete at heart."

Manitoba high school athletes are given a folder called Concussion Smart before each season. The awareness and education program for all sports follows the Canadian Guidelines on Concussion in Sport, including signs and symptoms of a concussion. You don't have to lose consciousness for one to occur.

It also lists protocol that has to be followed if an athlete is suspected or diagnosed with a concussion. Specific steps must be taken before a return to school or sports after a concussion and a doctor or nurse practitioner has to sign a medical clearance letter.

Football Manitoba is also awaiting provincial legislation called the Concussion in Youth Sport Act, Johnson says.

He and Henkewich wouldn't reveal the number of football concussions reported to Football Manitoba because of health-privacy concerns, but the WHSFL is in its third season of tracking all injuries.

After five weeks of play this season, there were 17 reports of various injuries out of all WHSFL players, Henkewich says.

"I think the easiest action for prevention is to stop," Johnson says, citing the risks of crossing the street, going down stairs and playing contact sports.

"But at some point I think we have to live life and we have to look at what benefits we get."



## SENSING IMPACT

Ryan Johnson doesn't mind being a gridiron guinea pig.

The Dakota Collegiate offensive lineman is one of seven players on the Lancers football squad chosen to wear a helmet equipped with a sensor system that monitors hits to the head.

"It's a great thing to have," the Grade 12 student says after a practice in late September.

"I think it's up to me to decide if I need to go out if I got hit too hard, but this is just kind of a second measure, I guess, to check and make sure. And it's good for research as well."

Dakota Collegiate and Steinbach Regional Secondary School, which also has seven of the BodiTrak systems for its varsity football team, are the only schools in Canada using the technology developed by Winnipeg-based Vista Medical.

BodiTrak is a flat, flexible circuit system inserted between the shell and padding of a helmet that has sensors measuring the G-force of a hit (a range of how hard it is), the speed the head is rotating and the location of the impact.

The information is picked up by a nearby wireless station in real time and data sent to an app coaches or specific staff can access with their cellphones

during practices and games. The data is stored online and daily and weekly reports are sent out with analytics.

Lancers head coach Ray Jarvis views it as a valuable resource and teaching tool.

"The sensor will indicate where on the helmet the impact occurred and so that will help us with our teaching of tackling, our teaching of those kind of components," says Jarvis, whose team began using the system in mid-September.

"If we can get some data over time in terms of where these contacts are occurring on the head, then that will help us adjust what we need to do with that player in terms of making sure they're tackling in a safe and appropriate manner."

"It doesn't really tell us much about concussions and things like that, but if there was a trend and it occurred over a period of time, then we can take a look."

Repeated head injuries are linked to chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a degenerative disease of the brain that causes cognitive impairment and behaviour changes. It's only diagnosed after death.

Steinbach varsity football head coach

and physical education teacher Jamie Peters also believes the BodiTrak data may improve techniques.

“Why does one player who plays the same position have more incidents? What is that player doing differently? How can we coach that player better with film, technique and this data?” he says.

Peters divvied up the systems in the helmets of a running back, linebackers, receivers and offensive and defensive linemen.

“We did this to see what the impacts of different positions would be,” he says. “These positions get hit differently in a game and experience different levels of contact.”

Jarvis, a vice-principal at Dakota and former phys-ed teacher, selected a couple of offensive and defensive linemen, linebackers and a running back to use it.

BodiTrak should give information on some hits coaches can't see, in particular along the lines.

“You may see something on the field and you know automatically you can see a heavy hit, a collision and you'll know exactly what it is, but sometimes you may not necessarily see that, especially in a pack of people,” Jarvis says.

“So it could provide us some information that that was a strong-enough hit that I need to go talk to that kid. Real-time information could start that conversation, but we haven't quite done that yet.”

Jarvis estimates three players were diagnosed with a concussion during his past seven years coaching the squad.

“We've had some players be out for an extended period of time, we've had others who we follow the protocol and they're back within the regular time frame,” he says.

“I've had one kid (a lineman) who had an extended time that he was out of the sport, but also we had to make some adaptations for him in the classroom, too. He never returned to play football, but he did return to play hockey.”

Jarvis would like to see athletes' concussion history shared between sports, changes he hopes come with upcoming new provincial legislation called the Concussion in Youth Sport Act.

“Part of the problem I think right now is I may have some kids out here who tried out for a club hockey team and something may have



**BodiTrak is a flat, flexible circuit system inserted between the shell and padding of a helmet that has sensors measuring the G-force of a hit (a range of how hard it is), the speed the head is rotating and the location of the impact.**

happened with that club hockey team that I may not necessarily be aware of and so they come here and I'm thinking everything is OK unless they tell me,” he says.

“Whereas the athletes I have here, I know and then we go through our standard protocol pieces.

“We have lots of multi-sport athletes, which is great, but if those things linger and you're not aware of previous medical history or something that has happened over the weekend or things like that, there is a loophole, a bit of a gap in information.”

If he suspects a player suffered a head injury and there's no evidence or admission from the student, Jarvis can widen his search to find out how the student is acting.

“The good part about being in a school is you can have those conversations with the teachers,” he says. “So maybe if you see something that is off, that maybe the kid wasn't telling you, then at least you have a little bit more information to go and have those conversations (with the student).

“That's the big conversation you have to have with them, ‘Your health and moving

forward is far more important than what happens in the next day or two or three days. We're looking for you to be healthy all the way through the season.’ “

His players – one Grade 12 girl plays linebacker – receive a Concussion Smart folder at the start of each season with information on head injuries and protocol that players and parents should read.

The Winnipeg High School Football League also has a rule limiting contact during practices to 75 minutes per week.

Like many teams, the Lancers use foam equipment sort of shaped like a person called Shadowman that a player pulls while a teammate practises tackling it.

It's a tool promoting safety, just like the BodiTrak system Jarvis says was paid for by an anonymous Dakota alumni.

Vista Medical supplies BodiTrak to sister company Head Health Network (HHN), based in Louisiana. The cost of each BodiTrak system for Dakota was about \$100 and the first year of a subscription for data monitoring was free, HHN president Curtis Cruz said in a phone call. Steinbach is using it as a demo with the cost to be discussed after the season.

