



Association of Professional Student Services Personnel

PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER

April 2007

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Nancy Begin
APSSP Vice-President of Public Relations

I hope you enjoy this spring edition of our newsletter. I would like to thank all those people who have contributed with pictures and articles. Please continue to send news my way, so that I can include it in the fall newsletter. By the time you read this, Easter will have come and gone, which means we will be closer to the summer holidays. I would like to extend good wishes to all of you as we come to the end of another school year. Enjoy!



Provincial Executive

President	Georgia Steinhart
Treasurer	Rick Townshend
Secretary	Marieke Favrod
VP Negotiations	Joe O'Connor
VP Public Relations	Nancy Begin
VP Grievance & Constitution	Carmela Diano

APSSP PROVINCIAL CHAPTER MEMBERS

- ▶ Bruce-Grey Catholic District
- ▶ Dufferin-Peel Catholic District
- ▶ Durham Catholic District
- ▶ Halton Catholic District
- ▶ London District Catholic
- ▶ Niagara District
- ▶ St. Clair Catholic District
- ▶ Toronto Catholic District
- ▶ Waterloo Catholic District

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Executive Reports

Provincial President

Georgia Steinhart

When you read this message we will be midway through the final term of the school year, with summer holidays beckoning in the not too distant future. Most APSSP members have lengthy summer holidays which are the envy of workers in other sectors. The downside of that benefit is the intense pressure many of us feel to fulfill all of our work commitments prior to the end of the school year.

Please include the APSSP Annual General Meeting on Thursday evening, May 17th as part of your busy Spring schedule. Along with transacting APSSP business, the evening provides an opportunity to socialize with professional colleagues from other Chapters, an excellent dinner and gifts for all who attend. The Provincial Executive works hard to make this evening a productive and enjoyable one, and we delight in seeing members from all of our Chapters in attendance. All members will soon be receiving a mailing with details of time, location and agenda for the AGM. As in previous years, the AGM will be held at the Delta Meadowvale which is just off H.W. 401 in Mississauga.

At the AGM, elections will take place for four positions: Provincial President; Provincial Vice-President for Negotiations; Provincial Treasurer; and Provincial Vice-President for External Affairs. Vice-President for External Affairs is a new position on the APSSP Executive and was approved at last year's AGM. A major objective of the Provincial Executive has been to broaden our contacts with other unions in the education sector and raise APSSP's profile with the Ministry of Education. We need an experienced and dynamic V.P. External Affairs to assist in that effort.

For Provincial APSSP, the first major event of the school year is the October Educational weekend, to which Executive and Governing Council members from all Chapters are invited. The Saturday morning presentations at the Educational Weekend were followed by portfolio meetings in the afternoon. In the evening, we had the opportunity to relax and chat with members



from other Chapters at a reception and excellent buffet dinner. The first Governing Council meeting of the school year took place on Sunday. Shortly after taking over her new portfolio, Marieke Favrod, our Provincial Secretary, demonstrated her superb organizational abilities and problem solving skills in ensuring that the weekend ran smoothly. She was greatly assisted in her work by Nancy Begin, V.P. for Public Relations. Joe O'Connor arranged for our speakers and organized the Saturday morning program.

In November, several members of the Provincial Executive met with the Provincial Executive of PSSP. PSSP, which is part of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, is APSSP's counterpart in a number of school boards in Ontario. Although the structure of the two unions is very different, we have many issues in common. Both groups benefited from sharing information, and we hope to continue regular contact.

Two of our Chapters, Dufferin-Peel and Toronto, are feeling the effect of large budget deficits in those Boards. In both Boards, it is not yet clear to what extent APSSP positions will be affected in the long term. However, the prospect of reductions in service through delays in filling vacant positions and cuts to positions themselves are very real. The Presidents of both Chapters, Dan Milne and Glenn Webster, along with their Executives, have been very active in ensuring that all decision makers hear the message that reductions in the services provided by APSSP members have the greatest impact on our most vulnerable students. In January, Provincial APSSP wrote to the Minister of Education to register our concern that the Provincial Government has taken over the operation of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic Board from the elected trustees.

Last Spring we introduced the new APSSP logo. In the Fall, Nancy Begin continued her updating of the look of the APSSP newsletter by printing in full colour. Nancy is now taking the lead in updating the look and content of our PR materials. Our current PR material is well written and relevant. However, APSSP has grown, and we provide a wider range of professional services to students. Our PR needs to reflect the changes which have taken place. You will see more of our new look at the AGM.

