

# Special Edition

A Newsletter for Specialist Council Executive Members

Volume 2:3 May 2013



**Patrick Loyer**

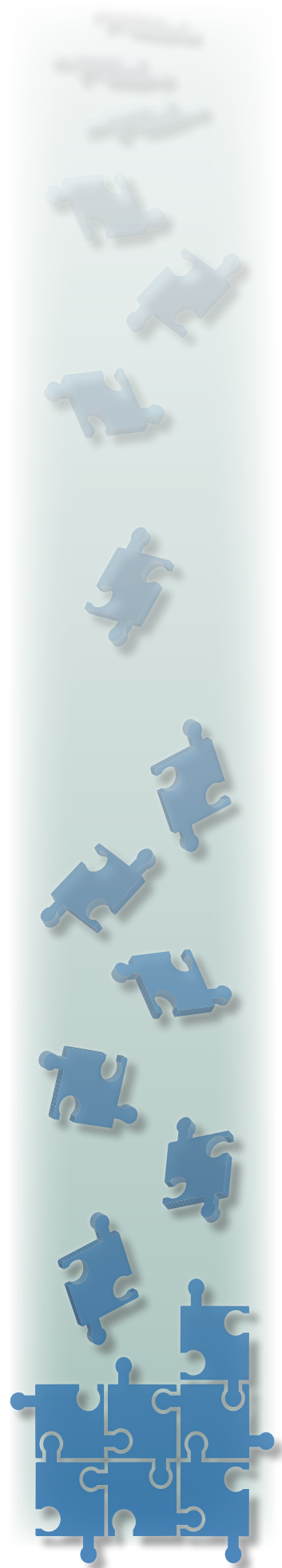
Executive Staff Officer,  
Professional Development

Spring has finally arrived and that sunshine does feel good! I hope that you all enjoyed a restful and rejuvenating spring break. We are now well into the final two months of this school year, and I do hope your year was a good one. Welcome to the third publication of *Special Edition*, our thrice-yearly newsletter for specialist council executives. As the factotum to all 21 specialist councils, I hope these publications provide a source of information and some valuable tips to assist you in your important roles on your council's executive.

We recently completed our membership drive at all ten Teachers' Conventions. Thank you to the presidents who volunteered to organize the schedule for each booth and to everyone who took a turn at

monitoring the booth. The number of new members was lower this year, but that may be due to the fact that teachers no longer need to register every year for the council of their choice. This booth also provides a unique opportunity to talk to Association members at large about the programs and services provided by our specialist councils.

The provincial Association is gearing up for its annual Summer Conference at the Banff Centre, August 12–16, 2013. A joint session will be provided this year for both specialist council presidents and conference directors. This session will explore topics relevant to your role as president or conference director, including facility selection, contracts, online registration, strategic planning, technology strategies, promoting membership, alternative ideas for professional development, privacy legislation, budgeting and finances, leading successful meetings, year planning and annual report writing. For additional information or registration, please contact Karin Champion at [karin.champion@ata.ab.ca](mailto:karin.champion@ata.ab.ca) or 1-800-232-7208. Although time is a precious commodity these days, I do hope to see all our councils represented at Summer Conference this year.



Summer break will soon be here. To simply say “thank you” for all the work accomplished over the past year by specialist councils for the benefit of teachers hardly seems enough, nevertheless my thanks are sincere. Your time and dedication to the good and

valuable work you do to promote professional development through your specialist council are truly appreciated. Please feel free to call me at 1-800-232-7208 or 780-447-9467 (in Edmonton) or e-mail me at [patrick.loyer@ata.ab.ca](mailto:patrick.loyer@ata.ab.ca) with any questions, comments or suggestions.





# Teachers' Convention Membership Initiative



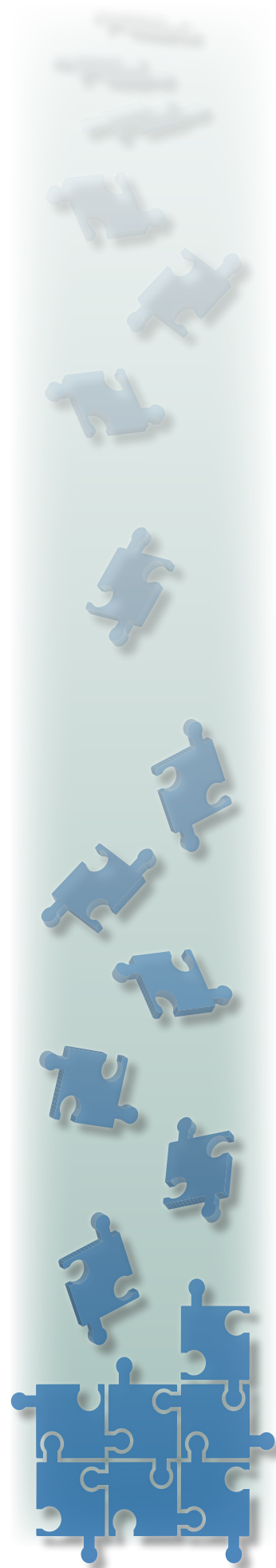
**Cheryl O'Brien**  
Administrative Officer,  
Professional Development

In an effort to increase the profile of specialist council programs and services at teachers' conventions, one table per convention was provided at no cost for specialist council use for the third consecutive year. As a result of this initiative, specialist councils registered 226 new members in total (see Appendix A for the breakdown of new memberships by council).

