

# Special Edition

A Newsletter for Specialist Council Executive Members

Volume 1:2 January 2012

## Happy New Year and welcome to 2012!



**Andrea Berg**  
Executive Staff Officer,  
Professional Development

I hope that you all enjoyed a restful and rejuvenating holiday. Welcome to the second issue of *Special Edition*, our triannual newsletter for specialist council executives, which was launched in the fall of 2011. As the factotum to all 21 specialist councils, I hope these publications provide a central source of information and tips to assist you in your important roles on your council's executive.

It was a pleasure to work with the councils at our annual specialist council training session and presidents' meeting on October 24. It always helpful to be able to put faces to names on e-mails and I appreciated the opportunity to connect in person with many of you. Thank you for taking the time to attend. Our morning session focused on strategies to assist with succession planning. In the past, several councils have indicated that recruiting

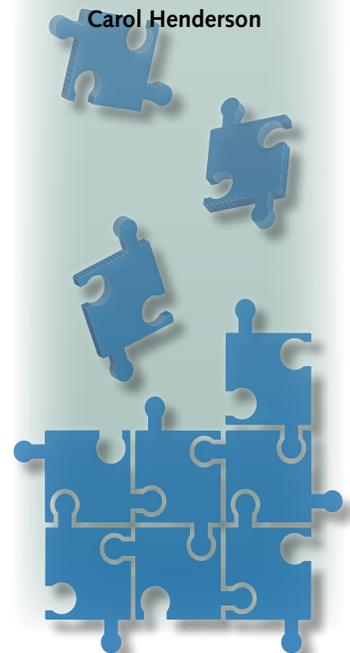
and retaining volunteers for executive positions can sometimes be a challenge. We discussed practical suggestions, and councils had an opportunity to plan which activities related to succession planning they will continue to do and which new activities they will start to do. If your council is interested in repeating this session for your full executive, please contact your ATA staff liaison or me. Additional information regarding the succession planning workshop is included in this issue of *Special Edition*.

Our next big membership drive will occur at the upcoming ten teachers' conventions. Thank you to the presidents who have volunteered to organize the schedule for each booth—it can definitely be a complicated task. Last year we signed up more than 800 new council members in total, and I am looking forward to surpassing that number this year. I am currently working with the Association's graphic designers to create new signage for the booths. We still do not have anyone to organize the booth at SEATCA. If you, or one of your regionals, are able to assist with this task, please contact me.

Thank you for your time and dedication to professional development through your specialist council. Please call me at 1-800-232-7208 or 780-447-9423 (in Edmonton) or email me at [andrea.berg@ata.ab.ca](mailto:andrea.berg@ata.ab.ca) with any questions, comments or suggestions.

Just as the Association has specialist councils, so the Alberta Medical Association has sections, the College and Association of Registered Nurses has specialty practice groups and the Alberta College of Social Workers has member interest groups. While we are teachers first, the status of our profession is contingent, at least in part, on the strength of our specialist councils.

—ATA President,  
Carol Henderson





## Did you know...?

Specialist councils are subgroups of the provincial Association and, as such, require approval from the provincial Table Officers Committee for certain actions, including

- changes to constitution,
- changes to conference date,
- changes to fees,
- correspondence with the Government of Alberta and
- requests made to outside organizations.

