



PARKSVILLE QUALICUM RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER #6 – APRIL 2017

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE from Cathy Van Herwaarden:

March was certainly "lion-ish"!!! Let's hope that April is more "lamb-ish". Happy spring to you!

If you're itching to get into the garden, give some thought to adding some wildflowers for the endangered bees and butterflies. Or, maybe make a Bee Bath. See "how to" on pages 12 to 15, in this newsletter.

Once again, this newsletter is much longer than intended; but there is so much information to pass along. I hope that you don't mind my long-winded "essays"! Of course, I have to live up to being called Chatty Cathy! Much preferable to Auntie Catastrophe, but that's a story for another day!!!

BC TEACHERS' FEDERATION (BCTF) NEWS RELEASE – Mar. 18, 2017

New BCTF ad campaign calls on teachers and parents to vote for a government that can be trusted to put kids first

During his opening remarks to the BCTF's 101st Annual General Meeting, BCTF President Glen Hansman previewed the Federation's latest television ad that will hit airwaves on Monday. The ad is the first part of the BCTF's campaign leading up to the provincial election and the period when school district budgets will be set for the coming school year.

"On May 9, we're asking British Columbians, especially teachers and parents, to vote for candidates who can be trusted to put BC kids and their education first," said Hansman. "For 15 years, our schools and our students have been short-changed by government underfunding. An entire generation of BC kids lost out because of Christy Clark's unconstitutional legislation that stripped teachers' working conditions from our collective agreements."

Premier Clark's government fought teachers every step of the way. The Clark government showed time and time again that they couldn't be trusted to put kids and their education first. It wasn't until teachers won at the Supreme Court of Canada, and the government had nowhere else to go, that they backed off their attack on teachers' rights and students' learning conditions."

The BCTF's campaign launch also puts pressure on the BC Liberal government to follow through on its commitment to fully fund the costs of restoring teachers' working conditions.

"After 15 years of waiting, BC students and teachers are finally on the verge of getting the smaller classes, better class composition, and more specialist teachers they need," said Hansman. "Teachers and parents must continue working together to make sure it happens."

"The BC government promised it would cover the full costs of our court win and subsequent agreement on restoration from its \$400 million contingency fund. School districts need certainty that funding is actually coming. Parents and teachers must keep the pressure up to ensure this government, after 15 years of cuts and broken promises, finally funds BC public schools properly."

BCTF Project of Heart: Illuminating the hidden history of Indian Residential Schools in BC <http://www.bctf.ca/HiddenHistory/>

This eBook is intended to be an interactive resource leading educators from the story to the 'back story' utilizing links on each page to offer related resources. Throughout this book you will find Project of Heart tiles with an 'aura' which indicates that this is a link. Click on each of these tiles to find additional resources including films, videos, documents, articles, activities and more.

Book in PDF Format: <http://www.bctf.ca/HiddenHistory/eBook.pdf>

U.S. broke its public education system, got Trump:

By Heather Mallick – Columnist

Fri., Nov. 11, 2016

<https://www.thestar.com/news/world/uselection/2016/11/11/us-broke-its-public-education-system-got-trump-mallick.html>

Americans, this is what happens when you abandon your public education system. Canada has a good one. Long may it be maintained, or our nation will crash as our next-door neighbour has, a backyard of flaming wreckage and oh no, where are the nukes.

Education is the key to civilized life. For years we've been hearing about America's underfunded schools, underpaid or absent teachers, no textbooks, damaged buildings, minimally trained volunteers at "Teach for America" (weeks of training post-B.A. does not a teacher make), unfed kids too hungry to learn, and a general disrespect for the teaching profession.

The better you are taught, the more you want accurate news and the better you'll be able to assess it to make a rational voting decision. But what if you quit school? Did you even try to go to a local college?

No demographic variable reflects Trump's electoral success better than education does. The lower the education level, the higher the Trump vote. The reverse held true for Clinton. Voters were ill-equipped to figure out that Trump was not offering them new factory jobs, but a bit of cold comfort.

Education does six things, and more.

1. Education teaches you to value thought over feeling, reason over passion. Throughout the U.S. election campaign, I was intrigued by the triumph of illogic.

People had been afraid of sounding racist before, a black Democrat in Charleston told the reporter.

"Now the lid is off. People feel free to say what they really think."

But schooling is what keeps the lid on. It teaches rational discourse. Do you want to live in a world where people feel free to say what they really think? Trust me, you do not want to hear what I'm thinking right now. My thoughts would be rancid, my words hot tar.

2. Education socializes you. There's a huge disadvantage to home-schooling: you learn all about your mom, but nothing about students of varying ages, backgrounds, genders and abilities. School is an institution. It teaches social norms. Then you'll get along with others in a workplace, a coffee shop or a public square.

An educated person will learn that violence is a last resort, especially in response to mere words.

3. Education teaches you to assess facts and understand statistics. For example, U.S. anti-immigrant feeling was strongest where there were fewest immigrants. Learning about percentages might have made Trump voters a little less terrified of "The Other".

4. Education teaches history and economics. You'd feel sparks down your spine to see an ethnic group or religion singled out for a national register or deportation. You'd know where that leads. And you'd understand the reasons for a regional economic decline and learn ways to adapt. You would not blame your situation on perceived "elites" who you deride as much as you suspect they deride you.

5. Education teaches you to put things in context. You don't flame out over a minor incident and you may find, as President Obama taught, that it teaches sublime lessons.

6. Education makes you read fiction, perhaps in another language. Never will the lives of others flower for you faster and more heart-hittingly. You'll identify with characters that seem glorious but are grimy underneath. You'll spot greed and self-interest. You'll learn about the unreliable narrator, about skepticism.

In other words, think first. The destructive element is life itself, but you can survive with a cool head and much hard work. You must do it on your own and blame no one.

BC Teachers' Federation online museum!

The founding meeting of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation took place on January 4, 1917 at King Edward High School at Oak Street and 12th Avenue in Vancouver. At the time, it was the city's only secondary school. Mr. J. G. Lister was elected the first BCTF president, and the objectives adopted at that meeting continue to guide the Federation to this day:

- To foster and promote the cause of education.
- To raise the status of the teaching profession in BC.
- To promote the welfare of the teachers of BC.

The BCTF decided to build an online museum to mark 100 years of advocacy towards these key objectives, and to celebrate the tremendous commitment and creativity of hundreds of thousands of public school teachers over the decades.

Looking back, it's clear that BCTF members have consistently led the way in making BC's public school system among the finest in the world. We've tried to capture their stories in ways that visitors will find engaging. And we hope you'll enjoy browsing through our exhibits, which depict our collective struggles and lessons learned in a century of teaching and learning across our vast province.

As part of the BCTF 100th Anniversary celebration, an Online Museum has been launched at <http://bctf.ca/history/>. A teacher singing group, More Than Just Pay, was asked to perform some of the "Greatest Hits" for the BCTF 100th Anniversary.

BCRTA - GREEN SHIELD CANADA

By now, everyone should have received their welcome package! For 29 frequently asked questions with answers, see separate document attached with this newsletter or click here:

http://www.pensionsbc.ca/portal/page/portal/pencorpcontent/allplans/publications/memberguides/green_shield_canada_faq.pdf

PROTECTING YOUR EHC LIFETIME MAXIMUM WHILE TRAVELLING

From: Gerry Tiede, BCRTA Pension and Benefits Committee Chair

Some travel insurance plans are 'second payor.' That means that they pass on any medical costs that you incur to your Extended Health Plan before the travel insurance starts to pay. And travel medical expenses can be very expensive. The problem with that is your EHC plan has a lifetime limit - the Green Shield Canada Plan's limit is \$200,000 - and if your travel claim is large, it may use up your whole life-time limit. When that is gone you don't have any EHC plan anymore.

Both plans available from Johnson's through BCRTA are 'first payor' plans. That means that Medoc or Prestige Travel pays your travel medical costs without touching your EHC plan, whatever plan it is.

If you have travel insurance through Pacific Blue Cross (PBC) it is a bit more complicated. The new EHC plan provider, Green Shield Canada (GSC), provides coverage only in Canada. So if you have a travel claim somewhere in Canada, the first payer is GSC and PBC will pick up any costs that aren't covered. That claim will use some of your GSC life-time maximum. But if your accident occurs outside of Canada, your PBC travel insurance will cover all costs without touching your GSC maximum. That's because GSC does not cover any expenses incurred outside of Canada.

I'm not a certified insurance professional but considering all this, perhaps now is the time to consult with an expert and consider switching to the BCRTA plans provided through Johnson Insurance. Call the Langley office of Johnson's and tell them that you are a BCRTA member. (604) 881-8840 or 1-866-799-0000 or email pbservicewest@johnsons.ca

Pharmacy Compass: www.pharmacycompass.ca

Are you paying too much for your drug prescriptions? There is a great on-line tool that allows you to find the least expensive store in your neighbourhood to fill your drug prescriptions.

This is a free service – no identification or password is needed. Enter the drug name, its strength and your address; the Pharmacy Compass will reveal a list of pharmacies in your neighbourhood with the average cost per pill and the dispensing fees. You will be surprised by the range of costs.

We all shop around to find the best price on everything from houses to groceries, but did you know prescription drug prices can vary even between drug stores with the same name?

