

ESPecially Yours

Volume 11, Issue 4

March / April 2011

From your president

"To everything, there is a season..."

The month of April 2011 marks my 58th month in elected office as president of our Bargaining Unit. These months translate to approximately 11,000 hours that have been spent on:

- learning at workshops;
- sharing what I have learned with the ESP Executive;
- answering members' telephone enquiries;
- responding to requests for assistance;
- advising members on problem solving;
- developing proposals for our Executive to approve;
- submitting applications to Provincial Office for grant funding;
- consulting with District colleagues;
- negotiating resolutions to grievances;
- collective bargaining;
- attending OCDSB Board, Committee and Budget meetings;
- and the list goes on!

It has been an honour and privilege to have served you, initially, in the capacity as Chief Negotiator and now, as President. I am fortunate to have the opportunity to work with a diverse group

of talented and dedicated Executive members, who are committed to protecting and enhancing public education in Ontario as well as improving the working conditions of ESP members at the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board and the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority. We hold candid discussions and meaningful exchanges as we work on action plans, policies and procedures, amendments to our Constitutions and By-laws. There have been times when the weight of negotiations gets heavy on everyone's shoulders; however, the anticipation, apprehension, excitement often lead to a feeling of satisfaction and achievement.

Each organization needs renewal for growth. I will be stepping down from my position at the end of August and wrapping up my

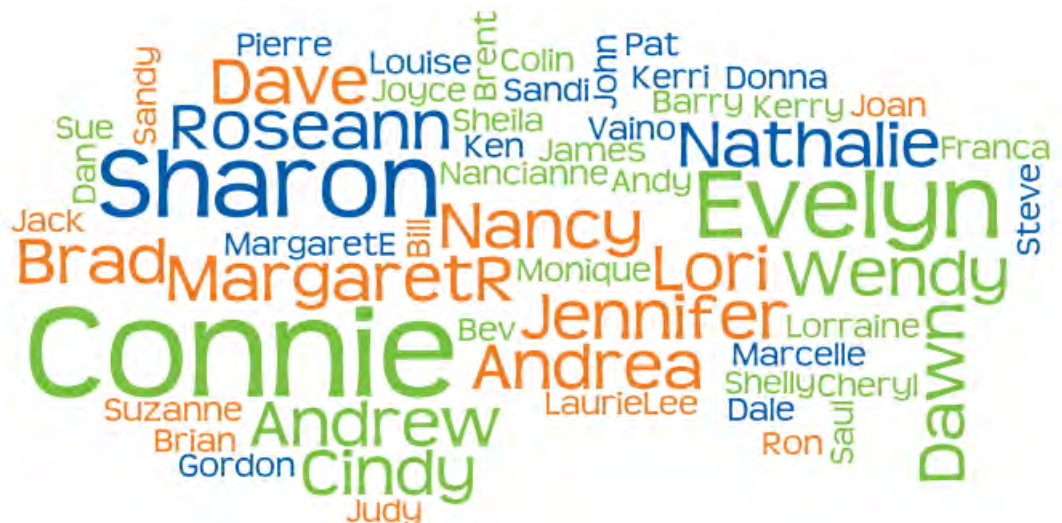
years in public education at the end of September this year. On reflection, I am proud to report that:

- the ESP Bargaining Unit is in good financial health;
- we have developed policies and procedures;
- the Executive team has identified achievable goals with sound implementation plans; and
- our transactions are transparent and accountable.

The ESP members that I know care deeply about our bargaining unit. I urge you to take the next step: show you care and care enough to act. Our Annual General Meeting is just around the corner. Nominate someone or put your name forward for one of the vacancies. Learn as a team, grow as a team and I challenge you "to be the change that you want to see in the world". Leave an indelible mark on our history. Make ESP a stronger and better bargaining unit!

Bonnie

THANKS IN PARTICULAR TO ...



PUBLICATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS
OSSTF DISTRICT 25, 67 JAMIE AVENUE, OTTAWA, ONTARIO K2E 7Y6
PHONE: 613-729-7211 FAX: 613-729-8565 www.osstf25.on.ca

From Sheila, your chief negotiator/member services officer

It has been a wonderful journey.....

And, it is with mixed emotions that I share my news that I will be retiring from the OCDSB, and from my role as ESP's Chief Negotiator & Member Services Officer, effective June 30th.

