

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Holidays will soon be upon us a time to recharge and reconnect with family and friends. I hope each of you will take this time to recharge your batteries. If the next few months goes by as fast as the last few months it will be June before you know it!

The Holidays are a great time for those of us with family to spend time with, but for those who do not have family it is a difficult season. For the last couple of years those of us who work in the Unit office have been making donations to Youth Haven in Barrie. We decided awhile back that we have a lot and instead of getting gifts for each other that we would donate to a charity. We chose Youth Haven because it is a shelter for homeless youth and some of the people who use the shelter are students in our schools. Youth Haven exists strictly on donations and any time that we can support them through dropping off food, etc after an event they are extremely appreciative. They try to provide the basics for the youth that live there, but the extras are hard. Consider donating to Youth Haven this holiday season and bring a smile to a young person's face - let them know we care.

Ways you can help Youth Haven:

- donate hygiene items (razors, shampoos, deodorants, etc)
- donate food (canned goods, dry food stuffs, lunch items, etc)
- donate clothing (seasonal clothing, work boots, shoes, jackets, school

uniforms, new socks and underwear)

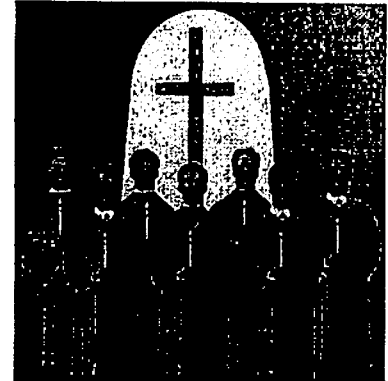
- donate pre-made dinners to feed 20 youth (lasagna, spaghetti, chili, casseroles, baked goodies, etc)
- host a fundraising event or collection drive. Have fun, be creative, the possibilities are endless!
- donate online -

[www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org) - Canadahelps is a registered charity created to accept charitable donations online.

I know that a lot of schools adopt a family to provide a Christmas, but please consider donating or doing something for the Youth of Simcoe County.

I want to take this opportunity to say Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all the members of Simcoe Muskoka Secondary Unit. This has been a busy four months. As we continue to meet with the School Board around contract negotiations it is our hope that we will be able to wrap things up in the new year, and move forward with implementing the central and local terms of the collective agreement. Thank you to the Collective Bargaining Team that continues to work toward the goal of a negotiated settlement and balancing the work they do within their school communities.

Have a great holiday and be safe while travelling.



Merry Christmas  
& Happy New  
Year!!

*Richelle*

## NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women is commemorated in Canada each year on December 6. On this day in 1989, 14 young women were murdered in a tragic act of gender violence at the Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal. This day reminds us to consider the women and girls for whom violence is an everyday reality and to remember those who have died as a result of gender based violence.

One way to take concrete action to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls is to raise awareness in our classrooms and schools. On December 6 (or 7) include school announcements and prayers that address gender violence. Samples are included. As well, on the OECTA website ([www.oecta.on.ca](http://www.oecta.on.ca)) in the issues section you will find *We Remember Through Action*, a commemorative resource guide for intermediate and senior grades, which provides ideas and links to classroom resources for teachers to facilitate problem solving and discussion in the classroom.



## PENSION CORNER

### Stick a Pin in it!

OTPP is now on Pinterest!

While you're perusing Pinterest for holiday decor tips, inspirational quotes, healthy recipes or financial planning infographics, explore [www.pinterest.com/myOTPP](http://www.pinterest.com/myOTPP) for tips, information and a bit of inspiration for your retirement.

Why OTTP launched a Pinterest board

- Women over the age of 50 are among Pinterest's largest group of users. This is a close reflection of the plan membership.
- Pinterest puts you in the driver seat. As you explore their boards, you'll find pins that are helpful or that resonate with you about life as a teacher or a retiree. By re-pinning these to your own boards, you'll build a content library of what you want to read (or watch).

OTTP wants to continue to expand the ways you can engage with them online, because you're spending more time online.

