



QPARSE News

The newsletter of the Québec Provincial Association of
Retired School Educators

Les nouvelles de l'Association du personnel
d'enseignement retraité du Québec

QPARSE/APPERQ

L'automne/Autumn 2023



Wednesday
October 4

Tour & wine tasting.
Vignoble
Côte de Vaudreuil,
2692 Harwood,
Vaudreuil-Dorion

Monday
Nov 13

"English Education in
Quebec. Who Cares?"
QPARSE member
Dr. Kate Le Maistre,
via Zoom

21 – 40 – 96 – 23 – C-13 ??

What a Bingo card full of numbers! Unfortunately, they don't represent a game, but a series of bills passed by the Québec government (and one federal one) that all affect, in some way or other, the minority population of this province.

Unless you're hijab- or kippah-wearing public servants, including practising teachers, **Law 21**, passed in June 2019, may not seem very important to your day-to-day life, although it may be keeping qualified teachers out of the classroom. One highly publicized case in Western Québec suggested that one of their female employees, an observant Muslim, was likely to cross the border to Ontario to teach. Indeed, Ontario government billboards have proudly said: "We care what's in your head, not on it."

In May 2022, the government passed **Bill 96**, "An Act respecting French, the official and common language of Québec," which has the worthy aim of promoting and protecting the French language. However, alarm bells were sounded because the whole bill applies the notwithstanding clause, that allows a province to override basic freedoms guaranteed to minority groups by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and that protects aspects of the far-reaching law from legal challenges based on the charter.

Among the clauses of concern, the law caps how many students can enter English CEGEPs, offers services to immigrants in French only after they have been in the province for six months, makes French proficiency a criterion for their permanent residency, and guarantees government services in English to "historic anglophones" only. I'm puzzled by the fact that while my bilingual children and grandchildren are historic Anglos (and my daughter proudly wears a T-shirt saying so), I am one of about 500 000 Quebecers who will no longer be legally permitted to receive government services in English, having been educated in English, but mostly outside Canada.

In 2014, the Québec government constituted a panel of experts who read and consulted widely and recommended that school boards and their elected officials should be maintained and reported that it had "a generally positive view of the performance of the Québec school system." In February 2020, the gov-

(Continued on page 4)

Inside this issue:

21– 40– 96 – 23 – C13 ??	1
Editorial	2
President's Message	3
Spotlight on Members	5
Benefits of Volunteering	6
"Ikigai"	7
Pictures generated by AI	7
Roaming Reminiscences	8
Why is Finland Number 1	10
Welcome Back Luncheon	11
Et ça crisse, frappe et jappe	12
Do you know where...?	12
In Memory	12
Thoughts On Hospice Care	13
WU WEI	14
Welcome new Members	14
QPARSE Program	15
A Cautionary Tale	16
Recipe	17
Application Form	18
About Us	19

Editorial

"Traveling—it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller." - Ibn Battuta

Going to new places, meeting new people, becoming immersed in a new culture, and the possibility of learning a new language, these are just some of the benefits of travel. So whether we travel through the pages of a good book, or in person to new lands, this endeavour ranks as one of the top activities on a retiree's to-do list.

As such, the theme for this edition of QPARSE News is travel - an all time favourite! On page 8 and 9 check out some of our members' reflections on their recent visits and their "Roaming Reminiscences". Then don't forget to send me your travel memories, and we will print them in the winter edition of QPARSE News.

Alternatively, let us know your thoughts on how to "rock retirement" in general - this is the focus of the winter edition of QPARSE. We really appreciate your input! It is your newsletter!

Meanwhile in Quebec, minority rights and English education are still immersed in a stormy weather pattern. For an insightful big picture account on some of these issues, read Dr. Kate Le Maistre's front page article.

You'll notice that Tom Conti is a prolific writer in this edition of QPARSE News. For an sample of his writing, read the spotlight on our QPARSE member, Lorne Flavelle . Thank you to Tom Conti and all members of the QPARSE News team. They are an awesome group! I'm sure you agree.

This edition also has three articles on well-being. The sense of well-being that residents of Finland experience, account for its top ranking on the world happiness scale (page 10). There is also the well being Chinese concept of "Wu Wei" (page 14), and the Japanese "ikigai" frame of mind (page 7). Can you relate to either of these ideas?

In the next edition of QPARSE News, Terrie, our hardworking publisher, will be writing an article on Artificial intelligence (AI). Meanwhile I leave you with the AI "picture of a plush, standing, teddy bear riding a skateboard in Quebec City." Learning something new is always fun.

The start of the school year is always a special time for us as retirees; so enjoy it!

See you soon,
M. Michielli
Editor
mmichielli@icloud.com



Editor of all

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Kate Le Maistre

Next Deadline:
January 6, 2024

Theme:
Rocking Retirement

President's Message - Message de la présidente

Bienvenue and welcome to a new year with QPARSE. I am excited to report that it is going to be another exceptional year of friendship, education, fun and generally all the things that retired educators need.