Combined with the 2011 evergreening initiative in which annual no-cost memberships no longer expire, this collaboration has been advantageous to all specialist councils. In addition, the specialist council booths at teachers' conventions provide an invaluable

opportunity to make new contacts with teachers regarding the support and services provided by specialist councils.

Specialist Council Membership Initiative—2013 Teachers' Convention							
<b>Total Processed</b> 226	<b>ASLC</b> –	<b>CTSC</b> 8	<b>LCF</b> –	<b>CSL</b> 25	<b>ECEC</b> 35	<b>ETC</b> 8	<b>ESLC</b> 4
	<b>ELAC</b> 16	<b>FAC</b> 19	<b>FNMI</b> 5	<b>GEOEC</b> 3	<b>GC</b> 7	<b>HPEC</b> 13	<b>MC</b> 15
	<b>MYC</b> 4	<b>OEC</b> –	<b>RMEC</b> 3	<b>SC</b> 17	<b>SLIC</b> 7	<b>SSC</b> 13	<b>SEC</b> 24



# Social Media and your ATA-hosted site



**Gregory J Romaniuk**  
Information and  
Technology Services

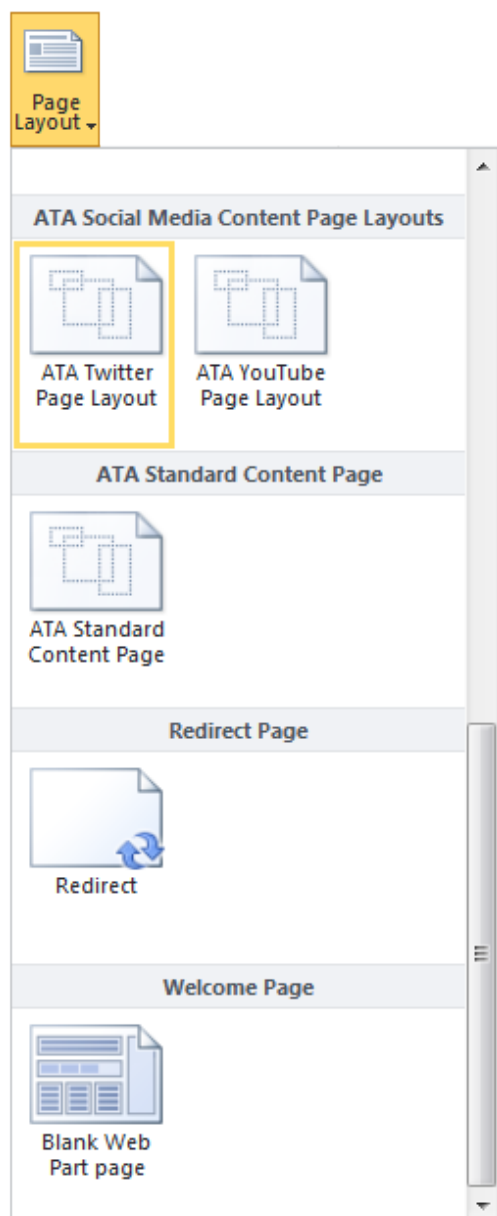
Over the past year the Association's Information and Technology Services department has continuously refined the functionality and user experience of our ATA Web publishing system; this task continues. Near the beginning of 2013, we activated a new look and feel, which upgraded your sites to look and act similar to the ATA provincial website. Many subgroup web managers have activated their site's horizontal navigation pull-down menus, after sorting through and rearranging the content of their site. As well, a few web managers have begun experimenting with RSS announcements to create quick, efficient feeds that give your members up-to-the-moment information about your subgroup.

I'm pleased to announce a big new step—the addition of our social media pages. Effective today, you can display Twitter feeds and YouTube videos on your Association-hosted website.

