

NEWSLETTER OF THE DELTA BRANCH OF THE  
B C RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

# THE TRUANT

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough. Unknown*

I'm not sure about you but I'm really looking forward to the end of 2018. It has been at times, busy, fruitful annoying, satisfying, frustrating, uneventful, stressful and worthwhile. The new year inspires renewed hope and enthusiasm not only for the world at large but for us tucked away in our little corner of Canada. So, to bring the DRTA year to a close please plan to join with old friends and colleagues and have some fun and celebrate at our Christmas luncheon. This year our host is the Delta Golf Course off Highway 10 in East Delta. It promises good food, prizes and surprises with seasonal entertainment provided by our very own Backer Turner Overview.

As we have done in the past, donations to the Deltassist Food Bank are gratefully accepted and delivered to their Ladner office. Prior to bringing your food donation of non-perishable food please check that the expiry date on the cans or packaging is current or staff at Deltassist must throw it out. Cheques and cash donations are especially welcome and if you would like a tax receipt please place your donation in an envelope along with your name and address, and place in the basket at the registration table. A receipt will be mailed to you.

Your executive debated how to price the turkey buffet and decided to subsidize each meal and keep it at \$30 per person. We hope everyone will want to come. Wear something festive and get into the spirit. Please email or call me at [pat.thiesen@gmail.com](mailto:pat.thiesen@gmail.com) or 604 943 1817 to confirm your place. Pat

Buffet Lunch – Delta Golf Club, December 12<sup>th</sup> 2018 – 11.30 for 12.00 noon

Thanks to the BCRTA office for sending out this newsletter.

DELTA RETIRED TEACHERS' EXECUTIVE 2018/2019

|                  |                 |              |  |
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Submissions for Truant to [sscribe@telus.net](mailto:sscribe@telus.net) please!

DRTA Executive Board Meeting, November 14<sup>th</sup> 2018

Present were Pat Thiesen, Sheila Gair, Annie Coblin, Peter Scurr and John Henderson.

I had sent out the wrong minutes but we accepted them and the agenda and moved on! Lois had sent the treasurer's report for us to look over. We apparently received Burnaby's rebate cheque but Pat has made contact with the office and ours will be coming out to us shortly. We need to have a bank balance before our next lunch! Pat will have a report from the BCRTA AGM somewhere in this issue. I went along as a delegate as did Val Windsor. Val made it back onto the school board for which we congratulate her and she will represent our board at the BCPSEA.

John had prepared all the paperwork for the scholarships – for the staff and students and we looked them over. Art work is Peter Scurr's department and he had several versions of a new banner to run by us plus the advertising for the Christmas lunch on the 12<sup>th</sup> December at the Delta Golf Course.

Little has come Annie's way so far from the wellness committee but with so many new members the BCRTA committees are still finding their feet. Pat told us that we are covered by ICBC for any travel we do on behalf of our district or the BCRTA. She had visited Carla Qualtrough (Delta's MP) on the 13<sup>th</sup> November with the petition for C-27 but Carla is not at liberty to accept it so it will end up in JoAnn Lauber's hands next week when the BCRTA meets downtown.

Delta won a trophy and a box of chocolates for the largest percentage increase in membership for the past year – applause all round! We tested the chocolates and let the DTA staff have a taste. Pat will bring the trophy to the Christmas lunch. There will be three of us on the welcome table at the Golf Club and space for BTO to play for us. We are giving an honorarium this year to the group in lieu of a free lunch. There will be a zone meeting with Langley in April, and Tim Anderson at the BCRTA will give Pat a hand in getting a website up and running and connected to the BCRTA.

Patricia handed over the new membership lists and hopes to get some cards out to our very oldest members – and I encouraged submissions to Truant from all. Sheila Gair

## Staying Healthy Vol. Two

We're now squarely into the 'Flu season. I hope everyone has gone to the Drug Store, Supermarket with a Pharmacy or their family doctor and got your shot. I was at the BCRTA offices last month when they offered the High Dose Fluzone Vaccine that I wrote about last Truant. It was the best flu "shot" I have ever had. No inflammation from the site and no tears either. Still, it cost me \$74.50 but I am now 28% better protected than I would be had I used my doctor's free offering. (FYI. In 1918-19, 50,000 Canadians died from Influenza.) We've come a long way, baby!