The first big thing we should educate ourselves on is the ruling that came on Law 40. I encourage you to read everything that you can, as not only is it extremely significant in Quebec, for the educators in the English education system in Quebec but also for all of those who access the English education system in Quebec.

Your Board of Directors met on August 28th to launch the new year's activities. What a positive, fabulous group of people. We are very lucky to benefit from the ideas, creativity, and dedication of this group.

Carol Klein and Claudia Thierry and their very busy committee have put together another program of very interesting activities. The first one is one of my favourites – the welcome back luncheon and social at the Ottavio restaurant. So much fun!

ACER/CART continues to be a support for us. It keeps us involved in so many issues that are happening across Canada. So many of them are pertinent to QPARSE members.

A small but very dynamic committee was struck to look at membership and recruitment. Over the years it has become more difficult to inform newly retired educators of the wonderful QPARSE organization. Privacy laws are very important but sadly they restrict our ability to reach people.

We shall have our QPARSE table at the QPAT convention and we shall also be giving a session on retirement. We did this once before and it was very successful. This will be our first post COVID session. We're very excited!

I am looking forward to seeing you, both in person and on Zoom. I think you will enjoy your year with QPARSE. I hope that you will join me in thanking our wonderful Board of Directors for all that they do for us. They are such a super group of people.

Sincerely,

Katherine Snow
President of QPARSE
katherinejsnow@gmail.com



21 – 40 – 96 – 23 – C-13 ?? (Continued from page 1)

ernment put aside this advice and called closure on the debate on **Bill 40**, a bill that contained more than 300 sections and modified about 80 existing laws. Among these were clauses that effectively abolished school boards and their elected officials and replaced them with service centres, staffed by employees paid directly by the Ministry of Education. The expressed goal of the bill was to decentralize education and to give schools more control, without the “middleman” function of the school board. In fact, the service centres in the French sector appear to have experienced a concentration of power in the Ministry and a reduction in decision-making at the local level.

The English school boards argued that, as a minority language group, they had a constitutional right under Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to control their school system and were granted an injunction, later taking their case to court. In July, 2023, Québec Superior Court judge Sylvain Lussier struck down sections of Bill 40 that would replace English-language school boards with service centres. His 125-page judgement acknowledged the involvement of all community members in the education of children, as rightsholders under Section 23, not just parents with children in schools, and specified “*ceux qui ont le droit d’y inscrire leurs enfants, ou qui y ont fait inscrire leurs enfants d’âge scolaire, ou avaient le droit de le faire, y compris les grandparents qui jouent un rôle important dans l’éducation des enfants.*” He added that “The transmission of the culture is at stake with the educational project, which is not limited to classrooms,” and wrote further on the need for genuine consultation, and on minority rights in more general terms. The Québec government has decided to appeal this ruling.

Even before the judgement on Bill 40 came down, the government introduced the most recent in the series of bills, **Bill 23**, giving the Minister of Education even more power. The Ministry of Education will be able to hire and fire directors general of service centres and school boards, or to over-ride their decisions if they don’t coincide with ministerial objectives. The Superior Council of Education, as well as the body that evaluates teacher education programs, will be abolished. Who will the Minister ask for advice?

At the federal level, **Bill C-13** recognizes the famous Bill 101, modified by Bill 96 with its notwithstanding clause, subjects federally chartered companies to Bill 101 and effectively moves Canada from symmetric federalism, with each province having equal rights, closer to asymmetric federalism, to the possible detriment of Francophones outside Québec as well as Anglophones in Québec. Only four Liberal MPs spoke out publicly against the bill, and only one of them, Anthony Housefather, defied the party Whip and voted against it.

What do all these laws have in common and why should we care about them? Why should we care whether or not school boards exist, since so few people vote in school board elections anyway? Should we worry that we might not receive government services in English? Most anglophones now communicate reasonably well in French and certainly make the attempt to do so. Will it matter to me that my death certificate will only be available in French and that my heirs will have to pay if they want an English translation? Are we worrying for no reason? Without returning to the status of the “Angryphones” of the past, many English-speaking Quebecers are concerned that the key issue is not a steady trickle of irritating laws, but an erosion of their rights, despite the protection of Section 23 of the Charter, which is not subject to the notwithstanding clause, and despite the assurances of the government that they will be treated equitably. There have already been examples of problems associated with government officials either unaware of the exceptions under the various laws, or insufficiently trained in their application, or of people having unsympathetic (and illegal) treatment during an exchange with a bureaucrat who was having a bad day.

What can we do about this? We are not lawyers who can understand the nuances of the laws, but we can stay alert to any changes that seem discriminatory and contact our MNAs and MPs. We can support our school boards, attend board meetings-virtually, and vote in school board elections. We can stay connected and follow the progress of these laws in the French and English press and broadcast media. We may no longer be active in schools, but we are still concerned with the schooling of children and the high-level decision-making that affects their schooling.