## RESOURCES

### Inspire Financial Learning

Sound financial literacy knowledge and skills help Canadians of all ages to make informed and responsible decisions and choices. In Ontario, financial literacy is infused and interwoven across subject areas in the Ontario curriculum in Grades 4 through 12.

The Inspire Financial Learning (IFL) program, sponsored by OTF provides resources and strategies to assist teachers, students, parents and guardians in developing the skills to make responsible financial choices.

Click on [www.inspirefinanciallearning.ca](http://www.inspirefinanciallearning.ca) to view the site.

### OTF Connects

This free webinar program provides easy-to-access PD at your home computer or on your mobile device. Webinars focusing on such topics as technology, math, financial literacy, the newly revised curriculum and critical thinking are available.

Check out the calendar of webinars at [www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/otf-connects/calendar](http://www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/otf-connects/calendar).

Also, past webinars are available at [www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/otf-connects/resources](http://www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/otf-connects/resources).

### OTF Teacher Resources

To assist educators in the classroom, the OTF Teacher Resources page has two components:

- Useful links to hundreds of websites, categorized according to topics to help focus your search; and
- Lesson Plans which have been developed by teachers in several of OTF's professional development projects. The plans are fully searchable by subject, grade, and topic.

Worth checking out at [www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/teacher-resources](http://www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/teacher-resources).

If you have a great resource why not share it with your colleagues. Send any resources with web links, etc to the Unit office for placement in upcoming newsletters.

### **Key Facts**

- Violence against women is the world's largest and most persistent human rights violation, and Canada is no exception.
- Over 50% of Canadian women will experience an incident of violence at some point in their lives, the majority before they turn 25.
- In most cases, women know their abuser.
- Violence against women costs over \$4 billion per year including direct medical costs along with those of criminal justice, social services, and lost productivity.

### **What You Can Do**

- Speak up about violence in your community.
- Encourage people who commit violence to get help.
- Teach girls to protect and empower themselves.
- Raise children who can resolve conflict without violence.
- Make sure your home, workplace, and community are safe for women and girls.
- Speak out against negative media images of women and girls.
- Promote women's economic and political equality.

### **SECONDARY - Sample Announcement and Prayer**

December 6<sup>th</sup> marks a tragic day in Canadian history. Fourteen young women were murdered in Montreal on this day 26 years ago. We take time today to remember women and girls who have lost their lives through violence and who suffer from abuse in their lives right now. We can take action by speaking up about violence and by encouraging people who commit violence to get help.

God of Life, today we stop and remember women and girls who are suffering from harm and abuse. We pray for open hearts and minds to support women and girls. Help us to offer hope to one another and to act to end violence against women. Help to us to bring about a world where women and men - boys and girls are able to love and to be loved. Amen.

### **ELEMENTARY - Sample Announcement and Prayer**

December 6<sup>th</sup> is Canada's National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. No one regardless of gender should be a victim of violence. Everyone deserves to be able to go to school and live in a community, free from harm. This December 6<sup>th</sup> remember those who have been victims and pray for an end to violence.

God of life, today we stop and remember women and girls who are suffering from harm and abuse. We pray for open hearts and minds to support women and girls. Help us to offer hope to one another and to act to end violence against women. Help us to bring about a world where women and men - boys and girls are able to love and to be loved. Amen.

**LEADERSHIP TRAINING  
FOUNDATIONAL TRAINING**

OECTA offers leadership training for those looking to become more involved with the Union. This school year OECTA is offering both the Foundational and Specialized programs. The Foundational Program will run with a capacity of 70 participants, of which we have one spot.

The sessions will focus on:

- √ ABCs of Grievance Arbitration
- √ Communication Fundamentals
- √ Legislative Framework
- √ OECTA: How it Works
- √ Principles of Teacher Leadership
- √ Professional Relationships

Each participant will complete the above modules and two of the following:

- Conflict Management
- Contemporary Issues in Education
- Facilitation Skills
- Financial Reporting
- Know Your Pension Plan
- Lobbying Essentials
- Making Meetings Matter
- Safe Schools
- Teacher Performance Appraisal

To be considered for the Foundational Program, participants must commit to:

- Serving members of the local unit in some capacity following training, i.e. being on a local committee or the unit executive
- Attending and participating fully in four days of training

OECTA will cover each participant's release time, travel, accommodation, and program costs for four training days in the Toronto area.

