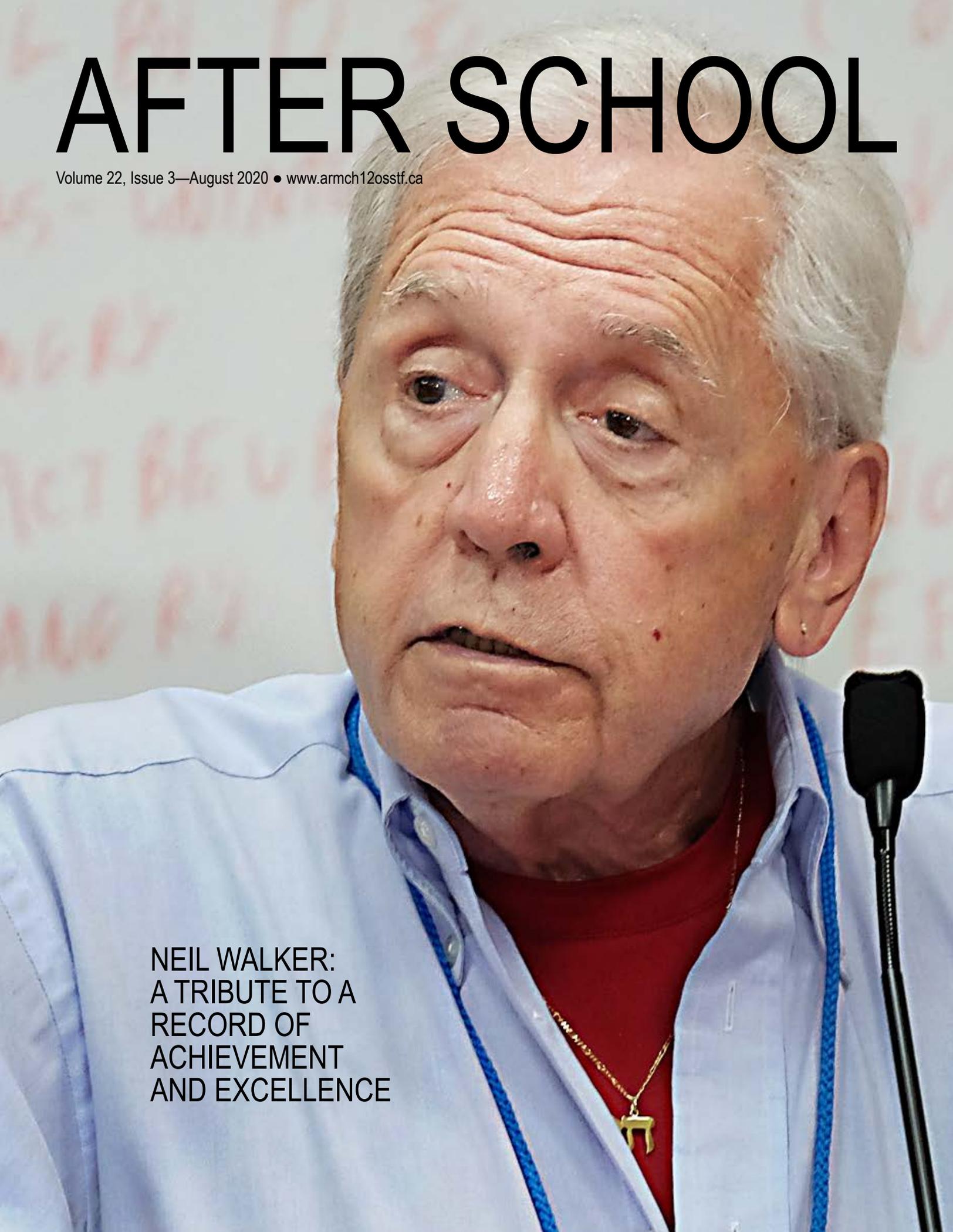


# AFTER SCHOOL

Volume 22, Issue 3—August 2020 • [www.armch12osstf.ca](http://www.armch12osstf.ca)



NEIL WALKER:  
A TRIBUTE TO A  
RECORD OF  
ACHIEVEMENT  
AND EXCELLENCE

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## AFTER SCHOOL VOLUME 22, ISSUE 3, AUGUST 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.

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Cover photo credit: Ed Preston

## EDITORIAL CHATTER—ED PRESTON, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Like everywhere else, the Executive for ARM, Chapter 12, has had to make decisions in line with the demands created by COVID-19. Events have been cancelled in the spring, including our AGM. With the assistance of Zoom, we successfully completed two Executive meetings, where we discussed how we plan to proceed as long as the pandemic is with us, and one meeting of the *After School* Editorial Committee. Our president, Manfred Netzel has elaborated in his article. Take a look at the ARM Chapter 12 Calendar, and the announcement regarding the revised date for the AGM in September.

Our cover photo for this issue is Neil Walker, former editor of *After School*

for many years. We wanted to celebrate both his creative contribution and his recent Ian Cameron Award by ARM Council for best newsletter. Manfred Netzel has more to say about this.

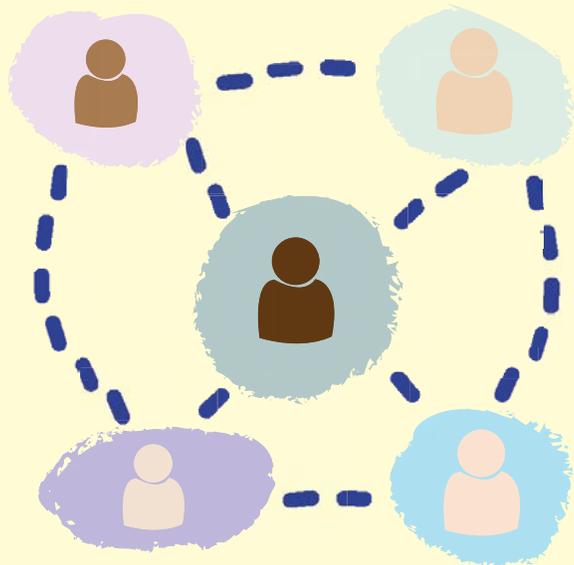
We have a new website under development. Christos Aslanidis has been working with the web designer, and the goal is to make it simpler and easier to manage and access. Please see our new website address below, and on the front cover.

Since the May AGM had to be cancelled, our Treasurer, Michelle Barraclough, wasn't able to provide a financial statement. In this issue you'll find the 2019–20 Treasurer's Report.

There are two very significant articles in this issue. Charles Hawkes offers his observations on the crisis in long-term care homes across the province. Leslie Wolfe, President of District 12, OSSTF Toronto has contributed her views on the recently announced destreaming initiative by Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education.

And as places have been gradually re-opening, you'll want to read the latest pub review by Allan Hux.

Finally, don't overlook the appeal for submissions to this newsletter from you, our members of Chapter 12. Our goal is to try to reach out to you, not only as readers but as participants.



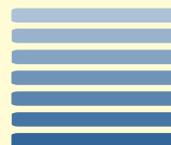
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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—MANFRED NETZEL, ACTING PRESIDENT

Welcome to our second virtual edition of this award-winning ARM Chapter 12 newsletter. You can see from the cover and my article elsewhere, I am not exaggerating. Neil Walker has done us proud again, by winning the 2020 ARM Ian Cameron Newsletter Award for the second time. You'll read the details and see more photographs in the tribute.