I'm sure most of you are limiting your intake of salt. There are so many reasons why you should reduce the sodium that goes into your body. Here's a brief bit of info about salt and sodium.

1. It adversely affects your high blood pressure and your heart.
2. Too much salt makes weight loss more difficult.
3. Sodium is known to increase your risk of kidney stones and stomach cancer.
4. Reducing Sodium intake by 25%, gives you a better night's sleep.
5. Most of us need about 1500 milligrams daily but we average 3400 ml per day instead.
6. We generally have no idea how much we are consuming especially when we eat out.
7. Changes in prepared foods aren't going to happen any time soon.

8. Keeping intake at around 2000 ml a day, could keep you from being a death statistic.
9. Processed foods and cured meats contribute disproportionately to their benefits.
10. Often what we think of as healthy choices are just the opposite.
11. Remember that sea or rock salt is the equal for table salt in its sodium content.
12. Avoid products that have 15% or more of the recommended daily allowance listed on the package.

I was at a great presentation last week about the innovative programme developed by the Delta Gymnastics Society. They have several sessions during the week at their Tsawwassen centre where seniors from nearby Residences are gradually regaining strength, body awareness and confidence doing simple exercises and balance activities. More information for you when I get it.

Here are a few "DID YOU KNOW" items.

- a. Don't put basil in the fridge.
- b. To remember it, write it down.
- c. Stay optimistic, you'll live longer
- d. The left lobe and the right lobe of your lungs are not the same size.
- e. Belonging to social groups, increases your psychological strength to endure and overcome physical challenges.

*From Stuart Minion: Put your hand over your heart. Feel That? It's called purpose. You're alive for a reason. Don't give up!*

## Report of 2018 BCRTA Annual General Meeting

From Thursday evening to Saturday afternoon, September 20 to 22<sup>nd</sup>, Val Windsor, Sheila Gair and I took part in the activities organized by BCRTA 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President Grace Wilson. The registration and meet-and-greet event, held on Thursday evening at the Richmond Hilton Hotel, gave everyone opportunities to catch up with friends and familiar delegates from all over the province. A small group of exceptionally talented young musicians from 2 Richmond secondary schools entertained with up-beat jazzy music throughout the evening.

**FRIDAY**

~~Saturday~~ morning comes early with a hearty breakfast and full schedule of meetings, discussions and information. The day's theme was Travel. To get things started, well-known BC travel expert, Claire Newell, spoke of how she got into her career. She provided great information about how to have safe and successful travel experiences. The best tip she offered was to make sure you register your trip at [www.travel.gc.ca](http://www.travel.gc.ca) which lets the Canadian government know where you are in the world and should disaster strike (tsunami, volcano, governmental overthrow, etc.), once contacted, they will be able to get you home as quickly and safely as possible. Prior to the recess break, Kathleen Thompson led the group in some stretching activities with elastic material to increase resistance while moving all areas of the body. Lots of fun.

The delegates learned much from North Vancouver's Indigenous Educator, Brad Baker, as he spoke about his personal life history which lead into his interest in implementing Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations. We concluded the morning with a variety of awards. The Golden Star Awards are given annually to teachers and classes who make significant efforts to work with/for BC's seniors. The Delta RTA was awarded a trophy for gaining the highest percentage of new members for the 2017-18 year. (The trophy will be on display at the DRTA Christmas luncheon.)

Following lunch, the delegates were formally introduced to the BCRTA's newest hire, Executive Director Tim Anderson, who spoke about how he hopes to improve the communications with the improved website and distribution of Information in BCRTA Connections and the Post Script magazine. JoAnn Lauber has spearheaded the Bill C-27 petition campaign across Canada to stop the Federal Liberal Government from passing this controversial Pensions Bill. She gave an up-date on the success of the campaign. Bob Taverner, past-President of the BCRTA, presented his slide show "Keeping Branch Presidents out of Jail" to remind all Branches on the legal limitations for fund-raising. Because we can not use members fees for scholarships, other ways must be used. Gerry Tiede then gave an update on the BCRTA's Strategic Plan. (It can be viewed on-line at [bcrta.ca](http://bcrta.ca)). The afternoon break was followed by delegates joining together in their Zonal groups

The day concluded with dinner and entertainment provided by a band called Tiller's Folly.

