

# North Island Retired Teachers' Association

## Fall Newsletter 2018

We have had a lot of ups and downs over the last year, deciding to take a hiatus for most of it. There was a barbecue planned for the early spring but a low response meant that it was cancelled.

Our Spring AGM had a good turnout with over 50% of our members attending. A new executive was elected and we have a new position that of Secretary-Treasurer. Many thanks to Fran Jenkins for stepping forward. This reduces the demands on our members to fill the previous executive positions as we are a small branch. I like to refer to us as an RTA "twig" but we are growing nonetheless.

Also thanks to Terry Whitney and Heather Storey who have volunteered to take on other activities.

Having missed the summer conference last year we have two members attending in September and will be representing the North Island with "bells on".

Much has happened over the last year. The Greenshield maelstrom continues to grow with many concerns going to our head office. The provincial Pension Executive people were the ones who made the decision for us to change to Green Shield. We have received a request that we send concerns directly to the pension executive who made the decision to change our medical plan in the first place.

Bill C-27 has continued to raise its ugly head, threatening to reduce our pension payments, and offering a disturbing trend towards increased taxation and “clawbacks” from hard working and deserving senior citizens. Our local branch petition has been completed and is now waiting in Rachel Blaney’s office for her to read in parliament, which she has agreed to do.

Our health care is being threatened with possible taxation on health care benefits, although there is a glimmer of hope for a national health care plan to pay for prescriptions, a continual draw on senior

monetary reserves. It is very clear that, unless we keep asking for it (squeaky wheels and all that) it won't happen.

If we rest after our years of effort, if we blink after putting in many years of experience, if we turn our heads away from our goal of a well-deserved retirement, we might lose some of our hard-earned benefits that we have laboured so hard to get.

We are dealing with politicians, good people who have stepped forward for public office, with good intentions, who get caught up in the beaurocratic maelstrom and have to try and please as many people as possible. Imagine a classroom with one hundred students which contains five different cultures, some are hungry, some can't read, some are sick, three don't speak your language and five are in the washroom.

With that in mind, I welcome you to a new year of your retirement. It's September and "To Hell with the Bell" has an added meaning. I toast all of the

teachers who are still “in the trenches”. May they have a wonderfully rewarding year.

For those teachers who are close to retirement please realize that we are here and value your contribution to the profession, your hours of conscientious attendance to the principles that make your job the most important one on the planet. The sleepless nights, the endless reports, the IEP's, the conferences, the staff meetings and the endless professional development that makes you an effective and valued professional are recognized and applauded.

To the retired teachers, some just tired, I raise my glass in your honour and thank you for making my life meaningful and productive, for giving me the goals to learn, for giving me the desire, and support, to succeed in whatever I decided to become. But most of all, for giving me the understanding and control over my own educational experience. Showing me how to learn what I want to learn and

to become what I wanted to become. You taught me how to learn for myself.

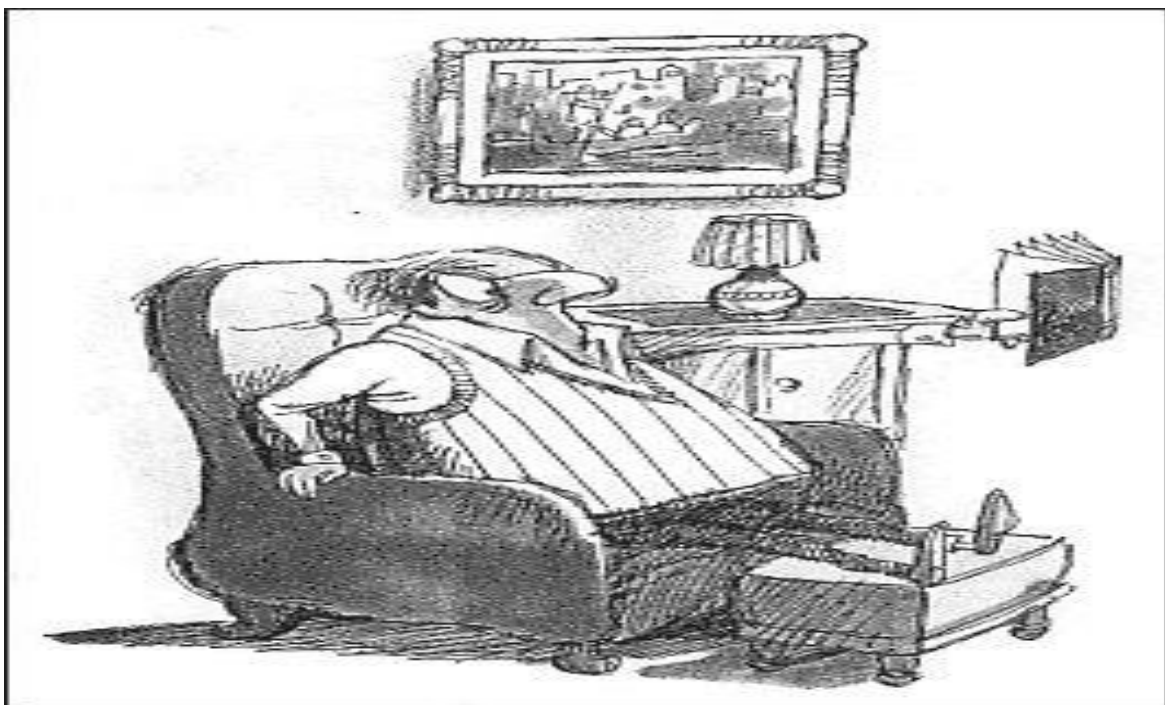
Everyone has a favourite teacher. I remember Mr. Wiley, my grade five teacher, who commented on my messy handwriting. I remember Ms. Applegate, my grade one teacher, who gave me an “O” for Reading. All of them are long gone, but their profession has not forsaken them. I drink in honour of their chosen career and profession. There is not another one like it on the planet, a profession where you can make the difference for each and every one of the students that you face, with a smile, every morning.