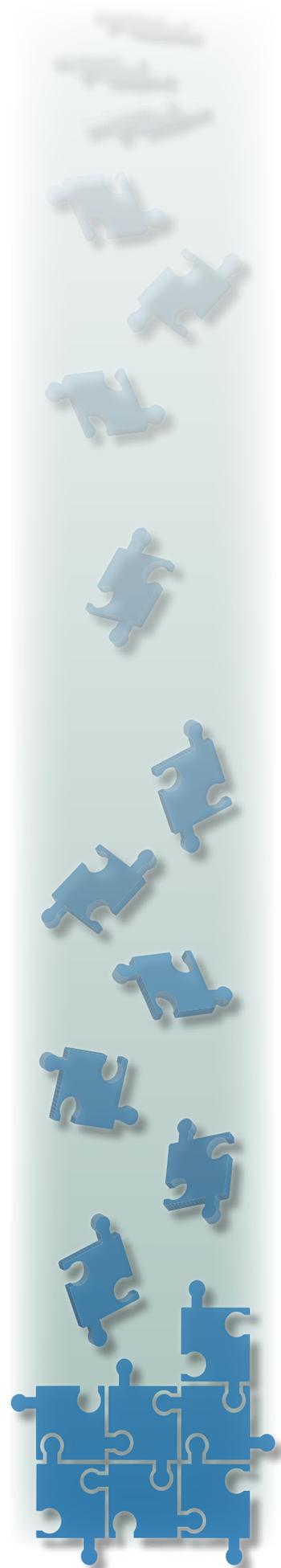
Requests made to provincial Table Officers must be submitted to Andrea Berg, at [andrea.berg@ata.ab.ca](mailto:andrea.berg@ata.ab.ca), or Cheryl O'Brien, at [cheryl.obrien@ata.ab.ca](mailto:cheryl.obrien@ata.ab.ca), at least two weeks in advance of the Table Officers meeting. The Table Officers Committee meeting schedule for the remainder of 2011/12 is below.

Table Officers Meeting Date	DEADLINE for Submission
February 13, 2012	January 30, 2012
March 22, 2012	March 8, 2012
April 27, 2012	April 13, 2012
June 1, 2012	May 18, 2012

# TOP 3!

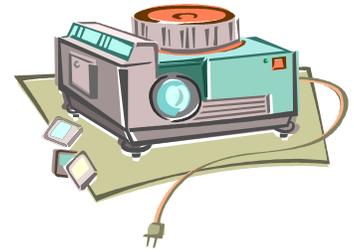
As part of the succession planning workshop, during the specialist council training session held on October 24, 2011 at Barnett House, council representatives brainstormed the top perks of becoming involved in council executives. Use your Top 3 Perks when recruiting new executive members. Consider posting them on your website, sharing them in your pamphlets and using them to begin conversations with potential executive members. How else could you use the Top 3 Perks to advertise the benefits of volunteering on your council?

## Perks of Becoming Involved in Our Council's Executive



## News Flash

# LCD Projectors for Specialist Councils



**Cheryl O'Brien**  
Administrative Officer,  
Professional Development

The Association has purchased a bank of 24 LCD projectors that specialist councils can rent for a nominal fee of \$50 for use at conferences.

The projectors will be divided equally among the councils hosting a conference on a given weekend. If councils do not require a projector, the remainder will become available to the other council(s).

To rent a projector, submit a request by e-mail to Mardi Veinot at [mardi.veinot@ata.ab.ca](mailto:mardi.veinot@ata.ab.ca). Councils will be asked to complete a rental agreement. Barnett House staff will ship the projectors and will charge the cost back to the council; alternatively, councils can make arrangements to pick them up.

Councils are responsible for returning the projectors and all associated equipment, such as cords, to Barnett House and will be charged for equipment that is not returned.



# Alberta's Privacy Laws' Impact on Teachers

Maggie Shane

ATA Records Manager and Privacy Officer

## FOIP (*Freedom of Information Act*) at School

Most Alberta teachers are employees of public-sector school boards. Clearly, all records—regardless of format or content—that are generated or received by teachers in the course of their work life are subject to all FOIP provisions. Any person can ask any FOIP body for anything, even though the act specifies some circumstances under which a public body can refuse to provide records.

## PIPA (*Personal Information Protection Act*) at the ATA

Whenever teachers act for or interact with the ATA, it's the PIPA Act (*Personal Information Protection Act*) and not FOIP that comes into play. PIPA governs the private sector, including the ATA.

Confusion sometimes arises which rules apply—FOIP or PIPA—because the laws are very similar in structure. Nevertheless, FOIP and PIPA exist for very different reasons. FOIP protects Albertans' democratic right to access public records created with tax dollars, whereas PIPA is concerned with protecting your human right to privacy. PIPA seeks to balance personal privacy against private sector organizations' legitimate need for personal information.

