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# THE BRIDGE

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Bridge over the Skeena River in Terrace BC. June 24  
Photo by Donna

## THE BRIDGE

Bridges provide a link  
Bringing people closer,  
Filling the space with new possibilities.  
Let's bridge age, status, race, differences  
With uncommon humanity.  
Let's bridge the gaps that chain us,  
Unlocking our grandest vision for today.

by Barb Stankiewicz

## Letter from the Editor - Donna Sharpe

When I type this poem of Barb's, The Bridge, it seems to me that there may be many of you who do not know who Barb was. She started this newsletter many years ago. I can't remember exactly how many years, but I remember her asking me to help her with the technology and I was just a new retiree. It was somewhere between 2001 and 2005. She had two or three pages that we typed up into an email and sent out to a few of our retired teachers in the KRTA (Kamloops Retired Teachers Association). Barb was our President for many years until health required her to step down. She passed away in 2021.

From that small beginning it has grown into a multi-page document that is able to be sent through email as well as published on the BCRTA website and shared with others in the many districts in BC.

As you read through this copy of The Bridge Newsletter, I hope it triggers memories of your times in Education. Perhaps you will find one memory or a few that you think should go out with an upcoming newsletter for others to read. Without your input we would not have this journal.

In this issue you will hear from some of our recipients of the TRU bursaries that are given out each year. You can read about some of the activities that we have had at our luncheons. You will have a report from Pat Petley about our work in Tanzania through our association with CHES. We held a Zone meeting in Kamloops and you can read Marney's report. You might even find a recipe to try out. I had an interview with one of our newer members, Laurie Dahlgren, for you to get to know her a bit more. And at the end a little bit of humour.

## February Lunch and Learn

At our February Lunch and Learn we were to have a guest speaker from Garden Gate to let us know more about the program they have been running there. Unfortunately, he had been called to an emergency session with no volunteers to help so had to cancel our meeting. Rosemarie, with her creativity stepped in and encouraged several of us to participate in some creative writing. The outcome was a number of Haiku's written by members at the lunch.

Spring is here at last  
Flowers bloom, robins sing, days grow longer  
Warmth and sunshine blast.

Raindrops on roses  
Refreshing nature's glory  
Rainbows in the sky.  
Suzanne Legault

Sandhill cranes soon here  
Listen for their high-pitched cry  
April seventeenth.  
Suzanne Legault

Raindrops on Roses  
Lots of puddles to splash in  
A rainbow delight.  
Rosemarie Stoltze

Sandhill cranes soon here  
Like clockwork they pass over  
They are majestic.  
Rosemarie Stoltze

### Ecosystem Start-Up

Worms in the dark soil  
Caterpillars munch on greens  
A feast for the birds.  
Miriam Semeniuk



Free photo from internet

## Thank you notes from our TRU bursary recipients

Glenda Miles received thank you letters from our TRU bursary recipients.

2024  
Kamloops-Thompson Retired  
Teachers Endowment

# Thank You

**Randi Lang**  
PROGRAM: Bachelor of Education  
CONNECT WITH ME: [R.lang@live.ca](mailto:R.lang@live.ca)



Dear Donors,

I cannot begin to express how impactful your donation has been to my education. I am the first in my family to get a post-secondary education, and I have a permanent mental illness that impedes my learning. I work three different jobs outside of full-time classes because I do not come from any money. By donating to my education, you have helped offset costs and therefore put a roof over my head and food in my belly for a month. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Attached is a photograph from my Bachelor of Arts convocation.

My email is [r.lang@live.ca](mailto:r.lang@live.ca) if you feel like reaching out!

Randi Lang (she/her)



2024  
Kamloops-Thompson Retired  
Teachers Endowment

# Thank You

**Alexandria Ntapa**  
PROGRAM: Bachelor of Education-Elementary  
CONNECT WITH ME: [ntapasa23@mytru.ca](mailto:ntapasa23@mytru.ca)

Dear Kamloops-Thompson Retired Teachers Association,

I would like to thank you for your generosity in supporting my studies at Thompson Rivers University with the Kamloops Thompson Retired Teachers Endowment. Your assistance will help me to continue to pursue my educational and career goals, in the Bachelor of Education-Elementary program at TRU.