I cannot begin to list the rewards and experiences that have come my way and I must thank each and every one of you for that, for the friendships we have formed, and the hurdles we have overcome in the last four and a half years. I have enjoyed working collegially with OCDSB management to problem-solve with the ultimate goal to determine best practices that benefit everyone.

I use this venue to share my good news for several reasons. Someone needs to step up as ESP's Chief Negotiator. Why not consider it? Being a release officer involves a lot of effort, but resources and training opportunities are endless. I consider the rewards to have been immeasurable and I highly

recommend it.

Our AGM is fast approaching and you will have recently received a Beam with nomination forms for positions on the ESP Executive. Have you considered joining this amazing team? If so, now would be the time to put your name forward as an Executive Officer, or as Chief Negotiator/Member Services Officer. Contact me, or any member of the current Executive, if you have questions.

So now, beginning July 1st, I am off to pursue other interests. I look forward to spending more time with my two young grandchildren (with another on the way) and I fully expect that I will find this next stage of my life equally as gratifying as my 26-year tenure as an Elementary School Office Administrator and Chief Negotiator/Member Services Officer.

Take care. Thank you. I hope to see as many of you as possible at the upcoming AGM!

REMINDER

All employees must complete an ANNUAL OFFENCE DECLARATION as of June 3, 2011.

Go to "Employee Inquiry" at <https://webapps.ocdsb.ca/employee/> (where you currently access your paystub information). If you do not know your password, send a BEAM message to Hotline - Employee Inquiry Password Reset; please include your full name and EIN. Your password will be reset within 24 hours via an email notification. Direct any questions to the Offence Declaration Assistance line at 613 596-8211, Extension 8545.

ESP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MAY 25, 2011

Come one, come all!

Confederation Education Centre has been booked. The following positions are up for election this year:

- Chief Negotiator/Member Services Officer (two-year term)
- Executive Officer/Professional Development (two-year term)
- Executive Officers (5 positions, for a one year term)

The position of President is not up for election this year, therefore the Bargaining Unit Executive will be making an appointment to fill the vacancy.

After the business portion of the meeting (passing our budget, elections) we will be honouring our retirees, including Bonnie and Sheila. There will be a hot buffet dinner for attendees. Watch for further information on BEAM.



Roseanne Myers, Linda Loughlin, Gilles Martin, Debbie Dezenosky, Sheila Lanthier, Pat Lam

SPENDING TIME WITH BONNIE AND SHEILA

These ESP members took advantage of an opportunity to spend an afternoon at the District Office to get a better appreciation of the support that our time release officers provide to members of the bargaining unit. They also had the chance to learn more about District 25 and OSSTF Provincial Office.

MEET YOUR ESP EXECUTIVE - Laurie Lee Czempiel

WORK THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT ME

I have been with the board 28 years. Before that I worked at Agriculture Canada, Nepean Police Force, Ron Engineering, and my ex-husband's towing business.

I started working for the Board just before my first child was three months old. Except for a few breaks in service, I have been here ever since.

WHAT DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL ARE YOU IN NOW?

The department I work in now is Facilities, Operations Division. This is the division that involves the Supervisor of Operations, who I work for, Area and Evening Supervisors and the custodial staff. This is a very interesting and high volume job which I enjoy.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE ITEM ON YOUR DESK?

The favourite items on my desk are the pictures of my family and especially my grandson, Koby, who I look at and smile when I am having one of those days. I also have a flock of colourful fluffy flamingos that surround my desk and make me feel silly.

ON BREAKS I LIKE TO..... go outside of the office building for a breath of fresh air. A healthy break of fresh air re-energizes me and makes me more productive.

ESP THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT ME

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN ON THE EXECUTIVE?

I am entering my ninth month with the ESP executive.

MOST SATISFYING ESP MOMENT?



Working on the PD Day committee and being the person finding and organizing the vendors for this year.

THERE IS MORE TO ME THAN WORK OR ESP

MY NEIGHBOURHOOD IS ... Wyldewood in Stittsville off Main Street. I grew up in Stittsville, left for 21 years and returned after my father died and my mom moved back to Stittsville.

