

## ARM Chapter 12 scoops Ian Cameron Newsletter Award



At the ARM Biennial Conference, May 25, on behalf of ARM Chapter 12, Neil Walker accepts the Ian Cameron Newsletter award from Maryaleen Trafford, Cameron's widow.

---

## OSSTF President Ken Coran: Stand strong

Manfred Netzel reports on the ARM Chapter 12 Annual General Meeting . . . 8

## Steve Fuller's Toronto

Here is your big chance to learn cooking from the ARM 12 master chef. . . 4

## Calendar . . . 4

## Texting mania and the Olympics

Curmudgeon Paul Rook takes on texting mania and Toronto's Olympic plans . . . 5

## Swing For Kids Spring Golf Tournament

Prizes, lots of laughter and fun and time to reflect on those who have passed . . . 6-7

## Bruce Archer sees love in water

A poem of two young people and their moment of realization . . . 11

---

---

## Editorial Chatter

MANFRED NETZEL OUTLINES SOME of the political issues we face. The provincial austerity program remains in contention between teachers, education workers and Queen's Park.

AFTER SCHOOL IS PROUD THAT CHAPTER 12 has won the Ian Cameron Newsletter Award. Cameron gave generously to make the newsletter a success. His efforts and those of the executive and membership make Chapter 12's communications successful. There are many who provide their insights, passions and good humour every issue -- you know them well from their bylines. What is special about the newsletter team is the willingness of *After School's* contributors to keep producing excellent, entertaining and instructive writing. People who write on demand are a rarity in this world, but not in *After School's* little band.

STEVE FULLER ANNOUNCES A NEW PHASE in bringing the art of cooking to everyone. In this issue, he invites ARM members to join him in his home kitchen for learning and enjoyment.

Fun with frying? Cooking with humour? Sign up and see for yourself just how much you can learn from Fuller the Foodie.

ARM Chapter 12 website, [armchapter12.org](http://armchapter12.org) is where it's at -- all things ARM 12 are there, including current and past issues of *After School*.

PAUL ROOK IS MORE THAN USUALLY CURMUDGEONLY in this issue. How could anyone complain about the Olympics and Toronto as a possible Olympic site? Doesn't he realize that texting is how the world stays together?

OSSIF PRESIDENT KEN CORAN ENLIVENED the Annual Meeting of ARM Chapter 12 with his comments about where the Ontario government and OSSIF find themselves. As always, solidarity is a key to standing strong against the neo-con forces that have been unleashed in the Liberal government.

---

### Contents

Editorial page - random thoughts	2
Presidential Perspective	3
Calendar - for the A in Active	
Retired Members	4
Steve Fuller's Toronto	4
Curmudgeon's Corner	5
Skeletons in the closet	5

Spring Golf Tournament	6-7
ARM Chapter 12 AGM	8
Stand Strong -- Media Releases	9
Considered: <i>Longing</i>	10-11
The Retired Bard -- Love Like Water	11
Educators' Financial Group	12
Labour Day Parade	12
Stratford Trip	12

---

### Active Retired Members

#### Chapter 12 (Toronto) Executive

President:	Manfred Netzel 416 767-8786
Vice- President:	James Loftus 416 447-0811
Secretary:	Virginia Maxwell
Treasurer:	Eric Dempster
Executive Officers:	Charles Hawkes
	Paul Headdon
	Boris Mischenko
	Rosemarie Mohring
	Karma Naike
	Neil Walker
	Don Wright
Members at large:	Ralph Cowan
	Marion Evans
	Steve Fuller
	Julia Harney
	Mel Herman
	Margaret McPhail
	Jim Mile
	Millie Oliver
	Sally Pengelley

### *After School*

#### Volume 14, Issue 3, September 2012

*After School* is the official publication of Active Retired Members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Chapter 12 Toronto (ARM C12)

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.

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:** Larry French, Manfred Netzel, Ed Preston, Paul Rook, Stephen Fuller, Sally Pengelley, Neil Walker

#### Newsletter Contact Information

[armc12nw@gmail.com](mailto:armc12nw@gmail.com)

# Oh Canada!

## Have we become a nation of bullies?

By Manfred Netzel, President, ARM Chapter 12

Our political leaders' bullying of average Canadians is increasingly noticeable this summer. What follows are only the most egregious examples of this bullying:

The recent budget processes at both the federal and provincial levels are clear examples of my argument. The creation and legislative arrogance of attempting to pass so-called omnibus budget bills totaling hundreds of pages and affecting dozens of existing federal or provincial laws (70+ federal and 30+ provincial) have been well-documented by the opposition parties and the media. Who can forget the video images of sleepy-looking MPs trying to present amendments and stall the Harper/ Flaherty budget over 15 hours in spring's Parliament? Or the indignation of Ontario's premier and treasurer trying to crucify the ONDP Leader Andrea Horwath for having the nerve to propose some amendments to the over 300-page Ontario Budget beyond what they thought had been agreed? Meanwhile, the Tim Hudak-led PCs had already decided to oppose everything in that budget without proposing any amendments or offering any serious constructive criticism as the Official Opposition at Queen's Park.

