

The Official
Newsletter
of the
Occasional
Teachers'
Bargaining Unit

District 12, OSSTF

The Call Out



Volume 15 Issue 3

March \April 2017

OSSTF PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT PAUL ELLIOTT STEPS DOWN



OSSTF/FEESO Provincial President, Paul Elliott, announced, Saturday, March 11, 2017 that after two terms as Provincial leader and twelve years of service on the Provincial Executive, he was stepping down. In his speech to delegates to the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly (AMPA) Elliott spoke of his work at Mobile Drive and his commitment to protecting public education, not just in Ontario or Canada, but in various corners of the world where free and open schooling and teachers were continually under attack.

The outgoing president spoke of the difficulties of bargaining with the Ontario Government through the chaotic models developed for teacher bargaining, and the success of the OSSTF in challenging the government at the Supreme Court of Canada with removing fundamental bargaining rights.

He elicited a groan from the audience when he said that provincial governments seem to have the memories of goldfish, because after two clear decisions by the Supreme Court, the Nova Scotia government had set out

down the same path tried first in B.C. and then in Ontario.

Finally, he thanked the members of the union who had supported his efforts over the last twelve years, noting wryly that his home district only brought three delegates to AMPA and that he had to work hard to build coalitions within the union, work that had helped produce positive results over the course of his presidency.

Incoming president Harvey Bischof noted, in thanking Elliott on behalf of the membership, that President Elliott had been a tireless worker and team builder within the union and among the various Ontario teacher and public service unions with which he has worked over his career at Provincial Office.

Paul Elliott received a prolonged standing ovation from the delegates after ending his speech.

Semester Two 2017 Pay Dates

2017 OCCASIONAL TEACHER PAY DATES			
Pay Date	Period	Covering From:	To
March 9, 2017	05	February 12, 2017	February 25, 2017
March 23, 2017	06	February 26, 2017	March 11, 2017
April 6, 2017	07	March 12, 2017	March 25, 2017
April 20, 2017	08	March 26, 2017	April 8, 2017
May 4, 2017	09	April 9, 2017	April 22, 2017
May 18, 2017	10	April 23, 2017	May 6, 2017
June 1, 2017	11	May 7, 2017	May 20, 2017
June 15, 2017	12	May 21, 2017	June 3, 2017
June 29, 2017	13	June 4, 2017	June 17, 2017
July 13, 2017	14	June 18, 2017	July 1, 2017
July 27, 2017	15	July 2, 2017	July 15, 2017
August 10, 2017	16	July 16, 2017	July 29, 2017
August 24, 2017	17	July 30, 2017	August 12, 2017



Spiderman's Pals Show Up at AMPA

Members are reminded that OSSTF and/or the OTBU will reimburse members for child care expenses, when they need to pay for childcare to attend sanctioned OTBU or D12 meetings or events such our Annual General Meeting, our Fall General Meeting and District meetings.

Call the OTBU Office for specific details.

Phone: 416-423-3600

From the Desk of President Linda Bartram...



AMPA 2017

AMPA 2017 was a very satisfactory one. We have a partially new Provincial Executive. The District 12 OTBU motion to create an Occasional Teacher Ad

Hoc Work Group to look at the challenges and work related issues faced by Occasional Teachers province-wide passed on Sunday, March 12. The complete motion can be found in this newsletter.

CHANGES TO HEALTH BENEFITS FOR D12 OCCASIONAL TEACHERS

Dramatic changes to our health benefits, as a result of the agreement between OSSTF and OPSBA, are coming soon. District 12 is in the 4th wave of implementation of Provincial Benefits which begins April 1st, 2017. This implementation does **not** affect D12 Occasional Teachers. You will find specific information regarding OT benefits in the **Chief Negotiator's Report** in this newsletter. I want you to know that Daily OT benefits were not a top priority in the initial provincial benefits plan. We and three other districts who have access to health benefits were quite frankly overlooked. We refused to be ignored and pushed back on behalf of OTBU members. The benefits deal we now have is hopefully the best that could be bargained. It will take some time to get all the details, but until we do, members currently covered by employer co-paid benefits will continue that coverage until August 31, 2017.

