



Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association Summer Newsletter

www.edmontonrta.org

June 2013



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THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:
Vi Oka,
780-459-8013

Vice-President:
Sherry Robbins,
780-437-0566

Treasurer:
Mike Mort,
780-761-5027

Membership Co-ordinator:
Cliff Otto,
780-476-9264

SUMMER LUNCHEON

and

Annual General Meeting

Chateau Louis 11727 Kingsway Avenue

Date: June 5, 2013

Lunch: 11:45 a.m.

Menu: Roast beef buffet

Cost: \$20 per person (includes GST and gratuity)

Speaker: Donna Durand—Executive Director, Alberta Council on Aging

Topic: “Senior-Friendly Neighbourhoods”

Door Prize: Everyone is eligible for a door prize.

PLEASE NOTE

A member of the Telephone Committee will contact you prior to May 29th in order to provide an accurate count for our caterer.

ERTA has to pay for lunches that have been booked even if the individuals do not attend.

Donations to the Food Bank are appreciated.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Summer—that glorious time of year when the sun shines brilliantly, the turquoise-blue sky stretches endlessly, lush gardens enchant the senses and warm, sandy beaches beckon—will soon be upon us.

For teachers, summer has always been that time of year when they went into seclusion to recuperate. They gardened, they golfed, they swam, they hiked, they camped, they travelled, they read, and they slept and they slept and they slept—all to become re-energized and ready to launch a new school year.

In retirement, those summer months have become a little longer, the days a little calmer, the tempo a little slower and the colours a little brighter while time spent with family is more cherished and special memories are more precious.

Once again, at this time of year we reach out to our newly retired colleagues. At this juncture in life's journey new retirees have the knowledge, the skills and the attitudes to successfully navigate the adventures and challenges ahead. As they embark on this new stage in their lives, they are encouraged to seize the opportunity to further their learning, explore new possibilities and realize new dreams.

Retirement for teachers has changed over the past fifty years. The early pioneers of the Alberta Retired Teachers' Association (ARTA) envisioned a vibrant organization that offered social activities for its members, addressed the health and welfare concerns of all teachers throughout this province regardless of where they lived and spoke with one voice. The association has evolved into a dynamic organization that fosters engaged and informed members who effectively advocate for its membership and other retirees of similar interests and concerns.

The provincial association has spent the past few months reflecting on its accomplishments and researching the specific needs of the stakeholders. Fresh planning, new thinking and focused goals will propel the association into the next fifty years.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Summer Luncheon & AGM	June 5, 2013
St. Albert Botanic Park Tour	June 20, 2013
Board of Directors Meeting	August 14, 2013
50 th Anniversary Gala Luncheon	September 18, 2013
Second Wind Conference	September 25, 2013

SUMMARY OF BOARD MEETING

The following proposals were confirmed and plans shared at the board meeting of the Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association (ERTA) on May 1, 2013, at the Central Lions Senior Citizens Recreation Centre:

- The suggestion to purchase an updated mid-priced laptop computer with mid-range capacity and appropriate Microsoft Office Suite software was approved.
- A tour of the St. Albert Botanic Park has been arranged for Thursday, June 20 (see St. Albert Botanic Park Tour).
- The keynote speaker and several session presenters have been confirmed for the Second Wind Conference planned for Wednesday, September 25 (see Second Wind Conference 2013).
- Bernie Lemay and Maurine Maslen will be granted honorary life memberships for exceptional service to the association at the fall luncheon.
- Arrangements for the branch celebration of ARTA's 50th anniversary have been finalized (see 50th Anniversary Celebration).

NOMINEES TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The election of a new Board of Directors, as mandated by the bylaws, will occur at the Annual General Meeting held in conjunction with the summer luncheon on June 5, 2013.

Although a slate of nominees will be provided at the meeting, nominations may also be made from the floor. If you intend to nominate a current ERTA member for a board position, please ensure that the individual is present at the meeting or ask them to provide you with a signed note indicating their willingness to allow their name to stand for election.

New board members with imaginative ideas create a new vision that revitalizes an organization.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Do you recall those days every June when you were back in the classroom? They were the days when both teachers and students exerted that extra effort to complete the work before school ended for the summer. Everyone was looking forward to the promise of freedom from a rigorous schedule that the arrival of summer brings and making plans for how to best maximize that freedom.

The enticement of a carefree summer beckons again this June. For many of our colleagues, however, this June will be the last one in the classroom. This is the year that they will retire.

