

THE OTBU NEWS



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OCCASIONAL TEACHERS BARGAINING UNIT MARCH , 2009
OSSTF DISTRICT 12 VOLUME 7, ISSUE 2



PRESIDENT'S REPORT By David Hopkins, President

I would like to start by recognizing and thanking the members of our OTBU Bargaining Team for all their hard work in achieving a Collective Agreement that will govern us for the next four years. So, thanks go to Vincent Zambrano, our Chief Negotiator, David Enright, our 2nd Negotiator and Linda Bartram our 1st Vice President. Also, Dale Leckie, the Provincial Director of Protective Services, should be acknowledged for his creativity in helping us work productively through some difficult moments in the bargaining process.

A second thank you should go to our Collective Bargaining Committee which provided a sensible working framework for our table team from which to craft a new Collective Agreement.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not thank you, the membership, for your input and ideas, and for your overwhelming support (95%) of our efforts on your behalf.

In his report, Chief Negotiator Vincent Zambrano will be outlining the changes in the new Collective Agreement, but in this report I like to focus on just one of those changes.

The one achievement in the new Agreement with the Toronto Board that I would like to highlight is the collapsing, or compressing, of the salary grid. The salary grid has now moved from an archaic, four-step grid to a more realistic two-step grid. The impact of this is two-fold.

First, Occasional Teachers will be able to realize a maximum salary for their work after only 100 days of work. Formerly, this took two hundred days and allowed the Board to hold down its salary costs, and thus underpay Occasional Teachers.

It also created inequities in salary rates that were too great and which served no real purpose. For example a percentage increase in salary, the common form of pay rate increase, always created a widening gap between Occasional Teacher members at the top of the salary scale and those just beginning. While this gap has not been eliminated entirely, the new grid goes a long way towards addressing the inequity created by four different classes of Occasional Teacher.

In addition the new Collective Agreement also addresses this pay equality question by using a greater share of the money allocated by the Provincial Government for Occasional Teacher Bargaining Units to benefit our most junior (vulnerable?) members.

Occasional Teachers at the top of the salary grid will receive a mandated 3 per cent increase in each of the four years of our Collective Agreement. However, Occasional Teachers starting at the bottom of the new two-step salary grid will receive more than 3 per cent as we were able to use some of the provincial funding to win a more substantial raise for them, and a much shorter time to reach parity with more senior members of our bargaining unit.

Collective Agreements tend, in my view, to be works in progress. When we achieve new contracts we engage in 'bargaining' with our employers which entails a give and take. You win some things but not everything. The 2008 - 2012 Collective Agreement is no different. So, it is our job, as a collective, to work toward maximizing the possibilities available in the new agreement and to set the stage for further gains and improvements after 2012. The work is never done.



STBU Negotiations Update by Leslie Wolfe, Vice President / Chief Negotiator

The Secondary Teachers Bargaining Unit of District 12 Toronto finds itself in the singular position of being the only secondary teachers bargaining unit in Ontario without a collective agreement. **As an occasional teacher, should you care? Indeed you should as the Board's current position will mean less work is available for you.**

Background

As you know, OSSTF engaged in a process with OPSBA, facilitated by the Ministry of Education, to come to a mutually agreed upon framework within which bargaining would take place. In addition to funding, the framework includes the parameters within which the number of on-calls (filling in for absent teachers) and supervision assignments (together referred to as Alternative Professional Assignments or APA's) – is to be bargained.

Over the course of bargaining, the TDSB negotiators made it clear that their goal was to ensure that our members would be required to do an increased number supervisory duties **and – of greatest importance to OTBU members - cover the full day absences of their colleagues.). This of course would have a negative impact on the availability of work for Occasional Teachers.**

On January 30th, or more accurately early in the morning of January 31, The Ministry of Education Facilitators declared bargaining between OSSTF D 12 STBU and the TDSB to be at impasse and told the TDSB that to be compliant with the Framework Agreement, they must bargain under the default workload position of status quo. The Board asked for a recess. Rather than using this time to change their position on supervision and full day absences, the Board met and reaffirmed its commitment to stripping our collective agreement, **a strip that amounts to reducing the availability of work for OTBU members.**

