



## Happy New Year To You and Your Families



As we begin a new year I feel some optimism about the possibility of learning to live with the new normal. I have grown to believe that most of us will get one of the strains of Covid-19 and we just have to hope that it will be mild, and we can begin to move on from these uncertain times.

I have said it before, but it bears repeating, I cannot fathom how our former colleagues, who are still in schools, are bearing up under some of the most trying times we have ever seen in education. Schools are open and then they are closed. We are doing in person learning and then we are learning at a distance. Teachers are stretched to the limit trying to keep up with so many factors over which they have no control. And, although we have no kids in the system, my neighbours are continuously expressing their admiration and appreciation for the work that their children's teachers are doing. Maybe it takes times like these to make people realize the value of teachers, health care workers and all front-line workers.

These trying times have also made me, and I'm sure many of you, appreciate the work of our retired colleagues who volunteer to keep NBSRT relevant in the lives of retired teachers. We held our annual Board of Directors meeting, by Zoom, just before Christmas, and the number and quality of activities being carried out by our local Branches and our committees is astounding. We have Branches reaching out to older members and shut-ins with cards, phone calls, and gifts. Some Branches have done zoom presentations on Group Insurance and the pension plan, while some have used Zoom to do readings, conduct social get-togethers, and hold a wine and cheese. I am so proud of everyone who continues to work for us during a period of time when we cannot get the immediate positive feedback of in-person get togethers. We could not survive as an organization without so many dedicated volunteers. If you get a chance please thank your local leaders and committee members.

For the coming year, we will continue to serve and represent you no matter what Covid-19 throws at us. Along with our regular business, we are in the process of putting together recommendations for our strategic plan. The recommendations will go to our AGM, hopefully being held in Woodstock on May 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> if Covid-19 allows. We are also very excited about some of the plans that your local Wellness Committees will be executing over the next few months.

Our work on your behalf will continue but we could use some more of you to step forward to help out at the local or provincial level. You would not have to make a large commitment of time or energy, but we can always use more help to make sure we are able to keep in touch with our members and especially our older or more isolated members. Please check the website [www.nbsrt.org](http://www.nbsrt.org) for the names of your local leaders and let them know what you are willing to do or just touch base and tell them if they ever need an extra pair of hands you would be available.

Thanks for sticking with us and best wishes to you and your families for 2022 and beyond.