

President's Message
September 2021



A funny thing happened to me on the golf course today. As a matter of fact, most of the things that happen to me on a golf course are pretty funny, but that is a story for another time. As we were getting ready to tee off, I realized the people ahead of us were retired teachers. Imagine a group of retired teachers enjoying a round of golf on a weekday in mid-September! They were laughing and joking, and chirping one another - and it got me started thinking about this message.

I meant to have a message done for the first week of school, but I have been suffering from a terrible case of writer's block. Surprisingly, it was that golf outing that gave me an idea for a theme. We, retired teachers, are a pretty lucky group. I know we all have our personal challenges and worries, but in general terms, we are fortunate. Not only have we had long rewarding

careers, but with any luck and, thanks to the people who went before us, we can now enjoy the fruits of our labour.

My mind wandered to Jack MacKinnon and Wayne Nightingale, Dawson Murray, and all the NBTA/F staff and Boards of Directors who worked so hard to establish our collective agreement and our pension plan. And, I thought of great past-presidents like Margaret Brogan and Tom Trafford, who were there to help set the foundations of our teachers' organizations and our benefits. Many have passed, but their legacy remains. It was their foresight, work and commitment that helped to allow us to enjoy our pensionable years. I don't want to hurt anyone's feelings, because it is true that many others contributed to our successes over the years, but these are the first names that came to my mind. Maybe sometime, we could find an opportunity to get together and share memories of some of the teacher leaders we remember, and recall what they have done for us.

These reflections made me think of our own organization. NBSRT has been structured by so many selfless volunteers. People like our first president, Muriel Baird, and our past-presidents at the provincial and local levels. If you want a true lesson in who has built NBSRT, spend a few minutes reading the tributes to each of our Honorary Life Members on our website. I read each of them today, and I was so impressed. We owe all of them a debt of gratitude for having had the foresight to realize that retired teachers need a common voice, and for building our organization's foundation.

But we owe them more. We owe it to all of our predecessors to do all that we can to make sure that NBSRT grows and becomes an even stronger voice. We can all be involved in promoting our organization by encouraging all of our former colleagues to join and get involved. We are working on a strategic plan to chart a course for the next three to five years that will strengthen us and make us even more relevant to all retired teachers. Please provide input when you are asked.

I sincerely believe that retired teachers need a strong organization to represent us. But, as long as we leave everything to a few local and provincial volunteers, we will not move forward as we need to.

Greater strength and effectiveness are dependent on increased numbers of members, increased numbers of people willing to take active leadership roles. Please get involved by supporting local initiatives and invite all retired teachers to join us.

It's funny how seeing a group of retired teachers enjoying one another's company during a round of golf in mid-September, made me think of how lucky we are - how lucky to have had so many others working to ensure we could benefit from our hard work and dedication to education.

I only hope you can all stay healthy and enjoy those fruits of your labour for many more years. Enjoy and have fun with former colleagues and friends, and consider supporting one another through supporting NBSRT.

Please Stay Healthy