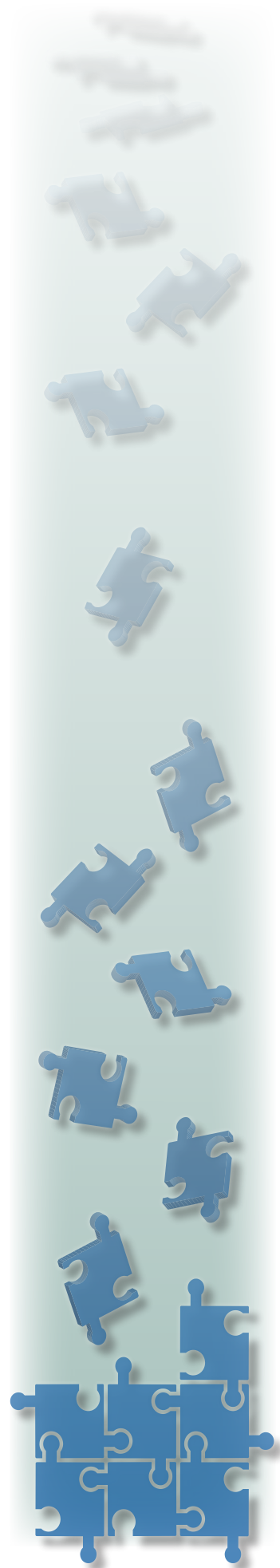
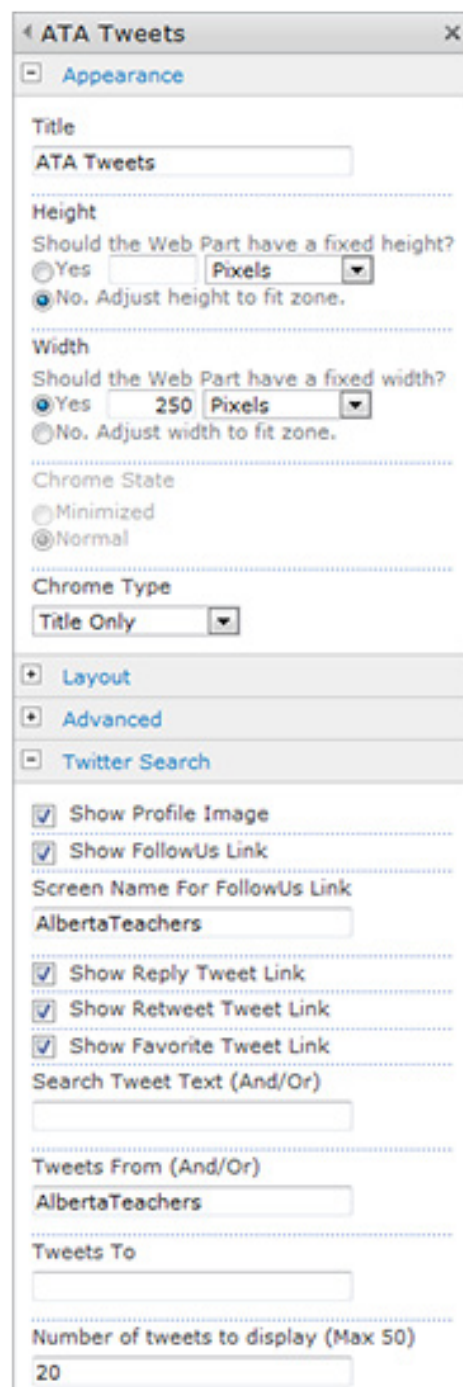


Many subgroups are using Twitter as a way to keep in touch with their members—now you can display your Tweet feed right on your homepage, allowing all of your membership, whether Twitter or non-Twitter users, to participate in the conversation.

Adding a Twitter feed is a fairly straightforward process: once you've created a new page, change the page's layout to be a Twitter page; this is a new option in the ATA Social Media Content Page Layout section of the Page Layout menu.



The new page will include a webpart initially titled My Twitter Feed. While editing your new page, select the new webpart's controls by clicking on the down-arrow that appears when you hover your mouse over the title My Twitter Feed; select the Edit Web Part option. A new webpart properties panel will appear in the upper right-hand corner of your browser window.





Note the various properties you may adjust. The most important field to configure is Tweets from, which is where you add the name of the Twitter account you would like displayed. Other fields to consider setting include the Screen Name for FollowUs link, and the other checkbox fields, such as Show Profile Image. Once you've made your changes to the webpart properties panel, please be sure to click OK for the changes to be saved. Don't forget to publish the page so that your members will have access to your new Twitter page layout.

A new YouTube layout that allows you to display YouTube video directly within your website is also available.

The YouTube webpage is configured in nearly the same fashion as the Twitter media page. You should find the YouTube video

ID using the Share choice on the YouTube page showing the video you would like displayed on your own site. Look at the URL that is given. For example, the URL returned from YouTube's share function is <http://youtu.be/BIDg35bYq2Q>. When configuring your site's YouTube page webpart, you'll want to configure the Video ID field to be BIDg35bYq2Q.

