



From the President

March, 2017

Shawn Martin, GEETF President – smartin@geetf.ca

Welcome Back

I hope that you had the chance to relax and recharge last week. Warmer weather is on the way and we're about to enter the final third of the school year. Your Local has many excellent activities on offer this spring. Please take a look at the GEETF calendar posted on our website – geetf.ca – and attend as many of the events that interest you. You may register your attendance right from the calendar.

After almost seven months as your newly elected Local President I want to thank you for all the support and encouragement I've received. The position has a steep learning curve and presents different challenges from the classroom setting. It's an honour to serve our Local. Please contact me for any assistance or advice as needed.

Provincial Contract Extension Agreement

As you know, ETFO members voted in favour of extending our Collective Agreements for an additional two years. Our Collective Agreements were set to expire this August 31st but are now in force until the last day of August of 2019. An important provision of this extension is that there will be no local bargaining. Your GEETF Collective Bargaining Committee was just elected last fall but as there will be no local bargaining for a couple

of years, we'll need to elect a new local bargaining committee closer to the 2019 contract expiry date.

Earth Day 2017

This year, Earth Day is April 22, 2017. Once again, the Social Justice Committee along with ETFO have contributed \$1000 each to support Earth Day events in seven schools.

GEETF - Trustee Dinner

On February 27th, your PA/PR Committee and the GEETF Executive hosted our annual dinner with the Grand Erie District School Board trustees. At the meeting, we discussed violence in schools, technology in Grand Erie, and access to specialist teachers.



ELHT Update

On April 1st our board will be transitioning into the new provincial benefit plan. You should expect to receive, if you have not already, an information package sent to your home address. Online registration information will be provided to you. ETFO has current information available at www.etfo.ca/benefits. And you always have the GEETF office to contact for assistance.

Please remember to access any of your current benefit information from the Manulife portal by March 31st as the portal will not be available after that date.

Reminder of GEETF Awards

Each year the GEETF presents awards at our year end celebration and retirement dinner. We have outstanding and committed teachers going above and beyond every day. Let's celebrate those contributions by nominating one of our colleagues for the innovative projects that they take on. The categories that we award are:

- the arts
- the environment
- humanitarian projects
- anti-poverty initiatives

The criteria used to determine award recipients are that the project undertaken...

- involves the school and the broader community;
- affects a significant change in awareness within the community;
- demonstrates a clear difference to past practice.

The due date for applications is May 15th. Please consider nominating a colleague you feel deserves a GEETF award.

OTF Funding for AQ Courses

The Ontario Teachers' Federation is providing subsidies to teachers for Additional Qualification courses in certain topic areas that they are taking. This funding can be accessed retroactively for AQ courses

they have successfully completed. Funds are still available in the following areas:

- Kindergarten
- Integration of Information and Computer Technology in Instruction
- Mathematics.

The link for more information is:

<https://www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/4594-2/>

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

The following events are planned for the near future. Please go to geetf.ca to access the calendar of events. By clicking on the event, the flyer and registration will open.

March 28 – FSL Committee Resources and Ideas Sharing Event

March 30 – Deconstructing Stereotypes of Aboriginal People

April 3 – Resume Writing Workshop

April 5 – Paint Night for Teachers in their First Five Years

April 6 – Forest of Reading Book Club

April 6 – Pregnancy/Parental Leave Workshop

April 10 – Interview Workshop

April 12 – Pension Workshop

April 19 – Retirement Benefits Info Session

April 28-30 – Women's Retreat

April 29 – First Five Years Committee Blue Jays Trip