

AFTER SCHOOL

Volume 25, Issue 3—May 2024 • www.armch12osstf.ca



REMEMBERING PAUL ROOK

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PATAGONIA AND BEYOND

AFTER SCHOOL

VOLUME 25, ISSUE 3, MAY 2024

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.

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IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome to this special Spring 2024 issue of *After School*, in honour of our friend, and colleague, Paul Rook, who sadly passed away this spring. Thanks to those who shared their memories of Paul.

Along with Presidents' messages and reports we hope you enjoy a trip to the *End of the Earth* (pg. 20) and reviews of the Cyber Crime Presentation (pg. 14) and west end luncheon. (pg. 15).

May 23 is a tour of the Holocaust Museum (pg. 13). You can add your name to the list to join the tour by May 20.

Organized by the Ontario Health Coalition (OHC), we hope you'll join ARM members and take part in the huge rally and march to Queen's Park, on May 30 to help *Stop the Privatization of our Public Health Care*. (pg. 16). After the march join your ARM colleagues to rest your feet and refresh at the pub,

"Sin and Redemption" reviewed by Allan Hux (pg. 18).

Lastly and importantly please note the call for **Nominations to the ARM** executive (pg) and consider joining the team to keep ARM active. **Our Annual General Meeting** will be held June 5 at the Latvian Centre (pg. 13). Watch your emails for more information and join us to celebrate summer.

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. 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 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.



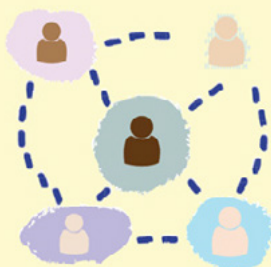
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CHECK OUT NEWSLETTERS AND THE CALENDAR AT
WWW.ARMCH12OSSTF.CA

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MEMORIES OF PAUL ROOK

BY CHARLIE HAWKES, ARM C12—VICE-PRESIDENT

Our chapter was saddened to learn that Paul died on March 21 in Scarborough Grace Hospital from internal complications following a mild stroke. He had suffered several health challenges for a number of years that confined him to his home in Scarborough.

Paul began his career as a History teacher at David and Mary Thomson CI in Scarborough. He became involved in the OSSTF rising from branch President, to political action chairman, and finally, election as a multi-year OSSTF President of Scarborough (previous District 16). Following amalgamation of Toronto, he became the original President of OSSTF District 12.

He returned to teaching briefly, retired, then helped form ARM, becoming Vice President of Chapter 12.

Paul was long associated with the NDP. He was an assistant briefly to John Harney, a federal leadership candidate and ran himself as a provincial candidate. In retirement, he served on the boards of Agincourt Community Services, and Scarborough General Hospital. He taught in the Life program for adults at Toronto Metropolitan University, and ran conflict resolution seminars for adults in a variety of occupations. His recurring health problems took him away from these activities for the last several years.

An avid reader, he organized a book club, named Clio after the Greek muse of History. After 23 years, the club is



still meeting to read and discuss books dealing with history and politics. Poignantly, he passed on the same day as the Clio book club met.

BY CHRISTOS ASLANIDIS, FORMER VICE PRESIDENT, OSSTF TORONTO

I Remember Paul Rook

Back in the 80's, if you were a teacher in the Scarborough Board of Education, and you were interested in OSSTF, you knew who Paul Rook was. I can't remember a time when he was not in some leadership position in what was known then as District 16. What was clear to anyone who heard him speak, was his rationality, calmness and dedication to the members, the union and progressive politics. It was Paul who encouraged me to become more involved in OSSTF, and I really got to know him and see his work when he recruited me to work on Jim McQueen's campaign when he contested for a position on the

Provincial Executive. Paul was Jim's Campaign Manager, and he ran the campaign like a general, with complex and meticulous strategies, planning and execution. A Paul Rook campaign was a site to behold. And it was, more often than not, successful.

When he became President of District 16, he encouraged me to run for the D16 Executive, and it was while I was on the Executive that I saw how hard Paul worked; to the point where there seemed to be little else in his life, and where he jeopardized his own health. Too often, Paul tried to do everything. But, he did get things done.

Eventually, Paul became the first pres-

ident of OSSTF Toronto District 12 after Mike Harris forced the amalgamation of the GTA municipalities and school boards in the late 90's. Paul was president for only one year, and after he decided to step down, Jim McQueen was elected President.

Paul Rook was much more than just a union leader. He was an excellent teacher, an avid historian with keen insight into Canadian history and contemporary politics. He also had an interest in the theatre, having several wonderful shows under his belt as a teacher.

Paul Rook was a remarkable leader in OSSTF. He was a model and a mentor. I shall miss him dearly.



MEMORIES OF PAUL ROOK

BY ALLAN HUX, ARM C12—MEMBER AT LARGE

Paul Rook and I met in our first year at Western in 1966. We majored in History and Politics and attended a few of the same classes over the next 4 years. Paul went into teaching while I attended graduate school at Western and U of T. I took the B.Ed Program in 1974–1975 and had a placement at David and Mary Thomson C.I. with

Charlie Hawkes. Paul was in their History department and we re-connected. We continued to have contact as active members of OSSTF. Paul invited me to join the Clio book club that he started when he retired, and I continue to participate in it. Over the past four years Paul's health had deteriorated and he became housebound. I would call him

at least five times per week and we would have half-hour chats about current events. I would kid him about being a stubborn, Scots Presbyterian from Galt and we would reminisce about our lives growing up in Ontario and Canada. I admire Paul and will continue to miss him.