RATIFICATION VOTE ON THE CONTRACT EXTENSION AND BILL 115 REMEDY

OTBU members will have an opportunity to hear details of the tentative extension agreement and the Bill 115 Charter remedy, ask questions and make comments during the Webinar on **MARCH 30th at 7:00 pm**. You will receive a phone call near 7:00 pm on March 30 inviting you to join the Town Hall meeting. You can also see the deal on the OSSTF website. You must have your OSSTF membership number in order to log in to *MyOSSTF*.

LET YOUR UNION KNOW

We are here to protect your rights under the Collective Agreement. Please let us know if you have any problems or concerns in your daily work. If we don't know, we can't act on your behalf.



President Linda speaking at AMPA on the D-12 Occasional Teacher Motion.

Chief Negotiator's Report

By Vincent Zambrano, OTBU Chief Negotiator



The educational unions, including OSSTF, have TENTATIVELY agreed to extend the present Collective Agreement until August 2019. The proposed extension was agreed to by the Provincial OSSTF and the Provincial Government. There was no 'local' bargaining in this "round". OSSTF members will note that the extension provides for some changes to the last negotiated Collective Agreement which the members of the OTBU ratified in the winter of 2015.

Before the proposed tentative collective agreement Extension can come into effect, members of OSSTF across the province, will have an opportunity to participate in discussing the terms of the tentative CA extension and take part in a ratification vote. A copy of the extension provisions can be found on the *myOSSTF* area of the provincial Website.

For the members of the District 12 OTBU an telephone Town Hall will take place on **MARCH 30TH 2017 at 7:00 PM**. Members will be apprised of the method for accessing the Town Hall by information to be found on the OTBU Website; in this Newsletter; and by email- if you have provided us with your non TDSB personal email address. On March 30th, all members will be able to call and log in to the Town Hall, ask questions and express their opinion on the proposed CA extension terms. Members of the OTBU will be able to participate in the ratification vote, on line, during the period from **April 4th to 6th 2017**.

In short, the terms and provisions,, as they apply to occasional teachers, provide for an all too insufficient increase in salary

- a lump sum amount of 0.5% on earned wages in 2016-17 will be paid by November 1st 2017 for those who are still employed as of September 5th 2017.
- beginning September 2017 there will be an increase in salary of 1.5%
- a subsequent increase of 1.0% in September, 2018
- an increase of 1.0% on February 1st, 2019
- an increase of 0.5% in August 2019.

Those who fulfill the criteria, as it presently exists in the CA and wish to access benefits, I include the following information provided by Provincial OSSTF.

Occasional Teacher "Pay In-Lieu" for Benefits:

This memo is intended to provide Extended Health/Dental/Life benefits information for occasional teachers, who based upon the amount of time they worked in the previous school year, qualify for employer paid benefits in the subsequent school year. For the purposes of this memo, Occasional Teachers in the following districts are included; **District 12 Toronto**; District 13 Durham; District 16 York; District 29 Hastings Prince Edward.

The tentative agreement reached February 23rd, 2017 between OSSTF and OPSBA will, if ratified, provide clarity as to how occasional teachers can access funding for Extended Health/Dental/Life benefits. The new language contained within the extension agreement clarifies original language found in the 2014-17 Central Agreement and reads as follows:

"Eligible daily occasional teachers in the four boards listed below shall be entitled to the lesser of a) the following table amounts and b) the actual benefit plan cost multiplied by the percentage of the existing employer co-pay in the 2012-2014 local collective agreements, to be used for the sole purpose of purchasing from among health, life and/or dental benefit plans

BOARD	Maximum Funding Amount	Employer Percentage Co-Pay
Durham DSB	\$2,454	50%
Hastings & Prince Edward DSB	\$3,680	50%
Toronto DSB	\$2,454	75%
York Region DSB	\$491	10%

These amounts shall be prorated for the portion of the year that the daily occasional teacher enrolls in the plan. Eligibility criteria for these amounts are based on the existing eligibility criteria of the 2012-2014 local collective agreements which is based on the number of days worked in the previous school year, and varies by board. Payments will be provided to the eligible daily occasional teacher on a monthly basis.”

