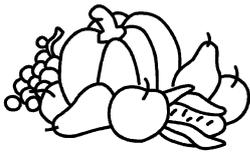




# Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association Fall Newsletter

www.edmontonrta.org

September 2009



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Fall Luncheon
- 2 President's Message
- 2 Summary of Executive Meeting
- 2 Dates to Remember
- 2 Membership Report
- 3 ERTA Delegates to ARTA AGM
- 3 Revised Seniors' Drug Plan
- 4 Teaching Resources Garage Sale
- 4 Retiree Brunches
- 4 Mayfield Dinner Theatre
- 4 Tutoring Request
- 4 Temporary Job Opportunity
- 4 Telephone Volunteers Required

## FALL LUNCHEON

Join us for our fall luncheon at the

### Chateau Louis

11727 Kingsway Avenue

Date: September 23

Lunch: 11:45 a.m.

Menu: Roast chicken buffet

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

Topic: ARTA Health and Wellness Benefits Plan

Door Prize: Everyone is eligible for a door prize.

#### PLEASE NOTE

A member of the Telephone Committee will contact you prior to September 16 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.**

Note:

The banquet room is in the building behind the hotel where there is ample parking.

### MEET OUR 2009/2010 EXECUTIVE

President:

**Vi Oko, (780) 459-8013**

1<sup>st</sup> Vice Pres:

**Joan Harrison, (780) 467-3885**

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres:

Past President:

**Joy de Mello, (780) 455-9003**

Treasurer:

**Bernie Lemay, (780) 469-5031**

Membership:

**Maurine Maslen, (780) 418-8032**

Secretaries:

**Shelley Bouska, (780) 473-3248**

**Carol Loewen, (780) 435-6832**

Benefits Reps:

**Fred Laux, (780) 444-6386**

**Mike Mort, (780) 761-5027**

Pension Rep:

**David Burghardt, (780) 487-7453**

Webmaster:

**Joyce Lukasiewich, (780) 458-1422**

Members at Large:

**Norma Borass,  
(780) 476-9088**

**Ed Friss,  
(780) 476-5924**

**Clifford Otto,  
(780) 476-9264**

**Gilles Verret,  
(780) 452-1289**

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

The Executive of the Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association (ERTA) would like to welcome the membership to another year of happy retirement. As twilight descends on another carefree summer and the days get shorter, an early morning frost threatens, and snow is observed in the high altitudes, it is time to assess the impending impact of recent announcements in education and health care.

This time last year, we had an \$8.5 billion surplus: now we have a \$6.9 billion deficit.

Alberta Health Services CEO Stephen Duckett has directed long-term care and mental health providers to trim their budgets, all part of a province-wide plan to eliminate the health department's \$1.3 billion deficit that includes \$24 million in severance pay.

Last week Education Minister Dave Hancock announced that he will cut \$44 million in funding to school boards that are carrying an excess of 3.25% of their operating budgets in reserves. The claw back is part of \$80 million worth of savings that the education department has to find this year because of Alberta's climbing deficit.

Teacher salary increases, currently tied to the Alberta Weekly Earnings Index, are creating a sense of uncertainty for school jurisdictions throughout the province. Funding to school boards was based on a 4.82% increase predicted earlier this year. Before the provincial budget was announced, Statistics Canada changed its formula, which resulted in a 5.99% increase. The Alberta Teachers' Association has been involved in negotiations with Alberta Education since last spring.

This scenario is reminiscent of another time; history has a way of repeating itself!

We hope to see you at the luncheon on September 23.

**SUMMARY OF EXECUTIVE MEETING**

The new ERTA Executive met at Barnett House on August 26, 2009. At that time the following items were discussed and decisions made:

- Renewal notices will be mailed shortly. A second reminder has already been sent to everyone on the email list.
- Current ERTA assets total \$24,154.02, which includes \$5,197.00 in prepaid dues.

- The charge for the roast chicken buffet will remain at \$20.00 per plate.
- In response to the show of hands at the Annual General Meeting in June, a Johnson's representative will be asked to present a brief overview of the current ARTA Health and Wellness Benefits Plan administered by Johnson's Inc.
- Luncheon dates for 2009/2010 were established. (See Dates to Remember).
- A retiree brunch was scheduled for Saturday, October 24, 2009. (See Retiree Brunches).
- David Burghardt, Joan Harrison and Vi Oko will attend the ARTA Orientation/Board Meeting on September 15 and 16 at Barnett House.
- More information was requested before executive members would consent to hosting a Wellness Workshop, an initiative of the ARTA Health and Wellness Benefits Committee.
- The new ERTA brochure was distributed.