Vice-President of Negotiations

Joe O'Connor

We are pleased to announce that a settlement was reached with the St. Clair Catholic Chapter on February 16, 2007, and was approved by the Membership and the School Board the following week. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Negotiating Team, and in particular, Lenora Cavacas, Chief Negotiator, and our Consultant, Larry Robbins. This Agreement is for a two year term, from September 2006 to August 31 2008, with an average salary increase of 10.9%, inclusive of a Pay Equity settlement. There were also Benefit enhancements for Vision: \$300.00 every 24 months plus a free annual eye examination; hearing aids: \$500.00 every 5 years; Chiropractic and Physiotherapy: \$35.00 a visit with a maximum of \$400.00 annually; sleep apnea equipment, and Insulin control devices coverage, as well as an increase in basic Life Insurance up to \$250,00.00. There were also enhancements in Pregnancy, Parental and Adoption Leaves, along with a supplemental plan for the waiting period for these leaves. Contract language was clarified in the area of Seniority (no loss of Seniority for employees on LTD or WSIB), and the ability to be granted Compensatory Time Off for overtime.

The opportunity to visit with this Chapter in February prior to this Settlement by myself, clearly indicated the support and determination to reach this Settlement, and this gave



the Bargaining Team the impetus to reach this Agreement. Thank you for your hospitality.

Presently, eight of our Chapters have signed Collective Agreements that expire on August 31, 2008, and one Chapter, Niagara, is presently in the early stages of Bargaining. Their Agreement expired December 31, 2006.

The Chief Negotiators and Grievance Officers met in St. Jacobs in February, 2007, and received an excellent presentation from Larry Robbins on Obligations to Accommodate People with Disabilities. Thank you to Larry. This meeting was well represented by most Chapters. We will meet again on Saturday, April 28, 2007, at the Stone Crock Inn, St. Jacobs.

We were optimistic that a new Funding Formula to School Boards would bring stability to our APSSP Chapters. The March 24, 2007 Provincial Budget gave School Boards an average increase of up to 5%, but no new Funding Formula was announced. All of the boards were left with previous shortfalls that continue to hinder the likelihood of balancing budgets. We hope that this will not have any impact on our membership. This has been experienced in the past, in particular, with the previous deficits of some of our larger Boards. (Dufferin-Peel Catholic, and Toronto Catholic Boards). The shortage of funds has also impacted on rural Boards throughout the Province and also boards that have experienced declining enrollment. In the coming months we will continue to monitor and support our Chapters that are experiencing these shortfalls.

Provincial Secretary

Marieke Favrod

As many of you know, the APSSP Annual General Membership Meeting will be happening on Thursday, May 17, 2007. This evening is always a lot of fun and provides a great opportunity for members from all APSSP chapters to come together. Don't forget to mark this date on your calendar and come out to socialize with colleagues, share a delicious meal, listen to an interesting presentation by our guest speaker and perhaps win one of the fabulous door prizes assembled by our own Nancy Begin!



Members may recently have been contacted by their local secretary to update their information for the APSSP Membership Directory. This information will be used to mail your invitation to the upcoming AGM, and allows APSSP to communicate with you directly about other important information and events. As always, your personal information is held in strict confidence and is never

shared with any person or agency outside of APSSP's local and provincial Executive Committees.

Thank you for helping us to keep this information current.

Educational and Planning Weekend,

Once again, the Planning Weekend was a great success. This year, Pay Equity was the topic of the Saturday morning program. Lisa Lubera, an Education Officer of the Pay Equity Commission, provided an excellent overview of Ontario's Pay Equity legislation and methods of implementation. Joe O'Connor moderated the panel discussion which followed. As always, Larry Robbins, our labour consultant, held our full attention as he spoke about the realities of Pay Equity maintenance, drawing on experiences of several APSSP Chapters as well as other unions. Pat Mason and Georgia Steinhart spoke about the very different process and outcome of the Pay Equity efforts within the Dufferin-Peel and Toronto Chapters. Pay Equity maintenance is legally the responsibility of both the Employer and the Union. The reality is that the burden of ensuring proper implementation and maintenance of Pay Equity usually falls upon the Union.