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the maximum amount I as an Occasional Teacher, who qualifies for employer paid benefits based upon my previous year’s work, can spend on a suitable benefit plan?

A: There is no maximum amount that a member can spend to purchase a suitable benefits plan. There is a maximum, however, on the amount that can be reimbursed by the employer. All calculations in the chart above are based upon a maximum of \$4,907/ year spent by the member on benefits. That leads to a maximum available reimbursement of \$3680 ($\$4907 \times 75\%$) in Hastings Prince Edward, \$2454 ($\$4907 \times 50\%$) in Toronto and Durham, and \$491 ($\$4907 \times 10\%$) in York. Please note that the percentages here (ie. 75%, 50%, and 10%) are consistent with employer benefit contributions for qualified daily occasional teachers in respective local collective agreements.

Q: How much funding will be available to individual members for them to choose a suitable benefits plan of their choice?

A: Each individual Occasional Teacher, who qualifies for employer paid benefits based upon their previous year’s work, can spend as much, or as little, on a benefits plan of their choice. The maximum amount reimbursed, however is capped according to the chart above.

Example: A member from D12 Toronto qualifies for employer funding for benefits, and chooses a suitable benefits plan that provides individual coverage for \$3200 per year. Their expected level of employer reimbursement is:

Cost of Plan x 50% employer paid coverage = Annual funding available (to a max. of \$2,454)
 $\$3,200 \times 50\% = \$1,600$

This D12 Toronto member, having chosen and purchased a \$3,200 benefits plan, will be reimbursed \$1,600 (50%) annually by the employer paid on a monthly basis. Please note that \$2454/year was available for reimbursement, but because the plan chosen was \$3200 (less than \$4,907/year) this leads to a reimbursement of 50% of the actual amount spent on benefits.

Q: Now that the funding will be in place to purchase benefits, where can I buy benefits?

A: Currently OTIP is developing a benefits plan that will be available for purchase by members, including the members covered in this memo. There are also other benefit plans on the market available for purchase that will be suitable for reimbursement.

Q: What happens to my current board provided Benefits when my district or bargaining unit transitions to OSSTF Benefits?

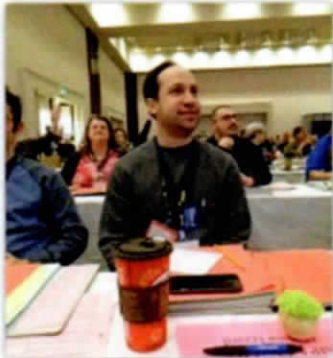
A: The Occasional Teachers covered in this memo will remain with their current board provided benefits until August 31st, 2017 regardless of when other district or bargaining unit members move to OSSTF benefits.

Q: Will the dollar amounts listed in the chart above increase during the term of the extension agreement?

A: Yes. As with other benefit funding, the maximum funding amount will increase by 4% in 2017-18 and then again by 4% in 2018-19.

Please participate on March the 30th in the Town Hall, get informed, and vote.

A.M.P.A. 2017



Eitan Laufer E.O. OTBU



Paul Bocking V.P. OTBU



Linda Bartram President. OTBU



David Pickering and Roman



Two Treasurers— Arm in Arm



Old and New-Elliott and Bischof



Coleridge with Manfred Netzel



Time Out for some delegates



Education Minister M. Hunter



Thinking About an LTO - Time is Money - Get Certified

Should you win a position as an LTO, the TDSB will pay you based on your OSSTF Certification Rating Statement.