This *modus operandi* of passing sweeping austerity budgets in both Ottawa and Toronto seems to have an inherently fundamental anti-democratic intent and process involved, which rubs me the wrong way and should evoke the same reaction in most citizens. This is especially true in Ontario, where the McGuinty government does not even have a majority of seats in the legislature. Of course, through our archaic 19th century first-past-the-post electoral system, both the current federal and Ontario governments can only claim to have been elected by a plurality of no more than 40 per cent of the electorate. At least Mayor Rob Ford can claim to having received an electoral plurality in his 2010 election.

Now, one sees the political bullying at Queen's Park reach a new crescendo with the secret negotiations conducted between the Ministry of Education(or Premier's Office) and one of the teacher unions (OECTA) resulting in a deal to strip expiring teachers' and other educational workers' contracts of long-term and hard-won terms and conditions by mutual consent and under duress. Remember the scenario in October 1997 during our two-week political protest, when we promised to each other "We Won't Back Down" until our solidarity was

undermined by a similar back-room deal with 40 per cent of the then federations? Seems that the principle of divide and rule worked well for the British Empire and also in modern public sector bully bargaining. The Tories, not to be outdone, announced in a policy paper their intention, if elected, to change the Ontario Labour Relations Act (OLRA) so that mandatory union membership and dues check-off would be illegal, as well as to force unions to disclose how they spend members' fees for activities related to political action. These plans would make Ontario a US-style Right-To-Work jurisdiction, like Texas or Arizona.

A quick look at our local political bully, Mayor Rob Ford, simply confirms my premise. However, the budget-based conflicts at City Hall for the past 18 months over contracting-out of public services, closing libraries and childcare centres, and a future vision of public transit have required both huge amounts of organized resistance and citizen/union resources to deal with the brash political agenda of an increasingly unpopular mayor and inner circle of councillors and advisors. It is telling that the Mayor's closest supporter and defender, Councillor Doug Ford, publicly stated his willingness to leave municipal politics if the near-snap election had occurred in June, to run as a Tory MPP for Tim Hudak in North Etobicoke. Has the Ford "gray train" come to the end of the line? As one who lives west of Yonge Street, I'm not looking forward to see my garbage collection privatized and conducted by a company starting in September that has had a bad reputation in other Ontario municipalities such as Peterborough and Whitby.

So what is to be done about this growing trend of political bullying by different leaders at all levels of government? As the teacher workshops and student assemblies about effective anti-bullying strategies always advise, one can never submit to or tolerate such behaviour. Instead, supporting the victim while confronting the aggressor, be it a peer, workmate, a boss or even an elected official, is the best route to take. Our teaching colleagues and friends, as well as all those being bullied in the public sector, will need us to confront this challenge and show support when called upon in the months ahead. Let's commit to being there for them when the call comes, hopefully, not before we have some time to enjoy summer.



Steve Fuller's Toronto

# Cooking with Steve

Learn from the master – for reluctant cooks who might like to try some of Steve's recipes (or their own)

I invite three or four to come to my house for a demo. Please call me at 416 661-7775 or send me an e-mail at stevefuller2@sympatico.ca. ———Steve

(THE RESTAURANT VISIT I planned didn't work out. Those who agreed to come dropped out, for personal reasons one by one until only I was left. I'd like to make another try.)

## Calendar

### Monday, September 3, Annual Labour Day Parade

**“United Against Austerity”** Meet around Armoury Street (University north of Queen) by 9:30 am on Labour Day, looking for the OSSIF contingent. Identify yourself as an ARM Chapter 12 member and enter the CNE Grounds free after the Parade enters the Dufferin Gates. Show some solidarity with our District 12 colleagues, as well as with our friends and allies in the Toronto social justice movements.

### Wednesday, September 19, 2012. Ageing Technologically.

**Facebook, E-mail, Twitter - the complete guide to new media.** 10:00 am. OSSIF Provincial Office, 60 Mobile Drive. \$15, lunch included. Please confirm attendance with Jim Loftus, 416 447-0811.