I really appreciate your time and commitment into choosing me for this award; it will go a long way into supporting my future goals of becoming an elementary school teacher.

My goal coming out of this program is to expand my knowledge and opportunities by jumping into my master's at TRU as well as picking up a full time contract in a local elementary school here in Kamloops or back in my hometown of Prince George where I hope to teach grades 4/5.



My passion for teaching started three years ago when I had the opportunity of picking up my own teaching contract in my hometown and from there, I decided that this career has many rewarding aspects. I am excited to see where my studies take me.

Thank you again for your generosity and support in my studies. I really value your assistance in this amazing opportunity into my lifelong journey.

Sincerely,

Alexandria Ntapa

The following "Thank You" is from the recipient of the Ron and Glenda Arts bursary at TRU. I'd like to share this message with you as it shows the amazing courage and determination needed by some self supporting students to stay with their studies and pursue their dreams in the face of serious financial difficulties.. May this encourage us to continue supporting our KTRTA bursary students in years to come. We do make a difference!  
By Glenda Miles

2024  
Ron & Glenda Miles Arts Bursary

# Thank You



Isabelle Towers

**Isabelle Towers**

PROGRAM: Bachelor of Arts, Major Philosophy, Minor Business Law  
CONNECT WITH ME: [isabelletowers@outlook.com](mailto:isabelletowers@outlook.com)

Dear Donor,

I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for being chosen as the recipient of the Ron & Glenda Miles Arts Bursary. Receiving this award has been both an incredible honour and a much-needed relief after what has been a challenging and demanding semester.

Throughout my undergraduate studies, I have worked tirelessly toward my dream of being accepted into law school. This journey has required significant sacrifices, including postponing my honeymoon after my June wedding so I could continue working hard through summer semesters, all while maintaining full-time employment.

This past semester, in particular, tested my limits. I balanced full-time work, finding a new place to live for us and our dogs after our landlord sold, rigorous fourth-year courses, preparation for the LSAT, and the law school application process - all while striving to maintain academic excellence.



I am proud to have achieved and maintained my As and A+s during this time, but I must admit that I have felt burnt out, exhausted, and weighed down by financial stress.

That is why this bursary could not have come at a better time. Beyond being a recognition of my hard work and sacrifices, it has lifted an immense weight from my shoulders. Your generosity will allow me to make my law school seat deposit - a financial necessity that had been a source of significant worry - and also enabled me to surprise my husband (and dogs) with a meaningful Christmas gift for his own sacrifices and achievements (he, too, applied and was accepted into law school this year), which will come as an incredible blessing as we had decided on no gifts this year to ease some of our financial stress. This gift of \$4,000 allows me to begin to see a path through the financial stressors of impending law school to begin to be excited of what we have accomplished, and most importantly, be incredibly proud of how hard we have worked, without it being tainted by the stress of what we still need to accomplish.

This bursary not only provides financial support but also validates the countless hours of effort, dedication, and perseverance I have put into reaching this point. It has given me renewed confidence as I prepare for the next chapter of my academic and professional journey.

Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for your kindness and generosity. Your support has made such a meaningful and unforgettable impact on my life, and I will carry this act of kindness with me as I move forward.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Isabelle Towers