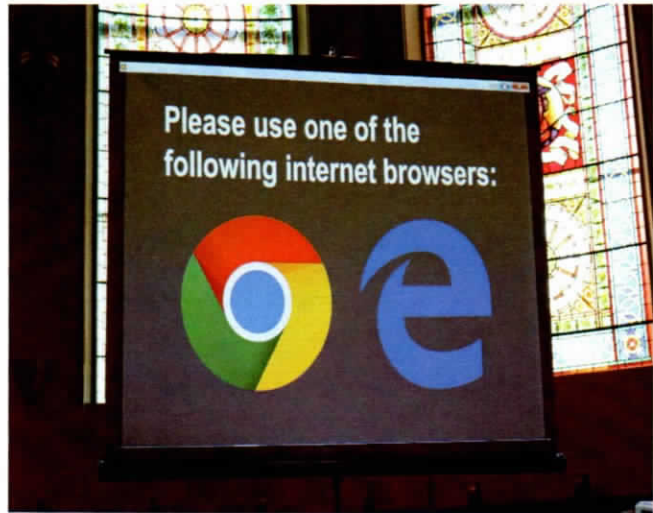
Begin to get YOUR Rating Statement by obtaining a Certification Application Form #1 from the OSSTF website at www.osstf.on.ca.

Enclose with the application form:

- copies of your contract or proof of OSSTF membership
- College of Teachers Certificate of Qualification
- originals of official university transcript
- originals of any additional information related to courses taken.

Mail this information to:

OSSTF/FEESO
Certification Department
60 Mobile Drive
Toronto, ON, M4A 2P3



Board Representatives **Sam Venneri** and **Theresa Raines** speaking to members at our February 17th PD Day, strongly urged D-12 Occasional Teachers to use the two browsers, pictured above in communicating with the TDSB and using the TDSB website.



Exec Officer, Coleridge Browne listens to comments from one of our OTBU members between workshops at our February 17th Professional Development Day at Victoria College

You Are Invited

To Attend

**The D-12 OTBU
ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 2017

4:30 - 7:00 P.M

**LATVIAN-CANADIAN CENTRE
EGLINTON AVE EAST AND CREDIT
UNION DRIVE**

Dinner will be served free to all participants following the meeting.

PD Day

February 17, 2017 Victoria College



Patrick at ease.



Thanks Mike and Howard.



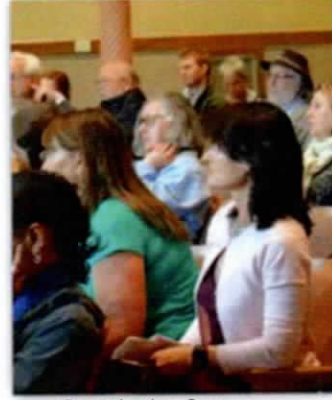
A prize winner.



All smiles.



Sam Venneri- A study in grey.



Questioning Sam.



Not camera shy. Thanks.



Making a point.



More smiles.



Another prize winner



Lucien and Don .



Listening, intently.



Exec Officer Ann Burke, PD Organizer 'extrordinaire' delivering lunches to presenters who were moving on to afternoon presentations.

P.D. DAY REPORT

P.D. Day for D-12 Occasional Teachers was held at Victoria College on February 17th. Despite the bright, cold weather, registration was brisk and members arrived early to get organized and to enjoy the breakfast spread. Thanks to Mike Jasenko and Howard Bernstein for assisting at the registration desk.

President Linda Bartram welcomed participants to the event and introduced Sam Venneri and Theresa Raines from the TDSB's Occasional Teaching Department.

Their presentation mainly dealt with the intricacies of navigating the SmartFind system and the MyInfo system being used by the Board. After the presentation, Sam and Theresa answered questions from the audience. Concern about the Board's announced intention of bringing into operation the rule whereby 4 declined assignments in 20 days might lead to a teacher being removed from the TDSB Roster ranked high among the questions.