Saturday gives over to the official business of the R.R. Smith Foundation and the BCRTA. Judy de Vries conducted the the election of needed Directors. During the 3 days of the delegates' gathering, donations to the fund were accepted and door prizes were awarded. The BCRTA meeting then began. After a warm welcome, out-going President, Patricia Clough, let delegates know that if any branch wanted to host and all-candidates meeting prior to the Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> Provincial election, funds were available to assist in their endeavour. As the results of the election for new Executive members and Directors were tabulated, the financial statement, retention of KPMG as auditors, setting of member fees, and the proposed budget for 2019 – 20 were all ratified. A motion was passed to set the BCRTA's member fees at \$40 a year. The R.R. Smith donation remains at \$2.00 and the DRTA fees also stay at \$8.00 annually which means the total fee to be a BCRTA/DRTA member will be \$50.00 collected in September of next year. (See the list of successful candidates at the end of the article.) A motion passed giving direction to "the Pensions Committee examine the way in which COLA is calculated with a view to having the calculations reflect accurately the actual increase in the cost of living to those in receipt of a pension from

business of the R.R. Smith Foundation, presenting its financial affairs and the BC Teachers' Pension Plan." The delegates were very pleased to grant Lifetime Memberships to JoAnn Lauber, Bob Taverner and Sheila Pither. All have given much to the success of the BCRTA in so many ways. Congratulations.

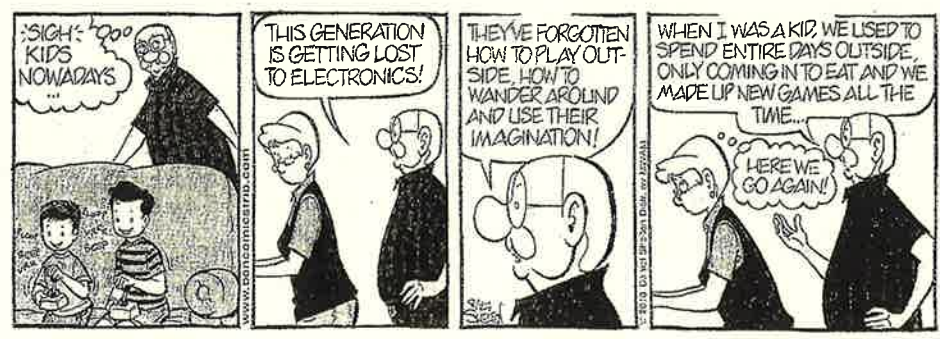
As his first duty as newly-elected President, Gerry Tiede spoke about what a few of his priorities are and his enthusiasm for taking on the task. He thanked his predecessor, Patricia and wished us all a safe trip home. Pat

**2018-19 BCRTA Executive Board and Directors**

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|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| <u>President</u>                     | Gerry Tiede  |
| <u>1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President</u> | Grace Wilson |
| <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President</u> | Charan Gill  |

New Directors

- |                               |                   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Inside Lower Mainland</b>  |                   |
| Caroline Malm                 | Dave Scott        |
| <b>Outside Lower Mainland</b> |                   |
| Androsoff                     | Sterling Campbell |
| <b>ACER – CART</b>            |                   |
| Lauber                        | Dale              |



## **WE'VE GOT MAIL!**

Wow! Where does the time go? I remember many years past studying my pension statement and it reading that the earliest date I could retire was 2014. Kim Hill, Michael Hicks and I lamented that the date was so far off in the future that we would never make it. Well, it's 2018 and I finally pulled the plug.

After teaching at Cougar Canyon and then at English Bluff I decided to transfer to Burnaby where I taught as a Teacher Librarian for the last nine years of my career. But my final years were working at the Burnaby Youth Custody Services as their TL at Fraser Park Secondary. I loved it there and felt like I had really found my 'calling' working with literature and kids whose lives and backgrounds were so different from what I had experienced previously. I also participated in a book award committee called 'In the Margins' which recommended books for incarcerated kids and youth who were living on the streets or in foster care. As the only Canadian I found it fascinating to learn more about the US system of dealing with troubled youth. Now that I have a bit more time I am thinking of rejoining the committee.