### Wednesday, September 26, 2012. Swing For Kids Annual Fall Golf Tournament

09:30 Registration  
10:00 Shotgun tee-off  
If playing the Championship Course, arrive earlier as you will have to tee-off around 9 am so we finish together. Shotgun start means we tee off at the same time and finish together for lunch which will be ready at about 1:00 to 1:30 pm

#### Place

Rolling Hills Golf Club

#### Cost

\$65 for 18 holes in Classic Course and lunch; \$75 if you choose to play the Championship Course; \$20 for lunch only. Includes 18 holes of golf, power cart for two (compulsory).

#### Directions to golf course

Rolling Hills Golf Club  
12808 Warden Avenue  
Gormley, Ontario L4A 7X5  
Golf Shop: 905 888-1955

From Toronto  
Take Hwy 404 north to Stouffville Road  
Turn right (east) on Stouffville Road and drive to Warden Avenue  
Turn left and go north 2 kms on Warden Avenue  
Entrance is on the left side (west) of Warden Avenue

BBQ lunch menu includes choice of 3 salads, vegetable platter, assorted cookies and dessert squares, coffee or tea, taxes, gratuities and prizes.

Send your cheque for \$65 (Classic Course) or \$75 (Championship Course) or \$20 (Lunch only, to Jim Loftus, 7 Roanoke Rd., Apt. 301 Toronto M3A 1E3. Make the cheque out to ARM C12 Fall Golf Tournament c/o Jim Loftus. Cheques must be in by September 16, 2012. Since places are limited, please act soon.

**Registration** Please notify us at armchapter12@gmail.com so that we'll have a good idea of how many will be registering. Include your team members' names and phone numbers and e-mails if possible. Please indicate skill level, 1 being a novice and 5 being a good golfer.

**Thursday, October 11 – Quinte's Isle Fall Colours** Travel to Prince Edward County to view the glorious fall colours. Lunch at the beautiful Waring House. Total cost of the trip and lunch is \$75. Visits to Lake on the Mountain and the Black River Cheese Co are included. Stop at Campbell's Orchards for a chance to purchase cider and apples. Cheque for full amount to Rosemarie Mohring, 416 425-6677 by September 7, 2012.

**Wednesday, October 17 Luncheon: Skeletons in the Closet – A Background to Genealogy.** An explanation and illustration of the process of genealogy, presented by amateur genealogist and researcher Grant Smith. Tuckers Restaurant, Warden Avenue and Eglinton Avenue. 10:00 am. Please confirm attendance with Jim Loftus, 416 447-0811.

### Wednesday, December 5, 2012. Xmas Party 10:00 am..

Tuckers Restaurant, Warden Avenue and Eglinton Avenue. 10:00 am. Please confirm attendance with Jim Loftus, 416 447-0811.



---

## Curmudgeon's Corner

# Bumping into a bear, Toronto as an Olympic city

**Texting happens but not public discussion in Ford's Toronto**

By Paul Rook

I AM REALLY FED UP WITH PEOPLE WHO CONSTANTLY TEXT. First, they are very rude. Especially when they begin texting when a group is having lunch or dinner together. The rest of us are sent a message that our conversation or presence is not very interesting, which of course could not be true. It is the equivalent of the texter's turning their chair to a nearby table and starting to join in the conversation with that group. Maybe we should do this, when someone dining with us starts texting in a restaurant. Of course they would probably be too busy to get the message. The person texting also probably wouldn't notice if the others walked and left them with the bill.

Texting is also dangerous both to the texter and others. There is a true story of a person in Los Angeles who was so caught up in his texting that he almost bumped into a bear. I will leave it to you to try to figure out what a bear was doing in Los Angeles – but hey, it is Los Angeles. The most frustrating ones are the people who are totally absorbed in their texting while crossing a street and totally oblivious to traffic. Of course these people argue that they can do both tasks – texting and crossing a street – because they are good at multi-tasking. Wrong! Recent studies have shown that when people multi-task they do each task far less well than those who are focused on one task. Also more of these people are being hit by cars. The irony is that some of these cars are probably driven by people who still multitask (such as texting) when driving.

Now for something completely different. In case you missed it Toronto City Council has passed a motion to apply to be the

city to host a future Olympics. Don't be embarrassed if you were not aware of this. Most people missed this because there was no planning for this motion, no public discussion beforehand and very little discussion at that Council meeting. But hey, this is Ford's Toronto!