Bad Faith Bargaining

The Toronto District School Board never intended to bargain in compliance with the Framework that it signed. It only ever intended to use the money provided in that framework to try to force their position on teachers, increasing our workload, and decreasing the availability of work to you, in return for a pay raise. It is for this reason – their obvious lack of intent to bargain in accordance with the Framework that they signed - that we laid the charge of bad faith bargaining against the TDSB at the Ontario Labour Relations Board. We are currently waiting for hearing dates to be set. When we laid this charge against the TDSB, the Ministry ruled that the deadline for access to the funding provided under the Framework would be extended until after the outcome of the hearing.

Rally for Respect

A public relations campaign was launched including newspaper ads in the Toronto Star and a series of radio ads that will air in the days leading up to the rally. We want the public to understand that in its drive to increase the workload of high school teachers, the TDSB is willing to give up money that will reduce class size and provide for additional programs for the students it purports to care about so much. In addition, we are holding a **Rally for Respect – all supporters are encouraged to join us - on Wednesday, March 11 at 4:30 p.m. at the Board Office, 5050 Yonge Street**, to coincide with the next Board meeting, and we have set a strike vote date of March 31, 2009.

We hope OTBU members will take this opportunity to make their voices heard. Secondary Teachers in Toronto deserve the same as all other teacher bargaining units achieved: A fair deal, with no strips, access to the funding provided by the provincial government, and without a negative impact on the workload of occasional teachers.

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO ALL OTBU MEMBERS

Rally for Respect! Rally for a fair collective agreement!

The Toronto District School Board is prepared to give up \$51 million just so it can make teachers do more and principals do less. It says that members don't support OSSTF negotiators.

Show the Board that teachers deserve better. Show the trustees that the Board needs to show their teachers RESPECT!

Join your colleagues at the

**Rally for Respect
Toronto District School
Board
5050 Yonge Street
Mel Lastman Square
March 11th at 4:30 p.m.**



Supported by Provincial OSSTF.



Linda Bartram, 1st Vice-President,
D12 OTBU

I am asking you to come out on
March 11 in support of our
brothers and sisters in District

12 STBU. If the Teachers do not maintain the current supervision language in their collective agreement, it will gravely affect our working conditions and indeed, our access to work. If Teachers are required to supervise for their absent colleagues, there will be less need for Occasional teachers in the schools. We need to let the TDSB know we support the Teachers. Please go to the D12 STBU website: www.osstfd12.com to view in detail the Teachers' position.

**I HOPE TO SEE YOU ON MARCH 11
IN MEL LASTMAN SQUARE.
LET'S SHOW THE TDSB THAT OTBU
RESPECTS THE TEACHERS!!**

2009 District 12 Annual General Meeting

The District 12 Annual General Meeting (AGM) for all three OSSTF Bargaining Units in Toronto will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 4, 2009 in the fourth floor meeting room at the District 12 OSSTF offices, 1482 Bathurst St. near the corner of St. Clair Ave. W. Motions will be heard from all three bargaining units and there will be Social following the meeting. It is your District.

It is important to be a part of what the District is doing.



Chief Negotiator's Report on the Collective Agreement for 2008-2012



Vince Zambriano Vice President / Chief Negotiator

On January 22nd, 2009 the negotiating team for the bargaining unit, Linda Bartram, David Enright, David Hopkins and I signed a memorandum of settlement on outstanding issues that were of concern to our members. We had two meetings with the membership and held a ratification vote which returned an almost 95% vote in favour of the agreement. We now have a new collective agreement that will govern our working conditions for the next four years. The presence of a government deadline as well as other conditions set by the Ministry of Education made the negotiations difficult.

However your negotiating team did more than was required and have brought you a collective agreement for the next four years. What follows are the important components and changes that I would like to highlight and if you wish more specifics you can go to the website and find them there.