All new retirees are eligible for a one-year complementary ERTA membership in the year immediately following retirement. However, this membership can only be attained if we at ERTA are informed about their retirement. If you know of any new retirees that have hung up the teaching mantle during this academic year or will be moving into retirement at the end of June, please help us to grant them their complementary membership by forwarding their names and some contact information to cliffcon@telus.net, or phoning 780-476-9264. With your help, we will be able to invite these new retirees into our midst and thereby enable to them enjoy the benefits of being part of our organization.

Do not forget to renew your own membership if it is expiring at the end of June. ERTA needs you. Check your membership card now.

Life memberships are awarded to current members who reach ninety years of age. Two ERTA members have reached, or are about to reach, this milestone in their lives.

William Pura, the oldest of five children, was born on August 26, 1923, to a pioneer farm family that lived north of Thorhild. He attended Grades One to Nine at Mapova School located almost five kilometres away. The name 'Mapova' was composed of the first letters of the surnames of the pioneer families living in the district, thus the 'P' for Pura in Mapova.

Bill came to Edmonton for his high school education, graduating from Victoria Composite High School in 1941. He enrolled in the six-

week Normal School program at Garneau School in the winter of 1942.

Bill taught Grades One to Ten in the County of Thorhild (Moosehorn, Danube, Land's End, Mapova and Abee) for a total of ten years. He was married in 1944. His wife Anne taught Grades One to Six while he taught Grades Seven to Ten.

He took a year off during the 1952–1953 school year to build a house in Edmonton.

In the spring of 1953, Bill was hired by the Edmonton Separate School Board to teach Industrial Arts at St. Joseph High School.

After taking summer school and night classes for several years, he was granted a Bachelor of Education degree in 1955.

In 1960, Bill became the director of Vocational Education and made the move to central office where he was responsible for Industrial Arts, Vocational Education, Business Education, Home Economics and Outdoor Education programming.

His wife taught Business Education courses first at nearby St. Catherine School then at St. Joseph. She was the first teacher in the city of Edmonton to teach computer programming.

Bill earned a Master of Education degree in Vocational Education Administration in 1975 and was two courses short of his doctorate degree when he and his wife retired in 1978. They were honoured by their colleagues with the establishment of the Pura Vocational Student Bursaries at St. Joseph High School.

Upon retirement, Bill purchased a 960-acre farm adjacent to his brother's property which they farmed jointly. This clever arrangement permitted him to farm in the summer and spend more than twenty winters in Arizona and California. As an additional summer sideline, he started a tree nursery growing Colorado blue spruce and Scotch pine.

He currently serves as the caregiver for his cousin Mary.

Harold Ulmer was born on May 25, 1919, on a farm near Castor, the fifth of seven children in the family. He completed Grades One to Twelve at the local school before registering at

Calgary Normal School in September 1938. Harold received a temporary teaching certificate the following spring after the completion of the one-year program, then fulfilled the course requirements for a permanent certificate the ensuing summer by signing up for two courses and sitting in on another two.

He began his teaching career in a one-room school in Sullivan Lake where he taught Grades One to Ten for two years prior to enlisting in the Royal Canadian Air Force in June of 1941. Harold met and married his wife, also a teacher, in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, in 1941 just before going overseas. Of the nearly five years he spent in the service, two and a half were at the controls of a Spitfire, a single-engine fighter plane deemed to be the best airplane in the world in its day.

Subsequent to his discharge from the air force, Harold took advantage of the Department of National Defense offer to pay his tuition fees and provide a living allowance if he chose to resume his post-secondary education. He enrolled at the University of Alberta in January of 1946, completed a three-year Bachelor of Education degree the following June and obtained his master's degree two years later.

Harold spent six years teaching Grades Nine to Twelve Mathematics and Science in Vulcan before moving to Edmonton in 1955. He spent twenty-five years, first as a teacher then as a principal, at the military base at Greisbach where both English and French programming were offered since the Van Doos (an infantry regiment headquartered in Quebec City) were stationed there.

Harold retired in 1980 and became a member of ERTA soon afterward. He served as vice-president of the association for several years.

He travelled extensively after he retired, spending two winters in Hawaii and one in Portugal.

He spends his time now doing what he likes to do—curling twice a week, golfing weekly, singing in two choirs and canvassing for various charitable organizations.

Cliff Otto

ERTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

The ERTA Annual General Meeting was held in the St. Michael Room at the Chateau Louis Hotel & Conference Centre on Wednesday, June 6, 2012.