Needless to say, Neil's accomplishment was one of only a few for our Chapter since last winter and spring due to the ongoing pandemic. The presentation in February by former Premier Kathleen Wynne was our last in-person event, resulting in the cancellation or postponement of many events and meetings, including the AGM in late May. Your Executive committed to meeting twice virtually through the teleconference video Zoom, which allowed us to both plan a "new normal" agenda for 2020–21 to keep both the accountability to, and engagement of, our membership as a collective goal.

Since there is still the great likelihood of a second wave of COVID-19 in the upcoming fall and winter, the decision was made to re-schedule the 2020 AGM through an online format on September 16 for the health and convenience of the members. It was also thought that the planned keynote speaker in May, Linda McQuaig, would not be asked to make a presentation online for several reasons. However, she is willing to be ready and available in 2021, so we will hope for a rescheduled appearance in May 2021. Since this is a first for the organization, we will be sending out both electronically and by a mailing in late August (to those not online), a minimalist package of AGM-related materials including a list of nominated candidates up



for election to the Executive. Those of you online will only receive the AGM materials online to reduce our preparation time and mailing costs. I hope for your understanding and support under these difficult circumstances.

At the same time, you will see on the tentatively planned Calendar of Events between now and January 2021, that we have attempted to offer a good variety of events and meetings. This, despite the added problem of not having 60 Mobile available to us from September 2020 for the next two years due to a major renovation/rebuild of the OSSTF/FEESO property. If local public health protocols allow, we hope to be able to use the Latvian Centre next door to Provincial Office for a limited number of in-person events including the Holiday Party in December and the

2021 AGM. Of course, higher room rental and catering costs will also be in place.

Logistical challenges aside, your Chapter 12 leadership team has also endeavoured to work closely with our D. 12 colleagues and Provincial OSSTF/FEESO to carry out an ambitious political action agenda, coordinated by our very experienced and capable PAC Officer Charlie Hawkes. Besides the ongoing ideological and divisive agenda of the Doug Ford administration, as seen by the catastrophic handling of the Long Term Care (LTC) crisis during the current pandemic, there is a series of proposed legislation being rammed through Queen's Park as the Opposition and media are distracted by the virus. Thus, changes to Legal Aid and class action law suits by grieving families against negligent

## IN MEMORIAM: DENISE GRAHAM

—SPOUSE OF ALLAN HUX

LTC operators during the pandemic (Bill 161), environmental assessments of large transportation projects (Bill 171), tenant eviction powers for landlords (Bill 184), accountability mechanisms that would weaken oversight of government emergency powers (Bill 195), and the recent introduction of a large omnibus bill (197) supposedly dealing with post-COVID recovery. The initial content seems to not offer much help for families, LTC facilities, small businesses, schools, day cares, First Nations or cash-starved municipalities. The final political agenda has the defeat of Team Ford in the 2022 Ontario Election!!! Stay tuned....

Of course, the uncertainties of the coming school year for students, parents and educators have not been eased by the current Education Minister Steven Lecce. We can all be glad that we retirees, even those who choose to work occasionally, are not having to face the prospect of nervous students, colleagues and support staff trying to follow the “plan” envisioned by the Minister. A pundit recently summarized the situation nicely:

*“...we need a minister who knows their way around a publicly-funded school more than a publicly-funded press conference.”*

Lastly, on your behalf, I want to express our collective condolences to our dear friend and Executive colleague Allan Hux, who has experienced the recent passing of his long-time spouse and partner, Denise Graham, after a very rapid bout with cancer. You can find more details in the adjoining article, “In Memoriam: Denise Graham—Spouse of Allan Hux.”

Yours in Federation,

Manfred Netzel

Denise Graham battled cancer since May 16 when she was unexpectedly diagnosed. This came from out of the blue. On Thursday, July 9, she passed away in Sunnybrook Hospital’s Palliative Care Wing.

She was in and out of North York General Hospital four times and we briefly tried LHIN Home Care without success.

We transferred her to Sunnybrook Hospital Palliative Care Wing on June 24 and celebrated her birthday there on June 27.

The medical team informed us on July 7 that they believed that she had 5–10 more days. They waved all the visitation limits that had prevented us from seeing Denise since June 27. We were never able to visit her in North York General Hospital due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Ryan, Ashley McGowan and I visited her Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 9:30 a.m. and 8 p.m. and I was sitting beside her and holding her hand when she passed at 4:44 p.m., July 9. We held a brief viewing at Humphries Funeral Home on Friday, July 10 for



her siblings who had been unable to visit her throughout this ordeal. A Celebration of Life service will be held at Fairlawn Avenue United Church after the pandemic has passed. A full death notice/obituary appeared in the Saturday, *Toronto Star* on July 11.

[legacy.com/obituaries/thestar/obituary.aspx?n=denise-lynngraham&pid=196478119](https://legacy.com/obituaries/thestar/obituary.aspx?n=denise-lynngraham&pid=196478119)

[humphreymiles.com/tribute/details/6014/Denise-Graham/serviceinformation.html#content-start](https://humphreymiles.com/tribute/details/6014/Denise-Graham/serviceinformation.html#content-start)

Blessings,  
Allan Hux



## IN MEMORIAM: JIM LOFTUS

—JANUARY 20, 1931–JULY 23, 2020

It’s with regret and sadness that we have to report that James Joseph Loftus very recently passed away at Scarborough General Hospital. He is survived by his children, Teresa and Gerald. Jim has been a very active member of ARM from its inception, and most recently as Vice-President. ARM Chapter 12 will be making a donation to the Scarborough Health Network Foundation—General Site, and you are welcome to do so as well. We will have a much fuller Memorial article in the November issue.

[dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/scarborough-on/james-loftus-9276395](https://dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/scarborough-on/james-loftus-9276395)

# NEIL WALKER: A TRIBUTE TO A RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT AND EXCELLENCE—MANFRED NETZEL, ACTING PRESIDENT