Staffing Committee

We now have a system in place whereby the number of members who will be kept on the Occasional Teacher list and the staffing process will be jointly managed by the OTBU and the Toronto Board. This committee will be working to develop protocols and language that will be instrumental in managing the Occasional Teacher list. Our members will be required to teach 10 days next September 2009, 15 days the year after that and 20 days by 2012 to be eligible to remain on the list. This will, over time, decrease the size of the list and ensure more work for those who seek work. Safeguards have been put in place to ensure that no one is taken off the list without cause and can be re-instated if there were extenuating circumstances. To be sure, this is not a cap but the Staffing Committee will allow the OTBU to have a greater say and influence the numbers on the Occasional Teacher list and the whole staffing process .

Salary

The salary grid has been compressed to two steps and the members will now be able to reach the maximum step in less time than previously- 100 days is all you need. This was achieved by using the monies that the provincial government provided for this purpose above and beyond the 3% salary raise in all four years. The pay scales for a daily, on both the lower and higher steps, will be some of the highest pay scales for daily OTs in the GTA area .

	0 – 100 Full-time Equivalent Days	After 100 Full-time Equivalent Days
Effective Sept. 1, 2008	\$196.26	\$215.90
Effective Sept. 1, 2009	\$202.15	\$222.38
Effective Sept. 1, 2010	\$208.21	\$229.05
Effective Sept 1, 2011	\$214.46	\$235.92

We are proud that the lower step saw an increase that was quite substantial and this will benefit the members who are starting out.

The continuing education occasional teachers will see a 3% increase for each of the next four years and the rest of the language as it applies to them is status quo.

Benefits

There have been improvements in the area of benefits for both vision care and dental.

The Vision Care benefit will be increased September 1, 2010.

Effective September 1, 2010 there is a provision for physiotherapy.

With respect to dental, the ODA rate will be brought up by 2011 to be a gap of only 3 years instead of four. (see table below)

Benefits changes will take place as specified below.
Effective April 1, 2008 - 2004 ODA
Effective September 1, 2009 - 2005 ODA
Effective September 1, 2010 - 2007 ODA
Effective September 1, 2011 - 2008 ODA

Effective September 1, 2010	increase vision care to \$400 per 24 months.
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Effective September 1, 2010	physiotherapy \$40 per visit to a maximum of \$600 per year
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Long Term Occasional

The members who take on a Long Term Occasional position will now see the number of days needed to reach LTO status reduced to 10 days. As well, short-term daily occasional teaching experience will be recognized for the purpose of salary and placement on the STBU grid when one takes on an LTO assignment. Thus, daily Occasional experience with the TDSB obtained after September 1, 2009 will accumulate so that 20 days will equate to 1/10 of a year of credit applied to grid placement for LTO assignments .

We also have language that will require the Board to provide the OTBU with a list containing the LTO positions posted AND the name of the successful candidate for each position so that the members can be assured the process is transparent.

Evaluation

Those members who choose to have an evaluation of their work will be able to have one using a new and expeditious method which will come into effect next year. The Union and the Board will be working out the details of this evaluation process in the next few months.

Summary

I am very pleased that the agreement also re-enforces the existing letter of understanding dealing with the materials that an Occasional Teacher should have when they arrive for an assignment. We have not arrived at the point where every school provides a folder which contains the materials that we all need to make our assignment a bit easier. However, the language will allow for a review of the existing process with a goal of having the materials being made available to our members.

I would like to thank the members for their overwhelming expression of support for the agreement. I also would take this opportunity to thank the Collective Bargaining Committee for their excellent work, the executive members of OTBU for their support and once again to the other members of the bargaining team I extend my sincerest thank you.



Internationally-Trained Teachers Workshop

Jennifer Mills (Executive Officer, OTBU)

The OTBU runs workshops for members who have received their education and teacher-training in countries other than Canada. We have run these workshops for four years and have a mailing list of over 70 people who have attended these sessions over this time. People who attend these sessions have concerns and questions about the TDSB policies, how to get on the Eligible to Hire List, classroom management, etc. These workshops

address these issues.

Our Programme is flexible and the agenda is determined by your needs.

Mrs. Tasneem Khan is our presenter. She is internationally trained herself and has a long history of successful experience with the TDSB as both a teacher and a secondary school principal. Tasneem is in a unique position, being able to see what the hurdles are and knowing how to close the gap between other teacher training regimens and how things work teaching in Ontario.

