

## ***I miss you! I miss my family! I miss everyone!***

Will this isolation and feeling of being grounded like a misbehaving teenager never end? Don't get me wrong. I know we could have had it far worse. The winter could have been more old-style, with much more snow and cold. We could be relying on the Texas power grid. We could be at the start of winter instead of the end. But it would still be nice to move back to some degree of normalcy.

When I agreed to offer for this position, one of the attractions was the opportunity to get out to your Branch meetings to renew acquaintances with many ~~old~~ (oops) valued friends and colleagues. Many of you know how much I enjoy meeting with you. I love to share information about our pension fund or about new initiatives aimed at serving retired teachers better. I have missed those opportunities and I have missed the chance to interact with you.

It has been difficult to be unable to visit with family members in Ontario, BC and PEI and it has been especially hard not to have the "kids" home. We have also missed opportunities to have friends in, to have neighborhood get togethers and to share in joyous events like births and birthdays.

Perhaps the toughest thing has been to have good friends pass away and not be able to take an active part in the mourning and the celebrations of life. It makes one realize more than ever the healing power of getting together with friends and family.

This brings me back to the beginning of my message and one of the wonderful things about NBSRT – the connections. As soon as things get back to normal, or at least the new normal, we will see our local Branches doing all they can to get us back together with old friends and new. We will see back to school breakfasts, luncheons and outings renewed. I know that all of our Branches have done some special things to connect with members during this long period of isolation, but there is no substitution for in person contact.

A few updates of importance:

- This year's NBSRT **AGM** will be held by Zoom on **May 11 at 9:30 AM**. Registration information to follow.
- The first winners of the new member draw are in – check our website NBSRT.org, NBSRT on Facebook or NBSRT on twitter.
- Your Branch Presidents, Executive members, Committee Chairs and countless volunteers on local and provincial committees continue to work very hard on your behalf. We have many great initiatives being carried out despite Covid 19 restrictions due to the tremendous work of all of our NBSRT volunteers. Our Branches have tried new and innovative strategies for reaching out to members and have found some wonderful new initiatives to keep all of us active and connected. Thanks to all of them.

***Please stay safe and take care of yourself and others***