Members are encouraged to use the lowest cost provider whenever reasonably possible. Not only does that save you money on your proportion of the costs, but it saves the insurer money which directly affects the premiums we all pay.

The Pharmacy Compass may help you get better value for your medications by comparing the average prices submitted to Extended Health Care by different pharmacy locations across British Columbia.

BCRTA SENIORS' ISSUES FOR THE 2017 PROVINCIAL ELECTION

The BCRTA, guided by its constitutional responsibility to provide information to its members on matters of importance to their well-being, has prepared a booklet of information on a variety of issues that may, and perhaps should, come to the fore during the lead up to the election.

Access to Health Care

BC patients have long waits for some diagnostic tests which are among the longest waits in Canada for key surgeries.

Integrated Health Care

British Columbia needs to establish an integrated health care plan for seniors that provide a seamless continuum of care from home care to palliative care that is cost effective and equally accessible.

BC Medical Services' Plan

British Columbia is the only province in Canada that still charges a flat rate health tax, the BC Medical Services Plan Premium (MSP).

Dementia

Dementia is a progressively degenerative disease of the brain that impairs thought processes and memory, and affects an individual's abilities and behaviour. It increases frailty, erodes one's independence and eventually causes death. There is currently no cure; it is irreversible.

Homeowner Expense Referral Grant

Seniors want to remain in their homes for as long as possible and "age in place". With fixed incomes and increasing costs, they often lack the financial resources to renovate and/or maintain their homes.

For background facts on each area and a list of specific questions for all provincial election Candidates, see the inclusion in the Postscript Magazine for Retired Educators (Spring 2017) or at the following:

http://bcрта.ca/images/BCRTA_Seniors_Issues_Provincial_Election_2017_Booklet.pdf

Are you a registered voter??? <http://elections.bc.ca>

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS:

Let's change the way we think about it!

We don't wait until Stage 4 to intervene for cancer, so why do we wait to treat mental illness and addiction?



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Mental health for all

There is an opportunity in front of us to improve mental health and addiction care in British Columbia. We currently pay for a system of care in the most expensive ways possible. People wait too long for care and too many people get their care from emergency departments and police. We can offer proven choices and support to help people recover and keep people connected in communities.

We believe action in these five areas will lead to better mental health in our province:

- Focus on prevention and early intervention
- Build an accessible addictions healthcare system
- Strengthen recovery closer to home
- Improve crisis care
- Lead change in mental health and addiction

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Manifesto outlines these principles for change – but we need your support to put these principles into action and make better mental health a reality. Join us in calling for sweeping change that will value mental health and addiction care as equal to physical health care.

Sign the b4stage4 manifesto using the form below, or click to learn more.

Endorsed by BCRTA and BCTF: <http://www.b4stage4.ca/>

"I stand with Canadian Mental Health Association of BC in calling for a system of care that values mental health and addiction as equal to physical health."

Send the following prepared email letter to your MLA: http://www.b4stage4.ca/email_your_mla

I am writing you to show my support for a renewed vision for better mental health and addiction care in British Columbia.

There is a clear opportunity sitting in front of all of us – if we collectively take the bold steps needed to improve our province's mental health, we stand to improve the lives of thousands of people across British Columbia. All British Columbians have the right to good mental health.

Achieving equality for mental health and addiction care will require investment in education, prevention, and early intervention. It will require coordinated care that is accessible in our communities and from our primary care settings.

The need is clear. The value of investing is obvious. It's time to change our system of care.

I stand with the Canadian Mental Health Association in calling for a system of care that addresses mental health, addiction, and physical health equally.

BCRTA COMMITTEE - Excellence in Public Education

BC Retired Teachers Association has endorsed the \$10.00 a day Child Care Plan developed by the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC. The executive team for Parksville Qualicum Retired Teachers' Association voted in favour of endorsement, also. We urge you to send a letter to your local MLA candidates to support the \$10 a Day Plan. Let them know we care!!!

Read or download the full plan:

https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/10aday/pages/92/attachments/original/1487824686/10aDay_Plan_7th_edition_Spring_2017_web_6.pdf?1487824686

Did you **sign the petition** for \$10 a Day Plan? **PASS IT ON!!!** <http://www.10aday.ca/>

The BC election is fast-approaching, and we need to make sure our candidates know that access to affordable, quality child care is a key issue for BC families.

Add your postal code to automatically find local candidates and add your name.

Dear MLA candidates:

BC families face a crisis in accessing quality, affordable child care. Fees are too high — the second highest family expense after housing. Wait lists are too long — less than 20% of children under the age of 12 in BC have access to a regulated child care space. Too often, families are forced into unregulated care with no safety standards.

The \$10aDay Child Care Plan is the solution to BC's child care crisis. Recent poll numbers show robust support for the \$10aDay Plan, and British Columbians from every corner of the province have signed the \$10aDay petition calling on government to adopt and implement the Plan. The \$10aDay Plan has been publicly endorsed by local governments, boards of education, labour, business, community service organizations, women's and advocacy groups, and more, who understand that the Plan offers a 'made in BC' solution to the child care crisis facing families with young children today.

Implementing the \$10aDay Plan will result in net benefits for governments, employers, and BC's economy — even in the short term. In-depth economic analysis shows that the Plan will pay for itself, and generate sufficient government revenues to cover additional government costs to build and operate a new child care system. Implementing the plan will create 69,000 new jobs in BC, add \$5.8 billion to BC's GDP, and provide higher returns than other government spending. With the federal government's promise of \$7-billion towards child care for Canadian families over the next 10 years, there are no more excuses to not support and implement the \$10aDay Plan.

Support for the \$10aDay Child Care Plan represents over 2 million British Columbians — given the depth of the child care crisis; unaffordable fees, too few quality spaces, low wages for early childhood educators, can we count on your commitment to implement the \$10aDay Plan if you are elected?

Send a letter to your MLA and candidates! Just add your name!
http://www.10aday.ca/email_your_candidates?utm_campaign=emailmla_5april&utm_medium=email&utm_source=10aday

Finance Rules for BCRTA and its Branches: Legal Advice (Sept. 2016)

1. The BCRTA may not be involved in any form of fundraising
2. The BCRTA may not receive or make donations of a "charitable" nature
3. Branches may not engage in fundraising (50/50 draws, raffles, etc.) or the direct granting of scholarships and/or bursaries
4. Branches may not donate funds raised via membership dues towards scholarships or bursaries.

At our past meetings and gatherings over the year, we have alluded to the changes that were "a-coming", in regards to fundraising. Here is more detailed information from BCRTA:

BCRTA BRANCH FUNDRAISING: Donations and Prize Draws

1. Staying Legal

If a BCRTA Branch conducts any kind of fundraising, it is breaking the law—several laws, in fact: the BC Societies Act, Canada's Income Tax Act, and the Criminal Code of Canada. That's because the BCRTA (including its branches) is an NPO, a tax-free non-profit organization, member-funded to operate for the benefit of its members.

The BCRTA is not a registered charity so, they created the RR Smith Memorial Fund Foundation to be the BCRTA's "charitable arm".

2. Branch Dues

Because the BCRTA is a member-funded NPO (Non-Profit Organization), it cannot use any of its member dues for charitable giving, and that includes scholarships and bursaries. Money from dues can only be used to fund branch activities that fit within the constitutionally stated purposes of the BCRTA, primarily "to promote the interests and to guard the welfare of its members".

Branch activities include such things as luncheons, teas and "koffee klatches", space rental, transportation and other costs associated with outings, destination entrance fees, guest speaker expenses, subsidies for elderly/needy members, newsletters and handouts, administration and workshop equipment and supplies, and door prizes (not involving the sale of tickets), etc.

3. Cash Donations

Individual branch members can donate whatever they want to whomever they want. And they may, as individuals, designate one of their members to collect individuals' donations, to give them to a charity agreed upon by the group. It's best to choose a registered charity, of course, to help avoid scams. One particularly worthwhile charity for BCRTA members is the RR Smith Memorial Fund Foundation: www.rrsmith.ca

The designated member who is the "collector" should record and forward the donors' names to the charity along with the money in cases of donations of \$20.00 or more, so that tax receipts can be issued by the charity. The collected money cannot and must not go through the Branch's financial records. Not even the Branch's chequebook, if it has one. The charity can be told that these donated funds are from "the members of the Parksville Qualicum Retired Teachers", but definitely not from the Branch itself.

This past Christmas, **Barb Brett** was our designated collector for Salvation Army money.

4. Fundraising Draws

If Branch members wish to do fundraising during their meetings, they can. Just take a few minutes break from the agenda, but the minutes would just show that you took a break without any mention about fundraising.

To do fundraising, three (or more) members just form into a loosely organized, separate, informal group. Such a group would need to give itself a name that distinguishes it as totally separate from the Branch. The name could be something like "the Retired Educators of Oceanside". The fundraising group does not need to become registered, or fill out any forms to become in any way official. The group just needs to name/elect three of its members as the ones responsible for applying for a gaming licence, conducting the draws (raffles, 50/50, etc.), and filing reports to the Gaming Branch.

As with donations (#3, above) all of the money raised must be kept totally separate from Branch funds. Gaming proceeds can only go to BC recipients.