PIPA organizations' records are proprietary and created with private funds. Therefore, there exists no universal scope of access. Under PIPA, you can't ask for just anything. You can only ask about your own information.

Successfully navigating FOIP and PIPA means understanding a web of laws and regulations. Records created through school board operations are governed by FOIP. Records created when teachers interact with Barnett House or SARO are governed by PIPA. Moreover, personal information sent electronically outside Canada via e-mail, fax or text message is subject to the federal *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* ("PIPEDA").<sup>1</sup> Teachers must also deal with the privacy implications of the *Alberta School Act*,<sup>2</sup> the *Alberta Teaching*

FOIP protects Albertans' democratic right to access public records created with tax dollars, whereas PIPA is concerned with protecting your human right to privacy. PIPA seeks to balance personal privacy against private sector organizations' legitimate need for personal information.

<sup>1</sup> SC 2000, c 5

<sup>2</sup> S-3 RSA 2000



*Profession Act*,<sup>3</sup> the Alberta Student Records Regulation,<sup>4</sup> the ATA Code of Professional Conduct,<sup>5</sup> the Alberta *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*,<sup>6</sup> the Alberta *Occupational Health and Safety Act*<sup>7</sup> and all applicable regulations.

Be aware of the privacy laws governing your professional practice and that support is available to you through your professional Association. Please contact Margaret Shane, ATA privacy officer, at [margaret.shane@ata.ab.ca](mailto:margaret.shane@ata.ab.ca) or 1-800-232-7208 for assistance.