Every time we meet there are new people attending for the first time. If you think this might be of interest to you please know that you are very welcome indeed.

Our next meeting will be: **Friday, March 27th 4 - 6 p.m.**

CALC - City Adult Learning Centre

(Broadview and Danforth - on the south east corner, right beside the bridge)

There is parking at the front of the school off Danforth Ave.

PD Day Photos



Employment Insurance Under Present Rules Needs Drastic Changes



Liz Barkley

Employment Insurance used to be called Unemployment insurance. This was the correct name for it. When it originally was passed Unemployment Insurance (the name has since been changed to Employment Insurance) provided a very reasonable cushion for those who had lost their jobs and were looking for work. It covered almost all workers in the work force. Now, through a series of changes by Prime Ministers over many years, including Pierre Trudeau, Brian Mulroney, Jean Chrétien, and Stephen Harper **E.I. has been restructured and is outdated, stingy, unfair, inequitable, and it is at serious risk of insolvency.** The fund **had** a very large surplus. The surplus was used to fit the needs of the Governments of the day. In some cases it was used to balance the Federal Budget or expended for other governmental needs. More than \$50 billion of E.I. funds have been diverted from the fund (Steel Workers Union). Not surprisingly the fund has now no surplus. It should have and be perfectly able to deal with the crisis workers face in this economic downturn. Workers need it and deserve it. This is what Employment Insurance is supposed to do. That clearly is not the case. More and more workers will be forced on welfare creating massive problems for budgets in already besieged cities. This is particularly alarming in this protracted downturn. In 1970 unemployed workers received 66% of their earnings.....now it is only 54%. Barely one-half of the unemployed workers will receive E.I. this year and **in Toronto only about one out of four.....**probably an optimistic projection. Employers have adjusted and hired temporary workers, contract workers etc. Workers who now under the rules are not eligible for E.I.

Eligibility requirements have changed drastically. At the outset workers only needed 150 insurable hours of work to qualify. Today, in many cities, workers need 600 hours or more! Eligibility requirements must be changed as should many other parts of the present rules.

Regional inequalities are startling. Last year in Ontario the average EI. payment was \$5,120, in Saskatchewan the payment was \$8,000 (despite its resource boom), in Newfoundland the payment was \$18,490. Those that do qualify often get far less than poverty level incomes. This is **beyond unfair.**

The projections for this year are that more than 200,00 Canadians will lose their jobs. Barely half of those workers in Canada will be eligible for E.I. and fewer than a quarter who live in Toronto and become unemployed will receive E.I. funds. Those that do qualify often get far less than poverty level incomes. This is **beyond unfair.** There is much more that must be corrected. Coalitions are forming and we should do all we can to belong and visibly support needed change. The Labour Council has launched it's campaign.....CAMPAIGN TO FIX EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE. **We are members of the Toronto Labour Council**

The Labour Council is calling on supporters to sign a petition which can be downloaded at Service www.labourcouncil.ca/fixElflyer.pdf.

As well, The Labour Council is hosting a demonstration at 12.00 noon March 16, at the Service Canada Office, Town Centre Court. The leadership of District 12 will be attending the OSSTF Convention and most unfortunately won't be able to attend. However I encourage our members and their families and friends to participate. This is important!



Greetings from the Occasional Teaching Department!

Christine McGahey, Officer, Occasional Teaching Office Employee Services - Secondary Teaching Office
416-397-3736 (phone) 416-397-3484 (fax)

For those who attended last Friday's PD Session at Mobile Drive, it was wonderful to see you and talk to many of you. For those who did not receive a package, once we receive your name from your Union Representative, we will send the package to you!

We are more than halfway through another school year. I'd like to extend my appreciation for the work that you do to ensure our schools run smoothly through the year. We feel fortunate to have a cadre of high-quality occasional teachers to step in at a moment's notice to do the world's most important work. Thank you!

For those who missed the PD Session on Friday, February 13th, I'd like to share with you some of the information I talked about during the presentation.

