



LarsEncore

BULLETIN 84

WEBSITE: www.larse.ca

March 31, 2023

The Newsletter of the Association of Retired School Employees

President: Barb Randle
larseretirees@yahoo.com

Vice President: Wayne Clifford
larseretirees@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Luce Pattison
larseretirees@yahoo.com

Secretary: Bill Stockwell
larseretirees@yahoo.com

Phone Captain & Membership:
Lois Maeder-Alves
larseretirees@yahoo.com

Editor in Chief: Bill Stockwell
wstockwell@sympatico.ca

Associate Editors: Bryden Murray
& Barb Randle larseretirees@yahoo.com

Tidbit Editor: Bryden Murray
larseretirees@yahoo.com

Luncheons 2023



Luncheon dates and locations:

Thursday March 30th -- Elixor Restaurant – 3237 boul. Des Sources DDO 514-683-7778

Friday April 28th -- Bâton Rouge – 3839 boul. St-Jean, DDO 514-626-6440

Thursday May 25th -- Restaurant l'Académie – 6321 Aut. Transcanadienne, Pte-Claire 514-429-4488



Don't forget the 50/50 RAFFLE at lunch. Half goes to you if you win, and the second winner gives half to the charity of their choice.

LARSENCORE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Why Not	Join A Group?
2	Entente cordiale
3	President's Message
4-8, 11	Group Reports
9-10	Golf & Cycling
12	Membership Form

BREAKFAST



IS ON THE SECOND FRIDAY OF THE MONTH!
at Le Manoir, 8:30 am, on the corner of Hymus
and boulevard St-Jean in Pointe-Claire

(April 14, May 12, June 9) (See the web site for summer dates)

2.



On September 24, 2018, the entente between L'ARSE and the Lester B. Pearson School Board was signed into effect. Shown at the ceremony, held at the beginning of the monthly meeting of the LBPSB Council of Commissioners were (left to right): Board Director General Michael Chechile and Chairman Noel Burke, L'ARSE President Tania Kinsella and LBPSB Director of Community Services Mario Barrette.

The Association of Retired School Employees (L'ARSE) and Lester B. Pearson School Board (LBPSB) agree that L'ARSE will be endorsed as the official association for retired employees of the LBPSB as of September 24, 2018. This agreement:

- a) Provides a protocol that will allow the Board's Human Resources department to inform retirees of this agreement, its benefit and, if authorized, to share their personal information with the Association;
- b) Makes sure that an Association representative attends and briefly addresses the new retirees at their gala formally welcoming them to "their" association;
- c) Offers rooms and venues that are normally available to the public for a fee, to the Association free of charge, as long as extra caretaking expenses are not incurred;
- d) Offers at "cost only", the same rooms and venues, including venues under entente with municipalities, if other significant expenses must be covered: utilities and caretaking;
- e) Allows the Association website link to be visible on the Board's website;
- f) Commits the School Board to design a portal where retirees, schools and centers will be able to connect regarding: volunteer opportunities and mentorship.

President's Address/ Message de la présidente

As I write this, Spring is arriving, although it is still cold and windy. It seems hard to believe that 3 years ago we were all getting used to being confined to our houses, with restaurants closed, many employees working from home, school being done online. We weren't able to see our families, other than through windows, or outdoors. So different from our usual lives. I, for one, was glad I was not having to deal with online school – either as a teacher or as a parent.

Many things have gone back to normal – or a “new” normal as some people say. We don't hear as much about Covid, or people getting sick from it, but it is still out there (my son tested positive just this morning). And I am just recovering from the worst cold I've had in 3 years (I tested negative). We still need to be careful, wear masks in crowds, wash our hands, and try to stay healthy.

The Executive, as well as many others, is still working hard to keep our activities going. We are back to doing our monthly lunches and breakfasts. Most activities are running, as you'll see in this Newsletter. We are always open to new ideas for activities ——— just contact one of us, at larseretirees@yahoo.com.

At our AGM in November, we said good-bye to 3 of our Members-at-Large, who have served us well over the years, but decided to take a break from being on the Executive. Thank you to Pam Greevy, Robin Narsted, and Janet Kennedy. They are all still active members in our association. We welcomed back Bryden Murray as a Member-at-Large. If you are interested in joining us, please contact me at the above email.