---

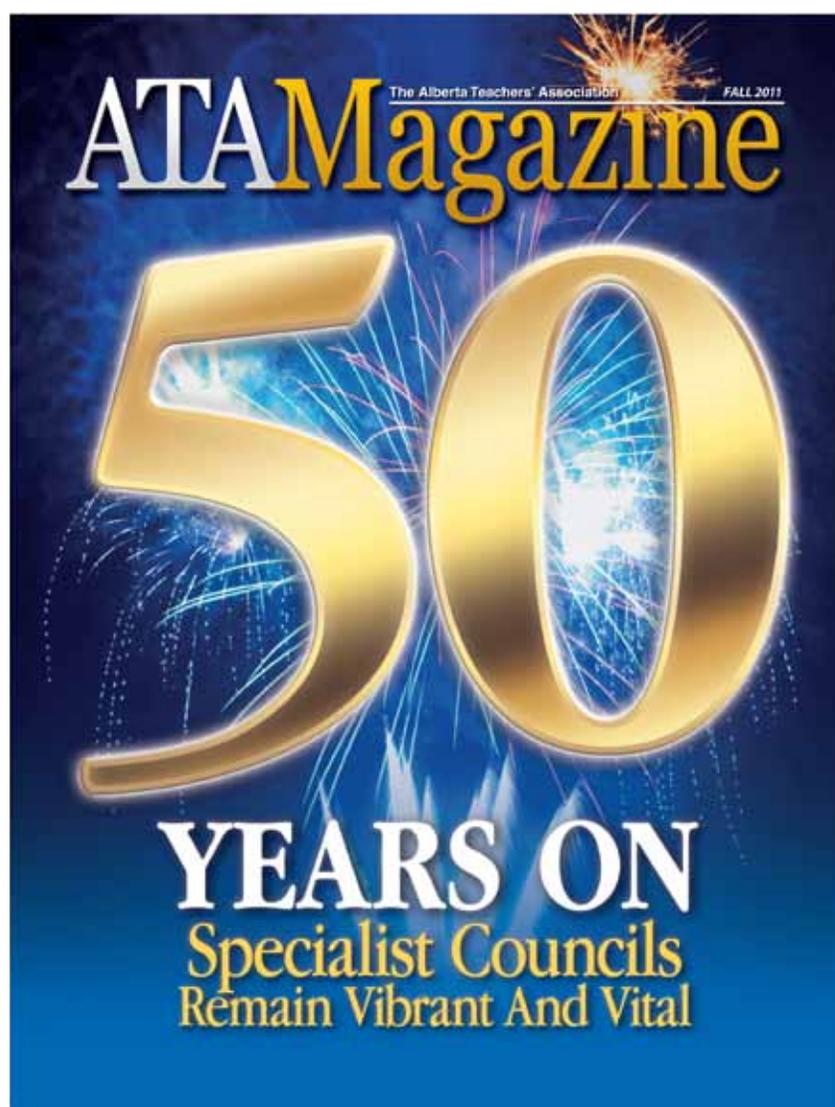
<sup>3</sup> T-2 RSA 2000

<sup>4</sup> Chapter/Regulation 225/2006

<sup>5</sup> Alberta Teachers' Association. Code of Professional Conduct. <http://www.teachers.ab.ca>

<sup>6</sup> C-12 RSA 2000

<sup>7</sup> O-2 RSA 2000



*In 2011, the ATA celebrated the 50th anniversary of the first specialist councils.*

# Web Services— Sending Out Your Message



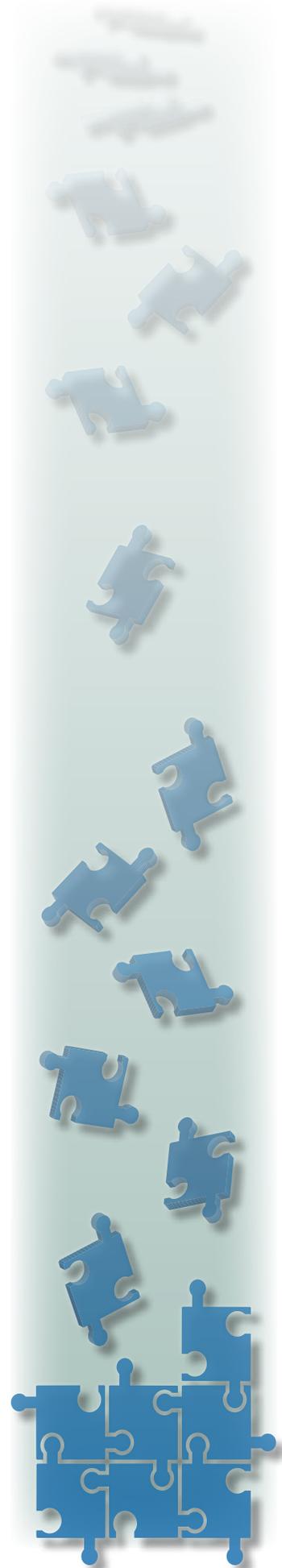
**Gregory J Romaniuk**  
Information and  
Technology Services

Specialist councils use TNET Web services to achieve several communication goals. One important goal is to provide quick, informational updates to members. An increasingly common tool that is well suited to this task is Real Simple Syndication (RSS), a standardized method of publishing information on the World Wide Web that allows visitors to stay abreast of up-to-the-minute news published on the site. RSS feeds are often identified by the  graphic; clicking on this graphic links to the entire RSS feed, including previous feed updates. A key attribute

of RSS is that a user subscribes to an RSS feed using the user's preferred RSS reader. As new information is added to an RSS feed, subscribers are alerted to the feed update from within their reader.

Many modern e-mail applications (eg, Outlook Express, Apple Mail, etc) and Web browsers (eg, Internet Explorer, Firefox, etc) allow individuals to subscribe to and view RSS feeds; as well, Web services called RSS feed aggregators can be used as RSS readers. Some e-mail applications are configured to make RSS feed updates appear as new messages in the e-mail inbox. Because of the way an RSS reader communicates with the feed, updates will not be filtered by the members' Internet service provider.

Your TNET specialist council site has a built-in RSS feed. If you are interested in using RSS feeds to facilitate communication among your council members, it is a fairly straightforward process to activate and begin using your RSS feed. Please feel free to contact Gregory Romaniuk at [greg.romaniuk@ata.ab.ca](mailto:greg.romaniuk@ata.ab.ca) or 780-447-9415 to learn more about RSS and your specialist council website.