I am living in my dream home, a Holitzner home I always loved and in a development that is in the field that I'd look at through the school fence at the old Stittsville P.S. and think how it would be a great place to build a house. So, here I am, living my dream!!!!

WHAT "DRIVE TO WORK" RADIO STATION DO YOU LISTEN TO?

During my two minute drive to work, I listen to Y101. "Love them cowboys!!!!"

WHAT IS THE LAST BOOK YOU READ OR MOVIE YOU SAW?

The last book I read is "The White Queen" by Philippa Gregory. I was introduced to this author this fall and so far I am on a third book by

her and that is something amazing for me as I am not a big reader. The author interests me with her historical story telling of the medieval times with the Royals.

The last movie I watched was "Diary of a Wimpy Kid". My husband, Dan, and I took our grandson, Koby, to it and laughed our heads off at it. Now, I have to watch the first one. Great movie!

ARE YOU A PET OWNER?

Yes! I love animals. We own two dogs. My dog is a black Chow Chow named Coal who just turned 12 and is very quiet and cuddly. My husband's dog is a chocolate Siberian Husky named Kodiak who is a nut case but lovable.

I did own two Blue Seal Point Siamese cats; the male was Whiskey and female was Misty. Both have passed away but I want to own another cat soon.

IF YOU WERE ASKED TO NAME A SCHOOL AFTER SOMEONE WHO WOULD IT BE?

I would name a school after Diana, Princess of Wales. Who better to name a school after? She changed the rules to be with her own children and adored all children. She was a very caring and loved person who is still remembered fondly. There should be a huge picture in the front foyer of her with her big blue eyes and gentle smile looking down on all who enter the school making them feel welcomed.

IF YOU COULD BE IN ANY PROFESSION, WHERE WOULD YOU BE?

A Geography teacher.

SUPPORT STAFF APPRECIATION DAY - MAY 4, 2011

From Teachers

"Today we celebrate Support Staff Appreciation Day as part of Education Week. It is important that we acknowledge the "Boundless Opportunities" that are provided through Public Education and in particular the contribution made by the support staff members in our schools. Take a moment and thank your colleagues, friends, and co-workers at your school. It is truly a team effort required to make Ontario Secondary Schools Students among the best in the world. Be proud to be an Education worker - be proud to be a member of OSSTF / FEESO!"

*Dan Maxwell, President
Teachers' Bargaining Unit
OSSTF District 25*



over a decade ago by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation to recognize the invaluable contribution that support staff like secretaries, custodians, technicians and educational assistants make in helping our students achieve their potential. My own daughter Amanda is an educational assistant in the developmental services classroom at Oakridge Secondary School in London. It is essential to have the collaboration of everyone in the education community to build a better future for our children. This is demonstrated every day by the hard work and dedication of support staff working alongside our educators in schools to help foster a positive and supportive learning environment for students. Our schools are much more than buildings, and we understand that it takes a collaborative approach, including the integral role of support staff, for students to succeed and learn. Today we stand with the Ontario Secondary School

Teachers' Federation and the broader education community to recognize support staff appreciation across Ontario. Happy Support Staff Appreciation Day, Amanda."

Maria Van Bommel, MPP for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, made the following statement in the Ontario Legislature on May 4, 2011

From Provincial Office

"It is fitting that we recognize that the whole school or university is a classroom and that it takes the efforts of many individuals to ensure that students' needs are met within our educational system. We ask that all Ontarians, especially students and parents, help us celebrate Support Staff Appreciation Day by expressing their gratitude to educational support staff for the roles they play in inspiring confidence in our students and helping them build their futures."

Ken Coran, President of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO)

From the Legislature

"I rise in the House today to commemorate Support Staff Appreciation Day as part of Education Week. Support Staff Appreciation Day was introduced

The Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly (AMPA) took place in Toronto this March and your ESP Executive was there. There was plenty of excitement surrounding the election of a new provincial executive. Three candidates from District 25 were running and two of them achieved their goals.



From L to R: Bonnie Cheung, Margaret Rule, Margaret Elson, Nancy Akehurst, Judy Soifer, Laurie Lee Czempiel, Roseann Myers

Cindy Dubue, the president of the EA Bargaining Unit, was elected to the position of Executive Officer. Dan Maxwell, the president of the Teachers Bargaining Unit, was re-elected as an Ontario Teachers Federation (OTF) governor. Sue Rab, a current OSSTF Executive Officer, ran a good, but ultimately unsuccessful, campaign for Vice-President.