BY MANFRED NETZEL, ARM C12—PRESIDENT

I would like to share two anecdotal memories of my friend and colleague Paul.

We were both actively involved in OSSTF in the 1980s and '90s at the Provincial and local level in Metro Toronto. Initially, we were both local District Presidents in the pre-amalgamation structure of Metro Toronto, he in Scarborough and I in the City of York. As such, we attended weekly Presidents' meetings in the former Metro OSSTF Offices that stood immediately beside the now demolished Provincial Office @ 60 Mobile Drive in Don Mills. Commuting was easier back then, so I could leave home in the High Park area around 9:00 a.m. and be on time for the meeting starting @ 9:30 a.m. Paul had it easier both because he lived in the East End and seldom drove himself.

When we were elected (along with Sheila Vandenberg from North York) to be the senior leadership team for the new amalgamated Toronto District 12 in 1998–99, it took a while for us to recognize over 100 schools and service the 7,000 members in every part of the new Megacity. Staffing, grievances, PD and dealing with local school issues in former Boards or schools were overwhelming for all of

us on the smaller Executive and with fewer support staff compared to the past. Of course, Paul being the new President was the 'lightning rod' for many disillusioned members and often forced to deal with new Board superintendents who didn't know us or tried to manipulate us because of that lacking relationship. After that first "year from hell", Paul, Sheila and I decided not to seek re-election again. Paul and I planned to return to the classroom for the balance of our careers, while Sheila successfully ran for the position of Treasurer of Provincial OSSTF and served the entire membership of the Federation for many years. I held Paul in particular esteem for his courage and commitment in those formative years of District 12 Toronto.

This leads to my second story about Paul after we had returned to classroom teaching. As we were both Social Science educators, sources and lesson planning were sometimes shared. In this case, the introduction of a new Grade 11 American History course in Sep-

tember 2001 (iconic date?) The new recommended textbook was both very expensive and in short supply due to the US publisher involved. My school had no existing class set of the prior Grade 13 textbook (written by current ARM C.12 Executive member Allan Hux) and had not yet budgeted for the pricey US version. In desperation I contacted Paul to see IF he might have some copies of the older textbook until I obtained the other. Not only did Paul agree to "lend" me an entire class set of the texts he wasn't using, but even offered to deliver them personally as he was driving himself now. Quite the dedicated friend and colleague I would say!! RIP, Mr. Rook.





PRESIDENT'S REPORT—MANFRED NETZEL

As this is my last contribution as President to our local Chapter 12 newsletter for the current 2023–24 term of office, I wanted to identify some of our collective achievements due to the commitment and diligence of your leadership group. The Executive has been a constant source of support and commitment for both myself and the general membership, for which I am grateful.

The term started in September with a popular Travel Presentation on September 20th organized by our Treasurer, *Michelle Barraclough*. Just days later, the Ontario Health Coalition (OHC) required our support and participation on September 25th at Queen's Park. The province-wide Day of Protest was in response to the increased cuts to health-care funding by the Ford PCs, and ongoing attacks on collective bargaining rights of health-care workers and others in the public sector. Besides offering to encourage ARM members' attendance, the Executive decided to make a financial donation to the Greater Toronto Health Coalition. That support is further in evidence through the ongoing efforts of VP *Charlie Hawkes* and Executive Officer *Allan Hux*.

Keeping the membership informed and updated about both their health/travel benefits provided through OTIP/RTIP and financial services provided by Educators Financial Group is always an important responsibility of the Chapter. This is best exercised in annual workshops by the benefits providers in the fall and early winter. This was carried out on November 22nd for RTIP and January 17th for Educators Financial Group using the Latvian Centre for both events.



The New Year saw the ARM Council-inspired and organized Homecare Survey initiative undertaken to survey both retired and active members (where Districts/Bargaining Units showed interest) about the personal experiences and outcomes of home-care services across the province. Due largely to the efforts of our Secretary and database expert, *Bill Pryde*, we were able to reach out to our Chapter membership both through an online survey and a mailed paper package for those not online. The result was some 25 replies in our Chapter and almost 200 from all ARM Chapters and their respective Districts. Collected data usage and strategizing that usage will then be determined by the OSSTF/FEESO Provincial leadership over the next several months. I will keep you informed as things develop.

On February 13th, Executive member *Donna Preston* organized a popular

online presentation by a Toronto Police Services constable assigned to monitor cyber crime developments and public education to enhance the public's personal and data security. The newer and more sophisticated use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for both positive and criminal applications was also discussed by the participants. During the AGM of OSSTF/FEESO held during March Break, I was able to assist with the ARM Council display booth, which the Coordinator thought had a lot of interest from the delegates over the course of the Assembly.

