



COLLEGE OF
ALBERTA
SCHOOL
SUPERINTENDENTS

2012

Retirement Ceremony

Robson/Rundle

Thursday, April 26, 2012

Greeting



On behalf of all
members of the College
of Alberta School
Superintendents, I would

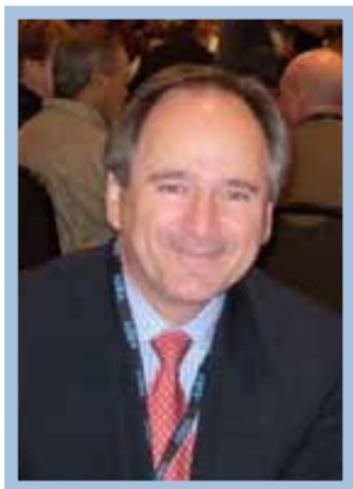
like to extend congratulations to our colleagues retiring this year. You've worked in education for many years and while much has changed over that time, what hasn't changed is that fundamentally you have been reaching and touching lives. In choosing to devote yourself to the teaching profession you've been given the gift of having daily opportunities to make a difference in the lives of children. In teaching it's difficult to see the fruit of a day's work, never mind an entire career, and only time will tell the true difference that you have made. My wish for you is that the investment you have made in giving of yourselves, in helping shape the future, will come back to you many times over.

On behalf of all your CASS colleagues, I wish each of you the very best as you transition into the next phase of your life journey.



Roger Nippard
President, CASS





Brian Callaghan

Brian has served as an Alberta Superintendent of Schools for 25 years. He started his career with Alberta Education in 1987 as Superintendent with Northlands School Division in Peace River. In 1990 he moved to Canadian Rockies Public Schools serving the communities of Lake Louise, Banff, Canmore, Exshaw and Kananaskis Country. He has also served as the Acting Superintendent for Francophone Public Board of Southern Alberta.

From 1978 to 1987 he served as a Teacher, School Principal, and Area Administrator in Arctic Quebec working with Cree and Inuit children with the Kativik School Board.

Brian started his teaching career in 1974 with the Montreal Catholic School Commission as an elementary teacher before moving on to teach high school English and Social Studies

He has served as President of the College of Alberta School Superintendents and Chair of the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards (COATS). He currently represents the College on the Board of the Calgary Regional Consortium.

He has also volunteered his time on various ASBA provincial committees. He has also been a presenter at the Olds Summer Workshops for new administrators and at the CASS Leadership Academy.

Brian has dedicated his entire career to children and teachers in their pursuit of professional and personal excellence. He holds degrees from Concordia University, McGill University and the University of Alberta.

Throughout his career he has been blessed with the love and support of his wife Helmi and his four children Annaliisa, Laura, Alex and Ben.



Debbie Deak

I never imagined myself becoming a teacher when I was nearing the end of high school. My career goal was to be a Chartered Accountant. Sometime during my grade twelve year I completed an aptitude test, given by the Institute of Chartered Accountancy; my score reflected that I had “great potential” to continue in this endeavor. However, in debriefing about the results, my high school counsellor told me it was foolish to consider such an idea. Didn’t I know that was a career only men should pursue? I discussed this with my parents and they agreed we should trust his advice. Hence, I enrolled in the University of Calgary upon graduation and took general studies for two years. I then moved to Lethbridge, (a boyfriend may have been part of that decision) and entered the Faculty of Education at the University of Lethbridge. I graduated at Christmas when I was 21 years of age.

The Superintendent of the County of Lethbridge phoned me during the Christmas holidays and asked me if I would consider a grade two position at Coalhurst Elementary School, beginning in January. I accepted and worked there for the remainder of the year, as well as the subsequent year. My parents then encouraged me to go someplace “far away” and enroll in a Masters/Ph.D. Program. (It was their wish I continue my schooling away from local influences.) I attended the University of Oregon at Eugene and obtained my M. Ed., with a specialization in Early Childhood and Special Education. Upon completion, I returned home and married during the summer of 1976. The Superintendent of Willow Creek School Division offered me a position that consisted of teaching kindergarten in Fort Macleod and Granum (I travelled over the lunch hour each day). This I did for one year and then settled into W.A. Day School in Fort Macleod for a lengthy period of time. This was a K – 3 school and I taught all of the grades, finishing my time there as the Associate Principal. My main area of responsibility had grown to be special education – this was my passion. I completely forgot I had ever wanted to be an accountant; working with young children who had diverse learning needs was, in my mind, the most rewarding career anyone could have.

