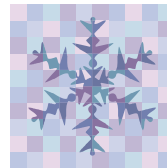




# St. Catharines Torch Club

## December 2013 Newsletter



### Next Meeting: Seasonal Social

- **When:** Thursday Dec. 12, 6 pm social hour, 7 pm dinner.
- **Where:** Best Western, St. Catharines.
- **Menu:** Rock Cornish Game Hen with all the trimmings.
- **Cost:** \$25.
- **Entertainment:** The barbershop group "Vintage Blend" will perform.
- Please purchase tickets from Merle Richards by Dec. 9
- If you require a special meal, please contact Alexandra Fic or Merle Richards.
- If you need a ride, contact David Warren at 905-934-9765.

### Vintage Blend

They are four gentlemen – Jym Cummings, Bill and Bob Laing, and Don Ursino - who like to blend their voices in harmony. They are 'veteran' barbershop singers, each joining their first quartet more than 35 years ago. But it wasn't until last year that they came together for the first time to form Vintage Blend and they have been entertaining Niagara audiences ever since.

When you see and hear this quartet you will understand why the name 'Vintage Blend' is so appropriate for the group. In February and March, the quartet will be appearing in eight performances of the popular and entertaining musical, 'The Music Man' which is being produced by the Port Colborne Operatic Society.

### A Special Request

For the December social, please bring non-perishable food items for donation to Community Care, on behalf of the Torch Club.

Thank you.

### Please Note

**Tickets for this event must be purchased in advance. If you don't already have them, please contact Merle Richards before Dec. 9 at 905-685-6984 or [merle.richards@sympatico.ca](mailto:merle.richards@sympatico.ca).**

## November 13, 2013 Meeting

**Date:** Wednesday, November 13, 2013

**Attendance numbers:** 35

**Meeting called to order** by Dave Sydor

**Toast and Grace** by Doreen Peever

### Business Notes

- Ivan Hrabowsky asked for volunteers to lead groups of June conference attendees to local sites of interest such as a winery tour, Fort George tour etc.
- Anne Elliott asked for a small roster of volunteers who would be willing to take notes on a rotational basis for our meetings. If a small group is established, it should mean only doing one meeting a year. The minutes are to be sent to Roy Blake for inclusion in the Newsletter. A Template for the minutes is provided.

**Speaker:** The Other Literacies by Dr. Joe Engemann

**Introduction of Speaker** by Susan Drake

**Summary of Presentation:** The Other Literacies

In his talk, Joe made a passionate case for expanding the focus of instruction in schools to include the "other literacies". While he acknowledged that all literacies are important, some of the essential literacies such as History, Geography and Science (as well as the Arts) are being neglected in favour of time spent on basic literacy and numeracy instruction. In part, this situation may be the result of the accountability that

teachers feel for standardized testing that occurs in Ontario at grades 3, 6, and 9 for literacy and numeracy and the grade 10 literacy test which must be passed in order to graduate from high school. As a former Science specialist, he specifically focused on the importance of Science in schools pointing out that Science provides the tools necessary for making informed decisions about health, for understanding the environment and for deciding which scientific topics are worthy of funding. Furthermore, Science enables us to understand ourselves and our capacity to improve the human condition. Students need to develop a habit of open-mindedness and the ability to see possibilities in Big Ideas (i.e. Atomic Theory).

The talk provoked discussion by raising questions about the need for subject specialists above grade 6, whether funding for research in literacy and numeracy is limiting funding and materials available in schools related to the other literacies, and whether teacher accountability related to literacy and numeracy is undermining attention to the outcomes in other subject areas. He suggested that Awareness, Advocacy and Accountability should be applied equally to all subject areas.

**Thanks to Speaker** by Al Wheeler

**Next Meeting:** Christmas Social Thursday December 12, 2013.

**Minutes:** Anne Elliott