

AFTER SCHOOL

Volume 22, Issue 2—May 2020 • www.armchapter12.osstf.ca

KATHLEEN WYNNE
RECOUNTS HER
TIME AS LEADER



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AFTER SCHOOL

VOLUME 22, ISSUE 2, MAY 2020

After School is the official publication of Active Retired Members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Chapter 12 Toronto (ARM Chapter 12).

Opinions expressed in *After School* are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policies of ARM Chapter 12 or of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO).

Submissions are always welcome but will not be returned. All submissions are subject to editing for length and style while respecting the author's intentions.

Editorial team: Ronda Allan; Chris Aslanidis; Michelle Barraclough; Charles Hawkes; Jim Mile; Manfred Netzel; Ed Preston; Paul Rook and Neil Walker.

NEWSLETTER CONTACT INFORMATION:
editor.afterschool@gmail.com

ACTIVE RETIRED MEMBERS CHAPTER 12 (TORONTO) EXECUTIVE

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EDITORIAL CHATTER

—ED PRESTON, ASSISTANT EDITOR

This is a milestone edition of *After School*. Not only is it the inaugural digital edition, but also put together with the skilled handiwork of our new editor, Ronda Allan. Ronda has a lengthy career in publishing and communications, facilitated by a degree in Fine Art and post graduate studies in graphic design. She currently works in the Communications/Political Action Department at the Provincial Office of OSSTF/FEESO. I'm sure you'll notice her unique stamp on the design and layout of this edition.

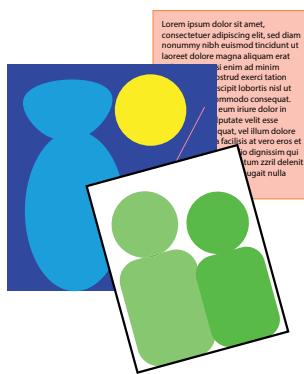
As well, we welcome Chris Aslanidis, a current member of the ARM C12 Executive, as our new Webmaster. Chris has had a great deal of experience with OSSTF/FEESO, including the role of a District 12, Vice-President and responsibilities as their Webmaster. To be quite honest, in late winter we didn't know how we were going to put this issue together and deliver it to you in a digital format. As explained by our Acting-President, Manfred Netzel, in the February issue, escalating costs for printing and distribution of hard copies necessitated moving to online issues. Very fortunately, once we put the word out that we needed two key players, Ronda and Chris stepped forward.

As we move forward with this, we'll be exploring ways to improve by bringing new items to the repertoire. The article by Linda McQuaig in this issue, and the editorial cartoon are a beginning. Take a look at the appeal at the end. You will likely notice that our Calendar of Events has been shortened considerably. At the time of this writing, the exponential spread of Covid-19 in Toronto and across Canada has forced us to cancel or postpone a number of events planned for the spring, and this likely includes the ARM C12 AGM scheduled for May 27. Read the Acting-President's Report for more details.

As it stands right now, I will be acting

as Assistant-Editor, and as such will be the vehicle through which submissions for future editions of After School will be received. In turn, I'll submit them to our Editorial Team for review. Please send them to the email address below, with a clear indication in the Subject Line of the nature of the submission.

One final thing; stay up to date on news and notifications: www.armchapter12.osstf.ca



GOT A PICTURE, POEM OR OPINION TO SHARE?

AFTER SCHOOL NEEDS ARTICLES, PHOTOS, DRAWINGS, POEMS, WORKS OF ART, OPINIONS, THEATRE, MOVIE AND BOOK REVIEWS, TRAVEL EXPERIENCES, LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, ETC. INCLUDE PHOTOS AND/OR ILLUSTRATIONS WHEREVER POSSIBLE. THIS PUBLICATION HAS TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL TO GROW, AND THIS CAN BE REALIZED WITH YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS. THERE'S A LARGE POOL OF TALENT OUT THERE, AND HERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR IT TO SURFACE, TO BE SHARED AMONGST ALL OF OUR MEMBERS.

SUBMIT YOUR WORK TO THE EDITOR AT:

EDITOR.AFTERSCHOOL@GMAIL.COM



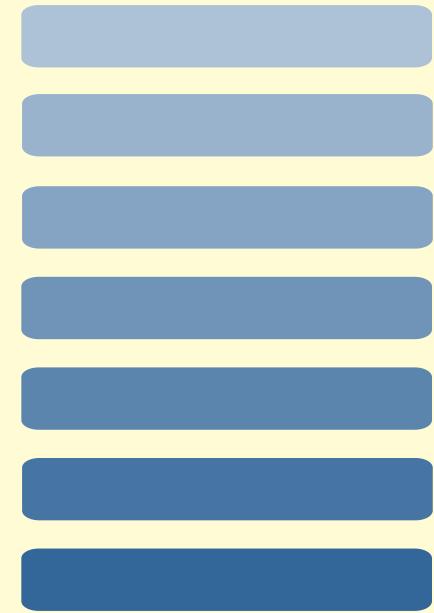
KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH ARM CHAPTER 12 NEWS AND EVENTS.

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416-751-8300



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—MANFRED NETZEL, ACTING PRESIDENT

I hope you like the new look of our award-winning publication, *After School*, and in its first digital format for your online reading pleasure!!

Due to circumstances that I explained in the last February issue, your Executive had to make some tough decisions about the production and distribution of this publication. That included producing three out of the four quarterly issues in digital format only, while keeping a single issue in both printed and digital format. At the same time, we had to search for a new editor because of the personal circumstances of our long-standing editor (and past President), Neil Walker. Further, the departure of our skilled previous webmaster last spring left the website unmonitored, out-dated and inactive by summer.

Fortunately, we are lucky to have found two very capable people in Ronda Allan and Christos Aslanidis to fill the vacuum and take on both communications platforms now and in the weeks ahead.

Of course, no one could have anticipated the current COVID-19 pandemic since our last publication in early February. This has required the Executive to again make some difficult decisions about the already planned sports and leisure activities, and meetings this spring. Both through email polling and, most recently, through a first attempt at a video conference in April, we had to revisit events like the monthly Travel Club presentations starting in March, periodic pub visits, the West-End workshop and luncheon in April, the spring golf tournament in a few weeks, the Stratford theatre trip in June, and most painful...

the AGM in late May.