1. Call to Order

Vi Oko, Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association (ERTA) President, called the meeting to order at 12:59 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Ray Roy, seconded by Mike Mort, *that the agenda be adopted as received.* CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes of the 2011 Annual General Meeting

Moved by Sherry Robbins, seconded by Ray Roy, *that the minutes of the 2011 Annual General Meeting be accepted as printed in the June 2012 newsletter.*

4. First Call for Nominations

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Irl Miller presented the slate of nominees and requested further nominations from the floor.

5. President's Report

Vi Oko provided a synopsis of Association activities for the past year. ERTA held four executive meetings and two special meetings, redeveloped the website, published newsletters prior to each of the four luncheons, had three guest speakers and a Christmas carol singalong. There were three field trips (to the Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute, the Alberta Aviation Museum and the Devonian Botanic Garden), two retiree brunches at the University of Alberta Faculty Club and two brunch performances at the Mayfield Dinner Theatre. ERTA representatives manned a display table at the Greater Edmonton Teachers' Convention. A retiree conference was organized in conjunction with neighbouring branches, a political forum was co-sponsored with CARP and an initial Travel Club meeting was held. Association bylaws were revised to allow for incorporation as a non-profit society.

6. Membership Report

Maurine Maslen was unable to make a report due to a conflicting commitment.

7. Treasurer's Report

During his presentation of the audited financial statement, Bernie Lemay pointed out the fact that ERTA actually sustained a deficit for the year ending April 30, 2012. He explained that the deficit incurred, in part, as a result of the extra costs associated with the sponsorship of the Second Wind Conference and the Election Forum as well as the development of the new website. Association assets totalling \$24,512.04 include \$18,679.04 in equity and \$5,833.00 in prepaid membership dues. The sum of \$5,023.00 is invested in long-term deposits. Moved by Bernie Lemay, seconded by Ernie Pawluski, *that the financial statement be approved as circulated.* CARRIED.

8. Appointment of Auditor

Moved by Bernie Lemay, seconded by Joan Harrison, *that the appointment of Brian Jordan as auditor for the period ending April 30, 2013, be approved.* CARRIED.

9. Second Call for Nominations

Irl asked for nominations from the floor for the second time.

10. Bylaw Revisions

Moved by Sherry Robbins, seconded by Joan Harrison, *that the membership approved the bylaw revisions as presented in order to conform with Corporate Registry requirements for a non-profit society.* CARRIED.

11. Election of ERTA Executive

Irl Miller called for nominations from the floor a third time before declaring the following slate of nominees elected by acclamation: President—Vi Oko, Vice-President—Sherry Robbins, Secretaries (2)—Shelley Bouska and Carol Loewen, Treasurer—Mike Mort, Membership Coordinator—Cliff Otto (effective the end of November 2012), Members at Large—Joan Harrison, Fred Laux, Eva Nolan, Mary Paranych, Ray Roy and Gilles Verret.

12. Appreciation of Retiring Executive Members

Vi Oko extended a special thank you to retiring executive members—Lorraine Caldwell, Ed Friss, Dorothy Keeler, Bernie Lemay and Maurine Maslen, for their dedicated service to the branch.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

ST. ALBERT BOTANIC PARK TOUR

A walking tour of the St. Albert Botanic Park is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 20, 2013. To confirm attendance, tour participants are asked to gather on the patio beside the gift shop shortly after 1:15 p.m.

The development of the five-acre park has been a labour of love since its inception in 1990.

Under the direction of a team of dedicated volunteers, the park features a dahlia bed, a shade garden, a rose garden, a hydrangea bed, a crabapple orchard, a cottage garden, a restful garden, a xeriscape garden, a pinetum, a lilac passway, a flowering shrub bed, Asiatic lily beds, daylily beds and a peony bed along with assorted trees and shrubs. The grounds are maintained by about 140 avid volunteers who spend up to 10,000 hours gardening each year. Over 12,000 visitors tour the park yearly.

To locate the park, travel north on St. Albert Trail from Westmount Mall. Mark Messier Drive (the northernmost portion of the Trail) can be accessed from 137 Avenue or Anthony Henday Drive. Proceed in a northerly direction down the hill to a set of lights. (If you have crossed the bridge on the Sturgeon River, you have gone too far.) Turn right at the bottom of the hill onto Sturgeon Road keeping to your left. Continue to travel east for 2.5 kilometres across Boudreau Road and past the Legion Memorial Ball Park to the park entrance located on your left.