Kate Le Maistre



Spotlight on Members



Lorne Flavelle

Lorne, a Montrealer through and through, was born in Pointe St. Charles and attended Sarsfield Elementary and D'Arcy McGee High School. After graduation, he elected to attend the "B" program at St. Joseph Teachers' College, which involved a half-year at the college and a half-year teaching.

I asked Lorne what, initially, led to his decision to pursue a career in education. He shared that his early naval cadet training required him to give instruction to his peers, with good evaluation I might add, and this helped him to make his decision. Initially considering a career with the RCMP, a height restriction did not permit his entry!! Despite this setback, Lorne rose through the Naval Reserve Unit HMCS Donnacona eventually becoming its Commander!

Lorne taught for the CECM-English sector, beginning at Saint Thomas a Becket in the St. Michel district of Montreal. It was there that he met his wife, Diane, who was also a teacher at the school. He went on to teach at both Holy Family and St. Aloysius schools.

Given his great interest in youth development, along with his teaching skills and the influence of his relative, Louis Dugal, the first guidance counsellor in the school board, Lorne applied to McGill's Masters program in Counseling. Securing his internship at John F. Kennedy High School, he went on to spend over 20 years as a fulltime guidance counsellor at the school. It was during this time that our paths crossed, and an enduring professional and personal association began. I remember the huge set of keys Lorne carried around. He must have had a key to every room in the school! A move to William Hingston High School followed.

During his career, the board asked Lorne to set up a program designed to assist teachers, many of whom were facing potential excess. Boy, have the times changed!! Known as the "Alternate Careers For Teachers", it was an individual exploration of their interests and potential career options conducted by a number of guidance counsellors on Saturday mornings.

Not intent to rest on his laurels, Lorne began a private practice, "Reflections Counselling Service", that spanned more than 25 years. He also became a trainer to introduce the "Real Game", a student career education awareness concept, to teachers across Quebec. After a short return to JFK High School, Lorne was reassigned to the Adult Education sector, which was growing by leaps and bounds! Lorne retired in 1995 but continued working part time in his private practice until 2022!!

Lorne was deeply involved in a number of counselling associations, becoming a member, board director and ultimately president of the Quebec Counselling Association (QCA). As well, he served as president of the national Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapist Association (CCPA). Lorne's interest in private practice inspired him to promote and establish the Private Practitioner's Chapter of CCPA, which is now its largest chapter in Canada! Always humble, Lorne has been recognized by both of these associations, including an annual CCPA award in his name.

Does all this go to his head? Not at all! Still the boy from the Pointe, he remains down to earth and always fun to be around. No moss grows under his feet, volunteering at the West Island YMCA, serving as a Church Warden and a Grand Knight in the Knights of Columbus, just to name a few of his interests. Swimming is also important for Lorne, and of course a good party!

Lorne shared that his real blessings in his life journey have been his wonderful wife, Diane, his two children, Lorianne and David and his granddaughters, Chloe and Erin. He is still involved with QCA and his kids say, "Dad, what part of retirement you do not understand"?!

Quite a career Lorne...welcome aboard!!

Tom Conti



THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

It is a *sine qua non* that maintaining good physical and mental health becomes increasingly important as we age, and, in fact, most of us are aware of this and do just that. For instance, I see seniors walking and running every day when I am out and about, and my twice-weekly exercise class is specially designed for those 60 and over. To keep ourselves sharp, many of us join a book club or travel to distant climes more regularly, while others take on the challenge of learning a new language. Indeed, this newsletter has previously featured the pastimes of some of our QPARSE members.

However, people on the cusp of retirement frequently mention that one of the things that they would like to do, or do more of, is to volunteer. I think we educators are hard-wired to help others and enjoy doing that as a team member in a social space such as a club or a church.

Thus, volunteering is an excellent activity for us seniors to consider as it has numerous health benefits. Some studies have shown that volunteering is associated with a longer lifespan and decreased mortality risk. But how does volunteering positively impact the health of seniors? Let's see what those studies have to say.

Firstly, volunteering provides opportunities for us to socialize and form meaningful connections with others. By interacting with others and feeling like we are contributing to a larger cause, we can experience improved mental health, such as reduced stress levels and less anxiety and tension, thereby reducing the risk of depression.

In addition, volunteering can help us stay active and maintain our physical health. Many volunteer opportunities require physical activity, such as gardening, walking dogs, or delivering meals, which can contribute to keeping us in good physical shape. Furthermore, volunteering can give us a sense of purpose and accomplishment, leading to increased self-esteem and motivation to stay active. Indeed, studies have shown that volunteers have lower blood pressure and a reduced risk of chronic diseases, such as those too often common ailments: heart disease and diabetes.

Volunteering has also been shown to improve cognitive function, including memory, attention, and problem-solving skills. This is because volunteering often requires individuals to learn new skills and adapt to new situations, which can improve brain function and overall cognitive abilities.