5. Scholarships and Bursaries

The selection of scholarship and bursary recipients is usually done by organizations set up for the purpose. Under BC's gaming laws, such organizations are known as "conduits". They may be registered as foundations or some such but; in any event, they must only be dealing with moneys to be distributed to post-secondary students in BC.

Most school districts in BC have a "conduit" organization that administers scholarships and bursaries donated by individuals, businesses and organizations. A phone call to your school district will reveal whether it is set up that way.

Larger cities and towns in BC have a community foundation that may deal with bursaries (e.g. Vancouver has the Vancouver Foundation). The RR Smith Memorial Fund Foundation (www.rrsmith.ca) is another possibility. If your Branch members wish to grant scholarships or bursaries, they must set up a separate group, as in #4 above, and then find a suitable conduit organization.

The Parksville Qualicum Retired Teachers Association did not offer a scholarship to local high school students for this school year (June 2017), but the executive is working towards setting up a Qualicum School District Scholarship account for next year.

In December 2016, the Canadian Harambee Education Society (CHES) received PQRTA's annual donation of \$600. For December 2017, we need to set up an alternate plan to cover our designated student's education in Tanzania.

6. 50/50 and Raffle Draws

The BC Gaming Branch is well along in a process of streamlining its operations and making life easier for gaming licence applicants with most of the paperwork done online. The appropriate licence for small groups is a Class D Gaming Licence. The cost is \$10 for a single event or repeated events throughout the year. www.gaming.bc.ca

Our branch cannot do fundraising in its own name. A separate group must be formed, under a different name. The group can be informal.

Your event requires a gaming licence if the following are involved:

- a) consideration – people must pay to participate, e.g. by buying a ticket
- b) chance – winners are chosen by a draw
- c) a prize – a prize is awarded to the winner of a draw

VOLUNTEERS:

One person willing to collect and record donated funds for **CHES**
(Canadian Harambee Education Society)

Three or more people willing run **50/50 Raffle draws**



BCRTA Heritage Committee:

The Heritage Committee wishes to raise awareness about the House of Commons Bill C-323 which supports the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties in Canada. We would like to draw the attention of members to the opportunity to learn more about the proposals to save and renew historic places in Canada for our future enjoyment and education.

On March 23, 2017, Members of Parliament voted **YES to Bill C323**: An Act to amend the Income Tax act and create tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic property in Canada. This bill passed the second reading and will continue to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development for sixty days of consideration. Then, it's back to the House of Commons for a third reading before going to the Senate to become law.

<https://www.nationaltrustcanada.ca/get-involved/hcf-news/yes-bill-c-323-%E2%80%93-act-create-tax-incentives-rehabilitation-historic-property-%E2%80%93-act>

BCRTA Membership Committee – March 24, 2017

BCTF (BC Teachers' Federation) has generously stated that they will mail out BCRTA membership applications to teachers that are "about to retire". This will be a tremendous boost to reaching new retirees. Hopefully, we can entice new members!

New this Year: The BCRTA Board endorsed FREE membership for any eligible new comers to the BCRTA and its branches to begin at any sign-up time after January 1, 2017 and extending to the end of the next membership year, July 31, 2018.

Those joining now will get a few extra months of free membership before the "official" start in June/July 2017. Any one joining since January 1, 2017 is eligible to apply for a refund as part of this free membership offer.

There are prizes given to branches with most increased members, so let's see how many **new members** we can get to **join for FREE!!! \$50 value!!!**

Ask your friends and any others that you know are retired teachers from here, there, or where!!! Have them try it **FREE for one year!!!** Get them to contact BCRTA:

Email: laurie@bcrt.com

Toll Free: 1-877-683-2243

WELCOME TO NEW PQRTA MEMBER:

Leanna Garner – retired principal from Qualicum School district



PQRTA - PAST EVENTS: R. Elaine Young (Program Chair)

Thursday, March 9, 2017 – Deep Bay Marine Station Tour and “High Tea”

An educational and fun trip! We saw and felt many sea going creatures. We learned about the Deep Bay Marine Station’s algae growing operation to feed and grow oysters.



Bob & Carol Hickman admire the sea-pens!



The gray whale skeleton is AMAZING!!!



The touchy-feely tank was interesting for Eva Hilborn and Barb Thorsell.



What story is Elaine Young (far right) telling to Guest Nell Thompson and Member Pam Cochrane?



Kath Hewitt (guest) checked out the sea star. No longer called a starfish, as it's not a fish! It's an echinoderm, closely related to the sea urchin and sand dollar.



The High Tea lunch was yummy!!!
Left to right: Life Members Eva Hilborn and Yolande Catalan with member Rita Levitz

At Deep Bay Marine Station, we also learned that micro-plastics are the scourge of our oceans. (See March 2017 Newsletter: Micro-fibers) We held a bottle of small particles that looked like little grains of plastic sand which come from some toothpastes and facial products. These particles cannot be filtered and end up in our oceans where fish eat them, instead of the food that they need.

I was shocked to learn that my toothpastes (Colgate Total and Crest Pro-Health) contains micro-plastics! EGADS!!! Check the label on your products for its ingredient list!

BEAT THE MICROBEAD PLASTICS: <http://www.beatthemicrobead.org/>

Tiny particles of plastic have been added to thousands of personal care cosmetic products sold around the world. These micro-bead plastics, hardly visible to the naked eye, flow straight from the bathroom drain into the sewer system. Wastewater treatment plants are not designed to filter them out microbeads and that is the main reason why they contribute to the Plastic Soup swirling around the world's oceans. Sea animals absorb or eat micro-plastic beads. These microbeads are passed along the marine food chain. Since humans are ultimately at the top of this food chain, it is likely that we are also ingesting them. Absorbing microbeads from the food we eat. Micro-plastic beads are not biodegradable and once they enter the marine environment, they are impossible to remove.

To learn more, watch the 2 minute video called "Plastic Soup", at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=voWTPAE9pqQ>



Micro-plastics by any other name! These include, but are not limited to, Polyethylene (PE), Polypropylene (PP), Polyethylene terephthalate (PET), Polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) and Nylon (PA). Check your toothpaste, shampoo, facials, and cosmetics!

Here's a list of 67 micro-plastics that cause problems in our environment, at the following:

http://www.beatthemicrobead.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Microplastic-ingredients_Jan-2017.pdf

SCRUBS/PEELINGS, FACIAL CLEANSER/ & SHOWER/BATH products contain micro-plastics!

Brand Names include:

- Aveeno,
- Clean and Clear,
- Clearasil,
- Neutrogena, and
- Olay

Check the complete list of products here:

<http://www.beatthemicrobead.org/product-lists/>

For general information about microbeads: <https://www.5gyres.org/microbeads/>



SPRING = Garden Time! **BEES NEED FLOWERS!!!**

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/issues/wildlife-habitat/projects/save-the-bees-and-butterflies/>

Almost 90 per cent of the world's plants rely on pollinators like bees and butterflies for fertilization and reproduction, including over 70 per cent of the major crops that feed us — everything from apples, tomatoes, raspberries and peppers to chocolate, coffee and almonds.

But pollinators are in trouble. Honeybee populations have been in serious decline. Canada's 800+ species of wild bees are experiencing similar problems. And species like monarch butterflies are at historic lows.



The good news: We can all play a part in bringing back the bees and butterflies!

- GROW milkweed and other butterfly and bee-friendly native wildflowers in your yard or balcony
 - AVOID using pesticides or herbicides in your yard or garden
 - CONTACT at least one school, faith group, business or other institution in your neighbourhood about planting a butterfly garden
 - CALL local garden centres and nurseries to ask them to stock shelves with native milkweed and pollinator-friendly plants
 - TAKE ONLINE ACTION: support the growing movement to ban neonicotinoids and to help bring monarchs back from the brink.
- Sign the petition here: <http://action2.davidsuzuki.org/neonics>



<https://bringbackthebees.ca/>

Honeybees have thrived for 50 million years. So why have colonies recently started dying en masse? Renowned entomologist and bee specialist Marla Spivak reveals four reasons why, and what we can do to help. Watch this 15 minute "Ted Talk" video to learn facts about bees: https://www.ted.com/talks/marla_spivak_why_bees_are_disappearing?language=en

Bees need wildflower nectar and pollen to stay happy and healthy, so planting wildflowers is a fun and easy way to help the bees.

Bees have good colour vision. That's why flowers are so showy. They especially like blue, purple, violet, white and yellow.

Let's plant some wildflowers

Here are some expert tips:

1) *Spring is the best time to sow seeds. Wait until the possibility of frost is over before sowing.*

2) *Wildflowers will flourish in most soil. If grass or weeds are growing there now, so will wildflowers.*



3) *Aggressive weeds can take over your wildflower garden, so continue to weed the area, especially in the first year.*

4) *In the fall, mow your wildflower garden at a high level and leave any clippings as they will have seeds in them.*

5) *Wildflower seeds are light, so choose a less windy day for planting.*

Get **FREE** seeds: <https://bringbackthebees.ca/Contest/Index>

Create A BEE Friendly Garden:

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/food-and-our-planet/create-a-bee-friendly-garden/>



All creatures that eat plants (including humans!) depend on pollinators. Three-quarters of the foods we eat — fruits, nuts, vegetables, and herbs — need pollinators to reproduce.

You'll triple the yield of fruit and veggies in your garden — no more lumpy strawberries or shrunken squash!