All of these beloved and customary activities have had to either be “post-

poned” to later in 2020 (or 2021), or actually cancelled.

If we are able to re-schedule some or all of these events, subject to speaker availability, location and the pandemic's presence 6–12 months from now, we will make every attempt to do so. Personally, I see the postponement and re-scheduling of the Chapter 12 AGM as particularly important, since the tentativeness of my position as Acting President and that of the Executive (whose annual term ends in June) needs some finality through re-election or resignation. The status of the Chapter budget for 2020–21 is also somewhat unclear due to the postponement of AMPA 2020 in March. Thus, a new OSSTF/FEESO budget has not yet be approved for the coming year. This is important since all District, Bargaining Unit and local ARM Chapters' budgets rely on the annual rebates that are distributed in the fall. As you can see, this is very serious and vital business.

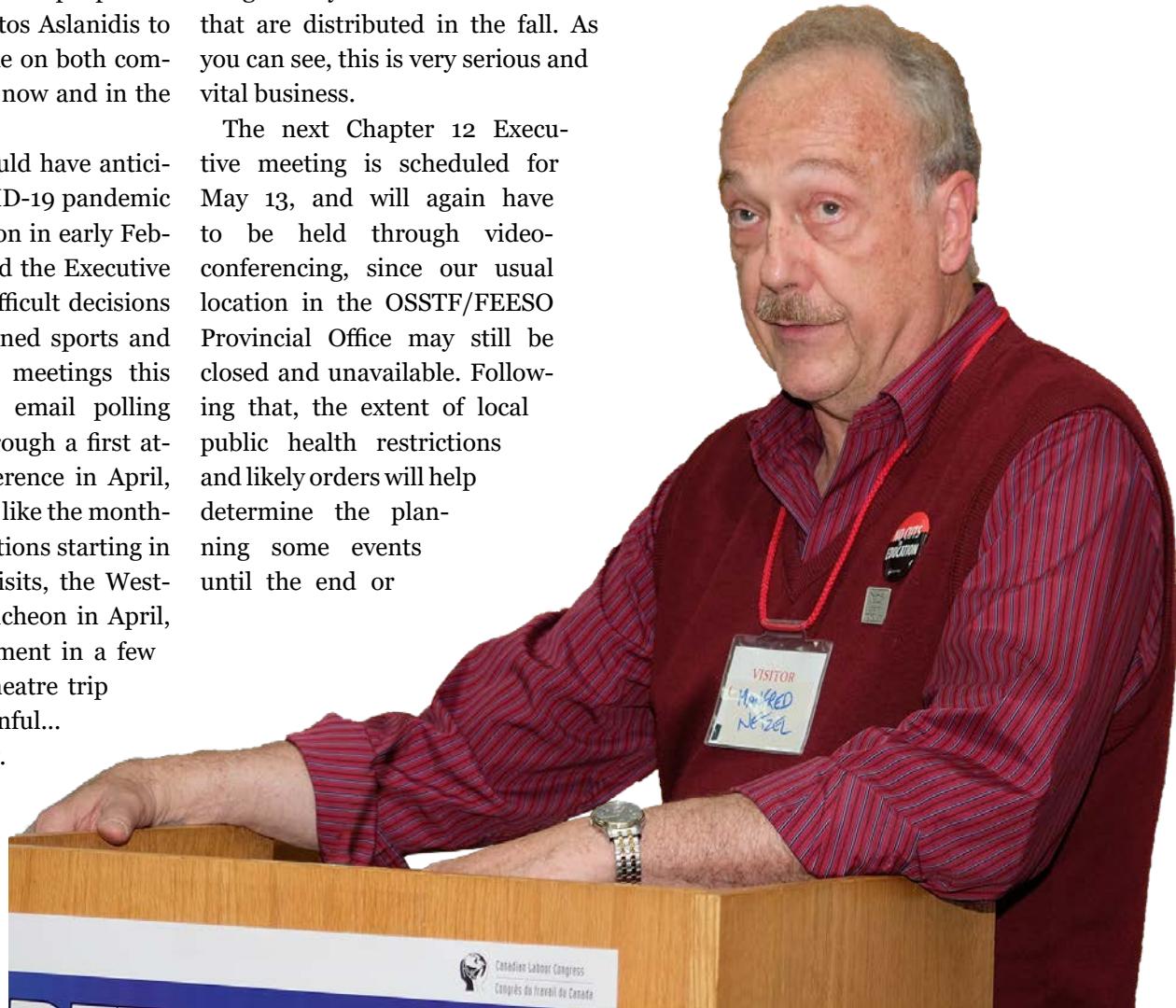
The next Chapter 12 Executive meeting is scheduled for May 13, and will again have to be held through video-conferencing, since our usual location in the OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Office may still be closed and unavailable. Following that, the extent of local public health restrictions and likely orders will help determine the planning some events until the end or

2020...at least. That makes your ability to receive online information and updates from us even more important. Please ensure that your contact information is updated and accurate.

At this time, on your behalf I would like to express our collective appreciation for the role all first responders and essential workers have had during this pandemic to keep us safe, well supplied with goods and services and maintaining a sense of “normalcy” in our daily lives until any previous routine is again the true normal. It is in all of our interests to stay safe, act kindly to others and stay in touch.

Best wishes,

Manfred



KATHLEEN WYNNE RECOUNTS HER TIME AS LEADER

CHARLES HAWKES

On February 19, a large and appreciative audience greeted Kathleen Wynne, the former premier of Ontario whose legacy shines more brightly in the light of the regressive Ford government in power today. Member at large Alan Hux, introduced Kathleen who used photographs and newspaper cartoons to illustrate her recollections of her early life and political career.

Kathleen was born into a family where her grandfather and father were both doctors, and a musical mother who had performed on CBC. She demonstrated leadership and feminism early in life in leading a school protest against clothing regulations for female students, and later as a track star in her district and university. Graduating from Queen's, she married, had three children, and became involved in education as a tutor, parent, and eventually a Toronto trustee.