Finally, volunteering can lead to a sense of fulfillment and purpose. This is especially important for those who may be at risk of social isolation and loneliness. Seniors who volunteer often report feeling happier and more satisfied with their lives as they contribute to a more significant cause and make a difference in their community.

Well, it seems it is all good news on that front! In a nutshell, volunteering is an excellent activity that provides numerous health benefits. By socializing, staying active, staying mentally sharp, and feeling fulfilled, we can experience improved physical and mental health, a sense of purpose, and a connection to our community.

What are you waiting for?

Lynn Travers.

(The information from the studies was generated from ChatGPT.)

Doing Good is Good for You Volunteering

Reduces

Depression
Chronic pain
Stress
Risk of disease
Social isolation

Increases

Physical fitness
Mental functionality
Sense of purpose
Social connection
Longevity

“Ikigai”

A popular book about longevity is "Ikigai: The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life," and it is authored by Héctor García and Francesco Miralles". Ikigai” translates to "the happiness of always being busy," and it's based on a person's purpose in life. It is said, that finding your “ikigai” can make life more meaningful. A summary of the main tenets follows:



1. Stay active; don't retire. Many of the world's longest-lived people still work in their 80s and beyond. For example, Jayne Burns is a 100-year-old lady who works at a craft store in Ohio. Burns said her only birthday wish after turning 100 was "to keep working,”
2. Take it slow. Rushing and being in a hurry has negative effects on quality of life.
3. Don't fill your stomach. Centenarians that the authors spoke to said they eat only 80% of what's on the plate.
4. Good friends are important. According to an 85-year Harvard study, great relationships has been linked to well-being. Centenarians in Okinawa, make spending time together at the village community centers a priority.
5. Get in shape. Exercise is a big component of longevity. Try five-minute movements, like radio taiso that residents of Okinawa do daily.
6. Smile. “It’s a privilege to be here, ‘in a world so full of possibilities,’ ” says the author, Renée Onque.
7. Reconnect with nature. Find time to breathe fresh air and walk. Spending time in nature is mood uplifting and it improves memory.
8. “Give thanks”, says the author. “Gratitude is a good way to remind ourselves of the best things in life.”
9. Be in the moment. “”Stop regretting the past and fearing the future. Today is all we have. Make the most of it,” write García and Miralles.
10. Follow your “ikigai.” Having an “ikigai” adds great purpose to life.

Reference: summarized from: The 10 rules of 'Ikigai,' from authors of the Japanese 'secret' for 'a long and happy life', Renée Onque, July 9, 2023

Ikigai: The Japanese secret to a long and Happy Life, Hector Garcia and Francesco Morailles

Picture generated using Artificial Intelligence (AI)

One of the many programs used to generate AI pictures, like the one shown here, is called OpenAI DALL-E. It uses detailed prompts to describe the picture you would like to produce. The more detailed the prompts, the better the picture meets your specifications! I saw this regal-looking dog in the March 2023 edition of the MidJourney scriptors used to generate the picture. The magazine showed the de-published photo. My prompts were similar to those used in the magazine, but even minor changes generate a different product.

So far, the lessons learnt point to the fact that numbers are not easily incorporated in AI pictures and AI has a hard time with human fingers in pictures. The learning curve has just begun!



the fact that numbers are not easily incorporated in AI pictures and AI has a hard time with human fingers in pictures. The learning curve has just begun!

Full body photography of Samoyed dog wearing a fancy white silk princess dress and silver crown, white smooth fur, highly detailed, high quality, beautiful and majestic. Of the 150 credits purchased on OpenAI DALL-E are now 141 left for any new ideas.

Roaming Reminiscences

What are some memories of the travels you've done over the years?

Claudia Thierry's Experience

The cleanest place I ever visited is Japan. It was also the safest. In 2004 when I attended the International Federation of Home Economics conference in Kyoto, we took the opportunity to travel by train, marvelling at the cleanliness, lack of graffiti and the honesty of the people. You could leave your suitcase on the quay and walk away to buy your bento box lunch without worrying about theft or pickpockets. I hope it hasn't changed since then. The grass in parks and at temples was meticulously trimmed by scissors wielded by kneeling workers. Each leaf out-of-place was similarly dealt with before it could blemish the pristine serenity of the area. Female gardeners wore old-fashioned bonnets and gloves to protect against the sun and maintain their lily-white complexions.



The farthest I've ever been from home is China. The culture is so different from Japan's. People were outgoing and very friendly toward Westerners, at least in 2017, prior to political changes that now make travelling to China a little risky. We felt a bit like monkeys at a zoo, in that everywhere we went, people were asking to take photos with us. What a difference a few years makes. Whenever we went by train or plane, we had to pass through many security checks. Pickpockets abounded at train stations and we witnessed the arrest of a band of them.

