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# LEADERS & LEARNERS

THE VOICE OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF  
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS/L'ASSOCIATION  
CANADIENNE DES ADMINISTRATEURS ET DES  
ADMINISTRATRICES SCOLAIRES

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## Upcoming CASA Events

- We are holding the CASA Annual Conference at the Delta Quebec City from October 15 to 17, 2005.

## Message From The Editor: Learning In Newfoundland and Labrador

**T**his July, participants at the CASA Summer Leadership Academy witnessed the deep love that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have for their home. The conference was held in downtown St. John's, but thanks to the stories told and chances to explore outside the city, folks from "away" left with an appreciation for the vast geography, rich cultures, and warmth and beauty of the people.

We listened to educators still working in the province during challenging restructures and to those who have found work elsewhere across Canada. We watched and listened to young dancers and musicians as they shared with us their heritage. We spoke with fishermen, shopkeepers, tour guides, and ordinary men and women we met on city streets and country roads. In each of these encounters, we all

stood to learn something new about this lovely part of our country, and about ourselves.

After a session featuring expatriate Newfoundlanders talking about their experiences leaving to work elsewhere in Canada, outgoing CASA president **Ruth Mattingley** said something that stuck with me throughout the conference. She was speaking about the gifts these expats

bring to their new students across the country. I believe, though, her sentiment applies to us all if we consider Newfoundlanders to be teachers and the visitors to be students in our encounters this summer.

"They brought their humour and spirit with them," she said, "and students are richer for it."

**Tara Lee Wittchen**  
*Leaders & Learners editor*



**Laura Tuttosi** with newfound friend. *Photo by Ed Wittchen*

## A Brief Summary Of The Sessions

Delegates to the 2005 CASA Summer Leadership Academy were welcomed to the conference, the city of St. John's and the province of Newfoundland and Labrador by outgoing CASA president **Ruth Mattingley**, St. John's mayor **Andy Wells**, NLSBA executive director **Brian Shortall** and NLADE vice president **Claudine Wells**. "I hope you have a 'whale' of a time," Wells noted.

The first morning, Thursday, July 14, was dedicated to the theme of restructuring. Newfoundland's deputy minister of education **Bruce Hollett** presented the government's perspective on the recent amalgamation of 11 boards to 5. The boards' perspectives were delivered by **Dr. Darren King**, **Cynthia Fleet** and **Dr. Ross Elliot**, who said, "Consolidation is by no means done. Its success will depend on the continued commitment by all parties." Representatives from New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and Newfoundland then led round table discussions.

That afternoon, a panel of former NLADE members who had left the province to work elsewhere in Canada each took the microphone to explain their decisions and describe their experiences thus far.

"The degree to which losing my buddies—not just a 'network'—was devastating," reported **Peter Gamwell**, now in Ottawa. "But children are children wherever you go." While **Greg Penney**, now in northern Manitoba, also acknowledged the difficulty of leaving ties behind, he said he was grateful for the opportunity to see another side of education in a different province. **Roger Nippard**, now in northeastern Alberta, found his move "invigorating and

intimidating; I went from knowing everyone in Newfoundland to no one in Alberta, but that's changed... My retirement will be richer for having worked in both jurisdictions." **Roger Clark**, now in northern Alberta, said that while it's been hard to be far from family, the positives now outweigh any negatives.

The day closed with a session led by **Phyllis Reardon** of REDAS (Regional Economic Development and Schools); she was joined by program participants **Jody Hale** and **Samantha Abbott**.

Friday's sessions started with a discussion about provincial/territorial testing programs and curriculum development/support, led by CASA's regional directors. Another set of round table discussions was held, this time focusing on ideas for a paper that CASA may deliver to the Council of Ministers of Education.

The next session featured a panel of school board trustees and CEOs sharing thoughts on how to balance politics and relationships with the political masters.

**Maurice Barry** closed the day with a talk on how colleagues in Newfoundland have had to become leaders in developing distance education programs and methodologies.



**Barbara Spadoni**, director of education for Superior North Catholic District School Board, warns delegates that in a restructuring situation, "Once you give something away you don't get it back, so be careful what you give away."

Saturday featured three inspiring "Snapshots of Success" sessions, featuring stories from across the country.

The conference's final speaker, **Dr. Edwina Wetzel**, shared an inspiring story of how, through hard work and dedication, the First Nations community of Conne River, Newfoundland, regained control of its students' education. The positive changes she described in the school and community over the last 20 years (including a resurgence in the Mi'kmaq language) could not help but impress delegates in attendance. "Are we a success? I think we are," she declared.