- The current Secondary Occasional Teaching roster is frozen – The Toronto District School Board continues to monitor our needs and hire only to subject areas that are required – at the moment we are only hiring in areas such as French and technical.
- Are you concerned about a change in the regularity of your work? Contact your Union and they will get in touch with us to look at your profile.
- How do you become the pre-arranged or specified occasional teacher? How do you get your name on a school's preferred/priority lists?

You need to make a great first impression and end your day on a good note.

Tips were shared around looking, acting and sounding professional, always arriving on time and being prepared, being aware of school processes and procedures, and knowing the Board's policies and procedures.

It's important to have a discipline plan that does not include raising your voice or losing your control. You need to behave as you would expect students to behave.

It is always a good idea to check in with the office before you leave for the day – leave them your name and phone number – see if they have any jobs for tomorrow.

- I highlighted some good information around SmartFindExpress –
 - Always keep track of your job number
 - Always maintain your availability and unavailability on SFE.
 - Do not turn off your cell phone because you do not want to receive calls.
 - Need to cancel a job – cancel in plenty of time for SFE to find another occasional teacher. If you cancel the morning of the job, leave a message at the school that you had to cancel out of their job.
 - Always make sure that your call back number is correct.
 - Do not tie up the phone lines during a call out time.
 - If you are searching for a job on the web and see a message "in call out mode" - you can only view this job, you cannot accept that job as the job is currently being offered to an occasional teacher. In a future SFE release, this will be corrected and the job will not be displayed while in "call out mode".
- Always ensure that your personal information is kept up-to-date.
- Always complete the LTO Application Form when applying for LTO jobs.

Our Winter newsletter is out! It's full of good information and is available on the Web – www.tdsb.on.ca – Select About Us, Select Staff Login, Type in your username and password, Select Forms, Select Occasional Teaching!

Reminders – the Spring newsletter will contain information around the annual renewal process – for sure it will be on-line again this year. Have questions – don't forget that our Help Desk is open in the evenings from Sunday through Thursday evening from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Naureen Khan is on duty and more than happy to assist!

On occasion it is important to mention and highlight very special people. The two men below fit that description. They have been extremely valuable to the OTBU D12.

by Liz Barkley



ART TURNER

Art has a long history of participation frequently in leadership roles in the O.S.S.T.F. Union Movement. Since he became an OTBU member his work and leadership have been invaluable. He is what we term a "Friend of the Executive". Over the years he has played a myriad of roles. He is our computer expert and all around technical Mr. fix it. His background knowledge of Graphics Arts and his Political understanding of the OSSTF/OTBU membership has been invaluable. On occasion, he has assumed the different roles of treasurer, trainer and organizer. He represents the OTBU on a Joint Health and Safety Board Committee. Art has helped the Executive on numerous occasions and has served the membership of the OTBU in an outstanding manner. On behalf of the OTBU membership I extent to Art a very heartfelt....Thank You.



Bruce Silzer

Bruce has been a union activist for as long as I can remember. He has served our membership in a variety of ways over the years particularly in the Area of Health and Safety. He plays a fundamental role on major H&S Committees. He has been and now once again is the Chair of the Executive meetings. As a constitutional expert he keeps us on the right track. Some months ago Bruce became very ill. He was hospitalized but is much improved.....and....once again has assumed the very important role of Chair of the Executive meetings. As well, he has resumed his role in Health and Safety. The roles he has played are invaluable. I extent to Bruce a very heartfelt....Thank You.

2009 OTBU Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The 2009 OTBU Annual General Meeting will be held Wednesday May 27 at the Latvian Centre, corner of Eglinton Ave. E. and Credit Union Dr., just east of the Don Valley Parkway. Immediately following the AGM there will be a social, including food and drinks, at the provincial OSSTF office, 60 Mobile Dr., around the corner from the Latvian Centre. The AGM will hear reports from the Executive and provincial OSSTF, motions to amend the OTBU constitution and other business of the Bargaining Unit.

Plan to attend the AGM 2009 and the following social.

Motions to be heard at the AGM must be received by the BU Secretary by close of business April 28 to be considered to be on-time. These motions will be posted on the OTBU web-site.