Since the political attacks on Ontario's public health-care system by the PCs has now extended into hospital privatization plans by Queen's Park, the theme of the West-End luncheon presentation was about that topic. The presenter was a VP of the local GTHC (Greater Toronto

Health Coalition), who described the tactics and also offered some strategies to fight this development. Pictures with captions about this event can be found on the Chapter 12 website (armch12@osstf.ca) which is always updated and made attractive by our webmaster, *Christos Aslanidis*. Despite some serious personal and family challenges, Chris continues to be involved in event promotion and registration.

Of course, we are kept informed about our Teachers' Pension Plan through our in-house expert, *Paul*

Headdon, whose latest analysis appears elsewhere in this issue. At the same time, *Allan Hux* keeps us both entertained through his regular pub visits and reviews, and engaged through organizing excursions such as to the Toronto Holocaust Museum on May 23rd. Check out the website for more info. *Don Wright*, *Jim Mile* and *Candice Phoenix* offer the additional talents found in the leadership group.

Lastly, we need to recognize the creative efforts in producing this very publication that you are currently en-

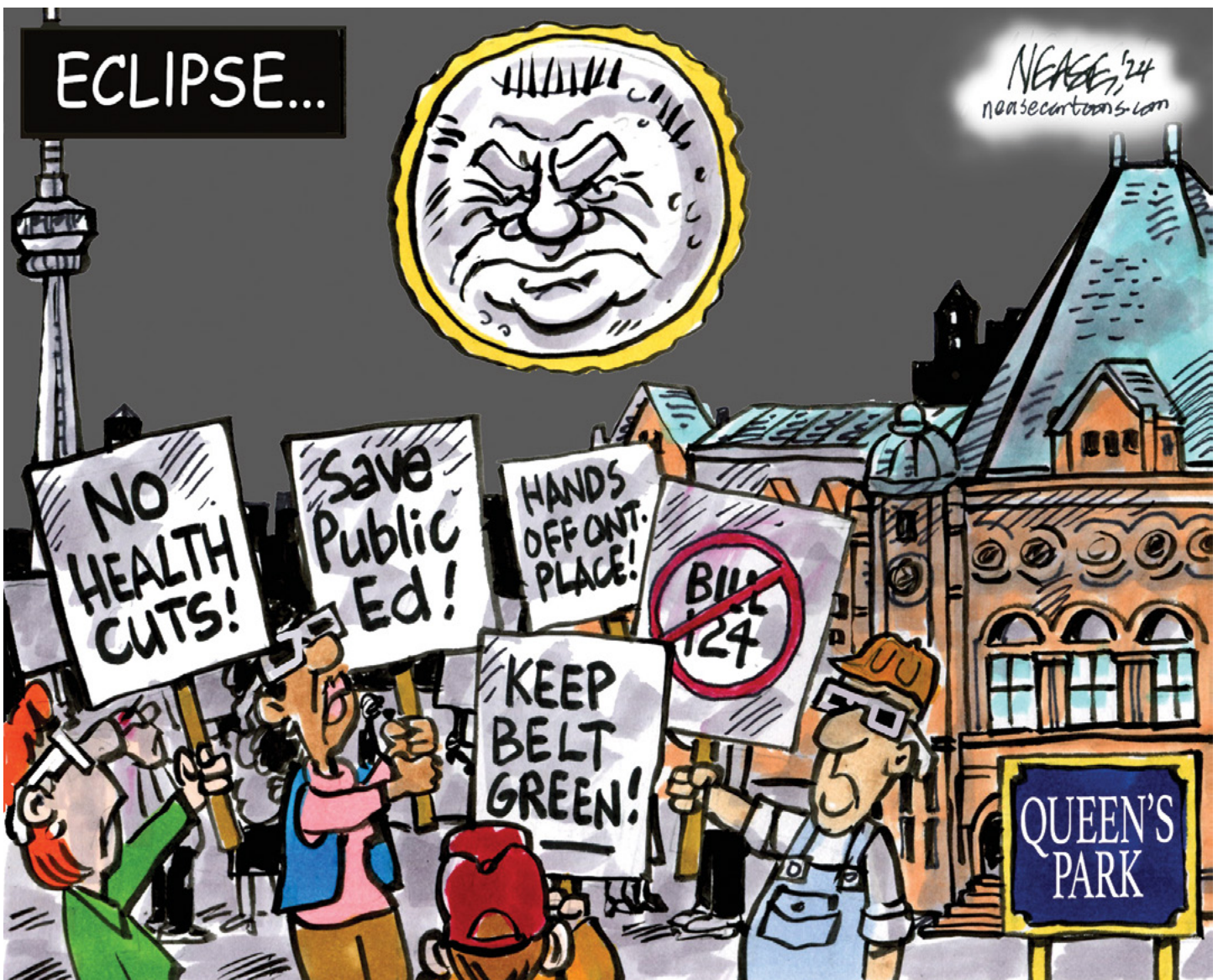
joying. Co-Editors *Ronda Allan* and *Eileen Markwick* are a fabulous duo in collecting, editing/proofing and graphically presenting the content in an attractive and concise style.

I am truly blessed to work with such a fine group of colleagues on the Executive.

Have a fine summer with family and friends.

In Federation,

Manfred



OSSTF TORONTO REPORT—MICHELLE TEIXEIRA, PRESIDENT, OSSTF TORONTO

Spring is a busy time for those of us in education, but it is also the time of year we realize that another school year will soon be over. The past couple of months have also seen a very busy TDSB budget season as the school board grapples with increased demands and decreased funding.