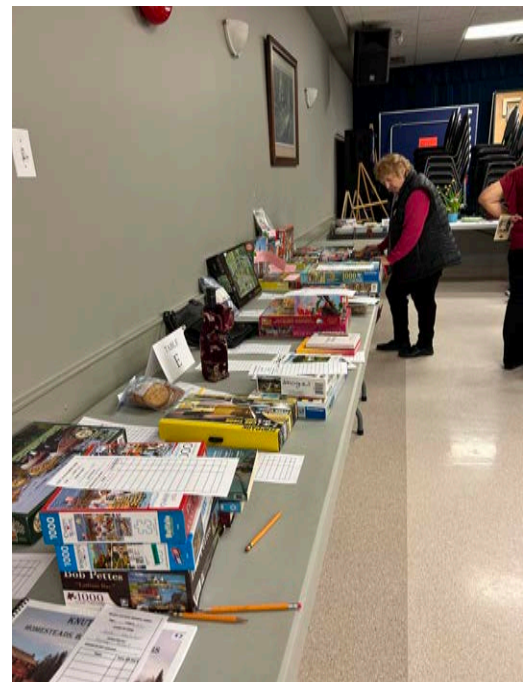
## March Lunch and Learn



Photos by Donna Sharpe



At our March luncheon we usually host a Silent Auction, which is our major fund raiser for the KTRT club. This provides funds to donate to our TRU bursaries, and to the Canadian Harambee Education Society (CHES), and consideration is given to other educational causes. This event is always participated in enthusiastically by our members.



## Gardengate tour

On April 14, 2025 several of the KTRTA group met at GardenGate for a tour, with Robert Wright, the Manager of Gardengate. The farm is located on a 2.8 acre in Kamloops. We started with the large field where many crops of veggies, that do well in the Kamloops area, are grown. Before planting time a truckload of manure gets plowed into the field.

The Sheltered Workshop has workers who have mental, physical and/or social issues. They are given food, meals and training in

gardening skills.

The workers

usually work a

year or two and

get a job somewhere else, if all goes well.

We got to see the greenhouse where certain plants for sale are grown or started with careful tending. Some plants are grown from other plants via starters and grafts. The



greenhouse is watered and cooled and shaded due to variable temperatures.



Photos by Rosemarie Stoltze

At the end we got to rest and talk in the larger renovated industrial kitchen, great for training, food prep and events. Produce is sold to the community at various times during the growing season . The tour was enjoyed by all of us!

For more info call: 250-554-9453 or E-mail: Rosemarie D. Stoltze



Photos by Rosemarie Stoltze

## Our work with CHES Girls extended to a nearby Boys Dorm



Last year you approved the sending of \$500 to assist in the construction of new dorms for boys at a high school in Tanzania. The old dorms were dismal - vermin ridden, moldy, very crowded, and smelly. Chris and Catriona Harker, who are very involved with CHES, spearheaded fundraising for this project. It was not a CHES project as it was for boys but they saw the need when they visited the girls' dorm that CHES had built on the same property. The fundraising was so successful that there was enough money for flush toilets with metal doors ( probably because they were available!), and sinks with running water for the boys' dorms. . Additionally there was money left over and it was used to put running water into the adjacent girls' dorms!



Apparently the water piping to the dorms needs to be only 15 cm deep in the ground. In Canada 50 % of building cost is usually labour and 50% materials. In Tanzania only 25 % is labour so the money goes a long way.

Submitted by Pat Petley



Photos by Chris and Catriona Harker



## Thank you Message from the Club

by Pat Petley

Yet another successful silent auction and "DAY OF GIVING" was held in March. Your kindness and generosity amounted to \$1960.00. \$845.00 came directly from Auction items, \$470.00 in cheques for CHES, and \$645.00 toward the TRU foundation KTRTA endowment fund. Remarkable in that there were **34** members at the luncheon. A few did send a cheque to Sandy, our treasurer prior to the auction.

The auction was fun with lots of baking and an interesting assortment of other items. Prior to the auction Marion Owens had mentioned her interest in Puzzles. You are obviously good listeners as a plethora of puzzles arrived. In fact Bags of them! I wonder what Marion will want lots of next year.



CHES is a, not for profit society, that provides educational opportunity for impoverished, bright girls to continue in school in Kenya and Tanzania. TRU has been our priority for giving. We currently have over \$100,000.00 in the endowment which provides funds for two \$1600.00 bursaries for students in the Education Faculty.