By 2003, she was an MPP in the Liberal government where she served in a number of cabinet posts, notably as education minister for four years. In 2013 she became Liberal leader and premier, going on to win a decisive victory in the 2014 provincial election. Kathleen's picture now hangs in the provincial legislature as the twenty-fifth Premier of Ontario, the first woman to hold that office. As a



gay person, she said that she has counseled younger LGBT females in need of support.

Kathleen talked about several progressive policies that highlighted her tenure as Premier. She introduced an Ontario Retirement Pension Plan to provide pensions for people who had no private pension plan. Although it was scrapped, she defended it because it finally pushed a reluctant Harper government to increase the Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) payout for all Canadians. Another initiative was introducing a basic monthly income for poorer people in three communities on an experimental basis. This progressive measure was dropped by the Ford government along with others such as an increase in the minimum

wage and an expansion of pharmacare to younger people.

She used these examples to make the point that governments too often divorce social policies that directly improve people's lives from orthodox financial considerations. The implied criticism of the Ford government is obvious.

After answering our questions, Kathleen showed us a recent picture with a smiling group of constituents on a street in her riding. She emphasized that she still sees herself as filling an important role in helping people as an MPP. In fulfilling that role, and helping to rebuild the Liberal party, we have not seen the last of her in Ontario politics.



Kathleen Wynne stands with members of ARM Chapter 12

LIFE WITH LARRY—LARRY FRENCH

Roger Angell, the *New Yorker* Magazine writer who is my inspiration for this article, I remind you, is a classy person, a writer of distinction, a lover of women, children and dogs. An anti-W.C. Fields. (Remember the story: in his inimitable fashion W.C. Fields was running down an acquaintance. Thankfully, the milk of human kindness had not dried up in W.C.'s bosom. He concluded his diatribe: 'But the fellow is not all bad: he hates dogs and little children.') Would Roger descend to a discussion of the functioning of his intimate body parts? Not on your life, I am sure. So I am skating on thin ice relating to you some of the twists and turns my plumbing and I have endured together thanks to the radiation I endured for prostate cancer—'the gift that keeps on giving,' according to a doctor friend.

James Joyce would have introduced a bit of word play at this juncture, punning the words 'excremental' and 'sacramental,' thus elevating the discussion to the realm of high art. Rabelais would have gone on for several pages describing the thousand and one techniques he recommended for wiping one's posterior after a visit to the outhouse, each more delightful than the other. Even Rabelais, however, despite his gargantuan imagination (sorry, I could not resist), would not have been able to foresee some five centuries later the joys to be experienced in the bathrooms of China's Chengdu Sheraton Hotel where a sweet smelling warm spray calibrated with the precision of a Norden bomb sight hits the spot where the sun is reputed never to shine and obviates the fastidious need for toilet paper. One of life's unforgettable (verging on lascivious, dare we pronounce the word?) pleasures, I assure you.

All that being said, I promise to be both brief and delicate. Being a man, I have in my time of need the priv-

ilege of standing upright facing the facility of evacuation, as Molière's *Précieuses Ridicules* would put it, whether it be a porcelain bowl indoors or tree or pole if out in nature. (Remember John Diefenbaker's retort when a reporter told him that he and his party were low in the pre-election polls? 'I have the same opinion of poles as dogs do and would gladly put them to the same use'. I miss 'the Chief', we have not seen his ilk, or that of Tommy Douglas, in modern politics.) But, by some mysterious interaction of systems that would I am sure puzzle the scientists at work at the Large Hadron Collider at Geneva's Centre for Nuclear Research, although I initiate the operation standing, I am often quickly obliged to fumble with belt and button and zipper and sit down. I have been unpleasantly surprised more than once and forced to embark on a tedious mop-up operation, as the Americans used to say during the war in Vietnam. I do not risk loss of life, I must admit, but has it come to this, that after an eventful and in micro-cosmic terms, relatively successful life, I no longer know what is best for me, i.e., whether to stand or sit? Martin Luther must shudder in his grave!

Has it come to this, I again ask you? Years ago, I spoke at my dear friend Bud Wildman's retirement party in Sault Ste Marie. Bud, I remind you, had an unadulterated macro-cosmic

successful career as the NDP member of the Provincial Parliament of Ontario for the Riding of Algoma. To set the record straight, much of Bud's success as a politician can be credited, as in many cases in public life, to the contribution of his wife, Anne. We were colleagues at the late and lamented Sault Collegiate Institute, Bud as Head of the History Department, myself as Head of Languages. Newly elected Bud, as a former teacher was supposed to have as his primary concern the cause of education in Ontario.

When Bud made his maiden speech in 1975 in the Ontario Parliament, Wendell Fulton, my kindly mentor in political action and predecessor as Legislative Researcher for the Ontario

Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) sent me the Hansard Record of the event. I still have it somewhere. Bud cannily refused to mention education. Instead he made headlines when he pointed out the crisis in the supply of bull semen on St. Joseph Island, a key part of his largely agricultural riding. Needless to say, with the cows on the island waiting to be inseminated in a state of total frustration, milk production was in precipitous decline. Premier Bill Davis, inheritor of the Progressive Conservative dynasty that ruled the province, was in the House as a courtesy to the new member. Embroidering a bit on Davis' response, I told the attendees at Bud's dinner, that Bill Davis was thunderstruck: 'Has it come to this,' he lamented, 'after forty years of my party's rule in this province, we end up with a critical shortage of bull semen on St. Joseph Island!' It was the beginning of the end, I told our listeners, a disheartened Premier began to think of retirement. When he resigned, after it had come to this, I remind you, his forty year-long dynasty crumbled. Roger Angell has not put Houseman on his favorite poet's list, but thinking of dynasties I remember the conclusion of Houseman's poem 'On Wenlock Edge':

*The gale it plies the saplings double,
It blows so hard, 'twill soon be gone:
Today the Roman and his trouble
Are ashes under Uricon.*