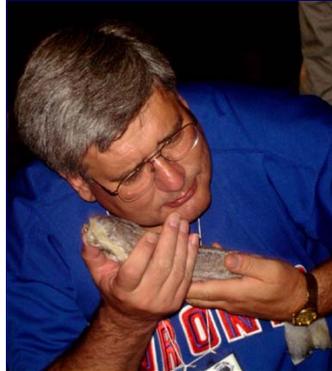
**Roger Nippard thanks Dr. Edwina Wetzel.**

## The Royal Order Of Screechers Ceremony



Who knew that old salted codfish could smell this bad? Now imagine having to kiss it!

*Photo by Ed Wittchen*



You have to kiss the cod, but **Ed Wittchen** prefers to cuddle his.

*Photo by Tim Murphy*



**Bob Smith** plays a mean cod. Hey, Bob, fish scales don't have any notes!

*Photo by Ed Wittchen*



(Above, right) Family and friends are always welcome at CASA social events. Here some younger visitors prepare to down their Screech (or soda).  
(Above, centre) **Barry Stangeland** demonstrates the proper way to kiss the cod.

*Photos by Ed Wittchen*

(Above, left) A "scuff" is a Newfoundland term for a dance. Larry Brazil and The Kitchen Crowd play traditional Newfoundland tunes so folks can dance off some of those deep-fried cod tongues!  
(Left) The delightful **Myrle Vokey**, former executive director of the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards' Association, entertained everyone during the Screech-in ceremony with his accordion and distinctly Newfoundland wit.

*Photos by Tara Lee Wittchen*



## Hands-on Learning At The Ocean Sciences Centre



(Top, left) Sea stars (also known as starfish) are just one of the many beautiful and fascinating creatures in the touch tank at this Memorial University of Newfoundland facility in Logy Bay.

(Top, right) **Kelly Johnson-Turnbull** picks up a sea star as **Marion Holmes** gets in for a close-up photo.

*Photos by Tara Lee Wittchen*

(Left) Memorial student interpreters share their knowledge of marine life with visitors from our CASA group.

*Photo by Blair Norton*



## Seeing The Sea

(Left) **Ruth Mattingley**, along with her son and husband, enjoys a whale-watching cruise.

*Photo by Ed Wittchen*

(Right, top) An adventurous bunch of conference delegates, friends and family prepare to launch their brightly coloured sea kayaks.

*Photo by Tim Murphy*

(Right, bottom) **Vanessa Holmes** and **Dennis Hodinsky** paddle close to a spectacular waterfall.

*Photo by Blair Norton*



## Lobsters, Lobsters And More Lobsters!



(Left) Originally from Fogo Island but now in Alberta, **Roger Nippard** handles a live lobster.

*Photo by David Panas*

(Above) Lobster traps and boats. (Right) Boiling up fresh lobsters in the village of Renew.

*Photos by Tara Lee Wittchen*



(Right) There's plenty of food to go around at this table: Crab legs, lobsters, cod cheeks and tongues, salads, potatoes and rolls (not to mention dessert) were all on the menu at a fabulous "boil-up" dinner.

No matter the locale, CASA event participants (and friends and family) are encouraged to sample the regional delights. It looks like this group didn't need much arm-twisting.

*Photo by Ed Wittchen*



## History Comes Alive In Newfoundland



(Left) Some folks took a day to visit L'Anse aux Meadows, a Viking settlement and UNESCO World Heritage site near St. Anthony's. The staff there re-enact traditional Viking life; some of them stay in character no matter what you say or do around them, which made for some amusing moments.

Here a group at the Viking Village learn how Vikings made fishing nets out of raw hemp.

*Photo by Marion Holmes*



(Above, left) A staff member in a traditional Viking dress teaches **Marion Holmes** of PD Pros how to do one-handed knitting using beautiful, colourful handspun wool dyed with plant pigments.

*Photo by Ed Wittchen*

(Above, centre) The Shawn Silver Dancers put on a spectacular show of traditional Irish dancing at Bridie Malloy's Pub on Saturday night in St. John's. Afterwards, they invited audience members to join in and learn a few steps. Hey guys, *Riverdance* called, they've got a few openings...

*Photo by Tara Lee Wittchen*

(Above, right) **John Orr** lets his inner Viking out at L'Anse aux Meadows.

