

MIGHTY PEACE TEACHERS' CONVENTION

Building Bridges

March 5 & 6 2015

NOVEMBER 28, 2014

Opening and Closing Keynotes Everybody Counts...So Do You!

In 1981, Alvin Law officially started speaking to schools and organizations throughout Canada. Today Alvin is one of Canada's most highly sought-after inspirational speakers and travels throughout Canada, the US and around the world. In his opening keynote, Alvin recognizes working in education is challenging, made more so when dealing with less than typical students. When it comes to contributing to making the world a better place, teachers lead Alvin's list. In a sometimes thankless job, Alvin guarantees you will leave feeling not only appreciated, but rejuvenated.



Hiking with Asses

After 35 years of hiking and mountaineering, carrying hefty packs to incredible heights over vast distances, Brian Keating decided to look for a level of luxury that would possibly simulate the heli-hike mountain experience, but where helicopters are seldom seen.

This closing keynote will take you on three journeys into Asia, Africa and South America, all assisted by their equivalent of a helicopter: mules, donkeys and horses. Yep, that's right. Brian plans on exchanging jet fuel for corn, speed for plodding, and the whirr of blades for the sound of hooves on tundra and stone. This is a celebration of our wild world, mountain landscapes, the wildlife that lives there, and the sheer joy of being without the burden of weight on the shoulders and back, to enjoy the freedom of the hills!



Brian's previous job at the Calgary Zoo was to raise money and then to spend it on environmental projects around the world. Presently, he's the Zoo's Honourary Conservation Advisor to their outreach efforts, and a part time Adjunct Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the U of C, and the owner of www.goingwild.org.

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Facebook Group:
[Mighty Peace Teachers' Convention](https://www.facebook.com/MightyPeaceTeachersConvention)

Website: mptca.teachers.ab.ca



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A Message from the MPTCA President

As I write this, it is just after 5 in the morning. I'm sitting in the bathroom of our hotel room typing away on my iPad, trying not to wake my family as I just realized that the deadline for this message is tomorrow. Complaining? No. Just describing a somewhat normal day in the life of a teacher.

I'm still reeling from my Convocation ceremony yesterday at the U of A. Over the last two years working on my Masters', I had the opportunity to work with teachers from all over the province, some from around the world. I learned that we don't have to watch the news about how our world leaders are changing the world. We are world leaders, too.

Our theme this year is "Building Bridges". I hope that as you attend the convention, you find sessions that will help you strengthen connections with your colleagues, your administration, and mostly, with your students and their families. But I also hope that you get the opportunity to reflect on the valuable work that you do and to take care of your own personal growth needs. Alvin Law and Brian Keating, just two of an amazing lineup, will share stories of how inspiration is not only found elsewhere, but within as well. There's also a bridge that needs regular maintenance and renovations there.

I look forward to seeing you all this spring. Enjoy your much-deserved Christmas break.

- Julie Gummesen



ATTENDANCE POLICY AND BEING ABSENT FROM CONVENTION

Teachers are obligated, professionally and legally, to attend and participate in teachers' convention. Section 78(1)(d) of the School Act defines "teaching day" to include the two days per year on which teachers' conventions are held. These days are for attending sessions at the convention authorized by the Alberta Teachers' Association. Convention days are, by law, teaching days for which teachers receive pay.

- **If you are sick (or cannot attend convention for other personal reasons)** then the provisions in the collective agreement apply and you must follow the same procedures for obtaining sick leave (or other forms of leave) that you would if it was a normal teaching day.
- **Any teacher wishing to engage in other professional development activity** during teachers' convention must complete the Alternate PD application form from the MPTCA website (mptca.teachers.ab.ca). Based on specific criteria set out by the provincial ATA, the attendance committee will make a judgment regarding the request. Requests to be absent from the Mighty Peace Teachers' Convention for **reasons of alternate professional development** are to be made prior to **January 23, 2015**.
- **Part-time teachers** are being paid "only for the time the teacher teaches" (*School Act* (Section 103(b))). Your teaching assignment is your *shift*, which is a defined time. Any addition to or adjustment of time must be done with your agreement and proper

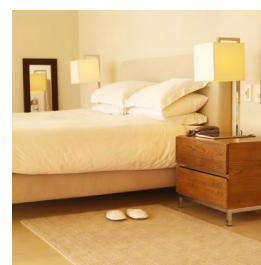
compensation. In simplest terms, whatever is consistent with your assignment for that day is your obligation. Notwithstanding all of the above, part-time teachers **aren't prevented from voluntarily attending sessions**.

- **Any teacher required to coach at an ASAA Provincial Finals Event** during teachers' convention must complete the form available on either the ASAA or MPTCA website (mptca.teachers.ab.ca) and send it to the attendance committee chairperson of the convention board. Teachers are not excused from Convention to coach zone events.
- **Substitute teachers can attend Convention!** As soon as a substitute teacher teaches for one day in any of our member locals they are an Associate Member of the ATA and are eligible to attend Convention at no cost. Substitute teachers can register on Wednesday between 1 - 5:00 p.m. or on Thursday or Friday during regular convention hours. Proof that they have taught during the current school year is required. Since adult supervisors do not hold an Alberta teaching certificate they are not entitled to Convention privileges.

School boards have the right to deduct pay from teachers absent from convention without legitimate reason, and in fact, have done so. A charge of unprofessional conduct under Association discipline bylaws may also be lodged against a teacher who fails to attend and participate in teachers' convention.

Hotels in Grande Prairie

The Mighty Peace Teachers' Convention Association has been able to block some hotel rooms for very reasonable rates and we are pleased to be able to offer these to our teacher members. Convention is always a busy time in Grande Prairie so we recommend reserving your room today! These rooms are only available until February, unless they sell out sooner.



