**East Coast Report**

**March 2023**

The East Coast organizations (ECRTO) met on March 13, 2023 by zoom and all but SERFNB and QART were represented.

The meeting began with a review of highlights from the Executive Meeting of January accompanied by encouragement to be present at the AGM for the Thursday conference session.

Reporting from the **Health and Advocacy** **Committees** advised a zoom meeting on Advocacy was expected prior to the AGM and that Health continues to monitor developments relative to seniors - - pharmacare, dental care, senior strategy – and that health issues are receiving considerable attention beyond issues raised by covid.

The **Communications Committee** representatives advised of plans to make the home page more attractive and a shift in focus along with a session at the AGM. In discussion some of the points raised were:

1. Appreciate getting information from AC on what is happening so it can be brought to members of associations
2. Website might consider some way of advising when new information is posted – a flashing “new” button, a written memo/email highlighting what is new
3. Website is only as useful as the information it contains and it needs to be current
4. Links and information need to be easy to access, people will give up/get frustrated if it takes too much time to search
5. Is there a place for written/emailed news on a more regular basis, time to rethink Options?
6. More regular communication from AC to the Members allows for feedback and leaves Members feeling they are “in the know” versus in a bit of a vacuum. A format allowing for easy sharing with members in the organization would be advantageous.

Members responses to the “**What’s New?”** question as summarized as follows;

1. Planning for May AGM’s, including elections for some
2. Continuing to hold in person functions – members seem to really appreciate being together – in combination with zoom offerings. Zoom makes the association more available to those in more remote areas/unable to travel and enables them to feel connected.
3. Some have started preliminary planning for 2023-24 functions
4. Two organizations have meetings in varied locations around their province. One moves Executive Meetings to different communities. Local Executive and members engage and interact, thus feel more involved, over lunch. Two divisions in the organization plan a joint meeting. Another Member has regular regional meetings where the local organizes the event and the provincial association participates and provides funding.
5. Each continues to explore ways to increase membership including offering/speaking at pre-retirement events.
6. While membership numbers in the last few years have been relatively stable, the hope is now that things are more “normal” in person contacts can resume

In addition, RTONS reports it is still waiting for the pension reform report and has a plan in place to communicate with their members. PEIRTA received the 3.74% COLA. QPARSE noted frustration with contract negotiations by active teachers and continuing concern over language. NBSRT noted the active teacher retirement luncheon hosted by the NBTA will be held in June and has the potential for 600 plus retirees from 2020-2023 and guests to attend. NBSRT will play a role. Also noted was that SERFNB has a new Executive Director and there is a plan to meet. Subsequent to the meeting the Executive Director was provided with a report of the meeting and was in touch for additional information.

The next in person ECRTO gathering would be in 2024 and it would be NBSRT and SERFNB’s turn to host.

On a final note, as I will not be reoffering as East Coast Representative the ECRTO Members were advised of this in advance of the meeting. I was contacted by one who is in the process of filing a nomination. This group has been a great joy to meet and work with. They are more than willing to share and collaborate with each other and truly care about and work on behalf of their members.

Respectfully submitted

Margaret Urquhart, East Coast Representative