The CLUB executive will meet prior to our next KTRTA luncheon. We will make a recommendation at that time as to the dispersal of the money that is available for donation. Our Mandate is to give to TRU and CHES (if it is deemed that we have enough money ) and to consider other groups or causes related to education. We have given to Kamloops Literacy (Bright Red Book Bus and Red Book Shelf), and to assist in the construction of boys' dorms at a school in a Tanzanian Village.

A special thank you to everyone who donated items, bought items, and wrote cheques. As well many thanks to the committee and friends who helped plan, and do the logistics on the auction day.

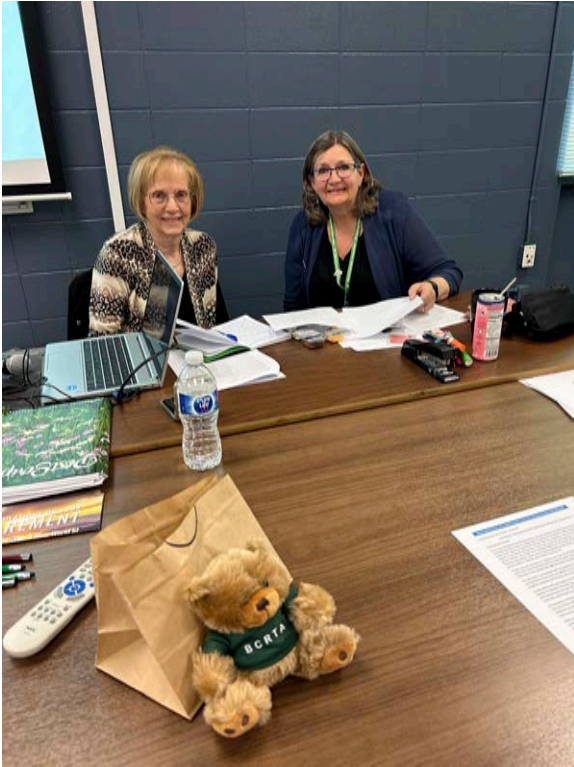
## Zone Meeting

On April 29, 2025 KTRTA hosted a zone meeting for the Thompson Okanagan zone. We were able to meet at the Henry Grube Education Centre and lunch was provided by

some of our local members with help from some catering by Safeway.

In attendance was Caroline Malm, BCRTA President, along with 15 representatives from of our branches. Caroline and Marnie Bethell, our KTRTA President, chaired the meeting where each zone representative gave a report from their zone telling about their activities, their number of members, their ways to communicate with their membership, when and where they meet, and ways they are trying to meet the needs of their membership.

Caroline shared some interesting information about the Provincial Organization BCRTA. We have 47 branches across the province with 17 686 members. There are 4 Staff, 11 committees, 13 members of the board, and 11



Photos by Donna

related organizations. She told us about the many ways the Provincial association works on behalf of our retirees. You can find out more details by going to [bcrt.ca](http://bcrt.ca) and there is more information in Marney's report on the next two pages.



## Kamloops Thompson Retired Teachers Association

Marney Bethell – President

September 2025

Once again, the KTRTA has had a busy year. We now have about 477 members with about a dozen on the executive.

We host 7 luncheons a year, mostly held at the Cottonwood Seniors Centre, in North Kamloops. We have anywhere from 30 - 60 people in attendance, with Christmas being the most popular. We present a program, referred to as “Lunch and Learn”, for five of the months. The other lunches are social events, one at Christmas and the other hosted by the KTRTA Club which is our fund-raising arm and separate from the KTRTA. They do a Silent Auction Fund Raiser in the Spring, which supports an Endowment in our name at TRU. To date, we have donated over \$110,000.00 which earns interest which currently provides two awards of \$1600 for TRU Faculty of Education Students. We have found that many of our members are attracted to the opportunity of charitable giving. This is the 31<sup>st</sup> year of our Endowment and more than 50 students have received support from retired teachers in the Kamloops area. All KTRTA members are automatically KTRT Club members.