- * Holiday Inn & Suites, Double Queen Room for \$179.99/night

Call 1-888-307-3529 and request Block Name: 2015 ATA Mighty Peace Teachers' Convention

- * Podollan Inn and Suites, King Room; Double Occupancy for \$144/night

Call 1-866-440-2080 and request Block Name: MPTC15

- * Service Plus Inn and Suites, Variety of rooms for \$119/night, Call 780-538-3900

- * Super 8, Double Queen for \$155/night, Call 780-532-8288

The 2015 Program is Only on SCHED

Last year we introduced Mighty Peace teachers to an online scheduling tool, SCHED. We had such tremendous reviews about this website that we have decided that this will be the only place that the 2015 program will be available. There will not be a spreadsheet or PDF file on our website.

We are letting teachers know about this now so that they can get on the program website, create an account, and learn about the wonderful features of this site prior to the full program being advertised.

SCHED does not register you for sessions and adding a session to your schedule does not commit you to that session. In fact, you can have multiple sessions that are in the same time slot on your schedule. It simply allows you to search through the program as a database (much more powerful than the old spreadsheet) and build a schedule of sessions you are interested in.



Build your schedule on your computer
and with the mobile web app.

Right now, teachers can visit mptca2015.sched.org to see the line-up of keynotes and some other sessions we are currently promoting. The complete program should be online February 1, 2015.

When teachers create accounts and build their tentative schedules on SCHED, the program committee can see the number of teachers who

are planning on attending those sessions. Having this information prior to Convention allows the program committee to make changes to rooms and even add sessions if possible. Another great feature of SCHED is that we can email all the teachers who have added that session to their schedule with any updates or cancellations, keeping our teachers informed.

Every year we have several amazing sessions that are over capacity which creates serious fire code violations and makes it difficult for our presenters to suitably engage teachers in their sessions. So, in addition to SCHED, we will be trying an online registration system, called Eventbrite, for those sessions that presenters have requested pre-registration for and for any sessions that we see are over capacity on the SCHED site.

Any sessions that will require pre-registration will be marked as such on SCHED, with a date indicating when teachers can register and get their tickets for the session. Some sessions will require pre-registration right away. As some sessions become popular and over capacity, we will let those teachers who have added it to their schedule know that it will require pre-registration, and then we will set a date for when pre-registration will open, so that all interested teachers have a chance to register.

Sessions in SCHED will connect you to our event registration site, Eventbrite. Once you register for session on Eventbrite it will sync with the session on SCHED, notifying you that you have a ticket for that session.

If you are not familiar with sched.org please check out the support section of their site which is dedicated to showing Convention attendees how to get the most from the features they offer tinyurl.com/schedsupport.

LEARN TO BUILD BRIDGES WITH THESE SPEAKERS

* **Dr. Kristopher Wells (@KristopherWells)**



The tri-local (Trumpeter, Northern Spirit and Grande Prairie Catholic) Diversity, Equity and Human Rights (DEHR) committee are excited to sponsor these sessions at Convention.

Kristopher Wells is an Assistant Professor and Director of Programs & Services, Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services, in the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta. His doctoral research, which focused on sex, sexual, and gender differences in K-12 education, received several national and provincial awards including a Killam Doctoral Fellowship, a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Graduate Scholarship, Andrew Stewart Memorial Graduate Prize for Research, Alberta Teachers' Association Doctoral Fellowship, and the Alberta Award for the Study of Canadian Human Rights and Multiculturalism. Dr. Wells' research and community service work has also been recognized with more than 60 awards, including an Alberta Centennial Medal.

* **Jim Parsons (not The Big Bang Theory actor)**



Jim Parsons has been a professor at the University of Alberta in Edmonton for thirty-six years. During this tenure, he has taught curriculum and instruction in secondary social studies, writing and publishing in education, and research design. Jim's current research and writing interests

are in the areas of online education, student engagement, and instructional leadership. He is a teacher educator who has researched and taught throughout North America, China, and most recently Scotland. His work is largely classroom based. He supervises graduate students in social studies and religious education and works to mentor aspiring writers and researchers.

* **David Bouchard**

www.davidbouchard.com



Keynote - *Love of Reading*

Too many educators and parents lack the love of reading. Getting adults to read is going to be a formidable task. In his book The Gift of Reading, Bouchard and Dr. Wendy Sutton outline our

respective roles and responsibilities in ascertaining that all children under our care are given the gift of reading. In his presentation the Gift of Reading, Bouchard inspires and leaves his listeners with a concrete plan and the rejuvenation needed to face illiteracy/alliteracy head on. David Bouchard will also be presenting other sessions at Convention.

* **Susan Carter**

susancartercomic.com



Keynote - *Coping with teaching (because it's not your fault!)*

This keynote takes a lighter look at education for a serious purpose. Susan shows teachers how to decide what we can fix in education, what we need to let go of, and how to tell the difference. Teachers will gain

practical ideas for the classroom while relaxing and enjoying a few laughs.

Session - *What's so funny about teaching?*

This workshop is an informative and interactive session discussing the place of humour in your classroom. Susan has "lived" humour in her own classroom and has developed actual humour lessons suitable for the grade eight (and up) level. She will discuss how humour works in the classroom and how to solve and resolve problems through humour. This will spill over to the staffroom as well.

* **Bee Calliou Schadeck**

Session - *Breaking Down Barriers: Education and Aboriginal communities*

Bee Calliou Schadeck will talk about the reality of life on a reserve or in a small Métis hamlet. Against this backdrop, session participants will explore attitudes and strategies aimed at breaking down the barriers history has created.