

# AFTER SCHOOL

Volume 24, Issue 3—December 2022 • [www.armch12osstf.ca](http://www.armch12osstf.ca)



JAGUAR PYRAMID  
TIKAL, GUATEMALA

3 IN THIS ISSUE

---

3 WHAT'S HAPPENING

---

4 LETTER TO ALL MEMBERS

---

5 ARM CHAPTER 12 NEEDS YOU

---

6 TIKAL, THE WORLD OF THE MAYA

---

8 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

---

9 PENSION REPORT

---

10 PROVINCIAL POLITICAL ACTION CONFERENCE

---

12 MUNICIPAL ELECTION 2022: A SIGN OF THE TIMES

---

14 WILLIAM FLETCHER—PART II

---

16 RAVINE HIKE IN WILKET CREEK

---

18 THE QUEEN IN RETIREMENT

---

20 PUB REVIEW

---

22 YOU'RE A LIAR AND I'M NOT.

## AFTER SCHOOL

### VOLUME 24, ISSUE 3, DEC. 2022

*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 authors 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:**

**Editor:** Ronda Allan

**Associate Editor:** Christos Aslanidis

**Reports Editor:** Eileen Markwick

**Advertising Editor:** Michelle Barraclough

**Editorial Board:** Charles Hawkes, Allan Hux, Jim Mile, Manfred Netzel, Neil Walker

#### **AFTER SCHOOL CONTACT:**

afterschool.armch12@gmail.com

#### **ACTIVE RETIRED MEMBERS CHAPTER 12 TORONTO EXECUTIVE**

**President:** Manfred Netzel

**Vice-President:** Christos Aslanidis,  
Communications

**Vice-President:** Charles Hawkes,  
Political Action

**Secretary:** Bill Pryde

**Treasurer:** Michelle Barraclough

**Executive Officers:** Paul Headdon,  
Pensions

#### **Members at Large:**

Allan Hux

Jim Mile

Candice Phoenix

Neil Walker

Don Wright

[www.armch12osstf.ca](http://www.armch12osstf.ca)

Cover photo credit: Michelle Barraclough

# IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome to *After School* Volume 24, Issue 3. This is our Winter Issue, but we thought we would counter the cold and snow of the season with a feature travelogue. **On page 6 Michelle Barraclough** recounts her adventure travelling to **Tikal, an ancient city of pyramids hidden in, but not quite buried by the Guatemalan**

**jungle.** Her dramatic photographs include our cover.

As well, **on page 14 Ron Fletcher** continues the story of **William Fletcher** his great, great, great, grand uncle whose history provides **insight into the early years of the teaching profession in Ontario.**

Finally, in addition to **another**

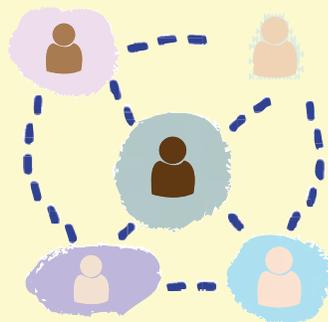
**fine pub review by Alan Hux, (page 22)** we direct your attention to **page 20**, where **Koom Kanke-san** provides us with **excerpts of the Queen’s diary after retirement.** These and many more articles of interest await in our pages. Thank you for taking the time to read *After School*.

## WHAT’S HAPPENING

All ARM Chapter 12 sponsored events are open to all members. Most of them are free, but do require registration. Go to [armch12osstf.ca](http://armch12osstf.ca) for more details on each event and for the registration links.

<b>January 11</b>	<i>The Frog and Firkin Pub Visit</i>	The Frog and Firkin Pub, 4854 Yonge St.	Join friends for post-holiday cheer
<b>January 17</b>	<i>Educators Financial Group Presentation</i>	Latvian Canadian Cultural Centre	Get the latest info on financial planning and your investments
<b>February 15</b>	<i>ARM Ch 12 Speaker Series</i>	Latvian Canadian Cultural Centre	Guest speaker, TBA
<b>March 6</b>	<i>Deadline for submissions to After School</i>		Check the website for details on the submission process
<b>April 18</b>	<i>ARM Ch. 12 Speaker Series (West End)</i>	Canadiana Restaurant 5230 Dundas St. W.	Guest speaker, TBA

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



CHECK OUT NEWSLETTERS AND THE CALENDAR AT  
[WWW.ARMCH12OSSTF.CA](http://WWW.ARMCH12OSSTF.CA)

NOTIFY ARM AND OSSTF/FEESO OF ADDRESS AND EMAIL CHANGES

[ARMCHAPTER12@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ARMCHAPTER12@GMAIL.COM)

OSSTF/FEESO:  
416-751-8300



# MESSAGE FROM PROVINCIAL OFFICE

**JIM SPRAY** — OSSTF/FEESO CFO/AGS, OPERATIONAL SERVICES

November 29, 2022

## **A letter to all members**

This letter was sent to all members of OSSTF including ARM members. It is reprinted here for the specific information or ARM Chapter 12 Members.

As you may know, on May 30, 2022, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) learned that we fell victim to a cyber incident involving a ransomware that affected our systems. We understand that this incident may have resulted in disrupted systems and operational challenges for individuals within our network. We sincerely apologize for any inconveniences caused and wish to inform you of the situation.

## **What happened?**

On May 30, 2022, we discovered that an unauthorized third party had accessed and encrypted our systems between May 25 and May 30, 2022. We immediately hired a cyber security firm to secure our environment and investigate the incident to determine its scope and the nature of the information involved. Following this review, we also conducted an eDiscovery process to review the personal information that may have been impacted. Such process, which has taken several months, was just recently completed.

Based on the results of our investigation and while we have no evidence of further misuse of the data at this time, we can now confirm that personal information of current and past members was compromised as part of this incident.

## **What personal information has been compromised?**

The personal information compromised concern current and past members, as well as their family members and/or beneficiaries and may include the full name, social insurance number, date of birth, the member ID and/or other personal information provided to OSSTF.

We invite you to contact us at our toll-free number 1-877-672-4644, available Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST, to obtain more information on the personal information concerning you that may have been impacted by the incident.

## **What can you do to protect yourself?**

As always, it is important to remain vigilant to detect the risk of fraud, identity theft and phishing. To do so, you should: (1) review your account statements regularly, (2) change your online accounts password often and avoid using the same passwords across various services, and (3) be cautious if you receive suspicious emails, text messages, or phone calls that request that you provide personal information or contain links or attachments, even when originating from trusted individuals or companies.

As an added precaution, depending on the type of personal information impacted, credit monitoring and identity theft protection services with Equifax may be available to you at our expense for a period of one year. As such, if applicable, our team will provide you with a code to redeem.