Our programs this year included a speaker from Garden Gate, a garden centre that employs special needs individuals, a speaker from Expedia Cruises and a speaker about end-of-life planning. We collect \$25.00 per person at the luncheon. \$5.00 per person, goes to Cottonwood Centre for the space rental, setting the table, with coffee, tea available with water and water glasses on the table. If we need to use their steam table (not often) or rent their dishes (usually), it is extra. It is very expensive to cater, compared to just a few years ago. We usually have to subsidize each lunch from our membership fees.

This April, Kamloops Thompson Association hosted the Zone Meeting. Branches from Salmon Arm, Vernon, Kelowna, Penticton, Merritt and Wine Country sent one or two representatives. We were also pleased to have BCRTA President Caroline Malm attend and speak to our large group about the great work that the BCRTA is doing on our behalf. It is always interesting to get together with other branches to get good ideas or even just to know that we are not the only branch struggling with increasing our numbers.

We have a semi-annual newsletter called the Bridge, with editor Donna Sharpe and a committee of helpers with 400 copies by email, with one to the BCRTA for our branch and 20 printed and mailed. All KTRTA members are invited to submit their photos, articles, stories and poetry and certainly do contribute!

We no longer have a website. If anyone searches for KTRTA, it takes them to the BCRTA and then our branch.

We usually send three members to the Annual AGM and really enjoyed the back to real events, over the zoom meetings.

Our association, like so many others, struggle to increase our membership and plan for future executive members. We usually hear "I'm so busy" and "I've attended too many staff meetings as...". It's a challenge. We also attend the retiring teachers banquet and I speak, after the superintendent, the teacher union rep and whoever else and I practically beg them to consider joining our local Retired Teacher Association. One time I even filled out as much of the forms as I could, but I also need their birthdate, so... not complete! Many retiring teachers seem to enjoy a period of time to enjoy being retired before they jump into clubs or volunteering.

In closing I would say the Kamloops Thompson Association is alive and thriving and we look forward to many more active years.

Respectfully submitted,

Marney Bethell

## Recipes

Lemon Sugar Cookies-submitted by Donna Sharpe

An easy recipe to bake. I found this on the internet. It was submitted by someone named Beth. It said that it made 24 cookies but I followed the amounts given and had over 60 cookies so I was glad that I didn't double the recipe.

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup unsalted butter (room temperature)
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 3 Tbsp lemon zest
- 2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 large egg
- 3 cups flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp salt
- some sugar for rolling the cookies.



photo by Donna

### Directions:

Using an electric mixer beat the butter, sugar, and lemon zest.

Add the lemon juice and egg and beat again.

Gradually add the flour, baking soda, and salt and mix on lower speed. I used my spatula and hands near the end.

Cover the bowl and refrigerate for 30-60 minutes.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Put some sugar in a bowl for rolling the cookies.

Form balls with the dough (I used a melon baller) and roll the cookies in the sugar.

Place the cookies about 2 in. apart on a lined baking sheet.

I used a fork to press down each cookie.

Bake for 11-13 minutes until the edges start to brown.

Cool and enjoy.

## Laurie Dahlgren interview.

### My life is all about Children

One sunny afternoon in August 2025 Laurie and I sat down on my deck to a simple lunch and a chance to have a conversation that would give me some information to put into The Bridge. As the editor I try to have something in each issue that focuses on one of our members.

Laurie grew up in the small town of Fraser Lake, BC. She was born there in 1964 and lived there until she was 18 years old. She had three brothers, two older and one 7 years younger. Her mom was a stay at home mom who was an avid gardener. Laurie has followed in her mom's footsteps with her love of a garden. Her dad owned a logging truck business with his brother. He was always interested in technology and had to have the first computers and the first electric cars.

