

ESPecially Yours

Volume 17, Issue 1

December 2016

It's Been A Busy Fall in District 25!

My last report was in June and summer had finally arrived. It appears things have changed somewhat since then - winter hit us with a blast on Monday, November 21!!!

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer break or at least had time to enjoy the hot weather with friends and family.

News about possible school closures has added stress to the already stressed school office staff after cuts of 22.5 FTE to our bargaining unit in the spring budget process. I am currently part of a committee to review Business Processes that will look into providing further assistance to our members in reducing workload.

In our last contract we included a letter of understanding to create a Joint Committee to review our competition process. We have had two fairly good meetings so far with two more to come. We hope to have some good recommendations for updating our current practices.

As you may be aware, District 25 Ottawa Carleton moved into a new building at 9 Corvus Court. This building provides us with space for all Presidents and officers released from their positions in our 7 Bargaining Units to have their own offices

as well as some boardrooms for larger meetings of up to 15 people. We are also in the midst of construction - building an addition in order to provide more room for training and other events. We hope to have the addition completed by the end of April so that all bargaining units can hold their AGMs in the building rather than renting space elsewhere.

OSSTF voted last spring to move all members to a new Provincial Benefits plan administered by the Ontario Teacher's Insurance Plan (OTIP). While many members have enrolled and are now accessing the new benefits plan, there have been a number of problems. Members affected include part-time members, members working at two locations, and members on LTD or LWOP. This change over is taking place provincially, however local officers are doing their best to answer questions and facilitate solutions. Hopefully by the time this newsletter is sent, most issues

will have been resolved.

Our PD Day Committee is working very hard to get things ready for our PD Day on February 17, 2017. Please keep that day open and plan to attend, they have some very special workshops and keynote speakers planning to attend. Keep your eyes open!!!

Our next issue will be coming out in the New Year, so please enjoy your Christmas/Holiday break!

Nancy



Hey, it's your chief negotiator

SUNG TO THE TUNE OF GLORIA GAYNOR'S "I WILL SURVIVE"

<https://youtu.be/gYkACVDFmeg>

As always, we all had a busy start to school this year, hitting the ground running and still going strong.

From day one, the effects of the cuts to ESP staffing made by the Board in the last budget round were clear to our front line workers and continue to be keenly felt in our school offices and elsewhere. Already existing workload issues (which unfortunately are not being addressed in the Board's "Business Process Review" of the last year and a half) are now exacerbated.

We also now find ourselves in the midst of an "Accommodation Review" process which will almost certainly result in the closure of a number of schools in our system, with resulting job "shifts" and losses for next year.

Uncertainty and insecurity seem to be the new order of things for employees of the OCDSB. The strain of this is showing in the levels of conflict we are seeing, not only between our ESP members and managers but between our ESP members themselves.

At the time of this writing, talks have broken down between the OSSTF and the Ontario Government regarding a possible contract extension and a remedy to the Supreme Court decision last spring which upheld that Bill 115 interfered with our Collective Bargaining rights during the 2012 round of negotiations (some of the results of which we still have not gotten over.) This means we will very soon be heading into another round of bargaining both centrally and locally for our contract which expires on August 31. If the tone and quick break down of talks to resolve the remedy situation is any indication, we can expect the upcoming round of negotiations to be as

difficult as the last.

With all of the above at play, stress is at an all time high and morale at an all time low for most of us to the point that the mental and physical

health of many is being affected, a fact that should come as no surprise to the Employer.

From what I have learned about our ESP Membership over the years, however, I know that we will eventually get through all of stress and strain.

this

We **WILL** survive staffing cuts, we **WILL** survive school closures, we **WILL** survive budget constraints, we **WILL** survive subtle shifts in Employer and Management practices that seem to be

taking an increasingly hard line with staff on all fronts.

And we will do all of this by virtue of our own strength and that of each other.

While it is always our hope that our Employer recognizes and values the role that we each serve in the education system, whether or not they willingly show respect for this in the real world of our schools, our offices, and our daily work lives is never a given.

More than just surviving, therefore, we **WILL** bargain fairly and aggressively together to make sure that we get what we have earned and deserve for the hard work and dedication we bring to each of our jobs.

That said, as we are now heading into the holiday season, here is a wish that we all get a well deserved break, with time to spend with our families and friends.