By way of background, at the beginning of budget season, the TDSB was facing a budget shortfall of 35 million dollars. After some adjustments, that number has dropped to 26.5 million dollars but is obviously still fairly significant given that they have dipped into their reserves as much as they possibly can. The original plan was for trustees to vote on a budget on April 2, 2024 before the Grants for Student Needs (GSNs) were released as a potentially strategic move to approve a budget based on need rather than on inadequate funding. However, that plan did not materialize. There were so many proposed cuts that over 120 people delegated to the TDSB. Further, as trustees felt the pressure from their employees, parents and community members, a number of motions were carried that requested staff to do further investigation and more public consultation.

Amid this, The Chair of the TDSB sent a letter to the Minister of Education asking for more funding to be provided to the TDSB. The letter points out that if the Province simply paid the TDSB for the full amount of employee salaries, that would almost account for their total budget deficit. The letter also reiterates that the TDSB spent 70 million dollars of its own funds to implement Covid-related health and safety protocols as required by the Province during

the pandemic and that if those costs were repaid as initially promised, the TDSB could balance the budget and increase its reserves once again.

Quietly, and without announcement, the Ministry of Education not only released its education funding on April 26, 2024, but it also fundamentally changed the funding formula—and not for the better as we have been advocating for, since the inception of the flawed formula introduced under Mike Harris. In-depth analysis is still being conducted, but the Core Education Funding, which are what were formerly the GSNs are now being called, represents a decrease to overall education funding when accounting for inflation and increases in student enrollment. Per pupil funding has failed to keep up with inflation under the Ford Government, having been cut by almost 10% since 2018.

There was no consultation or review on these significant changes with any stakeholder. It is clear that this is part of the Ford Government's overall goal of keeping education costs contained and starving the publicly-funded education system.

TDSB trustees do not have easy decisions to make. Though we, and many of them, denounce the proposed cuts, the fact remains that if trustees do move forward and approve an unbalanced budget, the risk of the Province taking the TDSB into supervision is very real. And with that comes the risk of even deeper cuts as a supervisor would likely look to make cuts wherever they could without regard for programming or community needs.

Indeed, this is another part of Ford and Lecce's plan—starve the school



Michelle Teixeira, OSSTF Toronto President

boards and perhaps eventually remove local voices from the equation. Remove the direct line that community members currently have to their elected representatives on school boards, centralize power and privatize public services.

This is precisely why we need to lay the groundwork now to defeat Ford in the next election. Together with Toronto and York Region Labour Council, Elementary Teachers of Toronto, CUPE 4400 Toronto Education Workers, and parent and community groups, we have launched the Fund Our Schools Campaign - www.fundourschools.ca

This campaign focuses on organizing at the ground level, in the schools and in the community, and targets Conservative MPPs who are vulnerable in the next election. Please check out the website, and stay tuned for ways in which you can help in the coming months.

PENSION PLAN REPORT APRIL 2024—PAUL HEADDON

OTPP will invest \$US 80 million in India's leading B2B fintech company called Perfios Digitizats Financial Services, in the banking, insurance and commerce industries in India. It also has a growing presence in South-East Asia, the Middle East and in Africa. (Source OTPP)

OTPP and Boreal IM logistics have completed two investments in Germany totaling 64,000 sqm. They have acquired a high quality 37,000 sqm contemporary warehouse in Bochaum and another one, a 27,000 sqm warehouse in Bornheim, south of Cologne. Construction on the second warehouse has commenced with delivery expected in 2025. OTPP has been partnering with Boreal IM since 2022. (Source OTPP)

OTPP has a one-year total-fund net return of 1.97 per cent for 2023. The net return was driven mainly by strong returns from public equities and credit. These gains were offset by losses in infrastructure and real estate. Net assets grew to \$247.5 billion. Investment income of \$5.5 billion and contributions of \$3.3 billion for the year were offset by benefits paid of \$7.6 billion and administrative expenses of \$0.9 billion.

The fund's poor performance was driven by several factors, including underexposure in listed equities which performed very well last year, as well as valuation adjustment in the infrastructure and real estate portfolio due

to higher interest rates and asset-specific events that negatively impacted selected investments.

The Plan is fully funded with a preliminary funded surplus of \$1.9 billion. This is the eleventh consecutive year that the plan is fully funded (assets exceed future pension liabilities). (Source *Globe and Mail* March 13, 2024)

Jo Taylor, OTPP CEO, has suggested that about 35 per cent of the pension assets are in Canada. He expects that this amount of assets will increase in the future. Mr. Taylor also said pension funds prefer Canadian investments, all else being equal, because there is no risk to exposure to foreign currency.

There are limited opportunities in infrastructure in Canada, and the expected returns don't match what OTPP could earn abroad. (Source *Globe and Mail* March 13, 2024.)

Our Plan has about 10 per cent of plan's assets in Canadian equities.