We hope to see many more of you at our activities as we strive to get back to our regular busy, active retired lives. Stay healthy and active!

Barbara Randle, President, L'ARSE



L'ARSE is a non-profit corporation whose sole mission is to foster friendship and mutual support amongst school board retirees. Eligible for membership are retired teachers, support staff and administrators. We are a registered not-for-profit corporation formed under Part III of the Companies Act (RSQ ch. C-38, section 218) holding letters patent under the registry/matricule # 1149265325.

L'ARSE DUES – NEW PAYMENT METHOD!!

We now have the ability to receive your \$10 dues via **Interac e-Transfer**. When you are in your banking software on-line, the email address to use for your transfer is: larse.membership@gmail.com
(No password is required.)

4. INTEREST GROUPS



Book Club I

The Original Book Club

We make up our reading list as we go along, and once again we've ended up choosing a wide variety of books. Since last September, we've read historical fiction, science fiction, personal essays, a nature story, and a Christmas tale - and enjoyed them all.

In The Dictionary of Lost Words, by Pip Williams, the motherless young daughter of a lexicographer working on the first Oxford English Dictionary spends her childhood under the table of the Scriptorium, playing with the discarded words. She begins a clandestine operation to rescue words which have been overlooked or intentionally omitted from the dictionary and to compile a lexicon which includes *everyone's* language. The compiling of the OED is, in itself, a fascinating story!

Suzette Mayrs' The Sleeping Car Porter, which recently won the Giller Prize, is set in the 1920's. Baxter, a Black Canadian and closeted gay man, is working as a railway porter to save money to fund his dream of studying dentistry. Describing her years of intensive research for the book, the author explains she was "excavating a past to find people like herself."

Klara and the Sun, by Kazuo Ishiguro, is a work of dystopian science fiction told from the point of view of a solar-powered AF (Artificial Friend) who is chosen by a sickly girl to be her companion. In the light of today's rapid development of AI, this story seemed especially relevant.

Sarah Polley, author, screenwriter, and director, wrote Run Toward the Danger in the form of six personal essays - "the most dangerous stories of my life, the ones I have avoided, the ones I haven't told, the ones that have kept me awake countless nights." I'm sure all of us were delighted when she won an Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay for Miriam Toew's Women Talking.

The Memory of an Elephant, by Alex Lasker, is an epic saga told by an aging African elephant as he makes a last, perilous journey to find the humans who rescued him some fifty years ago. The book has much to teach us about the nature of elephants, their precarious situation at present, and the ways our relationship with them can either help to save them or ultimately destroy them.

Small Things Like These, by Claire Keegan, is the shortest book ever to be shortlisted for the Mann Booker Prize. In 1985, in a small Irish town, a coal merchant delivering an order to the local convent in the days heading up to Christmas, makes a discovery which forces him to confront both his past and the complicit silences of a town controlled by the church. A story of hope, quiet heroism, and empathy, it stays with you a long time.

We owe a special thanks to Janice Tessier and Lois Maeder-Alves, who handle our Zooms, enabling our members to participate wherever they happen to be. You do us a great favour!

susansomerville8@sympatico.ca

TREKKER'S WORLD

Members of the Travel Talk Group meet twice a year, fall and spring, for lunch and a talk and slide presentation on an interesting trip taken by one of our L'ARSE members.

We usually meet in the upstairs room of the Duke and Divine Restaurant which is a comfortable and pleasant venue. Usually, 10 to 15 members join us for lunch before the presentation. Their lunches are good and reasonably-priced. The restaurant also provides us with facilities to show the slide presentation. We have had very interesting presentations on China, Arizona, Croatia, France, Italy etc...

Besides talking about their travel experiences, the presenters also give us practical hints and advice to help us if we wish to visit these places.

We encourage all L'ARSE members who have taken an interesting trip to share it at one of our meetings. Please let us know if you are interested by contacting Mickey Wernecke at hbwernecke@aol.com or Daniel Abergel at abergeld@yahoo.com. We hope to be able to organize a meeting in the spring. Hopefully, we can find someone who would like to share their travel experience with us.