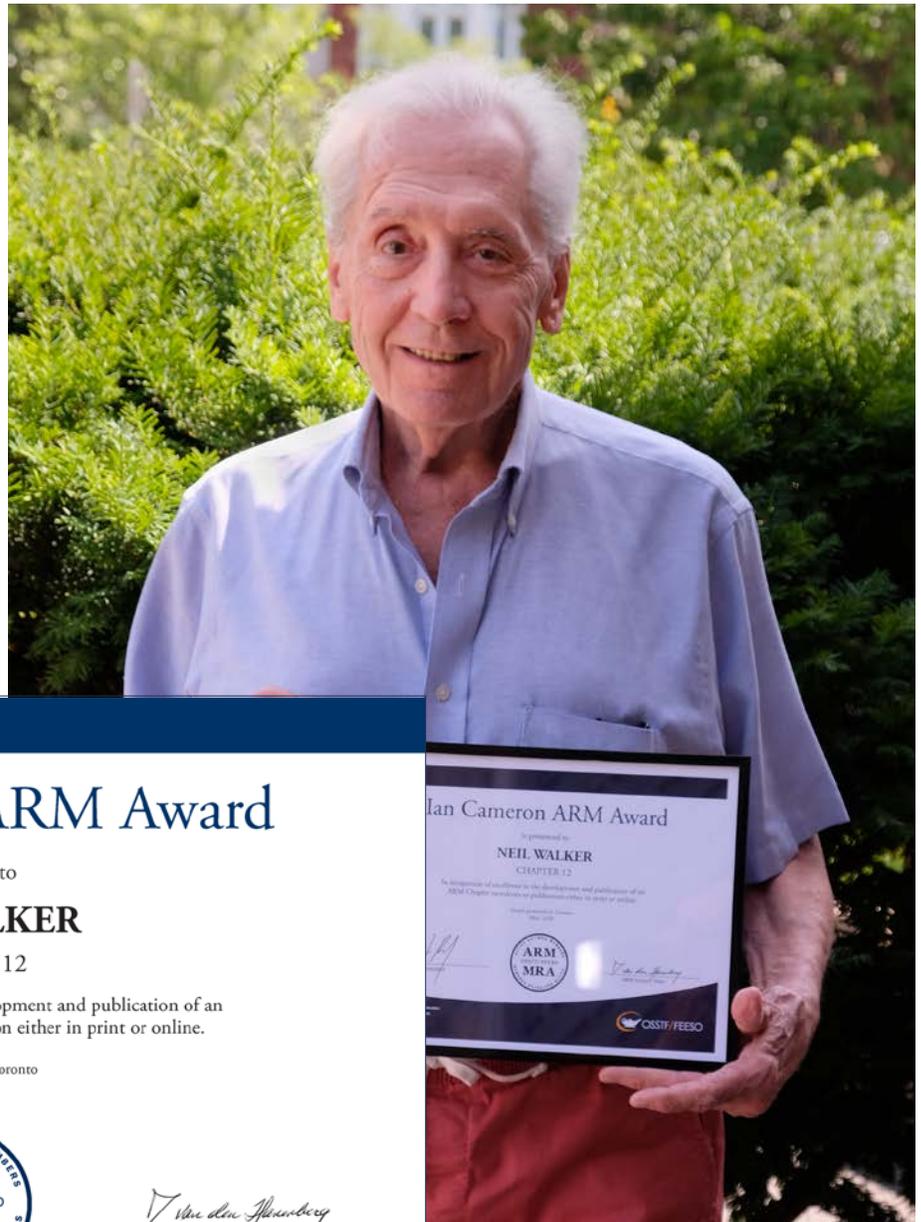
As you can see from the cover page of this issue of *After School*, ARM Chapter 12 is proud, once again, to honour one of its own. Neil Walker, our former Executive member, Chapter President and most importantly, former Editor of this publication has been recognized for his creative and communication skills by ARM Council this spring by having the Ian Cameron Newsletter Award bestowed on him...for the second time.

As a friend and professional colleague for some 25 years, I had no hesitation in writing this tribute to Neil, in my capacity as Acting-President of Chapter 12. Due to the ongoing challenges with his health, and the current pandemic which postponed the ARM Council Biennial in May, delivering the award to Neil was delayed. However, we were finally able to hand over the award to him in mid-July, following strict physical distancing protocol.

Neil's creative and editorial skills were well-known, before he actual-

ly retired and joined ARM, through his many years as Editor of OSSTF/FEESO's outstanding quarterly publication *Education Forum* magazine. You will surely remember receiving a hard copy in your own workplace mailbox, personally labelled for many years,

but eventually sent as a bulk mailing to every OSSTF/FEESO location as member re-locations and retirements made this practice inefficient. Nevertheless, I would notice that this high-quality publication was seldom seen in the recycling bin, unlike so many other paper



Photos credit: Ed Preston

**Ian Cameron ARM Award**  
is presented to  
**NEIL WALKER**  
CHAPTER 12  
In recognition of excellence in the development and publication of an  
ARM Chapter newsletter or publication either in print or online.  
Award presented in Toronto  
May, 2020

President  
ARM MRA  
ARM Council Chair

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation  
Fédération des enseignants/enseignantes  
des écoles secondaires de l'Ontario  
OSSTF/FEESO

missives from the Board, Federation or unsolicited sources.

Thus, when Neil joined our local ARM Chapter 12 and immediately volunteered to become the new newsletter editor, we were filled both with excitement and anticipation about the likely appearance and content of the 13-year old *After School* under his direction. We were not disappointed!! After taking over the task in the 2011–12 term, he quickly created a visually eye-catching journal which became the standard for other ARM Chapters to emulate. His skills were shortly afterwards acknowledged by ARM Council when they awarded Neil the (newly-named) Ian Cameron Newsletter Award at the May 2012 Biennial Conference in Toronto. The award (formerly the Bob Beames Newsletter Award) was named after a beloved founding member and past-President of ARM Chapter 12 who suddenly passed away in early 2012. It was very fitting to have invited Ian's widow, Maryaleen Trafford, to make the actual presentation to Neil, the photo of which was then proudly displayed on the September 2012 issue of our publication.

In closing, the unexpected resignation of Neil as President (and newsletter editor) in November has also been challenging for me and the Executive. However, it has now allowed us to see his legacy continued through our new Editor, Ronda Allan, and the extraordinary efforts of Associate Editor (and Chapter 12 photographer), Ed Preston. I'm sure this team and the entire Executive will endeavour to keep the high standards of communication with our members, sponsors and supporters over the years to come. Congratulations, Neil, for winning again in 2020.



# MAURITIUS: ONE ISLAND, MANY PEOPLE, ALL MAURITIAN—MICHELLE BARRACLOUGH

In the Indian Ocean there is an island where time stands still. A jewel in the crown of tropical islands. This is where my mother's family originates from and where she was born. I on the other hand had never seen this fabled land. On my quest for adventure, I was finally in a position to visit.

Mauritius is reached after an eight-hour flight to Paris, a three-hour layover, and a 10-hour flight to Mauritius. Tiring but rewarding, and I was finally there. The upscale airport was

a pleasant surprise and warm moist air that greets you after a cold start in Toronto, was wonderful. The sky was cloudy with a brisk wind, they call an anticyclone, was blowing and my cousin, Danielle was there to greet me. She was the first of several family members I was to meet. They all couldn't have been nicer, from letting me stay with them, (thanks to Sylviane and Chota) to ferrying me around the island (Danielle and Sylviane) and showing me the very best of my ancestral home.

A little about Mauritius to begin with. Combine an economic boom and political stability and you have the formula for development on a grand scale. Mauritians have developed from a sugar plantation export economy into a high end tourist destination, it has pristine beaches, good transportation high end malls and a scenic beauty, that is the envy of many tourist destinations. As it is part of a chain of volcanoes, the topography is stunning.

I visited a number of towns and a variety of communities. Port Louis, the capital, has modern buildings, a beautiful waterfront, museums, boardwalk and boutique stores. The central area of the island is a series of dormant volcanoes surrounded by a coast with pristine beaches.

There are five ethnic groups on the island, with the dominant group being Indo-Mauritian (68 per cent) originating from the labourers brought in to work the sugar fields. Because of the size of the population, this group now controls the political and retail aspects of the island. The next largest group are the Creoles (27 per cent) involved mostly in the fishing industry, the Sino-Mauritians (three per cent) involved in commerce, the Franco-Mauritians (one per cent), and the South African expatriates (one per cent) who control everything from sugar mills to banks. As in many areas in the world this small percentage of the population controls most of the wealth.

Religion and family play an important part in the society of Mauritius. Mauritians love music personified in the Seggae, which is a combination of reggae and traditional sega. This newer version was invented by a Creole musician, Racine Tatane. The Segga, a dance, is part of the Creole culture



Chamarel Falls

which died out of favour but was revived in the 1950s by a singer Ti Frere. The dance is accompanied by the beat of a ravine, a goatskin drum. The beat starts slowly and builds to a pulsating rhythm. If you are fortunate you will see a Seggae with the beautiful dancers and the husky voiced singers, reminiscent of Portuguese fado with a lot more energy.