We wanted to assure you that we take the protection of your personal information very seriously and that we are taking all necessary steps to prevent a similar incident from reoccurring. We have worked with our external cyber security experts to remove the malware and strengthen our security posture. We confirm that we are currently fully operational and available to assist and represent our members. For any questions or concern, we invite you to contact us by calling at the toll-free number 1-877-672-4644, available Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST. If you still have any question or concern that remain unanswered, you may contact us by email at [security.info@osstf.ca](mailto:security.info@osstf.ca).

Thanks,  
Jim Spray  
CFO/AGS, Operational Services

## ARM CHAPTER 12 NEEDS YOU

ARM Chapter 12 is only as good as the participation of its members.

There are lots of ways, big and small, to get active in ARM Chapter 12:

- **Join the *After School* Editorial Board:** The Editorial Board meets online four times a year and helps determine the content of the magazine.
- **Submit to *After School*:** We are always looking for, opinions, reviews, poetry, art, photography and even short fiction. Send your work to [afterschool.armch12@gmail.com](mailto:afterschool.armch12@gmail.com). Deadlines for submission and the submission guidelines are on the ARM Chapter 12 website.
- **Organize an event for members:** Are you interested in golfing, curling, attending museums and/or concerts, playing euchre, bridge, poker etc. Do you have a bit of spare time and some experience in organizing an event? We have the resources to promote and support member events, and, depending on if there are costs involved, we may even be able to arrange subsidization or sponsorship. For more details on how to submit a proposal, just go to our website, [www.armch12osstf.ca](http://www.armch12osstf.ca) and look under Events.
- **Join the ARM Chapter 12 Executive:** Executive members are elected at the Annual General Meeting. However, there is no limit to the number of Executive Members At Large position, so, if you want to take a bit more of a leadership role in ARM Chapter 12, this is how you do it. Check out our Constitution on the website.



***After School* is published by the Active Retired Members of OSSTF/FEESO in Toronto, and is privately funded by members' dues. *After School* encourages and welcomes feedback from readers.**

**Please send your letters to the editor to: [afterschool.armch12@gmail.com](mailto:afterschool.armch12@gmail.com)**

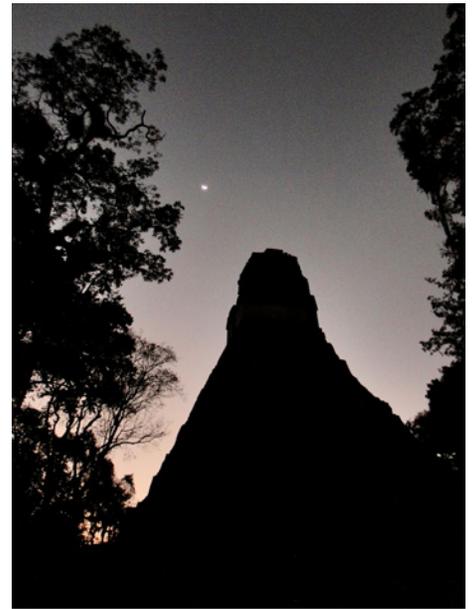
## TIKAL, THE WORLD OF THE MAYA—MICHELLE BARRACLOUGH

My first experience in Tikal was in the early 90s when, as a young teacher I visited Guatemala to learn the rudiments of Spanish. I had the romantic vision of Tikal, the lost city of the Maya. That was before I caught a 12 hour night bus to Tikal, over bad roads and infested with rebels, as the civil war was still ongoing. Anyway, being young, foolish and incredibly lucky, my bus continued until about 5:30 am, when the bus stopped. Bleary eyed, the other passengers and I were ordered off the bus by young men who said they were in the army looking for insurgents. They looked like my high school students toting submachine guns! We were lined up, women on one side and men on the other. They questioned the men, and as they did their search and questioning, all I could think off was, “Please don’t shoot anyone. My teacher’s first aid didn’t cover it!” At any rate, my prayers were answered, as we were allowed back on the bus minus bloodshed for which I will be eternal-

ly grateful. We continued on to Flores which was the terminal for the bus and the closest point to Tikal.

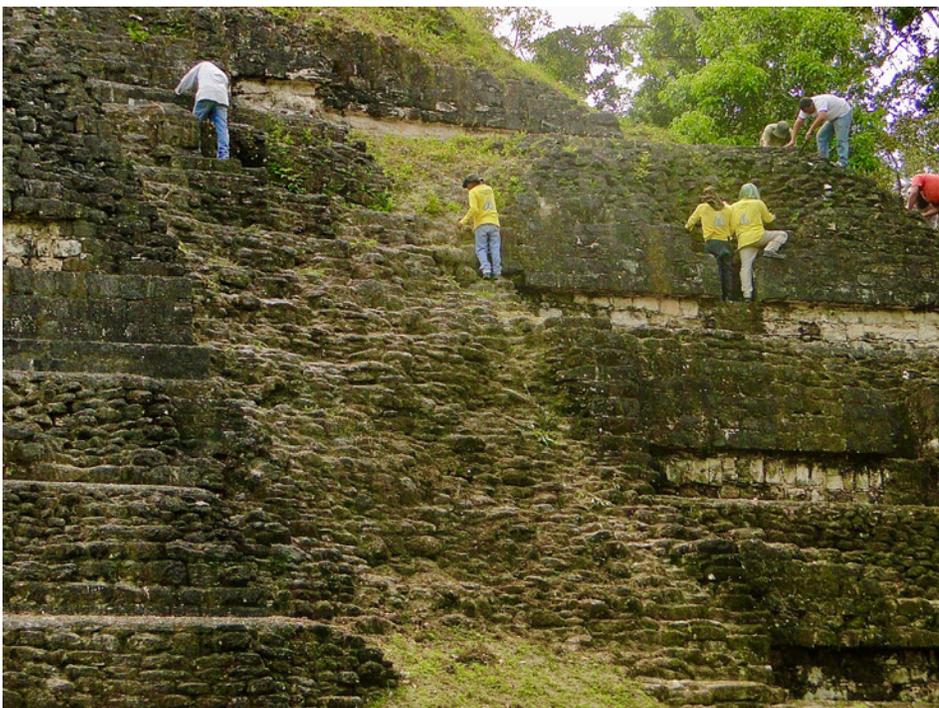
These days, it is a quick 1.5 hour flight to Flores. Flores is no longer a run-down town on the outskirts of civilisation. It is now the tourist mecca where you have a lovely promenade along the shore of Lago de Peten Itzá, cute hotels, bars and tours around the lake. Along the road to Tikal there are a multitude of small towns, with some really cute places to swim, and stay. El Remate is one of these towns where my friend, Phyllis and I stopped for a late breakfast. If you like seafood or tropical fruits, this is the place for you, especially since the local people have modified their menus to accommodate the tourists with items such as pancakes, and French toast.