Council publications are an ideal vehicle to showcase the Association's high professional standards and scholarship.

Council publications are also excellent vehicles for maintaining the profile of councils and advertising the amazing work that they do on behalf of members.

# Where to Find Material for Specialist Council Publications



**Karen Virag**  
Supervising Editor, Publications

One challenge for specialist council editors is finding material for the council publication. Here are some suggestions for where to look:

- Tell your readers what you need and develop a network of reporters and authors. Be clear about deadlines, content, length and format of submissions. Suggest article themes and ideas to potential authors. Assign council and committee members to report significant happenings.
- Get your name on mailing lists of government departments, museums, universities, community colleges and any organization that does work in your specialist council area. Keep your eyes and ears open for events, workshops

or courses that would be of interest to readers.

- If you know someone who will be attending a conference, ask him or her to supply an article, such as a review of a seminar or workshop.
- Ask conference presenters for contributions.
- Approach authors who have contributed in the past (either to your publication or to others).
- Review publications of other ATA specialist councils and of related organizations for exceptional articles that could be reprinted in your publication.

## Ideas for types of articles to put in your publication

- How-to articles, lesson plans
- Advice columns and FAQs
- Book reviews, recommended resources
- News roundups from locals
- Personal profiles
- Top-ten lists
- Updates, for example, from the district, from Alberta Education
- News from sister or like-minded organizations. For example, Big Brothers, Safe and Caring Schools, the Lions, etc
- Wish lists
- Reports on events attended, such as PD events, conferences, Summer Conference
- Fact-or-fiction column, interesting facts

The above list pertains more to newsletters than to journals, the latter of which usually consist of academic articles (although some specialist council journals straddle the line between newsletter and journal).

All specialist council editors receive copies of all specialist council publications. Look through them. They often contain material that would be useful to your readership, too.

# Happy New Year



**Didi Heer**

Accountant, Subgroup Services

The *Special Edition* is truly special, because I get to wish all of you a fabulous and bountiful year in its January edition.

I am mindful of the heavy toll that the yuletide holiday indulgences sometimes exact from our brain cells (or maybe it's just me—but I doubt it), so I thought that some teasers would be appropriate for this column to clear away the cobwebs. So here is the “This and That” column. I have compiled a list of inquiries I receive about QuickBooks from time to time that you might be interested to know. The teaser is that if you want to find out more, you have to call me.

## QuickBooks Tips and Tricks—Series 1, January 2012

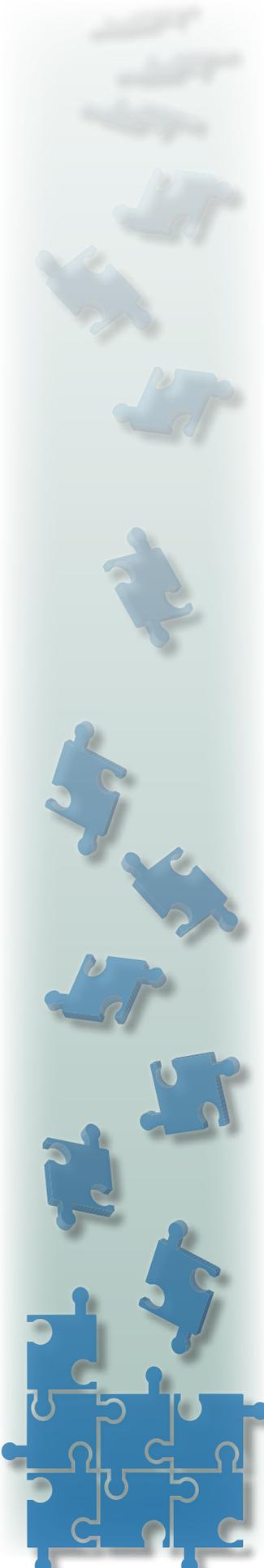
1. **Drill-Down Capabilities**—do you know that the report functions give you the ability to drill down on each account for additional details on that account? Just bring up any report (a good example of a report would be the Budget v Actual Profit and Loss) on your screen and double-click on the account you want to analyze.
2. **Trial Balance**—a quick report that shows all the balances in all of your accounts at a specific time at a glance. When you bring up the report on your screen, you can double-click on each account (see drill-down above) to get the detailed transactions for that account. Click on Report>Accountant & Taxes>Trial Balance.
3. **Report Centre**—in the mood to spice up your reporting life? Click on Report Centre to check out various ways to present financial information.
4. **E-Mailing Financial Reports**—do you know you have the capability to e-mail reports directly from QuickBooks in preparation for your executive meetings? These reports are created by QuickBooks in PDF format so they cannot be altered. Simply click on the e-mail button when you bring up a report on your screen.