In the past year I have taken up Icelandic horse back riding and now own my own horse Morisi. It's rather different from regular riding because all horses have three gaits (walk, trot, canter) but Icelandic horses add the tolt and flying pace and I am currently working on the former. I've travelled a few times to Iceland and am planning another trip next year.

In the summer Glen and I travelled to Rwanda to see the gorillas, and Tanzania for a safari. Those gorillas are amazing and they certainly have human traits. Rwanda itself was fascinating and considering the genocide was

in 1994 they have come so far, be it with a benevolent dictator. People are no longer encouraged to refer to themselves as Hutu or Tutsi, but as Rwandans as they work towards a less tribalized society (maybe the US could learn from them). In approximately four months 800,000 were massacred and yet the people seem pretty dedicated to never allowing the horrors of this time period to happen again. It is also one of the cleanest and safest countries in Africa. Interestingly the last Saturday of every month is dedicated to cleaning your neighborhood. There are competitions throughout the month to keep the cleanest neighborhood and everywhere you go you see older women sweeping the streets and sidewalks. You literally do not see garbage anywhere.

I'm trying to convince Glen to do a trip to Nunavut to sleep in an igloo next. Enough for now, I've got to save something for a future date!

Dale Clark, DRTA member.

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## **Christmas Quiz.**

1. What colour are mistletoe berries? 2. What was the name of Scrooges' partner? 3. Name the three kings 4. What is the opening line of The Christmas Song, by Nat King Cole? 5. Which city claims to be the birthplace of the first 'ugly Christmas sweater? 6. What was 1980's best selling Christmas gift? 7. How many ghosts are there in a Christmas Carol? 8. The red and white costume of Santa Claus was allegedly first introduced by what beverage company? 9. Which Christmas Food is considered good luck to eat on each of the 12 days of Christmas? 10. Which country was first to issue a Christmas Postage stamp?

## OUR SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!

Dear Delta Retired Teachers' Committee

I am writing to express my sincere gratitude to you for making the Delta Retired Teachers' Scholarship possible. I was very appreciative and honoured to learn that I was selected as the recipient of your scholarship.

This September I will be attending Kwantlen Polytechnic University to complete my health foundation certificate with hopes of becoming a nurse. Throughout my five years of high school I have always volunteered with young students. This has inspired me to continue my studies in the future and specialize as a Pediatric Nurse.

The financial assistance you provided will be of great help to me in paying my educational expenses. Thank you again for your generosity and support. I promise to work hard and hope one day I will be able to help students achieve their goals as you have helped me.

Sincerely, Amandeep Kainth

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I am greatly appreciative for the wonderful opportunity of receiving the Delta Retired Teachers' Scholarship. I will use the money from the scholarship to pay for my second semester in the health foundations program at Kwantlen Polytechnic University. The health foundations program is my first step towards achieving my goal and passion of becoming a registered nurse. My future career goal is to carry on my studies to specialize in midwifery. I express great thanks and gratitude for the opportunity to achieve my educational goals and career aspirations through the Delta Retired Teachers' Scholarship. I will take this entire experience to continue to strive for excellence in my post-secondary life and in my future.

Thank you, Rhea Dutt

## SPARE TIME?

Gray Elementary is having another "Read the Day Away" day on Friday January 18<sup>th</sup>. On this special day students in classes throughout the school will spend the day doing literacy based activities, primarily reading. To encourage continued student engagement in reading and to make the day even more memorable and unique, we would like to invite guest readers to come to the school to read stories to students.

If you would be willing to participate by reading a story to a class or two or by talking about your experiences with books and/or writing we would be very pleased to have you join us. You could either bring your own favourite book or I can provide a selection of suitable books you could pick from.

Please let me know if you wish to participate. Activities will be happening all day, starting with an assembly first thing. Please let me know the time you are available as well as the age group you would like. If you have any questions call me, Kim Watson, at 604 594 2474, or cell phone 604 916 0460 – email : [kwatson@deltasd.bc.ca](mailto:kwatson@deltasd.bc.ca)

## VANCOUVER OPERA GUILD.

For all opera lovers, there are escorted tours to The New York Metropolitan Opera, March 30<sup>th</sup> to April 6, 2019 – to Britain and Paris from July 6<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> 2019 and to Santa Fe from July 29<sup>th</sup> to August 4<sup>th</sup> 2019.

