



Spring 2021 Newsletter

THEA publishes four newsletters per membership year in Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer. Items suitable for publication may be submitted for the summer issue by July 16.

President's Message

Spring has sprung! I for one am grateful for the change of pace, signs of new life and the vibrancy the change in the weather brings.

I am crossing my fingers and trying to not get too ahead of myself that there is the potential for outdoor gatherings in the near future. Until then we hope that you continue to connect with us virtually. The board has been working hard to continue to engage you and this month we welcome fellow member Natasha Gleeson, who will speak about her work at the Urban Indigenous Education Centre with the TDSB. You are still able to register for the event, should you wish to join.

Next month we will be gathering for our Annual General Meeting. Once again it will be conducted online, and you will be receiving your AGM package in the coming week. We look forward to discussing our plans for the future of THEA including continuing to define our mission and vision and working to find ways to better serve you and potential new members. Again, I would like to reach out to you, the membership, and thank you for your continued interest and support of THEA. If anyone would be interested in helping to shape or guide the association, we are still looking to fill spots on the board. Feel free to reach out if you have any questions about what that might entail.

I would like to highlight initiatives THEA is supporting, including OHEA's work promoting **Bill 216 – Food literacy for Students Act, 2020** (more details to follow in the newsletter). In the words of OHEA "OHEA has applied and hopes to be selected to speak to Bill 216. If Bill 216 passes, it will change the Education Act and make Food Literacy part of the curriculum in every Grade from K-12." Thank you to all members who have taken interest and have been in communication with their MPPs, let's all support and continue the momentum around Bill 216.

Last but not least, I would also like to congratulate one of our distinguished members, Evelyn Hullah who is this year's recipient of the Marjorie Thompson Flint Award. She has had a long and celebrated career in Home Economics, and has been a strong supporter of THEA. Congratulations Evelyn!

Stay safe, and I hope to see you at our next event and our AGM.

Sincerely,
Kamaria

Human Library

Welcome THEA members! The human library is a place where members can introduce themselves and share their experiences and interests. Our hope is to foster communication and conversations between members to encourage connection in our association throughout the pandemic and beyond. If you would like to be featured in the next newsletter please submit a picture and bio by July 16.

Natasha Gleeson [BA (Dalhouse, '91), BSW (Ryerson, '98), BEd, MEd (York, 2014, 2017), OCT] is Inuk, with Inuit ancestry from Nunatsiavut (Labrador). Natasha was born in Sydney, Cape Breton, and lived in Edmonton while growing up in the mid 70's and 80's. She returned to Nova Scotia finishing high school in her birth province when her mother was terminally ill, and then began her post secondary education at Dalhousie University. Natasha currently resides in Toronto where she has experienced over 25 years in the Social Work field, within the shelter system as well as child welfare.



Today, Natasha is a teacher, working with the Toronto District School Board's Urban Indigenous Education Centre, where she has contributed to Indigenous Education through community connection, classroom instruction, student success initiatives, as well as curriculum and resource development.

Natasha is an Ontario Certified teacher with qualifications in History, Family Studies and Special Education. Natasha is mother to three children; Michael (20), Stella (16) and Isaac (12).

Call for member Support: Bill 216 – Food Literacy for Students Act, 2020

Bill 216 – Food literacy for Students Act, 2020 has passed its Second Reading and awaits review by the Standing Committee in the Ontario Legislative Assembly. If Bill 216 passes, it will change the Education Act and make Food Literacy part of the curriculum in every Grade from K-12.

In order for Bill 216 to pass a 3rd and Final Reading, it requires MPP's to vote approval. Hence, we need your help as THEA members, to write to your local MPP in support of Bill 216. Find your MPP's email address (<https://www.ola.org/en/get-involved/contact-mpp>), and read Bill 216 and OHEA's Official Response Letter to Bill 216 online (<https://www.ohea.on.ca/food-literacy.html>).

Items of Interest

MAHE Home & Family Website Launch

The Manitoba Association of Home Economists recently launched a new website (<https://homefamily.net/>), with information to help families live better. You can view their promotional video here (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wHdSBnyg24&t=9s>). Resources include information on nutrition, food preparation and cooking, food preservation, food shopping and household budgeting. Learn how to access, prepare and preserve local foods.

February 18, 2021 Meeting Report - Keep On Movin'

We got moving with Tamara Edwards, CPT for a virtual exercise class with members and learned how to stay physically active from home during the pandemic. Thanks to Tamara for the resources, some great tips, and excellent exercises!

March 4, 2021 Meeting Report - Age Friendly Communities

We celebrated IFHE World Home Economics Day 2021 and World Health Organization Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020-2030 at our last virtual meeting with Heather Thompson, Director of Age-Friendly Initiatives with Community Development Halton. The event was attended by over 25 individuals who learned from Heather's wealth of experience on building and preservice age friendly cities, and the domains that comprise it. As our population continues to age and Canada is approaching what some call a silver tsunami, Heather explained the challenges of creating communities where we can age and thrive.

In her presentation she highlighted housing and transportation as two barriers to age friendly communities and shared examples of communities in the province who have succeeded at promoting this. She also addressed how the solutions can't be addressed in a silo, and how other generations can be part of the solution to promoting and maintaining age friendly communities.