Recently there has been a campaign to influence public pension plans to make more investments in Canada. More than 90 chief executive officers at some of Canada's largest companies signed a letter to "amend the rules governing pension plans to encourage them to invest in Canada". This has received sharp pushback from some pension executives who argue that any regulations that direct more investment would cloud the clear man-

date that pension plans have to earn the best returns for their members. (Source *Globe and Mail*, March 8, 2024)

In 2006 publicly traded Canadian companies (equities) consisted of 28 per cent of the assets of domestic pension funds. By last year that proportion had declined to 4 per cent. (Source *Globe and Mail* March 7, 2024)

Pension fund executives would like the federal and provincial governments to put some of their infrastructure for sale, e.g. airports, bridges, ports, pipelines and toll roads. If this occurs the average consumer will have their expenses increased. This will probably increase the overall inflation rate for Canadians.

CPP has 14 per cent of its assets invested in Canada. Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec has 27 per cent of its assets in Canada and OTPP has 35 per cent.

Our pension plan investments include the Toronto Dominion Centre, container terminals in Vancouver's Arterra, a major wine producer that operated the Wine Rack retail chain, and PEI's Atlantic Aqua Farms, a leading North American producer of mussels and oysters.

Canada's public pension plans are among the best performing in the world. Chrystia Freeland described the Canadian public pensions as "crown jewels of the country". (Source *Toronto Star* March 21, 2024)

ORGANIZING INSTITUTE—PAUL KOSSTA

After the imposition of Bill 115, Provincial OSSTF/FEESO began a process of reviewing its internal and external efforts to better organize against any future draconian actions of provincial governments. This process culminated with a strong willingness to be more prepared for future actions.

To this end, a Better Schools, Stronger Communities workgroup was created on the principles of how to organize for power, how to build connections with your schools and districts, and how to support community groups with their own organizing.

The workgroup, led by Provincial staffer and organizer, Munib Sajjad, invited over 100 OSSTF/FEESO members to attend the first Organizing Institute on March 22 and 23. At this meeting, the keynote speaker was Jackson Potter, Vice-President of the Chicago Teachers' Union. He talked how his union has developed internal strength and has been able to garner community support for many of their efforts. He discussed how they have centred students as the primary interest in their contracts. This included demands that every student have access to safe housing and adequate nutrition. For them, caring for the community has become as important as seeking better contracts for members.

The more than one hundred participants to the Institute discussed and

reviewed the goals and objectives for OSSTF/FEESO for the months and years ahead. A strong interest in community organizing was expressed and everyone was reminded that the union's power doesn't come from its bureaucracy but from engagement and action of each individual member. Attendees were further reminded that individual members have families and communities and carry with them a variety of identities, experiences and interests. For community organizing to work, the leadership of the union has to listen and act alongside members and communities.

The Institute expressed a strong desire to have all the different components of OSSTF/FEESO, including ARM, be involved in this project. A number of ARM chapters attended and have been included in subsequent meetings.

To further strengthen this endeavour, AMPA 2024, passed the Strategic Action Plan which includes the creation of up to six provincial office full-time community organizer positions for the 2024–25 school year. In the following 2025–26 school year, these positions will be re-oriented to election organizer tasks.

This dynamic, exciting initiative by OSSTF/FEESO will be in the forefront of not only fighting back against draconian government actions, but in leading for a better education system and community.

ARM EVENTS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024

Join your colleagues and friends for the first in-person ARM Chapter 12 AGM in years.

WHEN: June 5, 2024, 10:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

WHERE: The Latvian Cultural Centre, Galleria Room on the main floor right beside the main entrance at 4 Credit Union Dr, North York, ON

M4A 2N8. **(Note this is a change from the original venue.)**

Attending the AGM is one of the best ways you have to get to understand our organization and our membership.

Election of the ARM Ch. 12 Executive takes place at the AGM.

Any member of ARM Chapter 12 may run for office. (See below article for details.)

Registration to attend the AGM will be conducted via email. Look for the invitation in your email inbox.

There will be no charge to attend this year's AGM, and a complimentary light lunch will be served at the end of the meeting, but **REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.**

Stay tuned for other details on guest speakers and agenda that will be posted on the [ARM Ch. 12 website](#).

ELECTION OF THE ARM CH. 12 EXECUTIVE

Any member of ARM Chapter 12 may run for office.

Candidates are asked to download the nomination form, (the link is below) complete it and attach the completed form to an email and send it to: armchapter12@gmail.com by May 26. This is the nomination deadline.

Candidates are reminded that they cannot run “from the floor.”

[ARM Chapter 12 Nomination Form 2024](#)

TORONTO HOLOCAUST MUSEUM TOUR

Members of ARM 12 are invited to tour the Toronto Holocaust Museum and will have the option of enjoying a lunch at Eisenbergs Café.

When: May 23, 2024, 11:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

This is an amazing museum with interactive exhibits. The tour starts with a short introductory movie.

Where: Attendees are asked to gather by 11:00 a.m. at the Prosserman Jewish Community Centre, 4588 Bathurst Street, North York, ON

Admission: \$18 and \$12 for people 65 +

Group rate with 15 + members is \$12/member

Parking is included. Show regular Canadian ID at the

Parking Booth.

Allan Hux will pay the group's full admission and individuals will pay Allan the \$12 with cash or cheque on site, May 23.