There were four (4) workshops to choose from. The State of Secondary Education, facilitated by Paul Bocking, in which members reviewed the annual OTBU survey on working conditions and brainstormed responses to major issues. This was the most popular workshop.

By popular request, EDUCATORS' FINANCIAL presented a Walking into Retirement workshop. This session provided useful information about retirement finances and organizing one's current finances.

By sending in our request early in September, the OTBU was able to obtain presenters of two of OSSTF's newest workshops. Managing Conflict examined sources of conflict that can occur between colleagues in the workplace and explored a three-step approach to managing them. The brand new workshop Poverty and Class Bias, addressed issues of poverty and class bias in our schools and suggested strategies that teachers might employ in their classrooms to understand and mitigate them. Both the workshops were interactive, and enjoyed excellent reviews from participants.

A splendid lunch, catered by Victoria College, was served at noon. During the lunch a draw was held for two door prizes - electronic tablets - which are very useful as Occasional Teachers move from school to school. After lunch, a number of members stayed to network with friends and colleagues and to discuss issues with OTBU Executive.

Reminder: The February P.D. Day is deemed to be a "Union P.D. Day," so if you are in an LTO you can ask the principal of the school where you are working if you may attend the union workshops instead of school-based activities. The OSSTF workshops provide a certificate of completion which we (OTBU) will mail to your home address

Provincial Executive 2017-2019



Harvey Bischof— President



Cindy Dubué VP.



Bob Gascho—VP



Earl Burt -Treasurer.



Paul Caccamo – E.O.



Martha Hradowy –E.O.



Karen Littlewood – E.O.



Pierre Coté—Gen. Sec.

From the TDSB....

Employee Annual Offence Declaration

All employees of the TDSB, except those hired after March 31, 2017, are required to complete the 2017 *Offence Declaration form*. Employees who are retiring or going on a leave of absence are required to complete their 2017 Offence Declaration form before June 30, 2017.

Employees hired on, or after, April 1, 2017 will be required to complete this on-line form starting in April 2018.

Failure to complete the Annual Offence Declaration Form is a breach of the legislative requirement for continued employment with a school board. The name of any employee who fails to provide the required document will be forwarded to the Executive Superintendent of Employee Services.

Annual Meeting of OSSTF Passes OTBU Motion for Provincial Workgroup on OT Issues

By Paul Bocking, OTBU 2nd Vice President

With overwhelming support from delegates, a motion submitted by the District 12, OTBU for Provincial OSSTF to strike a workgroup on OT issues was passed by the Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly (AMPA), the highest decision-making body of our union. The motion directs OSSTF's Provincial Executive to establish a Work Group, with a mandate of one year, to be composed of:

- Up to 8 occasional teacher members;
- Provincial Office staff (Secretariat) and member(s) of the Provincial Executive as deemed appropriate by the Provincial Executive.



The work group shall:

1. Gather and analyze information about occasional teacher work related issues;
2. Make recommendations to the Provincial Executive about issues specific to occasional teachers;
3. Provide input on more effective ways to engage occasional teacher members; and
4. Provide input on an internal OSSTF campaign to raise awareness of the important role of Occasional Teachers in the education system.

The Work Group will report to Provincial Council meetings, with a final report to Provincial Council, June 2018.

At the November, 2016 OTBU General Meeting, myself and OTBU Executive Officer Jamie Whitaker presented five motions for AMPA which were approved by the membership. At the December, 2016 OSSTF Toronto District Executive meeting, it was determined that two of the motions: that OTs have access to the new provincial benefits plan, and that a cap on the OT roster be made a provincial bargaining priority, would be better raised at the monthly meetings of OSSTF Provincial Council where negotiations are discussed. This has been done by OTBU president Linda Bartram and Chief Negotiator Vincent Zambrano. A third motion, that a province-wide survey be conducted on OT issues was expanded into the above motion to AMPA. Two other motions that a Provincial OSSTF secretariat officer be assigned specifically to OT issues, and that at least one member of the central negotiating table be an OT or specifically represent OTs, were defeated at the Toronto District Executive meeting.