Roger Angell has a long section as he concludes his article, on 'my approaching visitor, death.' There it is, the dreaded 'D-word' that Molière's Précieuses Ridicules, please excuse them, and me for the pun, would not have been caught dead pronouncing. They are not alone as we too nowadays have a hundred and one euphemisms to hide its blank unyielding reality. Roger, however, has no qualms about using the word. He is, in fact, the anti-Larkin in his matter of fact ap-

proach to the prospect; not for him the insomniac drink-inducing dread of Larkin, haunted by the inescapable onrush of extinction, as expressed so admirably in his poem 'Aubade':

*Most things may never happen: this one will,
And realization of it rages out
In furnace-fear when we are caught without
People or drink. Courage is no good:
It means not scaring others. Being
brave
Lets no one off the grave...."*

It is spring here in Morges on the shore of Lake Geneva where we spend half the year. Thoughts of death should be out of season, gone like Villon's snows of yesteryear. Our skis, now lonely off-season dust gathering sentinels after their winter's exertions, stand tucked away in the corner of the basement. With the warm weather, two weeks ago Nicole and I resumed our matinal Nordic walking. As we climbed the steep ascent to the Château of Denans, some five kilometres to the west of Morges, we scanned the wall of the Château whose beetling brow overlooks not the sea, but the vineyards below. These, although it was April, not June, were 'busting out all over' with the first blooms of the vines, a tender green gold that Robert Frost has celebrated:

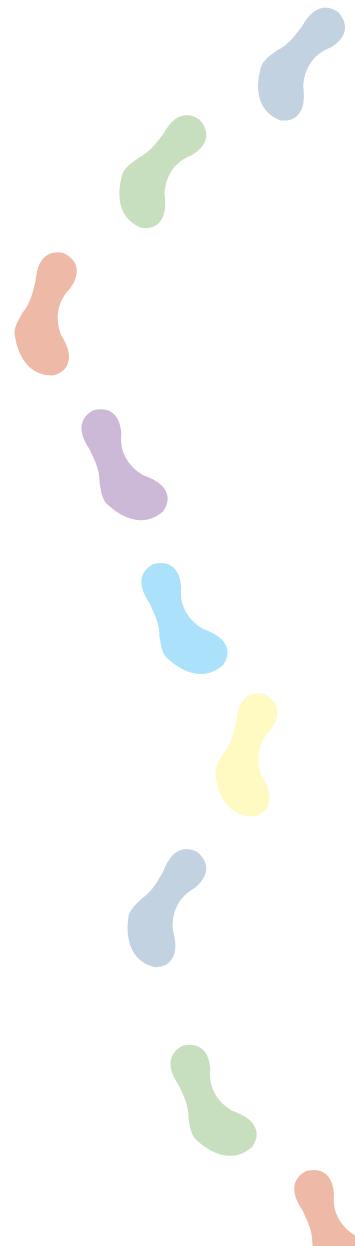
*Nature's first green is gold,
Its hardest hue to hold.
Its early leaf a flower,
But only so an hour...*

Amidst this reaffirmation of life, something was wrong. There was no sign of the welcoming presence of Victor on the battlements.

Victor was a dear friend who would bray with joy when he saw Nicole climbing the path as he knew there was a carrot or potato, apple or pear in his near future. We called his name, I

did my best imitation of Victor's high pitched caterwaul, but no response. We walked to the back of the Château and encountered the Châtelain. Victor had died, he told us, the week before Palm Sunday. Most appropriate. He may have had Christian tendencies, following in the footsteps of his New Testament predecessor. A seemingly youthful twenty-seven years old, our friend has left us, casting a grim shadow that reminds us of the fragile evanescence of existence. Victor, wherever you are in quadruped heaven, I hope you still bray with joy when the carrot man, or better still, woman, appears.

To be continued...





"MOVE IT, MOVE IT" MADAGASCAR NOT JUST A DISNEY MOVIE!

—MICHELLE BARRACLOUGH

Anyone familiar with the Disney movie *Madagascar* remembers the line "...move it, move it." And here in Madagascar, the endemic lemurs definitely fit the profile, from the ring-tailed lemur, to the largest lemur, the Idri, to the mouse lemur, they are here! Madagascar is the only place in the world that you might have the opportunity to see these wonderful mammals.

I decided to visit Madagascar as a prelude to my visit to Mauritius, my mother's home, and what a great choice. For those of you interested in "off the beaten track" touring, this definitely meets the bill. I had to learn the capital was Antananarivo. As in most capital cities in Africa, we go from the poorest, at the bottom of the city, literally, to mid town to the upper town, where the wealthy live.

There are markets and art galleries and as I discovered on my last day there, a wonderfully, inventive photography museum with an associated restaurant. Discover the history in photos and finish the day with a gourmet meal.

I also, lucked into, the Pope's visit. The first visit of Pope Francis to the "dark continent," was my first day in Antananarivo. I felt blessed.

I decided on a tour, as when travelling by yourself, it becomes rather expensive if you do your own tour. That being said, I met several people who had their own driver and guide with a mapped out tour, quite similar to the G Adventures tour I was

on. Our first stop in Andasibe-Mantadia National Park, allowed us to get acquainted with our first set of lemurs: common brown lemur, the bamboo lemur and the mouse lemur. A short walk through the park and the guide was showing us a selection of fauna and flora. These beautiful creatures are endangered mainly due to habitat loss. Much of the forested land has been demolished for slash and burn agriculture and making charcoal. 50 per cent of the population earn US\$151 per month or less, and so to make ends meet, the people do what they have to, to survive.

On the tour we travelled south and then west seeing several areas and other national parks including: Antsirabe, Fiadanana, Ranomafana National Park, Isalo National Park, and finally the beautiful coastal area, Ifaty and the Spiny forest with the baobab trees, some of which are a thousand years old.

Madagascar's first settlers came from Southeast Asia, later joined by African and Arabian settlers, who formed a unified people in the 18th century. Later, it was ruled by the French until 1960, and eventually, they had self rule in 1960. Unfortunately the series of leaders terminated in a civil war in the early 2000s. It is now trying to recover itself and reintroducing the tourist industry.

The population is quite mixed being composed of 19 tribes coming from Africa, Asia, and the Arabian peninsula. Reli-

giously, half the population retain the traditional beliefs the other half belong to the Catholic or Protestant churches. This of course made the Pope's visit immensely popular.