Attendees are asked to register by Monday, May 20 with ARM 12 using the following link: eventbrite.ca/e/toronto-holocaust-museum-tour-tickets-898143901587

For more information on the museum, the location and the eatery, visit:

torontoholocaustmuseum.org

prossermanjcc.com

eisenbergsandwiches.com/dairy-menu

If you have any further questions, please contact the organizer, Allan Hux, at allanhux@sympatico.ca

CYBER CRIME PRESENTATION—DONNA PRESTON

I hope all who joined us online February 13 for the cybersecurity presentation went away well informed. Constable Little from the Toronto Police Service gave a very comprehensive overview of how we continue to be targeted online. Using technology is increasingly necessary and often unavoidable. We are very vulnerable to sophisticated criminal operations on these platforms. We need to be aware and take as many precautions as we can, but as Constable Little reminded us that is a reactive response.

My take away? Absolutely, we need to be aware, vigilant and sceptical. Shouldn't we also have a reasonable expectation that business and government will deliver a higher standard of online safety? As we are increasingly forced to use this technology it is incumbent upon business and certainly government to ensure our collective safety. Downloading responsibility for that safety to the end user is an abrogation of their responsibility.



Constable Little, Toronto Police Service

ARM LUNCHEON AT THE CANADIANA—EILEEN MARKWICK

On Wednesday April 17 we held our traditional “west end” luncheon in Etobicoke and welcomed

Michelle Robidoux as our guest speaker. Charlie Hawkes, introduced and welcomed Michelle, who is one of the vice-presidents of the Greater Toronto Health Coalition (GTHC). Charlie is our main contact with the coalition and the Ontario Health Coalition (OHC), through weekly Zoom meetings and help with the distribution of printed and digital materials. Michelle spoke about the “Ford Government’s deceptive undermining of our medicare system by supporting and financ-

ing for-profit health companies”. Her well-researched information, statistics and tables gave us all something to be deeply concerned about and were very well received by those in attendance. Michelle distributed flyers about the May 30 Rally at Queen’s Park organized by the OHC and GTHC (see the flyer in this newsletter). Help to distribute the flyers would be much appreciated. Manfred thanked Michelle and presented her with a donation to GTHC on behalf of ARM. (See page 16–17 for the May 30 Rally flyer.)



Charlie Hawkes and Michelle Robidoux (GTHC)



Manfred Netzel and Michelle Robidoux (GTHC)

People over Profit

The Ford government does what it can get away with. But public pressure forced them to backtrack on their Greenbelt land development scandal. **If we all take action, we can pressure them to stop privatizing our health care too.**

Take Action

- ✓ Hand out leaflets in your neighbourhood, at work, in community groups
- ✓ Join your local Health Coalition and help build the fightback
- ✓ Join the major protest— and bring friends!
- ✓ Tell your MPP: stop the privatization of our health care



Thursday, May 30 at noon Stop the privatization of public health care

In Toronto: Gather at noon at the south side of Nathan Phillips Square across from the Sheraton (123 Queen St. W) We will march to the Ontario Legislature at Queen's Park. There is a designated space at Queen's Park for people with mobility issues—we will be at Queen's Park at 1 p.m.

Northern Ontario: **Sault Ste. Marie:** Gather at noon at the Roberta Bondar Pavilion, march & rally. **Thunder Bay:** Gather at noon at mini Queen's Park

Eastern Ontario: **Ottawa:** Gather at noon across the street from The Ottawa Hospital General Campus at Faircrest Heights Park (550 Smyth Rd).

Cornwall: Gather at 4 p.m. outside MPP Quinn's office (120 Second St. W.)

Across Ontario: There will be buses to the rallies & marches in each region. **See our website for details and to reserve a space on a bus.**



Which Card, Doug Ford?



Stop the privatization of our public health care

Instead of expanding services in our public hospitals, the Ford government is giving hundreds of millions in public dollars to for-profit corporations to privatize health care.

As he announced his plan to privatize, Mr. Ford promised we would never have to pay for care with our credit card, only our OHIP card. But his government is letting private clinics get away with charging Ontarians for health care, which is illegal under our Protection of Public Medicare laws.

“I wouldn't have spoken out, if I hadn't heard Premier Ford say these private clinics won't charge you extra. It feels like it's my public duty to say that's not true.”

Lois Cooper was referred to a for-profit clinic for eye surgery. Under the Canada Health Act, patients can't be charged user fees for medically needed surgery. But by the time it was all done, **Lois was charged close to \$8,000.**

Watch her story on CBC News: Medical upselling in Canada can cost patients thousands of dollars, April 2, 2023



Plundering Public Health... For Profit



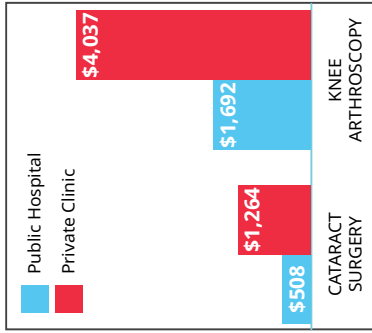
For more than a hundred years, Ontarians have donated, fundraised & volunteered to build our local public hospitals and their services. Together we built a world class public hospital system we could be proud of.

Privatization couldn't happen unless they dismantled the public hospitals: underfunded them, pushed them into crisis, and left them without the resources they need to provide for our communities... and that is exactly what the Ford government is doing.