Lloyd Cavers came to Livingstone Range School Division as Superintendent, shortly after its inception. I recall him asking me if I would be interested in a Central Office position as the Early Literacy Coordinator, and assisting with the psychological assessments throughout the district. I became licensed as a “Psych Assistant” with the College of Alberta Psychologists and worked in this capacity for two years. I then became the Coordinator of Student Services, and ultimately the Director of Student Services. During this time, I became a member of CASS and met many colleagues with whom I formed not only professional relationships, but also very dear, lasting personal friendships.

In 2004, two events occurred that redirected my career: Dean Rook retired from Holy Spirit Catholic Schools and Dr. Leroy Walker (Joker) worked with the University of Montana to put together a Doctoral cohort. I began my long-awaited journey to complete a Doctorate of Educational Leadership and also became Director of Student Services with Holy Spirit Catholic Schools. After two years, I became the Associate Superintendent of Student Services, and the following year, completed my Doctoral studies.

I have been very blessed throughout my career; CASS was an outstanding professional support and an association of which I was extremely proud to be a member.





Chris Diachuk

Dr. Chris Diachuk feels truly blessed to have served students, staff and school communities for over 35 years. He provided leadership as the Superintendent of Elk Island Catholic Schools, as well as in a wide range of senior executive roles over his career. Chris has also worked as a teacher, counsellor, truant officer, psychologist and consultant.

Chris has been a registered psychologist for over 24 years. He has been recognized by the University of Alberta for his dedication to the advancement of professional, psychological and clinical skills in graduate students. Chris co-founded the Master's Degree Cohort Program, taught at the U of A and also served as an adjunct Assistant Professor for many years.

Chris's career has been defined by teamwork and authentic leadership. He has always affirmed that, "everything of value that I have ever achieved in my personal, professional and family life has been as a member of a team."

Chris has long held the belief that, "our successes, both personally and professionally, are based on our ability to build and maintain positive working relationships both with each other and with the community at large...it's all about relationships."

Since his retirement, Chris has established a private practice and is presently serving as both the Director Of Employee & Organizational Wellness and the Organizational Psychologist, with the Edmonton Police Service.

Chris continues to enjoy an active lifestyle that includes running and rock scrambling and has been spending much more time with his wife, Gail, in their Arizona home.





Stuart Evans

I started my career in 1977 in the County of Leduc. Those first two years at a Hutterite School proved amazingly educational in terms of planning, structure, and thinking about the future. The next eight years flew by and in 1987 I accepted my first administrative position as an assistant principal in Leduc.

Again, eight years flew by and I accepted my first principalship in 1995 – still in Leduc. In 2005 I moved to central office where I have held every position. On reflection I've held 9 different administrative positions in Black Gold Regional Schools.

A 35 year career seems to have flown by – as I tell graduating students at university – I wouldn't have changed a thing. It's been an amazing journey supported by Norm Yanitski – who took a chance on my application to central office, and my wife, Elsi, who was always there supporting me my various pursuits.

I wish you all the best in these interesting times and hope you have as much fun in this profession as I have had.





Bernie Giacobbo

It has been quite a while since I first started teaching. There are days when I feel like it was just yesterday that I started, however I do date back to the 70's. I started off teaching elementary physical education in Lac La Biche for the first two years of my career. It was a new learning experience from day one not having been trained in elementary. I was then transferred to the high school to teach phys ed there, my dream job. I had the privilege of not just teaching but coaching. There were many long days, evenings and weekends but I never had so much fun. Being with young adults full of energy has kept me young, both mentally and physically. Kids have also kept me very active; something else I do appreciate. Being in phys ed also provides you with a lot of leadership opportunities. After a number of years I decided to get into administration. I took my Master's degree at Western Washington in Bellingham, Washington, USA from 1992 – 1995. Three summers away from family was not easy, but we managed. I came back and started my career in administration at a small school; Kikino Elementary. I spent 5 wonderful years there. The community was great to me and very supportive. I then moved out of the district, something that no one thought our family would do. I joined Aspen View Schools as principal at EPC; an 8 – 12 school. This was arguably one of the best times of my career. I spent three years with a great staff and awesome students. The school had a number of excellent programs and a staff that was willing and excited to take on new challenges. We also benefited from great parent support; something that all schools dream about. I then moved onto Division Office as the assistant superintendent; another exciting challenge. After 7 years in Aspen View another opportunity presented itself. I accepted a position as Assistant Superintendent of Schools with Yellowknife Public School District No. 1. It has been a great experience to see how things are done in the North. I am enjoying the work, the people and the community. I have truly enjoyed my time in Alberta and have wonderful memories of the people that I worked with and yes retirement is still on hold.