The Information and Technology Services team are working to add even more social media tools that should facilitate adding a photo carousel to your homepage and connecting with other services such as Flickr. Are you ready to begin adding social media to your site? Or do you have other questions about how to use your site? Please don't hesitate to contact me, at 780-447-9415 or via e-mail at [greg.romaniuk@ata.ab.ca](mailto:greg.romaniuk@ata.ab.ca), if you'd like assistance in using these exciting new tools.

### Youtube Page Layout Example

This is an example of the new Youtube page layout.

Alberta Teachers' Youtube



# Taking Fabulous Photos



**Karen Virag**

Supervising Editor, Publications

We can debate whether or not a picture is worth a thousand words but there is no denying that nice visuals, including photographs, makes a reading experience richer and more interesting, for journals and newsletters.

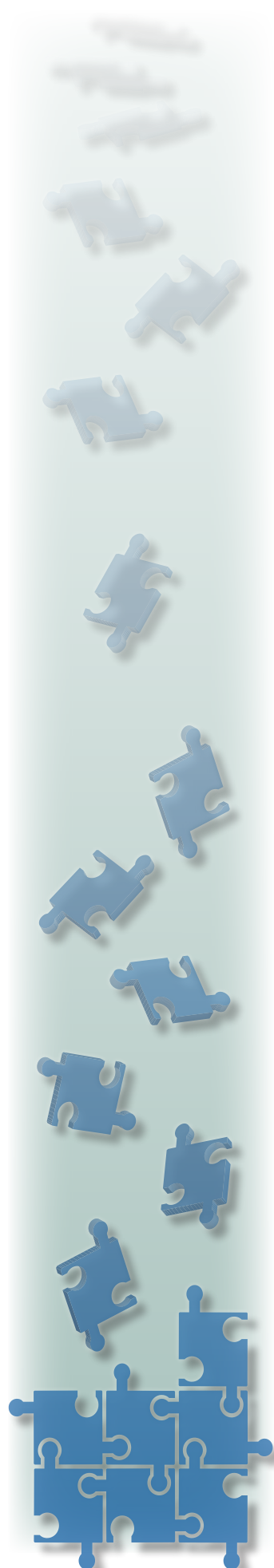
Even though today's cameras are auto-everything, the camera is the easy part—you're the one who has to make the photo irresistible to publishers and readers. A good place to start is to study design and incorporate it into your photos.

Here are some tips to help improve your photos:

- Look for good lighting. Try not to photograph people when they are standing in front of light sources; doing this obscures their features.
- Learn about your camera—even basic digital cameras have

settings you can adjust to optimize the conditions.

- Your phone's built-in camera may not be appropriate for all circumstances. Shots with movement or in poorly lit areas will not turn out well using such cameras.
- Look for expression—wait until your subject relaxes. Sometimes people forget you are there or start not to care. The wonderful thing about digital cameras is that you can shoot, look, save or delete.
- Watch for intensity—try to capture the spirit of the person or the event.
- Show movement through design. Frame each shot to minimize cropping and maximize the length of time viewers will look at your work
- Action shots captivate. Don't be afraid to shoot more than you'll need.
- Try unusual angles—up, down, through something, behind something.
- Watch where the light hits—natural light can make your photos sparkle or direct viewers to the key subject. Try to really look.



- Get up close—don't be afraid to come in close to your subject.
- Natural, candid photos are usually best, though at events like awards ceremonies, the so-called grab-and-grin photos of awards being presented are pretty much inevitable. Still, even such photos can be made more interesting, so ensure that the lighting is good and that you have an unobstructed shot.

## Sending digital photos with your newsletter of journal submission

- Send your photos as TIFFs or JPEGs. Please remember to label them and to supply a caption that identifies the scene and the

people in it, unless it is a large group shot. People like putting a name to a face.

- Do try to ensure a minimum dpi (dots per square inch) of 300. This ensures that the reproduction will be of good quality.
- Please do NOT embed photos in the body of an e-mail. Photos sent this way are extremely difficult and sometimes impossible to extract.
- If you are publishing photographs of students under the age of 18 and the students are identifiable, you must obtain parental (or guardian) permission and send the signed permission form to me. Contact me if you would like an electronic copy of the permission form. (karen.virag@ata.ab.ca).



## Mark Your Calendars!

This year's ATA Summer Conference will be held at the Banff Centre on August 12-16, 2013. Specialist council presidents (or an alternate) and conference directors are invited to attend.