As a teen age girl she participated in several recreation jobs through Parks and Recreation. She specifically remembered one job where she helped lead a group of kids on a bike trip from Jasper to Banff. Another such trip was a canoe trip in Nation Lakes up north of Fort St. John. Then in 1982 she decided to further her educational studies and went to University of Victoria for a BA in Recreational Management. With this degree behind her she changed tactics a bit by getting married in 1988. She worked with the YMCA for a couple of years until she had her first child in 1990, a beautiful little girl, Tiffany. During this time she decided to get a teaching certificate so started in 1991. She felt that teaching was a better fit for Motherhood. Then she had a second daughter, Alysha. She had been teaching as a TOC, Teacher On Call, for two years and then with two children under foot she decided to start a family daycare while they were still young. After they had grown to school age, she went back to teaching.

She and her husband were separated in 1996 so now she was a single mom trying to make ends meet on her own.

In 1998 she got a job teaching in Prince George. It wasn't a regular class but she was a TOC, for some time, then worked in a school as part time librarian and technology teacher, part time relief for teachers' preparation time, and some time sharing a class with other teachers.

Sounds like a very busy job to me. I hope she eventually got her own class.

She taught in Prince George until 2021. Much of that time she was a teacher librarian with a big emphasis on computers.

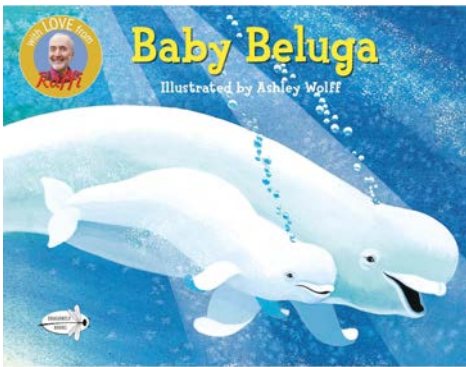
She moved to Kamloops with her two children some time after that and bought a half duplex in Westsyde. She spent a few years doing renovations on her place and looking after her cute little yard that she loved because it was small and flat.

Having left the home she had know all her life and her friends, she decided she needed to get out of her new home and get a social life, so she decided to join our Kamloops Thompson Retired Teacher's Association, even though she had never taught in Kamloops. She is happy to be making friends here and life is good. She is also enjoying being a grandmother to her new granddaughter, Florence Joyce, named after Laurie's mom.

I asked her what was her biggest story for this article and she thought for a minute or so. Then she decided that her story was still to come. "What would be my third act now that I am retired." She is not sure what she wants to get into next. She spoke about a box of mementos that she has that remind her of the many events and happenings in her life so far. She said that she wants to start a piece of writing that will focus on these mementos. And so we decided that she could start by choosing a few of these to write about for this article. The first one that came to her mind was a book called Baby Beluga. I'll let her tell you this memory.

She left here enthused to get started on her third act, writing her memoir from these many saved items from her previous years of; growing up, studying at university, marriage, becoming a mom, being a school teacher, and now moving to Kamloops with a grown up family and now starting the adventure of being a grandma.

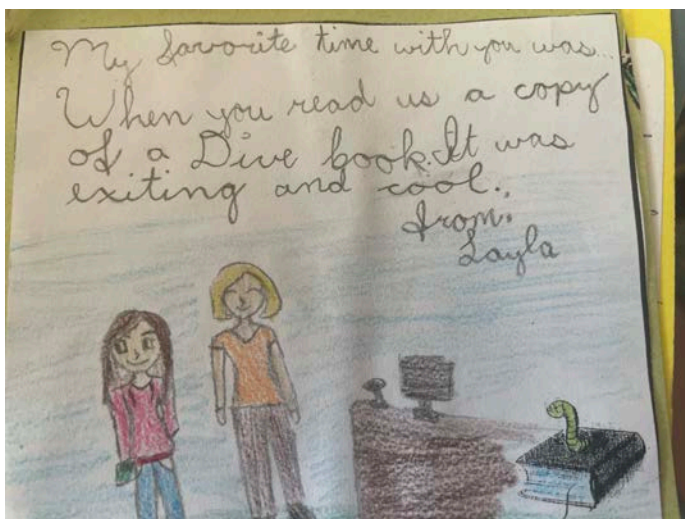
Written by the Editor from notes at the interview.