Paulette Hanna

I began my career in education in 1972 with Northland School Division teaching Grade Three students at Calling Lake. The following year I was employed by Three Hills Schools Division where I taught for 17 years. My next move was to the County of Mountainview to teach Junior High School in Sundre for one year. The opportunity of a Principalship in Kitscoty took me to the County of Vermilion River (now Buffalo Trail). From here I went to East Central Alberta Catholic where I was principal, Deputy Superintendent and Superintendent. My last move was to Red Deer Catholic where I held the position of Deputy Superintendent and Superintendent.

My love for learning and always needing a challenge led me to earn a Master Degree in Education Administration in 1992 from San Diego State University and Doctor of Education from the University of Calgary in 2010.

CASS has been an important aspect of my professional life providing me with extraordinary professional growth opportunities. I served on the CASS Executive including as President during the 2008-09 school year. I am very proud of my association with the organization. CASS is a learned organization supporting scholarly research and providing an informed voice on educational issues. The diversity of issues and dynamic exchange of ideas makes CASS an outstanding professional support for educational leaders. Thank you, CASS.





Heather Henderson-Hill

Heather Henderson-Hill obtained her M.Ed. Educational Administration and Special Education from the University of British Columbia and B.Ed. from the University of Calgary. She has served in a variety of educational leadership positions from teacher, vice-principal, principal, superintendent of curriculum and instruction, interim director of education/assistant director, assistant superintendent and deputy superintendent throughout the three provinces of British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. Following over (30) thirty years in education and in educational leadership, Heather now continues her journey of support through leadership workshops, executive coaching, facilitation and group planning.

Heather's administrative experience is varied – from rural communities to the city and junior secondary to junior-senior secondary schools. She is a facilitator and trainer for OneSmartWorld, Leadership – Great Leaders, Great Results, Great Teams, The Speed of Trust, Strengths Deployment Inventory, The Heart of Coaching, Violence Threat / Risk Assessment, and Board / Team workshops. Heather is also a Certified and Accredited Executive Coach and a member of the International Coach Federation.

Thank to CASS, to my colleagues and to all those who support young people by providing for quality education and allowing for strong personal development.





Roger Mestinsek

I was born in Wayne, Alberta in 1946 and spent my younger years in a small coal mining town in the Drumheller valley. That small town, East Coulee, was the foundation for many problem solving strategies implemented in our district over the years. My studies included a Diploma in Drafting Technology from SAIT, a BEd from the U of A, a Masters Degree from SDSU and a Doctorate Degree from the University of San Diego. I was married to my wife and friend, Madeline, for forty two years until her passing in March of 2011. We were blessed with three children; Michael, Jason and Jocelyn and, to date, six grandchildren.

I have been Deputy Superintendent for the Grande Prairie Public School District since 2002. My career as an educator commenced in 1973 as a teacher at the Composite High School. I continued working with students and families in the district throughout my thirty eight years in education. I have worn many hats for the district over the years, but my most satisfying times were interacting with students, staff and parents. My years as a member of CASS provided me with the opportunity to meet like-minded people who are working tirelessly to achieve the best quality educational system for Alberta children.





Lucy Miller

Lucy completed 39 years in education on March 2, 2012 as Chief Superintendent with the Calgary Catholic School District. The District has 106 schools, over 47,000 students, and a staff of over 5,000. She has been a teacher, principal, curriculum consultant, and superintendent in Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Alberta. She is a graduate of St. Francis Xavier University with Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education degrees, Dalhousie University with a Master of Education degree, and the University of Toronto with a Doctor of Education degree. She has been a part-time professor at Queen's University and the University of Ottawa, is the author of five books and numerous articles, has a history of active involvement and leadership in public administration, and has been recognized by numerous awards for her work including: the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence, the Women of Distinction Award, the Alberta Catholic School Trustees Appreciation Award, Calgary Police Services' Award of Exceptional Recognition, and the Lieutenant Governor's Leadership Award.

