

Currently Speaking

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www.ugot.org



Another school year is about to start! As I write this newsletter article (August 23/07), approximately 75 LTO teachers have been hired to begin teaching in September 2007. Many of these teachers are new teachers to Upper Grand District School Board. There are still a

number of LTO positions yet to be filled. In addition there are 65-70 Casual Occasional Teaching positions available on the Casual OT list. Teachers who were interviewed in July and placed on a waiting list will receive a confirmation letter in the near future. We welcome our new ETFO members!

If you have questions/concerns related to the LTO assignment, your daily OT assignments or other Collective Agreement issues, please contact me at the Orchard Park office (519-837-0090) or leave a message on my answering machine at home (519-836-8585). I am available to answer your questions and provide assistance when needed.

Last week (August 13-16) Andrew Aloe, Vice-President; Donna Henderson, Secretary; Ted Pritchard, Executive Member; and I attended ETFO's Annual Meeting at the Westin Harbour Castle in Toronto. The Upper Grand OT's were supporting two candidates for the Provincial ETFO Executive. I was Campaign Manager for Diane Dewing, Upper Canada Occasional Teachers' Local. Doug Cook, Upper Grand Teachers' Local, was also a candidate. Congratulations to both successful candidates! A special thank you to Ted Pritchard, Donna Henderson and Andrew Aloe who assisted me with my Campaign Manager's duties. I was not able to attend all of the Annual Meeting activities because of my mother's funeral. A special thank you from my heart to all the OT members who attended the visitation and the funeral and/or sent condolences to me. It was deeply appreciated!

Marina Howlett
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U. G. ETFO Occasional Teachers' Local

President:	Marina Howlett
Vice President:	Andrew Aloe
Treasurer:	John Ritchie
Secretary:	Donna Henderson
Executive:	Carol Christie
	Jacqueline Gray
	Pat Klypycz
	John Parkyn
	Ted Pritchard
	Ralph Rainford
	Ruth Tomlins
	Barb Walkey
Website:	www.ugot.org
ETFO Provincial:	1-888-838-3836

Other Occasional Teachers who received ETFO awards included:

- Shelly Jan - President of the Peel Occasional Teachers' Local - ETFO Local Leadership Award
- Diane Dewing - President of the Upper Canada Occasional Teachers' Local - ETFO Newsletter Editor's Award
- Diane Persall - Grand Erie Occasional Teachers' Local - Occasional Teacher of the Year Award

Last June the Simcoe OT's and the Upper Grand OT's co-hosted the Provincial Occasional Teachers' Conference at Bayview Wildwood Resort in Orillia. We had a raffle for a variety of donated prizes and our share of the proceeds from the fund-raising activities (\$100) was donated to the Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis Shelter.

The Upper Grand OT's also contributed \$100 to the Rural Women's Shelter - East Wellington. This money was collected from the Penny Sale held at the Annual Meeting on June 7, 2007.

\$300 was donated to the ETFO Humanity Fund on behalf of the Upper Grand Teachers' Local. This donation was made to recognize the work and support the School Stewards provide for the LTO's and Casual Ot's at each of the schools. We appreciate the work they do at the school when the OT's have questions/concerns or need some support. School Stewards are the voice of the Federation!

ETFO Annual Meeting

August 13 - 16, 2007

President Emily Noble welcomed delegates to the 2007 Annual Meeting. She reflected on the nine years she has been a part of ETFO's executive. "I have had the privilege of serving on the ETFO provincial executive for nine tremendously dynamic years. I have been humbled and honoured to have served as your President for the last five years. It has been a joy to watch this organization evolve from its tenuous beginnings to the very accomplished union that it is today. It really has been quite an incredible journey and achievement for all of us!" **Emily Noble will serve as the 2007 - 2008 President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation.**

Some highlights from President Noble's address:

- "At ETFO we are leaders in every way, in our communications, in our political action, in our professional development, in our equity, social justice, and women's programs, in member services, in member protection, and in collective bargaining. It takes great determination and commitment to stay in the lead..
- "The core work of the Federation is collective bargaining and member protection. If we ever lose sight of that, we will lose the loyalty and respect of our members. It is our capacity to do that work well that earns us the credibility to have a meaningful voice in our professionalism, and equity, and social justice initiatives.
- "In nine years, as you might expect, we have had some acrimonious moments. Much of the internal discord has emanated from the belief that not all members receive equal treatment and access to programs within the Federation. I believe that no member, in fact no citizen in our society, should be disadvantaged or given a lesser voice within our Federation because of gender or sexual orientation or disability or race. I believe equally strongly that no member should have an inherent advantage or be given a stronger voice solely on the basis of gender or race or disability or sexual orientation.
- "Let's all recognize that some groups, because of deep-rooted systemic or historic discrimination, will need additional training, resources, or support to give them the same advantage that the majority of us have because of the privileged position that we enjoy in our society. Each one of us, regardless of gender or sexual orientation or disability or race, will face barriers during our

careers. We will all need additional support at stressful times during our lives. One's individual challenge is no more or less worthy than another's. To mature as an organization, we need to ensure that we support all of our members fully.