There will be lots more about QuickBooks in future issues of *Special Edition*.

### Did you know...?

If you are accepting donations for your conference (or other purposes), Association Finance staff can provide a letter indicating the nonprofit status of your specialist council. Please contact Didi Heer at [didi.heer@ata.ab.ca](mailto:didi.heer@ata.ab.ca) for additional information. Please note that donation receipts will not be issued to contributors because specialist councils are not considered charitable organizations.





# ATA Educational Trust— Supporting Teachers' Professional Growth



**Kim Dewar**  
Administrator, ATA Educational Trust

In 2011, the ATA Educational Trust awarded more than \$80,000 in support of teachers' professional development, including \$30,000 in grants to encourage attendance and help teachers cover the costs associated with attending an ATA specialist council conference.

In October 2011, the Trust awarded 75 grants of \$400 each to teacher applicants to offset the costs associated with attending an ATA specialist council conference. Eligible expenses include registration, accommodation and subsistence expenses. A copy of

the letter sent to each successful applicant is sent to the specialist council to encourage council executives to acknowledge recipients and celebrate their conference attendance.

Specialist councils should consider applying to our project grant program. The ATA Educational Trust provides up to \$3,000 per project for the creation and publication of research or curriculum resources that will support teachers across the province. The application deadline is May 1. To see existing ATA Educational Trust projects, consult the ATA library or our catalogue of Trust-sponsored projects at <http://bit.ly/vOBCbe>.

Specialist councils are encouraged to make an annual donation to the ATA Educational Trust. The Trust is funded by donations, often through the goodwill of Association subgroups, and therefore asks for financial support for the valuable programs that the Trust administers. Group or individual donations, such as retirement tributes or donations in memory of departed teachers, are also encouraged. Receipts for income tax purposes are issued for all individual donations made to the Trust. Visit <http://bit.ly/uwtgrR> to download a printable donation form. The Trust reports once a year to the Provincial Executive Council of the ATA. An annual report and the Trust financial statements are printed in the *ARA Handbook* each spring.

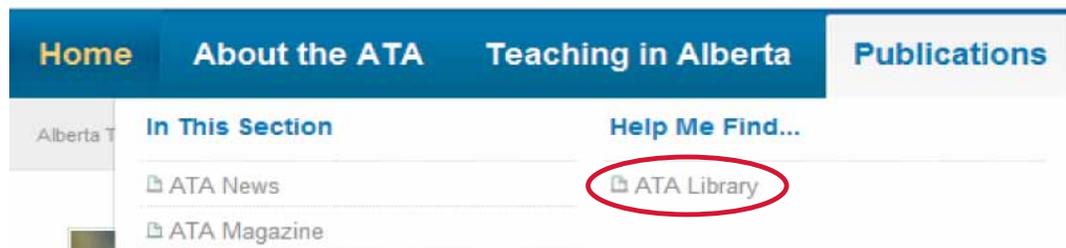
For detailed information on the Trust bursary program and to download application forms for any of our programs, visit the Trust webpage of the Alberta Teachers' Association website, at <http://bit.ly/rjAZ1G>, or contact Kim Dewar in Edmonton at 780-447-9436 or 1-800-232-7208, ext 436.