My visit to the island started in Port Louis and as I travelled south to towns with names such as Flic en Flac, Tamarind falls, Trou aux Biches and north to Grand Baie. I visited Hindu temples with a giant Shiva, a beautiful mountain called Le Morne, the Seven Cascades hiking area, Pamplemousse Botanical Gardens. For an island that can be travelled from one end to the other in a couple of hours, it had an

amazing array of interesting sites and adventures.

There are a host of water sports from parasailing to scuba diving. I must admit to being rather timid about the parasailing but I did do some scuba diving and was rewarded by sighting two large green turtles along with a myriad of colourful reef fish. There are schools of dolphins, and some sharks as well, that may be seen. Of course with nature, one is never guaranteed a viewing of the wildlife. One of the best known extinct species is the dodo, was a native of Mauritius. The entrepreneurs have made the most of this by way of souvenir T-shirts and other tourist trinkets.

As a biologist, I was fascinated by the Pamplemousse botanical gardens which are in the central north of the island. There Pierre Poivre, collected an amaz-

ing number of species from nutmeg to royal palms and also showed several of the Aldabra, giant tortoises. Another natural area not to be missed is the Black River reserve which is home to the Seven Cascades; you just have to watch your step on the hiking trails.

Several groups are trying to resurrect some of the endangered species particularly in the Ebony forest which has a very informative interpretive centre, and is close to Chamarel, with seven coloured earth demonstrating the close link to the islands volcanic past. One can spend the day exploring the exhibits and trails.

When all was said and done my two week vacation was no where near enough time to explore all the sights of Mauritius and I am already planning a post-pandemic visit.



Aldabra giant tortoise introduced in the 1800s



Michelle



Hindu Temple



Pebble Beach on the West Coast



Giant Shiva Statue

Photos credit: Michelle Barracough

# THE CRISIS IN LONG-TERM CARE HOMES—CHARLES HAWKES

The impact of the coronavirus disease in long-term care homes has shocked Canadians, particularly in Ontario, Quebec and BC. Health researchers, though, warned for years that such a crisis was predictable, and will worsen if action is not taken. ARM Chapter 12 has made long term care its political issue for the coming year. Here are some of the questions and facts about the crisis.

## HOW DOES THE MORTALITY RATE IN CANADIAN LTC HOMES COMPARE TO OTHER COUNTRIES?

Not well if compared to the mortality rate of 14 European countries, plus the USA that comprises the Organization for Economic Development (OECD). 81 per cent of COVID-19 deaths in Canada occurred in long-term care (LTC) homes, compared to the OECD average of 42 per cent. Canada's mortality rate for LTC homes is thus almost twice that of the OECD countries.

## HOW DO THE FIGURES BREAK DOWN FOR ONTARIO?

As of July 7, the total number of COVID-19 deaths in the province stood at 2,680. LTC homes accounted for 1,817 deaths of that total. In comparison, Quebec recorded 5,040 COVID-19 deaths, with 3,640 deaths occurring in LTC homes.

## HOW MANY ONTARIO LTC HOMES ARE THERE AND HOW ARE THEY FINANCED?

There are 627 LTC homes divided into municipal or public homes, not for profit ones, and profit making homes

for a total of 78,000 beds. The province spends about four billion per year, or eight per cent of the health budget financing them for nursing, personal care, food and programs. Additional financing comes from residents who pay an accommodation fee set by the province.

## WHAT CAN A RESIDENT EXPECT IN A LTC HOME FOR THEIR ACCOMMODATION FEE?

By mandate they are entitled to a bed in a shared room, three meals, nursing care, and periodic visits by a doctor for a fee of \$1,992, with slightly higher amounts charged for more room privacy. That figure is equal to the amount a senior receives from the CPP and OAS. All Ontario municipalities are required to maintain at least one home. (Toronto has 10, with the City helping them with \$48 million from property taxes). For profit homes charge more on top of the set fee.

## DOES ONTARIO HAVE ENOUGH SPACES FOR SENIORS NEEDING LONG TERM CARE?

No. Ontario's homes are at 99 per cent capacity, with 26,500 people on the wait list. That's equivalent to one third the number of beds available. Waiting is costly. Seniors who are hospitalized while waiting for a bed in a LTC home cost the province at least \$1,800/day compared to \$200/day in a home.

## WHY HAVE PROFIT SEEKING HOMES COME UNDER SPECIAL SCRUTINY?

These homes now total over half of

Ontario's LTC homes, the highest percentage of all provinces. They have as a group recorded the greatest number of COVID-19 deaths compared to public and not for profit homes. (Interestingly, Quebec recorded more deaths in their public homes than in their private ones). The fact that an unpopular former premier, Mike Harris, heads a large private chain, Chartwell, has not helped their reputation in Ontario.

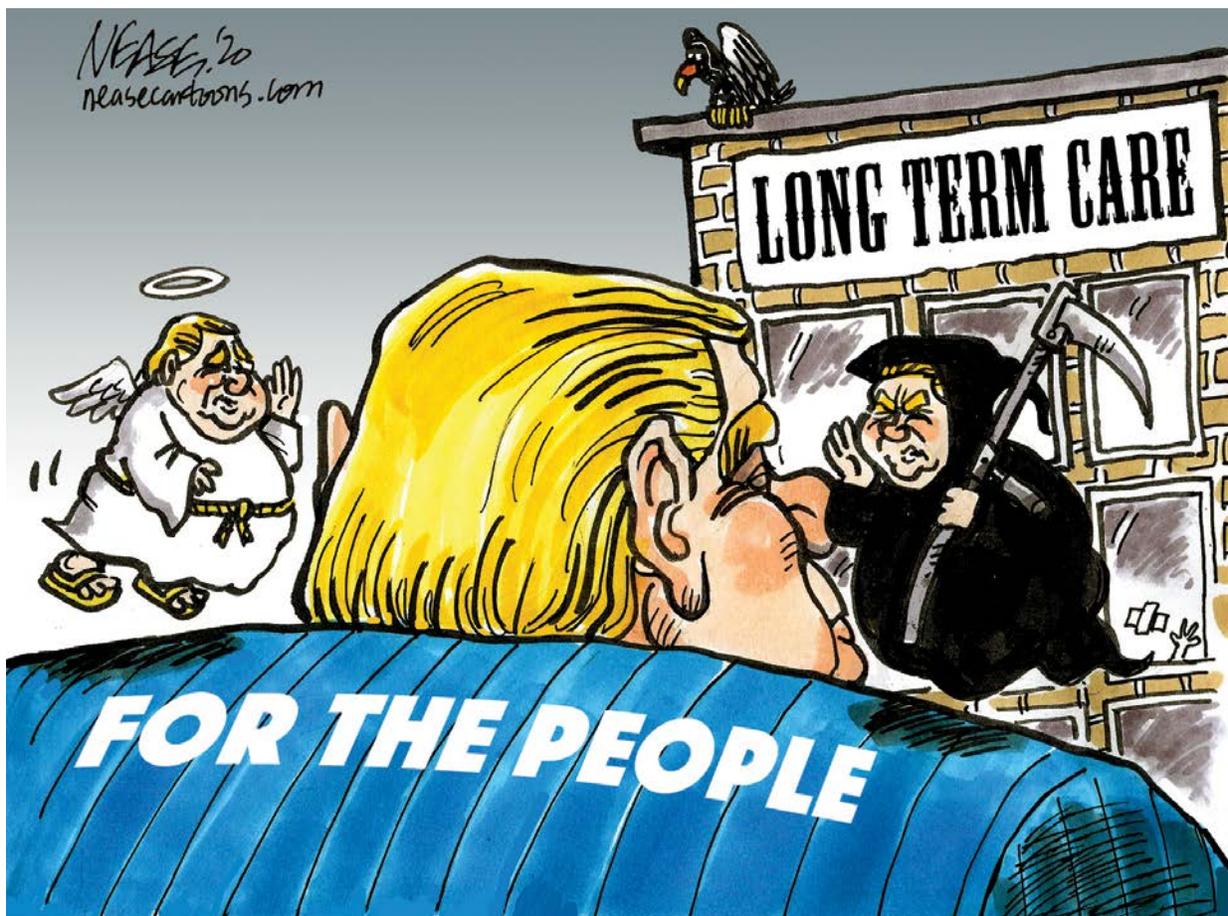
#### WHY WAS THIS CRISIS IN LTC HOMES PREDICTABLE TO HEALTH RESEARCHERS YEARS AGO?