In the afternoon, we were able to get together into our various portfolios. It was a great opportunity to meet all the reps from various chapters, discuss issues and share ideas.

Thanks to Marieke Favrod for her hard work in making all the arrangements.

Our next Planning Weekend will be held on Oct. 27 & 28/07.

Photos by Jim Steinhart of www.TravelPhotoBase.com



Niagara Falls, Oct. 21-22, 2006



Vice-President of Grievance & Constitution

Carmela Diano

We are fast approaching the end of another school year. We should commend ourselves for our on-going efforts in our daily lives. The many diverse services that we provide to our school communities, our students, and their families go a long way.

In my first year of Vice President – Grievance & Constitution, I have gained valuable knowledge through various experiences through the help of many of the members across all of our chapters. This past year has provided us with some important resources. For example, at our October educational weekend we had the opportunity to understand the basic framework of pay equity. All of our local chapters should act on this area or seek direction from provincial executive, if they haven't already.

Both grievance and negotiations officers met in St. Jacob's on February 24, 2007. (Our next meeting will take place on April 28, 2007.) The role of the Ontario Human Rights Commission was explored along with gaining a foundation of what "duty to



accommodate" really means when members are returning to work with some form of disability. These members need us the most during these vulnerable times. APSSP executive members need to play an active role in ensuring that our employers are meeting the needs of these members. If you require any assistance around this matter or any health and safety related matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Grievances have come and gone through out the year. I am happy to report that many of the previous grievances from last year have now been resolved. There are a few on-going matters involving some chapters that are being dealt with from a local and provincial level. The amount of time and dedication that local grievance officers put into these various matters is commendable. I congratulate you all on your hard efforts.

The constitution committee has met on two occasions. Committee members have been very enthusiastic in tweaking out some matters that needed attention. Their hard work has been greatly appreciated. I look forward to the new challenges that the committee will deal with next year.

As always, your feedback and continued support is very much welcomed and appreciated. I look forward to our on-going communications.

Vice-President Public Relations

Nancy Begin

As I sit here writing my report, its hard to believe, especially with the wintry weather outside, that spring is just around the corner. This has been a very busy year for Public Relations. Slowly but surely, we are making progress in updating our written materials. We have created a new pamphlet that can be distributed at PR functions, business cards, stationary, folders and a revised allegations manual, all with our new logo. Our goal is to have a generic APSSP welcome package available for use by all chapters for new members, by the October Educational Planning Weekend. Updating of our information is a group effort that can be



very time consuming as it involves discussion and decision making. I would like to express my appreciation to the rest of the Provincial Executive for their patience in helping me with this enormous task.

I continue to provide new items to all the chapters and make every effort to be available to the PR reps for ongoing support with their APSSP functions. I must say that I have become quite efficient at delivering items as well!

Plans are underway for our annual AGM coming up on May 17/07. It's a wonderful evening filled with good food, great gift baskets, gifts to our members, a guest speaker, elections and a chance to mingle with our colleagues from all the chapters. Hope to see you there.

It's Time To H.E.A.L.

Heather Mesaric is a Child and Youth Worker in the Dufferin Peel Chapter and just recently published her book, It's Time To H.E.A.L. Heather tells her personal story of physical and sexual abuse to further support other victims to break their silence. She offers clear, practical advice and strategies to assist children and youth on their journey of healing. I am very proud and honoured to share some of Heathers' thoughts about her journey and how she came to the point of courage and bravery to actually put her story into words.
Nancy Begin

Sexual abuse occurs far more often than is ever reported. The ordeal is usually concealed because the victim feels guilt or shame and sees no way out. It's much easier to "bury the truth deep within oneself" than to expose the ugly reality. Now, is the time for those suffering from the affects of abuse to heal themselves and live life fully.

It's Time To "H.E.A.L." offers youths and women strategies through life enhancing affirmations, intense journal exercises and powerful reflections. Following the guidelines will help abused individuals learn to love and accept themselves while they overcome the emotional and physical struggles that linger long after abuse has ended. The author candidly reveals her life story and painstakingly unravels the journey she took to rebuild her life. Walk with her through the sadness, fear and tremendous courage of a woman determined to conquer her past.