Leif





Examining the plans
From L to R: Councillor Keith Egli, MPP Lisa MacLeod, President Nancy Akehurst, Eric Cameron from Mar Gard Construction

New President

Nancy Akehurst was elected president of District 25 at the June meeting of the District Executive Council. That has made her the one responsible for shepherding the new addition through the planning stages and now into construction.

Groundbreaking Ceremony

From L to R: MPP Lisa MacLeod, President Nancy Akehurst, Councillor Keith Egli, Eric Cameron and Angie Paterson from Mar Gard Construction



And the work has begun!



Executive Members in Action

OSSTF Leadership Conference in Ottawa in August



Standing L to R: Margaret Elson, Amir Ismail, Saul Mogelonsky. Seated L to R: Leif Walther, Nancy Akehurst

Communications and Political Action Conference in Toronto in November

The theme of the conference was **Hear We Go**. It featured plenary sessions and workshops on how to better engage members and decision makers on issues concerning publicly funded education.

CBC REGIONALS

On Oct 21st & 22nd, executive members Judy Soifer and Jacquelin Hodgson attended the Region 5 Collective Bargaining Committee meeting held here in Ottawa. Region 5 Coordinator John Mazara and Jack Jones from the Provincial office led us through a Friday night networking discussion centered around local bargaining issues and successes. Saturday was filled up with an overview and lively discussion of the new Provincial Sick Leave Plan and the Functional Abilities Form.



Saul Mogelonsky and Margaret Elson

The Editor of *ESpecially Yours* is Margaret Elson. Comments, suggestions and contributions may be sent to her by GEM anytime. Next issue - February 2017

DID You Know?

NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND ACTION TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ON DECEMBER 6

Outdoor Vigil: 6:00 PM at the
Women's Monument at Minto Park
(Elgin and Gilmour)

The Women's Monument in Minto Park is the location each year at which we gather to grieve and honour all women who have died as a result of male violence. At the vigil we remember all the women from our own community who have been murdered over the year, as well as the 14 women who were attending the Ecole

Polytechnique in Montreal when they were murdered in 1989.

At the Vigil participants participate by placing lanterns at the foot of the monument to mark each of the 14 women from Montreal and a larger lantern to represent our local women. At the Vigil, we hear the reading of the names of all the women who have been murdered. Everyone, moving forward carrying their candles, places their flowers on the monument and it is a beautiful tribute to the women lost to us from our communities. Please let me know if you are interested in meeting up for this event. Also, dress warmly!

Beth Wallace, Chair of District 25 Status of Women/Human Rights Committee
beth.wallace@ocdsb.ca

Save the Date!!

Feb 17, 2017

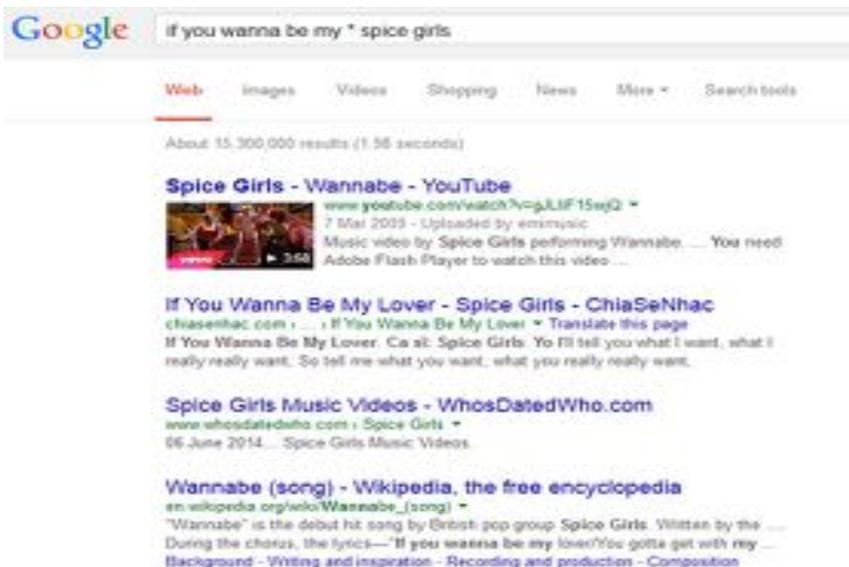
It's Canada's 150th birthday in 2017 - come celebrate with ESP! We have some excellent workshops, guest speakers and prizes. You won't want to miss our keynote speaker Kathie Donovan! (Her website:

<http://www.kathiedonovan.com>)

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at Longfield Davidson Heights starting with a light breakfast. Watch for information about registration coming out early January.