Madagascar is a beautiful island and well worth the visit. So if you have ever dreamed of seeing lemurs in the wild, visit this unspoiled area of the world.



THE PUBLIC LAB THAT COULD HAVE HELPED FIGHT COVID-19 PANDEMIC

LINDA MCQUAIG

Canada once had a publicly owned pharmaceutical company that could have made a difference in the current coronavirus crisis—except that we sold it.

Connaught Labs was a superstar in global medicine. For seven decades, this publicly owned Canadian company performed brilliantly on the national and international stage, contributing to medical breakthroughs and developing affordable treatments and vaccines for deadly diseases.

Hated by its corporate competitors, Connaught was unique among pharmaceutical companies in that its focus was on human need, not profit.

It would have come in handy today. In fact, Connaught got its start amid

a diphtheria outbreak in 1913. Toronto doctor John Gerald FitzGerald was outraged that children were dying in large numbers even though there was a diphtheria treatment available from a U.S. manufacturer. But, at \$25 a dose, it was unaffordable to all but the rich. FitzGerald set out to change that—and did.

After experimenting on a horse in a downtown Toronto stable, FitzGerald developed an antitoxin that proved effective in treating diphtheria, and made it available to public health outlets across the country. Then, with lab space provided by the University of Toronto, he and his team went on to produce low-cost treatments and vaccines for other common killers, including tet-

anus, typhoid and meningitis.

Connaught developed an impressive research capacity, with its scientists contributing to some of the biggest medical breakthroughs of the 20th century—including penicillin and the Salk and Sabin polio vaccines. It also played a central role in the global eradication of smallpox.

“It was a pioneer in a lot of ways,” says Colleen Fuller, a research associate of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. “It did things commercial companies wouldn’t do because they weren’t willing to take the financial risks.”

Fuller argues that if a publicly owned Connaught were still operating today, it could be contributing to the development of the coronavirus vaccine—and ensuring a Canadian supply if there was a global shortage.

Yet, tragically it isn’t.

Succumbing to corporate pressure and a misguided belief that the private sector always does things better, Brian Mulroney’s Progressive Conservative government privatized Connaught Labs in the 1980s. Today, what remains of this once-dazzling Canadian public enterprise has been taken over by a giant French pharmaceutical company.

The coronavirus outbreak may finally help expose the fallacy of the notion that the private marketplace is innately superior—which has been the guiding principle in Anglo-American countries (including Canada) for the past four decades, leading to the constant denigration of government and its functions.

Fortunately, Canada’s public health care system, established in the 1960s, has been so popular that it has survived, despite attacks of “socialized medicine”—although our political leaders have quietly whittled away funding for the system in recent decades.



A worker emptying a bottle containing penicillin mould during penicillin production at the Connaught Labs in Toronto in May 1944. Archives Canada

If the foolishness of cutting funding for public health care wasn't already abundantly clear, the coronavirus has driven it home with a sledgehammer—as we've witnessed the extra struggles the U.S. faces in containing the virus with its lack of public health care.

Still, our willingness to go along with the privatization cult in recent decades has left us weaker and less protected than we could be.

Not only do we no longer have Connaught Labs, but Canada spends \$1 billion a year funding basic medical research at Canadian universities, yet relies on the private marketplace to produce, control—and profit from—the resulting medical innovations.

For instance, the crucial work in developing a vaccine to treat Ebola was done by Canadian scientists at the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg—and financed by Canadian taxpayer money. But sole licensing rights to the vaccine were granted to a small U.S. company, which then sublicensed it to pharmaceutical giant Merck for \$50 million.

Although Merck is now producing the vaccine, critics have charged that the company did “next to nothing” to rush the vaccine into production during the deadly Ebola outbreak in West Africa, according to a recent paper published in the Journal of Law and Biosciences.

With a surge in future global pandemics expected, it might well be time to rethink Canada’s foolhardy attachment to the notion “the private sector always does things better.”

Always unproven, that theory is looking increasingly far-fetched.

*Linda McQuaig is a journalist and author. This column is based on research from her recent book *The Sport & Prey of Capitalists*.*

This column originally appeared in The Toronto Star.

COVID-19: We're here to help!

As the situation with COVID-19 keeps evolving, OTIP continues to work closely with its stakeholders and partners to make proactive decisions that are grounded in care for its members and employees.

Hours of operation—temporary change

On March 16, 2020, [OTIP's hours of operation](#) changed to Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. This temporary change in hours was made to balance the health and well-being of OTIP employees while continuing to meet the needs of members.

In line with this approach, OTIP call centre employees have been set up to work from home. This means that when you call them, you may hear some unexpected background noise from an employee's home work space.

Be assured that although the service experience may be different, the OTIP team remains committed to being available to answer your questions efficiently and effectively during this time.

To best serve you at this time, please visit [otip.com/contactus](#) for FAQs or select '[Send us online note](#)' for instructions on how to reach us by email. OTIP will work to get back to you as soon as possible.

Information on COVID-19 and your coverage

OTIP cares about the health and well-being of their members and their families and have compiled information to help keep you informed.

You can visit [otip.com/coronavirus](#) for the most up-to-date information on all things related to COVID-19 and coverage provided by your employee group benefits plan or your RTIP/ARM (retired members) health, dental and travel insurance plan.

We're all in this together.

Communities and organizations across the country are taking measures to contain the spread of COVID-19. OTIP thanks you for your patience and understanding during these uncertain times as we all do our part.



NO CUTS TO EDUCATION—LESLIE WOLFE, PRESIDENT OF OSSTF TORONTO



On March 5, OSSTF Toronto Members (Teachers, Occasional Teachers and Education Support Staff) were walking the picket line together, around Queen's Park with our Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) secondary colleagues, demanding a stop to all the cuts to education that were still being proposed by the government. A new strategy of asking small business owners to place *No Cuts to Education* signs prominently in their storefront windows and highlighting their support on social media was gaining momentum. The resolve to fight the Tory cuts-based agenda on the part of the entire membership continued to be strong.