For more information including the titles of the operas to be presented at each location and to book your tour, please contact Lis Dawson, at 604 922 8008 or Genny Maclean (Great Expeditions) at 604 738 5535.

## President's Column

The intent of this column is to update you with the goings on at the BCRTA and how what is done could possibly affect you as well as letting you know what's been happening in the DRTA.

Sheila Gair, Val Windsor and I attended the BCRTA-AGM as the DRTA's representatives in September. (You should be able to find my AGM report elsewhere in this newsletter.) I had been thinking over the last several months, that I might be able to do more for you DRTA members if I got more involved with those on the Executive Board of the BCRTA who are drafting, formalizing and implementing the new ideas and policies. As a result of that thinking, at the AGM, I applied to become a provincial committee member. I thought being on one committee would be enough to get acquainted with the goings-on. You know the saying about "best laid plans"? I was assigned to not just one committee but two. So, I have made a two-year commitment to the Member Well-Being Committee and the Communications Committee. Will I end up more knowledgeable? At this point I don't know, but I will be very busy helping to develop "Green Sleeve" packets for BCRTA members throughout the province, writing articles for both the BCRTA Connections and the Post Script while gaining a better understanding of how we are being served and what more can be done for our annual fee of \$48 or \$50.

About 2 years ago, I suggested to the Executive that we should have more visibility, something that helps teachers (generally those nearing retirement) see that we are active, social people whose lives didn't stop or end just because we retired. To that end, Peter Scurr, our 2<sup>nd</sup> VP and *artiste extraordinaire*, took on the task of creating for us a DRTA logo and to incorporate the logo into a display that will identify us, who are we, at our luncheons, at Pro-D Days, and at any event we've been asked to attend. I'm not

going to tell you what he came up with, but check it out at the luncheon. We're pretty excited.

I know most of you went to the polls last month to vote for new city/municipal leaders and for school board trustees. Some of you were happy with the outcome while the rest of you will have to wait 4 more years to try to get the leadership you want in place. I personally would like to congratulate 2 of our members who campaigned hard and long for a seat at a leadership table. Sylvia Bishop ran, though unsuccessfully, for the hotly contested position of Mayor after sitting several years as a Delta councillor. Val Windsor was successful in her campaign for a third term on the Delta School Board of Trustees. Thank you both for stepping up to positively represent the people of Delta.

I hope by now you have cast your ballot in the BC Referendum 2018 on Electoral Reform. If you haven't already done so, you have until Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> to get the envelope to Elections BC. At press time, just over 28% of eligible voters have sent their choice in. Do it, or don't complain about what transpires.

Earlier this fall, I sent out a request for any DRTA member who would consider tutoring as a volunteer at the Delta Transition House, called Azure House. I realize the job has limited appeal due to the secrecy needed to keep the location private and the volunteer needing to have an up-to-date Criminal records' check as well as the time spent with the student would be, at best 3-4 weeks in duration. Please give this opportunity to serve the community consideration. Thanks.

The BCRTA and Delta police are again warning of several incidents of fraud being perpetrated in our area. One of the latest nasty invaders on the internet comes in a version of "Phishing", a scam where someone sends out an e-mail assuming the identity of a person known to the receiver of the e-mail. Several of these have been sent out using **my** e-mail address. If you receive a request from me for money or cash cards to be sent



personally asked you for money before? (And I likely never will.) You can always call me at home to verify if I made the request. Again **THINK** before you do something that could be very costly to you.

On a lighter note, a University of Victoria post grad has sent out a request for “young” retirees (age 57 – 69) who have been retired between 2 – 10 years to complete a confidential survey lasting 25 – 30 minutes about how you decided to retire (not relating to money) and how you spend your time. If interested, please contact [arneh@uvic.ca](mailto:arneh@uvic.ca)

I know this is early to request but if anyone would like to join me in attending the Metro Fraser Zonal meeting in April, please let me know. It’s a great way to meet some of the RTA members from other Branches south of the Fraser.

Angelika Hedley forwarded the Vancouver Opera Guild’s announcement of their planned Escorted Opera Tours for 2019. Please look for details in this issue. They look very tempting.