THE BANFF CENTRE  
FOR MOUNTAIN CULTURE



# Year-end, Schmear-end



**Didi Heer**

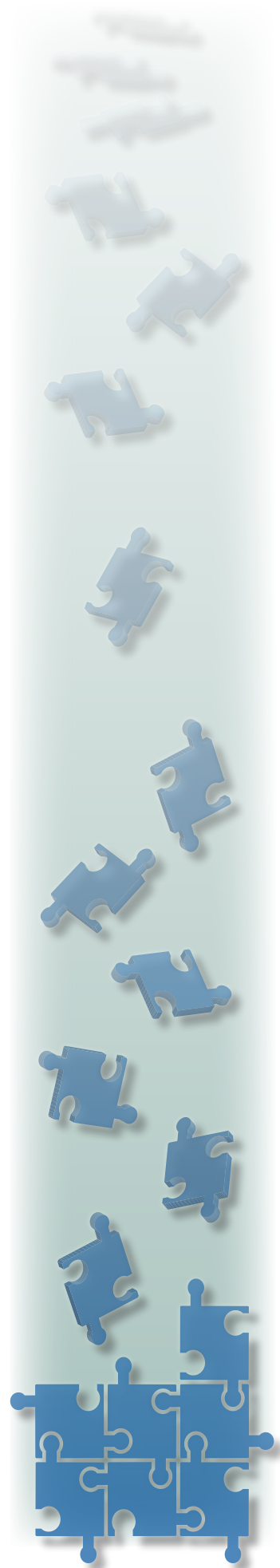
Accountant, Subgroup Services

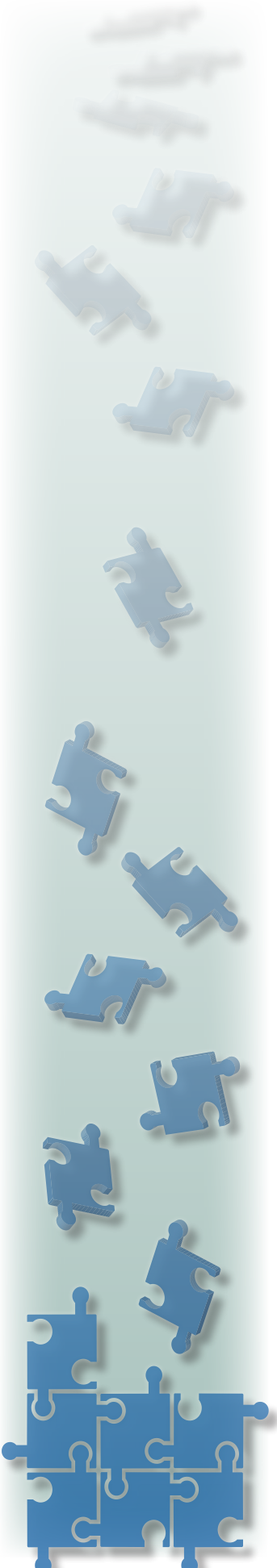
It's that time of the year again when you start looking forward to a well-deserved summer respite from the murky and dubious world of high finance.

So here are the much-awaited (yes, I am still delusional) top ten year-end tips and tricks:

1. Need help with 2013/14 budget template and calculation of surplus requirement? We got apps for that. Intrigued? Contact me.
2. Compiling information for 2012/13 year-end financial review—July to June is the specialist council financial year. Now is about the time that you want to consider putting in order the paperwork you have accumulated throughout the year so that you can easily send the stuff to me for review. Nothing like year-end panic to ruin the start of your summer.

3. Annual grant and membership count—Please note that the 2013/14 annual grant provided by the Association is calculated based on membership count as at August 31, 2013. So for memberships signed up during conferences between October 2012 and August 2013, you will want to ensure that this information is sent to the Association for entry into the specialist council data base. Sometimes the list comes directly from your conference team, so please remind them to send the information as soon as possible.
4. Honorarium reporting—for any payments made between January and December 2013. Some treasurers find it convenient to report honoraria paid between January and June 2013 when they close the fiscal year and send it to Barnett House along with the year-end paperwork. Information about honorarium payments after June can be submitted in December.
5. Grant account charges—Please pay all amounts owing in your respective grant account by the end of June. The Association year-end is August 31, 2013, and we have to report and explain to our auditors all delinquent accounts owing to the ATA. We will be e-mailing the bill along with the summary of charges at the end of June for charges your council made between April and May 2013. Please pay any balance forward from prior periods as shown on the bill summary. For any charges in June, we will print out report on your behalf and make adjustments in your year-end





financial statements so that expenses relating to 2012/13 are properly reflected in the 2012/13 financial reports.

6. Updating Quickbooks—Please consider updating your Quickbooks (QB) to 2013 if you have version 2011 or older, and please get Quickbooks Pro. We have a hard time opening old versions of QB if we have to fix your QB or use it for year-end review.