# Resources for You at Your ATA Library!

Sandra Anderson

ATA Librarian

Did you know that your ATA Library is a fantastic resource for finding great professional development information? We have **books and videos** on almost everything teachers might need to know about: gangs in schools, kids who self-injure, Asperger's syndrome, autism, learning disabilities, inclusion, differentiated instruction, how to teach subjects from basic literacy to high school chemistry and how to assess learning (to name a few!).

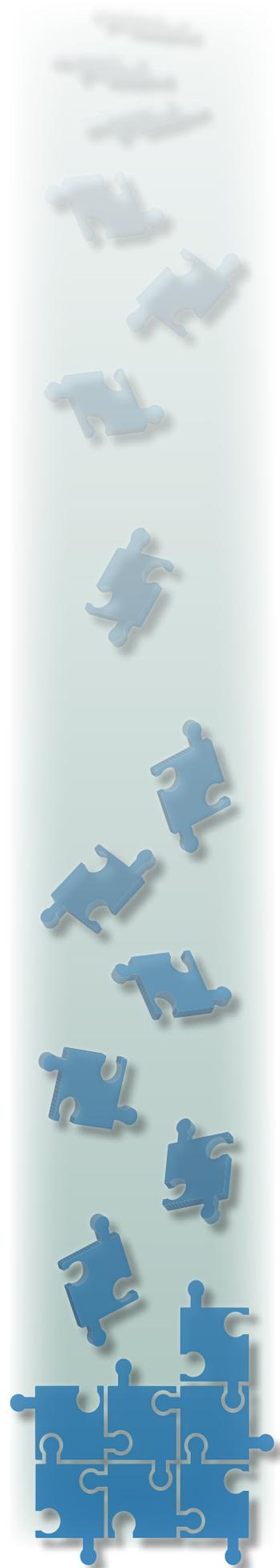


You can access our collection of books and videos through our online library catalogue. On the ATA homepage ([www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)), you will find a link to the library under Publications.

<a href="#">About the ATA Library</a>	On the Library page, you will find our library catalogue as well as web resources. In our library catalogue, you can place reserves on materials that will be mailed out to as soon as they are available. Books are loaned for one month and videos for one week. We are happy to send you materials in the mail or by courier and we prepay all shipping costs for returning items.
<a href="#">Search Library Catalogue</a>	
<a href="#">Web Resources</a>	
<a href="#">Library Services</a>	
<a href="#">New Books and Videos</a>	
<a href="#">Journal Articles</a>	If you log in to the ATA website with your TNET account, you will also be able to access two online journal databases on the library webpage. These databases contain thousands of articles on the latest research and news.
<a href="#">Bibliographies</a>	

**Important Note!** Whether you live in Fort Chipewyan, Fort MacLeod or Edmonton, you get the same service from your ATA library.

We are proud to offer professional reference service to all teachers in Alberta. Our friendly and knowledgeable staff are always ready to help you find the best answers to your research and information questions. If you can't find what you need on our catalogue or databases, please give us a call at 1-800-232-7208 or send us an e-mail at [library@ata.ab.ca](mailto:library@ata.ab.ca). We will be happy to locate and send materials to you.



# HelmsBriscoe— Spotlight on Red Deer



**Leanne  
Calderwood**  
Director,  
Global Accounts  
HelmsBriscoe

Red Deer is a popular destination for ATA meetings and conferences. Located halfway between Alberta's two largest centres, Red Deer offers our delegates accessibility and budget-conscious hotel options.

Here are some facts about Red Deer:

- Named by the First Nations for the large population of elk or “red deer” seen in the area
- Incorporated as a city in 1913
- Red Deer has a population of roughly 92,000 people.
- Red Deer boasts more than 170 restaurants, the most per capita in Canada.

There are some great hotel options for your groups in Red Deer. Below are some of the best fits for ATA groups, based on their attention to service as well as their attractive price points:

1. Capri Centre—a well-known hotel to ATA groups, the Capri has recently been rebranded to the Sheraton Red Deer. With 55,000 square feet of meeting space (including a large

exhibition hall), this is the largest convention hotel in Red Deer and very familiar to many ATA groups. If you have questions about how the rebranding to Sheraton will affect your group, please contact me.

