

**NORTH OKANAGAN-SHUSWAP TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION**

*NEWSLETTER*

**SEPTEMBER 3, 2003**

**WELCOME BACK**

I certainly hope your summer break was everything you had hoped it would be and that you are now feeling ready to commence another challenging year. Sheila and I took advantage of the summer lull to get our new association up and running. Signs have been changed, stationary ordered, ATA and STA files blended and new bank accounts opened. Although there were some challenges that presented themselves along the way, we feel the worst is over.

Remember, this is your association and we work for you. Please don't hesitate to contact us:

North Okanagan-Shuswap Teachers' Association  
171 Shuswap Street  
Salmon Arm, B.C.  
V1E 4N3  
Phone 832-1933 Fax 832-4592

I am in most mornings by 8:00 and Sheila gets in by 9:00. If we are not available when you call, please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

As you prepare to start another busy year please keep in mind the increased expectations that are being placed upon you by the impact of government policies and funding cuts. Please take care to:

- C Put your well-being foremost when considering additional responsibilities at the school.
- C Do the things you love and derive satisfaction from. (All wellness publications advocate balance in one's life to ensure maximum health and energy.)
- C Check with your Staff Rep and the Collective Agreement if you have doubts about negotiated rights.

As we prepare to begin another school year the appointed members of the College of Teachers are busy developing a strategic plan for implementing the directions of Bill 51 and the Minister of Education is busy announcing more changes that will further affect your work environment. I suspect that, given everything that has gone before, we really shouldn't be surprised.

## **THE COLLEGE BOMB AND PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY**

The BCTF Executive Committee met in mid-June to develop a response to Bill 51 and the changes to the College of Teachers. They were guided in their decision making by the feedback they received from teachers around the province and the Spring Rep Assembly. The consensus was to proceed with a strong, unified plan of action and to that end; the Executive has adopted a comprehensive plan. I will highlight some of the plan here and for more information you can visit the BCTF website ([www.bctf.ca](http://www.bctf.ca)) and click on 'BC Liberals Take Over College of Teachers'.

The plan calls for:

- C A legal/constitutional challenge to Bill 51 (already underway)
- C Teachers to sign letters cancelling their authorization for automatic deduction of College fees (underway)
- C The Fall RA (Nov. 7&8) to make recommendations to members on what to do with the fee
- C The decision on the RA recommendations to be made by conducting a provincial vote

In order for this plan to be implemented:

- C NOSTA executive members will be visiting school staffs
- C The LRA meeting scheduled for Monday, September 15, 2003 will provide additional information and materials for Staff Reps
- C There will be a Special General Meeting on Wednesday, September 17, 2003 with Irene Lanzinger, second vice-president of the BCTF as our guest speaker. (Shuswap Theatre in Salmon Arm, 4:15 pm)

## **NOSTA WEB-SITE**

As part of the local's on-going efforts to keep our members informed, Jonathan Bradshaw our Communication's Chair has got a NOSTA web-site up and running. It is still under construction but can be viewed at [www.bctf.ca/local83](http://www.bctf.ca/local83).

## **TOC CALLOUT**

Hopefully you all received your letter from the Board detailing the process for calling a TOC. Since this is a new procedure for all of us it may take a little getting used to. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the NOSTA office (832-1933) or your TOC Rep, Julia Body (833-1496).

**"Faced with often overcrowded classrooms, ever-tightening budgets and increased expectations, you nevertheless continue to work your special magic with your students. You instruct them, discipline them, guide them, coach them and inspire them to fulfill their potential."**

Chicken Soup for the Teachers' Soul

Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, 2002

The Public Education system in BC did not evolve overnight. It is a reflection of the efforts of thousands of individuals over a protracted period of time who believed children are the strength of our future and the key to the continued success and prosperity of our community. We do make a difference.