“We are happy to put programs like this in place to help advance the safety of youth sports,” Cruz says.

BodiTrak is also used in lacrosse, baseball and motor-sports helmets. A hockey-specific version is being built because those helmets don't have a lot of space between the shell and a player's head, Cruz says.

Some major U.S. college football programs use BodiTrak such as Louisiana State University (LSU), Penn State and Mississippi State. About 13 LSU athletic trainers monitor the data for different players during practices and games, Cruz says. Another school has enough for its 105-player roster as it's being used for research.

“There's lots of different ways you can use it, but in my opinion the best way is to look at your overall trends and understand how you can improve,” says Cruz, who was in Manitoba last month to install the systems and show coaches how to use it.

“What we're doing is collecting data that we can then use to keep everybody safer and have a better playing environment for everybody.”





# A TALE OF TWO PROS



It's a story Chris Walby often tells that draws laughter, but it really isn't funny.

The former Winnipeg Blue Bombers offensive lineman was playing a game in Hamilton when he suffered the most serious of the "few" concussions he guesses he had during his 16-year Canadian Football League career.

"I picked up a linebacker and we hit heads," Walby recalls. "We were both going towards an area so we were both going forward. It was the first time I really, literally, saw stars."

"The next thing I know, I was lining up in their huddle. They called me a couple names and one booted me in the (butt) and pushed me towards my own huddle."

He went to the sideline, got a shot of smelling salts and returned to the game.

If the same thing happened today, Walby would have been pulled and medically assessed for a concussion.

"I do like what they have now," he says. "They have the concussion protocol and that's good to be there and that's great."

Helmets these days are also more protective.

"We had those little air pops in ours and I can't even think about what those guys had in the old days with just the leather helmet," says Walby, who remembers numerous times when he felt a little dizzy or light-headed after tangling up with opponents.

In the Winnipeg High School Football League, helmets are sent in for reconditioning when they're three years old and go under a scope to look for cracks and other defects.

"On average, schools buy between 10 and 15 helmets a year so they're constantly upgrading their helmets," says league commissioner Rick Henkewich, adding the cost of each one is \$300 or more. "The shelf life, depending on the brand, is said to be five to 10 years. We use five years as our median number."

Walby, who turns 62 in late October, says he wonders if his forgetfulness relates to hits to the head or age. He does Sudoku puzzles regularly to exercise his brain.

Even though the evolution of player safety has gone in the right direction, the hall of

famer believes it begins with one key thing.

"No. 1, it's all about coaching, having professional coaches who know and understand the game," Walby says. "It's not about beating the (crap) out of your players and saying, 'OK, who's the toughest kid on the team.'"

He recalls one drill players did in his 1981 rookie season, which began with the Montreal Alouettes before he signed with Winnipeg.

"They had planted telephone poles in the ground and we were told to head butt that," Walby says. "That was the way to teach us to

**"On average, schools buy between 10 and 15 helmets a year so they're constantly upgrading their helmets. The shelf life, depending on the brand, is said to be five to 10 years. We use five years as our median number."**

*- Rick Henkewich, league commissioner*

keep our head up, which is absolutely the worse thing you can ever do. But that was the way it was taught back then, it was lead with your head.

"Nowadays, it's about shoulder checks, put your head across, not leading with your head. It's a hard thing to teach kids because it's an angle, it's all about angles."

Walby is the father of four sons aged 20 to 32. All grew up playing hockey and tried football at different levels, but none lasted more than a season because they ended up not liking it for various reasons.

That was OK with Walby.

"I would never tell my son that they couldn't play if they were young again," he says. "But I definitely would make sure they play in a program where the coaching staff understands the game."

His former teammate, all-star Bombers kicker Troy Westwood, takes a different view with his son, 10-year-old Trey. The youngster played one season of minor football at age 7 and that was it – father's order.

"All the information was starting to come out and people were much more aware of head injuries," says Westwood, a sports radio co-host. "I was reading everything I could get my hands on and sort of weighing it out."

When Trey took to the field as a quarterback, his dad noticed he wasn't physically inclined like some of the other kids.

"Every single practice and every single game I would sit there watching scared, more or less, hoping that nothing happened," he says.

"What absolutely brought me to the point where I made the decision (he couldn't play) was when I read an article from the two largest pediatric bodies in North America. Both of them said to not let your children play football until I think it was 13 or 16.

"I put the article down and I thought to myself, who am I? How can I possibly think that I'm smarter than the two largest pediatric bodies in North America in allowing Trey to play football?"

Trey was angry at first when told tackle football was out until he was older, but he could play flag. The young boy plays soccer, but even that comes with risk when players head the ball.

Also a former pro soccer player, Westwood coaches his son's team and tells his young charges not to head the ball and play the bounce instead.

Westwood says he suffered concussions in each of three sports: pro football, soccer and while training for a boxing match he took part in. He was never knocked unconscious, but did feel dizzy and nauseous for a few days after each one and didn't tell anybody.

He's glad awareness and education is improving, but more needs to be done.

"I think you have to be a fool to ignore or downplay the science involved," he says. "Right now, the entirety of the concussion debate and learning, we're in the infancy stages of it."

# Protect copyright rules, says CTF

BY GEORGE STEPHENSON

**T**he Canadian Teachers' Federation has urged the federal government to not change provisions of Canadian copyright law that helps students and teachers.

Changes to certain provisions of the Copyright Act "would have a detrimental effect on the quality of teaching and learning in Canada," says a CTF brief to the Commons Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology.

The current law, which is under review by a Commons committee, allows teachers to freely copy short excerpts from copyrighted material.

Five years ago the Copyright Act was changed to include education as an endeavour covered by what is called "fair dealing" in the law. Fair dealing allows limited use of materials in a number of areas such as education, parody, satire and research.

The Supreme Court has upheld the provision, ruling it is fair for teachers to make copies of "short excerpts" from a copyright-protected work for students without having to purchase a copy of the entire work for each student in a class.