The baby boomers are getting older and living longer! In Toronto, seniors over 65 now outnumber children under 14. By 2041, seniors over 65 will com-

pose 21.2 per cent of the city. Living longer pushes seniors into the post 75 age group where serious illness is the norm requiring specialized care. Canada as a whole needs 43,000 LTC spaces within five years, and in 15 years, 199,000 spaces.

#### THIS IS A GRIM PICTURE OF LTC HOMES. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

For a start, copy Quebec and BC who now pay personal support workers \$25/hour instead of \$15-18, train them better, and contract them to one home only. Look to Europe and listen to health researchers for best practices in food, programs, and home architecture. And help ARM keep the pressure on our politicians.



## LET'S HEAR IT FOR OTIP!—CHARLES HAWKES

We travelled to Portugal last March to stay at a resort on the Algarve with retirees most of whom came from the Ottawa area (ARM Chapter 25). Within days of arriving, we realized that news of isolated outbreaks of COVID-19 had turned into a pandemic, and we had to get out of Portugal quickly.

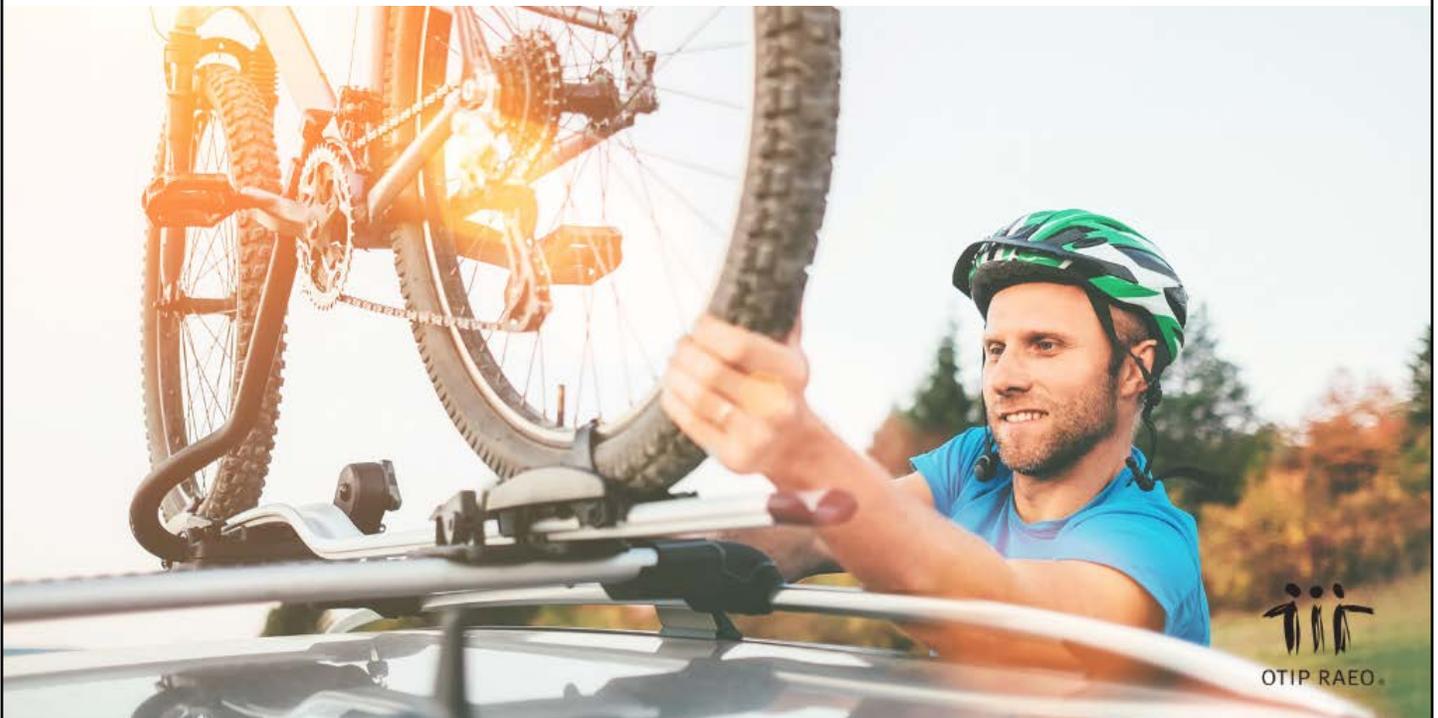
When Trudeau announced that individuals who had contacted the virus would not be allowed back into Canada, people became anxious. Would

our health insurance cover us if we took sick in Portugal before we could arrange a flight out? Some people had the RTO health plan who advised them that they had only about 10 days to return to Canada. (RTO later backed down because of the blowback from members.) OTIP, however immediately contacted us to assure us that coverage would continue until we had a flight home. At a stressful time, that made a difference.

### Why you need to tell your insurer if you install a roof rack or make other car modifications

Thinking about installing a roof rack on your car for bikes or skis, or modifying your vehicle in another way? Always inform your insurer before you make any changes to your vehicle. Modifications can impact your insurance if they alter the vehicle's safety, increase the likelihood of an accident or increase the value of the vehicle. Here are a few things you need to know about the various types of vehicle modifications.

For more information, visit [www.otipinsurance.com/article73](http://www.otipinsurance.com/article73).



# FINAL OSSTF ARM CHAPTER 12 TORONTO STATEMENT JULY 2019–JUNE 2020

<b>Income Statement</b>	<b>ARM Chapter 12</b>		<b>July 2019–June 30, 2020</b>
<b>Balance from 2019</b>			\$5,066.45
	<b>Balance</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Revenue</b>
OSSTF Rebate Fees			\$11,740.00
Educators financial Contributions			\$1,000.00
OTIP contribution			\$3,000.00
Executive Lunches		\$1,672.22	
Luncheon Meeting Expenses		\$5,392.74	
Luncheon Meeting Revenue			\$1,957.00
Newsletter Expenses		\$4,892.31	
Newsletter Editor		\$850.00	
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		\$1,098.92	
Office & Miscellaneous expenses		\$911.96	
Health Coalition Conference		\$40.00	
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$17,114.05</b>	<b>\$25,003.45</b>
<b>Net Income over the period</b>	<b>\$7,889.40</b>		
<b>Income Statement</b>		<b>ARM SFK Chapter 12</b>	<b>July 2019 –June, 2020</b>
<b>ARM SFK Chapter 12</b>		<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Revenue</b>
<b>Balance from 2019</b>			\$6,425.70
SFK Revenue			\$870.00
Charities supported		\$6,000.00	
Bank Charges		\$11.70	
Total		\$6,011.70	\$7,295.70
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$1,284.00</b>		

**Note:**

The following Charities each received \$1,500 in December 2019, from Swing For Kids: Massey Centre, Red Door Family Centre, Rosalie Hall, and Covenant House.