Now, while those *No Cuts* signs still remain in many windows across Toronto, most of those businesses are now shuttered, with their owners worrying about whether they'll ever reopen. The economy has come to a screeching halt, with many workers, including some of our Professional Student Services Personnel (PSSP) and Occasional

Teachers' Bargaining Unit (OTBU) colleagues understandably worried about their jobs and their income.

Thousands of Ontarians have been infected with COVID-19 and as I write this, it has just been announced that 1,000 Canadians have died.

Since March 5, first OECTA, then the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) and L'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO) all signed tentative agreements based on the last public proposal from the Minister of Education, a proposal that included a funding generator of an average class size of 23:1 for secondary school classes, as well as two e-learning credits required for graduation, albeit with the ability for parents to opt their child out.

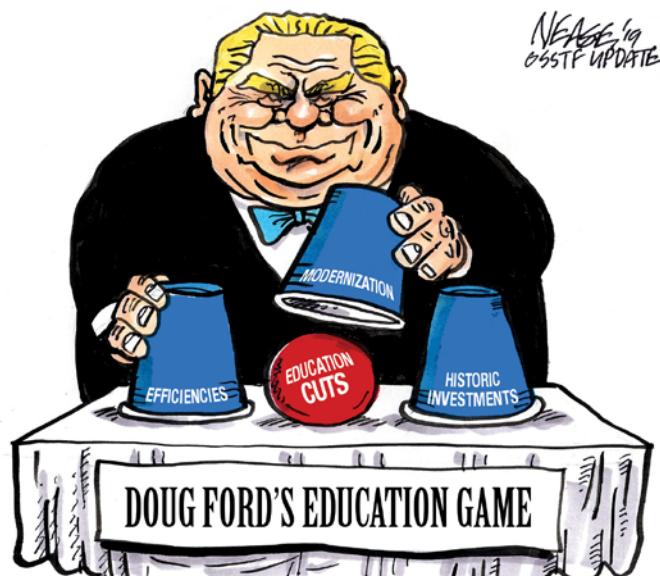
Schools were shut down and have remained closed for just over a month. OSSTF Toronto Members are coping with the impacts on their own lives of reduced access to work in some cases, as well as physical distancing and isolation; managing their own families, and at the same time, Long Term Occasional Teachers (LTOs) and full-time teachers are into their third week of morphing what for the greatest majority of them has always been face-

to-face education into emergency-remote-learning.

That's a lot of change in just a few short weeks, however one thing has remained unchanged however throughout this year: OSSTF Toronto Members' deep commitment to their students, to the necessity of bricks-and-mortar publicly-funded classrooms, and to a publicly-funded education system that is funded based on student need so that it can continue to provide equitable access to the kinds of education opportunities students need to succeed.

All OSSTF Toronto Members should be proud of their efforts this year, both to protect education from cuts, and to do what was needed when called upon after the schools were shut down. We don't know what the rest of this year will bring, but we do know this: OSSTF Toronto Members will be there to protect and defend publicly-funded education.

Since this article was written, tentative agreements between OSSTF/FEESO and the Ontario government have been reached at the central table for Teachers & Occasional Teachers and for Education Workers.



ARM CHAPTER 12 INTERIM INCOME STATEMENT FOR 2019/2020

Income Statement	ARM Chapter 12		July 2019–March 2020
Balance from 2019			\$5,066.45
	Revenue	Expenses	Revenue
OSSTF Rebate Fees			\$11,740.00
Sponsor Contributions			
Executive Lunches			\$1,672.22
Luncheon Meeting Expenses			\$4,685.13
Luncheon Meeting Revenue			\$1,957.00
Newsletter Expenses			\$5,233.81
Golf and Curling Activities Expenses			\$2,105.90
Golf and Curling Activities Revenue			\$2,240.00
Theatre and Excursion Expenses			\$150.00
Theatre and Excursion Revenues			
Gifts, Cards, Membership & Charities			\$1,074.02
Office & Miscellaneous expenses			\$76.55
Health Coalition Conference			\$40.00
Totals			\$15,037.63 \$21,003.45
Net Income over the period			\$5965.82
Income Statement		ARM SFK Chapter 12	July 2017–May 10, 2018
ARM SFK Chapter 12		Expenses	Revenue
Balance from 2019			\$6,425.70
SFK Revenue			\$870.00
Charities supported			\$6,000.00
Bank Charges			\$7.80
Total			\$6,007.80 \$7,295.70
Balance			\$1,287.90

Note:

1. The following Charities each received a cheque for \$1,500 from the SFK: Massey Centre, Covenant House, Rosalie Hall, Red Door Family Centre.
2. Additional pending Invoices for the Latvian Centre catering and the Newsletter will alter the final balances.
3. The total compensation for the editor will be \$850.

RESPONDING TO OUR FIRST RESPONDERS

DON WRIGHT

As I write this, today's morning paper is on my desk.

My six-year-old son hugs me tight. "Please don't die," he whispers. It's something he now says nearly every time I leave to go to work.

The writer is Dr. Nadia Alam, an anesthetist who works in a Georgetown hospital.

Although most of us are enjoying the peaceful quiet of our own homes, first responders

continue to risk their lives every working day.

We need to thank them for this.

If you know a doctor, nurse, EMR or other front-line medical responder, please consider writing a note, email, or making a thank-you call. But remember the others who keep our cities and the planet turning. The public transit and highway coach drivers, the outside workers who help keep our roads safe, the posties who deliver important mail and friendly, upbeat letters.

Let me make the case for long haul truckers. (I confess to an earlier conflict of interest.)

Truckers are often first at an accident scene. They have imme-

diate radio contact with police, ambulances, fire departments. They usually make the first emergency calls.

They may, at first, be the only persons at a massive accident who have fire extinguishers. They help pull injured persons from burning vehicles. Many truckers have logging chains with which to tow cars and their trapped passengers away from dangerous exposure to oncoming traffic.

You can thank them. When a long rig passes you, flash your lights to show it is safe for them to pull back into the lane. They will thank you with a flash of their four-way signals. You could even look like a pro.



CURMUDGEON'S CORNER—PAUL ROOK

The role of a curmudgeon is to reveal and comment upon ridiculous situations, absurd policies and foolish leaders. In all these areas there is much to comment upon during this pandemic.