OTBU Professional Development Day - Friday, Feb. 13th

by Jennifer Mills (Executive Officer, OTBU)

The OTBU P.D. Day was held at 60 Mobile Drive this year. It was a great day! Even an inauspicious "Friday the 13th could not negatively influence the day!

It was wonderful to see so many out for the day - over 100 members....the most that we have ever had. It is so important for us all to keep up to date in this very high-paced world. If we don't keep our ears to the ground current with the events of today we are in danger of being out of step. Being out of step is fatal!

From my point of view I thought this P.D. Day was a highly successful venture. We certainly heard from our members that the topics were pertinent, the presenters superb. The audience was very attentive and most enthusiastic. It was clear that there was much that participants heard and learned.

It is very motivating for your OTBU executive to hear such enthusiastic comments and makes us very happy about the day. Thanks in particular to the people who organized food and drink and generally applied oil to the squeaky parts. Co-coordinated teamwork is a beautiful thing!

What would we do without them? : Linda Bartram, Vince Zambrano, Coleridge Browne and Liz Barkley.

We had a number of speakers who addressed concerns of our membership. Below is a bare-bones synopsis (as I saw it!) of what went on in each of the sessions:

Christine McGahey, TDSB Occasional Teachers

Chris came with a power point presentation and went over issues of importance to our membership: getting work, the dispatch system and a walk-through of how to deal with the computerized system. As the information was topical and relevant for every member it was a very useful presentation. A lot of people mentioned that it was great to see Chris in person and that they appreciated her candor along with the facts, the answers to questions, and important things for all of us to remember.

Nick Satarlou, TDSB Social Worker - Student Abuse and Neglect

We always need to know what the TDSB and government policies and priorities are in dealing with the welfare of students. Even seasoned retired teachers who heard the presentation said that a reminder of the regulations that govern how we deal with students was important. Nick raised many relevant issues and pointed out recent changes in legislation and TDSB policies. Being in a unique situation as OTs in schools we need to know the rules so that we can protect ourselves as well as our students.

Marc Robillard, Provincial OSSTF - Classroom Management

Marc gave a great presentation and pointed out that there are many styles in coping with classroom management issues - some more effective than others. There were so many insights and ideas presented that I think that anyone with ears to hear took away a few tips and/ or a change in perspective. Classroom management is such a huge issue for us and there are so many different ways of achieving sanity in the classroom. We never know it all!

Jane Ste. Marie- Provincial OSSTF - Employment Insurance Issues for O.T.s

This turned out to be a very important session for our members. Many questions were answered and a better understanding of the E.I. Programme and how it relates to us were made clear. Members thought that Jane's approach and expertise made it so they had a better grasp of the E.I scene. This was particularly true in dealing with... who could apply, how to apply, when to apply, and the compensation received.



For Your Information

Liz Barkley

Chris Spence is the new Director of the TDSB.

Mr. Spence is a career educator, and was for five years the Director of the Hamilton Board of Education. He is the first back person to head the TDSB. Before he became an educator he played in the CFL for the B.C. Lions. He has a doctorate, has written books, and made films about his teaching experiences. He has taught in Metro and is known as a very progressive Educator. He is particularly concerned with at risk students and raising the achievement level of students in the TDSB. **Welcome Director Spence. We look forward to working with you.**

Occasional Teachers Please Be Aware!

Please be aware of the parking restrictions of each school you work in or you might get a parking ticket. This will differ from school to school. If you drive to your daily job site, make sure you ask at the office when you arrive if you will require a parking permit and where you should park.

Retirement Age is Changing

A recent survey conducted by Sun-Life Financial found that almost one half of working Canadians believe they will stay on the job past the traditional age of 65. A big change from the past. It used to be 61... Stats. Canada

Food has/is changing....So are our Ailments

Food can be a enormous benefit to individuals, or it can be a poison. In today's world all too often it becomes a poison. Our lives today demand convince which has lead to the development of processed foods. We often don't know what we are eating, where it comes from or really what it contains. This situation has increased listeria, salmonella etc. We have seen the recalls Maple Leaf Products and the problems and illness it created. Just recently Maple Leaf Products has recalled 26,000 packages of hot dogs containing listeria. Every week, it seems, another food borne illnesses is announced. Citizens are now questioning big corporations, institutions and government. Our food often comes from different countries. There is no inspection. This of course leads to new forms of bacteria with all that entails. Much nutritional value, is destroyed in food we eat particularly in. Processed food. Cured meats have problems as well. We have an increasing problem with obesity. We have packaged products that are high in fructose, fat, corn syrup, and calories. We need to look at labels when we buy.