"This decision recognizes that students will benefit when teachers can use short excerpts for educational purposes, such as one article from a newspaper," the CTF says. "When longer excerpts are used, such as more than a chapter of a book, schools pay a fee or a copyright tariff."

CTF says the use of short excerpts from a range of sources actually promotes many lesser-known artists and authors on a regular basis in Canadian classrooms.

Publishers, however, have argued that the fair dealing provision is unfair to the producers of content, claiming that it is causing them to lose money. They want the federal government to change the law and to remove education as an exemption under the fair dealing provision.

CTF says publishers have not been harmed by the current law.

"According to reports, education spending on copyrighted works has



**TEACHERS,  
COPYRIGHT AND  
FAIR DEALING**  
FairDealingDecisionTool.ca



increased significantly since the 2012 Supreme Court of Canada decision and copyright reforms, contrary to what publishers and creators say."

The federation brief says that teachers are not abusing the law.

"Teachers seek clarity in the law and are risk-averse when it comes to any uncertainty involving copyright law," it says. "They will not copy material if there is any doubt. Teachers do not copy whole textbooks and it infuriates our profession when someone says something so blatantly not true."

"Canadian copyright law has a good balance and the education community's interpretation of fair dealing is a responsible one when compared to teachers and students use of copyright works around the world."

"Teachers and their organizations want to ensure that Canadian students are

able to access the very best educational content available."

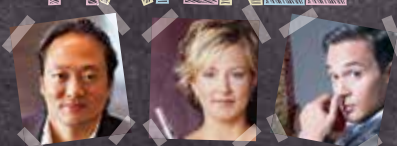
At the same time, CTF has undertaken a number of initiatives to ensure teachers understand the rights and limits of the fair dealing provision. The federation has promoted an online tool developed by ministries of education across Canada – *CopyrightDecisionTool.ca* – that lets teachers quickly see how fair dealing applies.

"Any legislative amendment that narrows the scope of fair dealing would mean going against two landmark Supreme Court decisions that clearly establish fair dealing as a user's right that is an integral part of Canadian copyright law."

"More to the point, narrowing, limiting or eliminating the fair dealing provision would deny teachers and students fair access to available enriched classroom resources."




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A CENTURY OF SOLIDARITY

*Heading into the 100<sup>th</sup> year of The Manitoba Teachers' Society, The Teacher will be running articles about the revolution and evolution of the organization, its challenges and successes.*

# PD: A HUNDRED YEARS OF GROWTH

BY MIREILLE THERIAULT

*"Year after year the public have been thrusting more responsibilities upon the school, and ever demanding more in the way of social service. Teachers and educational authorities have alike risen nobly to the occasion. ... Teachers have thronged the special classes held in the evenings, on Saturday mornings and during the summer vacation, that they might raise their standing and make themselves more fit for a task which was becoming more complicated every year."*

*- The Manitoba Teacher Vol 13 - #7 - 1932*

The term "professional development" may have become a catch-all phrase over the years for most people, but for educators, it means something altogether more vital. Just ask a teacher how many lazy, "days off" they have for PD and prepared to be schooled.

In the 1920s and '30s, professional development was a given. Ideally, young men and women entered Normal School with the equivalent of grade XI or XII and finished with a full year of further study, but since a great number began their careers with no more than a six-week course, it was common practice to attend classes in all types of subjects during the summer for several years. And while continued study wasn't necessarily a requirement of teaching, it was related to gaining higher levels of certification and corresponding salary increases.

The Manitoba Teachers' Federation strongly encouraged members to continue their studies having identified that higher qualifications went hand in hand with

professional recognition. Early versions of the Code of Professional Practice contain references to ongoing professional development and on a pragmatic level, The MTF printed classroom pointers, lesson plans, suggested reading and essays on education in The Manitoba Teacher. Local Association meetings and regional conventions gave teachers a chance to not only discuss union business but engage with peers on a professional level.

When the Federation officially became The Manitoba Teachers' Society in 1942, teachers gained further credibility in issues of curriculum and teacher training. Well into the 1950s, The MTS also found that increased focus on professional development was paramount in addressing the issue of permit teachers.

Even though the Department of Education issued permits to those barely qualified, and school boards eagerly signed up the 'cheaper' alternative to Class V or VI teachers who possessed a university degree, it was the teachers themselves who were expected to better their situations on their own time and own dime. The term "in-service" came into fashion as it described, quite literally, training teachers undertook while still serving in their position.

At first glance, not much changed until the end of the '50s, but the relative stability and prosperity of the post-war era provided teachers and The MTS with the opportunity to concentrate on their role in education as a whole and professional development in particular.

Back in the early days, teachers who shared a particular interest or taught a specific subject, met informally as clubs or chapters

of larger organizations. The start of teacher-focused groups began with the Manitoba School Library Association in 1938. The Manitoba Art Educators followed in 1947, and though music teachers had organized long ago, the Manitoba Music Educators' Association officially started in 1959. The influence of many other special groups grew in the areas of curriculum far before becoming official associations.

Recognizing the invaluable insight SAGs offered, MTS passed a resolution at the 1961 Annual General Meeting providing financial and administrative support to groups for a two-year trial period. At that time, only two associations were attached to the curriculum committee. There were six associations in 1962-63, and double the following year.

Over the next 10 years, the number of groups topped 20 and MTS acknowledged their need to direct their own growth within the organization. The first SAGE Council formed in October 1970 and though most groups held their own individual events, 1976 was the first co-ordinated conference. The number of groups grew to 26 by 1980 and 29 by 1990. The co-ordinated conference became a PD staple, and while many groups have come and gone or changed their emphasis, if not their names, the importance of SAGs has only increased.

From a broader perspective, the Society had led workshops on collective bargaining and association leadership for over a decade, but in 1958 ventured into new waters by offering the first leadership course for principals and vice-principals. From that point on, professional development as a core service of





**MSLAVA – 1971 MTS workshop at St. Benedict's Ed. Centre L-R Margaret Bean, Jim Weber, Kris Breckman**

The Manitoba Teachers' Society grew rapidly.