Even what seems like a small contribution (just a tiny flower pot or patch) can provide valuable pollinator habitat.

Watch the 4 minute video: "David Suzuki's Queen of Green – Bees, Bath and Beyond"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46AqN7jVfFo>

If you have 53 minutes, then watch this video: "Nova Tales from the Hive" (2012)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FtKqic69xVo>

Build A Bee House:

Canada is home to hundreds of bee species of all sizes. The smallest is the size of the head of a pin! Some live below ground, some above. Every single species is beneficial to plants.

About the size of houseflies, Blue Orchard bees (*Osmia lignaria* aka "mason bees") are so named because they create rows of cells in their nests divided with walls of clay. A single female will visit as many as 17 flowers per minute.

House walls: an empty milk carton (waterproof) with the spout cut off — leave the bottom intact — or a box about that size made of wood scraps (not cedar).

Paint a wooden house a bright colour with exterior zero- or low-VOC (volatile organic compounds) paint. At first, the bees will fly around taking mental "snapshots" of their potential new home, but they'll soon learn to make a bee-line to their new abode. If you plan to make more than one bee house, be sure they're different colours.

Fill the box with layered stacks of brown paper nest tubes, which you can buy at a garden store. Cut the tubes to six inches (15.75 cm) long, closing the end with tape or a staple, or fold them in half. Commercial nest tubes are 5/16 of an inch (.79 cm) in diameter, the exact size of an HB pencil. Make your own by rolling a piece of brown paper around a pencil, then pinch off the end and seal it with tape.



Hang the house somewhere out of the rain, facing south or east, at eye level, once the temperature outside has warmed to 12-14° C (54-57° F).

Dig down below your garden soil adjacent to your bee house until you expose the clay layer, or keep a bowl of moist clay near your bee house for the masons to use as construction material.

It may take a full season for the bees to find your house. If you don't have any luck attracting locals, you can also purchase mason bees from a garden store or local bee keeper.

Make A Bee Bath



Bees and other beneficial insects — ladybugs, butterflies, and predatory wasps — all need fresh water to drink but most can't land in a conventional bird bath without crashing. "They're like tanks with wings," says bee master Brian Campbell. "They need islands in the water to touch down on."

Line a shallow bowl or plate with rocks. Add water, but leave the rocks as dry islands to serve as landing pads.

Place the bath at the ground level in your garden. (Put it near "problem plants" — those that get aphids, for example — and the beneficial insects that come to drink will look after them.) Refresh the water daily, adding just enough to evaporate by day's end.

Provide Nutritious Bee Food

Bees eat two things: nectar (loaded with sugar, it's a bee's main source of energy) and pollen (which provides proteins and fats).

Choose a variety of plants that flower at different times so there's always a snack available for when bees are out and about. (Rule: native plants attract native bees and exotic plants attract honeybees.)

Flowers bred to please the human eye (for things like size and complexity) are sometimes sterile and of little use to pollinators. Native plants or heirloom varieties are best.

Bees have good colour vision — that's why flowers are so showy! They especially like blue, purple, violet, white and yellow. Plant flowers of a single species in clumps about four feet in diameter instead of in scatterings so bees are more likely to find them.

Bee species all have different tongue lengths — adaptations to different flowers, so a variety of flower shapes will benefit a diversity of bees.

These plants, organized by when they bloom, are just a few of the species that attract bees:

| Early Season | Mid-Season | Late Season |
|--------------|------------|-----------------|
| Blueberry | Blackberry | Aster |
| Cotoneaster | Cat mint | Beggar's tricks |
| Crabapple | Catnip | Borage |
| Cranberry | Chives | Coneflower |
| Crocus | Dahlia | Cornflower |
| Foxglove | Hyssop | Cosmos |
| Heletrope | Lavender | Goldenrod |
| Hazelnut | Raspberry | Pumpkin |
| Heather | Sunflower | Sedum |
| Primrose | Yarrow | Squash |
| Willow | | |
| | | |

Don't Pull That Dandelion!

It's one of the first spring foods for our precious bees.



Let's not kill off anything that helps the bees.



www.gmofreeusa.org



More resources: <http://www.nanooseediblesfarm.com/resources.html>

Create A Butterfly Friendly Garden:

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/10-tips-for-a-monarch-friendly-garden/>



Here are 10 tips for making your garden a happy place for butterflies, birds, bees and other critters.

1. **Start small.** You can always enlarge the garden later on as you gain confidence.
2. **Get help.** Engaging the local community is the key to your success. Educate them!
3. **Locate the garden in a sunny area.** Butterflies and most butterfly-attracting plants need bright sunshine.
4. **Nectar and host plants.** Think two kinds of plants: nectar sources and host plants. Butterflies visit flowers in search of nectar to eat so you need to have nectar-producing flowers in your garden. But you also want to have host plants that provide food for caterpillars and that will lure female butterflies to lay eggs on them. Different kinds of butterflies require different host plants.
5. **Think water source.** It will be very difficult to keep your garden alive during the summer or periods of drought unless you have an easy water source. Is there a faucet nearby, or can one be created? In the long-term, carrying buckets may not work. Soaker hoses buried in the ground are also a good idea. Mulching the garden will save water and suppress weeds; lawn clippings are good mulch.
6. **Include both annuals and perennials.** Use native plants where possible. Both seeds and seedlings of native plants can be purchased locally and planted directly in the garden in either mid-June or late August/early September. Seeds can be started indoors in late winter and transplanted into the garden as seedlings in the spring. Using native plants provides butterflies, insects, birds and mammals of your area a food source they can use throughout the growing season.
7. **Consider having a damp area or shallow puddle in the garden.** Some butterflies drink and extract minerals from moist soil. Sometimes large number of butterflies will gather for a drink, "puddling".
8. **Consider placing flat stones in the garden.** Butterflies often perch on stones, bare soil or vegetation, spread their wings and bask in the sun to raise their body temperature.
9. **Plan for plants to bloom through the growing season.** Butterflies are active from early spring to late fall. Plant a selection of flowers that provide nectar throughout the entire growing season. Remove spent blooms (deadheads) on a regular basis to encourage new flowers and continuous nectar.
10. **Do not use pesticides in or near the garden.** Most traditional garden pesticides are toxic to butterflies. Use predatory insects or hand remove pests.



2016 TAX SEASON — ELIGIBLE MEDICAL DEDUCTIONS

Here's our annual check list to help you complete your 2016 Income tax return to your maximum advantage. We don't offer income tax advice but can say that any eligible medical costs that you pay, that exceed 3% of your net income, can be deducted when you complete your income tax return this year.

Eligible medical expenses are those payments made by you or your spouse that were not reimbursed by MSP, EHC, or the Dental Plan. Some examples that you should include:

1. Your portion of payments that you made for prescribed medications. Use the listing found in your Caresnet Account from Pacific Blue Cross to track your medical and dental expenses, but be sure to check the totals at the bottom of the page; there may be errors or duplications.

2. Any additional payments to a medical doctor, dentist, or paramedical service provider. Your insurance plan typically pays for a percentage of these medical costs; you may claim the portion you paid on your tax return.

3. Premiums that you paid to Pacific Blue Cross, Johnson's or any private health service plan. The amount that you paid as a deduction from your pension, for EHC and Dental insurance, can be found in Box 135 of your T4A from the Teachers' Pension Plan. MSP premiums are NOT claimable.

4. Premiums paid for travel medical insurance plans:

100% of the premiums that you pay for our Johnson's Plan: EHC with Prestige Travel.

Your MEDOC premiums include coverage for trip cancellation insurance which is not deductible. You should have received a letter from Johnson Insurance in February that states your premium and the portion that is for trip cancellation. Call Johnson if you don't have the letter. (1.800.563.0677)

5. Other amounts paid:

To public or licensed private hospitals.

For respite care - up to the maximum allowable.

For artificial limbs, wheelchairs, crutches, hearing aids, prescription eye glasses or contact lenses, dentures, pacemakers, prescription drugs and certain prescription medical devices that are not covered by your insurance plan.

For attendant care, or medical care in an establishment.

Relating to guide and service dogs.

For travel costs if you travel a significant distance for treatment.

Search: "Which medical expenses are eligible?" at www.cra-arc.gc.ca for the complete list.

A couple may combine all medical expenses on one tax return - often the one with the lowest income - to gain the highest value deduction. And you can also choose the most advantageous 12-month period to combine your claims. You may need to get tax advice to maximize your deduction.

Tax Information for Membership Fees

Are my BCRTA membership fees tax deductible?

Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) permits amounts related to your employment for union dues and dues required to keep a professional status to be claimed on your income tax. BCRTA membership fees, therefore, are ineligible for any tax deduction.

Fees paid to a voluntary membership-based organization serving retirees are ineligible to be claimed at tax time on line 212.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

Do you celebrate Easter? If yes, then what do you do? Where do you go? Who do you see? What are your traditions or stories that come to mind at Easter time?



Eugenia Taggart: I always celebrated Easter in my childhood and when children were around. Usually there were baskets with coloured eggs and one special chocolate one. Of course Sunday school was always a must!

Lucinda Hendren: I do not celebrate Easter any more, but I used to have some fun.