- "With the provincial election and the next round of bargaining on the horizon, this organization will face some daunting challenges. There remains a funding gap that defies explanation and devalues the work you and I do and ignores the needs of our students. These are challenges that we need to meet head on. These are challenges that will require strong leadership and a strong sense of purpose both locally and provincially.
- "We exist to serve the needs of our members. We can only do that effectively as a tough-minded and strongly principled labour union. Colleagues, great challenges lie ahead for our members and for this union. We will be facing significant challenges in the next round of negotiations. There is much to be accomplished. Let's get it done!"



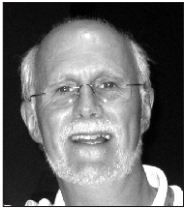
ETFO 2007-2008 Priorities

The priorities for the coming year were passed:

- to protect the collective bargaining rights of all members;
- to defend publicly-funded public education;
- to serve the needs of the membership;
- to provide for the professional development of members;
- to promote social justice in the areas of anti-poverty, non-violence, and equity;
- to support international assistance and co-operation;
- To promote the care and protection of the environment;
- to actively engage members in the Federation; and
- to promote and protect the health and safety of members.

Impressions of the ETFO Annual Meeting in August

by Ted Pritchard



From Monday, August 13 to Thursday, August 16, the Annual Meeting of ETFO, the August Assembly, took place at the Westin Harbour Castle Hotel in Toronto. I was one of two alternates, along with Andrew Aloe, and two delegates, Donna Henderson and your

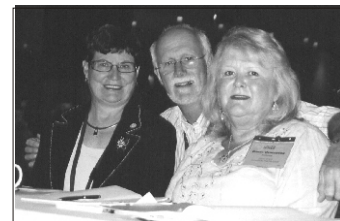
President, Marina Howlett, sent to represent your Upper Grand Occasional Teacher interests at the Annual Meeting.

While the day-long meetings ran into the late hours of the evening, the work and preparations for the Annual Meeting are not confined to one week in August. A couple of the Upper Grand Executive Meetings were occupied with preparations for the AM. The organization of Provincial Occasional Teachers (POTs) met from June 10 to June 12 at a conference resort north of Orillia to plan resolution and election strategies intended to benefit Occasional Teachers in the future. Teacher and Occasional Teacher Locals have to submit Resolutions for consideration at the AM back in February and March. Marina committed to become the campaign manager for Diane Dewing, the President of the Upper Canada O.T. Local, who was making a run to become a member of the 14 person executive of ETFO. Hopes were that we would see representation rise by one from 2 to 3 Occasional Teachers on the Executive.

The week of the AM, even with all these plans, is a roller coaster ride of up and down emotions even at the best of times. There are events that can't be planned for, but can be prepared for. Such an event happened to Marina in the early hours of the Friday before the AM. Marina's mother passed away, not unexpectedly, with Marina present that morning. One visitation occurred on the Monday of the AM and the funeral happened on the Tuesday. Even as Marina fulfilled her responsibilities to her mother, and dealt with her very personal loss of mother and best friend, she worked on behalf of the membership. She was in Toronto early in the morning on Monday to fulfill obligations to Diane's election campaign and then rushed back to Erin in the afternoon to stand by her mother. In Marina's absence, I had the opportunity to assist with Diane's campaign which I found exhilarating but exhausting at the same time. There were too many hospitality suites to attend and too many nights when I fell into bed at 1:30 a.m. only to be up again at 6:00 the same morning. Marina was back at the AM by Wednesday to see Diane emerge victorious in her campaign and take her seat on the ETFO executive. Rian McLaughlin, President of the Hamilton

Wentworth O.T. Local, also remains on the Executive. Unfortunately Shelly Jan, president of the Peel O.T. Local, lost her race to hold her executive position after serving Occasional Teacher and Teacher concerns effectively for two terms. Doug Cook from our Upper Grand Teacher Local also gained a seat on the Executive. This is what I meant by "Roller Coaster" highs and lows, with elation over Diane Dewing and Doug Cook joining the Executive and the depression of losing Shelly Jan from the Executive.