OTBU executive members will apply to participate on the provincial OT work group and will provide regular updates to OTBU members on its activities. Building support among delegates from across Ontario for this motion increased the visibility of OTs and our issues within the larger union, and strengthened our contacts with other OT bargaining units.

Report from AMPA

By: Lillian Speedie-Court, OTBU Secretary

The 98th AMPA began much like any other - over 570 delegates from 140 Bargaining Units representing over 60 000 OSSTF members attended to debate the 231 motions that were submitted. District 12, Toronto, is the largest delegation, with 70 representatives. 2017 was also an election year and we said goodbye to outgoing OSSTF President Paul Elliot. His speech highlighted the ongoing work and commitment of our members on Labour Councils and in Districts throughout Ontario. He also talked about the ongoing efforts to have violence in the work place, and health and safety issues taken seriously by our employers and the government.

We received greetings from UNITE HERE, Local 75, representing hotel workers at the Sheraton. They expressed gratitude for our presence and confirmed that by not participating in the *Green Choice* Program, which gives guests \$5 not to have their room cleaned daily, we had directly contributed to more shifts and even overtime for union hotel workers.

Many research reports and associated motions were presented. One report of particular local interest was the Report on MAC 212-16 Amalgamation/Merging of Bargaining Units. The workgroup was started last year with a mandate to research issues related to the advantages, disadvantages, and feasibility of merging related bargaining units, with an eye to maintaining the best services and service capacity, for bargaining units with less than 100 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions. It was agreed to allow this workgroup to continue its research in this area.

It was an exciting election year. Mary Gardiner, an OT President from District 18, Upper Grand ran from the floor for President, against Harvey Bischof. She spoke well and highlighted some OT issues in her speech, but she was not able to garner enough votes to win. Elected Vice Presidents were Cindy Dubue (Ottawa-Carleton), Rob Gascho (Waterloo). Our own D12 member Earl Burt was acclaimed as Treasurer. Paul Caccamo (Thunder Bay), Martha Hradowy (Greater Essex) and Karen Littlewood (Simcoe) were elected as Executive Officers. D12 member Michelle Teixeira was acclaimed as OTF Table Officer. Unfortunately, our own Laura Drexlar who ran again for OTF Governor, was not successful.

Also of note, D12 member Jenny Chen won the James Forster Human Rights Award, and D12 delegate Michael Yaneff got married during AMPA! We can also report that rookie AMPA delegates, Treasurer Michael Frascchetti and Exec Officer Eitan Laufer survived the weekend, tired but unscathed.

Your OTBU executive was busy at this AMPA. On Friday night we hosted a suite, inviting other OT members from across the province to come together to socialize and strategize on how best to have our concerns heard at AMPA and within OSSTF in general. On Monday morning, a motion passed at our November GM to establish an OT Work Group passed at AMPA as MAC 224-17. This motion established an OT Work Group to research OT specific work issues. This is a significant step towards better representation for OTs at OSSTF and we should be very proud of being the authors and promoters of this important motion. Special thanks go to our President Linda Bartram for stepping up to the mike to spearhead this important motion.

At AMPA, there are also guest speakers. In addition to greetings from the Faculty of Education student representatives, Ontario Minister of Education, the Honourable Mitzi Hunter, spoke to the house to a cool reception and was not able to respond to all the members waiting in long lines to pose questions. Another guest speaker was Laurence Hill, author of *The Book of Negroes* and *The Illegal*. His speech was peppered with humour about the challenges of those who enter the arts. He praised the creativity of young people and highlighted the value of education and support in the development of art. He spoke of his struggle with identity and race, and why these themes are central to his literature.

An intriguing booth at AMPA was the one run by the Canadian Labour Congress. It presented a powerful virtual reality experience to illustrate the fear, confusion and alienation faced by many refugees in coming to a new country.