One of the arguments for hosting the Olympics is that a lot of new infrastructure, such as transit lines can be financed and built. If we need this infrastructure why don't we just build it? The profits from the Olympics won't finance it because there won't be profits. Remember the Montreal Olympics when Mayor Drapeau said that the Olympics could no more have a deficit than a man could have a baby. Montreal recently paid off the debt from the 1976 Olympics. There are no statistics about the number of men who had babies.

The Olympics also can do incredible harm to a city. The tourist areas of London did not get much regular business. Tourists stayed away because of the even higher costs of accommodation, the security and the hassles. Many theatres lost up to 80% of their business and others closed. Shopping areas, such as Oxford Street were empty and regular tourist attractions did not have line-ups. I can't imagine the Tower of London without a mile long line-up to get in, during the summer.

There is another very good reason for not hosting the Summer Olympics. They always occur during the American Presidential Election year. The last thing Toronto needs is a presidential Candidate dropping by to insult us, as Mitt Romney did in London. We have enough problems already.

---

## Skeletons in the closet or genealogy for everyone

We all have a past and a past before that. Who were my ancestors? Where did they come from? What did they do? Were there any heroes or villains? How far back can I trace them?

Grant Smith has done it all, found them and wrote about them in a two volume family history. His amazing story starts in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with a Pilgrim family sailing from Britain to Plymouth Colony.

Grant will give practical advice on how to do this for your own family. His message is that you can do it and likely surprise yourself with what you will find.

As a personal first step, anyone who intends to attend the luncheon, who has had a soldier in their family, is invited to send the name and basic information to Grant at [get2smith@gmail.com](mailto:get2smith@gmail.com) by the beginning of September.

10:00 am registration. \$15 luncheon included. Oct. 17, 2012 at Tucker's Restaurant, Eglinton and Warden. Confirm attendance with Jim Loftus, 416 447-0811

---

# Swing For Kids Spring Golf Tournament successful

## Spring Golf Tournament honours the lives of five deceased ARM members and friends

The Wednesday, May 23, 2012 Swing For Kids Annual Spring Golf Tournament was a highly successful event in terms of golfer participation and enjoyment; cost-revenue results and the monetary contributions to ARM's children's charities fund through proceeds of the silent auction, fifty-fifty raffle and hole sponsorships.

The Tournament's 19<sup>th</sup> Hole Luncheon also provided an excellent opportunity to pay tribute and raise a glass to five ARM members and friends, all of whom had been avid ARM "Golf Masters" and curlers until their untimely passing from our midst.

**Ian Cameron** served 10 years as ARM's first President following ARM Chapter 12's inception in 1999. He enjoyed a very successful teaching career and was revered at Prince Edward Collegiate, Picton; Midland Avenue CI and Sir Oliver Mowat CI, Scarborough, and as lecturer at Lakehead University. He was very active in politics and he was ever ready, willing and able to participate in all of ARM's social interaction programs, luncheon meetings, walks and talks, theatre outings and all golfing, curling and bowling activities. Right up until the time of his passing, Ian had been actively seeking the RIM organizations participation in ARM's "Ageing Technologically" program. May Ian's spirit continue to inspire all of us in all we do.

**George Welsh** loved Shakespeare and poetry. As a teacher of English at Victoria Park S.S. he was greatly admired and respected for his unconventional methods in bringing joy and laughter to his classroom. His marvellous sonorous voice made him no less artistically talented than the great Olivier in the eyes and ears of his students and peers. George's love and respect for other's talents often brought him to VP's tech. department where he prized and praised the "magnificent incomparable artisans of VPSS" from whom he often sought advice and favours for home projects. George's talents, skills and leadership qualities led him from VP to English headships, first at Westview Centennial S.S. and then to Sir Sandford Fleming Academy. George's



**Peter Kauppinen enjoys the 50-50 prize money that Jim Loftus has just presented to him.**

family absorbed his wry humour and roasting skills such that their roasting of George, at his own celebration of life memorial, kept his army of former friends and colleagues in stitches throughout the day. He loved canoe trips, golfing and curling. His departure leaves an abysmal void in ARM's circle of friends.

**Barry Breedon** began his teaching career in Calgary, Alberta. He came to Toronto where he taught at Harbord Collegiate beginning in 1991-1992. He later taught at Earl Haig Collegiate from where he retired in 2004. Both Barry and his wife, Margaret, were avid golfers and curlers and regularly participated in ARM golf tournaments and curling bonspiels. Barry and Margaret loved to travel, particularly to places where they could enjoy a good game of golf with a group of



**A good day for golfing and remembering: (l to r) David Macadam, Chuck Hamilton, Patti Nunn and Sylvie Pelletier.**

friends. They were, in fact, on a golfing trip to Florida when Barry passed away in his sleep in July 2008. Barry's absence from ARM events leaves one more void in ARM's circle.