At the AM, the food was good, the beds were better (what little I saw of them), the work was fulfilling and the parties were even better still. Even with all this going on, there was time for a swim in a pool, a sauna, a whirlpool, a dinner cruise (hotdog from a cart and a ferry boat ride to Centre Island), Karaoke, and a midnight walk along Toronto's waterfront. I hope I get to go to the AM next year.



Dorothy Smith

submitted by Donna Henderson

On August 10, many present and retired teachers as well as students from Dufferin and Wellington were saddened to hear of the passing of Dorothy Smith. She was a dedicated elementary teacher in Orangeville and surrounding area for 32 years.

I remember when I first started teaching, Dorothy was on my staff and I was amazed at her level of energy. She had a family at home. She always had time for the newbie. She had hugs galore for her little ones in her classroom. Her blue eyes always twinkled with her ready smile because you were a friend.

Her family was supported in the many roles they assumed. She was always encouraging to all from the oldest, Marina Howlett, all the way to the youngest great grandchild.

Dorothy will be missed by many family and friends. We all take pride in the knowledge that she touched our lives.

ETFO ANNUAL MEETING REPORT



The ETFO AM was held in Toronto from Aug. 13 to 16. The Delegates attending from the Upper Grand OT Local were Marina Howlett and Donna Henderson. The Alternates were Ted Pritchard and Andrew Aloe. Ruth Tomlins attended one day as a Visitor.

The opening morning of the meeting is used to bring Delegates up to date on issues. I attended the Women and Supporters Caucus where the Speaker was Wayne Samuelson, President of the Ontario Federation of Labour. His theme was that “change comes with all of our collective energy”. The Annual Meeting began at 4:00 and, with many evening sessions, continued until 2:00 Thursday afternoon.

Emily Noble, President of ETFO, opened the AM. She has served nine years on this Executive and is moving into the role of President of CTF. The meeting theme was looking at our achievements in Collective Bargaining (200 minutes prep time) and our policies for the protection of our members. This year in Collective Bargaining and in the Political Arena the drive is the removal of the \$711/student funding gap between Elementary and Secondary Panels.

Tuesday’s speaker was Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education. This government believes that PUBLIC EDUCATION IS THE CORNERSTONE for provincial growth. She stressed the gains that this current government has re-established with more teachers since 2003 and smaller class sizes in the early years. The next initiative is to address the class sizes in Grades 4-8. She acknowledged the funding gap and will work to reduce it. She also addressed some of the Conservative election promises. She sees no merit in rewarding schools that do well on tests. Needless to say, her words were very well received.

Tuesday afternoon the Provincial ETFO awards were given. There were 223 applications for 10 awards. These awards are given annually for excellence in education, leadership and union work. Standing Committees were also introduced. Our president, Marina Howlett, serves on the Pension Committee. Later that afternoon, Dr. Samantha Nutt, Executive Director for War Child Canada, addressed the delegation. Her speech emotionally evoked an awareness of the atrocities that we unknowingly fund through many of our donations to charitable groups.

Wednesday morning, Howard Hampton, Leader of the NDP party, spoke to the meeting. He understands there is a funding gap. “If the funding model worked we would not see inequity in schools and school areas.” Schools should not have to fund-raise for the classrooms. Fund-raising does not treat all evenly. He

stated that the top 10% of schools from affluent areas raised more money than the other 80% all together. The NDP party wants to remove the gap.

Wednesday was the summation of the election machine. The speeches had been made on Tuesday. The Candidates had had debates. We all had had the opportunity to meet the Candidates on Tuesday evening. Now we have a new Provincial executive.

The highlight of the AM is the Annual Banquet. The Honourary Life members, of which Marina is one, attend this meal and new Members are given their pin and the honour of being a life member of ETFO

Thursday, the meeting ended. The deficit Budget was passed and fees were not increased. We all came home tired, but proud of our Local and ETFO.

Donna Henderson



My first AM was nothing short of amazing. I was there Monday and Tuesday. I would have stayed all week but I had registered for a Karate Camp in North Carolina. I listened to some great speakers. Among them were Emily Noble, David Miller, and Kathleen Wynne. Their messages were very inspiring to me. They made comments about how we as teachers are doing a great job but they also made mention about the improvements that still need to be made. I agreed. These were great speakers but the speaker that touched my heart was Dr. Samantha Nutt. She is the Executive Director of War Child Canada. She spoke with passion and conviction. She told stories and she informed us about war. What impressed me the most was how much she had experienced in such a short time. I was in awe. I won't go into the details. For that, go to her web site www.warchild.ca. I met her after and she was so amazing to talk with. The speakers were fun and informative but what struck me the most about the AM was the democratic process used. We had a Parliamentarian who ran the show. We openly discussed the issues and we would vote. I won't get into the process because it is complicated. It isn't difficult to learn, however. I had Ted Pritchard and Donna Henderson beside me the whole time answering my questions and guiding me through it. Without their support it would have been difficult. I am already looking forward to next year's AM.

