

# ECSSA News

Edmonton Catholic Support Staff Association

February 2009



At Faith Development Day, Sister Alexandra Kovats provided us with much to reflect on both personally and collectively in our schools, offices and communities. Her challenge to us was to make a difference in our world in whatever way we can, no matter how small. She reflected on our carbon footprint, but I feel that we also need to look at what is around us. Who is in need as much as what is in need of our help. She felt that God is at home and we have gone out for a walk. We need to come home to realize how lucky we are and reach out to those in need. Sister Alexandra encouraged us "to see with new eyes and a new heart". She expressed that Mother Earth is the vine and we are the branches. The Edmonton Catholic School District is our vine, our base from which we as the branches are encouraged to grow forth. I hope that the leaves and the flowers that spring forth from those branches, the little things that we do, such as a simple donation of a bar of soap or a toothbrush, will reflect a beauty within each of us to grow and create a larger more beautiful planet. The beauty that others see in us, we don't always see in ourselves.

The gathering of our members at the two Staff Development Conferences will provide an ideal kick-off for ECSSA's first of many social justice projects. On Monday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> a letter was forwarded from ECSSA via an e-mail to all ECSD Users from our Superintendent Joan Carr's office. This letter outlined our social justice project for this spring and requested the support of our members. The goal is to assist children and families from the Wings of Providence and Youth Emergency Shelter Society by providing small items of toiletries to help them to continue to feel good about themselves even during difficult times. We hope that after the two conferences you will continue to collect those needed items listed along with your other support staff colleagues at your work sites. As the letter mentioned you can collect the items in shoe boxes and then forward as many shoe boxes as you collect in one larger box to either St. Benedict or Holy Family School. The campaign will end on Friday, March 13 in time for distribution before spring break.

We all have it in us to share our strengths, our generosity and our beauty. We hope that this Social Justice campaign will be just one small step to help each of us to feel good about our inner beauty. It is one small step for our strong support staff members and one great gift to others. Again thank you for your support.

Cheryl Andrews  
President of your Edmonton Catholic Support Staff Association

## General Meeting & Elections

There will be a general meeting in May. We will be addressing union business and holding elections for the President and Secretary Positions. Anyone interested in putting their name forward for either of these two positions should contact Lise Viel at St. Joseph High School or the ECSSA office.

## Conference Reminder!

Please remember to sign in when attending the conferences .

## Communication Energy and Paperworkers Union - CEP Scholarship Opportunities

### **CEP Scholarship awards for 2009**

CEP is now accepting applications for the CEP Scholarship awards for 2009. These scholarships are available to members in good standing, their children or the children of retired or deceased members who were in good standing at the time of their retirement or death. Applicants must be entering or undertaking study at college, university CEGEP or technological institute for the 2009/2010 session. Three scholarships of \$2000.00 each will be awarded in every region of the CEP. Applicants must submit an essay of 1500 to 2000 words on the topic: *"What the labour movement means to me"*.

◆ **deadline is March 31, 2008**

Contact Cheryl Andrews at St. Benedict for more information and application forms.

### **Promoting Equality: A CEP Scholarship for Women in Male Dominated Fields**

One scholarship promoting equality worth \$2000.00 in recognition of the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women ( December 6 ) is made available each year to women pursuing full time post-secondary education at a recognized institution such as university, college, CEGEP, technical or other schools in non-traditional fields of trades, technology, operations and blue collar careers.

These scholarships are available to members in good standing, their children or the children of retired or deceased members who were in good standing at the time of their retirement or death.

◆ **deadline is March 31, 2008**

Contact Cheryl Andrews at St. Benedict for more information and application forms.

### **Caring Report**

We extend our prayers and sympathies to: Karen Salambier of St. Augustine on the passing of her father, Tania Paquin of St. Francis of Assisi on the loss of her mother-in-law, Leoniza Cairns of St. Pius X on the loss of her husband, Elaine Kishimoto of Austin O'Brien on the passing of her grandmother, Anna Taylor of St. Edmunds on the loss of her father, Claudette McCartney of Holy Family on the loss of her granddaughter and Janis Tanouye of Austin O'Brien . on the passing of her grandmother.

Flowers and wishes for a speedy recovery were sent to: Kathleen Kirkman of Blessed Kateri, Teresa Hooper of St. Augustine, Elizabeth Rzechowka of Austin O'Brien, Irene Stolarchuk of Father Leo Green, Mike Michalchuk of Printing Services, Luciana Daniluck of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Don Allen of St. Joseph, Cheryl Place of St. Joseph, Coline Podaima of St. James, Carole Trepanier of J.H. Picard and Tina Letki of St. Benedict.

## ECSSA Banquet

May 7, 2009

The ECSSA Social Committee is very excited about this year's event. Plan on attending with your entire support staff and mix and mingle with old and new friends.

Plan to Attend & Enjoy

*Life begets life. Energy creates energy. It is by spending oneself  
that one  
becomes rich.*

### ECSSA Donations

Every year on your behalf ECSSA donates to a local charity. We are proud to help out agencies in our area that work with children. Over the past years we have donated to many different charities including; The Rainbow Society of Edmonton, Stollery Children's Hospital, Kid's Kottage, Youth Emergency Center, Boys and Girls Club and many more. If you know a local charity that works with children please let us know. Write a quick couple of sentences that describes the work the charity does, contact information and why you think it would be a worthy choice and send all that information to

### Social Justice Project.

The ECSSA Social Justice team is very pleased to announce their first project. Starting with a big kick off at the conferences, ECSSA will be collecting toiletry items for two Edmonton charities. There will be a collection box at each site for further donations. We are hoping to collect a shoe box full of comfort from each site. This will add up to a whole bunch of kindness.

*One kind word can warm three winter months*

Japanese Saying

## ECSSA Report

Last month ECSSA on your behalf :

Received many calls and emails with regards to leaves, returns to work, FTE, and questions about the support staff conferences. ECSSA has filed a grievance on a job posting which resulted in meetings and phone calls . Planning for the upcoming negotiations are ongoing. ECSSA has met with HR regarding staffing, helping our members return to work successfully and worked with the district and a member after a physical attack by a student.

ECSSA attended meetings with the district regarding the Administration Support Positions. There were three meetings that led to very good discussions and a several suggestions. There will be recommendations being brought to the budget committee and a report will be issued later. ECSSA is also a standing member of the budget committee and will continue to have input throughout this process.

ECSSA attended The Decision Making Task Force and the District Joint Health and Safety Committee and the Board of Trustee meetings.

The ECSSA library continued to be busy, particularly with books dealing with conflict and one new hot title The Bully at Work. New member packages were sent to 37 new members and flowers and prayers were sent out to our members dealing with loss and illness. The Annual ECSSA Banquet is keeping our social committee very busy.

If you have any ideas on how we can help serve our members better please bring them to the next Board of Directors meeting, March 4th, 5:00 p.m. at St. Joseph High School.

## Those who show up - Decide.

T.V. 's West Wing

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*Support Staff*

*The glue that holds it all together!!*