My first overseas trip took place when I was seventeen. I was to travel to Bavaria to spend the summer with my aunts and grandfather. Since there were no direct flights, and a neighbour was doing the same trip after her first-year teaching, we travelled together, via Paris. She intended to spend several weeks in Paris. My dad thought two days would be fine for me and supplied the funds for a hotel. Well, two days grew into nine days. The budget had to be stretched and there were limited francs available for food. Once I finally arrived in Munich, my relatives were shocked to see a “Twiggy” type lady emerge from the arrivals at the airport. This was just before a thin was in. For the rest of the summer, they attempted to fatten me up!

Jan Langelier's Experience

Somewhere I'd love to go back to Italy, Redrock parks in Western USA, Provence

Somewhere I wouldn't go back to if I were paid to go: Nowhere – I love everywhere I have travelled

The oldest place I ever visited: Village Viviers in France – 1100 AD

The coldest place I ever visited: Yellowknife in January

The cleanest place I ever visited: Stockholm

The most romantic place I ever visited: Paris

The farthest I've ever been from home: Rome

My favourite form of transportation: Walking

My most memorable meal: Top of CN tower

My first overseas trip : Stockholm – Member of Canadian group represented at the inaugural meeting of Education International



(Continued on page 9)

Roaming Reminiscences *(Continued from page 8)*

My most adventurous trip: Redrock parks

My most educational trip: All of the above and any others – I learn so much by travelling

Des mésaventures de voyage - Brian

De nos jours les voyages par avion ne sont plus comme auparavant. Dernièrement, nombreux sont ceux qui se sont vu leurs bagages perdus ou endommagés ou même leurs vols retardés par la compagnie aérienne. Les pertes de bagages, impliquent la perte d'objets précieux et sentimentaux, et des souvenir.

Le refus d'embarquement dû à des surréservations est aussi la cause de beaucoup d'ennui aujourd'hui.

Les compagnies aériennes contestent actuellement un règlement qui les oblige à compenser leurs clients pour des pertes et dommages de bagages ainsi que pour les retards d'un vol. En fait, le règlement stipule que les compagnies aériennes sont redevables à leurs clients d'une indemnisation de 2400\$ dû à une surréservation et un maximum de 2100\$ pour les bagages introuvables ou endommagés.

Références :

<https://www.ledevoir.com/societe/consommation/543787/transport-aerien-jusqu-a-2400-d-indemnisation-pour-la-surrereservation>

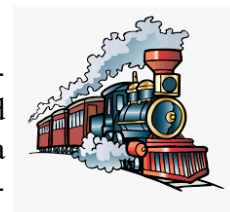
<https://www.ledevoir.com/societe/justice/796397/justice-la-cour-supreme-du-canada-se-penchera-sur-l-indemnisation-des-passagers-aeriens>

My most adventurous trip—No Exit Stamp! - Renate Sutherland

It was the summer of 1972 and Graeme and I had planned to visit Prague after visiting relatives in East Berlin. In preparation for this trip, we had to have the necessary “entry and exit stamps” to enter and leave Eastern Germany. In addition, an official hand-written visa application for travel to Prague was approved and granted before our departure from Montreal. On Saturday we took the train from East Berlin to Prague. The train, had standing room only, and it was on its way from Berlin to Sofia, Bulgaria. As required, we had the East German “entry stamp” but, because of the weekend closure of local government offices, we had no “exit stamp”. In Dresden, numerous workers’ groups filled the reserved seats. Before the train left the station, we witnessed individuals, clutching purchased clothing items, being taken off the train by military police - they did not return. At this point, we wondered what would happen to us without the official “exit stamp”.

As the train slowly approached the East German - Czech border, we saw look-out posts, East German military police with machine guns and vicious dogs, all patrolling this bleak “no man’s land”. East German customs personnel checks our passport and notices that there is no “exit stamp”. In German I explained the reason, but in response, these very young officials take away our passports...What now! The only Westerners on the train had been caught!!!

After 20 minutes, our passports were returned, but only after a severe reprimand and the fine payment of \$40 (CDN) each. Luckily and against the rules of carrying foreign/western currency in Eastern Bloc countries, we were so relieved and happy that we had the necessary funds.



(Continued on page 10)

No Exit Stamp! - Renate Sutherland *(Continued from page 9)*

On arrival at the Czech border, we were greeted in French and a red-carpet treatment awaited us. Much to my surprise, I saw my original hand-written visa application form, which had been submitted for approval to visit Prague. While in Prague, we had to surrender our passport to the officially assigned hotel where we had to stay, participated in state authorized sight-seeing tours and were very limited in exploring the area on foot surrounding Wenceslas Square where the hotel was. What we did not know, until we crossed back into West Germany on our way to Munich was, that we were in Prague at the start of the Trial of Alexander Dubček, a Slovak politician who tried to reform the communist regime during the Prague Spring of 1968-69!

