



MP Bob Zimmer and President Gerry Tiede



MP Peter Julian with Dale and JoAnn Lauber

BCRTA ADVOCACY IN ACTION AT PARLIAMENT

On June 6, 2019, representatives from BCRTA joined dignitaries from our sister organizations across Canada to attend Parliament and see petitions for pension security presented in the House.

MP Bob Zimmer, stood in for MP Warawa who was absent due to cancer. Zimmer presented the ACER-CART e-Petition advocating for pension security. The petition, which attracted 13,720 signatures, is in the top 4% of all petitions filed with the House of Commons. 4,107 of those signatures came from BC. Great work, BCRTA!

At the same session MP Julian presented several of BCRTA's written petitions opposing Bill C-27 and gave credit to the BCRTA as a leading activist. Again, congratulations to the Branches of BCRTA for their diligent and persistent work in support of protecting defined benefit pensions.

Thursday's pre-AGM afternoon included the orientation of new delegates to ACER-CART and a presentation from the National Association of Federal Retirees (NAFR), who reviewed the basics of non-partisan issues advocacy in elections. Between

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now and the October federal election, we will be in conversation with candidates about the issues that matter to retired teachers and seniors. This session confirmed the processes we in BC usually use to plan and set up platforms to engage would-be MPs.

Owen Adams, Chief Policy Advisor for the Canadian Medical Association, provided the AGM with the issues deemed by the CMA as important in the upcoming election. The CMA agrees that the most important issue in this election will be Pharmacare. It is their opinion that it is now or never and that every organization that cares about this issue must demand a position from all candidates. CMA has the same fear as ACER-CART: that the Federal Government will propose a 'filling the gaps' approach. Filling the gaps approach is NOT the ACER-CART preferred action.

The second guest speaker was the Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister of Seniors. Minister Tassi is a lawyer who has been intimately involved in education. Minister Tassi thanked delegates for their contribution to education and reviewed the government's commitment to seniors, especially low income seniors:

- GIS now has an exemption for the first \$5000 of earned income,

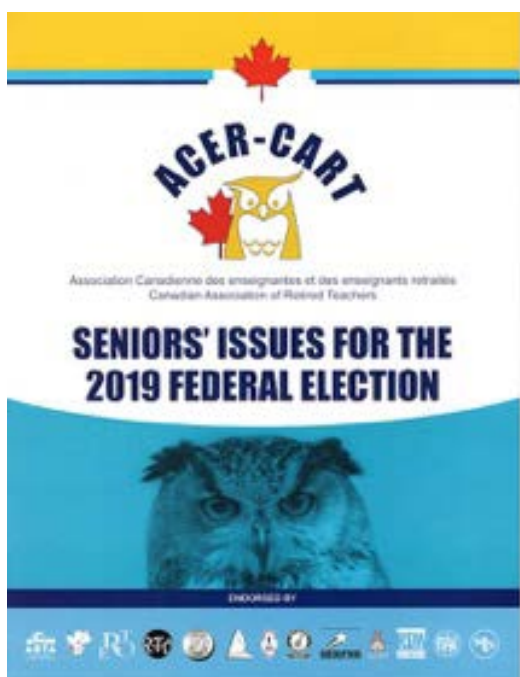
- CPP has been enhanced and now Government is working toward automatic enrollment,
- OAS application includes GIS,
- Consultation on Pension Security had 4000 respondents,
- Healthy Aging has \$75,000 for a pilot project in New Brunswick,
- \$50 million has been pinpointed over 5 years for a national dementia study,
- New Horizons for Seniors grants up to \$25,000 are available to seniors' groups to foster social inclusion and prevent senior isolation.

2019/20 ACER-CART EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President - Bill Berryman, Nova Scotia
Vice-President - Gerry Tiede, BCRTA
Regional Rep. East - Margaret Urquhart, NB
Regional Rep. Ontario - Martin Higgs, Ontario
Regional Rep. West - Marilyn Bossert, Alberta
Executive Director - Roger Régimbal, Ottawa

ACER-CART ATTENDEES FROM BC

Gerry Tiede, President BCRTA
JoAnn Lauber, Special Advisor ACER-CART
Dale Lauber, BCRTA Rep to ACER-CART
Tim Anderson, Executive Director BCRTA.



