

Open Road

Contact: 604-916-0653 or lrrta.35@gmail.com

The Newsletter of the Langley Branch of the B.C. Retired Teachers' Association

Hoof and light-hearted, I take to the open road - Walt Whitman



Winter Greetings



What a great time to be a Langley Retired Teacher! We have had a busy winter season enjoying our outings and luncheons together. In December we organized a trip to Vancouver to visit the German Christmas Market at Vancouver Place, followed by dinner at Van Dusen Gardens where we were mesmerized by their annual light display. I hope you, too, have enjoyed opportunities to take in winter events with family and friends in your area.

Our next luncheon on March 12th will feature a presentation by Moira McKenzie and David Chudnovsky, directors of the Institute for Public Education. They continue to conduct research and make presentations to government advocating for improvements in all areas of public education. Of course, there will always be our lovely flower and gift card give-aways, as well!

I hope to see many of you in March and please look for information on our next day trip -- time and place to be decided by your Executive.

Respectfully submitted -Gail Chaddock-Costello, President Langley Retired Teachers' Association

MARCH LUNCHEON AT ADRIAN'S



Our next LRTA luncheon at *Adrian's at the Airport* will be held on **WEDNESDAY, March 12, 2024**. We have invited David Chudnovsky and Moira Mackenzie who are very much looking forward to the LRTA gathering on MARCH 12th. They will be talking about the [Institute for Public Education BC](#) community engagement research project and inviting us to share our [hopes and dreams for public education in BC](#). They've been hearing from people in all walks of life around the province and, when the consultation is complete, the institute will be publishing and promoting a detailed report and recommendations

You will have three menu items to choose from:

- chicken souvlaki
- spanakopita
- schnitzel neptune



The luncheon cost is \$35. This includes tea/coffee, entrée, dessert AND gratuity.

Pre-registration will be required so watch for the email soon.

Your executive is looking forward to meeting again with our members.

Please note: You may park in any of the 'RESERVED' parking spots as they are reserved for Adrian's patrons.

If you would like to attend the upcoming luncheon, please email me (Maureen) at lrrta.35@gmail.com

Don't forget to mention what your menu choice is.

If you do not have email access, please phone me at **604-916-0653** to pre-register.

SUNSHINE/SHOWERS REPORT
~Submitted by Jacquie Hollybow~



The LRTA sends cards to members who are experiencing a significant illness and to the family of members who die. Our '85 years plus' members received a Christmas card.

Please contact Jacquie Hollybow (604 888-7020; e-mail: jhollybow@hotmail.com) if you are aware of a member who fits either of these criteria.



Often, we have former colleagues who pass away while they are either still actively teaching, or who have retired, but have not chosen to join the LRTA. Because many of our members may have taught with them, we report on their passing, as well.

We want to thank Jacquie for sending cards of condolence to their family members on our behalf.



The Langley Retired Educators' Scholarship fund was unable to collect the necessary funds required to award \$700 scholarships to 7 schools this year. A decision was made to reduce the scholarships to \$650 for the 7 schools. This is unfortunate, but understandable with inflation and financial concerns.

The \$1,000 scholarship for the Denny Ross scholarship is funded separately by a retired educator and will remain.

The School District Foundation has started the 2025 campaign using the following link.

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/langley-school-district-foundation/p2p/LREScholarshipFund2025/>

The amount and number of schools may need to be adjusted annually depending upon donations collected and interest earned on investment.



HERE'S YOUR CHANCE -- ONE YEAR FREE MEMBERSHIP!

Join the BCRTA and receive your first year FREE!!

Join now and receive your first year of BCRTA membership for **FREE!**

Here is a direct link <https://bcrt.ca/join/> (you can copy and paste the URL into your browser window). **This offer is for anyone who has never joined the BCRTA, not only for new retirees.** So, if you know a teacher who has retired in previous years, but has not yet joined the BCRTA, please let them know of this unique opportunity.

We had a lovely time at our Pre-Christmas Luncheon!

Preparing for our guests



Delicious food served by one of the pleasant staff members (and her special helper)



Happy winners of poinsettias and gift



Getting into the Spirit of Christmas...



Vancouver Christmas Market



Van Dusen Gardens



Federal /Provincial Tax Tips



The Office of the Seniors Advocate has produced the following list of tax information and credits that may be used when you are filling out your 2024 tax return. To get all benefits you should be filing no later than April 30th.

Free Tax Clinics

The Canada Revenue Agency has a directory of community organizations hosting free tax clinics. Some clinics that are currently operating may complete and file taxes for free. These clinics mainly work with low-income seniors.

Claim all Eligible Expenses for Tax Returns

You may be able to claim medical expenses on your tax return. Canada Revenue Agency has a list of eligible items online and instructions about how to claim them on your taxes. Some common items include prescription medication, devices, equipment, services, travel expenses and renovations.

You and your spouse or common-law partner may be able to split your eligible pension income if you meet the requirements.

Tax Credits

Tax credits are deductions you may be able to claim when you complete and submit your income tax return. Tax credits can be based on income, investments, training or education, activities you're involved in, expenses you incur or the work that you do. See below for examples of tax credits that seniors are often eligible for.

- **BC Renter's Tax Credit**

New this year in B.C., a Renter's Tax Credit based on annual income will be available. The tax credit will provide up to \$400 to low- and moderate-income renter individuals and families with an adjusted income of \$60,000 or less. Individuals and families with an adjusted income greater than \$60,000 and less than \$80,000 may receive a reduced amount.

- **Disability Tax Credit**

The Disability Tax Credit (DTC) helps offset extra costs related to living with a disability.