# SEPTEMBER BLUES IN EDUCATION: BASIC MATH, DESTREAMING AND THE COVID CLASSROOM—LESLIE WOLFE, PRESIDENT OF OSSTF TORONTO



Traditionally in education, June is a time for winding down. You finish up with marking, get your report cards done, attend retirement celebrations and say farewell to colleagues who are leaving for other worksites. This June was kind of like that—marking got done, report cards were created and distributed, albeit from home and electronically respectively; staffing procedures moved ahead, apace, thankfully with no bumping and with everyone guaranteed a job for next school year; (we even managed to negotiate an extension to job access for teachers currently still on the Recall List from last year's cuts debacle!), and farewells to the newly retired were said.

But it was also a June unlike any other, with questions looming about what schooling will look like in September, and announcements about a new elementary math curriculum and destreaming coming fast on the heels of the school year's official end.

## Schooling in September

Hopefully by the time you read this, there will be a formal plan for what the

reopening of schools in September will look like. There are three scenarios the Ministry of Education wants Boards to plan for, with the ability to quickly pivot between them as circumstances dictate:

1. Regular classes and schedules with enhanced cleaning and hygiene routines;
2. Cohorts of no more than 15 students to accomplish physical distancing. Under this model the students will rotate their learning between home and school;
3. Fully remote teaching/learning which will be available to those students whose families choose for them to remain at home, and to all students if a full system shutdown is required again.

OSSTF Toronto is being given the opportunity to provide input to the TDSB on its planning, which, as this article is being written, is ongoing.

## New math curriculum

In addition to planning for the reopening of the public education system during an ongoing pandemic, the provincial government announced that elementary school teachers will be expected to implement a new “back to basics” math curriculum starting in September.

## Destreaming

In early July, the Minister of Education announced a number of initiatives to address systemic racism in education including the destreaming of high school programming in grades 9 and 10, beginning with the math program in September, 2021.

All available data shows that

students from Black and Brown communities are disproportionately represented in Special Education, Behavioural and Applied level classes. If the education system is to address its own role in perpetuating systemic racism, it is past time for this to stop.

The OSSTF Toronto Teachers' Bargaining Unit has worked closely with the TDSB both to support anti-racist initiatives, and also, as is our role, to advocate for the supports our members need in order to ensure students can succeed.

In the TDSB, destreaming, which now goes by the name Advanced Pathways, began as a pilot project about five years ago. Piloted by a group of teachers and administrators in a couple of schools, careful planning went into the programming to ensure the transition for students would be successful. Over the ensuing years, more and more schools have come on board, most beginning with math and then slowly growing Advanced Pathways to the other grades 9 and 10 courses. On the insistence of the TBU Executive, an effort has been made to keep Academic class size below the cap for classes that are working with students making the jump.

In addition, the TDSB committed to destreaming not just grades 9 and 10, but also at the elementary level of programming so that students who currently begin their education careers with the message that they are less capable will instead learn that they are capable, so that by the time that cohort hits grade 9, moving directly into Academic programming is a natural fit.

Of course, special education will still provide support for students whose learning needs require it, but a deep review of how and why stu-

dents receive that designation must be undertaken and corrected where it is a reflection of system racism/anti-Black bias.

It remains to be seen whether the Ford Tories are up to the challenge of doing what it takes to implement such a massive change in a way that will set the system, its workers and its stu-

dents, up for success. Their track record of insisting on cuts to education is not encouraging.

For students who will be asked to move from streaming at the elementary level to Academic level courses at the secondary level, there will be learning gaps to bridge and self-esteem issues to overcome. This will

require additional staffing and therefore education investments. If the necessary supports aren't put into place, then it is very possible that this attempt to destream students will wind up with the same results as the last time it was tried, in the 1990s: as an abject failure. Students cannot afford that.

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## LIFE WITH LARRY—LARRY FRENCH...CONTINUED

Roger Angell is memorizing short poems as a memory refresher. I and several of my friends do the same. Our neighbours here in Morges, good friends also, Jacques and Christine, have added a challenge to the process—franco-phone and germanophone, they learn a poem each New Year in English. The joy that poetry brings, its ageless wisdom, are an elegant antidote to pasty faced death; although he may win Bergman's game of chess with the doomed knight, in his concentration he misses the young couple with their newborn child passing behind his back. Poetic justice.

Ten years ago, the same year as my transformative 'aches and pains' lunch on the Danforth, during the annual meeting of my union, OSSTF/FEESO, a group of my colleagues agreed to meet in the lobby of the hotel and go out to dinner together. An end of winter ritual celebration once more of the good old days, funded, with its habitual generosity, by the union. Once outside the hotel by the taxi stand, we were engulfed in snow. A mid-March blizzard. The taxi drivers discouraged us from venturing out having heard the storm warning urging cars to stay off the streets. Most of our group went back into the hotel.

However, Paul, former Vice-President, and Jim, former Collective Bargaining Department staffer from the Sault (not to be mistaken for the Paul and Jim of the Danforth lunch), Ian, founding President of ARM, and I decided to brave the storm and walk to the restaurant some twenty minutes away. Once arrived we found the restaurant almost empty. The staff greeted us warmly and we had a joyful dinner. There is something liberating in springing from the fierce isolation

imposed by a Canadian snow storm, I know from long experience in Northern Ontario, and at dinner we managed to shake off the earthbound shackles of union politics. Contrary to my buddies on the Danforth, we did not mention once our aches and pains. Nor, unlike that son of Brussels, Jacques Brel, and his beer drinking pals 'chez la grosse Adrienne de Montalant' out to épater (give the finger to) 'Les Bourgeois,' did we fall into sterile negativity criticizing our incompetent political leaders and the unenlightened who elect them.

Rather, our conversation took flight on the wings of poesy, from the beginning to the end of the dinner. Jim was a gifted writer and poet, the acknowledged Poet Laureate of Nicole and my poetry parties. Ian loved EJ Pratt and recited 'The Seagull.' Paul has a wonderful memory and treated us to Keats' 'Ode to a Nightingale.' I risked boring everyone with my all too predictable homage to Yeats. Finally, staff begged us to leave so they could go home. Aglow with wine, good cheer and fellowship, the four of us merrily roisterers staggered out undaunted into the wintery blast and plodded through the at times knee high snow back to the hotel.

I am sad to relate that pasty faced death has claimed both Jim and Ian. I mourn their loss. I am somewhat comforted to state that Ian, thanks to the homage paid to him and his wife, Maryaleen, by their film-maker daughter, Leah, will be immortalized in a Web Series tribute to his leftist Lada Niva driving ways called 'The Communist's Daughter.' This article also, like that of Roger Angell, a little message in a bottle cast upon the seas of time, a sort of memento vitae as well as mori, has the value of prolonging via the mind and

spirit of the reader, at least for a while, the existence of people dear to me. By the delightful paradox of which art is capable, Larkin lives on defying extinction, thanks to the beauty of the poem he has created in its terrifying shadow. Emily Dickinson, another of Angell's favourites, gifts us still with the inspiration she found in her demise, linking it cleverly to immortality:

Because I could not stop for Death,  
He kindly stopped for me;  
The carriage held but just ourselves  
And Immortality.