**Tom Enright** had retired early as an IT computer consultant with the Province of Ontario but he continued to offer his talents to seniors' non-profit groups throughout the G.T.A. Tom became a highly respected and valued friend of ARM through chance meetings with Jim Loftus at local church services and at the North York YMCA. Prior to participating in ARM C12's golfing and curling events, Tom had been and continued to be involved in the same activities with RTO groups throughout Toronto. His wonderfully affable personality and great spirit of cooperation quickly drew the admiration and reverence of ARM colleagues, friends and especially the golf and curling coordination team. He enthusiastically assisted in planning and organizing ARM's sporting activities and he totally embraced ARM's children's charities funding concept, to which he also contributed a great deal of money. To all ARM members and friends who were privileged to

share Tom's friendship, he was referred to as a "gentle giant" and "a prince of a man," and then quite affectionately as "Our Tom." Ah! How wonderful 'twould be were we each to adopt and emulate that quiet, caring, cooperative spiritual essence that was the real Tom Enright.

**Bryan Nunn**, a solidly accepted addition to ARM's circle of friends, was the most recent sudden, shocking loss to our circle at a very youthful, active age 51, on April 29, 2012. Bryan, as vice president, Client Advisory Services at Educators Financial

Group, clearly understood and embraced the nature of providing EFG's collegial and financial support for ARM's many social, educational, developmental and sporting activities. As an avid golfer and curler, he encouraged EFG's senior staff to become active participants in many of ARM's golfing, curling and business/educational luncheon events. Prior to his sudden passing from our midst, Bryan, as recently as February 21, 2012 had transferred his many highly marketable and valued skills and knowledge from EFG to Alterna Savings Credit Union, where he became Vice President of Wealth Management. During his all too brief tenure with Alterna he quickly gained a reputation as "a strong contributor, a straight shooter and generally great guy." And so say all of us. But Bryan's spiritual presence was strongly experienced at the May 23 Tournament's 19<sup>th</sup> Hole Luncheon, as EFG's President, Chuck Hamilton, who had entered 8 EFG players in the tournament (including Bryan's wife, Patti) paid tribute to Bryan's enormously valued role and service with EFG, as well as Bryan's keen understanding of ARM's valued relationship with E.F.G. May Bryan's great spirit of cooperation continue to inspire all of us with ARM, EFG. and our many friends beyond.

# Chapter 12 Annual General Meeting

By Manfred Netzel, President, ARM Chapter 12

THIS YEAR'S 13TH ARM CHAPTER 12 AGM on May 30th was held at provincial OSSTF's Head Office in Don Mills. The agenda reflected something for everyone ranging from a very extensive collective bargaining and political action report from OSSTF President Ken Coran to reports about pensions, health benefits, trips and recreational activities and an enlightening keynote presentation by Toronto Star business columnist David Olive. Besides giving praise to his own high school teachers in Scarborough for giving him critical thinking skills that have helped in his journalistic career, he presented some very interesting and provocative views about the global economy, Canada's

role in the next few years, and also some tips on personal finance strategies. There was also a formal tribute paid to our deceased members over the past year, particularly former Chapter 12 President and activist Ian Cameron for the dedication and passion that he provided us for over a decade. And, of course, the catered buffet dinner organized by Executive members Jim Mile, Karma Naike and Ralph Cowan was quite tasty. Musical entertainment was also provided both by Executive member Boris Mischenko and by the father and son duet of Jim and Myles Finlayson that had been organized by Vice-President Jim Loftus.

Without repeating the entire agenda, it is necessary to report on the strong and consistent message delivered by our OSSTF leaders about the imperative for all supporters of public education to support our colleagues in education and the broader public sector as they face very challenging times this fall. The recent political about-face by the McGuinty Liberals in threatening the traditional collective bargaining process and rolling back of hard-won current benefits for educators, support staff and other Ontario public sector employees in healthcare and municipal services must be resisted. Since you and I vividly remember the "Blue Plague" of the Mike Harris years in the 1990s, we cannot in good conscience allow a repeat of this political landscape for either our family members and friends



**OSSTF President Ken Coran outlines issues facing OSSTF.**

currently in the education system, nor for the rest of Ontarians employed in the public sector. As retired educators, we should feel a moral duty to help derail this neo-conservative agenda because we already know that it will attack public services and those who provide them in the pursuit of privatization and greater so-called efficiencies in the delivery of those services.