In Northern Ireland, we hard boiled and decorated eggs. My Father taught me how to pick the blooms off the whins (the prickly gorse bush, which is invasive here.). The eggs were boiled in water with lots of whin blooms and they came out a pleasing yellow, You painted the eggs with a face. On Easter Sunday, after church in a new straw hat decorated with ribbons and tiny flowers, we picnicked and rolled the eggs down a primrose covered hill until they cracked. Then you ate them.

The bakeries sold chocolate eggs which had been decorated with icing sugar flowers. They were absolutely beautiful. The baker would ice your name on the egg too. I was given an especially large one as Easter often coincided with my April birthday, but as I received a large egg it was an expectation that I share it with everyone. Huh!

When I was teaching, every year I had one day when I taught the art of Pysanke, (Ukrainian Easter eggs). The students were very competent and the results were really good. I still have the whole kit; dyes, kistkas(pens), beeswax, patterns etc, in my garage. One day I'd love to share the skills again.

Sally Hemingson: I'm looking forward to my 25 year old Grandson visiting me from Vancouver this Easter. This will be the first time he'll be here on his own. Rather nice that he wants to come and visit his Granny. Easter has changed over the years but I'm usually with some family members on Easter day for a meal.

Val Dyer: Yes, I celebrate Easter. We have ham and scalloped potato dinner with friends in, at home. My husband (Terry) and I came from very large families, where money was a scarce commodity, so we never had Easter baskets. Instead, we put our hats under the bed for the Easter Bunny to fill – a tradition which, still to this day, we practice. Easter Bunny always leaves lots of Cadbury's Easter eggs in Terry's hat and the bunny usually leaves some "Oh, Henry" eggs for me.



Betty Ann Acres: I only celebrate Easter through the music of the great composers and of course choral music.

Yolande Catalan: I used to, but not anymore, now that I'm alone. We used to go with all my sisters and the family for a picnic. It was fun. Then we had lot of pleasure seeing all our kids looking for their hidden eggs. That was very good times.

Nancy Whelan's Easter Tales:

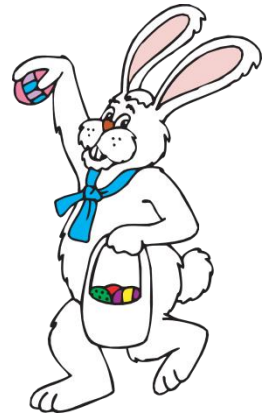
1. When teaching Grades I, II, and III at the old one-room Horne Lake School in the 60's we had all been looking forward to the Easter holidays (now known as Spring Break) and for the last afternoon before the holiday I had planned a great Easter egg hunt in the field and woods around the school. I had scurried about hiding the eggs very early that morning and we planned to head out for the hunt in good time before the homebound buses arrived. Alas, by noon the sky had darkened and before long the school ground and surroundings were covered with snow! Luckily, I had saved enough eggs for my own children and handed them out, as a disappointed class left the school that afternoon.
2. I spent part of the Easter holidays with my new husband, Jack, travelling in our camper and hiking into San Josef Bay near the top end of Vancouver Island. As we sat eating our lunch on a sandy spit, I found an old dessert spoon buried in the sand ... it still resides in my cutlery drawer; wonder what tales it could tell?



Roy Devereaux:

Yes, we always have Easter brunch or dinner with family or friends. Love to celebrate all special days and occasions.

One time, my Dad got into his white long johns, wore gloves, ears etc. to dress up as a life size Easter Bunny for his grandchildren. They all cried when they saw him, especially when his cotton puff tail fell off!



Kathy Zahar:

Yes, I celebrate Easter. Traditionally, it's an Easter egg hunt with children and Easter candy. This year, we are going to see friends/family who have children and will go on an Easter egg hunt in Grand Forks and then Salmon Arm the following day.

Andrea Vevers: 'Historically' in my Welsh Methodist upbringing---

Maundy Thursday -- was the first day to gather. Rehearsals for the Good Friday Cantata was one reason - but the main historical reason which was emphasised was:

Handing out of 'Maundy Money': 1 groat (4p) threepence, half-groat and a penny (UK)



- Specially minted for the occasion and legal tender.
- These coins were in red and white leather purses.
- Money in the red purse in lieu of food and clothing.
- Money in the white purse, the Maundy coins.

From the 15 Century, the amount of Maundy coins related to the years of the Sovereign's life.

In 2009, each recipient was given 2 purses:

Red purse contained 5Pounds- celebrating 500th anniversary of accession of Henry 8th and 50p coin to mark the founding of Kew Gardens--

White purse contained 83pence in Maundy coins as the Queen was then 83.

Recipients are men and women retired pensioners, recommended by the clergy and ministers of all denominations in recognition of service to the Church and community.

I remember well -- our Reverend John--being presented with these coins in the small pouches, by the Minister of our church - at the rehearsal tea!!

Now -- we celebrate with friends around our dinner table -- and share stories of these historical events -- and update with others as they participate in modern religious events over the Easter weekend.

Cathy Van Herwaarden:

This year, I'm sure that I'll have to wear my bunny ears, at least once! Still a child at heart!

As a child, I remember climbing onto a stool to be counter height with all the mugs filled with coloured dye. It was very magical to watch the hard boiled eggs turn colours. With lots of patience, we would make striped eggs, too, by holding each end of the egg in the dye with the wire egg holder. Sometimes, we'd use the clear wax crayon to write on the egg before dying and it was very magical to see the invisible writing show up. Then, the basket of eggs was stored in the fridge for the Easter Bunny to find for our egg hunt. Also, I always got a new dress (usually pink and home-made) complete with a new hat to wear to church on Easter Sunday. Mom used to bake a bunny cake, too!



During my teaching career, I did the usual crafty items with the elementary students. One year, we created Easter bonnets and had a parade through the school. As well, I always got the children to make a stand-up bunny card with words: Some "bunny" loves you!!!



During early adulthood, the Van Herwaarden family began the tradition of travelling to Newcastle Island for an afternoon picnic and Easter egg hunt with many nieces and nephews. It was always fun to see the rabbits hopping about and watch the excitement of the children finding chocolate eggs. I'm sure that some were left behind for others to find, too.

For my son, the Easter Bunny made a trail of small chocolate "poops" from his bedroom door, down the stairs and ended at his special Easter basket with a big chocolate bunny. Later, the Easter egg hunt for the dyed hard-boiled eggs would begin!

Speaking of chocolate...

Research Shows That Eating Chocolate Cake for Breakfast Is Good For the Brain And The Waistline

<http://tipsforhome.net/health-tips/science-shows-eating-chocolate-cake-breakfast-good-brain-waistline/>



There is nothing quite like a nice piece of chocolate cake, and most of us have likely been tempted by that piece of cake in the refrigerator first thing in the morning. To be honest, many of us have not only been tempted by the cake, but we actually have indulged ourselves.

As it turns out, science is now showing that, not only does chocolate cake have benefits, you have no reason for guilt. Some 968 people between the ages of 23 and 98 participated. The study followed the dietary habits of the people, and those habits were not changed in order to take part in the study.

According to what they learned, chocolate has a positive effect on cognitive performance and if you eat it regularly, it can improve your memory and abstract thinking. At the Tel Aviv University, another study revealed something rather interesting. When they ate chocolate cake every morning, it helps them to work. They also found that eating cake regularly might just help a person to lose weight. Dr. Daniela Jakubowicz found that the brain needs energy when you wake up immediately.

Your body converts food and energy more efficiently in the morning, so that piece of cake is less likely to end up on the waistline. When you eat chocolate cake later in the day, the body is more likely to save it as fat reserves.

According to the study, it was important to eat chocolate before 9 o'clock in the morning. People who eat protein, carbohydrates and a 600 calorie dessert tend to lose more weight than those who ate a 300 calorie breakfast at a later time.

Why is chocolate so beneficial to the health? One of the reasons is because it contains flavonoids that are found in plant-based foods. They are available in high quantities in the cocoa beans. Incidentally, you will also find flavonoids in red wine. Coincidence? I think not! When you get right down to it, there may be no reason to avoid that chocolate cake for breakfast. Life is too short to stress over those small things anyway!

But then again....

**The Truth behind the Chocolate Industry Will Leave a Bitter Taste in Your Mouth
Your Chocolate Was Probably Made by Child Slavery, but a Dutch Company Aims
to Change That**

By Chelsea Davis, February 15, 2017

<https://www.pastemagazine.com/articles/2017/02/the-truth-behind-the-chocolate-industry-will-leave.html>

Photo by Chris Hondros/Getty

In our modern-day society, it's hard to believe that child slavery still exists, and furthermore, that many people unintentionally help perpetuate this archaic and inhumane practice. I'm certainly a culprit, along with anyone else who's indulged in a Hershey's bar or a gold foil-wrapped Ferrero Rocher chocolate in their lifetime.



The two biggest producers in the world—Ivory Coast and Ghana—account for roughly 60-70 percent of the global cocoa supply. According to a survey of the child labor in this area, over 2.3 million children were working in cocoa production and 2 million children were involved in hazardous work in cocoa production in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana combined. Even more troubling is the fact that the total number of children subject to child labor saw a 21 percent increase over the previous survey from five years earlier. As of 2015, over 90 percent of the estimated 2.3 million children working in Ghana on the cocoa plantations are working as slaves.