In the Spring of 2015, our Senior Discovery Tours visit to Eastern Europe took us back to Prague, where we went back to Wenceslas Square, now a hub of many commercial and tourist activities, and were delighted when we dropped into the now beautifully modernized Grand Hotel where we had stayed forty-three years ago. It was a very elegant hotel then, frequented by communist officials and tourists alike.

Why is Finland Number One on the world happiness scale?

Finland is No. 1 as the world's happiest people! Their secret is the “Sisu” mind frame.

“Sisu” is way of living that has been part of the Finnish culture for about 500 years. It doesn't translate well, but it's rooted in determination and the grit to keep going, even if there are strong odds against you. That's why for six years, from 2018 to 2022, Finland and the Nordic countries were the happiest countries in the world. The author believes that “sisu plays a significant role in our well-being and the ability to maintain a positive and resilient mindset.” Basically, it says:

1. Live for yourself, not someone else's expectations.

There is little status hierarchy in Finland, people are flexible and they don't stick to “a rigid definition of success.”

2. Become an expert in something and share that knowledge.

“One of the best ways to serve others is to find: Something you're good at ,
Something exciting, and something that has a positive impact on others.”

Find a job or a hobby you like, and focus on it.

3. Do random acts of kindness.

The magic formula is to do three random acts of kindness a day.

4. Be a good neighbor.

“Talkoot” is Finnish means “working together to do something that one would not be able to do alone.” In farming, when someone had to build a barn roof, they'd hold a “talkoot.” Neighbours would come to help neighbours.

5. Enjoy quiet time on your own and with others.

Being together in silence is important too!

*References: The Sisu within you: the Finnish key to life, love and success
World Happiness Report 2018 to 2022 Gallup World Poll
UN Sustainable Solutions Network*

Welcome Back Luncheon

On September 7, 2023, on a bright sunny day, approximately 50 QPARSE members gathered to celebrate the start of the school year! It was an awesome turnout!



Et ça crisse, frappe et jappe

Maude, réveillée en pleine nuit,
Par les contrecoups d'un combat

D'invectives, d'injures et d'un crissement
De dents.

Elle se dit :

« Qui est cet intrus
Écervelé? »

Toute seule dans son appart
Elle est prise d'assaut de la foulée
De sa tirade, et s' imagine qu'il
L'épie

À moitié morte, elle est figée
Par l'effroi abyssal.

Des frappes fortes à la porte
Assaillent et martellent ses oreilles
En rafale.

Et déchaînent la haine
Des chiens de rue qui se mettent
À japper.

Lui, il hurle toujours comme une bête

Et cri à tue-tête :

Madame! Je suis le proprio
Déverrouille!

Évacuez illico!

Le bris d'un tuyau
D'égout inonde
Le sous-sol presque au
Plafond.

Les flots s'infiltrant chez vous,
D'une force effrénée.

Il sonne l'alerte.

© Sunny



Do You know the whereabouts of these members ?

We are still searching for the following members whose mail has returned or whose email has changed. If you know anything about any of them, please let Terrie Kozaczynski know by email at terriekoz@yahoo.com or by telephone at 514-334-2203.

Macpherson June—Hemmingford, QC

Wintle Sarena—Cookshire, QC

Julien, Marie-Bernadette—Pierrefonds, QC

Westlake, Sidney—Montreal, QC

Arseneau, Evelyn—North Lancaster, ON

Humber-Rogers, Patricia—Bromont, QC

Reed, Jerry—Qualicum Beach, BC

In Memory of Our Dear Friends *we send our deepest condolences to the friends and family of the following:*

Lambshead, Marilyn of LaSalle, QC

Moore, Betty of Brighton, ON

Steeves, Walton of Chateaugay, QC



Thoughts On Hospice Care

I think the biggest challenge is deciding that hospice is the right place for you. It involves two equally difficult things: accepting that death is near and understanding that hospice care will improve life as death approaches.

With my diagnosis, I had no choice but to accept that death was near. I was lucky. For some reason, it did not take me long to work through the normal responses, like denial or anger, that interfere with acceptance. I know this part of the decision may be harder for some patients. I hope we can bolster care and counselling services to help future patients work through this thinking. We need to shed light on the realities of the end of life.

My mindset was helped by being assessed for Medical Assistance in Dying. The assessing physicians were kind and patient, ensuring that I had a clear understanding of options. I was found to be eligible, which has been a source of strength for me. I have the autonomy to choose when my life will end.

I was also lucky to have a clear understanding of how hospice would improve my life. Through my wife's work as a palliative care nurse, I had long thought of a hospice as a place for patients to be comforted and supported. I do not think others do. I worry that most can only see sad images when forced to think about hospice care. I knew the positives, making my decision easier. We need to shed light on the benefits of palliative and hospice care.

Make no mistake, I wanted to stay home as long as I could. My last few months at home were filled with joy and reflection. Eventually, my needs could not be met through family or home care. I shed tears leaving home for the last time. I regretted the progression of my disease, but not the decision to come to hospice.