Tikal itself, is about 60 km southwest of Flores and there are a multitude of tour companies through which you are able to book a tour. Or, if you prefer, you may visit this cradle of Mayan ci-



vilisation by minibus and hire a guide there. A guide is advisable as the area is large and at its zenith it held upwards of 100,000 people. Tikal is in the department of El Peten and together with Belize and Mexico is part of the Mayan Biosphere Reserve of 30,000 sq km. The best time to visit is between February and May, as it is the dry season with so much less mud and insects. Although truth be told, one needs bug spray at any time of the year. There are no rivers in the area as the porous limestone allows the water to percolate through into underground caverns. The area is home to a multitude of birds and animals including spider monkeys, agoutis, foxes, ocellated turkeys, jaguars and peccaries. We were fortunate to see all except for jaguar, which are nocturnal and shy of humans.

The fascination of Tikal is because of its partially uncovered jungle state, steep sided temples, some more than 44 m in height, dense canopy and wide paths connecting the complex of pyramids and temples. Your imagination can run wild as at any moment you



might be standing on a buried pyramid, or temple. The site is composed of the Acropolis central or Gran Plaza with the Templo de Gran Jaguar. West is the Templo III, south is Templo V and the

Acrópolis del Sur, then the Plaza de los Siete Templos, and last but not least El Mundo Perdido, the lost world.

All this being said, Tikal, steamy and rich with the past, enriches both

our lives and those of the local residents, many of whose ancestors lived in this land. Given the chance I would encourage all to visit this lost land of the Mayas.



**Photos:** Page 6 bottom: Cleaning the pyramid; top: Jaguar Temple at sunset. Page 7 top left: Agouti, a relative of the racoon; top right: Jungle parrot; bottom left: Oropendola and woven nests; bottom right: the grounds of Tikal.

Photo credit: Michelle Barraclough

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT—MANFRED NETZEL

As a passionate soccer fan, the past while has been an intense and exciting period of multiple games each day since November 20. Now as the knock-out round of the World Cup is about to begin as I write this article, I can make some political comparisons between the political and sporting jousting that we have experienced since the municipal election in early November. Please indulge me as I pen these comments.

Let me begin by feeling much greater satisfaction with the results both for City Council and the TDSB than we saw after the June Provincial election. Besides seeing most of the candidates endorsed by OSSTF/FEESO elected as new City Councilors or Trustees on the largest school board in Canada, I was personally very pleased to see a former student of mine, *Amber Morley*, defeat the ONLY incumbent politician in Toronto's Etobicoke—Lakeshore ward quite decisively...well done Amber!! The loss of numerous candidates who had been endorsed by Mayor Tory was also gratifying in my view, as it symbolized both a clear mood for change amongst the electorate and a possible skepticism of the Old Guard's legacy and loyalty to the last-term Mayor. Hopefully, the new and more diverse faces in both public bodies will better reflect the values and civic visions of Torontonians and their daily challenges in the next four years. This may also raise the voter turn-out in 2026 from the disappointing 29 per cent this time around.

Of course, we now see the early agenda of the Ford government shortly after their large majority win in June. The imposition (then withdrawal) of the now infamous Bill 8 and use of the

Notwithstanding Clause to crush striking CUPE education workers (and likely other unionized groups) was preceded by Bill 24 and the imposition of a 1% wage/salary cap on almost all public sector professional workers (except for the male-dominant police, fire and EMS job classes). As I write this, the CUPE members are still voting to ratify (or not) their tentative deal, which could stop or rejuvenate chaos in the public schools. Our support and that of colleagues in both the public and private sector is crucial to keep the PC Government accountable and somewhat limited in their destructive agenda of privatization and cuts to public services and the people who provide them for Ontarians.

Finally, you have almost certainly heard from, or been contacted by, OSSTF/FEESO recently in November about a data breach in late May that may have involved the personal ID and banking data for thousands of union members hacked by professional IT scammers. After first hearing about this in late September while attending Provincial Council as ARM Council Chair, I was unable to share this confidential information (as was every PC participant). The recovery process included the payment of a large sum of "ransom" by the Federation, the hiring of a private security firm to assess the extent and range of affected members and then provide the communication with and "remedy" offered those members who feared for their privacy. The form letter sent throughout No-



member is reproduced in this newsletter issue for your information should you have not received this yourself. In any case, the clearly recommended direction for anyone who does online banking, conducts online business or uses credit cards with passwords is to register with **EQUIFAX** using the application code provided for an initial one-year free credit monitoring service arranged by OSSTF/FEESO. According to the industry, one in three public and private agencies, organizations and companies are subject to regular data hacking. Recent breaches in other Ontario firms, cities and school boards have become common news items. Vigilance by the consumer or citizen is strongly encouraged.

Let me end on a positive note by wishing every member of ARM Chapter 12 as well as family and friends a happy and relaxing Holiday Season along with a great start to 2023.

Best regards,

*Manfred*

## PENSION PLAN—PAUL HEADDON, ARM CH12 PENSION AND BENEFITS OFFICE

OTTP has invested \$60 Million Cdn. in India's National Highways Infr Trust which is sponsored by the National Highways Authority of India, and is the Government of India nodal agency for national highway development. In addition an investment was made in November 2021, making OTTP total investment \$308 Million Cdn.

The recent investment will be utilized to acquire three additional road concessions that will allow NHIT to own operate, and maintain a portfolio of eight toll roads in various Indian states. The roads have a total length of 635 Km. and the concession period is roughly from 20-30 years.

OTTP and Mahindra Group have signed an agreement giving our plan 30 per cent equity stake in Mahindra Suster Private Limited for \$300 million (USD).

They will set up an investment trust (InvIT). The money will be used to enable Mahindra Suster to build a strong renewable energy business focused on solar energy, storage and round-the-clock green energy plants over the next seven years. OTTP has committed to add up to \$ 450 Million (USD) into the business.

The Ontario Teachers' Federation has appointed two new members to our Pension Plan. Because they are from the oil industry and the financial industry, they may not support climate change.

In September 2022 OTTP pub-

lished its Annual Responsible Investing and Climate Strategy Report. In the Report OTTP provides an overview of its climate strategy which includes helping its portfolio companies decrease their emissions, increasing in green assets, helping high emitters decarbonize, issuing green bonds and developing partnerships to amplify our efforts in reducing climate change (source OTTP news).

There are plans to increase the allocation of investments in India by OTTP from 5 per cent to 10 per cent in the next 15-20 years. Investments will be made in areas such as infrastructure, health care and renewables. Presently only 2 per cent of our plan assets are invested in India.

Plans are also being made to increase their investments in Asia, in particular, Singapore. The staffing OTTP office is being doubled to approximately 40-50 people. They will also look for investments in Australia and south-east Asia.