In 1967 Kris Breckman and Jean Gisiger became the Director, and Assistant Director of Professional Development, a huge step in establishing dedicated staff and resources at the Society level. That year, the newly built McMaster House at 191 Harcourt included space for a teacher's lending library boasting over two thousand titles and AV materials. Margaret Bean came on board as a second Assistant Director of PD in 1971. As a fledgling department, they worked with SAGs in preparing events but soon broadened the scope to workshops and conferences related to Equality in Education, the Status of Women, and Special Education.

The nature of PD offerings has changed since the '70s of course, but the biggest issues to emerge over the last 30 years is autonomy and funding.

FRAME, Financial Reporting and Accounting in Manitoba Education, was established in 1983 as part of the Education Finance Review. Through the reports submitted by school divisions twice a year, local associations can track the amounts and nature of expenditures on professional development. While it is a powerful tool in keeping tabs on how much money is spent, the stickier question is who gets to decide.

From The MTS point of view, teachers should have the final say since they are the ones held accountable for their own professional development not just under the Code of Professional Practice; 8 - A Member makes an ongoing effort to improve professionally, but as a matter of law. Under the Education Administration Act, a teacher

is responsible for: on-going professional development. That particular clause has only been part of the Act since 1997, coincidentally a time of massive curriculum changes that had teachers scrambling to keep up.

At the 1997 AGM, delegates responded by passing a detailed, eight-point plan on professional development. In that same time frame, The MTS established a comprehensive Society Review Commission that resulted in several initiatives, including formation of a Standing Committee on Professional Development. It also appointed a Task Force in 1998 to determine policy and strategy. The resulting report, tabled in 2000, included three main recommendations:

- The Manitoba Teachers' Society actively promote the professional image of teachers by ensuring the provision of professional development opportunities for its members.
- The Society strengthen its support to groups and individuals currently providing professional development opportunities for teachers.
- The Society redirect current financial and human resources to allow the active promotion of the professional image of teachers by providing professional development opportunities for its members.

And of particular note, this observation. "It is apparent that issues such as the control of professional development funds may have to be bargained on behalf of the membership. The Task Force advocates that professional development issues be considered working conditions and be pursued as such through collective bargaining." (*Report of the Professional*

*Development Task Force Presented to Provincial Executive, January 2000 – page 4.*)

The future of professional development, whatever form it takes, rests in the hands of teachers themselves by whatever means may be required.

***"The resources of people and money in the organization up to 1958 were devoted, of necessity, almost exclusively to welfare projects. Today it can be truly said that half of the financial resources and over half of the teacher resources of the Society are being expended in the areas of curriculum, instruction and professional development.***

***This is only the beginning of the story. The Curriculum Committee, Central Office, subject area groups and over 20 division associations worked together to produce curriculum workshops involving well over 2,000 teachers. These workshops were given by teachers, to teachers in the teachers' own time and paid for out of the teachers' own money. Outside of these workshops, the 13 subject area groups carried on their special activities, including meetings and workshops dealing with such matters as the new maths, the new physics, Cuisenaire and language laboratories."***

*- The Manitoba Teacher, May-June, 1965*





★ Jane Valjane



# teachers on wheels

SARAH JANE MAYNARD, CATHERINE HART &  
TANNYS MOFFATT ARE TEACHERS BY DAY  
AND DERBY GIRLS BY NIGHT

**T**o play a notoriously rough and tough, high-intensity, full contact sport like Roller Derby, you have to be passionate, confident and not give up when the going gets tough. Luckily, as three Manitoba educators can attest, teaching demands the same skills.

Sarah Jane Maynard, Catherine Hart, and Tannys Moffatt are teachers by day and Derby Girls by night. They train in arenas around the province, skating aggressively around a flat track, blocking, jamming, striking, falling, getting hit, and then picking themselves up again.

"It takes grit, much like teaching, especially at the beginning!" says Maynard – aka Jane Valjane - who teaches French immersion at École Harrison in Brandon and plays for the Wheat City Rollers.

Maynard discovered roller derby purely by chance, but... "roller derby could not have chosen a better moment to find me!"

She moved to Brandon from Yarmouth, Nova Scotia in May of 2013 and began her life as a new Manitoba teacher.

"In my first year I made a rookie mistake of spending the majority of my free time

deeply focussed on school work – assessing everything, building lessons from scratch, and then falling into bed unsure I'd done enough preparation to fill the next day with engaging lessons and activities."

Her new lifestyle left little time for exercise or self-care but after surviving her first year, she discovered that... "The best classroom ideas came when the classroom was furthest from my mind!" One night while at a rock concert fundraiser she spotted a diverse group of women, which she later discovered were a local roller derby team.

"There was such an aura of excitement and camaraderie about these women in matching jerseys that I was moved to inquire." The rest, as they say, is history.

The sport began its roots in the 1930s, with many incarnations over the years including the flashy, rebellious, violent spectacle that captured people's attention in the '80s and '90s. The modern version of derby was reinvented and built by women for women, focusing on sporting integrity and rules and regulations, while still carrying its main theme of feminism and empowerment. Unlike most other women's sports that

need a qualifier – such as women's soccer, or women's basketball, roller derby by itself is uniquely female. Men's leagues exist but they play 'men's roller derby'.

Roller derby has been spreading throughout the world since the early 2000s with the Winnipeg league established in 2008. Tannys Moffatt – aka Ani Position - is a science teacher at Tec Voc High School in Winnipeg, and a long time roller derby skater – one of the first, in fact. Today she is an "A" level player for the Winnipeg All-Stars as well as an officiant and head trainer for new skaters. She has travelled all over with the All Stars including Philadelphia, Minneapolis, Denver, Fort Lauderdale and Waterloo.

"I remember our first game in Fargo – it was our first game and it was their first game, and I cringe when I watch that footage now. A lot has changed over the years!"

