

Marty Quenneville Dist. 41 President 2001/2002

I came to Dist. 41 RTO/ERO after serving many years on OECTA executive. I had started teaching elementary grades and Sp. Ed. in Sarnia and ended my career teaching Visual Arts at the secondary level in St. Thomas. I had spent time in all the separate schools in Elgin.

In my year as First Vice President I learned a lot as the President that year was frequently away for executive events.

During my years as President we initiated an awareness of RTO/ERO campaign in the greater Thames Valley area. We decided to go with a rotating billboard display in Elgin and neighbouring counties. On account of the amount of adverse publicity directed at current teachers and the federations we felt it was necessary to generate some positive images for teachers. With a provincial election expected in the coming year we also felt we had to advise the public re their responsibility to vote for good education and health policies. We also were looking to increase the involvement of retired teachers through membership in RTO/ERO.

During this year RTO/ERO changed the fee return to Districts structure which was a benefit to smaller Districts such as Elgin. All districts with a membership under 1000 received a basic \$5000 and those over were reimbursed based on membership numbers. All special grants were removed except for Service to Others projects.

We also looked at ways to increase our membership. After Membership Committee member Dave White attended a Membership Workshop hosted by RTO/ERO in Toronto, we felt we should try to reestablish communication with years past. Many of these retired teachers were covered under Board Group Health Insurance plans. In a cost cutting measure they had been regrouped into a retired teachers only group which caused their premiums to rise substantially. In most cases RTO/ERO Group Plan would be cheaper for them and they would have more control over their Health Insurance costs.

All in all it was an eventful year and rewarding experience as President of Dist. 41 RTO/ERO in 2001/2002.