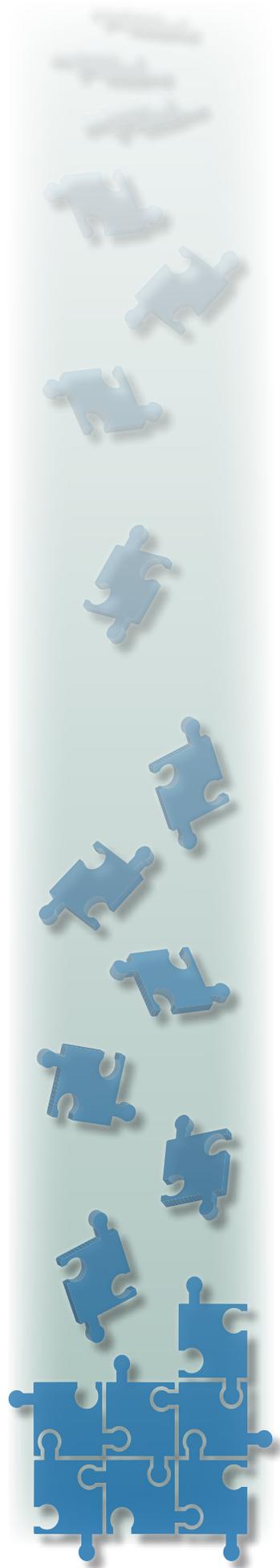
2. Holiday Inn Suites South—conveniently located on Gasoline Alley near Highway 2, this hotel contains one very large ballroom divisible into three. This is great for groups that don't require a lot of breakout spaces but need larger general-session spaces.
3. Holiday Inn on 67 Street boasts 16,000 square feet of space; its largest ballroom can accommodate 280 people. There are a couple of breakout spaces and a few boardrooms for your smaller gatherings as well.
4. Red Deer Lodge—this is a Silverbirch property (Silverbirch offers our ATA groups a complimentary coffee break with the conference contracts). The hotel's largest ballroom is being renovated, but there is still space for groups of up to 120 people. Once the ballroom is finished, this hotel will be a very attractive option for larger groups (300-plus delegates).

As your advocate in the hotel community, our role as part of your conference team is to source all the options that fit your group, across the province. We're at your service and we look forward to being of service to you in 2012.

Leanne Calderwood  
Director, Global Accounts



[lcalderwood@helmsbriscoe.com](mailto:lcalderwood@helmsbriscoe.com)



© Copyright 2012  
The Alberta Teachers' Association  
11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton,  
AB T5N 2R1  
Telephone: 780-447-9400 or  
1-800-232-7208  
www.teachers.ab.ca

Please contact Karen Virag,  
supervising editor, Publications,  
for permission to reprint material  
from this newsletter.  
She can be reached at  
karen.virag@ata.ab.ca.

Submissions for this  
newsletter should be  
forwarded to  
andrea.berg@ata.ab.ca.

PD-SC-27 2012 01

## Please note the following important upcoming activities and deadlines:

**February 1, 2012:** Specialist council speakers list suggestions for Teachers' Conventions due. You can access the online form on the PD collaborative site. Please submit completed forms to Barb Bossert, at [barb.bossert@ata.ab.ca](mailto:barb.bossert@ata.ab.ca). Following the February 1 deadline, Association staff will compile the speakers' bank into a single document to distribute to Teachers' Convention boards by **March 1** of each year.

### February and March 2012

Specialist council booths at Teachers' Conventions as follows:

February 9–10: CATCA and NCTCA

February 16–17: CCTCA and NETCA

February 23–24: SEATCA, PDTC, SWATCA

March 1–2: GETCA

March 8–9: CEATCA and MPTCA

Encourage your colleagues to visit the specialist council booth and to sign up for a council. Stop by the booth yourself to network with executive members from other councils who are volunteering to sign up new members.

**April 20–21:** Spring Regional PDAC, Edmonton. Specialist council presidents or designates invited to attend. Extra delegates may attend at the council's expense.