A roller derby game is called a 'bout'. Teams have five players, a 'jammer' who is responsible for scoring points, and four blockers whose job is to prevent the jammer from passing through. Today the international governing body is the WFTDA



## Hurt Vonneguts

PHOTO BY MATT DUBOFF



## Ani Position

PHOTO BY MATT DUBOFF

(Women's Flat Track Derby Association) and "It's growing as more and more of a mainstream sport," says Hart. "There's a World Cup with international teams, as well as Roller Con – a huge skating convention that happens in Vegas every year."

Hart – aka Hurt Vonneguts is a newer player in the Winnipeg Derby League, as well as a teacher in Winnipeg and a member of the MTS Provincial Executive. She says people are often surprised to hear she plays roller derby because she can come across as more quiet and reserved.

"They often ask things like 'Isn't that a really aggressive sport?' and 'Is it like the movie Whip It?' (Whip It is a popular 2009 Hollywood movie about the world of roller derby).

Hart's derby name is a play on her role as an English teacher. "It's funny, sometimes we only know each other by our derby names," she laughs. "It's fun to have that alter ego."

Teams often have different themes with theatrical costumes for the players, though these days those are mostly used for photos and promotions. Otherwise, players wear their uniforms for the game, which is an intense workout. Players usually practice for two hours twice a week, in addition to helping run their league.

Hart says playing is like doing squats constantly.

"You really build up your muscles, and you really want to cross-train and make sure you're doing a lot of core exercises. I think it's good for your mental health as well. I

think when you have a lot of mental stress but you're not tiring yourself out physically then it's the wrong kind of tired."

While the game is aggressive, it's not as dangerous as it looks. "You're taught everything – how to stop and how to fall down because you'll be doing it a lot," says Maynard. "It can be scary at first but your gear is there to catch you."

Still, the hands on learning is tough.

"I lived the learning mottos found on classroom posters – I fell and got back up – often. I took risks. I learned from mistakes. I practiced, practiced and practiced. And I asked for help."

In derby, skaters teach other skaters through a program called Fresh Meat. People come in with all stages of fitness but to be able to play they have to meet a list of skills and pass an endurance test where they have to skate around the track 27 times in 5 minutes. The women come from all walks of life as well. Maynard's team is made up of a military veteran, hair stylist, insurance broker, pharmacist and biologist, but despite their different backgrounds the teams are all about empowering women.

"It's sisterhood a hundred percent. It is about diversity and lifting each other up and accepting our bodies in different ways. And it's about being able to be tough and aggressive – so often we're taught that we're not allowed, but when you start it's so liberating."

Hart agrees. "It's a very supportive culture, they stress camaraderie. It's an overtly

feminine sport and very empowering. 'Not sorry' is kind of the mantra, don't be sorry for being aggressive or taking up space."

Moffatt says some of her students know about her skating, and some have been interested in joining, while Maynard has already had three students join a junior derby team in Brandon. "We are trying to get more youth involved. Our numbers have been pretty constant the last few years."

All three skaters say their favorite things about Roller Derby is the sense of community that comes with being part of a team. The sport is famously inclusive, even in the youth league, which accepts transgendered kids.

"Diversity is crucial to a successful roller derby team," says Maynard. "Differing sizes, shapes, strengths, and mentalities work together to achieve a common goal. A school or classroom works in the same way – they succeed to their fullest potential when everyone is able to play to their strengths and work and learn as a team."

"Made up of small wins and losses, the game is at once challenging, unpredictable and exhilarating. This might be a stretch but – is it so different from a day at school?"

Anyone who is interested in learning more about Roller Derby can check out the Winnipeg Roller Derby Instagram and Facebook page, or go to [www.winnipegrollerderby.com](http://www.winnipegrollerderby.com) (Winnipeg), [www.wheatcityrollerderby.com](http://www.wheatcityrollerderby.com) (Brandon), or [www.placetyrollers.com](http://www.placetyrollers.com) (Portage la Prairie).



Teachers representing our more than 15,000 members were, from left to right: Donovan Giesbrecht, Susanne Lee, Robyn Laramée, Leslie Fuerst, Scott Gurney, Kevin Rempel, Amita Khandpur, Maria Nickel, Amanda Panteluk, Ronann Mariano, Julie Braaksma, Sean Oliver and Abbey Muirhead, joined by MTS President Norm Gould.



# TEACHERS // FOR THE

# W<sup>TM</sup>

**BY ANNE BENNETT**

The Winnipeg Blue Bombers saluted MTS members on Teacher Appreciation Night, Friday, September 21, as the team took on the Montreal Alouettes. Thirteen teachers representing the membership from across the province were honoured at field level between the third and fourth quarters, where they were introduced and acknowledged by the enthusiastic fans!

Teachers representing our more than 15,000 members were, from left to right: Donovan Giesbrecht, Susanne Lee, Robyn Laramée, Leslie Fuerst, Scott Gurney, Kevin Rempel,

Amita Khandpur, Maria Nickel, Amanda Panteluk, Ronann Mariano, Julie Braaksma, Sean Oliver and Abbey Muirhead, joined by MTS President Norm Gould.

The Blue Bombers were pleased to welcome our members to Investors Group Field, for the opportunity it gave the organization to highlight the dedication and commitment of public school teachers to our children – our future. It was a fun-filled evening, and we must have brought the Bombers luck – the Blue and Gold won decisively, 31-14.

# WE'VE COME A LONG WAY, (FOR) *baby!*

BY ANNE BENNETT



*Stacey Penner, a teacher in Mountain View School Division, with husband Mike and children Jack, Sam and Paige.*



*Amber Britsky of the Louis Riel School Division with her daughter, Nora.*



*Louis Riel School Division teacher Jennifer Moran with her husband, Scott, and son, Max.*

On January 15, 2016, Amber Britsky, expecting her first child, looked on from the gallery of the Legislature as the government voted to credit teachers taking maternity leave with a full year of service. For her, and the dozens of other teachers who'd grieved the loss of pay, pension and seniority that came with the decision to have a child, the moment marked a major victory.

"My colleagues had advised me to try for a September baby because that would give me the most pay," she said. "Knowing I would have to try to conceive at a specific time infuriated me. When I became pregnant, I filed my grievance."

As significant an achievement as the credit for service was, the celebration was short-lived. The issue of non-payment of top-up benefits over break periods had yet to be resolved.