District 25 was also well represented when the provincial awards were handed out. Congratulations to Cheryl Cavell, Chief Negotiator of the EA Bargaining Unit, who came home with the Status of Women Award and to Dan Maxwell, this year's recipient of the Larry French award for outstanding leadership in political action.

KIDS HELP PHONE

When the ESP Bargaining Unit was thinking about a charitable cause to support, Kids Help Phone was a natural fit. After all, they provide support to children every day - and so do we.

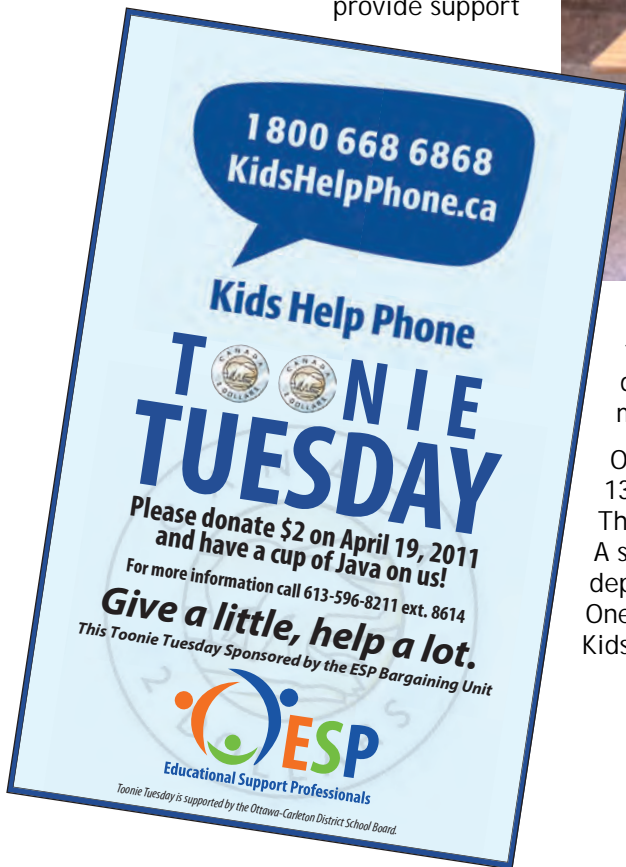
Kids Help Phone is Canada's only toll-free, 24-hour, bilingual and anonymous phone counselling, web counselling and referral service for children and youth. Every day, professional counsellors provide support



Nancy Akehurst and Joan Fulcher on duty at 133 Greenbank

to young people across the country. Kids Help Phone relies on donations to run their services, donations raised with the help of many volunteers.

On April 19 we held our first Toonie Tuesday at administration sites at 133 Greenbank, Stittsville Depot and Confederation Education Centre. Thanks to the generosity of staff at these locations we raised \$844.45. A special mention goes to Christine Marleau. As part of the HR department, Christine participated in the 100 Days Fitness Challenge. One of three winners, she graciously agreed to donate her winnings to Kids Help Phone.



We would like to thank Mitchell Scott, Food Services Manager, Chartwells Dining Services at 133 Greenbank Rd for his sponsorship and assistance in providing free coffee for all who donated at 133 Greenbank. We are also indebted to Paul Jaworski, Graphic Designer, for the great poster. Thanks again to all staff who donated to our fundraiser for Kids Help Phone. We'll be back next year!

Another way to help - some District 25 walkers (and riders!), including ESpecially Yours Editor Margaret Elson, pictured at the Walk for Kids Help Phone held May 1 in Ottawa and other cities around Ontario. Nine other districts participated, with double the number of participants compared to last year.



DAY OF PINK

by Kelly Granum
D25 Status of
Women/Human Rights
Committee

OSSTF District 25 Status of Women and Human Rights Committee would like to make all members aware of the significance of the Day of Pink.

Students in a high school in Nova Scotia started the Day of Pink. They witnessed harassment and discrimination of a colleague because he wore a pink shirt. In response, many others wore pink shirts to show their support for diversity, but also as a signal that bullying, homophobia, and discrimination would not be tolerated.