In 2002, a chilling documentary titled ***Slavery: A Global Investigation***, brought national attention to the chocolate industry's usage of child slaves, igniting outrage among consumers and activists alike. From routine beatings to inhumane living conditions, the film offers a rare look into the lives of former child slaves on the Ivory Coast.

80 minute prize winner: <http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/slavery-a-global-investigation/>



The film makers spoke with freed children who reported that they were often beaten with fists and belts and whips. "The beatings were a part of my life," Aly Diabate, a freed slave, told reporters. "Anytime they loaded you with bags (of cocoa beans) and you fell while carrying them, nobody helped you. Instead they beat you and beat you until you picked it up again."

Watch the CNN Chocolate Slave video (only 1:38 minutes):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eHDxy04QPqM>

After in-depth investigations on the conditions of child workers, the news made its way to Congress, which led to legislation asking the Federal Drug Administration to introduce "slave-free" labeling for chocolate products sold in the United States. However, just before the bill made it to a vote, the chocolate industry—**Hershey, Nestle, and Mars** included—made a promise to self-regulate and implement voluntary standards to end child slavery in their businesses by 2005. This **deadline has repeatedly been pushed back, with the current goal now at 2020.**

Here's the real kicker: the chocolate industry has yet to make any significant strides to end child slavery, and the problem has arguably gotten worse. While the future of the chocolate industry's commitment to producing slave-free chocolate may seem bleak, there is hope. Amsterdam-based **Tony's Chocolonely** is on a mission to change the industry by making 100 percent slave-free the norm in the chocolate industry.

Upon discovering that the world's largest chocolate companies were buying cocoa from plantations using child slavery, Dutch journalist Teun van de Keuken ('Tony') decided to take matters into his own hands. After eating 12 chocolate bars, he subsequently turned himself into the police as a 'chocolate criminal,' citing that he had bought illegally manufactured chocolate products. After pushback from the courts and other key players in the industry, he sought out four boys who had worked as slaves on a cocoa farm in Ivory Coast to testify against him. Though Tony never got convicted, Tony's Chocolonely brand was born, and in 2005 the first 5,000 Fairtrade, 100 percent slave-free chocolate bars were produced and recently entered the U.S. with the launch of their chocolate in Portland, Ore. in fall 2016.

"As far as we know, we are the only company that uses fully traceable beans from Ghana and Ivory Coast," explained Tony's Chocolonely's American Brand Builder. "Most of the initiatives from other companies invest in programs that improve the productivity of farmers, but these farmers do not necessarily deliver beans to the companies that finance these programs. We think traceability is a very important—if not the most important—step because it makes the company directly responsible for the farmers and their families.

Tony's takes pride in disrupting the industry and standing up for the less fortunate with one percent of Tony's Chocolonely net revenue donated to its Chocolonely Foundation—supporting projects to eradicate slavery in the cocoa chain.

The court ruling that chocolate companies do not have to tell their consumers if they use child labor, means that big brands such as **Hershey, Mars, and Nestle**, can hide their unethical profit-making practices. So don't assume an unmarked label means anything. Steer clear of the big brands, and replace suffering-filled chocolate with organic makers who can look you in the eye and promise you that; no child was harmed in the making of this chocolate.

These seven chocolate companies benefit from child slave labor:

- **Hershey**
- **Mars**
- **Nestle**
- **ADM Cocoa**
- **Godiva**
- **Fowler's Chocolate**
- **Kraft**

BEWARE

These big companies produce brands like:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| - Crunch | - Snickers |
| - Kit Kat | - M & M's |
| - Aero | - Twix |
| - Cadbury | - Mar's Bar |
| - Hershey's | - Toblerone |

These socially conscious companies do not profit from child labor:

- **Clif Bar**
- **Green and Black's**
- **Koppers Chocolate**
- **L.A. Burdick Chocolates**
- **Denman Island Chocolate**
- **Gardners Candie**
- **Montezuma's Chocolates**
- **Newman's Own Organics**
- **Kailua Candy Company**
- **Omanhene Cocoa Bean Company**
- **Rapunzel Pure Organics**
- **The Endangered Species Chocolate Company**
- **Cloud Nine**



<http://usuncut.com/news/beware-of-these-10-popular-chocolate-brands-that-exploit-child-slaves/>

However, chocolate is still NOT good for dogs!

PET DANGERS YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT:

By Nancy Dunham on February 6, 2017

http://www.moneytalksnews.com/10-pet-dangers-you-dont-know-about/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=email-2017-02-06-am&utm_medium=email&subscriber=yes

You love your pet and would do anything for him/her — but sometimes even minor missteps can lead to severe illness or worse. Consider these little-known dangers that might just put your pet in jeopardy, and learn how to keep your furry family members safe.

1. Beware tennis balls



Yes, your dog loves to play fetch, but tennis balls can prove deadly. Dogs' jaws can compress balls in such a way that they pop into the back of the dogs' throats and block air passages. Small balls can also be swallowed and suffocate your pooch. That's what happened to Oprah's beloved Golden Retriever several years ago when it found a ball it was not supposed to use. What to do? Keep games of fetch lively and fun — and never let a dog play unsupervised.

2. Keep plastic Easter eggs out of reach



Yes, they can choke an animal; but they can also damage their digestive system, if they are ingested. And beware of Easter grass the fake grass often used to fill Easter baskets. Ingesting that can cause a pet to choke or severely damage their intestines. Keep plastic Easter eggs well out of reach and consider using paper instead of plastic Easter grass.

3. Forego Easter lilies

Many people love the smell of lilies but don't realize they are among the most poisonous plants for cats. If you have an Easter lily, watch your pet for vomiting, lethargy, loss of appetite and other warning signs of poisoning. If you suspect your animal ate the plant, immediately seek emergency veterinarian care. Your best bet? Keep these blooms out of the house.



4. Keep cleaning products out of reach

We know cleaning products are dangerous to kids, of course, but we sometimes forget they are dangerous to pets, too. Keep cleaning products well out of reach out pets. Also, make sure floors, furniture and other surfaces on which you've used cleaning products are dry before you allow a pet in the room.



5. Don't allow random drink stops

Pets get thirsty and will sometimes stop to drink out of puddles, drain spouts and lakes. You don't know what's in that water — anything from chemicals to pollutants or worse. Keep fresh water and a bowl ready for your pet at all times.



6. Discard food container bags

Sure, pets often come running when they hear the crinkle of a food container bag opening, but keep them far away. Dogs have died after becoming trapped inside food bags. Pets have also eaten food bags and been severely ill or died. Keep them away.

Foods Your Pet Should Never Eat

By Melissa Neiman

<http://www.moneytalksnews.com/slideshows/7-foods-your-pet-should-never-eat/?all=1>

Pets love treats, especially “people food.” Even the most unsentimental owners find it tough to look into their pets’ loving eyes and turn them down as they beg for table scraps.

But in many instances, refusing “human food” to pets does them a favor — and may even save their lives. Following are seven foods that can have serious, even dire, consequences if consumed by your pet.

1. Alcohol

Refusing to share spirits with your pup may seem like common sense. But in case you get the urge to offer beer, wine or liquor to your furry family member, know that doing so can be dangerous.

Alcohol impacts a dog’s liver and brain in the same way booze affects humans. But it takes far less alcohol to do damage to your pet.

Just a little can cause vomiting, diarrhea, central nervous system depression, problems with coordination, difficulty breathing, coma, even death. The smaller the dog, the greater the effect.

2. Avocados

Guacamole may be your go-to party appetizer, but if your pet gets a hold of the creamy dip, there will be little cause for celebration.

*Avocados contain an element known as **persin** in their leaves, fruit, seeds, and even bark. Persin is incredibly toxic to most animals, including dogs, cats, horses, birds and rodents.*

The presence of persin in animals can cause many symptoms, such as:

- Difficulty in breathing
- Severe congestion
- Inflammation of the mammary glands
- Accumulation of fluid around the heart

Just a tiny amount can be harmful, and in the worst case it may be fatal. So keep your avocados where your pets can’t get to them.

3. Onions, garlic, chives, shallots and leeks

Onions, garlic, chives and leeks are dangerous for both dogs and cats, regardless of whether they’re raw, cooked, powdered or dehydrated.

All veggies in the Allium family can cause serious damage to your dog or cat’s red blood cells, causing them to burst. Other consequences include anemia and kidney damage. Weakness, diarrhea, vomiting, or discoloured urine are signs that your pet may have ingested these veggies. Raw is more dangerous because the active ingredient is more concentrated, but cooked is also harmful.

A small dose on occasion probably won’t hurt, but consuming a large amount in one sitting or smaller amounts on a frequent basis can cause poisoning.

4. Chocolate, coffee and other foods with caffeine

You may have heard that that you shouldn't give your pet chocolate. The same is true for other products containing caffeine, including coffee.

*These products all contain substances called **methylxanthines**, which are found in cacao seeds, the fruit of the plant used to make coffee, and in the nuts of an extract used in some sodas.*

When ingested by pets, methylxanthines can cause death in the worst-case scenario. In other cases, your pet may experience:

- Vomiting and diarrhea
- Panting
- Excessive thirst and urination
- Hyperactivity
- Abnormal heart rhythm
- Tremors
- Seizures



The darker the chocolate, the more danger it poses to your pet. White chocolate, for example, contains the fewest methylxanthines, while the highest level can be found in baking chocolate.