Lately OTTP has been boosting its exposure to long term bonds offering "interesting rates" The exposure to bonds has increased approximately from 14 per cent of its assets last June, to 18 per cent, by June 2022.

Our plan wants to increase its exposure outside North America by making 50 per cent of its new investments in Europe and Asia. I still believe that we should

continue to have a considerable percentage of our investments in Canada. (source National Post Oct. 5, 2022).

If you have followed the news recently you will have noticed an increasing number of early retirements by Health Care and Educational participants. As of August this year 20,000 of the additional retirements were in educational services (source National Post Oct. 2, 2022).

Our pension plan has invested \$95 Million in the Bahamas-Based Crypto-Exchange Company called FTX. It is the second largest crypto exchange company in the world. Recently FTX has declared bankruptcy. This is very similar to the situation when Caisse de depot et placement du Canada lost \$150 Million in the crypto Celsius Network. This company also went bankrupt.

The FTX investment was placed in OTTP's Venture Growth Platform. Crypto currency value has decreased by at least 75 per cent this year. This investment is less than .05 per cent of our plan's total assets.

FTX is under investigation in the U.S. for allegations of fraud and misuse of funds. This was a very poor speculative investment.

The good news is that your pension plan will increase by 6.7 per cent beginning on the Jan. 31, 2023 payout. This increase is due to inflation protection of our plan.

## PROVINCIAL POLITICAL ACTION CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 25-6, 2022—CHARLES HAWKES

Once a year the OSSTF/FEESO gathers hundreds of teachers from every district in Ontario to plan a political action strategy for the next provincial election. This year, after two years of Zoom meetings through the worst of Covid-19, the Federation felt it could finally hold an in-person two-day conference on November 25 and 26 at the Sheraton Airport Hotel. Among the participants, there were no discussions of the setback to progressive government from the last election or the difficulties of shutdowns and remote learning. Instead the tone of the conference was forward-looking and optimistic.

The setback the Ford government took in their reckless attempt to use the notwithstanding clause to impose a contract on CUPE members was fresh in everyone's minds. Federation President Karen Littlewood in her address reminded us that the Conservatives blinked when the union movement unified in opposition to Bill 28. The key lesson for the OSSTF/FEESO was to maintain partnerships with other unions and progressive groups in the community and share their struggles. It is clear the government is pursuing a privatization agenda with policies of underfunding and talk of voucher systems. Karen went on to endorse and introduce Queen's Park's most vocal education critic, NDP leadership contender Marit Stiles.

Marit was slated to debate other NDP leadership contenders when the conference was first organized. However, two days before the conference, the party announced that no other party members had registered to run. The deadline and \$55,000 deposit was



Marit Stiles, ONDP

due in early December. Marit said, 'I'm ready to debate, but I can't do it by myself.' Conference organizers responded quickly by setting up an on-stage interview with Global TV news correspondent Colin D'Mello. His relaxed and humorous approach combined well with his probing questioning to bring out the best in the candidate and future leader of the NDP and official Opposition.

His first questions though, were somewhat difficult for Marit to give definite answers.

Why no other contenders for NDP and Opposition leadership? She cited the hard work and lost family time embodied in these leadership jobs. The Conservatives got the largest majority in years—was this a rejection of the NDP? We do have a strong base to

work from to 2026. Should the party oppose or propose? We must try to do both. Marit moved to firmer ground with specific policy issues.

The Conservatives, she said, must 'get real' on the costs to keep health and educational systems going. Bill 124 froze wages of nurses, and health care workers. It must be rescinded, and the government return to negotiating contracts. The health system isn't broken. Its biggest challenge is an aging population which should be met with more home care and less institutionalization. The Conservatives talk up privatization and user fees (and even say that they can be returned to citizens!)

Colin D'Mello asked whether health and educational workers would always 'get what they wanted particularly

dealing with the NDP'. She replied that she has been on both sides of the bargaining table in her career. He pressed her on whether she would ever consider declaring an 'essential workers' designation for them which would eliminate their right to strike. She replied that she always considered health and educational people as "partners and critical people" and would never have to impose a contract on them. She continued by asserting that educational funding has been treated as 'a shell game' for years, implying that it should be seen as an investment, not as an expense for the province.

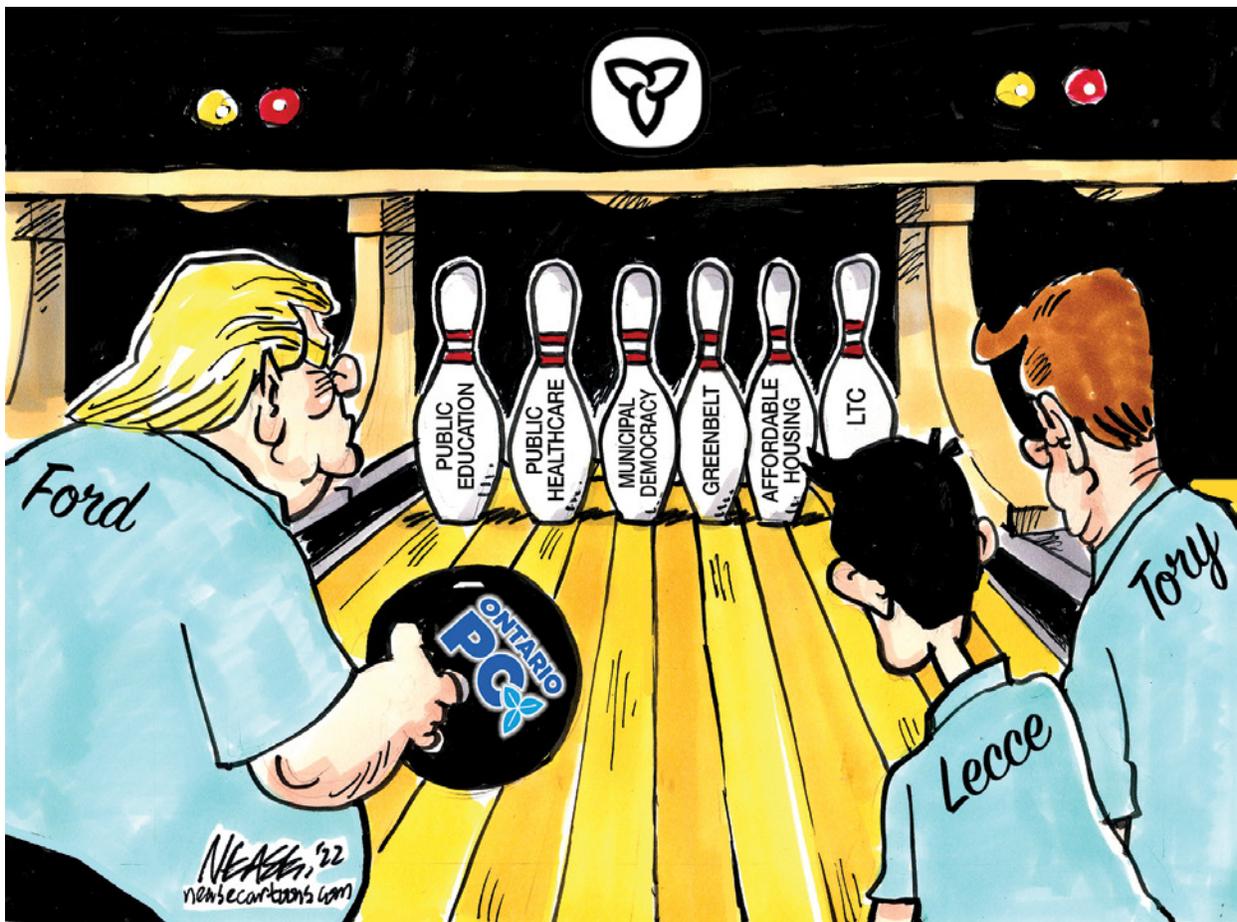
Marit's measured answers, sense of humour and absence of stridency went over well with this audience of educators, and she received a prolonged standing ovation.