Everyone, enjoy the rest of 2018 and the holiday season. Look forward to and relish all the promise and potential that 2019 holds. Pat

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#### Trivia answers:

1. White
2. Jacob Marley
3. Melchior, Balthazar and Caspar
4. Chestnuts roasting on an open fire
5. Vancouver BC
6. The Rubik’s cube
7. Four
8. Coca-cola
9. Mince meat pies
10. Canada



#### HODGEPODGE!

Our president has sent me such a volume of material that I am very short of space, so several possible columns, unfortunately already written will be severely pruned, so bear with me.

We are missing Vicky MacDonald, Ian’s wife who was a faculty advisor for many teachers who ended up in Delta. Friend Bonnie Chapman who moved to Grand Forks reported that Paul Steer had come to their lunch as he has moved to Midway. The travel guys out of North Delta send me information and then almost right away – sorry all tours booked!

John and Della are off to the sunshine for three months, and Lynette Baldock is heading to the seniors games. I hope members will respond to Alex Watson’s request, and the Opera tour mentioned on another page

Pat writes about a scam but did not mention my involvement. I fell for ‘her’ request for some funds and had quite a conversation with ‘her’ via email over several days, and after I had deposited my cheque contacted her to see if she wanted the receipt mailed. For once I was SO relieved I use cheques because Van City had it back in my account the same day.

I complained in my Money Matters column that four of the community groups I support with a monthly cheque had all contacted me last week – please add to your donation, give a little more for Christmas, and one said build your tax receipt by sending us more! Takes all sorts.

I wonder at our new ICBC rates and the funding for the Cite C dam and for those of us in Surrey, this new Sky train plan, and the changing of the police force. Obviously our taxes will go up – and maybe that referendum will go down? Not holding my breath, but the purse strings!

Sheila

**LAST BUT NOT LEAST –**

**Nobody's perfect and here I am with a back page that I was not expecting – I had miscounted my other pages. Worse things happen at sea!**

**Our congratulations go to the two young ladies who are heading for nursing careers with some help from you and me as members of the DRTA. I wish them every success in their studies.**

**I had a note about a book launch on Saturday December 1<sup>st</sup> from 1.00 to 2.30 at the Tsawassen Library. The book is written by Diane Reid Stevens and Dave Stevens and is called Eccentric Earthlings A to Z. There will be a short presentation to start and then the books will be available for purchase and signing. Diane is a semi retired English teacher and Dave an artist and retired art teacher. You should get this newsletter before December 1<sup>st</sup> – fingers crossed with the postal strike, but a good idea for some children's gifts.**

**I suppose I could put in a paragraph or two as a letter from the editor?**

**I was thrilled to hear from Dale Clark as I remember her well. How I wish others would sit down with pen and paper, or in front of their computers and let us know how things are. Are you travelling more, getting involved with other groups, starting a new life somewhere else? I look back at my teaching life and quite honestly have no idea how I did so much. Almost all of it has gone – this newsletter and the one regular column for the Postscript is the entire extent of my activity these days - mental I mean. The physical side is just about zero though I do try and walk the neighborhood each day, though I now take my**

**walking stick with me, and have a small note in my pocket with my name, address and next of kin printed on it.**

**I miss all the people I taught with and would love to have news of them. I am not really missing the classroom and all this fuss over SOGI 123 leaves me cold, and makes me wonder how I would cope today. I am not 100% keen on things like white boards and cell phones in the classroom, and if I am ever near a school when it's time to leave, I think almost 100% of the kids have a phone to their ear. Remember the days when you sent your kids off to walk to school and that was that?**

**The seismic upgrades are another issue and while the cost is prohibitive, I feel for these parents who have to get their children to another school a mile away until the work is done. To those who ran for the school board my hat is off to you and well done Val for being there for another year. I know Pat mentioned Sylvia Bishop as well – what courage to run in an election.**

**I'm slowing down and I know a large number of you are as well. We have to adapt all the time to things like lack of energy, or some physical disability that has slowed us down. I can breathe well with the help of inhalers, and my other ailments are under control, but my bed looks more and more inviting in the early evening, and my gas bills each month hardly add to a half tank – so little gallivanting these days. My daughter has been living with me for over a year now, but she is headed off to Australia at the end of the month to visit two of her children in Brisbane – I'll have to adapt again, and not looking forward to it. Have to admit things could be worse, so button up and get on with life! Sheila**