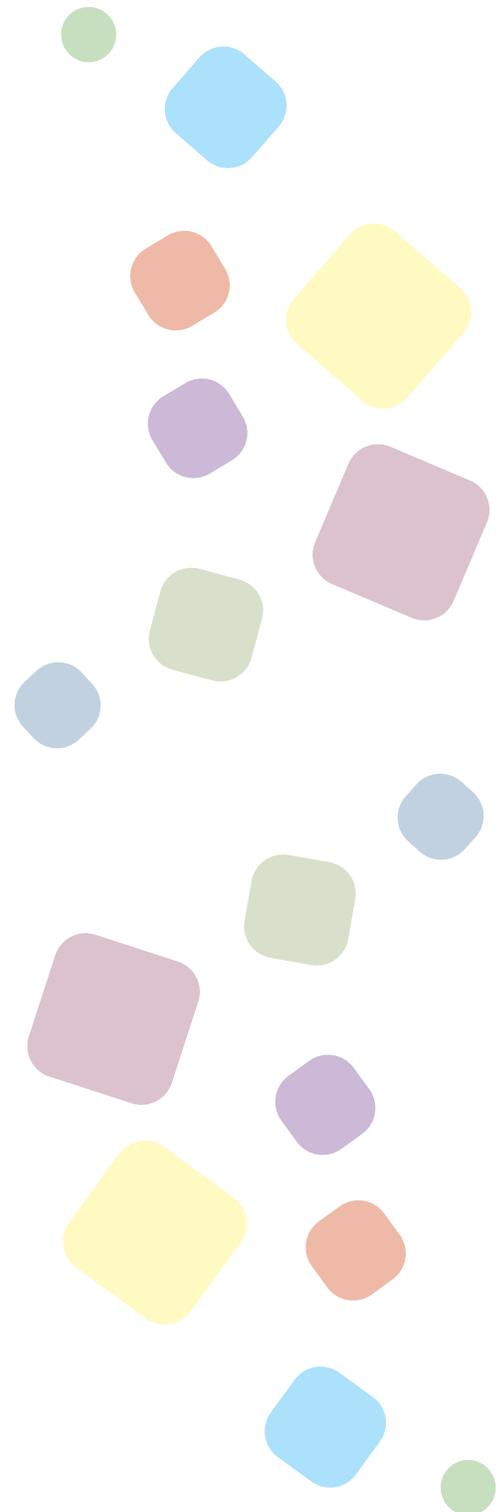
'Vita brevis, Ars longa.' I rest my case.

Paul and I still get together at the annual meeting for dinner with Jack and Neil and Michael, and until recently, Michael's father, Fred, another of our union warriors recently departed. We do mention writing and poets from time to time during our conversations. More often than not, however, we are forced to evoke and pay tribute to friends like Fred, Jim and Ian who are no longer with us.

I would love to invite Roger Angell to one of our mid-March celebrations. At the end of his reflection on ageing and loss, he makes a life enhancing plea for 'more venery. More love, more closeness, more sex and romance.' He would snap us out of our backward-looking old fuddle-duddle reminiscences and set us with renewed energy on the shining path of life.

Thanks, Roger, for your heart-warming wisdom. I see from Wikipedia that you are still with us and that

you have re-married. Bravo. May you and your wife, and us with you, have an abundance of everything that you wished for.





417 Danforth Ave. / 647-350-5087  
louisciferbrewworks.com

I would like to thank our colleague, Neil Walker, for nominating the Louis Cifer Brew House on Danforth Ave. I thought he would want to nominate Allen's in my honour, but no, he thought that I should be introduced to "Lucifer," as locals call the Brew House. Here we could be tempted to consume some fine drinks and food and it is only a short walk from Neil's house. Lucifer's is also a short walk from the Broadview or Chester subway stations depending if you are coming from the east or west side of the city which is a real bonus.

My wife, Denise Graham, was intrigued by Neil's story of "Lucifer's" and accepted my invitation to come along on February 28, 2020. Neil was not feeling well and could not attend and so we didn't know if anyone was going to join us. I was delighted when two of our ARM colleagues arrived. Cathe Gordon Green spotted us at our table on the first level and then George Edelstein joined us.

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

them in random order.

One of the major attractions of Louis Cifer is that they brew their own beers and ales and we could see three large vats in front of us behind the glass wall on the east side of the room. The layout is very spacious. On the first floor there are lots of tables on the ground level that are accessible for everyone. We chose the next level two steps up that allows people to see over the heads of the people on the entrance level to keep an eye on the brew master and crew. In addition, there is a large seating area upstairs to the rear of the room for up to 60 people. I walked up the winding staircase and chatted with the receptionist. This room may be reserved for parties and is open for regular service when they are busy usually on Friday nights and Saturdays. This room has a fine view of the main floor and the vats, but does not have an elevator and so is not access for people using walkers or wheel chairs.

George, Cathe and I ordered different brews and Denise ordered a glass of Rodney Chardonnay [\$19] while we reviewed the menu. George had a flight of four ales that included Dry Irish, Gothic, ESB, and Purgatory which was an extra special bitter. George said the ales were very good. A single glass is \$4 and a flight of four is just \$12 which is a really good deal. Cathe ordered a glass of the lager and I ordered a flight of four lagers. My Original Sin Blonde, Gates of Ale, Witchcraft Belgium, and House Lager were excellent and only \$12 as well. The flights of ales and lagers were definitely the best deals in the pub. Now you might be wondering about the washrooms with all these drinks being consumed. The men found their washroom acceptable, but I noted that there was no hook to hang up your coat while you used the facilities. The women said their washroom was very clean

and accessible. I will say that the symbols on the men's and women's washroom doors are quite "suggestive."

Once we had received the drinks we ordered our lunch fares. I ordered their broccoli cheddar soup of the moment [day \$9] as a starter, but everyone else focused on the main lunch items. Our waiter, Tyron, who is from Nice in France was very helpful. He is here studying and working on the side as many university students must. We wonder what he is doing now that all bars and restaurants are closed.

Denise decided on the lunch Pad Thai [\$ 17] and said the noodles were very good. Cathe ordered the haddock with coleslaw and chips [\$19] and I also ordered the haddock, but upgraded to sweet potato chips [\$22]. We agreed that the fish meal was excellent. George had the chips and a very large cheese burger which he said were very good. I continued to be the outlier and ordered the molten lava cake [\$13] and a coffee [\$3.23] for dessert. It was delicious, but as you can see Louis Cifer has a slightly more expensive lunch menu than most pubs that we have visited. However, the unique features of sitting in a brew house and enjoying locally produced brews is worth it in my view. You might like to mark down Louis Cifer as a place to visit on special occasions with your family and friends.

Who knows when our next pub visit will be? When will Ontario and Toronto get ahead of the COVID-19 virus and be able to open pubs? How will it feel to sit six feet apart with physical distancing in a restaurant or pub? I certainly hope that we can get together in the fall of 2020 and check out one of the many fine pubs that you have recommended to me. The next one on my current list is the Northern Maverick Brewing Company at 115 Bathurst St. We will keep you posted. Stay well.



## CURMUDGEON'S CORNER—PAUL ROOK

There has been a great deal of speculation about what the post-pandemic world will be like. Some are suggesting that we return to the old normal. Not a good idea. Why you ask. Because the old normal was a world where there were many problems such as not being prepared for the pandemic, poorly regulated long-term care homes and income inequality. I could go on and on about the problems prior to this pandemic. Those who know me will be nodding your heads in agreement about me going on and on.