Admission to the park is free and ample parking is available.

Telephone Vi Oko at 780-459-8013 to register your intent to attend the one-hour guided tour of one of St. Albert's little-known treasures.

SECOND WIND CONFERENCE 2013

The Second Wind, a conference for retirees in the greater Edmonton area will blow in as a warm, prevailing breeze on Wednesday, September 25, 2013, and you are invited! This event will be held at the Chateau Louis Conference Centre. The registration fee includes a delicious, nutritious lunch along with noon-hour entertainment. An art show and sale will feature local artists.

At the Second Wind Conference 2013 you will encounter information and resources that promote overall retiree health and wellness, inspiration to remain actively engaged in your community, opportunities for social interaction and mental stimulation, methods to raise the profile of retirees as valuable and productive members of society, and strategies to promote membership and involvement in ARTA and the branches.

The day will begin with a presentation by the keynote speaker, the animated and passionate Laurie Greenwood, followed by a variety of interactive sessions to nourish your body, mind and spirit.

Bonnie Carter will tell you about the Tibetan Five and reveal how to reverse the aging process. Theresa Fielden will introduce you to the Passion Test and disclose how to live life with more purpose. Charlene Landridge from Alley Kat microbrewery will share her passion for their beer. Peter Nolan will lead you in a drumming session. Carole Aippersbach, a public legal education lawyer, will provide the latest information about wills and personal directives. These topics are just a few of the subjects being presented at the eighteen breakout sessions at this dynamic one-day conference.

Registration forms are available online at www.gertasecondwind.org or by calling Maurine Maslen, the conference registrar, at 780-418-8032. Be among the first to register. The early-bird registration fee of \$60 will only be available until July 15. After that date, the fee will be \$75. Register early to ensure your choice of program selections.

Come for a day of enlightenment, enjoyment and personal fulfillment. Re-unite with former

colleagues and explore new connections with people of similar interests, passions and needs. At the end of the day, there will be an opportunity to 'wine down'—to relax and share the experiences of the day with friends, both old and new.

THE ARTA WALKING CHALLENGE

ARTA is an advocate of a healthy, active lifestyle for its members as they strive to attain an enhanced quality of life. The ARTA Wellness Committee is sponsoring a walking challenge in an endeavour to promote this laudable goal of the organization's current strategic plan.

Twenty participants from each branch are encouraged to join a twenty-day walking challenge during the month of June. Each participant will receive a pedometer along with a tracking sheet to monitor the number of steps walked each day.

Please telephone Vi Oko at 780-459-8013 or Mike Mort at 780-761-5027 to register. Branch participants will be selected on a first-come basis.

A prize will be awarded at the 2013 ARTA Annual General Meeting in October to the branch with the greatest accumulated distance and to the individual with the most steps walked. Participant draw prizes will be presented as well.

2013 ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

The 2013 Annual Golf Tournament is scheduled for Wednesday, June 19 at the Ponoka Community Golf Club. The Texas scramble shotgun start begins at 1:00 p.m.

The \$100 registration fee includes green fees, a power cart, gift bag, lunch, a barbecued steak dinner and fabulous hole, skill and draw prizes.

You are encouraged to participate in the tournament as an ERTA representative, to bring a friend or register an entire team.

Registration forms are available online at www.arta.net or ask Vi Oko for one at the summer luncheon. Email Bryan Martin at brianomartini@shaw.ca for more information about the event.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE ALBERTA SENIORS' DRUG PLAN

The Alberta Government is intent on instituting a pharmaceutical plan, modelled on the Fair PharmaCare Plan currently in effect in British Columbia. Effective January 1, 2014, the plan will replace several existing programs, which includes the Seniors' Drug Plan and will be tied in, with support changes, to eighteen other cost-shared programs.

The plan has several features that will negatively affect all Alberta retirees. The Government plans to replace the first payor Seniors' Drug Plan coverage with a second payor stop-loss plan designed to benefit all Albertans. Most working Albertans, however, have employer-funded benefit plans, while seniors will be financially responsible for their own health care costs. Consequently, this plan revision, in reality, becomes a health tax on most Alberta retirees. It is estimated that implementation of the plan will result in \$135 million in health care savings in the 2014–2015 fiscal year alone.

Because retirees have higher drug usage and health care needs, this plan targets the most vulnerable Albertans—retirees on fixed incomes—at a time when they require health care and drug coverage the most. The Alberta Government has been vague regarding the details of this major policy and program change. This lack of public disclosure of information and the rationale for this change is of great concern to the ARTA Health and Wellness Benefits Committee.