2019 ELECTION RESOURCE

ACER-CART has worked with BCRTA and other retired teacher organizations across Canada to prepare an 2019 Election Issues booklet. This booklet poses questions to candidates about their positions on four key issues:

- Making Retirement Income More Secure
- National Pharmacare
- Opposition to Privatization of Medicine
- National Seniors Strategy

Copies of the booklet will be sent to all BCRTA branches, for use by members in engaging local candidates. You can access the booklet online at:

<https://bcрта.ca/2019electionbook/>



BCRTA MEMBER SURVEY

BCRTA is reaching out to all its members to hear from you about issues that you care about, your hopes and concerns, and about the work of your association.

Survey forms have been mailed out to members as part of the Summer 2019 issue of PostScript magazine. A postage-paid envelope is included for ease of reply.

Members who respond will be eligible to win a number of prizes, including a \$100 Visa gift card, \$25 Starbucks Cards, \$10 Tim Horton's Cards, or even a remarkably rare and coveted BCRTA pen.

An even quicker way to fill out the survey and be eligible for a prize is to do it online at:

bcрта.ca/survey

Have a friend who is eligible to join the BCRTA?

- Retired Teachers
- Retired Support Staff
- Retired Post-Secondary Educators

Get all the benefits of membership and the first year is free!

bcрта.ca/join

Reflections on Being a BCRTA and Local Branch Member



As a retired teacher/administrator member of the BCRTA, I have been able to participate in many valuable and rewarding opportunities at both the provincial and local RTA levels.

I have been a member at the Provincial and local RTA since my retirement in 2007. I hold an executive position in my RTA and have been on two provincial committees for the past three years. It has been my hope that by doing this that I am contributing to the welfare and betterment of all provincial members. The friendships that I have formed through both the provincial committees and local association have resulted in lifelong connections.

My local branch has as its aim to “live for today and tomorrow, not yesterday.” Our past gives each member a common history but it is not our driver. My local branch meets four times a year for about 90 minutes. If there should be important provincial information it is shared at that time or via email or snail mail throughout the year. We often have a guest speaker to provide information on topics that have been suggested by members. We have also been fortunate to send two local members to the Provincial RTA and AGM each Fall. This keeps us connected in positive ways.

I would encourage all retired educators to open the door to the benefits of becoming a member of BCRTA and their local RTA if they are fortunate to have one. I also recommend that you look at the BCRTA website and see the many things available to active members. I recently used the *Endless Savings and More App* and saved enough money to pay for my provincial and local membership to the BCRTA for the coming year. It is reassuring to have an executive at the provincial level that supports our pension, our medical and dental benefits, and other opportunities that allow us to age with dignity.

*Elaine Thompson
BCRTA and Local Association Member*



Early Days of the BCRTA

Housing

The early days of the Retired Teachers began in Victoria and Vancouver with the two groups of retirees meeting before W.W.II as a part of the BCTF. Eventually they formed their own registered Association. The Retired Teachers Pension Action group came into existence in 1942. The major interests concerned retirees pensions, cost of living and housing.

The Retired Teachers Association of BC became a registered group under the Provincial Act, in May 1955 and was incorporated under the Society Act of BC. By 1956 the RTA had about 1,100 members. The housing needs of retirees on limited pensions was a grave concern. The President of the Federation, Mr. R. R. Smith, suggested that the retired teachers association should invest their money in Real Estate in Vancouver. This was done successfully, through Mr. Smith's real estate knowledge with the co-operation of the Finance and Advisory Committee. The BCTF was also helpful with financing, and was repaid by the retirees. Mr. R. R. Smith spoke about action taken to secure relief for some of the hardships suffered by retired teachers concerned about their housing costs. At the 1952 BCTF AGM, the Retired Teachers Section had a panel discussion on Housing for Retired Teachers. Dr. Black served as chairman. Mr. Fred Turner described the housing plans for Senior Citizens at present being instituted by the United Church of Canada. Mr. R. R. Smith, President of the Federation, discussed a co-operative Housing Scheme which might be worked out to the advantage of retired teachers on low income. Those interested were asked to write their names and addresses on a slip of paper and hand them in to the secretary at the meeting.

At the 1952 AGM it was moved by Mr. Connor, seconded by Mr. Caulfield that Dr. Black, Mr. G. F. Turner and Mr. R. R. Smith, President of the Federation, become a committee to study the feasibility of a Housing Scheme for Retired Teachers.

This Committee was to report the result of its investigation to the Executive for consideration. Mr. Smith consented to write an article on the subject for the BCTF.