At the time, top-up was paid only for "teaching days", meaning that if a teacher's leave included time during the summer, spring break or over the holidays, she wasn't paid for that time. This inequity became known as the "mommy gap".

The issue struck a chord with teachers who were planning families, as well as those who had already had their children. Many teachers who fought for change would not themselves see the benefit.

"I didn't receive retro payments for the weeks I lost," says Britsky. "However that doesn't change the fact that this needed to be done. Women should not be penalized financially for having a baby at the "wrong" time."

The long and winding road towards equitable maternity leave benefits is one MTS members know very well. From the 1930s on, advances in maternity leave benefits have been hard-won and slow to come, as women fought to maintain both their livelihood and their teaching careers while raising a family.

"We got our first sick-leave provisions in 1930 but it wasn't until 1994 that women were permitted to use six weeks of sick-leave post-partum," says MTS Staff Officer Nancy Kerr. "Can you imagine? Prior to that, as recently as the late 1960s when a woman started showing she had to go cap in hand to the board and ask if she could keep working. It was just assumed that once you had your baby you'd quit."

It was only in 2000 that the first Supplemental Unemployment Benefits Plan (SUB) came into force, allowing employers to make payments to staff during a temporary period of unemployment,



supplementing Employment Insurance benefits.

Launching a grievance can be stressful and time consuming. Preparing for the maternity leave cases, Kerr notes that teachers came to meetings at MTS, often bringing their children along. Then there were hearings where women were required to attend and defend their position. And it's not necessarily a speedy process, either – it took years to resolve all the maternity leave grievances that were filed. Not all women who grieved were called to hearings. Early and effective grievances opened the floodgates, making it all but impossible to deny the right of teachers to keep their jobs, and their finances, intact. Penner's grievance didn't make it to the hearing stage, to which she credits "a strong case, good bargaining strategies as well as pressure across the province from women standing in solidarity on the issue."

Penner, Moran and Britsky are quick to note the support they received along the way, and how it helped them find the courage to grieve.

"It's difficult because you don't want to be 'that person' causing a stir," said Moran.

"In this case I put my family before my discomfort and it paid off. It was no longer just about me. It became about my family and the other members who were entitled to their maternity/paternity leave benefits."

Penner, too, had doubts – briefly. "When my local president at the time, Kathy Bellemare, first asked me, my initial thought was nope, no way. I'm not a rock-the-boat type in a professional setting. As I worked out my thoughts over the phone, though, it took me very little time to transition to "YES! This is important for so many reasons. Let's do it!"

Moran agrees. After the birth of her first child, and experiencing for herself the discrepancy in income due to timing, she was ready to stand up for change.

"It gave me the courage to contact our Louis Riel School Division president, Frank Restall, to file my own grievance."

Would they do it again?

"In a heartbeat," said Penner. "I'm thankful for the experience, proud and satisfied. When I see a teacher who's a parent on leave during the summer, I know their situation and am happy they're reaping the rewards."

Each of the mothers is quick to credit both

their locals and MTS for the support they received throughout the grievance process.

"It was my Mountain View Teachers' Association president and bargaining committee who put forth the real fight for the cause," Penner added. "This is one of those situations where you pay your MTS dues all those years, and you're not always sure where they're going. But sure enough, when you need MTS they are there for you."

Kerr calls the fight for change one of the great moments of solidarity in the history of MTS, one in which she's proud to have been a part. Her personal investment in the process was such that she waited until June 29, when the last of the mommy gap grievances was resolved, before serving notice of her intent to retire.

Like the other mothers who fought for change, Britsky has no regrets and only positive things to say about the experience.

"It's something we should be extremely proud to have accomplished for future mothers. I now have the confidence to stand up against inequity and I encourage my colleagues to add their voices to issues that impact them," she said. "Together, we can make great changes."

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# School weathers rail line washout

BY PAUL TURENNE

The past 15 months have not been easy for the residents of Churchill, Man., but when the staff and students of Churchill's Duke of Marlborough School returned to classes this September, they did so with a newfound optimism, and sincere pride in knowing the school appears to have weathered a storm that affected the entire community.

In May 2017, serious flooding damaged the railway between Churchill and Gillam, severing the only ground transportation link to the town, located on Hudson Bay. The price of groceries, fuel, and other goods soared as air transport became the primary link to Churchill, but the school's educators were determined not to let that affect their students.

"We've got an incredible group there that did a fantastic job of providing quality education in what I'd call less-than-ideal circumstances," said Reg Klassen, chief superintendent of the Frontier School Division. "What made this work was the staff we had in place. We have a really strong staff there and many of them have been there more than a short while. They've made it their home community, so there was a real commitment to make it work. The result was an education that was as stress-free and high-quality as they've ever had."

Shawn Manning, now in his third year as principal at Duke of Marlborough, said enrolment did decline in the wake of the railway closure – from nearly 220 in the spring of 2017, down to less than 170 at one point – but it is now trending back upwards since the Sept. 4 announcement that the railway has been sold and is expected to be repaired.

"The impact of the railway closure presented challenges, but we all did the best we could to proceed regularly despite those challenges," Manning said. "At times, it did seem to go unnoticed, and that was not by accident as our staff did an amazing job supporting each other along with the children and



**"The impact of the railway closure presented challenges, but we all did the best we could to proceed regularly despite those challenges. At times, it did seem to go unnoticed, and that was not by accident as our staff did an amazing job supporting each other along with the children and families of the community."**

*- Shawn Manning, Principal, Duke of Marlborough*

families of the community."

"You've got to give Frontier School Division credit because they supported us whole-heartedly and maintained the programming we had," he said. "Honestly, we didn't miss a beat. We're a pillar in the community and we'll continue to be. At the school level, I'd say we didn't see the same impact as maybe people felt in their personal lives. In a very difficult time we were able to have a very productive year. It gave us really good insight into the resiliency of the community."

Klassen said the division made a conscious effort to ensure the staff complement, educational supports and other logistics were unaffected, so that the school could act as that beacon of stability in an otherwise difficult time.