How did I come to write this book...how did I find the strength, courage, willingness to share my life story and journey of abuse? It started when I became frustrated with the secret life I was hiding from everyone. I didn't want to be silent any longer. I wanted to claim the right to have a voice. I wanted others to know who



Author/Child and Youth Worker, Heather Mesaric

I really was. I didn't want to believe any longer that there was something wrong with me. I wanted to speak openly about my past, my struggles and most importantly my dreams and desires of finding peace in "my" world. I was tired of being jealous of the others around me, as they told wonderful stories of their childhood, how much they loved their parents and so on.

I started writing, first and fore most in order to heal myself. I wrote to keep myself from drowning in self destruction, loneliness and trying to contain the feeling of rage towards the men who destroyed
Continued on page 8

Provincial Treasurer

Rick Townshend

Due to increased revenues this year and decreased expenses in the Professional Consulting category, I am pleased to report to the membership that for the Budget year 2006, APSSP has realized a significant surplus and we remain in a sound position financially.

A more detailed accounting of our financial picture will be



shared with the membership at our Annual General meeting which will take place in May of this year. At that time, the Budget for 2007 which was ratified at the January "07" Governing Council meeting will be presented to the membership. Highlights of this budget include increases to some expense allowances, increased Chapter Rebates, and a dedication of more resources to the Strike Fund.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our Annual General meeting this year. This is an opportunity for you to come out and support the many people of this organization who work so hard throughout the year on your behalf.

It's Time To H.E.A.L. - continued

my life when I was a child and adolescent. I started writing down my thoughts about my life and how I was affected by my past. I wrote poems to ease the pain I was feeling. I began the long and painful process of learning who I was, because I wanted and needed to change the way I was feeling about myself and the world in which I lived. I had a burning desire to shake up the world around me. I wanted to scream as loud as I could and say "wake up." I wanted to believe I could make a difference. That I could be accepted by others, no matter what my past may have been like. But first, I had to learn how to find the voice that was buried deep within me, the voice that was silenced so long ago in order for me to survive. I also wanted to find the answers to the questions that seemed to haunt me day-in and day-out. The answers, that only I could answer, because they were trapped inside me.

I began to write to rid myself of the hurt, anger and loneliness that I was feeling, but what I found instead was forgiveness, love of self, a voice that could make a difference in someone else's life, as well as inner peace and acceptance. I have found support, admiration and most of all a new purpose; the desire to share my story, so others too can find their own voice. As I look into the

mirror today and smile at the reflection I see looking back at me, I reflect back to a place in time so long ago, when that image wasn't so. I know that I have gone through many stages throughout my journey of healing. I have opened many doors that were barricaded or locked in order to achieve the self-determination that is so prevalent within me today. I have found inner peace, acceptance of others and myself, which of course has lead me to the final destination of freedom and broken silence – I truly have found my voice. I am in a position where my voice is being heard and hopefully understood. I want to be a voice for other survivors who are not able to find or use their own voice. I want to reveal the hidden agenda behind why some survivors hide the truth from themselves as well as others.

It's Time To H.E.A.L. is a book for all professionals or any youth 12 years or older, as well as other women survivors. Some the exercises or affirmations suggested in the book can be modified for any age group, but would need to be closely monitored to ensure the child understands the task being asked of them. You may visit my website to view my weekly affirmations, other survivor's stories, up coming events or workshops or to contact me at: www.time-to-heal.com.

Future APSSP Members . .



Congratulations to Janice Long, Cheryl Cameron, and Stacey Rickman, all of whom are Speech Language Pathologists from the London District Catholic Chapter.

From left to right: Janice Long with son Blake (June 2006), Cheryl Cameron with daughter Julia (November 2006) and Stacey Rickman with daughter Michaela (August 2006).

UP-COMING MEETING DATES

Reminder.....

APSSP AGM will be held on May 17/07. One of our own members, Heather Mesaric, will be the guest speaker. Elections will also take place for the following positions:

Provincial President
Provincial Treasurer
Provincial Vice President of Negotiations
Provincial Vice President of External Affairs

Please make every effort to attend!

Delta Meadowvale Hotel
6750 Mississauga Rd.
Mississauga, Ont.

Provincial Executive Meetings

Tuesday May 1/07
Tuesday June 5/07
Dufferin Peel Board Office

Chief Negotiators and Grievance Officers Meeting
Saturday April 28/07
Stone Crock Inn, St. Jacobs

Educational Planning Weekend
October 27-28/07
Niagara Falls