The Ford government is paying **double** for surgeries at a private for-profit hospital.

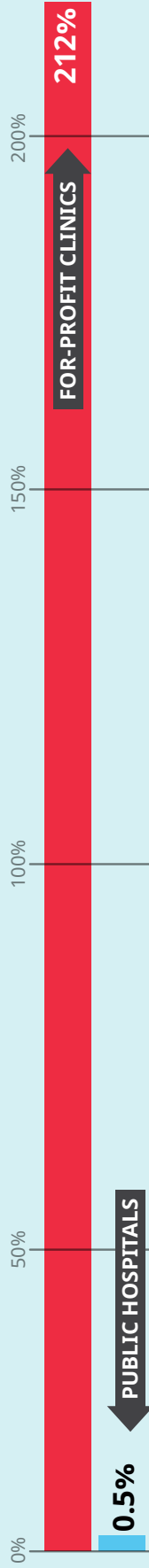
After she left office with the Ford government, former Health Minister Christine Elliott became a lobbyist for a corporation that owns a for-profit hospital.

The Ford government increased funding to that hospital by 278% and is funding them more than double the cost per surgery than our local public hospitals— paid by our taxes.



Source: CBC News; November 14, 2023

Real-dollar cuts for public hospitals, huge funding increases to for-profit clinics



Source: Government of Ontario, Budget Estimates 2023-24 & 2022-23.



Operating rooms in public hospitals across Ontario are sitting empty or underused— Meanwhile, the Ford government is increasing funding to private clinics by more than 200%.

Ontario funds its public hospitals at the lowest rate in Canada.

Every service that has been cut from our public hospitals has been privatized. It's not a coincidence. It is the plan.

Instead of privatizing, Ontario should match the funding other provinces give and improve our hospital services under public ownership & control.

For-profit privatization is an urgent threat to our health care

It siphons funding & staff out of our local public hospitals, forcing them to close services.

It costs more. Private clinics charge OHIP and they charge patients thousands of dollars in user fees on top, even though such fees are illegal.

Privatization enriches corporations at the expense of the health and well being of regular Ontarians.



For more information visit StopForProfitHealthcare.ca

SIN & REDEMPTION SCHNITZEL HOUSE—PUB REVIEW BY ALLAN HUX

Sin & Redemption Schnitzel House
136 McCaul St, Toronto, ON M5T 1W2
416.640.9197
sinandredemption.com

Manfred Netzel recommended this pub, and I was pleased to go downtown once again to check out a pub close to the subway and the Art Gallery of Ontario. Sin & Redemption is on McCaul St. just north of Dundas St. W., three short blocks from the St. Patrick subway station.

My son, Ryan Hux, agreed to meet me here for lunch on Saturday, April 6 at 12 noon. Ryan lives off Lake Shore Blvd. W. just west of Bathurst St. It was such a beautiful, sunny day that Ryan walked up Bathurst across Queen St. and up McCaul St., and we met on the corner of McCaul and Dundas.

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 I have already addressed the location, and I will address the rest in random order.

We entered the pub and were seated in one of their three rooms that have windows looking out to the east side of McCaul St. This is when I discovered one possible reason for the pub's name. St. Patrick's Catholic Church is directly across the street and is a very impressive, large stone structure. Its imposing presence no doubt helps people avoid "sin" and receive "redemption" when they slip up.

Sin & Redemption has an extensive menu with lots of sandwiches, salads, burgers, and full meals. Ryan boldly selected the lamb shank which came with fries [\$29] and it was very tasty. They do have a special section of schnitzels, and I selected the pork schnitzel with a creamy mushroom sauce, fries, and salad [no onions!] for \$29. The slice of pork was huge and there were many fries on a large metal platter. I ate leisurely and realized that I would only need a modest snack for supper. The pork was delicious.

Our server, Agnes, was very gracious. She supplied us with water, took our orders of ginger ale [\$4] for Ryan and I had a glass of Lindemans Chardonnay [\$11], and served our meals promptly.

Our main meals were so substantial that we did not have room for dessert, but I asked to see the dessert section of the menu. They specialize in waffles with about six different sauces including maple syrup. I hope to try one of these on my next visit.

The pub is on a single level, but the washrooms are downstairs and so are not accessible for people with walkers or wheelchairs. They are labelled in the Abrahamic tradition for "Eve" and "Adam".

The total bill for Dad, including the tip, was \$82.49, and we had a lovely time together. I am delighted to invite ARM 12 members and their friends to join me on Thursday, May 30 at 2:30 p.m. after the OHC rally to experience Sin & Redemption.

Please let Allan know if you are going to join him by Monday, May 27 at allanhux@sympatico.ca.



TRAVELLING TO THE “ENDS OF THE EARTH”: PATAGONIA AND BEYOND—MANFRED NETZEL

This past March, my partner and I were able to experience a very unique and somewhat ‘exotic’ adventure to a region of our Hemisphere: Southern South America and Patagonia. The means of transportation was admittedly, not the most environmental nor intimate. Return flights of about 11–12 hrs. each via Air Canada then being plopped on a cruise ship with 2300+ passengers (1200 crew members) and one two-hour trip on a speedy catamaran through a very turbulent (but stunning) ocean-fed channel shared by Chile and Argentina...you get the idea. Of course, to see certain far-flung tourist destinations on this Earth, it becomes unreasonable or even irrational to contemplate other (less energy-consuming) forms of transportation. Nevertheless, an incredible two-week experience likely not to be repeated. I’ve included some photos which try to give a ‘snapshot’ of the more memorable natural, man-made and cultural experiences.