Dr. Miller joined the Calgary Catholic School District in March, 2007 and was committed to building relationships, and organizational capacity around collaboration, transparency, accountability, and shared responsibility for excellence. Through "re-imagining" she made staff and community involvement in decision making a non-threatening way of life. She was very active in the broader community serving on two provincial steering committees, the Board of Directors for the Calgary Educational Partnerships Foundation, and the Calgary Catholic Education Foundation. She was on the Board of Governors for St. Mary's University College, a Director for the United Way's Calgary Children's Initiative, and the Child Advocacy Centre. She was also active nationally and internationally presenting to and hosting groups of educational leaders from Ontario, Japan, and China. Lucy is now the President and CEO of United Way Calgary and Area.





George Ollenberger

Early one morning in April 1980 the phone rings, on the other end is Jim McLaughlin; Associate Superintendent of Schools; “Hi George, would you like a teaching job?” “Just a minute, I reply and I put my head under the tap and turn on the water. Ok, now that I’m a wake what did you say?” Jim repeated himself. My reply was well that’s great BUT, I’m still in university and do not have a teaching certificate yet. Jim’s response was “Oh, that doesn’t matter we will take care of that”, and he did. So my career began. I graduated from the University of Alberta with my B.Ed. in June 1980. I started my teaching career at Millet School teaching grade 6 and moved over to the new Griffiths-Scott School in September 1980 where I continued to teach for the next 22 years. In 1999 I was appointed Vice-Principal of Griffiths-Scott and on September 30, 2002 I was appointed Principal of Pipestone School. I completed my Master of Education from the University of Lethbridge in June of 2003. After a successful principalship resulting in significant increases in student achievement Central Office came a-calling and in 2005 I was appointed Director of Administrative Support. Two years later in 2007 I was appointed Director of Instruction. My most notable legacy would be the creation, initiation, implementation of Wetaskiwin Regional Public School’s Learning Cycle. My hope is to see it continue to be WRPS’s work. Finally on March 29, 2012 I retired after 32 great years of working with students, parents, teachers, administrators and central office personnel. I have truly been blessed with great memories.





Bob Smith

In 1977 I graduated from Simon Fraser University and started my teaching career with the Peace River North School Division at a small K-10 school just north of Fort St. John, British Columbia. After three years of being the special education teacher at Buick Creek School, I transferred to Taylor Elementary School and spent five years teaching Grade 1. During those early years I enjoyed quite a bit of notoriety as a male primary teacher, but also as a passionate defender of teacher's rights in a variety of local and provincial roles within the BC Teachers' Federation.

In 1985 I transferred out to another very small community, Wowowon, to teach in a two room multi-graded classroom. This was a community that I had driven through on a number of occasions and I was never able to pronounce the name properly. Lucky for me I had some very bright pupils in my classroom who took great joy in pointing out to me that the pronunciation of the community was based on the fact that it was located at mile 101 on the Alaska Highway. This was absolutely the best year in my educational career, I thoroughly enjoyed the challenges of teaching in a multi-graded situation, and I was able to mentor a beginning teacher (my wife) in her first teaching assignment.

For some reason that year of teaching in Wovowon was the evolution of my career over to the dark side, school administration. After only one year at Wovowon, I was encouraged by district administration to apply for one of the many principalships that were available in the division. I knew that if I did this the Board of Peace River North was likely to ask me in the interview process why there was such a big change in Bob Smith. My answer to that question was fairly straightforward; I told them that after several years of coming to the Board in an adversarial role, I came to realize that if I wanted to make a change in education I needed to do it from within the circle of influence. Well apparently they fell for that line, or they were desperate, but I was lucky enough to be appointed as the principal of Prespatou Elementary Junior-High School. While I could regale you with a variety of funny and amusing anecdotal stories of what it was like to be a principal in a small rural community where all students were of the Mennonite faith, suffice it to say that I was the first principal of the school to stay for a three year period.

