



# THE CURRENT NEWS

Edition # 5



## Upper Grand Elementary Teachers' Local

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### The Next Stage

There are many stages in one's career and each stage has its own challenges and joys: seasons of bountiful harvests followed by times of struggle and concern. How you handle the hard times will come back to you during the good ones.

As we approach the conclusion of the school year, it is natural to reflect upon where one has been and what there is to look forward to in the future. From my perspective, this year has been one that seemed to have contained within it several "seasons" all in the blink of an eye.

The role of a local President is complex. Facets of the position include that of spokesperson, mediator, investigator, advocate, counsellor and negotiator to name but a few. It's common to engage each of these within the span of a single day. This switching of roles can be exhausting. When the phone rings one never knows what will be waiting on the other end of the line. For some situations there are standard answers. But each member is a unique individual with specific circumstances and so one must quickly learn that success is more likely achieved when the "plan of action" remains fluid. In short, it's best to think on one's feet.

Preparation for this role involved years of education, extensive research, and on the job training as local Vice-President. Each day included spontaneous "real time trial by fire". The scariest part was (and still is) acknowledging that people turn to me for help with their career, their livelihood.

As a leader, I knew that I had to acknowledge when I'd reached full capacity. Doing a job well involves reflection and there seemed to be no time for this. I had to carve it out for myself. This involved getting off of the ride, so to speak. If this was to be seen as weakness, then so be it. But taking the time to regroup allowed me to return with a renewed sense of confidence in myself and in those around me.

If you are a teacher approaching retirement, you may be feeling a sense of apprehension, maybe not. Perhaps you are looking forward to new adventures, to a life set by its own schedule with no fear of the unknown. To some extent, I envy you if this is the case, for it seems so easy. But if you are nervous about the arrival of June 30<sup>th</sup> and what this date signifies, then I'd like you to know that *you are not alone*. Take the time to enjoy the sunset of where you are now. Let the warmth of the years of service bathe you, for you have much to celebrate. As the heat from this time cools, let yourself be open to new possibilities. The process will unfold and you will find yourself changed in a way that fits you naturally. You do not need to pick your next adventure, it will pick you.

Just remember as you retire from teaching that the next stage is just that: *a stage*. Don't look down, look ahead. And don't hesitate to step off and join the audience when the need arises. You have as much to learn from them as they have to learn from you. In my experience, I have found comfort in learning that others want you to succeed.

*Tamara*

## TEACHERS' PENSION PLAN SHORTFALL A CONCERN

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) is hosting a meeting for provincial and local presidents of the four Ontario teacher unions: AEFO, ETFO, OEFTA, and OSSTF. The status of the teachers' pension plan will be discussed.

As noted in the May 19, 2011 OTF Communiqué, OTF and the provincial government (pension plan partners) must decide when to submit its next valuation to the Financial Services Commission of Ontario (pension plan regulators). A valuation must be submitted every three years, or earlier if that is in members' best interest. The valuation must show that assets at least balance liabilities 70 years into the future.

Robust net assets of the teachers' pension plan total \$107.5 billion as of Jan. 1, 2011. The plan also boasts a 14.3% return on investments in 2010, well above the industry benchmark of 9.8%.

Nonetheless, there are concerns as the cost of future pensions is growing faster than plan assets. The losses of 2008 are still being absorbed, global economic uncertainty exists, long-term real interest rates have declined and pension payments exceed contributions.

The concerns are not immediate. Plans like the teachers' pension plan are required to have enough funds to meet future obligations to all current members when looking ahead 70 years or more. However, with this in mind, there is a \$17.2 billion funding shortfall.

Important decisions regarding the plan are on the horizon. To deal with potential future shortfalls, contribution increases could be required. Reduced inflation protection for pension credit earned after 2009 may be invoked. The plan partners may also decide to make changes to other pension benefits that members will earn in the future, or adopt a combination of these measures to bring the plan into balance.

Teachers need to read the OTF Communiqués when they are available and are encouraged to visit [www.fundingyourpension.com](http://www.fundingyourpension.com). Additional information can be found at [www.otpp.com](http://www.otpp.com) and [www.otffeo.on.ca](http://www.otffeo.on.ca).



### ***A message from our retiring Treasurer***

I have enjoyed my time helping the union over the last 11 years in the Treasurer's role. Not being a political person, I was looking for a way to support the union that had supported me and my fellow workers over the previous 10 years, and the Treasurer's position was a way to use my skills and still support in a non-political role. I never realized that I would be so appreciated in doing these duties that I enjoyed doing so much. It was a win-win situation where I was performing a useful role as well as meeting a wonderful group of people on the Executive and Provincially. Thank you for your support and wonderful feedback.