This year's Annual Labour Day Parade in downtown Toronto has as its theme "United Against Austerity". If you and your family, friends and neighbours can give some time on that day to show your solidarity in opposing this direction, please plan to attend the Parade. Details can be found on our new website [armchapter12.org](http://armchapter12.org). This website is also a great new development for our Chapter 12 since the Spring, ably administered by our webmaster Steve O'Brien.

Finally, the AGM was also the place for Executive elections. I was honoured to be reelected as President and am also pleased by the re-election of all Executive incumbents for the coming year 2012-13. In addition, we were joined with the election of a new Executive colleague, Margaret McPhail, who brings a wealth of Federation experience at both the District 12 and OSSTF Provincial Office levels to our leadership group. Welcome aboard, Marg. As always, I can be reached at (416) 767-8786 or by e-mail: [mnetzel@sympatico.ca](mailto:mnetzel@sympatico.ca)

---

# Standing strong

## Recent OSSTF news releases shed light on what the McGuinty government is doing

### Legislation not required, local negotiations continue

TORONTO, ON - Aug 17 2012 - "The Ontario Government's decision to propose unnecessary legislation against the education workers and school boards of this province is puzzling," said Ken Coran, President of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) in response to the Minister of Education Laurel Broten's announcement yesterday.

"The Government shows a complete lack of faith in the normal negotiating process that has always worked between local school boards and education unions," continued Coran. "Instead, the McGuinty government wants to make its own rules, rather than allowing the school boards, who are our employers, to work out a deal unobstructed by the politicians. The government is showing contempt for the bargaining processes that are enshrined in law and that have always worked. We are currently reviewing the legality and constitutionality of the proposed legislation and are preparing for a legal challenge if it should become law. Our focus is on getting deals at the local level."

The school boards and unions, the people who work daily with students, understand what is needed to guarantee a positive learning environment and future success for students. OSSTF/FEESO teachers and support staff will be in their schools and with their students on the first day of school, working to ensure that students continue to receive the resources and support they need to continue moving forward.

"Real negotiations take time, and imposing impossible deadlines can lead to unwanted and unnecessary conflict and crisis. OSSTF/FEESO wants to avoid getting caught up in a crisis that the Minister of Education appears to be creating," Coran concluded.

### OSSTF/FEESO President Ken Coran tells Premier McGuinty and Minister Broten it's time for them to put students first

TORONTO, ON - Aug 16 2012 - "There is no need for conflict when there is a defined process for collective bargaining that has been used successfully in the past. The vast majority of school boards agree. The vast majority of education workers agree," said Ken Coran, President of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) at their annual Leadership Conference in Toronto. Coran was addressing over 400 local Federation leaders from across the province.

He expressed his frustration with the Ontario Government's recent comments in the media that are misleading the public in order to create a new crisis in education.

"I assure you that OSSTF/FEESO members will be in their schools and with their students on the first day of school and we will continue to provide the best education experience in the world," stated Coran.

Coran speculated that the government is poised to introduce special legislation that will interfere and make a mockery of the established bargaining process. "Legislation is not the answer; it is a catalyst for conflict with the government," said Coran. He challenged the government to step back and allow the Ontario Labour Relations Act processes to proceed. OSSTF/FEESO and the school boards are fully prepared to follow the law. The government should follow the law as well.

At the end of his speech, members joined President Coran in a loud and enthusiastic pledge to stand up, stand strong and stand united in their fight to protect their collective bargaining rights and to protect public education.

*OSSTF/FEESO, founded in 1919, has 60,000 members across Ontario. They include public high school teachers, occasional teachers, educational assistants, continuing education teachers and instructors, early childhood educators, psychologists, secretaries, speech-language pathologists, social workers, plant support personnel, university support staff, and many others in education.*