My experience at hospice has been wonderful.

I am a private person. I worried having staff care for my hygiene, would be hard on me. The staff have been professional and discrete. I have a terrible disease, that has taken over my physical body. The staff has not allowed me to feel it has taken my dignity or humanity.

Although I am sharing these thoughts with you, I am also a private person when it comes to my emotions. The nursing, pastoral and medical staff have offered me space to talk about my feelings and thoughts. These approaches have been respectful and kind. I hope patients troubled by fear or doubt will take advantage of these offers. I am a food snob. The food is great. Really, it is!

When I arrived here, I still had good-byes to say. The staff welcomed guests, working their schedules around these visits, not vice versa. For our 59th wedding anniversary, the extended family ate together upstairs. I wish I could rhapsodize about the view, but it was rainy and foggy.

Death is sad, but this hospice is not. It is a place of comfort, dignity, and love, I hope our community continues to support it.

Raymond LeBlanc
(as told to Gus Grant)

Raymond Paul Leblanc, CM MD FRCSP, Dalhousie Professor Emeritus. He was a physician, teacher, scientist and administrator, driven by a tireless work ethic to improve health and vision care. Ray passed away on July 10, 2023 at the Halifax Hospice.

Submitted by Tom Conti with permission to reprint from Mrs. Françoise LeBlanc.

WU WEI (pronounced ooh way)

A 2,000-year-old Chinese concept called "wu wei", translates to "non-action" or "effortless action", can help us lead more balanced and fulfilling lives.

Research has shown that it can help lower stress and anxiety, while it increases overall well-being. Here's what is suggested on how to make wu wei part the day's activities.

1. Accept things as they are

In any situation ask yourself whether you have complete control. If not, make peace with it and move on.

2. Allow imperfection

Allow things to unfold in their own way, without forcing the outcome.

3. Implement mindfulness

Mindfulness means being aware of your thoughts and feelings and being non-judgmental.

Notice small details! Wu wei comes much easier when you pay close attention in the present moment.

Lao Tzu, an ancient Chinese philosopher once said: "If you are depressed, you are living in the past. If you are anxious, you are living in the future. If you are at peace, you are living in the present."

Note: summarized from "A 2,000-year-old Chinese mindset can make you more successful—it 'takes almost zero effort,'" says psychologist, Dr Junhana Cao, July 13, 2023

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QPARSE PROGRAM CALENDAR

**PRESENTATIONS VIA ZOOM
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
10 AM STARTING TIME**

2023

Wednesday Oct. 4	Tour & wine tasting. Vignoble Côte de Vaudreuil, 2692 Harwood, Vaudreuil-Dorion
Monday Nov 13	“English Education in Quebec: Who Cares?” by QPARSE member Dr. Kate Le Maistre, via Zoom
Thursday Dec 7	Holiday lunch, 11:30 at Baton Rouge, 5385, rue des Jockeys, Montréal (Decarie boul.)

2024

Monday Feb 12	“Travel with Senior Discovery Tours.” Zoom presentation by Ruby Simard, Marketing Manager for Quebec and Atlantic Canada
Wednesday Mar. 13	To be announced
Tuesday April 16	“All about MY Orchids, an introduction to an addiction and how you can get started.” by QPARSE member, Brenda Lee at EMSB, 6000 Fielding Ave., Montreal.
Tuesday May 7	Annual General Meeting

To register for ZOOM online events, please contact via email one of the following at least one week before the event:

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Claudia Thierry (514) 457-2499 / cthierry@aei.ca
OR Carol Klein (514) 696-3447 / retired0821@gmail.com

PROGRAMME DES ACTIVITÉS DE L'APPERQ

**RÉUNIONS VIRTUELLES VIA ZOOM
PAR INSCRIPTION
ET DÉBUTANT À 10 HEURES**

2023

Mercredi, le 4 oct	Visite et dégustation au Vignoble Côte de Vaudreuil, 2692, route Harwood, Vaudreuil-Dorion.
Lundi, le 13 nov	Rencontre virtuelle (Zoom) : « L'éducation anglaise au Québec; qui s'en occupe? » présenté par Dre Kate Le Maistre de APPERQ
Jeudi, le 7 déc	Lunch à 11h30, au Baton Rouge, pour célébrer la période des Fêtes. 5385, rue des Jockeys (angle du boul. Décarie), Montréal.

2024

Lundi, le 12 fév.	«Voyager avec Senior Discovery Tours.» Rencontre virtuelle (Zoom) avec Ruby Simard, Responsable Marketing du Québec et les provinces de l'Atlantique. à déterminer
Mercredi, le 13 mars	
Mardi, le 16 avril	« All about MY Orchids », le début d'une dépendance et comment vous pouvez commencer. » par une membre de APPERQ, Brenda Lee. Commission scolaire English-Montréal (CSEM), 6000, avenue Fielding, Montréal.
Mardi le 7 mai	Assemblée générale annuelle

Pour vous inscrire svp contactez les suivants adresses courriel au moins une semaine avant la date. On vous contactera avec la connexion ZOOM un jour avant l'événement.