Additional information and the online application can be found on OECTA's website at [www.oecta.on.ca](http://www.oecta.on.ca) in the Members' Centre. Selection of applicants into the program will be a joint process between the local unit executive and the Provincial Office.

**LEADERSHIP TRAINING  
SPECIALIZED TRAINING**

OECTA's Leadership Training Program reflects the Association's commitment to training strong teacher advocates and activists at the local and provincial levels.

OECTA is offering the Specialized Training for 30 participants this school year. The prerequisite for application to a specialized training program is either completion of the Certificate of Foundational Training or service to OECTA membership in the role of a release officer for a period of at least one year.

Applicants will select one of the following areas of specialized programs:

- √ Advocacy and Member Engagement
- √ Collective Bargaining
- √ Conflict Management
- √ Grievance Officer

Leadership Training Program Dates for 2015-2016

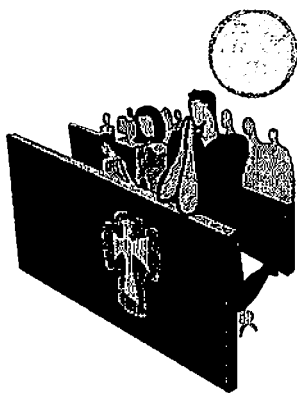
- December 1-14 - Applications for the Foundational Program
- January 5 - Applications for the Foundational Program sent to Unit Presidents
- January 6-22 - Applications for the Specialized Program
- January 21 - Recommendations from local Unit Executive for selection of applicants to the Provincial Office
- February 1 - Acceptances emailed to Foundational and Specialized Program participants
- March 31 & April 1 - First two days of Foundational and Specialized Training
- May 19-20 - Last two days of Foundational and Specialized Training

## IN SYMPATHY WITH

Maria Varano-Gallo, Teacher at St. Joan of Arc, on the passing of her mother-in-law, Maria Gallo.

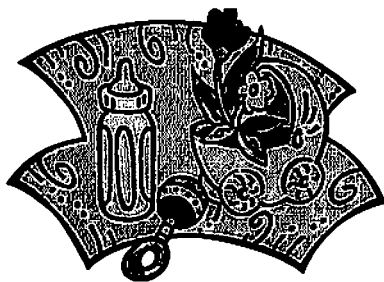
Cheryl Luymes, Special Education Co-ordinator, on the passing of her mother-in-law, Fenny Luymes.

Stephen Janveau, Teacher at St. Joan of Arc, on the passing of his grandfather, Sam Cappadocia.



## CONGRATULATIONS TO!

Kim Trudeau, Teacher at St. Peter's, and her husband Marc on the birth of their son, Graham.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

December 8 - Unit Executive Meeting  
Michael & Marian's, Barrie  
12:30 p.m.

December 11 - Local Collective Bargaining  
Board Office, Barrie

December 18-January 3 - Christmas Vacation

January 4 - Classes Reconvene

January 12 - Unit Executive Meeting  
Unit office, Elmvale  
12:30 p.m.

January 28 - February 3 - Semester One Final Exams

February 4 - Professional Activity Day

February 5 - Professional Activity Day - Start of Semester  
Two

February 9 - Unit Executive Meeting  
Unit Office, Elmvale  
12:30 p.m.

February 15 - Family Day!!!

February 25 - OECTA Staff Representatives Meeting  
Barrie Country Club, Barrie  
12:30 p.m.

March 7 - AGM Meeting  
4:30 p.m.

March 22 - Unit Executive Meeting  
Unit Office, Elmvale  
12:30 p.m.

March 25 - Good Friday

March 28 - Easter Monday