Heart Disease

A broad based coalition of health groups recently called on Ottawa to invest \$700 million over seven years. which would, result in economic savings of \$22.2 billion dollars in disease prevention, death, and lost productivity. The Heart and Stoke Foundation said that research shows that up to 80 per cent of premature deaths are preventable. Foods to eat to help to protect your Cardiovascular system are whole grains, olive oil, nuts, fish particularly fatty fish (salmon, sardines etc). **Canada's leading killer is Cardiovascular disease** claiming 70,000 lives annually in Canada (world wide close to 20 million).

Poverty here and now

A report from the Children's Aid Society states that there is a "startling increase in the number of children are living in abysmal poverty". More than 500,00 children living in poverty are in our own backyard. 50% of Ontario's children living in poverty live in Toronto. A drastic increase from last year. This must change.

Food Banks in Crisis. Contribute to your local food bank. We must help one another

There has been an unprecedented increase in the use of Food Banks. This is continuing to increase. Food Banks usage is soaring. They are overwhelmed. It is projected that 350,000 Ontarians will rely, this year, on food banks. Contributions are badly needed.

Another Cancer-Causing Substance.

Acrylamide used in **french fries, potato chips** and many other processed foods has, after research, prompted Health Canada to add the chemical to the country's toxic substance list. This chemical is not naturally found in foods. It is produced when sugars and other items in potatoes and some grains are exposed to extremely high temperatures. It is recommended by Health Canada to place it on the toxic substances list. Many processed foods contain it.

The Afghanistan mission (war)

A very expensive endeavour. The government (Harper) stated that by 2011 the war will have cost taxpayers an estimated \$11.3 billion. This is the first time the Harper government has released a cost. It is interesting to note that the Parliamentary Budget Officer stated that the cost was much closer to \$18.1 Billion. We, the taxpayers, are paying for that War.

Earth Hour....March 28 at 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Cities around the world will turn off their lights for one hour on March 28th. Last year Toronto was estimated to have turned off 5.8 million light bulbs. Last year 35 countries participated. It was so successful last year that organizers are working hard to increase the number of cities participating this year. To date 538 cities have signed up. Be a participant. Help to raise the global awareness of climate change.

Important Reminder: Make sure you pay the College of Teachers fee of \$120.00. The payment deadline is April 15th. No postponements or delays. If you miss the deadline you lose your right to teach in Ontario.



Today's Joke from Coleridge Browne

I was having trouble with my computer. So I called Richard, the 11 year old next door whose bedroom looks like Mission Control, and asked him to come over.

Richard clicked a couple of buttons and solved the problem.

As he was walking away, I called after him, 'So, what was wrong?

He replied, 'It was an *ID ten T error*.'

I didn't want to appear stupid, but nonetheless inquired, 'An, ID ten T error? What's that? In case I need to fix it again.'

Richard grinned. 'Haven't you ever heard of an *ID ten T error* before?'

No,' I replied.

'Write it down,' he said, 'and I think you'll figure it out.'

So I wrote down: **I D 1 0 T** I used to like the little brat.

RATIFICATION INFORMATION MEETINGS



We have heard that there is some confusion among the membership regarding a certain "Substitute Teachers Political Action Caucus".

This organization has nothing to do with the OTBU and we have no contact with them. They have no affiliation with the OSSTF and are not privy to any of the discussions, communications and shared resources which we, your elected OTBU executive have.

Should you be one of those members please call the OTBU office for clarification.

We are the ones who have the OSSTF affiliation and the correct information for you.

Office: 416-423-3600 Website is www.geocities.com/otbud12.

We will put the information you need to know on the OTBU D12 website.



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