Internationally, nationally,

and locally, discrimination continues to be a major source of conflict. Racism, sexism, homophobia, and anti-Semitism, are just a few of the negative attitudes that individuals may encounter daily. These social problems affect each of us personally, how we interact and communicate with each other. They create barriers and misunderstandings, and may lead to harassment/bullying and even hate or violence.

The Day of Pink encourages us to celebrate diversity, by being open-minded, understanding of differences, and learning to be respectful of each other.



DAY OF MOURNING

On Thursday, April 28, flags at public buildings were lowered to half-mast marking the National Day of Mourning. More than twenty years ago, the Canadian Labour Congress declared April 28 a National Day of Mourning for workers who have been killed, or

suffered injury and disease as a result of their work. Every year since, unions, labour councils, families and community partners gather by the thousands to 'mourn for the dead'. What began through the efforts of Canada's labour movement is now observed in more than 80 countries.

This year, more than 100 people gathered in Vincent Massey Park, at the monument to the nine workers killed when the Heron Road Bridge collapsed while under construction in 1966. Jeff Adams PSSU member from OSSTF District 25, chaired the commemorative ceremony. 1,038 Canada flags, representing the number of workers who were injured or lost their lives on the job last year, fluttered in the wind, lining the pathway from the Vincent Massey Park parking lot to the Workers' Monument.

After speeches and tributes made by the Deputy Mayor of Ottawa and local labour movement leaders Sean McKenny, John Telford and Paul Moist, worker representatives and local politicians took turns to lay a rose in front of the Workers' Monument to the accompaniment of bagpipe music. OSSTF District 25 was represented by Cheryl Cavell, Bonnie Cheung, Cindy Dubue, Barry Kelley and Dan Maxwell. It was a solemn and dignified ceremony. This was followed by a charity barbeque in the park.

As workers, we should be grateful to those who blazed the trail before us. We should continue to make workplace safety a priority by:

- finding out who is the health and safety representative at our work site;
- checking out the health and safety bulletin board in the work place;
- becoming aware of the latest amendments to government acts and regulations and ensuring that we comply;
- completing a workplace injury report if we sustain an injury in the workplace.



ESP members Nancy Akehurst, Sandy Ringrose and Jane Bowes get their pink on!



Congratulations to ESP members Patricia Clark, Office Administrator at Merivale High School, and Sharlene Hunter, Communications Coordinator at 133 Greenbank. They are deserving recipients of a 2011 Director's Citation Award.

Compassion Fatigue Solutions & Professional Development

by Jennifer Eastman

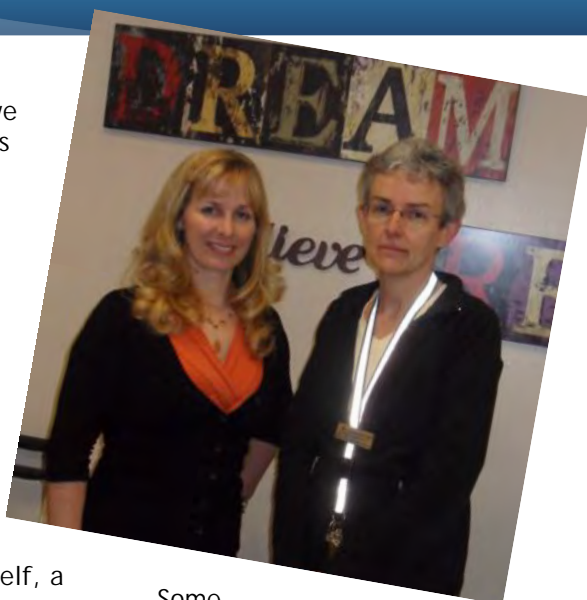
OVERLOADED? As soon as we heard the title of this year's OSSTF symposium, my coworker, Heather McGregor, and I gave each other a knowing look and smile. "Yes, sign us up please!" This opportunity was not only very timely, as we approach the end of our school year, but also conveniently located in Ottawa.

On April 7th Heather and I made our way downtown for our adventure. For myself, a rural girl, getting there by bus was enlightening. Contrary to what the students tell us when they are late, we found that city busses run right on time!