In 1989 I moved to Fort McMurray and during the next eight years I was the principal of three schools. I have extremely fond memories of my time in Fort McMurray and it was definitely a time when I solidified my belief that the main role of the school principal was to build the capacity of those around him to support student learning. We were stronger as a team of teachers committed to student success than we were as individuals.

In 1997 I left Fort McMurray and became the principal of Consort School. At this stage in my career I was thoroughly enjoying the daily challenges of the principalship, and I would never have considered a position within central office administration had it not been for another influential person, Wes Neumeier. So I made the decision to move even further to the dark side, central office administration. For the next ten years I was the Deputy Superintendent of Prairie Land Regional Division and I would like to thank the Prairie Land Board for giving me that opportunity. What can I say other than going to work every day was a joy in my life. I was able to foster positive relationships with those that I worked with, but at the same time I had the ability to say what needed to be said.

Which brings us up to the current time, I am not retired but have moved farther east to the province of Saskatchewan to accept a position as the Director of Education in Creighton School Division. One of the current themes that is constantly being discussed in Saskatchewan is the overall lack of student achievement, especially when compared to the Province of Alberta. So even though the Accountability Pillar and the all required monitoring and reporting that goes with it can be a thorn in our side, I do believe the pressures to improve student achievement that we are held accountable to in Alberta, does make a difference in student achievement. I want to let all members of CASS know that they should be thanked for the commitment to education and student success. Well done everyone!





Joe Weleschuk

Born and raised on a farm in Wostok Alberta, Joe earned his Bachelor of Education in 1980 and a Graduate Diploma in 1986 through the University of Alberta. He completed his Masters of Arts in School Administration and Curriculum from the University of Gonzaga in 1988.

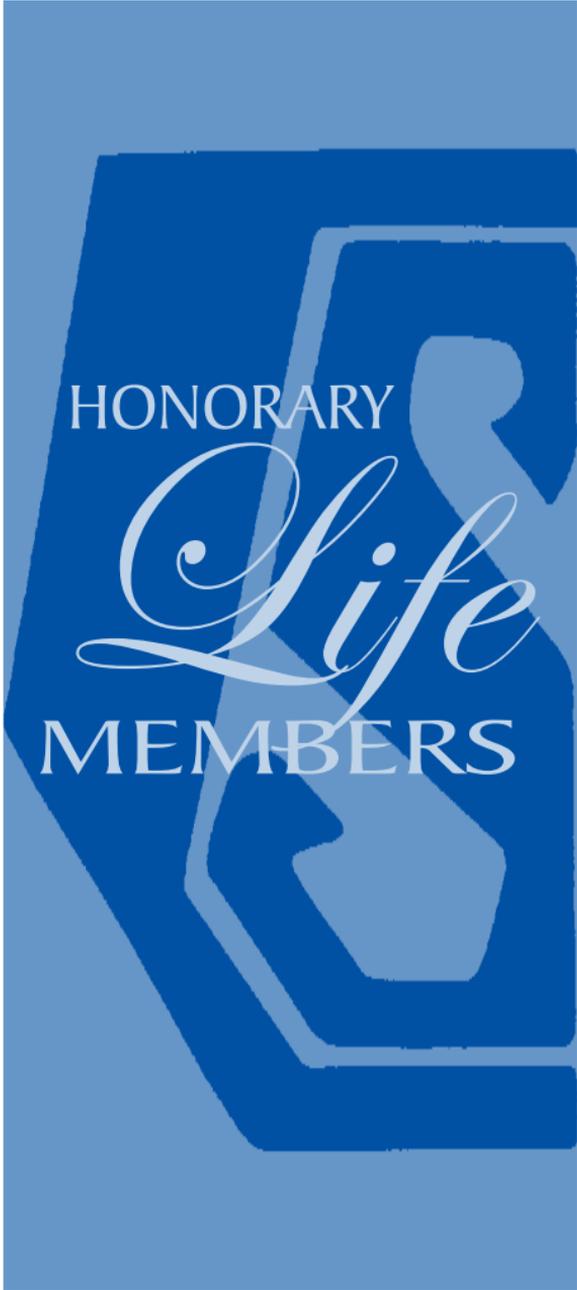
Joe and his wife Carolyn have made Sherwood Park their home. Joe began his teaching career with what was Sherwood Park Catholic Schools (Elk Island Catholic Schools) in 1980 and feels blessed to have had the opportunities to teach various grades and subjects as well as hold numerous leadership positions in seven division schools throughout his career.