The Conference also included a number of workshops. One notable one was given by OSSTF/FEESO's Paul Kossta, who is the Federation's legislative observer and contact at Queen's Park. Retiring this year, he has many years of experience in lobbying provincial politicians on educational and Federation issues. His advice, laced with personal stories and personalities was insightful. Try to cultivate a personal relationship with individual politicians so that they will recognize and remember you. They do, after all meet many people. Realize that they don't, and can't, know every issue in depth. You are there to inform them as well as persuade them. Keep a civil and cordial relationship but be firm when necessary. Realize that all politicians have one priority: to win the next election.



Colin D'Mello, Global TV

You will therefore be most successful if you can show them that numerous voters are behind the issue you are supporting. Good advice for all of us when we deal with politicians at every level of government.



## MUNICIPAL ELECTION 2022: A SIGN OF THE TIMES—CAM KILGOUR

The recent civic elections across the province confirmed a disturbing reality in the realm of participatory democracy at all three levels of government in Canada. As anticipated, the voter turnout in the GTA elections for mayor, council, and trustees was lower than the June 2nd provincial election in which a pathetic, historically low 43 per cent of eligible voters exercised their democratic right. In our city, only 30 per cent of the electorate bothered to cast a ballot. The consequences of non-participation are significant to every citizen.

As educators, we have all witnessed the decline of funding for our public schools and the attendant loss of morale amongst all education workers. The “majority” Progressive Conservative party rushed through Bill 28, the Keeping Students In Class Act, invoking the Notwithstanding Clause of the Charter to eliminate the legal option of a constitutional challenge to the legislation. This is draconian and a reflection of the PC agenda in cutting costs to vital services. The only reason that the Ford administration can do this is due to the voter apathy and/or cynicism that resulted in another four year term in office.

What are some solutions to this vexing trends? At the school level, students can learn the duties of exercising their franchise through creative curricula, beginning in primary school and reinforced, in intermediate-senior schools. School councils can encourage parents

to be engaged in the policies implemented in their local schools. In the same way that the OSSD requires students to perform 40 hours of service, the act of voting can be debated as a commitment to representative democracy.

Reducing the voting age to 16-17 could motivate adolescents to engage. Some European countries (e.g. Scotland and Wales) allow 16-17 year olds the right to vote in local elections. While harmonizing the age with eligibility to drive a vehicle, it would increase young voter interest and participation beyond the “Student Vote” initiative already carried out in many schools.

In Australia, voting is mandatory. While this may seem radical, it does give citizens an incentive to show up on election day. The consequence for not casting a ballot is a fine.

There are numerous electoral reform initiatives that have been successfully implemented around the globe (Mixed-member proportionate in New Zealand is one).

Preferential ballots are plain. The process can be streamlined, especially with advanced technology, to maximize both turnout and representation.

For the next four years, Toronto will be under a city council run by John Tory who now has the powers of the so-called Strong Mayors legislation to advance his agenda. The new Council will see Labour-endorsed progressives Ausma Malik, Alejandro Bravo, Chris Moise, representing

downtown wards. Amber Morley, Lily Cheng, and Jamaal Myers also add fresh voices and greater diversity. Even so, Tory has his budget chief, Gary Crawford, in place and the common lament among outgoing councillors is the desperate need for revenue tools to fund the services the city needs for everyone.

On a personal note, it was gratifying to see Dianne Saxe earn a seat at Council in a tightly contested race against an NDP-endorsed candidate who had the support of the unions. Having knocked on doors and worked for her on both the provincial and municipal campaigns, I know how diligent and conscientious she is in pursuit of a healthier, cleaner, and more affordable city for all Torontonians. She literally ran for her grandchildren as a matter of conscience. At the door, most constituents are concerned about similar issues: housing affordability, safe streets, clean parks, and effective transit. The good news is that there are solutions rooted in mindful policies.

Whither our democracy? It all happens with people in communities and neighbourhoods. We can mobilize participation in local politics, especially in our schools and community centres. In the moment, we can express solidarity with those education workers, nurses, personal support workers, child care workers whose rights are being stripped by a government that is definitely not “for the people.”



## Kids are expensive

### An Educators RESP can help

Education opens doors and creates infinite possibilities. So when it comes to your grandchild's Registered Education Savings Plan, you want to make every dollar count. With our low-fee RESP, featuring a 20% lower management fee, even more of your money goes into saving for your grandchild's education. It's easier to save for their future when you start now.

**Educators**  
FINANCIAL GROUP

Learn more at [educatorsfinancialgroup.ca/LFARM22](https://educatorsfinancialgroup.ca/LFARM22)

Helping the education community, and their families, achieve their financial goals since 1975.

\*20% lower management fee than our A Series Educators Monitored Portfolios and Balanced Fund. Commissions, trailing commissions, management fees and expenses may all be associated with mutual funds. Please read the prospectus before investing. Mutual funds are not guaranteed, their value changes frequently and past performance may not be repeated.

## WILLIAM FLETCHER—PART II—*RON FLETCHER*

William Fletcher, the Scottish immigrant was still in his twenties when he was one of the first graduates of Toronto Normal School. He took short term teaching positions around Toronto, boarding with the parents of some of his students, usually for three months at a time. The pay he received, then calculated in pounds, was barely enough to enable him to study for the Presbyterian ministry.