For those students who arrive hungry, after having a fight with parents, who come with stories of neglect, abuse and sleep deprivation, I applaud you. You came to school. You showed up to be taught. Your lives then became a pact with your teacher, to develop your goals, to develop your love of learning, to make you what you are today. Please thank your teacher for the help that they gave you.

May you have a long and productive life. May you continue to develop the skills that you possess and pass those on to your children, who, I hope, meet a teacher who will understand where they come from and add to their personal goals.

This is the beginning of a new school year. May all of the teachers out there know that the retired professionals understand their circumstances and support the drive for quality education.

May this year be positive, productive and rewarding.



## **Greenshield**

As members get used to the new Greenshield plan there are various flaws that have surfaced. The old Blue Cross plan allowed us to get teeth cleaned without an added fee being tacked on at the end of our visit.

Prescriptions were covered without the added interference from Pharmacare and an indifference to our age. I didn't have to fight to get the brand names I desired or to refuse the "generic" creams, solutions and concoctions that are being forced on us in place of the quality products we are used to.

The RTA is now considering a new plan, one of our own. Please stay tuned for more information.

## **Travel Plans**

Having made some recent trips outside of our country, I have become aware of some very expensive medical travel plans. If you go with the travel agent automatically, you may be paying many hundreds of dollars more for the same coverage.

The RTA is advertising a plan called MEDOC. It is worth looking into. There are many plans out there. All you have to do is take the time to investigate and find the plan that is right for you.

### **RTA Provincial Website Changes**

If you Google BCRTA you will find yourself at the provincial website. It is much easier to get to branch information and browse through what other people are doing. The new website is much more “friendly” and you will find it easier to get to various areas of concern.

### **Free Stuff for Seniors**

Despite the businesses who are struggling on the North Island, there are still many who offer discounts for seniors. You have worked for many years and deserve some recognition for your service.

The following is a list of North Island businesses who offer a discount for seniors.



The Bargain Shop –

Dollar Store –

Please do not be afraid to mention that you are a senior and you might be surprised with the response. As I travel I am greatly encouraged by the services offered to seniors.

It is strongly suggested that you carry your RTA membership card with you when you shop. You might be surprised at the services you are offered.

### Today the Chicken

Nasa engineers have developed a cannon built specifically to launch dead chickens at the windshields of airliners, jets and space shuttles, all travelling at maximum velocity.

The idea is to simulate the frequent incidences of collisions with airborne fowl to test the strength of the windshields.

British engineers heard of this cannon and were eager to use it to test the windshields of their new high-speed trains.

They borrowed the gun and the gun was fired. The engineers stood shocked as the chicken hurled out of the barrel, crashed into the shatterproof windshield, smashing it to smithereens, crashed through the console snapping the driver's backrest in two and embedded itself in the back wall of the cabin.

Horrified, they sent NASA the disastrous results of the experiment, asking for suggestions.

NASA's response was just one sentence: "Next time thaw the chicken first."

Hope to see you at our meetings.

Greg Murray – President (250-949-7838) Fran Jenkins –  
Secretary-Treasurer (250-956-3620)