- If you or a dependent spouse or common-law partner have a serious or prolonged physical or mental impairment, you may be able to claim

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- expenses related to assisted living, elder care, home care services and other services.

To determine eligibility, you must first complete a Disability Tax Credit Certificate—Form T2201—and have it certified by a medical practitioner.

- **B.C. Home Renovation Tax Credit for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities**

The Home Renovation Tax Credit for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities is also available for family members living with seniors to assist with the cost of some permanent home renovations to improve accessibility and daily living activities.

- **Age Amount tax credit**

You may be eligible to claim this tax credit if you were 65 years of age or older on December 31, 2022, and your net income is less than \$92,480.

- **Canada Caregiver Credit**

You may be eligible for this tax credit if you support a spouse or common-law partner, or a dependent with a physical or mental impairment.

- **Pension income amount credit**

If you reported eligible pension, superannuation or annuity payments on your tax return, you may be able to claim up to \$2,000 as a tax credit. Alternatively, you may wish to transfer the credit to your spouse or common-law partner.

<https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/current-issues/2024-income-tax-tips-for-seniors/>



Let's Go Report

The daffodils are poking out of the ground- a sign that Spring is around the corner.

Let's Go is working with **Enjoy the Journey** to plan another LRTA day trip. The finalized details will be sent out soon.

The opportunities to get "out and about" are numerous. The travel industry in Canada is experiencing a customer shift away from travel to the US and is instead focusing on travel in BC, Canada and anywhere else. **Enjoy the Journey** has published a new brochure featuring 4 new trips in BC and Canada as well as reminding customers of the trips already in the catalogue for 2025. Visit the **Enjoy the Journey** website to see the very exciting offerings. Below is the February newsletter featuring Canadian trips. Contact information is also below.

Enjoy Tours is concentrating on Canadian tours during this year of turmoil with the United States. This gives us a great opportunity to explore our own great country.



If you would like to sign up for any of these trips, call:
Enjoy the Journey 604-630-2434.

Mention that you are a B.C. Retired Teachers' Association member.

To find the full details for these events go to enjoythejourney.ca and while you are there browse through all the other exciting adventures available in the area.

If you would like to join the Let's Go Group and receive information as soon as it is available, send your email address to judydevries@me.com and be added to the list.

Happy trails, Judy de Vries -- LRTA Member at Large and Let's Go Co-ordinator

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

~Submitted by Maureen Wilson~



I would like to thank those who have let me know that they are okay with receiving a digital copy of our LRTA newsletters. In past years, more and more people are getting comfortable with electronic communications. Of the 500+ members, I currently send out notifications via e-mail to 556 of our members. Approximately 30 people receive our newsletters via Canada Post, a far cry from the 125+ that were being sent out when I first took over the publication of the LRTA newsletter many moons ago. As we progress with technology (much of it because of COVID restrictions in past years), it is wonderful to see how many of our members feel more comfortable with their smart phones and tablets. I know so many seniors who are enjoying visits with their families via Zoom.

If you are receiving this email by SNAIL MAIL ONLY and are interested in receiving a phone call regarding future luncheons, please phone me (604-916-0653).

MEMBERSHIP/BCRTA WEBSITE LIAISON REPORT

~ Submitted by Maureen Wilson ~



The Langley Branch of the BCRTA is one of the largest and most actively supported branches in the province. This year, we have a total of 533 members. We are pleased to welcome those who have joined us this past year. We are hoping that some of our recently retired members who enjoyed their first year free, will consider continuing with us.

This year all retired teachers who have not yet joined the BCRTA, should fill in a registration form to receive a year of free membership in both the BCRTA **AND** Langley branch. Here's a direct link to the BCRTA membership page - <http://www.bcrt.ca/membership> - where you can either *download* a BCRTA membership application, fill it out and mail it in, or fill one out *online* and e-mail it to laurie@bcrt.ca. Don't forget to note that you would like to join the BCRTA **AND** the Langley Branch.

Belonging to the BCRTA provides us all with benefits and privileges that would otherwise not be possible. Yearly dues are necessary to support the effort of those that advocate for the rights and interests of retired teachers. At the branch level, the yearly fee is important as it allows the executive to plan luncheons, pay speakers and organize special activities. In addition, the Langley School District Foundation provides scholarships (the dollar amount depending on how much is donated that year by our members) each year to several Langley school graduates planning a teaching career.

Check out our website at <https://bcrt.ca/langley/>. Special photo credit goes to *Glen Mackenzie*, who took this beautiful photo of the Fraser River in Fort Langley that appears on our homepage.

We are trying to be environmentally aware, as well as save on printing and mailing costs, by sending electronic copies of our newsletters, wherever possible. If we do not have your current e-mail address and you would like to be part of our 'green team' and receive your newsletter via e-mail, please let us know by e-mailing us at: lra.35@gmail.com

Thanks, Maureen Wilson ~ editor of 'Open Road', the LRTA newsletter



A Little Bit of Humour...

**My kids and grandkids
keep laughing about
me losing my memory.**

**They won't be laughing at
Christmas when there's no
eggs under the tree!**

**I finally figured
out what I
want to be
when I get
older.**

Younger.

THERE IS NO SUCH
THING AS A
**GROUCHY
OLD PERSON**
THE TRUTH IS ONCE
*you get old
you stop being*
POLITE AND START BEING
HONEST

Sorry, but your password
must contain:

at least 8 characters
upper and lower case letter
a symbol or number
a hieroglyph
a haiku
a musical note
the feather of a hawk
and a drop of unicorn blood

**The older I get the
tighter companies are
putting the lids on jars**

**The fitness trainer
asked me, "What kind
of a squat are you
accustomed to doing?"
I said, "Diddly."**