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A Cautionary Tale

It was Mother's Day, May 14, 2023. The striking cemetery workers' union had agreed to open the gates for several hours so family members could "visit" their dearly departed loved ones. I was one of them.

As I approached the cemetery in my car around 9:40am, in front of the Oratory on Queen Mary Road, I became part of a huge traffic jam. As far as my eyes could see ahead of me and also on Côte-des-Neiges Road, the cars were bumper to bumper, moving at less than a snail's pace! Quick thinking, after being paralysed for at least 20 minutes, I parked on a side street and walked the two short blocks to the Decelles street entrance to the cemetery—only to find all the gates closed! Then I noticed people, on foot like me, squeezing through a tiny gap between two fence rungs that had obviously been pried open some time ago. I decided to try my luck, and lo and behold, I managed to get through!



Feeling good, I proceeded first to the Conti-Lorenzetti plot. Thank God, there was no damage after the horrific ice storm in early April. A short stroll passed several other family and friends' gravesites that were also spared. I made my way to my maternal grandparents' final resting place and I knew they would be safe as they are entombed in the St. Peter & St. Paul mausoleum. I whispered to them that they were safe!

As I ventured further and deeper into the cemetery, just how much damage the storm had caused became a stark reality. Huge branches from hundreds of older trees were downed, many avenues closed off, as well as tree limbs resting on monuments. It looked like a disaster zone! Cars were circulating, where they could, having entered by the main gate. I could not help but wonder just how long it took for them to get in, and to get out, given the chaotic traffic scene I had observed earlier.

Closer to the main office a very good friend's family gravesite was also spared any damage. But just a few feet away the "street" was closed at both ends due to huge fallen branches strewn across it! Just last summer a tree in front of my friend's plot was cut down. That was a good thing too, as it surely would have done some serious damage!

I eventually arrived at the old Conti plot, only to discover that a huge tree, believe me a huge one, had fallen and came partly to rest on the monument. Again, no damage was visible. I was always concerned that this tree would eventually fall and this time it did, roots and all!! Several more stops at friends' sites revealed no damage as the trees are fewer in this area and too small to cause any real havoc.

Returning to my starting point where my parents are laid to rest, I collected the Christmas wreath and headed back out the way I had entered, only to see many more "visitors" squeezing through the fence while others were not so lucky and having to turn away. Five more pounds and I don't think I would have made it! All in all, it was quite an experience. I only hope that the strike ends soon, so I don't have to lose weight the next time I try to get inside the gates!

Judging by the number of huge holes, I think the groundhogs are once again enjoying the peace and quiet of the cemetery, and doing their thing!

UPDATE: The cemetery recently opened to the public, the groundhogs are not happy.

Tom Conti

CHEESE BREAD (CRESCIA)

This recipe, known as **Crescia**, which in Italian means "to rise", is traditionally made at Easter time. It is a cheese bread that for generations has brought much delight to my family. It is also excellent toasted with butter (or margarine) in the morning or enjoyed at any meal.

I like to divide the dough and put in 2 aluminum loaf pans, each 8in x 5 1/2in, or just one approximately 10 by 11 inches. It freezes well so I like the 2-pan idea. It is good at any time of the year! Enjoy!!!

Tom Conti



INGREDIENTS:

Mix a half cup water & a half cup milk, heated to lukewarm in a small saucepan, then add 2 traditional yeast pkgs & 2 teaspoons sugar. Let stand for 10 minutes for yeast to activate.

6 eggs

1 cup grated parmesan cheese (I like to use Reggiano Parmigiano)

half cup vegetable oil

quarter cup softened butter

1 tablespoon salt

half tablespoon pepper

5 1/2 cups all purpose flour (you will probably need more when kneading)

About 1 1/2 cups of strong cheddar cheese, such as Cracker Barrel, cubed. Save about 12 cubes.

Beat eggs well, mix activated yeast and add to the eggs, again mixing well. Then add this & the rest of the ingredients with the flour in a large bowl. Knead* on a floured board, adding the cubed cheese while kneading. More flour may be needed as the dough should be soft, not sticky. (*I usually knead for at least a good 10-15 minutes...you could use a Cuisinart or similar appliance for this step...call me old fashioned!)

Place in buttered baking pan(s), press the saved cheese cubes into the top and rub a little oil on top of dough. Cover with plastic wrap and place a tea towel over this. Let rise for 2 1/2 hours (I go a bit longer). Then bake at 325F for one hour.

Remove from the oven and let cool slightly before removing from pan(s).

Bon Appetit!



Crescia before going into oven.



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- We organize social, educational and community service activities with our members.
- We represent the interests of seniors through our participation in [ACER-CART](#) (the Canadian Association of Retired Teachers).
- We publish a [newsletter](#) three times a year.

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