7. Sending Quickbooks back-up electronically—You can easily send a back-up file as an attachment to your e-mail. Please ensure that you use the back-up format in QB. This is the only format that we can use. The file must be in .QBB or .QBM format. If your back-up file is larger than 10 KB, please choose the back-up option “create portable file,” which will create a squished (I know, I am very technical) back-up version in QBM format. This option is in the FILE menu where you do the regular back-up.

We still accept memory sticks.

In either case, please tell me which version of QB you are using when sending back-up by e-mail or by memory stick. Also, don't forget to give me the password if you are using one. If you are not sure which version you are using, open QB and click on F2. This will give you information on QB product version.

8. Whassup with Conference 2013? Just a reminder that conference financial information for events occurring between October 2012 and May 2013 must be included in the council year-

end review as at June 2013. Please assist me by reminding conference treasurers that the deadline for closing off the conference business of your council is June 30 and that I require the financial information to allow me to consolidate the financial summary in the council's year-end financial report.

9. Connect with 2014 Conference Committee—The committee is subject to council policies and procedures as outlined in the council handbook in conducting the business of the annual conference. In your role as council treasurer, you have oversight responsibilities with respect to conference finances and ensuring that the conference treasurer is aware of the council financial policies.

10. Updating council handbook—The fiscal year-end is an ideal time to review finance-related policies that were amended or new ones formulated for incorporation in the council handbook.

11. Plan to attend fall seminar in November (please)—I promise to entertain and dazzle you with esoteric accounting and finance knowledge that a treasurer could not do without.

Call me. Maybe. Didi Heer, phone 780-447-9437 or e-mail [didi.heer@ata.ab.ca](mailto:didi.heer@ata.ab.ca), for your year-end needs. Year-end checklist coming soon.

I know ... 11 tips—just making sure that your fondness for counting is still intact, along with your sense of humour. Have a safe and fantabulous summer—miss you already.





# Implementing Twitter at Your ATA Conferences



**Leanne Calderwood**  
Director,  
Global Accounts,  
HelmsBriscoe

There are lots of great articles and lists of how to implement Twitter into conferences, but what if you yourself are not proficient at Twitter, and neither are your delegates? We're going "back to basics" and including how even you, @twitterrookie, can create engagement at your specialist council conferences.

## **Why use twitter to create engagement at your events:**

Everyone is doing it, but why should you as a conference planner or conference chair?

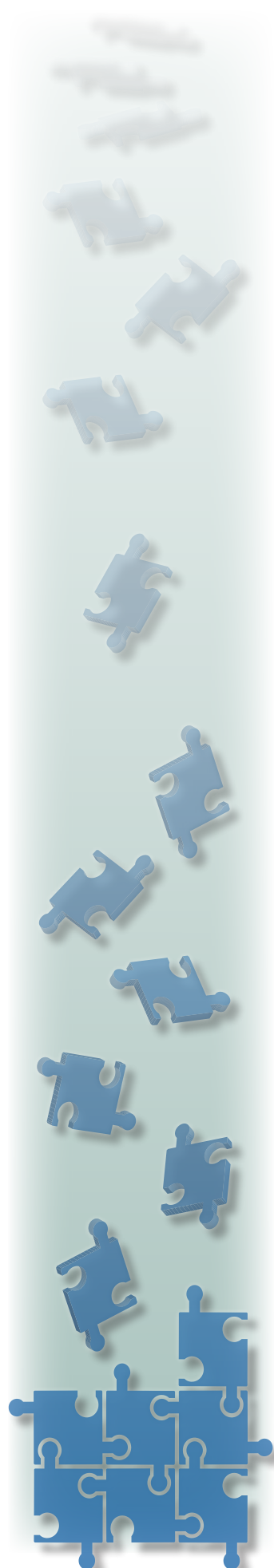
1. **Create excitement for your event** – use twitter as a promo tool year-round, at no charge to your bottom line!
2. **Share information** - Twitter is a great way to share information with others who cannot attend the conference, or even the session you're attending
3. **Real time feedback** – speakers can watch a twitter feed to gauge the energy of the audience, or answer questions posed by their audience