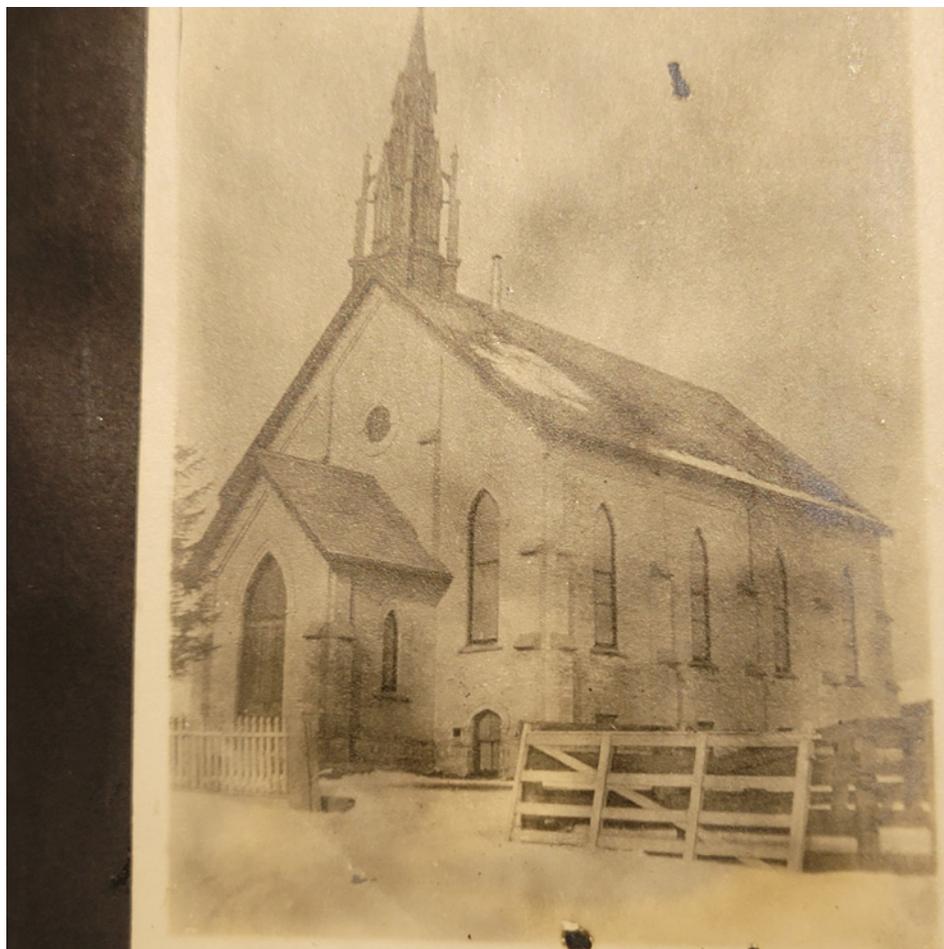
In 1851 there were eight teachers in Etobicoke, each with his own section. Of these eight, William was the only one who had teacher training. He boarded with the Shaver family. This family included the future social reformer and parliamentarian, James Shaver Woodsworth.

Their house, Applewood, still exists. Now a museum, it was moved to its present location when Highway 427 went through.

In 1854 William boarded with the Chisholm family. Their house, now known as Bovaird House, is the oldest in Brampton and is also now a museum.

But William sought to be a preacher and was appointed the first minister at Carlisle just north of London where he served as minister from 1859 to 1868. That church will soon become the Presbyterian Heritage Centre for Ontario.

In 1868 William was sent as a missionary to Manitoba, at that time not yet part of Canada. There, he walked



**Photos:** Page 14:  
Carlisle Presbyterian  
Church, circa 1850s.  
Page 15: Bovaird  
House, today

right into the Riel Rebellion.

One of William's parishioners implored him to intercede with Riel who had taken prisoners, including her husband, and was holed up in Fort Garry.

Once at the fort gates, William and another settler who later told the tale, were surrounded by Metis brandishing guns and shouting, "Shoot the dogs!" Either William's smooth talking or his minister's collar was at play as Riel was convinced to let them go.

Things calmed down enough for William to represent Manitoba in a report he gave to the Canadian Senate in Ottawa on conditions out west.

But soon the restless Scottish Canadian was off again. Now 52 years old he married a 21 year-old woman and moved to homestead in Nebraska where together they raised ten children. The descendants of William Fletcher can be found in the US Midwest to this day.

Who says teachers can't be multi-skilled?

William Fletcher's various activities reveal that teaching was yet to become the profession it is today.

*Ron Fletcher is a retired Elementary teacher. He taught History for the TDSB and is the great, great, great, grand nephew of William Fletcher.*



# ARM OUTINGS

## RAVINE HIKE IN WILKET CREEK—MICHELLE BARRACLOUGH

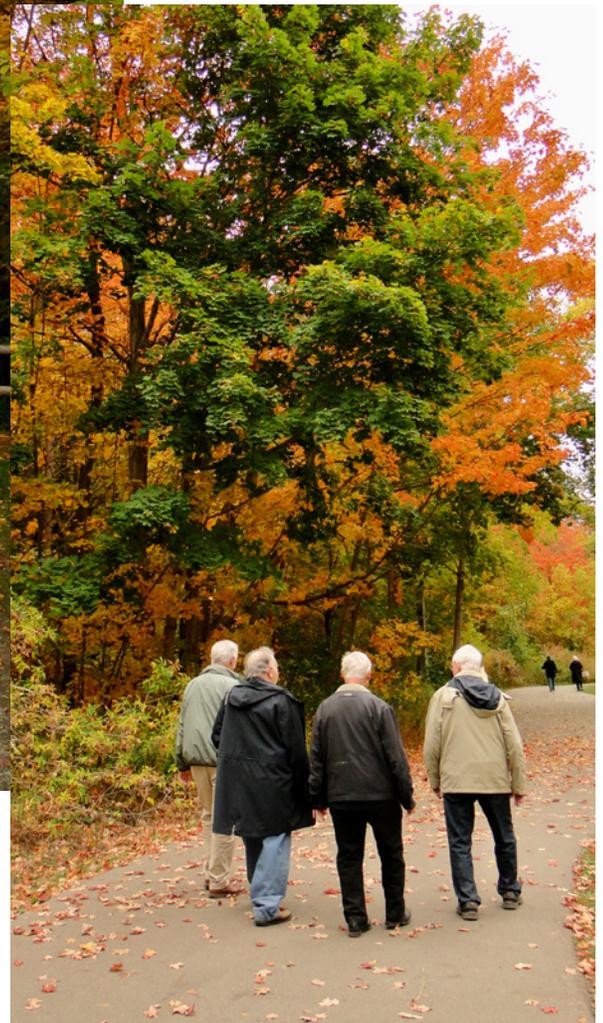
On a beautiful fall day in October, a group of intrepid travellers walked from the Toronto Botanical garden parking lot into the ravine at Wilket Creek, a tributary of the West Don River. Toronto is extremely fortunate to have a number of these ravines leading into Lake Ontario. The ravine system functions to direct overflow water into the lake, and is home to many species of wildlife, and a diverse Carolinian flora. It acts to cool the city in the summer and modify the chill of the winter. And, in particular, the colours that day were spectacular.