Considered

# Longing

by JD Landis (Snowbooks March 1, 2005) 416 pages

ISBN-10: 1905005059 ISBN-13: 978-1905005055

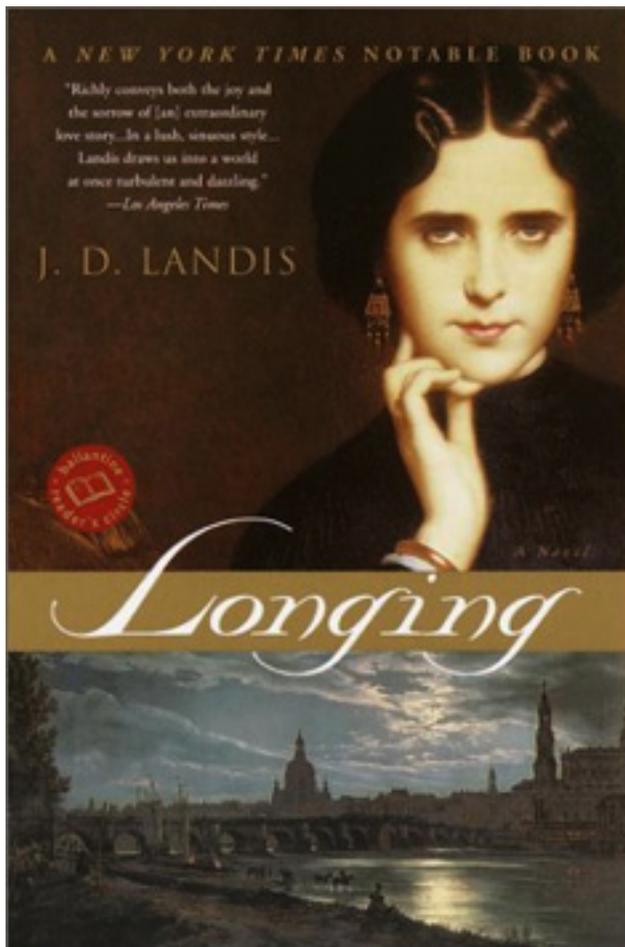
Reviewed by David Schreiber

An ordinary novelist would be embarrassed to write a story as overflowing with coincidence and melodrama as the true story of Robert and Clara Schumann. But such qualms do not apply to J. D. Landis, whose *Longing*, a “novelization” of their story, is based on unimpeachable sources—letters, diaries, court documents and similar materials. Truth, once again, seems stranger than fiction.

Bored as a law student, Robert quits university and moves into the home of piano teacher Friederick Wieck, who has an eye for talent and promises to make him into a great concert pianist in only a few years. In the Wieck house, Robert meets one of the daughters, the extraordinary Clara, age eleven, who is preparing for her first concert tour, which will take her to Paris, then to Weimar to play for Germany’s greatest poet, Johan Wolfgang von Goethe. Robert becomes impatient with his progress and tries a wooden finger-stretching machine. It damages a nerve in his left hand, putting an end to his future as a concert pianist. Still, he continues to study with Wieck, now as a composition student.

As Clara grows into adolescence, the two young people fall in love; but when her father finds out, he is furious, certain that Clara’s career will end if she marries this ex-piano student who offers her nothing but empty dreams of writing music for a living. Wieck angrily forbids Clara to see Robert and warns Robert that he will shoot him if he finds him approaching Clara again. For several years the lovers struggle to maintain their relationship by passing love-notes via sympathetic servants, managing only a few clandestine meetings. Finally, seeing Wieck reject all their efforts at peace-making, they sue in court for the right to marry without his approval. Wieck responds by sending venomous letters to friends and business contacts in an effort to besmirch Robert’s character and Clara’s musical abilities. Eventually Wieck loses the court case, is sentenced to a short jail term, and the lovers marry.

The marriage of Robert and Clara Schumann inaugurates one of the most remarkable artistic collaborations in history, with Clara, one of the greatest pianists of her century, providing financial and emotional support to, and on concert stages tirelessly promoting the music of, Robert, one of the greatest composers of his century. The collaboration is not only artistic; it produces eight children in the space of thirteen years.



Even during her years of child-bearing and domesticity, Clara continues her concert career, always successful, always a sensation, achieving enough credibility that her innovations on the concert stage—playing from memory, eliminating cheap entertainment acts, programming only music by the great composers—transform concert recitals and set the template that is still used today. For Robert recognition comes much more slowly. While he associates with great musical figures such as Mendelssohn, Liszt and Chopin, he fails to gain much acceptance with the public until many years after his death.

One morning there is a knock on the door of the Schumann house. It is a handsome young man carrying a knapsack full of his own compositions, come to pay tribute to his hero, Doctor Schumann. Robert invites him in and asks him to play something he has written. After hearing only a few bars, Robert tells him to stop and excitedly calls Clara from the other room. They invite the young man to stay with them for several days. His name is Johannes Brahms.