Andrew Aloe

O.T. Daily Rate of Pay

- Casual O.T. Rate of Pay:
(Certified) Sept. 1, 2007 \$195.19
Feb. 1, 2008 \$197.92
- Emergency Supply Rate:
(Non-Certified) Sept. 1, 2007 \$128.00
- Long Term Occasional Rate of Pay:
Grid Rate based on Category Placement
and Years of Experience - Elementary
Teachers' Grid

N.B. Casual OT's who continue to work in the same teaching assignment for twelve days or more are paid Grid Rate. Grid Rate is retroactive to the first day of employment in that particular teaching assignment.

If you accept an LTO contract, please notify SEMS of the dates you will be unavailable for Daily Occasional Assignments. This will alleviate the numerous calls you are likely to receive during the time period you are on an LTO contract

Also, OT's are reminded to include date, school name, teacher's name and job confirmation number prior to presenting time sheets to the school secretary. If you are unsure of the name of the teacher whom you are replacing; please check the information on the website, or the S.E.M.S. Telephone line (519-822-0255 or 1-877-797-7771) or ask the Secretary at the school. Timesheets need to be submitted to the office upon arrival at each school.

Website www.ugot.org



Please visit the website for current information, Professional Development opportunities, an Executive contact list, Currently Speaking (our OT newsletter), and other pertinent information as it becomes available.

We will continue to use the website to communicate to members when it is impossible to contact all members by telephone or through the mail.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Federation Dates

Thurs., November 15, 2007 ...**Fall General Meeting**
Time: 4:45 pm Location: Wellington County Museum
Thurs., June 5, 2008.....**Annual Meeting**
Time: 4:45pm Location: Wellington County Museum

Executive Meetings September - December 2007 (January - June 2008 to be announced)

Tues., September 11, 2007Orchard Park
Tues., October 16, 2007Orchard Park
Tues., November 20, 2007.....Orchard Park
Thur., December 13, 2007.....to be announced

Professional Development/Early Dismissal Days

Fri., September 28, 2007
Fri., October 26, 2007
Fri., November 16, 2007
Fri., February 15, 2008
Fri., June 6, 2008
Fri., June 27, 2008



Holidays

Dec. 22, 2007 - Jan. 6, 2008Christmas Break
March 7 - 16, 2008Winter Break
March 21 - 24, 2008Easter

Pay Dates

September 21, 2007	February 22, 2008
October 5, 2007	March 7, 2008
October 19, 2007	March 20, 2008
November 2, 2007	April 4, 2008
November 16, 2007	April 18, 2008
November 30, 2007	May 2, 2008
December 14, 2007	May 16, 2008
December 28, 2007	May 30, 2008
January 11, 2008	June 13, 2008
January 25, 2008	June 27, 2008
February 8, 2008	July 11, 2008

Provincial ETFO Executive 2007-9

President - David Clegg
First Vice President - Sam Hammond
Vice President - Hilda Watkins
Vice President (female) - Barbara Burkett
OTF Representative - Hilda Watkins

Executive Members - Doug Cook (Upper Grand Teachers' Local), Rachel Gencey, Martin Long, Mike Lumb, Rian McLaughlin (Hamilton-Wentworth OT Local), Deb St. Amant
Executive Members (female) - Diane Dewing (Upper Canada OT Local), Sharron Raymond, Susan Swackhammer, Maureen Weinberger

VOTE YES FOR MMP (MIXED MEMBER PROPORTIONAL SYSTEM)

October 10, 2007 is Election Day for Ontario voters. Not only will we be electing our representatives in the Ontario Legislature, but also voters will be asked whether they want to reform the province's electoral system. ETFO is supporting the recommendations from the Ontario Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform. In order for you to make an informed choice, I have included this article from the VOTE YES for MMP multi-partisan campaign and two newspaper clippings from the Guelph Mercury and the Guelph Tribune to direct you to additional sources of information.

WHAT IS MMP?