In the year 2000, Joe pursued his passion for leading people and accepted a position in the private sector. Serving as the operations manager for a European bulk material handling company entering the North American market, Joe built a team of people which made the organization competitive and successful.

After four and a half years, Joe returned to Elk Island Catholic Schools where he became the Director of Student Services and then transitioned into the position of Assistant Superintendent of Human Resource Services where he has served for the past six years.

Joe's passions include golfing, landscape gardening, travelling, and volunteering. He looks forward to the freedom of time in which he plans to spend with his wife Carolyn, his two daughters Joclyn (married to Mark Beliveau) and Chelsey, his grandson Benjamin, and his parents.





HONORARY

Life

MEMBERS



Sharron Graham

After thirty exciting years of teaching I am retiring June 29th. As I reflect back I am amazed at how quickly it went. Over the time I taught every grade from one to twelve. Junior high was my forte. You never knew what each day would bring. It kept my skills honed and me humble. After obtaining my Master's from San Diego State I entered the world of Administration. I was principal of the Young Offenders Centre and then regular schools for ten years. Four years ago I joined Central Office, another new world to explore. During this time I had the wonderful opportunity to work with CASS on the Principal Quality Standards and be on the AISI PD Working Committee. As I reflect back I feel very honoured to have worked for an excellent school district (Grande Prairie Public) and to learn from so many inspiring mentors. Now it is time for me to pursue my hobbies and family.





John Loree

Serving the students of Lethbridge School District and working with all of the staff has been a great journey for John. He began his teaching career as a grade 3 teacher, and the thing he remembers about his first position was the collaborative support he received from his colleagues and administration. Over the next 35 years John's career included work in 8 different schools working as a classroom teacher, teacher-librarian, Curriculum Coordinator, Assistant Principal, Principal, District Administrator, and for the last three years as a CASS member serving as the Director of Curriculum.

John has been active with the Alberta Teachers' Association, serving in a number of roles. He has been actively involved as Chair of the Lethbridge Area Field Experience Committee, serving on the university's Teacher Education Advisory Committee and the provincial Teacher Education Certification Committee.

At the provincial level John has represented CASS on several committees. At the zone level John has served as the Vice Chair of the Southern Alberta Professional Development Consortium.

John has appreciated all of the support from his friends and colleagues in Lethbridge School District, from Zone 6 CASS members, and from everyone in the province. It has been a great learning experience and the support of the CASS colleagues has been unbelievable.

John believes the most important part of life is his wife Annie who teaches grade 2, and their son who has just completed his medical degree in Edmonton. He looks forward to spending time on the things that matter most!





Carol McLean

Carol began her career in Education as a teacher with the Edmonton Catholic School System. She joined Alberta Education in 1981 and, since then, has held a variety of leadership roles in the department:

- Director of the Lethbridge Regional Office of Education
- Assistant Director of Special Education Branch
- Director of Zone 2/3 Services Branch of Field Services Sector
- Executive Director, Provincial Standards and Processes Sector of Basic Learning Division
- Executive Director, Program Sector of Program Development and Standards Division
- Executive Director, People & Research Division.
- Assistant Deputy Minister, People & Research Division

Carol left Alberta Education for a period of four years in the late 1990's to lead Southern Alberta in a community planning process to establish Regional Child and Family Services Authorities in Southern Alberta.

As Assistant Deputy Minister, People & Research Division, Carol is responsible for creating and leading the Department's strategies and interests in the areas of professional competencies and development, human resource capacity, attraction and retention, our student engagement initiative, change management within the sector, and our work on applied research and research strategies. With a vision to provide the "Right People in the Right Places doing the Right Things", the Division:

- Builds, strengthens and promotes the capacity of people in the education sector
- Promotes and maintains a positive, safe and healthy work environment
- Strengthens the education sector with research, strategic advice and direction
- Ensures that provincial standards related to the work of People & Research Division are current, appropriate and implemented
- Strengthens and promotes school and system improvement.

Carol has extensive experience in strategic business planning, policy development, operational planning, and monitoring to ensure financial and results accountability



“Best wishes to
our newest
retirees and life
members for
continued good
health and
happiness for
many years
to come.”