BC RETIRED TEACHERS AT THE BCTF AGM 1953

A meeting of the BC Retired Teachers Section of the BC Teachers' Federation was held at John Oliver High School at 9:30 am on April 7th, 1953. Mr. Armstrong told the meeting of the purchase of property in Burnaby for a Housing Scheme for Retired Teachers and showed a map of the property. Mr. Fred Turner spoke on the United Church scheme for Senior Citizens which is proving very successful. Mr. R. R. Smith addressed the retired teachers about the Housing project and described the types of buildings which could be developed on the property. Since the property in Burnaby had been purchased through the BCTF Federation no further action could be taken until the matter had been discussed at the general meeting.

The annual meeting gave the retired teachers a year in which to show progress in the development of the property. If after a year no progress had been made the property was to be sold by the Federation. In May 1955 the senior executive officers of the BC Retired Teachers officially registered their Association.

ACCOUNTS, RETIRED TEACHERS' HOUSING PROJECT 1954

A. Account with BCTF

Paid by BCTF: purchase of Victory Heights Property	\$12,750.00
Miscellaneous (architect's fees, taxes, interest, surveyor's fees, etc.)	\$1,197.60
Total	\$13,947.60
Fully refunded by RTA to BCTF	\$13,847.60

B. Statement re: Victory Heights Property:

Anticipated gross revenue from sale of land	\$27,175.00
Charges: Purchase Price (\$12,750.00 less refund re services \$1,395.62)	
Total Net purchase price	\$11,354.38
Architect's fees	\$490.00
Taxes	\$340.22
Clearing	\$1,655.00
Registration fees	\$24.00
Total	\$13,863.60
Anticipated profit from sale of land	\$13,311.40

C. Statement re: Smith Avenue Property

Total cost -land purchased from Joshua H. Mayer August, 1954	\$19,000
Charges: Proportion of water rates, taxes, fire insurance, legal fees	\$226.98
Interest	\$300.00
Total expenditures	\$19, 526.98

Having bought the Smith Avenue property, the Retired Teachers Trust Fund indicated donations by Active and Retired Teachers, also donation and a loan from a retired teacher, so that the property could be bought, leaving a balance on hand in December 15, 1954 of \$153.58.

Having sold the Victory Heights lots with a substantial profit, the more expensive Smith Avenue property was purchased. Both active and retired teachers contributed to the funds to purchase the properties, with total pledges of \$7,431.58.

Assets: Smith Avenue property at cost: \$19,526.98
Money receivable from cash sale of Victory Heights lots: \$13,311.40

RETIRED TEACHERS' HOUSING COMMITTEE STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES DEC 15, 1954

Minutes of the BCRTA Association AGM 1959.

Mr. Smith's report on the Investment situation stated the various investments made on behalf of the Retired Teachers' Association, including Victory Heights, Smith Avenue, Shaughnessy Residential Club and the West 7th Avenue property.

The West 7th Avenue, Vancouver report-the properties at 1865, 1875, and 1885 West 7 Avenue had been purchased, giving a frontage of 150 feet on West 7 Avenue. The plans call for 32 suites: including 21 Bachelor suites and 11 one-bedroom suites. Tenders will be called during week of early April. Operations should commence about May 1, and completion by end of five months. Moved by Mr. Hill, seconded by Miss Dauphinee for plans to be accepted as read. Carried. Mr. Woodhead spoke in appreciation of Mr. R. R. Smith's great assistance to the Retired Teachers in this housing project.

In the early years of the Retired Teachers Association, the Finance and Advisory Committee were working with Mr. Willway and his Victoria Committee, as well as Alan Spragge of the BCTF giving his assistance, too.

However in 1967, the Finance and Advisory Committee advised Mr. Graham Bruce and his RTA Executive to sell the Shaughnessy Residential Lodge for retired single teachers on West 41st Avenue. It was costing the RTA \$1,600 to maintain over and above the income from the tenants.

These early documents of our BCRTA history indicate concerns about housing, and efforts to build accommodation for retired teachers, taken from the original sources of hand written or typed notes.

Barb Mikulec
Heritage Committee

Combining My Love for Animals and Children by Volunteering at the BC SPCA



Fifteen years ago, I retired from the VSTA. My entire career was spent in education in many parts of the world. Since my retirement, I have travelled and volunteered extensively. Over the last 10 years, one of my favourite volunteer activities is with the BC SPCA Education Program. It is perfect for me as it combines my love of children and dogs!

Ten years ago, my Standard Poodle, Parker, was 2. At that time, I was volunteering in other areas of the BC SPCA. When I learned about the Education Program and the opportunity to visit schools for classroom presentations, it sounded like the perfect fit for Parker and me. Since then, Teddy, our 5 year old Standard Poodle, has joined our team.



I continue to volunteer with this program as it is very rewarding to watch the children interact with my dogs and I am a huge proponent of what is being taught.