5. Citrus

Keep your pet away from lemons, limes, oranges, grapefruits and other forms of citrus. Stems, leaves, peels, fruit and seeds of citrus plants contain varying amounts of citric acid. These essential oils may depress your pet's central nervous system depression, if ingested.

If your pet eats a small amount, it likely won't present as a medical emergency. Small doses, such as eating the fruit, are not likely to present problems beyond minor stomach upset.

6. Milk and dairy

Did you know that the majority of both cats and dogs are lactose intolerant? Their digestive systems simply cannot handle cow's milk and other forms of dairy, including ice cream.

Feed your pet a saucer of milk and it is likely to end up with stomach upset and diarrhea.

7. Fruits (grapes, raisins, and currants)

Cats aren't fans of sweet foods; but keep your dog away from grapes, raisins, and currants. These fruits can cause kidney failure. Symptoms range from upset stomach to seizures, paralysis and more. Immediate treatment can save your pet, so don't delay.

8. Yeast dough

This warning goes out to all bakers: Make sure your dog or cat keeps its paws off of your yeast dough, which can expand in the stomach, resulting in increased gas in the digestive system. At a minimum, your furry friend will experience great discomfort.

A more severe reaction might include the rupturing of your pet's stomach or intestines. It is recommended that "bread-based" treats comprise no more than 10 percent of your pet's overall calories.

9. Nuts, especially Macadamia Nuts

It's recommended that you keep your canine away from all nuts, but macadamia nuts can be especially dangerous to dogs. Why? Experts aren't sure. Nobody has really figured out the toxic principle here.

10. Raw meat

Consuming uncooked meats, which can contain deadly bacteria like E. coli and salmonella, is a dangerous practice for both humans and dogs.

11. Fried and fatty foods

A dog's pancreas can become inflamed from eating overly fatty foods, which results in its organs producing enzymes that can damage intestines.

12. Salty snacks

If your dog consumes too much salt it can cause sodium ion poisoning, which often results in excessive thirst, fever, seizures, vomiting and diarrhea. It's almost like dogs get drunk.

13. Moldy foods

Make sure your dog doesn't have access to moldy foods in the garbage or in a compost heap.

Some Nutritious & Delicious Treats for your Pet

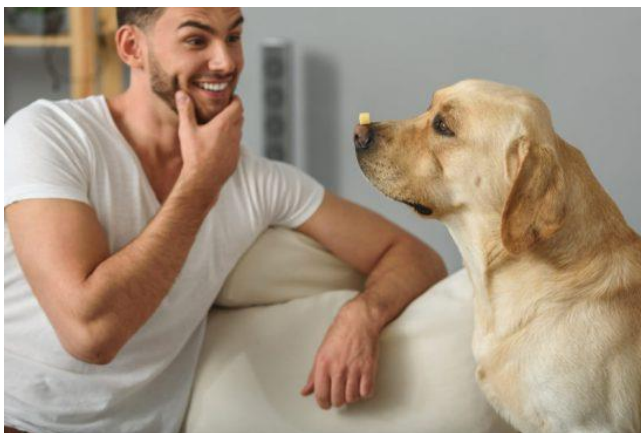
http://www.moneytalksnews.com/6-healthy-treats-for-your-dog/#at_pco=cfd-1.0

By Melissa Neiman on March 13, 2017

Most dog owners know that it's not a good idea to feed a pup table scraps or other unhealthy snacks; but if you're a sucker for a pooch's mooching ways, we have some good news: There are many healthful treats that you can offer your dog.

Each dog is different, and some pets might have health conditions that make certain types of treats a bad idea; but for most healthy dogs, here are six nutritious and delicious treats that won't cause your vet to fret.

1. Cheese



When dishing out dog treats, it's good to go with Gouda — or cheddar or Swiss.

Most dogs simply adore a tidbit of cheese, making it a great high-value reward for training. Just mind those calories, and keep in mind that softer un-ripened cheeses are more likely to cause stomach upset.

Cheese is also a great vessel for disguising your dog's medications.

2. Fruits and vegetables



When it comes to fresh produce, what's good for man is typically good for man's best friend.

Just like us, dogs need the vitamins and fiber contained in fresh fruit and veg. Most dogs love crunching down on baby carrots or chewing through green beans.

Keep in mind there are exceptions to every rule. Vegetables are fine, but not some fruits (grapes, raisins or currants) can cause kidney failure in dogs.

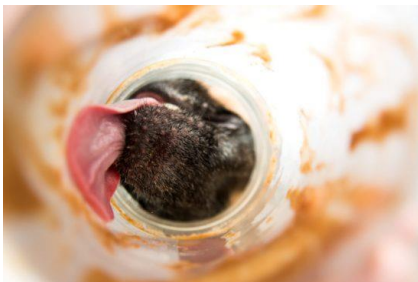
3. Oatmeal

You're not the only member of your household who can start the day with some warm and hearty oatmeal. Experts say that it is especially good for senior dogs with bowel irregularity issues.

Just make sure to cook it before serving, and avoid unhealthy added sugar and flavoring.



4. Peanut butter



Want to butter up your four-legged friend? Stuff some raw, unsalted peanut butter into a Kong treat dispenser for hours of delicious entertainment.

5. Yogurt

Yogurt is a great source of calcium and protein for humans and canines alike. Select a yogurt with live active bacteria and no sugars or artificial sweeteners.

The active bacteria may act as probiotics. If your pooch is pudgy, make sure that you pick fat-free yogurt but not one that contains fat substitutes (e.g., Simplesse or Olestra).

Frozen yogurt also makes a great treat during warm-weather months.



SPOT THE RETIRED TEACHER IN THE NEWS:

Least worn piece of jewelery in Qualicum Beach

WENDY MAURER
NEWS Contributor

Have you ever thought about how objects give us special access to the past? How we use objects to tell stories? Objects can also be a way to experience a story. There is an object in Qualicum Beach that does just this. It is the Chain of Office worn by the Mayor on ceremonial occasions and also shown to school children on school visits to the Town Hall as they learn about the role of local government. Such an object can inspire interests and discussions. Imagine you are a school child and get the chance to try on such a special item. I expect the conversations at home that night would be very interesting.

For centuries Chains of Office have honoured high officials. They are also a ceremonial keepsake to be passed on, an important piece of public history. Ever wonder how the Town of Qualicum Beach Chain of Office came to be?

Former Qualicum Beach Mayor Art Skipsey (1977 - 1990) tells a story of an event in Victoria. Apparently "all of the Mayors from Victoria and its neighbouring communities went to greet Queen Elizabeth II, and her husband, Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh when they came to the City on a Royal visit. The Mayors were all wearing their chain of office, except the Mayor of Oak Bay. Being a small municipality, the Mayor didn't actually have one... but apparently, Prince Phillip leaned over to the Mayor of Oak Bay and said "so, do you save your Chain for special occasions?"



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY QUALICUM BEACH MUSEUM

Front row: Doug Robertson, Art Skipsey, Jack McCaskell; Back row: Mark Brown, Leo Klees, Jack Collins, Orlan Rye.

Art decided the Mayor of Qualicum Beach needed a chain of office. He personally commissioned master silversmith, Ernest Murray, to handcraft the sterling silver Chain of Office. Symbols meaningful to the Town were chosen. "The chain includes the Maple Leaf (for Canada), the Dogwood (for British Columbia), and the native stones - jade, rhodenite and flowerstone for the precious resources of our land." The chain also includes the Town crest created by Simon (Sam) Little in 1942.

Mayor Skipsey presented this gift to the Town on the occasion of his retirement,

December 3, 1990. It even came with its own special case made of Yew wood from Vancouver Island. Yew was selected because historically yew has had a connotation of endurance. At that time the chain cost about \$3,000 and took the artist about three months to create.

Subsequent Mayors have worn the Chain for their inauguration and at select special occasions. If Royalty returns for another visit, we know our Mayor will have appropriate regalia, thanks to Former Mayor Art Skipsey.

My thanks to Art Skipsey and his daughter, Ann for providing background information.

If you have a Qualicum Beach story you want me to share with readers please let the museum know. 250-752- 5533. Be sure to follow us on FB, use our website for information www.qbmuseum.ca and visit the museum: winter hours Tues. & Thurs. afternoons 1-4pm. 587 Beach Road.

The Museum Archives is currently looking for photos of the Totem Pole when it was at the beach and also of the Scout Hall which has recently been demolished. We are happy to scan your photos and return them. 250-752- 5533.



a
younger
version
of Art
Skipsey!



Thanks for the local history lesson!

From ELAINE YOUNG – School District 69 Trustee and PQRTA Program

BC School Trustees' Association – Public Education is the Key Campaign (Publicly released at March 28th School Board Meeting)

Here's a 7 minute video with Patricia Daly speaking about Early Childhood Development:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLrBAjwv MNMDsNiQpGB9cDP-5cnFVshR&v=Og9_XFc_Ebg

No matter what your political orientation, this campaign will interest anyone who supports Public Education. Check out their website: <http://www.bcsta.org/>

Here are some ideas that can help to spread the word:

1. Define, for yourself, why Public Education is the key and talk about why Public Schools matter to you. I've made a couple of T Shirts to use as a walking billboard.
2. Talk with sector leaders about why Public Schools matter in their sector. No matter who you talk with, you will be surprised by their responses.
3. Make certain everyone you know is registered to vote and that they do vote. Democracy only works when folks participate and so please do!
4. BCSTA has videos and posters. Take a look and spread the word.