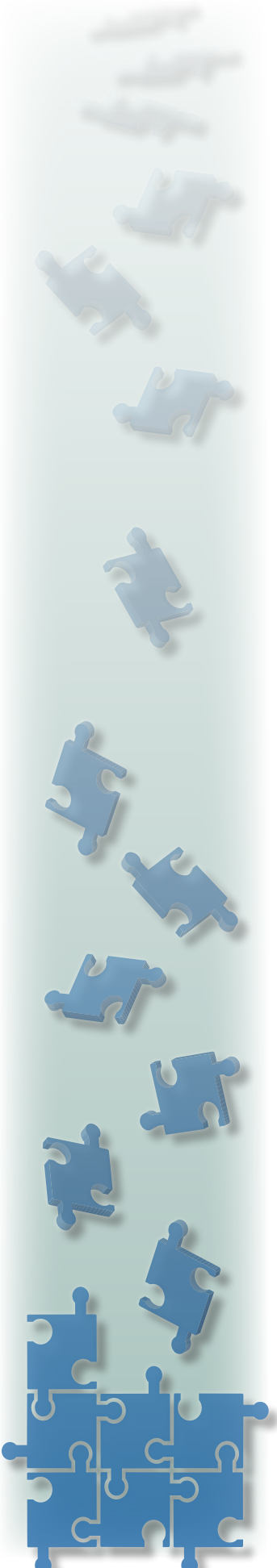
4. **Solve problems** - Twitter can relay, in real time, information to conference organizers who can act on the information to enhance the event. For example, is it too cold in your session room? Did the buffet line run out of sandwiches?
5. **Building interpersonal connections** - Are you looking to connect with someone? You can leverage twitter to connect with them.
6. **Real-time event planning** - Do you want to plan an impromptu "after conference get-together"? You can let people know using twitter.
7. **Popularity contest** – use the data from twitter as a report of popular sessions, or data that a sponsor would find useful!
8. **Year over year metrics** – use your twitter metrics year over year to measure engagement, satisfaction, and other measurable results
9. **Post-conference follow up** - You can keep the energy of a conference alive and well once it's over by providing post-conference materials through twitter, like post-event surveys!!

## **Starting a Twitter Campaign for your Conference:**

Now that you've taken some time to learn some twitter fundamentals, it's time to start your conference twitter campaign.

1. **Creation** - Months prior to your event, create a hashtag for your event.
  - Keep it short and memorable. For example, #ATAScience2012
  - Test drive your hashtag – do a search for your proposed hashtag, to see if its already used



- 
2. **Marketing** - Advertise the hashtag with all conference correspondence. Website, registration forms, emails. Include twitter handles for various audiences:
- speakers
  - sponsors
  - exhibitors
  - delegates
  - planning team
3. **Twitter Guru** - Assign someone to monitor you tweets – the hashtag to deliver information will only work if the information is being shared. Especially onsite when the buffet line runs out of sandwiches – you need that information in real time.
4. **Twitter team** – Identify those who are proficient at twitter and engage them to tweet about your event. Perhaps a small incentive will help with this initiative.
5. **Internet bandwidth** – ensure your facility has enough bandwidth to accommodate multiple smartphone users. No sense creating twitter buzz if no one can get enough bandwidth to tweet anything.
6. **Name badges** – print your delegate's twitter handle on his/her name badge.



7. **Twitter education session**

– whether done through a pre-conference YouTube webinar, or a beginning session onsite at the conference, host a session where you can go over twitter basics and get everyone set up.

Need more help with Twitter?  
Contact me @lcalderwood or the ol' fashioned way at lcalderwood@helmsbriscoe.com.  
#HappyTweeting!!



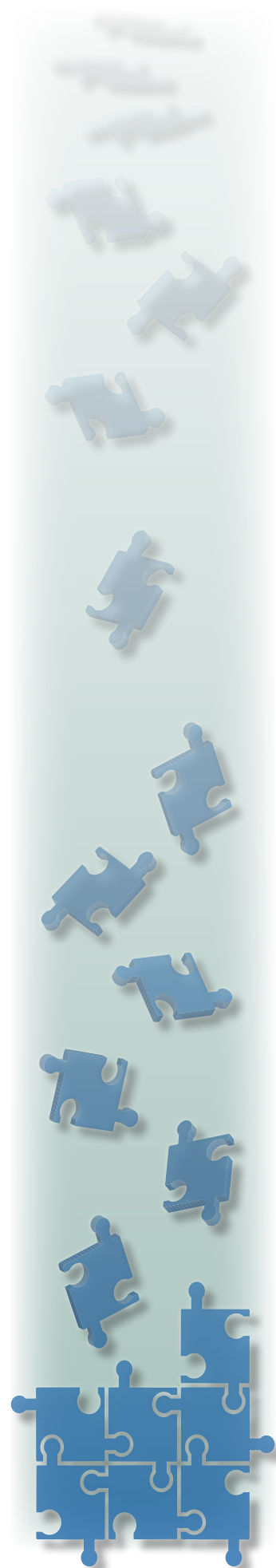
lcalderwood@helmsbriscoe.com  
403-668-0285



# Services and Contacts for Specialist Councils

All departments can be reached through the central ATA telephone numbers: 780-447-9400 (Edmonton area) or 1-800-232-7208 (elsewhere in Alberta). E-mail contacts are listed where applicable. For additional information, contact Cheryl O'Brien in Professional Development (contact information below).