It is very important that children learn how to interact with and treat animals. Many children have had little or no interaction with animals. Teddy and Parker are perfect for this as they are calm, gentle and love the attention! It is a joy to watch how happy the children are when Parker and Teddy are in their classroom. It is even more rewarding to watch the more tentative children interact! The children learn how to safely greet dogs, give them treats and what it takes to care for a dog. To boot, there are often donations given to the SPCA!

This education program is an extremely worthwhile endeavour. If it is something you might be interested in, contact Paula Neuman pneuman@spca.bc.ca for more information. They are looking for volunteers at most of the branches around the province. You do not need a dog to volunteer for this program. They have several different presentations they offer to classrooms. The position is flexible within school hours and days.

Valerie Ramsey is a retired educator, dog lover and BCRTA Member



June is the month that BCRTA sets our budget, and a time when we review year-to-date results. For the current 2018-2019 fiscal year a projected budget deficit of \$33,415 was approved at the 2018 AGM. This year we found that fewer teachers are retiring, so our membership growth was not quite as high as we anticipated. As we reviewed the trends, directors heightened their awareness of spending, without slowing our efforts to serve members through projects in progress and organizational momentum. A detailed review by staff of all business expenditures resulted in some savings. Some directors also found savings by having fewer committee meetings when possible, saving on travel costs. The result is that while income was slightly below projected, expenses were significantly less than budgeted and BCRTA is not in a deficit position for this year.

For the coming year 2019-20, the Finance Committee is taking a cautious but more confident approach to projected revenue and expenses. For clarity of reporting, the expense section of the projected budget will look slightly different. It will enable Directors to easily track committee expenses and will also be more transparent for members. The Board will be recommending a budget with a small deficit of just over \$3,000.

To continue to provide and increase services to members, the Board will also be recommending a fee increase to \$42 for the following 2020-2021 year, which begins on July 1, 2020. This five percent increase will be the first change to fees in three years, and tracks with inflation.

In May the Finance Committee formed an ad hoc committee to review committee members' travel and accommodation eligibility. The purpose of the review was to bring clarity, consistency, and standard administrative procedures for handling expense claims. The following changes will be added to expense vouchers and the BCRTA handbook.

- Hotel accommodation for Metro area members will be provided if they live further than the Surrey/Langley border.
- In the event a BCRTA Director or member is required to attend multi-day meetings, then he/she may obtain overnight accommodation to facilitate attendance at these meetings.
- Travel and/or accommodation requests that fall outside of existing policy must have prior approval of the Finance Committee Chairperson.
- No reimbursement will be made for any unauthorized expenses until authorization has been obtained.
- In the Guide to BCRTA Zone Meeting Expenses:
- 5 (c) the rate for hotel accommodation shall be no more than \$145.00 plus tax per night.

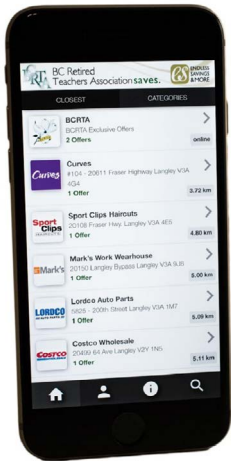
Please note that travel and/or accommodation requests that fall outside of existing policy will be considered on the basis of time, combined cost (e.g., road + air), weather conditions and disabilities.

Travel reimbursement has been increased to \$.54 per km. This is in keeping with the new BCTF rate.

Grace Wilson
1st VP and Treasurer



ADVANTAGE TIP FOR SUPER-SAVERS



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Endless Savings & More (ESM) Discounts on your Smart Phone for BCRTA Members

Download the BCRTA version of the ESM App and save on everyday purchases from hundreds of businesses including national chain retailers, service and travel providers.

To get the ESM App, go to your app store (Google or Apple). When you first download the ESM App, you will be asked for the "organization code" for BCRTA. It is: **bcrta**

For complete details, view the

[BCRTA Welcome Letter](#)

(<http://www.esmobileapp.com/files/WelcomBCRTA.pdf>)

BCRTA ADVANTAGE PROGRAM

NEW AND IMPROVED

BCRTA ADVANTAGE PROGRAM has a renewed agreement with STAPLES PRINT AND COPY. All BCRTA members receive a discount for copying and print services. See the ad below.

(Note: Print and copy area only, this does not yet apply to other retail products, we're working on it!)

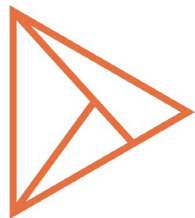
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