We settled in with a wonderful breakfast before meeting the presenter, Françoise Mathieu. A certified mental health counsellor and compassion fatigue specialist, Françoise shared her knowledge and experience with our group. By defining vicarious trauma, anxiety and depression and exploring the consequences of chronic stress, we gained an understanding of how our "helping profession" can affect our health and home life.

What is "Compassion Fatigue"? We were shown how to identify our own warning signs and develop ideas to help regain emotional and physical balance. By learning to recognize stress symptoms, we can now understand the behaviour and actions of those around us, and also support them.

Are you a "human-doing" or a "human-being"? Exercises included a self-inventory to assess our overall workload, professional and personal, to help determine where change is possible. We were led in a session of "mindful- meditation".



Some attendees admitted to being skeptical of this practice, but were pleasantly surprised.

Have you ever been "slimed" or participated in "sliming"? Sometimes we just don't need to be on either end of dirty details or negativity. By developing a deep awareness of our own needs, thereby providing self care and effectively communicating with others, we can improve balance and reduce stress in our lives. Pledge to keep your environment "Slime-Free"!

Red Alert, Red Alert! Are you entering the red zone? Our new self-awareness helps us diagnose when we are in need of some self-care. Knowing our limits and eating healthy are key. Creating your own personal haven and developing rituals that enhance your wellbeing are essential. Our individual take home strategies came from within, and Françoise directed us in discovering them. No matter where you are on your journey, we highly recommend welcoming opportunities to re-evaluate yourself and pause from your routine. Participating with a coworker offered valuable time to

network and share strategies, without interruption. Conferencing helps to renew faith in your choice of occupation and you will hopefully return to the workplace refreshed. Only you can make the decision and commitment to change that will lead to a more rewarding life.

The next time you see an opportunity for growth offered, don't think "I've heard it all before". Embrace a day where you don't have to pack a lunch, answer phones or get slimed. Sometimes a little guidance and inspiration will set you on a path to better health. We guarantee you'll be in the green zone!

by Heather McKinnon

Françoise Mathieu did not offer any magical cures, quick fixes or money spending initiatives to buy the latest gimmick to solve our problems. Simply, to learn when the trigger point of stress is arriving in our lives, and what tactics we personally need to apply to avoid overload before it happens. For example one person may need to do extreme sports, someone else may need to meditate, whatever you can do to find a release from the stress while learning to cope. She encouraged a healthy diet as well as regular exercise. Although obvious as it might be to take care of yourself physically, it seems this is one of the first things we will ignore.

The organizers of the event score ten out of ten - very organized. The day was a huge success with lots of food and beverages, in a comfortable room. Thank you so much for the opportunity to attend - the symposium was a success for me!

The Editor of *ESpecially Yours* is Margaret Elson. Comments, suggestions and contributions may be sent to her by BEAM anytime. Next issue - May/June 2011

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE ...

Life - might as well laugh about it, better than crying ...



Wise words from Jennifer Eastman!



Disclaimer - Although care has been taken in preparing the information contained in this publication, accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The opinions and views expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of OSSTF, or District 25.

KEEPING YOUR MIND ACTIVE - ONE ANAGRAM AT A TIME!
(with apologies to all mothers-in-law)

ASTRONOMER:

When you rearrange the letters:
MOON STARER

DESPERATION:

When you rearrange the letters:
A ROPE ENDS IT

THE EYES:

When you rearrange the letters:
THEY SEE

THE MORSE CODE:

When you rearrange the letters:
HERE COME DOTS

DORMITORY:

When you rearrange the letters:
DIRTY ROOM

SLOT MACHINES:

When you rearrange the letters:
CASH LOST IN ME

ANIMOSITY:

When you rearrange the letters:
IS NO AMITY

ELECTION RESULTS:

When you rearrange the letters:
LIES - LET'S RECOUNT

SNOOZE ALARMS:

When you rearrange the letters:
ALAS! NO MORE Z'S

A DECIMAL POINT:

When you rearrange the letters:
I'M A DOT IN PLACE

THE EARTHQUAKES:

When you rearrange the letters:
THAT QUEER SHAKE

ELEVEN PLUS TWO:

When you rearrange the letters:
TWELVE PLUS ONE

AND FOR THE GRAND FINALE:

MOTHER-IN-LAW:

When you rearrange the letters:
WOMAN HITLER