"We met with the town and committed to them that we wouldn't lay off any teachers, that we wouldn't do that even though (enrolment) numbers were lower," Klassen said. "None of them abandoned their positions either. Our teachers and support staff were magnificent. There was always the belief this would be temporary, and that the tracks would be fixed."

With the recent announcement that the new railway owners do, in fact, intend to fix the tracks, the 2018-19 school year started with enthusiasm and hope that enrolment numbers will climb once more. "Everyone is entering this school year with lots of optimism," Manning said. "We're all, of course, still looking forward to seeing that first train roll in."





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# PORTFOLIO

## But not from the standpoint of dust

In a video created by the White House, President Donald Trump gave his take on Hurricane Florence.

***"This is a tough hurricane, one of the wettest we've ever seen from the standpoint of water."***

As New York Magazine explained, "whether Florence is also wet from other standpoints is a question the president did not address."

Extending his vocabulary further, Trump said the devastating storm ***"certainly is not good"*** (unlike others we've seen) and it ***"has been a nasty one, a big one."***

## Sing it out: Oh, Corporate Canada!

BY GEORGE STEPHENSON



As the new season of the National Football League gains steam, fans, politicians and pundits are once again gasping for air over the fact a handful of players are kneeling during the U.S. national anthem.

While they focus on how to end the protests, they all but ignore the question of why we play national anthems before sporting events at all. Like the flying wedge, it's time to retire this anachronism. If it had any meaning 70 years ago, it's not obvious today.

Now it's just background noise, fraught with as much meaning as the sixth inning sausage race at a baseball game.

Even in Winnipeg, the anthem is no longer a declaration of national pride, but a commercial slogan.

When Pavlov's fans at Winnipeg Jets games hear the anthem line "True North strong and free", they shout out the words "True North", a homage to the corporate owners of the team. Many even do it at Winnipeg Blue Bomber games. Duh.

While True North may be strong, free it ain't. True North chairman Mark Chipman once said that while the team didn't plan it, "we're quite pleased with it."

No doubt. Who else can claim such allegiance that fans would alter a national anthem to hail profit over patriotism?

Well, many others actually.

Florida Panthers fans shout out "red" when the U.S. anthem hits







## LIVE FROM HURRICANE HELL!!!

Whenever a hurricane blows in, we get to see TV reporters encased in hip waders and hoodies braving the elements to tell the tale. During Hurricane Florence, we saw a Weather Channel reporter leaning into the wind seemingly battling forces that would carry him to Oz. Meanwhile, in the background, two people in shorts strolled into the frame, apparently unaffected by the force 10 wind. In its defense, the Weather Channel said the reporter was standing on slippery grass while the strollers were on pavement. Ah, meteorological science, what a mystery.



## COMMUNICATIONS TIP!

When trying to illustrate how women are supporting a Supreme Court candidate accused of sexual assault, maybe try to get more women than men in your promotional picture.

“rockets’ red glare”, falling in line with the team’s marketing campaign. In Atlanta baseball fans end the anthem with “home of the Braves” while in Kansas City, football fans end the anthem with “home of the Chiefs.” If Bentonville, Arkansas, had a team the anthem would no doubt end with “home of Walmart.”

A few years ago at the Major League Baseball All-Star Game in San Diego, a Canadian tenor bizarrely changed the lyrics to our national anthem, singing “we’re all brothers and sisters. All lives matter to the great.” It was supposed to be: “With glowing hearts we see thee rise, the True North (!) strong and free.”

Aside from looney lyrical rewrites, respect is in short supply. As anthems play, fans still stroll the concourses, the beer lines keep moving, nachos aren’t left to go cold. Those held hostage in their seats do stand, but many a rogue eschews the U.S. protocols around the anthem ritual. Americans are expected to stand in silence, face the flag, take off their hats and hold them or their hands over their hearts.

Look around at some game in the U.S., people talk, hats still abound and many fans don’t seem to know exactly where their heart is. Spoiler Alert: It is not directly under your left arm pit.

While fans in most stadiums and arenas don’t sing along until their jingle-line comes up, things are different at Fenway Park in Boston. There fans rise up and boisterously join in, knowing the lyrics and the historical

significance of the song. Of course, it is Neil Diamond’s Sweet Caroline, played during the eighth inning of every home game, not the national anthem at the start.

Yet, people complain about a few football players exercising their constitutional rights by taking a knee to protest inequality in America. Really, who is more disrespectful, the football players or the slob in the cheese hat putting in his beer order?

Getting rid of anthems altogether would also end the many embarrassments of anthem singers, from Roseanne Barr spitting and scratching during her performance to the many who forgot lyrics or tempo.

Winnipeg’s own Burton Cummings was one of those in the anthem spotlight at the 100th Grey Cup Game where he turned the anthem into what one critic called a “weird blend between a Christmas carol and something that might be heard in a Vegas lounge.”

O, Canada must spark the inner caroler in singers. At another game, Dennis Park decided to sing the anthem to the tune of O, Christmas Tree. That rendition was not fully embraced by Canadians.

Is it all really worth the effort and misplaced creativity?

Sports have gotten rid of leather helmets, bare-faced goalies and peach baskets on poles. Time to silence O, Christmas Tree, er, O, Canada, as well.

Sorry, True North, you’ll just have to settle for people giving you money.



## So MUCH FOR STATISTICS

Hurricane Florence was what is known as a 1,000-year rain event. In other words, it can be expected to occur once every 1,000 years. Unfortunately, the climate doesn’t agree.

**Since August, 2017, three hurricanes have set rainfall records in four states:**

- 50 cm in South Carolina
- 90 cm in North Carolina
- 153 cm in Texas
- 133 cm in Hawaii

Climate change, what a hoax.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?  
I'D LOVE TO HELP.  
REACH ME AT [RJOB@MBTEACH.ORG](mailto:rjob@mbteach.org)

# REFRESH

BY RAMAN JOB, PUBLIC RELATIONS FACILITATOR



## Do you have one in your life?

Is there a person in your family who bites on every morsel of cringe-worthy fake news and righteously spits it forward to everyone in his feed?