Family Life Lessons During the Pandemic

Barbara Padolina talks to Karen Dee and Jess Wiles from THEA about her experience in managing families and the home during the pandemic. On most days, the kitchen is the likeliest place in which you will find **Barbara**. With a professional background as a caterer, she established The Home Cook (<https://www.thehomecook.ca/>), a business involved in culinary instruction based on a philosophy of the fundamental importance of the home and family in each person's life and the significance home cooking has in

caring for and loving our family. A home cook herself, Barbara's business name refers to the "style" of cooking which exists in the home.

In all her culinary classes and demonstrations, there is a strong emphasis on the importance of one's family - a friendly reminder of why it is good for them to cook well and be mindful of this as an act of love to those for whom they cook. Some of her most favourite things to do include engaging with the moms and girls in her Toronto-based culinary girls club and preparing meals for hungry people (most of whom she gave birth to). Barbara's culinary adventures continue in her home kitchen in Toronto as Michael's wife and mom of their 12 children.

Q: What changes or impact has the lockdown had on your schedule or routine during the pandemic?

A: The biggest change over the past year has been having more time with family. This has been most challenging for our oldest kids since they are very used to getting out of the house, going to work, going to school, or hanging out with their friends. We had to be very creative with the ways that we keep in touch with our friends. Longer hellos and lingering goodbyes - always physically distanced - but we are trying to squeeze as much as we can out of those short moments.

Another impact of the lockdown on our family is having to be aware of what others have going on and respecting each others space. Not everyone wants to hear my son singing at the top of his lungs at 7am! We are so blessed to be able to have multiple people in our family, so if someone is needing some time on their own for a meeting or a class they can just advise other family members and the others pitch in to help. Every family and home is different, so you have to find ways to be able to get along with each other.

Q: What is the impact of the pandemic on human touch and interaction, and what can we do to replicate this?

A: I think there's a lot to learn from this whole situation. It's highlighted the presence of those closest to us because, guess what, you're spending 24/7 with them. And it's highlighted the absence of those we love since we can't be with them physically. It's a lesson in fine-tuning and understanding our own communication because nobody's perfect.

Human touch is irreplaceable, but I think there are different ways that we can be present with those who are not in our lives physically right now. We are blessed to be living in a time of history where technology allows us to communicate with each other so well with text messages and email. I also think there is a real beauty to receiving a letter on paper. Human touch is irreplaceable, but knowing that someone touched that paper and took the time to write out a letter is very special. I also love to bake, so I'll share food with my neighbour or send some to a friend. This is another way to show love and effort and communicate a sign of affection. I think we want to grab as many moments and opportunities to let others know we thinking of them.

Q: Is there a COVID lesson that has benefited your family in a positive way?

A: Listen more. I find because we're in close quarters for longer periods of time we actually have to listen more to each other and figure out a way to work things out since there is no where else to go.

Be patient. Ask questions before you jump to conclusions. Everybody has a story, so you have to try to understand their perspective and consider why for their actions. My husband comes home from work as a courier delivery driver and is very physically tired and needs time to merge with the rest of the family. One way that the kids do that is they'll ask him how many stops he made today. He'll come up with a range and they have to guess. My kids are very competitive and they love it!

The pandemic has also helped me to get out of my comfort zone. I teach cooking lessons and it's been wonderful to try to just be more creative and figure out other ways to keep people engaged virtually and make people laugh.

Q: What tips do you have to keep everyone organized and getting along that you can share with other families?

A: I love that question because I'm still learning too. So far what's worked for me is to be present in the moment and to focus on who we're with. Another tip is to learn to welcome interruptions. A parent's life is basically one that is interrupted all the time by kids, your spouse, friends, and in this case the pandemic is a major interruption to our normal routines as families. Try to change your perspective and see those interruptions as an opportunity to be able to help someone you care about.

My last tip is to lower expectations, and what I mean by that is to choose people over perfection. My house is not HGTV worthy, but it's okay. My kids love to play and make tents in the living room and it's mind-boggling when you see the mess that they can make, but also the joy that comes from being able to play with each other.

Q: Any final thoughts to share on your experience in managing families and the home?

A: I have such great admiration and respect for those who are professionals in the field of hospitality and home economics because in this pandemic it's been those little moments of human care and attention that make people feel loved.

Managing a family is like having a degree in human resource management. As a Mom I am a chauffeur, a logistics manager, an event planner, a cook. Yes, cooking is a survival skill, but these skills allow us to love people around us. That's why these are lessons in home economics that are so important for us to impart to the younger generation. We're so focused sometimes on the hard skills and we forget that the soft skills are what carry us through the hardest times.

Thank you, Barbara, for taking the time to share your wisdom and experience with us!

Upcoming Events

Annual General Meeting - Toronto Home Economics Association

Thursday, May 27th, 2021 7:15 - 9:00 PM EST

Registration begins at 7:00 pm

Join fellow THEA members online via ZOOM

Login/ Phone details will follow via email a week before the meeting

RSVP in order to receive access to our meeting by:

email to info.thea@yahoo.ca or

leave a message at 416-461-5255 by May 24th

We will email you the directions or call you back with how to join the meeting via computer or by phone.

PROXIES WILL BE ACCEPTED (please complete and return the form in the AGM package)

Indigenizing Home Economics

Wednesday, April 28, 2021 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM EST

Join the talk to discover what centering Indigenous perspectives in home economics and family studies will look like in our education system. Hosted by one of our members Natasha Gleeson, who will share her personal experience and provide helpful resources for home economists, educators, and students.

RSVP: info.thea@yahoo.ca

or Call Kamaria 416-461-5255