The most ridiculous situation in Ontario is that we were not prepared for this pandemic, although we should have been. After SARS, a commission wrote a report on how to prepare ourselves for the next pandemic. Mario Possami, Senior Advisor to the SARS Commission has said “I didn’t think in my wildest dreams that if we faced a pandemic we would be as badly organized as we are today.” When Premier Ford went through where the items to fight a pandemic are stored he was surprised by how little there was. He should not have been. For the past

three decades governments, including his, have been cutting back the funds for health care. This absurd policy was based on the concept of reducing taxes, especially for the wealthy and corporations. With not enough money for hospitals to function properly there were no extra funds to buy ventilators and personal protective equipment. We have had to order more ventilators from China. This begs the question: Why weren’t we producing these items in Ontario? The answer is that it is cheaper to buy them from China.

A large portion of deaths from COVID-19 have occurred in long term care homes. This could have been avoided if the government had followed inspection protocols, and if we had better overall policies in this area.

These homes are supposed to be inspected annually but media reports have shown that many have not been inspected since Ford came to power. When it became apparent that workers in these facilities often work in two or three of these homes, Ford put a stop to this in order to reduce the spread of the virus. Ford does not realize that workers do this to earn enough money because they are poorly paid and often don’t get enough shifts in one location. We need laws to enforce proper wages, hours and training for people who work in these homes. There are significant obstacles to this. The main one is that the majority of these homes for the care of seniors are privately owned. What do you think owners care about most—seniors or profits?

What happens when this pandemic ends? Some say we should return to normal. But didn’t the old normal have policies, situations and leaders who made this pandemic worse? Others have said there will be a new normal. Then they go on to say that many things that have happened during the pandemic will continue afterwards such as more people working from home and more e-learning for students. Will this be any better? No, we will just become more isolated.

There is a chance to build a better world, but I doubt that will happen. I fear that all the debt created to help people during this crisis will just be an excuse for many governments to go back to cutting more much needed programs for people. For example, Premier Ford has provided massive amounts of money to fight COVID-19. My fear is that when the pandemic is over Ford will revert to his old self and go back to cutting money for education, health care and other programs that people need.



REVIEWS

THE ECONOMIC CASE FOR INVESTING IN EDUCATION THE CONFERENCE BOARD OF CANADA, 2019

Why shouldn't the provincial government try to cut educational spending? After all, it is the second largest expense in the provincial budget after the health system, Ontario's debt is rising, and deficits are always a concern.

Suppose it could be shown that spending more on education, not less, actually **saves** money for the provincial government? This study commissioned for OSSTF/FESO by a mainstream economic consulting firm proves convincingly that more funding for schools directed towards improving the graduation rate reduces provincial costs for social welfare, health, and crime prevention. In addition, more spending gives a healthy boost to the economy, and increases employment in Ontario.

The study shows that individuals without a high school diploma have

poorer health, higher demands on social welfare, and higher crime rates than high school graduates. The differences between these two groups are large. Non-graduates require 71 per cent more in annual per capita health care, and are twice as likely to draw on social assistance as graduates. It follows, then, that the key to saving money in these areas is to improve the graduation rate for Ontario students.

At present, 86.3 per cent of Ontario students graduate from high school, a significant improvement from back in 2004 when only 68 per cent graduated. But Ontario could do better. Nova Scotia has a graduation rate of 90 per cent, and the study uses that figure as an achievable goal for Ontario. The estimate of savings in health care with a 90 per cent graduation rate amount to \$6.4 million annually, with a total saving of \$1.4 billion over the next 20 years. Social welfare savings from decreased use of social assistance would amount to \$5.1 million annually, with a total of \$1.1 billion in savings over the next two decades. Criminal justice spending would fall by \$4.9 million annually, saving \$1 billion over the next 20 years as a result of a higher graduation rate. These savings could be directed towards the rising costs of health care for Ontario's aging population.

The Conference Board calculates that a one per cent increase in government spending on public education supports about 4,200 extra jobs with a \$275.3 million boost to Ontario incomes. This income in turn feeds back in to the tax systems of all three levels of government.

This study contradicts the current cost saving program of the Ford government. Its plan to reduce the number of teachers, increase class sizes, cancel optional courses, and mandate online learning will not in any conceivable way raise the student graduation rate. If anything, it will lower it, and the costs will show up in health, social welfare, and crime prevention programs.

REVIEW BY CHARLES HAWKES
(THE FULL STUDY IS AVAILABLE AT
[BIT.LY/2V3RWBX](http://bit.ly/2V3RWBX))



Toronto's Local Craft Brewery and Restaurant
67 Front St. E. near Front & Church
Sts. 416-867-9499
cestwhat.com

Bill Pryde has been urging me to visit and review *C'est What?* for at least two years and so on September 26 we met on the south side of Front St. Bill was waiting on the sidewalk for me when I arrived at 1 p.m. sharp. He didn't want me to miss the place. The entrance isn't exactly a "hole in the wall," but rather a staircase in the wall of an historic building in the St. Lawrence Market area of the old city. We descended 15 steps to the entrance to two long narrow rooms. Karma Naike managed to find the spot and joined us shortly after. The regular pub is to the left with



many small square tables that seat one to four people, a bar with 12 stools, three pool tables and a section at the rear with tall tables. There is artwork for sale on the walls and the current artist is Les Luxenburger. There are several sets of tables that will seat parties of six and eight and on the afternoon of September 26 a large party arrived and had reserved the back half of the room. The second room to the right at the bottom of the stairs is where they have additional tables when the place is hopping and a small stage where they have live musical entertainment on the weekends.

As you may know, I believe there are at least eight key criteria that must be considered when reviewing a pub. I have already covered location and layout and the others are: the brews, fare, service, atmosphere, design/décor, price, and accessibility and I will address them in random order.

C'est What?'s menu is a book of eight pages that lists its brews, wines, appetizers, lunches and dinners. Bill and Karma were immediately attracted to the Butter Chicken. Bill had his with poutine on french fries while Karma's was on a bed of rice with a side bowl of peas [\$15]. They were delighted with the flavour of the butter chicken. I went for the Lamb Burger on a wrap with cucumber and lettuce and sweet potato slices [\$17] and a small Caesar salad on the side [\$4]. We all raved about the quality of the meals.