Laurie writes:

The power of story is great. Once I had a little boy who spun like a helicopter at the back of the class while I read stories. The day I picked "Baby Beluga" and sang instead of read it to the children he sat down finally and I had him hooked for the rest of the year.

Notes from students were always heart warming. One little boy named Trevor used to stand at my desk and chat with me while I signed out books. This was one of his favourite memories as well as mine. I kept many notes from children and they are scattered though my files as they bring me joy.



## Bear Bumb

A couple in Barnhartvale were finishing home renovations on their back deck in the fall and had just applied a fresh coat of blue paint. They decided to order a pizza for dinner and placed the leftovers in the pizza box outside on a ledge by the kitchen window.

In the morning they woke to footprints on the deck and a large, round rump mark on the edge of the deck above the first step leading to the lawn below. Claw marks indicated that a bear had carefully opened the pizza box and sat down to enjoy the rest of their dinner!

Look out for a bear with a big, blue, rump! He was a real bumb looking for a free meal. Anyone want to paint a deck over again?

Submitted by Miriam Semeniuk



This made me laugh when I received it from a friend on her email so I have included it hoping to amuse you too

Added by Donna

## Food for Thought Perhaps a little dated

From a School Principal's Speech at a Graduation

He said, "Doctor wants his child to become a doctor.....

Engineer wants his child to become an engineer.....

Businessman wants his child to become a CEO.....

BUT a teacher wants his child to become one of them .....

Nobody wants to become a teacher BY CHOICE" Very interesting but that's the truth."

The dinner guests were sitting around the table discussing life. One man, a CEO, decided to explain the problem with education, "What's a kid going to learn from someone who decided his best option in life was to become a teacher?" To stress his point he said to another guest, "You're a teacher, Bonnie. Be honest. What do you make?"

Teacher, Bonnie, who has a reputation for honesty and frankness replied, "You want to know what I make." She paused for a moment and then began.

"Well, I MAKE kids work harder than they ever thought they could.

I MAKE a C+ feel like the Congressional Medal of Honour winner.

I MAKE kids sit through 40 minutes of class time when their parents can't make them sit for 5 minutes without an iPod, Game Cube, or movie rental.

You want to know what I MAKE?"

She paused again and looked at each and every person at the table.

"I MAKE them wonder.

I MAKE them question.

I MAKE them apologize and mean it.

I MAKE them take responsibility for their actions. I teach them love and respect for God and their countrymen.

I TEACH them how to write and then I MAKE them write; keyboarding isn't everything.

I MAKE them read, read, read.

I MAKE them show all their work in math. They use their God given brain, not their man-made calculator.

I MAKE my students from other countries learn everything they need to know about English, while preserving their cultural identity.

I MAKE my classroom a place where all my students feel safe.

Finally, I MAKE them understand that if they use the God-given gifts they were given, work hard, and follow their hearts, they can succeed in life.”

Bonnie paused one last time and then continued.

“Then when people try to judge me by what I MAKE, with me knowing that money isn't everything, I can hold my head up high and pay no attention because they are ignorant. You want to know what I MAKE?

I MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN ALL YOUR LIVES, EDUCATING KIDS AND PREPARING THEM TO BECOME CEO's, AND DOCTORS AND ENGINEERS. What do you MAKE Mr. CEO?”

His jaw dropped; he went silent.

Source unknown/

Submitted by Margaret Catherwood.

*We acknowledge that we live, work and play on Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc territory within the unceded ancestral lands of the Secwépemc Nation.*

*Please submit your articles (max.1500 words) and photos to Donna Sharpe at [onlineoffice.ktrta@gmail.com](mailto:onlineoffice.ktrta@gmail.com). Submissions on various topics, such as travel, good books, writing, poetry, hobbies and sports welcomed. Authors agree that their submissions may be edited.*