Now a bit of history of the area. Originally when the glaciers covered the area, we would have been standing under two CN Towers worth of ice and snow. But, as the ice melted and the land rose an ancient lake was formed called Lake Iroquois. The shore line followed Danforth road along from Casa Loma to the Scarborough bluffs and part of that same shoreline can be seen in the steep slopes of Wilket creek. The drainage of this lake was into New York State and the Ohio river. But as the ice dam up the St Lawrence melted some of the lake emptied and eventually became Lake Admiralty and then Lake Ontario. The lake is continually changing and modifying, as can be seen on the Scarborough Bluffs which continue to erode.

When the Europeans entered the picture Mr. Milne, a Scottish miller set up a grist mill at Wilket creek, but shortly found that there wasn't enough water to run the mill, so he relocated the mill to Don Mills and the DVP. Around 1954, the estate was sold to Rupert Edwards who used it as his country estate with the largest rock garden in the Americas at the time. Shortly thereafter the estate was given to the city of Toronto under the care of the Toronto Garden Club, and Edwards Gardens were established.

The ARM group walked through time and history to enjoy the vibrant colours, and it amazed us that the feel of the country was here in the city. I invite all our readers to visit the lovely part of Toronto and join our merry group on our next adventure.





## THE QUEEN IN RETIREMENT—*KOOM KANKESAN*

**Day One:** Woke up to find myself inside a berth on a ship but everything was black. No lights. Outside the portholes were waves of flame.

**Day Two:** We're dropped off at an airport hanger midst the white clouds of some Caribbean island. Wearing lime green dress and hat; somewhat miss the crown and the ermine robe.

A bunch of other people were there too. Don't know any of them but they look suitably posh. They load us onto a tourist coach kind of thing that takes us to the resort. On the way there, we see thousands of lost

souls screaming in purgatory. Not knowing what else to do, I smile and wave.

We got to the resort. I'm pretty tired but it's nice to be retired.

**Day Three:** Someone asks me if I'm gender-fluid whenever I use the pronoun "we" so I cease it.

**Day Four:** Margaret Thatcher's here and she keeps following me around. It's not just nobility here at the resort, evidently. Thatcher claims there's a plot to upset the order of things. Is she paranoid?



**Day Five:** Further talk of an uprising from the working classes beyond the walls. Today, Freddie Mercury asked me “Does the Queen like *Queen*?” I had a bone to pick with him using my name for his band.

**Day Six:** Diana keeps chasing me around the compound, yelling “Payback!” and pelting me with coconuts. Today was movie night and they played *The Terminator*. Everyone looked at me when Arnie was on screen, and at Diana when Sarah Connor appeared. Oh dear.

**Day Seven:** Hung out with Elizabeth the First and her pal, Shakespeare. People always say that if Shakespeare had lived in my time, he would have written movies. *The Tempest* is all well and good but could he have written *The Terminator*? You have to admit that the idea of a killer cyborg coming back from the future to kill the mother of the resistance is pretty clever! And if Shakespeare had written it, would James Cameron have been jealous? The only thing that could have made it better would be if the robot had won and crushed the resistance - I bet Shakespeare would have written things that way.

**Day Eight:** Today, Freddie Mercury asked me if I want to *be* in *Queen*.

**Day Nine:** The working-class souls from purgatory mounted an uprising and came over the walls. Apparently, Diana was working with them from the inside. Tried my best to stay out of it.

**Day Ten:** A lot of dead (or is it un-dead?) on both sides. The souls from purgatory have killed many of us but they sort of take a grudging liking to me. I never say anything about the losers or the winners.

**Day Eleven:** Boy, being retired seems somehow almost as crazy busy as when I was working. Funny.

**Day Twelve:** I am in *Queen*.

*Koom Kankesan has published three works of fiction, including The Tamil Dream. His next novel is slated to come out in 2024. Koom teaches English for the TDSB.*



OTIP RAEO.

# Escape starts here

Need some rest and relaxation?

Let OTIP help, with a chance to  
**WIN \$10,000 in CASH or 1 of 2  
 secondary prizes of \$1,500!**

Enter Now: [OTIPinsurance.com/ARM12-Win](https://www.otipinsurance.com/ARM12-Win)



No purchase necessary. Open to all active and retired Ontario education members. Must be an Ontario resident, minimum 18 years of age to enter. Contest closes December 31, 2022. Selected winners must correctly answer a skill-testing question. Full contest rules at [www.otip.com/contest-rules](http://www.otip.com/contest-rules). Odds of winning depend on entries received by the draw date for the prizes.

## THE FROG & FIRKIN PUB—PUB REVIEW BY ALLAN HUX

The Frog & Firkin Pub  
4854 Yonge St., North York, Ontario  
M2N 5N2, 416-225-3764

[WWW.FIRKINPUBS.COM/](http://WWW.FIRKINPUBS.COM/)  
[THEFROGANDFIRKIN](http://THEFROGANDFIRKIN)

As I mentioned in my last pub review, I moved from the Yonge and Lawrence neighbourhood to the Yonge and Sheppard area in July, 2022, and I have found a second wonderful pub, the Frog & Firkin, 4854 Yonge St.

I find that having two favourite local pubs, one on the east side of Yonge St. and one on the west side is very convenient. There are a number of great features of The Frog and Firkin that I am pleased to share with you.

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

The Frog & Firkin is just a half block north of the Harlandale exit from the Sheppard subway station on the west side of Yonge St. It is a two-storey pub with an upstairs bar and booths plus a small dart room at the front looking out to Yonge St. Unfortunately, this area is only open after 5 p.m. and on weekends. It has a nice small out-door back patio that was lovely to sit in in mild weather and meet some folks who live in the area. The main floor has a number of tables on the right side of the main room and some tall tables and chairs that sit two to four people in the centre. The chairs have very comfortable high backs and I always pull one of these over to the bar replacing one of the stools.



I tend to drop into the pub in the afternoon on my way back from some meetings on the subway line and I sit at the bar. Here is where I met Alisha, Jasmine, Nicole, and Ellen who are regular servers. They are friendly with a good sense of humour. They are quick to serve you, to inform you what the special is on tap, and are happy to provide you with their excellent menu.