Wild Card Searching

A screenshot of a Google search results page. The search bar contains the text "if you wanna be my * spice girls". Below the search bar, there are tabs for "Web", "Images", "Videos", "Shopping", "News", and "More". The search results show "About 15,300,000 results (1.58 seconds)". The first result is "Spice Girls - Wannabe - YouTube" with a thumbnail image and a link to the video. The second result is "If You Wanna Be My Lover - Spice Girls - ChiaSeNhac" with a link to the page. The third result is "Spice Girls Music Videos - WhosDatedWho.com" with a link to the page. The fourth result is "Wannabe (song) - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia" with a link to the article.

Pro tip from Amir Ismail

If you want to search for something that you can't completely remember, take advantage of "wild card" searching. For example, what if you don't remember the name of a song you heard? Fill in the blanks of any search with asterisks (*) and Google will try to complete your search for you.

Health and Safety - Everyone's Business

BED BUGS ... THE UNWANTED OVERNIGHT GUESTS

By Bev Charles

Bedbugs are also known as *cimex lecturarius*. Even the words make our skin itch! They conjure up images of olden days horsehair mattresses, filth and disease. Unlike cockroaches, they are more like head lice as anyone can have them, and it doesn't depend on the state of your house. Like head lice they are more of a nuisance and they don't spread disease.



Bedbugs only come out at night and feed on their warm hosts, usually us, but also other mammals, before retreating to their little hideaways in the seams of your mattress, around your bed frame,

cracks in the walls, and behind your pictures and electrical outlets.

Bedbugs are wingless and crawl from place to place. Signs of these guests are bites similar to those of mosquitoes. (The difference between these and flea bites are that they are generally painless and have no red dot in the middle.) You'll also find blood spots on furniture, bedding, carpeting and walls from their waste. You may detect a musty odour from their scent glands. Before a feeding their bodies are flat. This allows them to hide in small crevices and inadvertently be brought home in suitcases, bags, second hand clothing and furniture.

Bedbugs reach maturity in as little as a month and produce three or more generations in a year. The eggs are whitish in colour and usually found in clusters.

Major infestations at school or in daycares are rare because they only come out at night to feed.

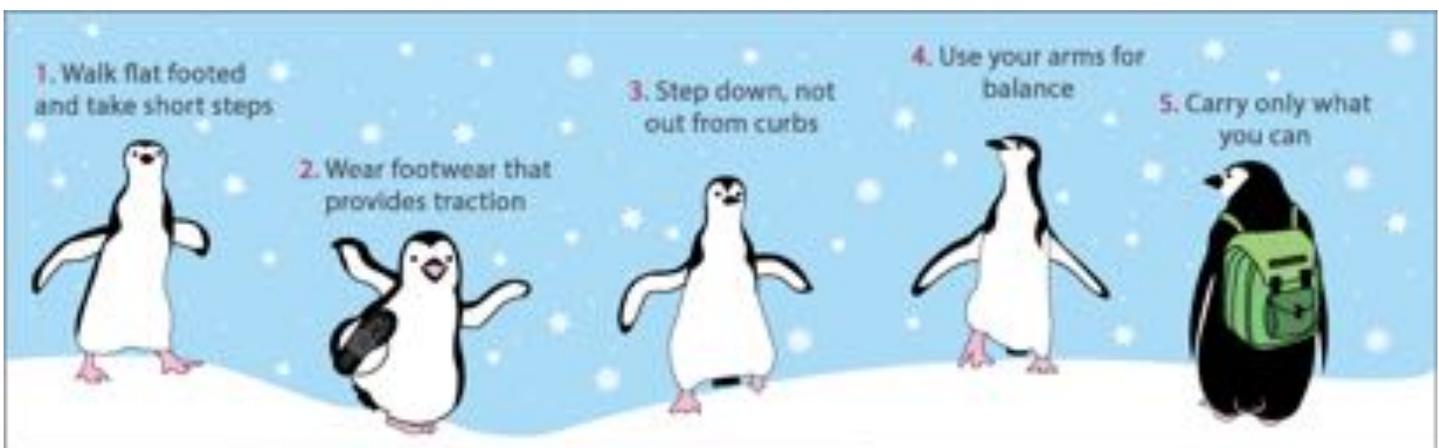
What to do? In hotels they can cover up the heat detectors and raise the temperature of the room to 40 C.