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

Fall Luncheon	September 23, 2009
ARTA AGM	October 7, 2009
Retiree Brunch	October 24, 2009
ERTA Executive Meeting	November 4, 2009
Mayfield Dinner Theatre	November 18, 2009
Christmas Luncheon	December 9, 2009
Spring Luncheon	March 24, 2010
Retiree Brunch	April (T.B.A.)
Summer Luncheon	June 9, 2010

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

For me, the highlight of the summer is ushering at the Symphony in the Park. The "1812 Overture" is always incredible to see and hear as the symphony and military work together to culminate the festival. It also is the signal that summer is over and fall activities are starting.

Just like the school year, the ERTA year begins in September. We have tried to notify anyone whose membership is due for renewal. If necessary, please renew your membership at the luncheon or send your cheque to ERTA at 53 Goodridge Drive, St. Albert, Alberta, T8N 2B1. The next newsletter will only be sent to people whose memberships are current.

At this time we have 5 lifetime, 316 paid-up and 64 members whose memberships are up for renewal. Thus far we have 8 newly-retired teachers who have accepted our complimentary membership for the 2009-2010 year. If you know of any retired teacher who would like to join us, please help us contact them.

Once again you will be contacted to ascertain if you plan to attend the luncheon on September 23. If your caller has to leave a message for you, please respond as soon as possible. You will be asked for the name(s) of guest(s) who will accompany you. If you have had a change of name, address, telephone number, or email address please let them know so that they can pass the information on to me. Some of you are not able to attend any luncheons. If you do not wish to be telephoned, simply ask to have the note "Don't phone" written beside your name.

It is important that we have an accurate count of the people attending the luncheon. If your circumstances change after you have been phoned, be sure to contact Joan Harrison at (780) 467-3885.

For ERTA to succeed we need volunteers. If you are willing to telephone, arrange events that members would like to attend, serve on the executive or shadow an executive position, please contact a member of our board.

Once again my thanks to Joyce Lukasiwich for maintaining the website and sending out emails, and to Joan Harrison for taking charge of the telephone lists.

Maurine Maslen, Membership Co-ordinator

### **ERTA DELEGATES TO ARTA AGM**

The Annual General Meeting of the Alberta Retired Teachers' Association (ARTA) will be held on Wednesday, October 7, 2009 at Barnett House. The Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association (ERTA) is entitled to send six voting delegates to the meeting. Members interested in the operation of the provincial association are also encouraged to sit in on the proceedings as observers.

Members representing the fourteen Alberta and one satellite branch in the Okanagan convene to report on the undertakings of each branch along with the recent endeavours of each standing committee. In the past few years retired teachers have created a sophisticated governance model

involving comprehensive policies and procedures, devised extensive programs including an expanded benefit plan to better serve the membership, and actively served as political advocates on behalf of Alberta seniors. Please contact Vi Oko at (780) 459-8013 if you wish to observe ARTA in action.

### **REVISED SENIORS' DRUG PLAN**

Albertans over sixty-five years of age received the *Seniors' Health Bulletin* from Alberta Blue Cross last June. The leaflet contained a message from Alberta Health and Wellness Minister Ron Liepert, a "fact" sheet, charts outlining the premium structure (based on total taxable income) that singletons and couples would be assessed for a proposed optional seniors' drug plan along with answers to a number of questions presumably posed by Alberta seniors.

The ARTA Board of Directors applauds the Alberta Government's intent to provide free prescription drugs to the most needy in our society, seniors whose taxable income is less than \$12,000 per year. However, the revised proposal, to be implemented on July 1, 2010, is no more acceptable than the first one since it continues to erode the principles that ARTA board members deem most desirable for a universal health care program.

Middle income seniors will now be required to pay monthly premiums for prescription drug coverage along with a maximum \$15 per-prescription fee, referred to as a co-payment. It is important to remember that the realities of the proposed drug formulary include the delisting of a number of drugs and the tripling of the premium for the Blue Cross non-group plan in which many seniors are currently enrolled.