The Pub Salad is a combination of mixed greens, roasted beets, goat cheese, pumpkin seeds, balsamic dressing and it comes as a small for \$9.95 or a large for \$15.95. It normally comes with pickled red onions, but on my first visit, I told them that I have an onion allergy and they automatically exclude onions with my orders now. You can add chicken for \$4.00 and you have an amazing meal. In fact, this is absolutely the best salad I have eaten in any restaurant in Toronto. Having the warm, narrow slices of beets on top

of the salad is what has captured my taste buds.

I have introduced a few of my friends to The Frog & Firkin over the past four months and they say that they really enjoy the food and atmosphere. Jim Mile gave me a ride home from an ARM 12 Executive meeting on November 15 and so I took him for a late lunch. We went around to the south side of the main floor where there is a lovely sitting area with a comfortable couch and easy chairs that can accommodate a group of 6 to 10 friends. But, we sat at a regular table.

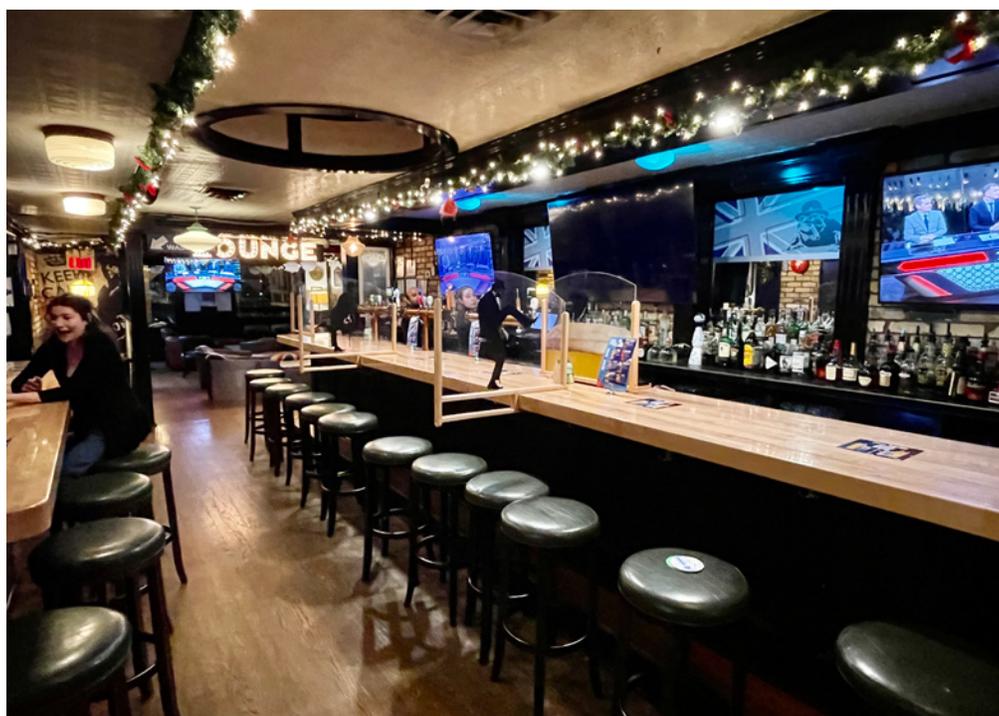
We started with wine; Jim had the 9 oz. house red wine (\$11) and I had the house white (\$11.) Jim reviewed the menu and ordered a loaded Firkin burger in a potato bun (\$17) and of course I had the large pub salad with chicken (\$19.) I also had a coffee (\$2.95) while Jim just had a glass of water. Fortunately, the stairs down to the

washrooms were just around the corner after all our liquids! Unfortunately, the pub is an older two-storey building, and so the upstairs bar and the downstairs washrooms are not wheel chair or walker accessible. Fortunately, the developers have not attacked this row

of two-storey buildings between Harlandale and Elmhurst yet and there are several ethnic restaurants in the block.

December is a very busy month with the ARM OTIP luncheon on December 5 and the ARM Holiday Party on December 12 along with our family

commitments. I would like to invite ARM members to register for a Happy New Year visit to The Frog and Firkin with me on Wednesday, January 11. Check the ARM 12 website or email [allanhux@sympatico.ca](mailto:allanhux@sympatico.ca). Happy Holidays!



# THE LAST WORD

## YOU'RE A LIAR AND I'M NOT—JIM MILE

(This conversation probably never occurred)

**Me:** You are a crypto neo fascist.

**You:** And you are a gullible degenerate comm-symp.

**Me:** Oh yea. How do you know that?

**You:** Well, you told me that you watch CBC and read the Toronto Star. That says it all.

**Me:** So, you read The Sun and the crap on the internet. That tells me you get distorted news at best but more likely half-baked reports and crazy conspiracies. Watch out! Disguised lizard people are among us. Look at the Ontario Government.

**You:** Oh, yea. Blah, blah. What makes you think you're not getting fake news?

**Me:** I trust CBC and the Star. They don't lie.

**You:** What! C'mon! Do you really believe that the rich tycoons like Murdoch, and their writers don't have a bias, an axe to grind? Do the writers ever dare to attack their editors or their billionaire owners? Can't your single digit IQ even see that?

**Me:** Ok. Star writers and reporters may have a slight left outlook, but they don't fabricate facts.

**You:** Maybe yes, maybe no but they certainly ignore facts or events that conflict with their outlook and that's just as bad. Selective reporting gives a false impression of the world.

**Me:** All right then, where or how do you find the real or total facts?

**You:** The reality is that one person can never know everything about an event.

**Me:** What a feeble cop-out! I get that there are trivial facts. A reporter has to be selective but hon-

est. How about if he/she is right there on the spot of a big event as a witness or even a participant?

**You:** Not even then. Here's an example. Suppose you're a soldier in the trench during WW I, and you and several of your fellow soldiers repel an enemy attack on your post. Would you consider that a victory? At the same time, further away from your small group, the larger enemy force has broken through and routed the rest of your army. So, that's a defeat in the greater and larger picture.

**Me:** Yeah, but the losing general at HQ would know.

**You:** True but he might very well lie to everyone to protect himself. And the winning general might inflate the victory for any number of reasons.

**Me:** Well then if I can't trust first-hand reports, how can I get at the truth? Isn't there an unbiased objective observer?

**You:** Probably not. Everyone has coloured eyeglasses and sees events distorted. Recent events are most of the time, incompletely or incorrectly reported.

**Me:** Yes, so that has to include you, Sherlock. You might have had a relative who suffered in the war or who was a conscientious objector or God knows what else.

**You:** All right. Consider this. You can't argue with science. A scientific fact is backed by repeatable experiments. Any phony or mistaken evidence is quickly caught by fellow scientists.

**Me:** Finally, you slipped up and said something sensible.

**You:** No! It's really baloney.

*To be continued.*