6.

Book Club II

Book Club Two is continuing to meet on a monthly basis and has read a variety of novels in the last months. We remain on zoom to accommodate travelling members, and those who are out of town but remain faithful readers. Over the fall and winter we read the following:

The Four Winds by Kristin Hannah is set in Texas, 1934. One of the darkest periods of the Great Depression is the Dust Bowl era and this historical novel is a dramatic telling of this time. It fills the reader with compassion for those who leave behind a no longer tenable life to seek safety and asylum, and is a reflection of our own time;

Lost Children Archive by Valeria Luiselli is also a story of immigration, in this case the crisis the Mexican border and the thousands of undocumented children trying to cross into the United States. That crisis is the backdrop for a story of a family on a journey that will remind us of how we document our experiences and remember the things that matter to us the most;

A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian by Marina Lewycky is the story of two feuding sisters who are forced to reconcile and join forces against their elderly father's gold digging girlfriend. It is reviewed as a dark comedy but book club members sometimes failed to see the humour, or appreciate the interruptions of the story with the history of tractors. An odd book;

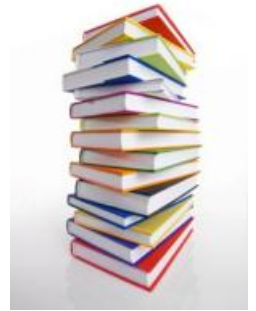
In 1901 the word "bondmaid" was discovered missing from the Oxford English Dictionary. Pip Williams bases her novel, *The Dictionary of Lost Words*, on this story. It tells of Esme, the girl who stole the word, and the team of lexicographers who are assembling the dictionary in the Scriptorium. The novel is a celebration of words and the power of language to shape our world;

The Promise by Damon Galgut explores the betrayals of South Africa through a tragic family drama. The book tells of the end of apartheid and the destiny of the four main characters during this time. It is both eloquent and saddening;

Miss Bensen's Beetle by Rachel Joyce is the amazing story of a woman who leaves behind her spinster school teacher life (readers will appreciate her escape) to search for the golden beetle of New Caledonia, which may or may not even exist. Her adventures are marvellous in this captivating story of perseverance and the transformation of friendship;

Our next book is *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus which has nothing to do with high school chemistry labs but a chemist turned TV cooking sensation in the 1960's. We are looking forward to another great read. If some of these titles appeal to you, enjoy!

Happy reading. lesleypasquin@gmail.com



Samba Canasta

We continue to play every second Wednesday afternoon in the Lounge at Le Cambridge. We usually have between 8 and 16 people playing.

Some of the players meet at a local eatery for brunch beforehand. After many years as our "Organizer Extraordinaire", Robin Narsted, decided to pass the reins to Mary Ellen Montague, who is working out the kinks, and is doing a wonderful job.

If you would like to join us for a fun afternoon of card-playing, contact Mary Ellen at montague61@bell.net.

Casual Bridge Group



We are back to playing bridge. Slowly, we are becoming familiar once again with the bidding, the conventions, the playing and each other—re-discovering the joy of the game. We play every second week on Wednesday afternoon, usually at various members' homes.

New players, regardless of playing level, are always welcome. Just don't expect a seriously-focused bridge club. We love the game AND the conversation. Contact Pam Greevy (larseretirees@yahoo.com) if you think you might be interested in trying it out.

JOIN US

During our working careers, we became acquainted in the course of our daily lives - providing high-quality educational services to the communities of the West Island and Vaudreuil-Soulanges.

Our L'ARSE organization now offers retirees multiple activity groups to build and encourage friendships, nourishing a vital social network that benefits all of its members.

Moreover, through monthly breakfast and luncheon gatherings, as well as events such as the annual Wine & Cheese reception and our annual general meeting and luncheon, L'ARSE members get together just to have a casual chat, share a laugh and family stories, and enjoy each other's ongoing life journey.

Please join us.