Since this is not feasible in our homes, we can thoroughly vacuum or steam clean rugs, floors and furniture. Put clothing and bedding in a hot dryer for 30 minutes. Bedbugs and their eggs don't like a temperature higher than 113F. Reduce clutter and seal cracks and crevices. Make your bed an island, away from curtains and walls. Vacuum your mattress, box spring and bed frame on a regular basis. Don't use bed skirts (sorry all you decorator types). Keep your sheets and blankets tucked in. When travelling, use those handy luggage racks.

If you rent, let your landlord know or dial 311 and ask for Bylaw Property Standards. If you suspect them in your workplace, notify your principal or supervisor. They will make arrangements to send these unwanted overnight houseguests packing.



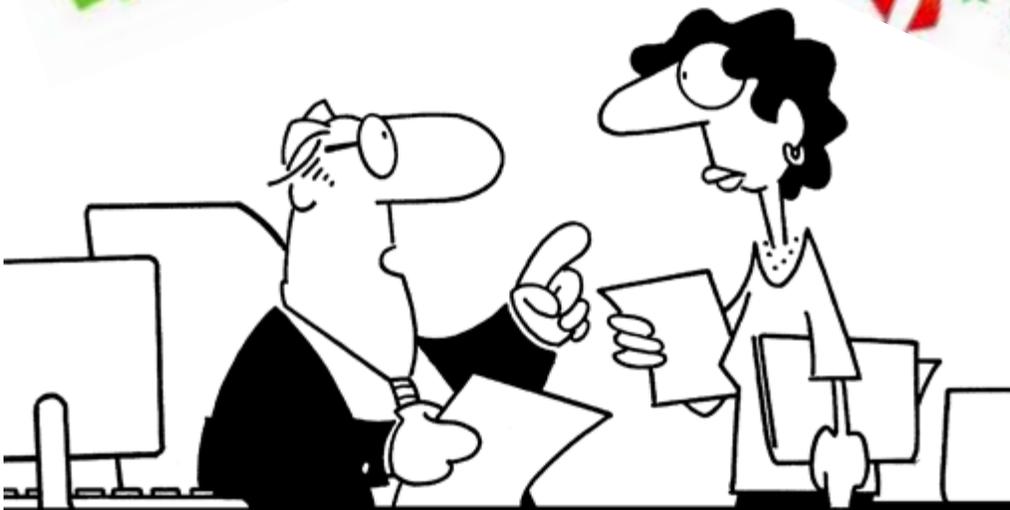
Walk like a penguin to avoid slips, trips and falls this winter!



ON THE LIGHTER SIDE ...



happy holidays!



The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of love and of generosity and of goodness. It illuminates the picture window of the soul, and we look out upon the world's busy life and become more interested in people than in things.

Thomas S. Monson

“The key to time management is strict and disciplined adherence to a rigid schedule, while remaining flexible enough to let anything happen at any time.”

Disclaimer - Although care has been taken in preparing the information contained in this publication, accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The opinions and views expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of OSSTF, or District 25.



Thinking about buying winter tires?

Here's what you need to know.

Winter tires improve handling and overall traction in snowy, icy and slushy conditions and reduce the likelihood of collisions. They can even reduce braking distances by up to 25%!

Visit www.otip.com/article10 to read our full article.

Mythbuster: Does the type of car you buy affect your insurance rate?

Myth: The type of car you buy doesn't have an effect on your insurance rate.

Yes it does.

Fact:

The Canadian Loss Experience Automobile Rating (CLEAR) system identifies the average size and frequency of insurance claims for most makes and models of cars. Most insurance companies use CLEAR to rate vehicles according to their safety record and the cost to repair or replace them, and may offer lower premiums to drivers who buy cars with better ratings.

For example, some vehicles may be more susceptible to theft than others; some may be better designed and less easily damaged; some are less expensive to repair; and some protect their occupants in collisions better than others.

We're here to help!

If you're considering buying a new car, talk to an OTIP insurance broker to find out how the type of car you choose will affect your insurance rates. One of our brokers would welcome the opportunity to find you the best coverage and value for your needs.