***Ken McDougall***

### **CANDIDATES RUNNING FOR PROVINCIAL OFFICE**



**Doug Cook**

Membership solidarity is key in actualizing priorities. However, solidarity cannot be taken for granted or assumed. Members decide to stand in

union after thorough and transparent discussion in order to support sound principles and to implement carefully considered strategies...of the many challenges facing ETFO, delegates to the 2011 Annual Meeting must prioritize three: The provincial election, collective bargaining and membership expansion....".



**Gord Dunbar**

"Education is a matter of building bridges". The strength of ETFO's "bridge" lies in combining our diversity and collective ability to

access, coordinate, and utilize our members multitudes of talents. Those links will successfully overcome future challenges facing our union.



Two \$500 draw prizes are being offered by Upper Grand ETFO to promote **Student Vote** in Upper Grand



**Student Vote**  
The future of Canadian Democracy

**Each teacher who registers for Student Vote may enter the Upper Grand Student Vote Draw and win a \$500 prize from ETFO to help fund a class trip to Queen's Park.**

**Contest Rules:**

- ◇ Research Student Vote online at [www.studentvote.ca](http://www.studentvote.ca) to determine suitability.
- ◇ Consult with colleagues at your school.
- ◇ Consult with your Principal.
- ◇ To participate in Student Vote register by calling 1-866-488-8775 or register online at [www.studentvote.ca](http://www.studentvote.ca)
- ◇ After you register, e-mail Amy Murray on First Class to enter our draw; copy your School Steward. There are two \$500 prizes.
- ◇ All draw entries must be received by 4:00 p.m. September 16, 2011.
- ◇ Winners will be notified by email on October 13, 2011 and announced on our website [www.ugetfo.org](http://www.ugetfo.org)

**For further information please contact Amy Murray via First Class**

**Upper Grand ETFO  
Celebration to Honour our Retiring Teachers'**

**Tuesday, June 21, 2011**  
Social 5:45 - 6:30 p.m.  
~ Cash Bar ~  
Dinner 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.  
(A vegetarian meal option is available)  
Presentations 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Guelph Place Banquet Hall  
492 Michener Road, Guelph**

**Check with your Steward for more information**



**ETFO WORKSHOPS**



REFLECTIONS ON PRACTICE  
A WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

**Reflections On Practice - A Women's Leadership Institute 2011-2012**

This workshop is a professional learning activity that provides 30 female members with the opportunity to learn about reflective inquiry, action research, professional activism, and leadership. Participants will have the opportunity to expand their research skills.

Participants will commit to attending the three sessions, being part of a professional learning community, engaging in online chats, conducting an action research project, preparing and sharing a report of their findings.

**Dates:**

- Session 1: August 2-5, 2011
- Session 2: October 20-21, 2011
- Session 3: April 26-27, 2012

**Location:** ETFO Provincial Office - 480 University Ave, Toronto

**Registration Deadline: Saturday, June 11, 2011.**

**Flyer**

PDF: <http://www.etfo.ca/CalAttach/ROP2011.pdf>

RTF: <http://www.etfo.ca/CalAttach/ROP2011.rtf>

For more information, contact Anne Rodrigue, [arodrigue@etfo.org](mailto:arodrigue@etfo.org), 416.962.3836 ex 2261.



**Leaders for Tomorrow - A Program for Women from Designated Groups**

Leaders for Tomorrow is an intensive, year-long leadership development opportunity for women from designated groups.

The program includes a variety of workshops and experiences related to leadership roles within ETFO and in the broader community. The course is designed to enhance leadership skills in an inclusive, anti-racist/anti-oppression framework. Release time will be provided for all members accepted.

**Dates:**

- Session 1: October 3-4, 2011
- Session 2: November 7-8, 2011
- Session 3: February 9-10, 2012 (eve of Feb. 8)
- Session 4: March 30-31, 2012
- Session 5: May 2-4, 2012

**Location:** ETFO Provincial Office - 480 University Ave, Toronto

**Registration Package:**

PDF: [http://www.etfo.ca/CalAttach/L4T\\_2011.pdf](http://www.etfo.ca/CalAttach/L4T_2011.pdf)


RTF: [http://www.etfo.ca/CalAttach/L4T\\_2011.rtf](http://www.etfo.ca/CalAttach/L4T_2011.rtf)

**Registration Deadline:** Thursday, June 30, 2011.

If you have any questions, please call or email Kalpana Makan ([kmakan@etfo.org](mailto:kmakan@etfo.org)) or Cydne Dufresne ([cdufresne@etfo.org](mailto:cdufresne@etfo.org))  
Telephone: 416-962-3836 / Toll free: 1-888-838-3836




# June 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 Retirement Celebration - Guelph Place Banquet Hall	22	23	24	25
26	27 Last Executive Meeting	28	29	30 Our office is closed as of June 30 		



# August 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 Board to provide written notice to Teachers whose transfers were granted	11	12 AGM Prep Meeting - Orchard Park	13
14	15 Annual Meeting	16 Annual Meeting	17 Annual Meeting	18 Annual Meeting	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29  Our office re-opens today!	30	31			