Others have suggested that we can create a new normal and in doing so solve many problems such as income inequality. But here's the problem. What the new normal is will depend upon who creates it. In Ontario the Ford government will play a big role. The question is which Ford will it be? Will it be the Ford prior to the pandemic, who was cutting services, such as health care, and catering to the needs of big business? Or will it be the new Ford, who has been praised by many for how he has dealt with the pandemic? Perhaps we can answer that question by looking at what the Ford government has been doing, while everyone is focused on the fight against COVID-19.

It may surprise you to find out that the Ford government has quietly started creating the new normal without much public consultation or knowledge. For example, they have created Bill 175, which will have a big impact on care for seniors in Ontario. This will allow further privatization of long-term care homes and home care. Why would they do this when the private long-term care homes had a higher percentage of deaths from COVID-19 than the publicly-run homes. The answer is simple. This government is driven by an ideology which favours

private business over everything else. Remember the first thing Ford did when he became Premier. He put up signs declaring that Ontario was "open for business." How this legislation was created gives further clues about Ontario's future. Experts were not consulted when it was created. The hearings were short and Conservative MPPs challenged and even ridiculed those who made presentations.

Ford and his Ministers have been saying that we must get rid of more red tape so businesses are not restricted. For example, Ford has said we have to remove the red tape that delays construction of new transit projects. When you hear red tape most of you think it is negative. You have been conditioned to think this way. But what is red tape? Red tape consists of the laws and regulations put into place to protect consumers, workers, homeowners, the environment etc. Among the first regulations in North America, were the ones put in place by President Teddy Roosevelt for the meat industry. He was inspired by a book *The Jungle* which revealed the horrible, unsanitary conditions in meat packing plants. But business doesn't like these regulations because they increase costs and reduce profits. But look at what happened in Walkerton because regulations relating to water inspection were reduced by Mike Harris.

Ford has said that tenants will not be evicted, if they cannot pay their rent because they are unemployed due to COVID-19. But what will happen after the pandemic? The Ford government has put together legislation that will make it easier for apartment owners to evict tenants.

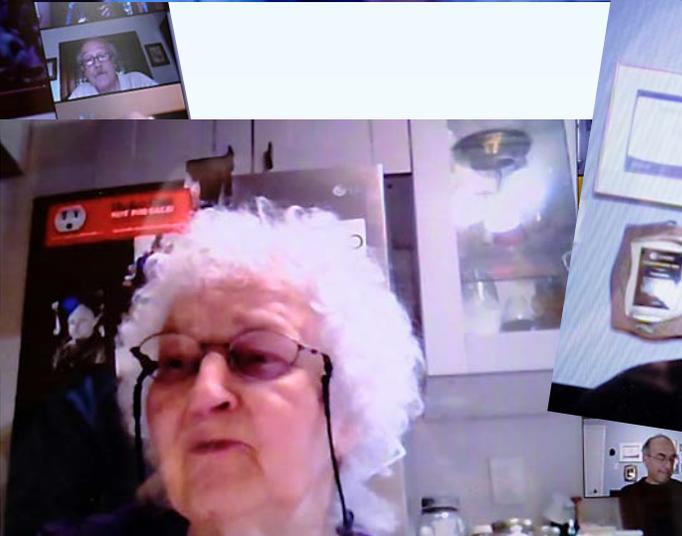
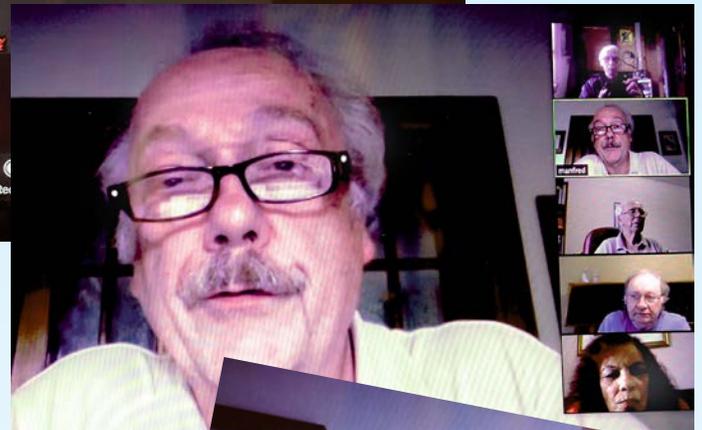
It is obvious that Ford plans to revert to his old self after the pandemic. As they say, the leopard does not change its spots.

## THIS PAGE IS FOR YOU!

We're looking for submissions from you, our members. Here is your opportunity to have others view/read your work, whether it's art work, photographs, essays, poetry, prose, recollections from your education career, your most memorable student(s), travel here and afar, how you've been coping with the the pandemic, how our political leaders have been handling the pandemic, book/theatre/movie/etc. reviews, plans for your future, feedback on After School, etc. There are so many of you with so much talent and potential. Why not share some of it? You can continue to be an inspiration. We want this Newsletter to be a place for expression by all of our members.

Send your submissions to: [editor.afterschool@gmail.com](mailto:editor.afterschool@gmail.com)

# ACTIVE RETIRED MEMBERS CHAPTER 12 (TORONTO) EXECUTIVE MEETING WITH ZOOM



# ARM CHAPTER 12 CALENDAR OF EVENTS—MANFRED NETZEL, ACTING PRESIDENT

Dear ARM Chapter 12 members:

As we continue to face the future with uncertainty due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, your Executive has tried to keep the activities and information meetings/luncheons in our planning. With the likelihood of a second “wave” of coronavirus infections and related restrictions occurring in the later fall and winter, we have decided to organize most of the traditional events in a virtual mode, not in-person. A further challenge is the decision by the OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Executive and Council to not allow any meetings to take place in 60 Mobile, both due to planned major renovations and a rebuild of the Provincial Office, starting in September for the next two years or so. The staff will be relocated into nearby sites, thus operating with both logistical and health guidelines and restrictions.

Hence, we are proposing a limited set of planned activities between September and the end of 2020, with the hope that some greater “normalcy” can return in 2021. These begin with hosting the postponed AGM from May to a new date of **SEPTEMBER 16** to be held online. This will also include the election of your Executive for the 2020–21 term. An email blast and also a mailing for those not currently without access to the internet will be generated in late August providing more details and important reports. Please keep in mind that the agenda will be covering only important topics and reports as required by our Constitution... there will be NO keynote speaker or buffet supper, of course.

Other planned online activities, although still tentative, starting @ 10 a.m. are as follows:

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2020**

*GUEST SPEAKER: FORMER MAYOR JOHN SEWELL ADDRESSING THE PROSPECT OF CHARTER CITY STATUS FOR TORONTO*

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020**

*EFG/TEACHERS' LIFE SPONSORS' WORKSHOP*

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2021**

*OTIP/RTIP INFORMATION WORKSHOP*

\*\*At this time, we do not foresee planning for the Annual Fall golf tournament in September, nor having a curling bonspiel in November.

NB. If the public health protocols for the City of Toronto allow, we hope to organize the Annual Holiday Party on Wednesday, **DECEMBER 2, 2020** @ the Latvian Centre. Of course, we will have more details in the November issue of *After School*, which will also be a hard copy issue that will be mailed to all members.

We greatly appreciate your patience and understanding in us attempting to keep the Chapter operating and being accountable under these very challenging times. It is also our hope that the onset of 2021 will allow for more “normalcy” of our activities.

Best regards in Federation,

Manfred