While we were waiting for our meals, Bill and I counted the number of brews on the menu and came up with 67! Obviously, we weren't tempted to try them all on this visit, but Bill ordered an Amsterdam bitter and a Great Lakes Shwing followed later by a mocha porter coffee. Karma had the Joan's Dark Secret named after our lovely waitress which was very pleasant. I opted for variety over volume and had 5 oz. glasses of Al's Cask, Erik the Red, Pumpkin Ale, and Hemp Haze [\$3.10/glass].

Yes, Bill and I were able to walk up the 15 steps unassisted after our lunch. We did share the fruit pie [\$10] which really is an ample portion for two or three people.

One noticeable feature is the low light levels in the room. Each table has a single light hanging down over it which sheds sufficient light to read the menu and see other people at the table. These lights are focused and so the spaces between tables are dimly lit. There is a nice sitting area with a gas fireplace, but this wasn't in use while we were there at lunch time.

When I returned home, I told my wife, Denise, about *C'est What?* and she was intrigued. She has regularly accompanied me to a pub before I write my review, so I invited her for a lunch date on October 18. We sat at the table next to where Bill, Karma and I had sat. Denise was attracted to the Butter Chicken Poutine and awarded it an A++. I ordered the Hogtown Salad with warm chicken skewers [\$15 + \$4]. The salad was very large with lettuce, cabbage, cherry tomatoes, hardboiled egg, bacon, and thinly sliced toasted almonds. It was excellent.

We were served by the lovely Joan again and Denise ordered a 15 oz. glass of Karma Citra, the current feature draft from Great Lakes Brewery [\$8.19]. Denise enjoyed the tang. I decided to try Karma Citra and three different *C'est What?* brews in the 5 oz. glasses: Double Rouge, Mocha Porter and Joan's Dark Secret [4 x \$3.19]. They were all very pleasant and I have decided that four small glasses of different brews is a fine way to enhance your lunch. For dessert, Denise and I had coffee [\$4/cup] and shared the homemade warm hazelnut brownie with vanilla ice-cream on two large orange slices [\$10]. Denise assured me that the orange slices were there to keep the ice cream from sliding off the plate, but I found the slice quite tasty with all that melted ice cream on it.

On entry into the room Denise thought it was a bit dark and this led her to think that it was more of a guy's place. However, she did adjust to the low light and enjoyed the ambiance. She noted the many board games available for patrons to take to their tables on the shelf under the aquarium including chess, checkers, cribbage, Clue, Battleship, Life,.... I also pointed out that two women were playing at the only pool table in use. Denise thought that it was a bit too dark in the Women's washroom, but I can assure the fellows that there is plenty of light in the Men's.

As we walked up the 15 steps to leave, I noted that there was no elevator or ramp and so *C'est What?* is not accessible for people using wheelchairs or walkers. Unfortunately, this is typical of the many establishments that I have reviewed along streets in the older parts of the city. *C'est What?* is however very accessible to public transit. We took the Yonge subway to Union station and walked east on Front St. for several short blocks. On the way home we walked up Church St. to Wellington St. out to Yonge St. to the King St. subway station. The next time you are downtown, I invite you to visit *C'est What?* Watch for the right door panel with "Love Toronto/Love *C'est What?*" at 67 Front St. E.

REVIEW BY ALLAN HUX



HOW THE CORONAVIRUS MAKES THE CASE FOR STRONGER CITIES

—CHARTER CITY TORONTO

Cities are at the front lines of combatting the crisis, but don't have enough funding even at the best of times.

The coronavirus crisis is pointing up very clearly some of the weaknesses in how we fund our large cities.

Ontario cities don't have adequate sources of revenue to meet their needs in the best of times; now they are showing extreme vulnerability in this crisis.

As the *Globe and Mail* reports on April 13, the spending required to fight the coronavirus pandemic is having a big impact on the finances of every large city in Canada. They all face hundreds of millions of dollars in unprecedented deficits that they cannot cover—and are not even legally allowed to have.

Toronto projects a pandemic-related deficit of \$780 million on a 2020 budget of \$13.5 billion; Vancouver: \$270 million on a \$1.6 billion budget; Montreal: a deficit of up to \$350 million. Just like our hospitals, cities normally run at 100 per cent capacity; there is little left to confront a crisis.

Two factors are driving the deficits: increased spending (such as Toronto buying hotel spaces for the homeless and a vast array of other public health costs); and reduction of revenues (such as loss of transit fares, city fees and tax losses from failed businesses and a slowdown of home sales).

One proposed solution is simply to allow cities to run a deficit, which as 'creatures of the province', they are not allowed to do. But that wouldn't help much anyway. How will the deficit be paid off? Cities simply don't have the revenue base to do it; it would require either massive tax increases or existential cuts to city services.

Another proposal calls for the provincial or federal governments to bail cities out. That might help in the short run--providing those governments do

not question how cities spent money during the pandemic. Senior governments are also stretched very thin, and in general, they dislike handing money over to other levels of government without a full accounting and justification of the spending decisions. It's not at all clear how much of cities' extraordinary spending will be covered.

We think a better option is to strengthen cities overall and from the get-go, by recognizing the importance of local government and ensuring cities have the tax revenue basis to meet their needs—at all times. That means giving cities access to large-scale, progressive sources of tax revenue as proposed by Charter City Toronto.

It may be that such funding arrangements would still be challenged by a crisis of this proportion.

But such a fiscal framework, embedded in a constitutionally-protected City Charter, would give cities stable, predictable revenues, allow them to

address their ongoing infrastructure, good repair and housing deficits and put them in a much better position to address crises that arise.

Like everyone, Charter City Toronto is suspended until the coronavirus recedes. We wish you all the best in these extraordinary times.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

THERE ARE CURRENTLY NO EVENTS
PLANNED DEFINITIVELY.

Thank you to Educators Financial Group and its CEO Chuck Hamilton for the long-standing and renewed \$1,000 sponsorship support of ARM Chapter 12.
educatorsfinancialgroup.ca