For many years Robert has been suffering from mental instability, but the disturbances are increasing, the hallucinations are getting harder to ward off. One rainy February night he runs out of the house in his dressing gown, races down to the Rhine, throws his wedding ring into the icy water and jumps in after it. Fishermen rescue him, and he is taken home. He asks to be

---

taken to a mental asylum, saying he is afraid he might harm his wife and children. Brahms rushes back from Hamburg to help Clara take care of the household and the children. Although the asylum is only twenty miles away, on the advice of the doctors Clara does not visit Robert until a day or two before he dies. Clara and Johannes fall in love, but after Robert's death they decide not to marry. They become the closest friends for the rest of their lives. Within months of Clara's death, Brahms also dies.

Has the life of any artist offered richer material for books or movies? Hollywood did a creditable job in 1942 with *Song of Love* starring Catherine Hepburn as Clara, and more recently German cinema has made several attempts. But it took author J.D. Landis to give the story the treatment it deserves. From the mass of

original documents he creates a gripping narrative that takes the reader into the Schumann home where you see things from such an intimate perspective that you are left feeling like a close friend of the family.

Landis's style is sophisticated and literate, always finding the well chosen word, bold enough to use, where necessary, language that rises above our daily humdrum vocabulary. Now and again an historical personage has their moment on the stage, as do some historical events; and where an obscure reference, a point of law, or some oddity can use clarification, Landis supplies a helpful footnote. In a word, the book is a joy to read. Everyone who finishes it will feel compelled to search out, and listen afresh to, the music of Robert and Clara Schumann.

---

## The Retired Bard Love like water

***Poet and writer Bruce Archer gives us a look into the innocent space of youth, water and love***

In the heat of summer, two bronzed and naked swimmers  
Move tentatively, hand in hand, from sand to cooling water  
In the clear mirrored surface of a deep blue mountain lake.

Leaning into the gently rolling waves, they cross a sand bar,  
A shelf with a gradual slope leading downward from the shore.  
Moving slowly, they reach deep water, then deeper still until  
They become immersed in an opalescent sun-lit chamber.

They twist and turn, like a pair of dolphins in friendly play;  
With time as their monitor, they touch and intimately caress,  
Then push each other away. They surface through shafts of  
Sunlight, to gasp, and laugh, and kiss. Treading water, they  
Look into each other's eyes, and find mutual caring there.

Filling their lungs, they make another descent, hoping to touch  
The sandy bottom of the lake with their fingertips. Success  
Frees them to rise and float, until they can breathe evenly.

They pause a moment, making silent enquiries of intent.  
They smile, and nod agreement, arch their backs, and plunge  
Back into their private space, venturing a little farther from  
The shore. They wish to go deeper than before, but they have  
Accurately gauged the limits of the possible, and surrender to  
The inevitable failure of their attempt. They touch briefly, and  
Propel themselves upward to safety and familiar reality.

They spread a blanket on the beach, and hold each other closely,  
Content with their efforts; convinced that the lake has become  
A medium for the deep love that flows between them.



Educators Financial Group Inc.  
 2225 Sheppard Avenue East, Suite 1105  
 Toronto, Ontario M2J 5C2  
 Tel: 416.752.6843 or 1.800.263.9541

## Investing shouldn't be retired upon retirement...

**W**hile education members benefit from great pension plans such as OTPP and OMERS, with the rising costs of living, and longer life spans – the question many retirees and pre-retirees are asking themselves is: how can I make sure that my pension income will not only be enough... but that it will last as long as I do?

“That’s where the importance of investing comes in,” says Educators Account Manager

Rose Bukasa. “If you’re retired, or close to retirement, you’ll want to look into investments that can generate a consistent stream of monthly income, grow principal to meet future financial needs, and preserve capital.”

### *Have a specific investment question?*

Our Account Managers are trained financial specialists and can take your calls weekdays from 8 am to 8 pm.

## Solidarity

**Because the struggle continues**

*United Against Austerity*

Monday, September 3, Annual Labour Day Parade

*Directions:* Meet around Armoury Street (University north of Queen) by 9:30 am on Labour Day, looking for the OSSTF contingent. Identify yourself as an ARM Chapter 12 member and join our group. Enter the CNE Grounds free after the Parade enters the Dufferin Gates. Show some solidarity with our District 12 colleagues, as well as with our friends and allies in the Toronto social justice movements.

## Ah, Stratford!

**Good theatre, good food, good company**

A little bus ride immersed in conversation and laughter with friends, a lunch on the patio, a great play and a relaxing ride home made June 20 an enjoyable last excursion till Fall. Organizer Karma Naike said, “This year’s Stratford outing was one of the best. We had some prizes from OTIP, folks enjoyed the energy of 42nd Street, and the poetry of Wanderlust. The trip was a cool time on a hot day, and we look forward to upcoming excursions.”