While Premier Ed Stelmach continues to insist that no new taxes will be imposed by his government, Alberta seniors will be the only group to be assessed a "tax" increase in the form of a premium for Ron Liepert's pharmaceutical plan.

Earlier this year, the ARTA membership, in collaboration with other Alberta seniors, was able to force the Minister of Health and Wellness to withdraw his original Pharmaceutical Strategy announced last December. ERTA members are urged to contact their elected MLAs to make them aware that any changes that place an additional financial burden on all senior

Albertans are unacceptable.

### **TEACHING RESOURCES GARAGE SALE**

Share your resources and experience with our newest colleagues! Bring those boxes that have taken over your basement to the Beginning Teachers' Conference Garage Sale at the Fantasyland Hotel at West Edmonton Mall on Saturday, September 26 from 3:45 to 5:00 p.m.

Take this opportunity to sell your "gently used" books, materials, and charts or posters at a reasonable cost to first year teachers. Tables will be provided. You will be responsible for transporting your own materials and for monitoring your table.

For further information, please contact Andrea Berg at (780) 447-9423 at the ATA office in Barnett House.

### **RETIREE BRUNCHES**

Irl Miller has graciously offered to host two brunches for new as well as current Edmonton and area retirees at the University of Alberta Faculty Club located on the corner of 114 Street and Saskatchewan Drive.

The first one is scheduled for Saturday, October 24, 2009. We usually meet in the lounge inside the front door shortly after 11:15 a.m. The brunch costs \$18.00 per person. Courtesy parking located west of the entrance to the venue can be accessed from 114 Street. Note the date and time on your calendar then telephone Vi Oko (780) 459-8013 or Joan Harrison (780) 467-3885 if you plan to attend. Spouses, colleagues and friends are always welcome.

In addition to renewing old acquaintances and making new friends, retirees have an opportunity to discuss pertinent issues with members of the executive in a tranquil setting.

### **MAYFIELD DINNER THEATRE**

Reservations have been made in the Broadway section for the brunch performance of *The Super Groovy 70s* on Wednesday, November 18, 2009. Disco music, big hair, bell-bottoms and platform shoes will signal the rebirth of the 70s at the Mayfield.

The Dinner Theatre doors open at 10:00 a.m. and the stage production begins at noon. The dress code specifies business casual.

Tickets are available on a first-come, first-served

basis. Please write your name on the Mayfield sign-up sheet at the luncheon on September 23 and hand Vi Oko your cheque made payable to the Edmonton Retired Teachers' Association for \$75.00, which includes GST. You can also reserve your seat by mailing your cheque to Vi Oko at 20 Glenhaven Crescent, St. Albert, Alberta, T8N 1A5.

### **TUTORING REQUEST**

An international baccalaureate student attending Old Scona Academic Senior High School requires tutoring in Chemistry 30 and Physics IB. Please contact Vanita at (780) 298-1702.

### **TEMPORARY JOB OPPORTUNITY**

Executrade is recruiting individuals to process student exams for Alberta Education. Applicants require basic computer skills, keen attention to detail, enthusiasm while completing repetitive tasks and the ability to lift up to 30 lbs. A security/criminal check is required.

Dates: Late November 2009 until mid December 2009

Mid January 2010 for 2 to 3 weeks

Rate: \$13.25 per hour

Locations: November/December 2009 session  
- West Edmonton

January/February 2010 session  
- Downtown Edmonton

For further information, applicants may contact Marilyn Chorney at (780) 944-0023 or email your résumé to [marilynchorneyexecutrade.com](mailto:marilynchorneyexecutrade.com).

### **TELEPHONE VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED**

Prior to each luncheon, our telephone volunteers contact the entire ERTA membership to determine if they will be attending the upcoming luncheon. The Executive would like to thank those volunteers who have been doing the telephoning over the past couple of years. Their help has been and is greatly appreciated.

Some of our volunteers are no longer able to make that commitment so we require five or six more people to join the Telephone Committee. If you are willing to call ten to fifteen members just before each luncheon to verify the total number of members and guests that will be attending, please let Joan Harrison know by calling (780) 467-3885 or tell Vi Oko at the fall luncheon.