Wednesday Trivia

Trivia Night is a fundraiser for the Mark Bernotas Foundation. This is a monthly event, second Wednesday of the month, held at Le Dome in Kirkland. For those of you who enjoy light hearted trivia, this is the spot for you. Most attendees are educators and many are L'ARSE members.

Come and renew acquaintances with old friends and start new ones! The price is \$10 for entry plus 1 raffle ticket. Raffle with door prizes as well. The event begins around 5 pm. Form a team or join with the vets on site.

Tania Kinsella

kinsellatd@gmail.com

Diane Prudhomme

dprudhomme05@gmail.com

8.

Crafting Corner

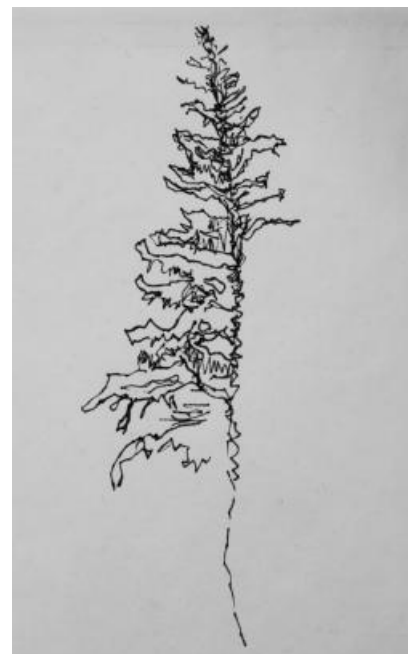
A warm invitation to all new retirees: if you have any favorite creative or artistic hobbies, now is the time to share them through chatting and photos.

Our small but dedicated L'ARSE Art Group and Crafty members are always happy to greet new friends. No talent is needed and we do not teach any skills but we love to exchange techniques and share ideas on anything from woodwork to textile arts or calligraphy.



We have been posting photos of our work on the website and in the newsletters for a few years and you will find examples in the archives online. If you have any questions, you may reach out to Michèle via fitzgeraldmb@sympatico.ca.

Welcome to your life of free time to express your creativity!



GOLF REPORT



9.

There are close to 70 members registered with L'ARSE golf with, on average, 20 participating every week. The 18-hole group plays every Monday while the 9-holers play every second Wednesday. Our abilities vary greatly and everyone is able to fit in. This is a fun group to play with and we'd be delighted to have you join us. The golf is low key and the company excellent. With this group you will see the good, the bad and the downright ugly.

We always have room for new members. Weather permitting, we tend to stay for an adult beverage or two after the round. We play on courses ranging from Cornwall to Hawkesbury, Terrebonne to the U.S. border and all places in between. The 9-hole gang plays courses such as Mystic Pines, Mohawk Hills and Métropolitain. We also have one day per month where we play both nine and eighteen holes at Golf Dorval with tee times arranged so that we can all have a drink together after.

The highlight of our year is "The Schools Open Open" which will held tentatively at Golf Dorval on August 31st, the day that students return to classes. This is usually followed by drinks and dinner on the patio.

Our virtual indoor season usually begins in December and we play every Monday until the following summer season is ready to go. This season we played all of our games at Le Golf Club's T.M.R. location. We usually get together for lunch afterwards to discuss the important issues of the day.

If you would like to join us this Spring (we'll probably start in early May, depending on the weather) or for the indoor season, please contact Mike Kirk at mcqkirk@gmail.com OR Bryden Murray at bryden.murray@sympatico.ca or to have your name added to our mailing list.



10.



Cyclopaths

Cyclopaths is a name chosen a few years ago by this group of recreational cyclists which has been operating since last century, almost since the inception of L'ARSE. We plan to begin pedalling again in early April, gradually increasing in number of cyclists as the temperatures rise, and happily welcome new members to this non-competitive activity.

Late last season, the group averaged around 10 participants, a number that will likely grow in 2023 as the weather improves over the spring and any remaining pandemic restrictions ease. However, variations in members' vacation travel-plans usually helps to keep group size reasonable. So far, the largest number of trip participants was about 20.