If you are interested in more information, please check out my Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=r%20elaine%20young>



Qualicum School District 69 is now hiring Teachers Teaching on Call (TTOC). Do you know of anyone that may be interested???



Recycle stamps!

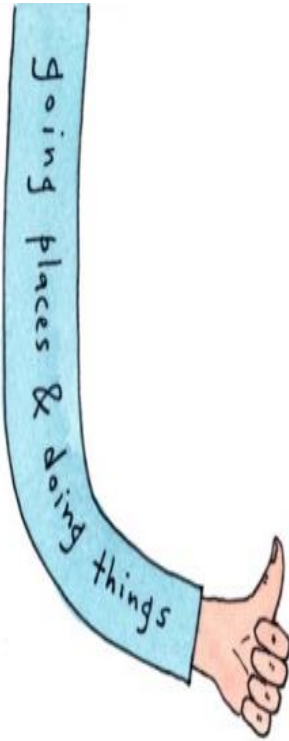
USED POSTAGE STAMPS

Thanks to Jo Ann McNulty for her large collection of postage stamps that will help our local cancer patients.

Save your used postage stamps for donation to the Order of the Eastern Star (OES) who sells the cancelled stamps and uses the money to make specialized bandages for local cancer patients.

Just cut out the cancelled stamp from the envelope while leaving about half an inch of paper around the outside edge. Pass along your collection of used postage stamps to me and I'll drop them off to Dorene Benny for OES.

Parksville Qualicum
Retired Teachers are
busy in the business
of retirement!!!



What are you up to???

Please let me know for
our next newsletter!
cathyvanh@gmail.com



GOINGS AND DOINGS:

Cathy Van has attended some live concerts: Rodriguez, Lyle Lovett with John Hiatt, Tanya Tucker, and pianist Avan Yu.

Cathy continues to sew for others. Just ask, if you need some mending, hemming, creating, or altering done!

Jule Briese:

Just finished facilitating my six week Elder College session titled Nurturing Our Inner Garden to an amazing group of ten women. This session is being offered once again through the college in late fall. I am presently participating in Ann Toby's Elder College mind stretching session "Beyond the Nature/Nurture Debate".

My second book *Reflections - An Inward Journey* is on the cusp of being launched.

The winter that wrestles with spring on a positive spin has created ideal conditions on Mount Washington for Nordic skiing.

Sharon Ives:

- Recently moved from her house into a condominium in Qualicum Beach
- Going on Caribbean Cruise with her husband Patrick

Carol Scott:

- Cruised to New Zealand and Australia with her husband Doug

Carol Hickman:

- Participated in "Break Out, Nanaimo" and proudly escaped the locked room with her family and had two minutes to spare! Good clue detecting!
- Spent 5 weeks in Hawaii
- Beginning renovations on cabin at Sproat Lake

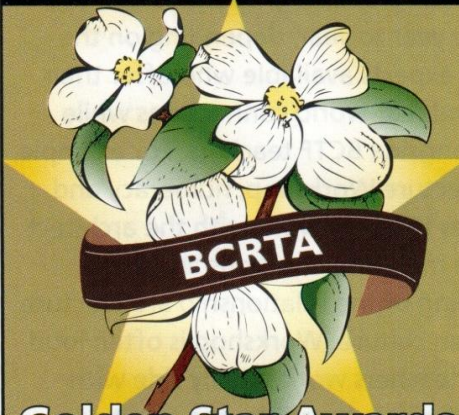
Diane Williams:

- Loving her first year of retirement and doesn't miss going to school!
- Did some boating with her sister
- Enjoying having time to make daily visits to her elderly father

If you know of a PQRTA member who needs some sunshine in their life, due to illness or a loss in their family, please contact:
Colleen Craig: cocraig@shaw.ca or 250.752.3762

Jeff Lord: Oct. 13, 1925 to Jan. 7, 2016

BRITISH COLUMBIA RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



Golden Star Awards

Five \$1,500 Awards
for programs K to Grade 12

Plus one \$1,500 award

Sponsored by the
Legion Foundation
(BC/Yukon Command)

Celebrating programs that feature the interaction of seniors and students

Awards will be given to
current public school programs that

- feature the interaction of seniors and students
- require students to think and work creatively
- access and use the community as an information source
- require students to work cooperatively with each other and outside sources
- use a variety of media to record and display results.

Submission deadline: April 15

Submission guidelines and more information:

Web: www.bcrta.ca

Phone: 1-877-683-2243 or (604) 871-2260

Email: laurie@bcrta.com or kristi@bcrta.com

April 15th Deadline for \$1500!

Spread the word!!!

Brant Wildlife Festival



The Nature Trust
of British Columbia

APRIL

There are so many fun, interesting, exciting events taking place for this year's Brant Wildlife Festival. Keep checking to see what's coming up!

<http://brantfestival.bc.ca/>

For More Details of Parksville and Qualicum Beach Events

<http://www.visitparksvillequalicumbeach.com/events-2017-4/>

What's On Digest – Vancouver Island Events

<http://parksvillequalicum.whatsondigest.com/next-month>

Eyes on BC – Life on the West Edge

<http://www.eyesonbc.com/>

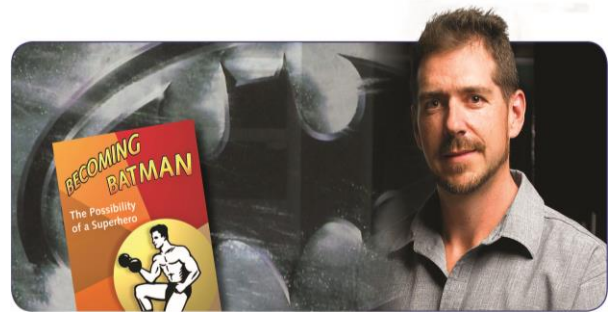
ELDER COLLEGE: Saturday Speakers - Everyone Welcome!

Nanoose Place Community Centre 2925 Northwest Bay Road, Nanoose Bay

- ▶ \$10 cash/person at the door
- ▶ \$5 cash for University students with valid student card
- ▶ Free for high school & elementary school students

APRIL 22, 2017 – 10:00 to 12:00 ***Science, Superheroes and Society***

Presenter: E. Paul Zehr, PhD (neuroscience)
Communicating science is a necessary and rewarding activity, but finding compelling, relevant and timely points of linkage between challenging scientific concepts and the experiences and interests of the general public can be difficult.



Superheroes represent an element of popular culture that is well understood by many. Linking scientific messages to aspects of Batman, Iron Man, Batgirl and Captain America can help spread science as widely as possible. And it's fun, too.

E. Paul Zehr, PhD (neuroscience) is an award winning science communicator, professor, author and martial artist. His books "Becoming Batman", "Inventing Iron Man", and "Project Superhero" use superheroes as metaphors exploring the science of human potential. In 2015 he won the Science Educator Award from the Society for Neuroscience and Project Superhero won the Silver Medal for Juvenile fiction from the Independent Book Sellers of North America.

April 22nd is Earth Day!

This year marks Canada's 150th birthday! Celebrations across the country are highlighting our great outdoors. At a time when most children spend less than an hour per day outside, we're asking everyone to **EarthPLAY for Earth Day 2017: Connect to your nature!**



UPCOMING PQRTA EVENTS and REMINDERS:

For Program, contact Chair Elaine Young:
revis3@shaw.ca or 250.586.8112

April 1, 2017 – Change Pacific Blue Cross to Green Shield Canada

Members who receive Pacific Blue Cross benefits from the Teachers' Pension Plan should have received their welcome package telling them about the change to Green Shield Canada.

Please direct your calls and questions to the following:
Teachers' Pension Plan, Client Services, BC Pension Corporation
Toll Free: 1.800.665.6770 or Email: TPP@pensionsbc.ca
Learn more about the new carrier: <http://www.greenshield.ca/en-ca>



Submit FINAL medical claims to Pacific Blue Cross, before June 30th.

April 11, 2017 – 11:00 – Tour of Kathok Centre (Buddhist Temple), followed by lunch at Cuckoo's Trattoria and Pizzeria in Coombs Menu: https://www.oldcountrymarket.com/content/Main_Menu.pdf



April 14 – Good Friday

April 16 – Easter Sunday

April 17 – Easter Monday

April 22 – Earth Day

April 29 and 30 – Advance Polls for Provincial Election

May 11 – Tour and High Tea at Milner Gardens – details later

June 14 – AGM and Potluck Picnic at Rotary Park on Qualicum Beach



PQRTA EXECUTIVE and CONTACTS:

President – Cathy Van Herwaarden

Vice-President – Lucinda Hendren

Past-President – Kay Howard

Treasurer – Ellen Coates

Secretary – Marg Hoverman

Program – Elaine Young

Membership – Laurel Johannson

Heritage – Sharon Cox-Gustavson

Communication – Val Dyer

Phoning Contacts – Jan Graham and Nancy Whelan

Social Concerns Contact – Barb Brett

Historian – Vacant, but thanks to Jim Swanson for updating our website, at the following:

<http://bcrt.ca/bcrt-branches/107-parksville-qualicum>