You've seen the looney headlines: Is Justin Trudeau Fidel Castro's love child? Immigrants get more benefits than Canadian pensioners. Muslims demand pork be removed from Montreal school cafeteria.

If some of the adults in your life have trouble sorting fact from pure bovine feces, imagine the challenge it can be for students who, like us, wade through sloughs of deceptive and toxic news every day.

Here's where national Media Literacy Week ties in. It's an annual week to raise awareness about digital citizenship and educate students about the online world. This year, it's November 5-9 and the theme is, appropriately, "Fact or Fake."

Now, if educating students about the online world sounds a bit patronizing because popular opinion holds that digital natives are so much more net savvy than adults, it's not.

First, while students may be prodigious posters to social media, many really do struggle with parsing fact from fiction, especially those who aren't heavy consumers of a variety of news.

Second, some teens are indeed experts at using various platforms for social good. We've had many examples of these at many Media Literacy Week events in Manitoba: Sharp kids, with outstanding digital chops, who can and do best their teachers in online smarts and ability.

I look at Media Literacy Week as a sharing of information between teachers and students where both camps come away smarter about online habits – and each gets a glimpse into the other's online world.

We can thank The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) and MediaSmarts for promoting and providing the resources for teachers, parents and students – and teachers for responding.

So what can we expect this November? Well, there will be plenty of schools who will jump on the Fact or Fake theme exploring the difference between genuine news,

infotainment and passionately partisan posts. Others will highlight aspects of their digital worlds that are engaging them right now: the maker-spaces in their schools, community involvement, and exercising their own student voice through videos, podcasts and digital stories.

It's all important, and it would make a wonderful exercise for all Canadians regardless of age.

Our world views are so heavily shaped by the media we consume. If they're cankered by hate and suspicion of our fellow Canadians, we slowly poison the well of compassion and goodwill we need to maintain a civilized society that protects the interests of us all.

What can you do? Contact your child's school to find what's up for Media Literacy Week. Google MediaSmarts and check out their amazing resources.

If you'd like to read a superb feature on who creates fake news and why, check out the *New York Times* story, "Inside a Fake News Sausage Factory: This is All About Income".



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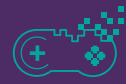
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# WORKSHOPS

**WHO:** TLLT workshops are available to MTS members. Non-members, including educational assistants and support staff, may attend TLLT workshops in their school for an additional charge of \$10 per person.

**WHAT:** TLLT workshops are half-day (3 hrs) or full-day (5.5 hrs) sessions offered by teachers for teachers. The cost is \$150 booking fee.

**WHERE:** TLLT workshops are offered at your school site or divisional PD day.

**WHEN:** TLLT workshops can be requested for any date, subject to the availability of TLLT facilitators. Book early to avoid disappointment.

**WHY:** The mandate of the Teacher-Led Learning Team is to design and facilitate workshops for Society members across the province.

**HOW:** To request a TLLT workshop: <https://www.mbteach.org/professional-development/tllt.html>

## Current LGBTQ\* Realities – HALF DAY

Participants will learn strategies for developing LGBTQ inclusive classrooms and schools.

**Topics:** Terminology (gender and sexual identities); societal norms of sex, gender, orientation and gender expression; supporting students who are coming out; starting and maintaining a GSA; and addressing everyday discrimination.

## Difficult Conversations – FULL DAY

Participants will explore knowledge and skills to have purposeful conversations when stakes are high, emotions are strong, and opinions vary.

**Topics:** Exploring the 3W's of avoidance – what, why, ways people avoid important conversations; clarifying motive, mindset, conditions, and purpose in preparation for conversations; and applying new knowledge and reflecting on conversations using a framework; and considering communication stumbling blocks, triggers, and diffusion techniques to stay in dialogue.

## Difficult Conversations 2.0 – FULL DAY (Available March 2019)



Participants will explore knowledge and skills to have purposeful conversations when stakes are high, emotions are strong, and opinions vary.

**Topics:** Emotional intelligence, habits of mind; and conscious communication.

## Fishing for Fun – HALF DAY

Participants will learn about the Fish! Philosophy, a mindset that inspires creativity, joy, and productivity to enhance the work we do with students and the way we work with colleagues. This is important because the ability of teachers to collaborate and work together is paramount to student success.

**Topics:** Working with a gameful mindset, choosing attitude, finding joy, and being present. \*\*This workshop complements High Impact Teams.

## High-Impact Teams – HALF DAY

Participants will identify characteristics of and strategies to enhance meaningful collaborative work within grade-level teams, PLCs, and departments.

**Topics:** Qualities of high-performing groups, strengths and impacts of work style preferences; tools for talking about things that matter. \*\* This workshop complements Fishing for Fun.

## More than Just Classroom Management: Planning for Teacher and Student Success – HALF OR FULL-DAY

Participants will reflect on their experiences and current practice, dialogue with colleagues, and discover how to deepen connections with students to improve student learning. Based upon the professional needs in your school, choose your own adventure to explore either a half-day (two topics) or full-day (all topics) of learning.

**Topics options include:** 3P'S of teaching (passion, presence, power); classroom routines and other considerations; the Brain Trumps; and intervention strategies.

## Opening the Door to Reconciliation through Story & Fact – HALF-DAY

In 2015, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission released 94 Calls to Action to "redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation" (TRC, 2015). The role of education in the calls to action is paramount.

**Topics:** Story and fact; The Indian Act; Sixties Scoop; enfranchisement; residential schools; The Peasant Farming Act; Pass & Permit systems; and internalized oppression.

## Working with Educational Assistants – HALF DAY

Participants will explore practices and guidelines that enhance dynamic working relationships between teachers and EAs.

**Topics:** Roles and responsibilities of Educational Assistants; MTS policy and provincial regulations; effective communication strategies; preparation, guidance, and supervision of EAs.

*\*workshop descriptions are subject to change due to ongoing reflection and revision*

For more information, please contact Danielle Fullan Kolton [dfullankolton@mbteach.org](mailto:dfullankolton@mbteach.org)