As a self-admitted Euro-centric educator, my curiosity about and respect for the enormous challenges faced by the 15th–16th C explorers of Spain, Portugal and later 18th–19th C English/German biologists or natural scientists (even pirates) to circumnavigate these waters and waterways with the ships, navigational tools and insufficient maps or charts of the time increased dramatically. Names like Magellan, Drake, von Humboldt, Darwin and later Roald Amundsen mentioned in school now have fuller meaning and resonance for me. Travelling in the late summer of the Southern Hemisphere was sometimes still quite uncomfortable as our ship sailed to such extreme latitudes that it was beyond the equiv-

alency of Africa’s Cape of Good Hope, Northern Labrador or Norway’s Arctic Circle. In fact, the closest we got to the Antarctic South Pole was still 1000 nautical miles away.

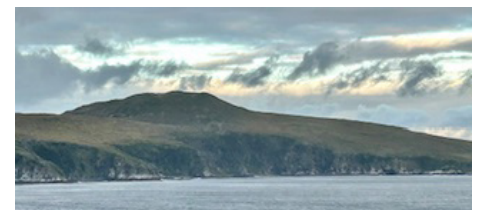
Marine and land-based wildlife, as expected, was fascinating even if not quite comparable to the other experience some 20 years ago of visiting the Galapagos Islands. Had it been a month later, many species might have already migrated to more northerly (warmer) migratory climates. Penguins are as adorable as panda bears, but their fearlessness towards humans is so remarkable, that signage at a penguin rookery reminded visitors to stay at least two meters away to avoid injury to the birds!!

Seals and sea lions are the same predictable noisy and smelly fish-eaters one finds in the Caribbean, Gulf or Southern California. Large birds of prey such as Andean condors and Magellan hawks are marvels of flight, while colonies of black & white Guanay cormorants have colourful reddish legs and feed in the open waters of the Humboldt Current off Chile and Peru. We even saw a scampering armadillo on one occasion running through scrub brush in a parched area of the penguin rookery near Punto Tombo.

Lastly, the presence of the Roman Catholic Church in the urban centres we docked at or toured is obvious, be it the Buenos Aires Cathedral, the Basilica or the nearby La Recoleta Cemetery where the famous, wealthy or heroic are buried. The legendary **Eva Peron** is encased in the family mausoleum, although her husband Juan had his body removed by unknown supporters some 50 years ago. At the same time,

the current and less popular Argentinian **Pope Francis** has not stopped the growing secularism of his homeland, nor its continental neighbours Chile and Uruguay. The capital cities have urban traits like any North American or European peer. What was unique to Santiago, Montevideo or Buenos Aires was the Spanish colonial past they shared, relative prosperity (especially the Uruguayan capital), a PASSION for soccer and an amazing level of inventiveness to fill the economic pitfalls of poor-value currency, hyper inflation of 200 per cent in Argentina’s case, and high energy costs leading to more use of diesel transportation. The prospects for significant increased electric-powered personal and commercial vehicles is likely not much in the future. Climate change had also seen major wildfires in Chile and Argentina during their spring and summer, followed by intense rain shortly before our arrival in Buenos Aires. Almost 200 people had died from Dengue fever- infected numerous mosquitoes by the end of the Easter Holiday...spray cans of OFF were selling for up to \$40 USD online!! And then there was the legendary TANGO dancing to behold and be amazed....

A trip like the one we experienced is not inexpensive for sure....but is a unique activity like this one worth consideration?? Of course, with many cruise companies and additional ‘bonuses’ to sweeten the coffee. Enjoy.



Cape Horn—south side



Cormorants at the “Lighthouse at the end of the World”—1,000 nautical miles from the Antarctic pole.



Southerly terminus of the 30,000 km Pan-American Highway—from Alaska to this spot in Terre del Fuego.



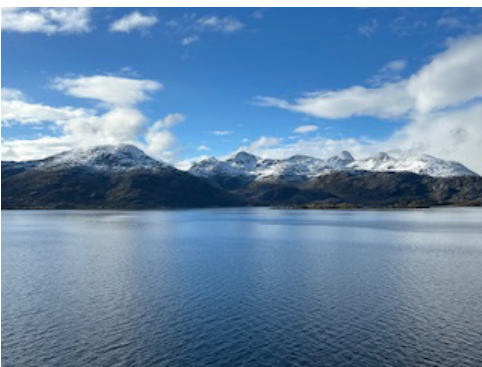
Obelisk in central Buenos Aires—meeting place in 2022 World Cup Celebration for 5 million jubilant soccer fans



Penguins at the Penguin Rookery—Punta Tombo, Argentina.



Sea Lions at the Beagle Channel a shared waterway between Chile and Argentina—with the Andes in the background.



Chilean fjords—just north of the Strait of Magellan which connects the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.



Terre del Fuego National Park, Argentina



Tango Dinner and Show in Buenos Aires

Photos credit: Manfred Netzel



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