Tuesdays are the usual days for cycling trips, but we cannot always count on ideal weather every Tuesday of each month. Longer-term weather forecasting has improved over the years, however, surprises have happened. E-mail notifications of forthcoming trips usually appear on a preceding Sunday or Monday, based on these forecasts, distances usually vary from 20 to 50 kilometres, gradually working up to the longer trips over time.

This is not a racing club, there are enough of those around already. Our speeds probably average around 15-18 kilometres per hour, roughly 3 times a brisk walking pace.

Our focus is on exercise in a pleasurable group. Physical distancing is almost a given which makes cycling an ideal option to maintain fitness during flu season and the recent pandemic. The psychological boost from this opportunity for safe socialization has been a welcome additional benefit releasing us from the isolation many of us have been experiencing.

Unfortunately, L'ARSE's group coordinator fractured an elbow on March 5th playing hockey (!), so Wayne may need some help in organizing and leading the initial Cyclopaths' outings.

To learn more, feel free to contact Wayne Clifford at 514-697-8802 or at cyclopaths1998@gmail.com.

CAA-Québec and Protégez-Vous have jointly evaluated 10 electric or power-assisted bicycle (PAB) models available in Québec shops. To know more, and for test results, consult:

CAAQUEBEC.COM/ELECTRICMOBILITY



Last spring, at the Atwater Market, our L'ARSE Cyclopaths gang was able to sit at one table.

— Photo by Rick Jones

Cross-Country Skiing

This past winter we were blessed with an unprecedented amount of snow and unusually clement weather. Colin Legault invited skiers to join him at the Morgan Arboretum and twice members took him up on his offer. I was also joined on two occasions by skiers at Bois de Liesse. One of our members reported skiing the well-groomed trails at Cap St. Jacques, while others reported they were enjoying the trails at the Beaconsfield Golf course.

In the upcoming LarsEncore bulletin, people will be asked to indicate via email if they would like to join the group. We will invite skiers once a week to ski locally: Bois de Liesse, Cap St. Jacques, and the Morgan Arboretum. Our group welcomes new members of all skill levels, so please don't hesitate to join us. We hope to see you on the trails next winter.



Mary Anne Bindner, mabindner2@gmail.com; Colin Legault, legaultcj@gmail.com;

Snowshoeing



We are a small but enthusiastic group. We usually use trails that are in or near the West Island, mostly local parks - Bois-de-Liesse, Cap St-Jacques, Bois de l'Île Bizard.

We are always happy to welcome new members.

Please send us an email if you would like to join our group:

bryden.murray@sympatico.ca

L'ARSE MEMBERSHIP FORM

Regular Member

L'ARSE (L'Association of Retired School Employees) is open to any retiree from any educational institution and the spouse/partner of the retiree.

Name of Retiree _____ Retired from _____
(location)

If you wish to include your spouse/partner in your membership,
please enter their name/e-mail address here:

Spouse/Partner name: _____ e-mail: _____

Associate Member

Subject to available space, L'ARSE is also open to people who wish to participate in a L'ARSE-sponsored activity*.

Name _____

* * * * *

E-mail address _____ Phone # _____

Street address _____

Town _____ Postal Code _____

Please send a cheque for \$10 per person, payable to L'ARSE (one-year membership / fees applied starting for 2023 only) to: Lois Maeder-Alves, 63 Devon Road, Baie d'Urfé, QC H9X 2W7. You may make an Interac e-Transfer to this email address: larse.membership@gmail.com

New retirees: Please ensure that your e-mail address reflects your personal one, and not your school board's; you'll no longer have access to the latter once you retire! Thank you.

* * * * *

The **LarsEncore** newsletter, issued 2/3 times a year, outlines the many and diverse activities available through our Association. It also highlights the activities of individual members. Photos & Articles highlighting members' travels, other activities or items of interest, are most welcome!

The newsletter will be sent electronically, unless you prefer a copy by mail.

I wish to receive my copy of LarsEncore via Canada Post: _____

*Your personal contact information will be held in confidence by the Membership Chair, and shared only with L'ARSE activity leaders and executive members, as required. If you wish your contact information to be held ONLY by the Membership Chair, please check this box

Signature: _____ Date: _____