*Photo by Ed Wittchen*



## Feedback: Some Of Your Thoughts On The 2005 CASA Summer Leadership Academy In St. John's, Newfoundland

"The agenda was interesting and well paced.

Some of my favourite memories: the panel discussions with our national representatives, sharing a thought or two with **Frank Kelly** while we watched the puffins, talking to leaders from Newfoundland as they shared their drastic board reorganization story and admiring them for their invincible spirit, enjoying the many social moments with partners from all across Canada, appreciating the many hands who helped me up when I slipped on the tour boat stairs, the friendliness of Newfoundlanders and the beauty of St. John's.

I plan on returning to Newfoundland and visiting the Viking settlement at St. Anthony's as well as returning to St. John's. My husband plans on returning, too.

I'm reorganizing the protocols for communication and job delegation with senior staff this month after speaking to other directors who have developed effective strategies to deal with limited staff and increasing job tasks."

~ **Zandra Zubac, director of education,  
Sudbury Catholic District School Board**

"My favourite part of the conference events were several sessions featuring presenters from the 'Rock.' The Robotics session featuring high school students from St. John's who placed first in the post-secondary section of an international competition against major US technical institutions such as MIT was just incredible.

I also really enjoyed **Alex Hickey's** session on the Virtual Teacher Centre, as well as **Maurice Barry** and **Eric Nippard's** session on the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation.

I also thoroughly enjoyed **Edwina Wetzel's** session. She has dedicated her entire life to the education of her people on the Conne River Reserve and their success is due, in large part, to her absolute commitment to education in that community."

~ **Roger Nippard, assistant superintendent,  
Northern Lights School District**

"Hearing the national perspective on issues breaks down the isolation we often feel.

I was thrilled to be in Newfoundland as it is home to so many of the people I work with. I was intrigued by L'Anse aux Meadows, the bogs, the salmon reclamation and the jelly bean houses in St. John's.

However, nothing compares to Newfoundland's greatest resource, its wonderful, hospitable people."

~ **Kath Rhyason, superintendent,  
Fort McMurray Public Schools**

[*What was your favourite part of the official conference events?*] "The panel presentations and some of the showcase sessions on the last day."

[*What was your favourite part of the "unofficial" conference events?*] "Screech-in Ceremony."

~ **Chris Gonnet, director of learning,  
Yukon Department of Education**

"St. John's was my first CASA event and I found it extremely rewarding in as much as this was my first national conference.

It was really interesting exchanging ideas and listening to people speak from across the country. It is surprising how inward-looking (provincial) you become over the years when most of your PD is from your home province and your reading is either Ontario-related or American in perspective.

I found the conference a lot of fun as well as educational. Great group of people, both professional and personable. Sessions and socials were well scheduled, well organized and well attended.

Even now, when I think about the music, the laughter and the hospitality we experienced, my foot starts tapping and I find myself humming the tune to 'The Wild Rover.'"

~ **Dan Kelly, secondary school principal,  
Lambton Kent District School Board**

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## Our Mission:

CASA will advance quality public education and excellence in system level leadership through advocacy and national collaboration.



## Our Beliefs:

CASA believes that:

- Cultural diversity is a unique strength that enriches our nation.
- Communication and collaboration with parents and other partners is integral to successful student learning.
- Quality public education provides the best opportunity for a nation to enhance the lives of all its citizens.
- Effective system, provincial and national level leadership enables and supports excellence in teaching and learning.
- A comprehensive education, equitable and accessible to all, is the key to meeting the diverse needs and securing a successful future for our youth.

Specific strategies to advance the mission:

- Establish position papers on specific topics as they relate to the beliefs and interests of the association.
- Recruit new people.
- Establish a national representation.
- Establish a three-tier public relations and publications strategy.
- Establish a funding team to create an operating budget.

# Ode To Newfoundland



*When sunrays crown thy pine-clad hills,  
And summer spreads her hand,  
When silver voices tune thy hills,  
We love thee, we love thee,  
We love thee smiling land.*

*As loved our fathers, so we love,  
Where once they stood we stand,  
Their prayer we raise to heaven above,  
God guard thee, Newfoundland  
God guard thee, Newfoundland  
God guard thee, Newfoundland.*

**Thank you to our wonderful  
friends in Newfoundland and  
Labrador for making our time  
together so memorable!**

*Photo by Tara Lee Wittchen*