Service	ATA Contact
Editorial assistance, desktop publishing, artwork, printing, binding and mailing for publications	Supervising editor, Publications Karen Virag karen.virag@ata.ab.ca
Specialist council publications are available in the ATA library	ATA library library@ata.ab.ca
Distribution and handling of orders for additional council publications and materials	Distribution Ian Campbell ian.campbell@ata.ab.ca
Production of council stationery (letterhead, envelopes, business cards and so on)	Staff advisor
Artwork, layout, desktop publishing and editorial assistance for conference brochures and council membership brochures	Staff advisor
Inclusion of items in school mailings	Document production manager Renee Hughes renee.hughes@ata.ab.ca
Review of conference speaker and facility contracts	Staff advisor
Copies of generic specialist council application forms	Professional Development Cheryl O'Brien cheryl.obrien@ata.ab.ca
Conference publicity: All specialist council conferences for the upcoming year are featured free of charge in a centre-spread advertisement in a September and January issue of the <i>ATA News</i> . One small reminder notice is also available free of charge. Contact Raymond Gariepy to arrange for this additional advertisement. Councils may purchase additional advertising space.	Managing editor, <i>ATA News</i> Raymond Gariepy raymond.gariepy@ata.ab.ca





Council news, other than conference information, may be published free of charge in the Notices and Events column of the <i>ATA News</i> . News release services are also available for council activities.	Managing editor, <i>ATA News</i> Raymond Gariepy raymond.gariepy@ata.ab.ca
Council conference information is included (if available) in the events calendar on the ATA website. Conference dates and location may also be included in the Member's Diary.	Professional Development Cheryl O'Brien cheryl.obrien@ata.ab.ca
Special and joint project grants to assist councils	Staff advisor
Annual operational grants to each council	Staff advisor
Year-end financial review	Accountant: Subgroups services Didi Heer didi.heer@ata.ab.ca
Training for presidents, editors, treasurers and webmasters	Professional Development Andrea Berg andrea.berg@ata.ab.ca
Membership service	Professional Development Debra Augustyn debra.augustyn@ata.ab.ca
Constitutional changes	Staff advisor
Contact with outside agencies	Staff advisor
Professional development directory includes contact information for specialist council presidents, secretaries, treasurers and conference directors in addition to PD chairs and convention executives.	Professional Development Barb Bossert barb.bossert@ata.ab.ca
Records storage	Margaret Shane ATA Records Manager and Privacy Officer margaret.shane@ata.ab.ca
Websites	Webmaster Greg Romaniuk greg.romaniuk@ata.ab.ca
Membership lists	Professional Development Cheryl O'Brien cheryl.obrien@ata.ab.ca
Conference registration forms	Professional Development Cheryl O'Brien cheryl.obrien@ata.ab.ca



# Upcoming Activities and Deadlines

## **May 1, 2013: Educational Trust Project Grants deadline:**

Each year, the Trust awards a number of project grants of up to \$3,000 to help individuals and groups (including specialist councils) conduct research or develop practical classroom materials for Alberta teachers. The materials and resources produced through these grants are placed in the ATA library and can be borrowed by interested teachers. Go to [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) and click on For Members/ Grants, Awards and Scholarships for more information

## **August 12–16: Summer Conference, Banff Centre.**

Specialist council presidents and conference directors are invited to attend. Please contact Karin Champion at [karin.champion@ata.ab.ca](mailto:karin.champion@ata.ab.ca) for information or registration.

**August 31: Specialist Council Annual Reports due,** including audited financial statement, for July 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013. Please submit to Cheryl O'Brien at [cheryl.obrien@ata.ab.ca](mailto:cheryl.obrien@ata.ab.ca).

## **September 15 and November 15: Strategic Planning**

**Grant deadline:** Each year, the Association offers its subgroups—locals, specialist councils and convention associations—matching grants of up to \$2,000 each to offset the costs of organizing strategic planning retreats to discuss their plans and set long-term goals. Applications will be considered in two rounds. The first deadline is **September 15**, following which five applications will be chosen to receive grants. The second deadline is **November 15**, following which five additional applications will be selected. Go to [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) and click on For Members/ Grants, Awards and Scholarships for more information.

## **September 30: \$400 Educational Trust Conference**

**Grants deadline:** Each year, the Trust awards a number of grants to help defray the costs associated with attending an ATA specialist council conference. Eligible expenses include registration, accommodation, fuel, food and (if applicable) the cost of a substitute teacher. Go to [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) and click on For Members/ Grants, Awards, Scholarships for application forms. You may wish to advertise these grants to your members in an upcoming publication.

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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](mailto:karen.virag@ata.ab.ca).

Submissions for this  
newsletter should  
be sent to  
[andrea.berg@ata.ab.ca](mailto:andrea.berg@ata.ab.ca).

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