All in all it was a very successful AMPA for OTs. Many thanks to the members who voted for us to be delegates.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Ontario College of Teacher Fees

All Occasional Teachers, Dailies and LTOs should be aware that the annual College of Teachers fees are now due.

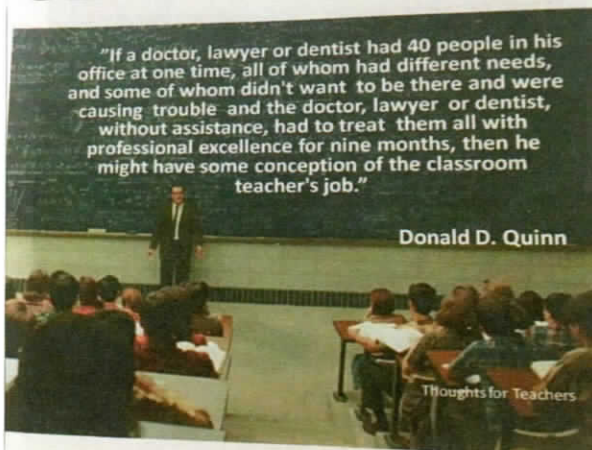
The DEADLINE for paying your fee - \$150.00 - is

APRIL 15, 2017

Membership in the College of Teachers is a “condition of employment” with the Toronto District School Board.

Failure to pay the annual fee means that you may no longer be eligible to work in a Toronto Board classroom

POVERTY AND CLASS BIAS



This poster and sentiment was taken from the *Poverty and Class Bias* workshop at our P.D. Day. Something to think about?

Check Your Board (TDSB) E-mail Accounts

It is important that members remember to check their TDSB e-mail accounts on a fairly regular basis as the Board is now disseminating more and more important information for teachers, OTs and other employees via e-mail.

For example, keep an eye out for training sessions around new Board policy initiatives and for information on the annual (critical) renewal process for all Occasional Teachers which has to

be completed by all OTs who qualify to remain on the teaching roster for 2017-2018.

The OTBU executive makes every effort to keep members apprised of new developments in the Board, but the fact that not all members access the website on a regular basis and have not submitted their personal e-mail address to the OTBU Office means that things can fall through the cracks.



A Timely Read

With all the controversy swirling around the “Donald” in the United States, it is particularly interesting to read the account written by London-based businessman Bill Browder of his business dealings in Russia. Specifically, what is interesting is what happened to Browder and his associates after the Russian oligarchs and the apparatchik around Vladimir Putin decided to plunder the companies in which Browder’s Hermitage Fund was invested.

Forewarned about this attack on their business the folks at Hermitage quietly withdrew their money from Russia so that when the attack finally came, there was no money to scoop.

In retaliation, the Russian government charged Browder and a number of his associates with criminal and economic offences against the state in an effort to blacken Browder’s reputation and to recover some cash.

In the course of defending the Hermitage Fund, lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, uncovered a theft of \$230 million from taxes owed to the Russian government by a group of tax officials who were supposed to

be collecting the taxes not profiting from them. One might have thought that the government would have been grateful for this information. Instead, for his diligence and his honesty, Magnitsky was jailed and tortured and eventually beaten to death by prison guards using rubber truncheons(had a heart attack in custody).

All this and more is in chronicled in *Red Notice* which reads like a modern crime novel. What is chilling is that it is not fiction. It is a true story. Also, it allows the reader a glimpse into the mind of the Russian leadership, especially Putin, and the tools he uses to attack anyone who he perceives as threat to his plans and ambitions.

This is a timely read because of the nasty attacks by the Russians on Crystia Freeland, a journalist who publicized the financial crimes being perpetrated by “friends of the government in Russia, and now Minister of Foreign Affairs, in this country and the allegations of Russian interference to defeat the “hated” Hilary Clinton in the 2016 presidential elections.

Bill Browder, *Red Notice*, Simon and Schuster - now available in paperback.



Spring Time(?) in Toronto, but looking forward to more of this!



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