A citizens' assembly of randomly selected residents from around the province recommended a mixed-member proportional system after studying various options and travelling around Ontario to speak to voters. It's a compromise between the current system and proportional representation, which would remove ridings completely and assign parties a number of seats equivalent to their share of the province-wide popular vote. MMP creates a more proportional balance compared to the current system making the breakdown of seats in Queen's Park closer to the popular vote.

The new system proposes fewer, larger ridings -- 90 instead of 107 -- where

representatives would be elected in the same way they are now.

It also has 39 at-large members -- candidates who don't have their own ridings. Each party makes a list of those candidates ranked in order. Constituents elect a local representative, and also vote for a party. The party vote is used to select at-large members, topping up each party's representation so it roughly reflects that party's share of the vote.

Germany and New Zealand are often cited as successful examples of countries with MMP electoral systems.

For more information, visit the citizens' assembly website at: www.citizensassembly.gov.on.ca.

Guelph Mercury

Understand the Question

Elections Ontario has already launched the first phase of an information campaign to educate voters about the referendum.

The "Understand the Question" campaign includes several ways for the province's 8.5 million registered voters to get information on the referendum, a news release said. Some key elements include:

- www.yourbigdecision.ca elections Ontario's referendum public education website which will provide voters with impartial tools to define and understand the Referendum options and provide answers to

the many questions that Ontarians have on this landmark decisions, the release said.

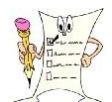
- 1-888-ONTVOTE (1-888-668-8683), an easy-to-access hotline to assist voters with their questions
- Province-wide French and English newspaper, television and radio advertising campaign
- Referendum awareness profile and group on Facebook
- Over 100 resource officers hired to deliver local community information sessions

Guelph Tribune

VOTING REFORM REFERENDUM: ONE CHANCE ON OCTOBER 10, 2007

(From the ETFO files)

We have an historic chance on October 10, 2007 to achieve, for ourselves and future generations, what we need more than anything in our political arena: a modern voting system.



The Ontario referendum on electoral reform this fall opens the door, at long last, to a more hopeful politics: more voter choice, fairer election outcomes, better representation, and more party accountability.

It's the surprising opportunity of a lifetime. You can help make the most of it by supporting a resounding Yes victory in October (see www.VoteYesForMMP.ca - more contact info below).

Under the proposed MMP (Mixed Member Proportional) system, voters will have one ballot and two votes - a party vote for a preferred party and a local vote for a preferred local candidate. The two marks allow and encourage positive political choices. All voters matter equally, very few votes are wasted, local representation is guaranteed, and parties generally get the share of seats in the legislature they actually deserve - no more, no less.

Under Ontario MMP, 90 members of the provincial parliament will be elected from single-member ridings in the usual way. A further 39 members will be elected to province-wide at-large seats. These will be allocated on the principle that each party and its voters must achieve, overall, a share of the legislature as close as possible to their share of the province-wide party vote.

In this way Queen's Park will welcome, in the near future, more Conservative members from Toronto, more Liberal members from Eastern Ontario, a larger contingent of New Democrats, and Canada's first elected Greens.

The MMP system proposal is simple, sensible and fair. Political parties will be required to make public their candidate lists and nomination methods well before Election Day. We will continue the tradition of geographic representation but strengthen it with proportional representation, increased voter choice and increased candidate and party accountability.

Other countries have found in proportional voting a strong tool to promote the election of women and visible minorities. Parties' nomination lists of candidates for the at-large seats have strong reason to offer an appealing diversity of accomplished men and women from various occupations and cultural groups.

Winner-take-all voting systems, like the one we will leave behind on October 10, usually give majority power to a single party which has not won majority voting support. MMP will distribute legislative power in direct proportion to the choices of voters, leading to broader-based government and broader public consensus on government policies.

By voting yes on October 10, we will be telling politicians we affirm the most fundamental democratic value - all citizens are equal - and its natural companions - fair representation for all and true majority governments.

Legislatures need outside help to reform. The MMP voting proposal comes from the Ontario Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, a jury-like group with one person from each riding selected randomly by Elections Ontario, with half being male and half female. The Assembly members devoted seven months to consulting the public and studying and debating voting systems before reaching their made-in-Ontario conclusion.

Those 103 citizens working on our behalf have done their job brilliantly. Now the rest of us must do ours by winning the referendum.

VOTE YES for MMP is a multi-partisan campaign to make this important reform happen. We welcome people from all backgrounds and every political party to support the Citizens' Assembly call for MMP.

For more information on VOTE YES for MMP, including details on how to help, volunteer and donate, visit www.VoteYesForMMP.ca or contact us at info@voteyesforMMP.ca or call 416-410-4034.