The recent decrease in the price of generic drugs, from 35% to 18% of the brand name drug, has resulted in the withdrawal of several pharmaceutical companies from the Alberta market claiming that the prices set by Alberta Health Services do not adequately cover current marketing costs. Certain alternate drugs will no doubt be brand name drugs in the higher-priced category. As seniors seek ways to cope with the rising costs, they may reduce or opt out of their use of prescribed medications, a choice already made by some.

Pensioners and retirees cannot anticipate the same increases in income as people active in

the workforce. Pensions are often indexed to a fraction of the cost of living. Investments have been battered by low interest rates in an effort to fuel the economic recovery. Meanwhile, retirees face the same living costs as the general population.

In conjunction with its mandate to advocate for all Alberta seniors, ARTA has requested—and has been invited to attend—a meeting with Health Minister Fred Horne. Details will be shared as they are forthcoming.

SCHOLARSHIPS

ARTA sponsors two scholarship programs for post-secondary undergraduate students who are directly related to an ARTA member. The ARTA Certificate/Diploma Scholarships are awarded to applicants who are enrolled in a minimum two-year certificate or diploma program at an accredited institution. The ARTA–TW Insurance Degree Scholarships are bestowed on applicants who have completed the first, second or third year of an undergraduate program leading to the first degree. Previous recipients of either scholarship do not qualify for a subsequent one.

The scholarship programs recognize academic achievement combined with involvement in the community. Applications accompanied by official transcripts and supporting letters of reference must be received at the ARTA office no later than July 31 of the current year. Application forms may be downloaded from ARTA's website at www.arta.net, by phoning 780-822-2400 or writing to ARTA at 409, 11010–142 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1.

ARTA established the University of Alberta Endowment Award in 1998 with an initial donation of \$15,000 as well as the University of Lethbridge and the University of Calgary Endowment Awards in 1998 and 1999, respectively, with contribution of \$10,000 to each institution. A \$1,000 scholarship is allocated to third- or fourth-year education undergraduates at the University of Alberta, a \$500 award is granted to a third-year student in Lethbridge, and \$400 is awarded to a second-year student in Calgary annually. Contact the institutions for application forms.

50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

A celebratory event to commemorate ARTA's 50th anniversary will be held in conjunction with the regular fall luncheon on September 18, 2013. Dean McMullen, Chair of the 50th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee will be the guest speaker and a special video commissioned for the occasion will be shown at that time.

Display boards located around the perimeter of the room will feature significant educational milestones and historical highlights. Literary works authored by retired teachers in Alberta will be on display as well.

Branch members will be encouraged to actively participate in the event by recording the year their own teaching careers were launched on decade boards.

The membership is also asked to recall where they were and what they were doing in 1963. Whether you were at university, working or still in school, tell us about yourself and what was going on in your life. Email Joan Harrison at joanh1@telusplanet.net or call 780-467-3885 to arrange to have your personal anecdotes recorded on a page or pages specifically designed for this occasion. If you record your reminiscences of 1963, she will do the work. We hope to compile your recollections in a book that will become part of ERTA recorded history. Get involved and do your part.

Branch winners of the Outstanding Volunteer Award, initiated primarily to mark ARTA's 50th anniversary, will be honoured at this special event.

Mark the date on your calendar now and plan to be a participant at the 50th Anniversary Gala Luncheon.

2013 EMERALD ISLE TOUR

From October 7 to October 19, 2013, several Edmonton and Parkland branch members, their families and friends are planning to tour the Emerald Isle. The Collette Vacations trip is being hosted by Esther and Gordon Oaks.

For more information about the thirteen-day journey featuring the majestic beauty and the historic sites of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland contact Esther by emailing eoaks@shaw.ca or telephoning 780-437-7499.

LIFE

Life is an opportunity, benefit from it.

Life is beauty, admire it.

Life is bliss, taste it.

Life is a dream, realize it.

Life is a challenge, meet it.

Life is a duty, complete it.

Life is a game, play it.

Life is costly, care for it.

Life is wealth, keep it.

Life is love, enjoy it.

Life is mystery, know it.

Life is a promise, fulfill it.

Life is sorrow, overcome it.

Life is a song, sing it.

Life is a struggle, accept it.

Life is tragedy, confront it.

Life is an adventure, dare it.

Life is luck, make it.

Life is too precious, do not destroy it.

Life is life, fight for it.

—Mother Teresa