



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



# The **truant** *May, 2019*

*"As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands — one for helping yourself, the other for helping others." — Audrey Hepburn*

## President's Greetings

Spring has finally decided to join us with glorious days of sunshine and showers, promising warmth and astounding colours in our neighbourhood gardens. But she's in no hurry.

With our May Luncheon/AGM, this year concludes with many emotions especially those of loss and grief as well as trepidation for the future of this Branch of the BC Retired Teachers' Association. With two of our most valued members on the Executive Board no longer able to continue their roles and no one putting their name forward to run for office to help with the work, the future is not looking as bright as it once was. If you have some time to spare a couple of times in the year to work with Peter, Lois, Della, Annie and me keeping members informed of the benefits of being in the organization, please consider putting your name forward to be our Secretary, or our Membership liaison, electronic communicator or even the Editor of this, our Newsletter, the Truant, please let me know.

For this May Luncheon/AGM, we will again be at the Delta Golf Club in East Delta. With the idea of keeping our costs at \$25 per meal, the buffet will be a "do-it-yourself" Soup and Sandwich extravaganza. Everyone has a good time when they join us for lunch, so phone/text/tweet friends and colleagues an invitation to come for a good time.



### Delta Golf Course – May 15th

**11:30 am for 12 noon - \$25**

Free Parking

**To confirm your attendance,**

**please e-mail Pat at**

**[deltaretiredteachers@gmail.com](mailto:deltaretiredteachers@gmail.com)**

**or call (604)943-1817**



Spring has arrived!

## **Your Executive Board**

President	Pat Thiesen	<a href="mailto:deltaretiredteachers@gmail.com">deltaretiredteachers@gmail.com</a>
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice-President	Della Henderson	<a href="mailto:dellamrh@gmail.com">dellamrh@gmail.com</a>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-President	Peter Scurr	<a href="mailto:petergrantscurr@gmail.com">petergrantscurr@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Lois Wilkinson	<a href="mailto:rlwilk@telus.net">rlwilk@telus.net</a>
Secretary	_____	
Membership	_____	
Truant Editor	_____	
IT Contact	_____	
Member-at-Large (Well-Being Contact)	Annie Coblin	<a href="mailto:acoblin@hotmail.com">acoblin@hotmail.com</a>
Member-at-Large	_____	



***Such a good-looking group – December, 2018***

## **President's Column**

I mentioned in the Winter, 2018 Truant that I volunteered/applied to join a Provincial Committee and was put on 2. I now meet with really interesting committee members from all over the province from places I don't expect ever to see again like Smithers, Courtney/Comox and Peachland. Their experiences have been very different from mine, but their commitment to bettering the lives of RTA members is most gratifying. We meet every 2 months or so to discuss initiatives of the RTA or of the local branches. With the Policies and Procedures of the RTA getting overhauled, discovering the purpose behind each committee is sometimes quite a challenge. Hopefully the struggles will end before the October Annual General Meeting rolls around.

Many ideas were exchanged at the most recent DRTA Executive Board meeting on April 17<sup>th</sup> even though there were only 4 of us present. After the usual beginnings to a business meeting, Lois walked us through her Treasurer's Report and the proposed Budget for 2019-20. Both were approved. We accepted the idea of a Scholarship Donation "Piggy Bank" be made available at the sign-in table so members can contribute toward our fund. Peter has agreed (for the time being) to act as our Communications/IT person. Also, he is currently working to up-date the e-mail list of DRTA members. These up-dates will also help the BCRTA with their information dissemination as well. Don't forget to **change your contact information with the BCRTA** if you move or get a new phone number. Peter will be taking many more photos at the luncheons for use in the Truant and we will ask for one of our attendees to act as the "official" greeter. (Another chance to volunteer.) As the BCRTA has created Facebook and Twitter accounts, Peter would like to explore the feasibility of a Facebook page for the DRTA. Let him know your ideas.

Graduation for our Grade 12 students is quickly approaching. For those who have aspirations to attend a post-secondary institution, many have been applying for scholarships and bursaries. The Delta Retired Teachers Association has for many years now offered 2 - \$1000 scholarships to Delta graduates who meet very specific criteria. In order to select the very best applicants, the Scholarship committee is asking for volunteers to assist with that process. The selection meeting will be held at the Delta Manor Education Centre (DMEC) on Tuesday, May 21<sup>st</sup> from 10:00 am to noon in the Action Room. Please consider joining this selection group especially if you were part of school-based selection committee once upon a time.

I have stated before, the DRTA is in desperate need of members joining the ranks on the Executive. Even if you don't want a title or specified role, please consider becoming a Member-at-Large, willing to lend a hand for small tasks that you could do in an afternoon or so. Everyone would benefit from your help. Pat

***BTO - Such talented Musicians who we love to hear at the Christmas Luncheon***



***Paula, Marilyn, Cathey, Catharine, Linda, Margaret, Arnie, and Dorothy***

**Warm Days Trivia**

1. What are the summer signs of the Zodiac? (three answers needed)
2. In the southern hemisphere, the first day of Summer occurs in what month?
3. One of the most popular summer songs of all time was the 1966 hit "Summer in the City." What rock band wrote and performed it?
4. The most traditional birthstone for the month of August is what?
5. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to protect your skin from sun damage, you should use broad spectrum sunscreen with at least: SPF \_\_\_\_?
6. Watermelon is a great source of lycopene, which gives the fruit its what?
7. What fruits were crossed to create the "nectarine"?
8. In the famous nursery rhyme what did the Queen of Hearts make 'all on a summer's day'?
9. Holding a buttercup (the flower) under a friend's chin was believed to reveal something about that person. What did this floral test reveal?
10. You could easily spend a summer afternoon tossing the ol' Frisbee back and forth. Where did the name "Frisbee" come from?

## In the News – Your BCRTA

1. President Gerry Tiede sent a brief letter to each Branch congratulating the effort and success of the Bill C-27 Petition Campaign. 16 actual petitions were read and recorded in Hansard with potentially another dozen or so yet to be included. Thanks to all 13,740 who signed. He writes “The protection of our defined benefit pension plan is not only crucial for us, but a benefit for everyone who currently has a Defined Benefit pension. Rather than weakening pensions, wouldn’t it be fantastic if every Canadian could contribute to a defined benefit pension during their working years and then enjoy a secure pension in retirement.” The presentation of the petitions has largely succeeded as Finance Minister Morneau’s office stated that the government is not moving forward with Bill C-27. (It has not yet been withdrawn, however.)
2. The “head-office” for the BCRTA is housed on the main floor of the BCTF Building in Vancouver. As the association has grown, the same cannot be said for the office. Over the past several months plans to enlarge the space were discussed, plans created and the finishing touches are now almost in place. The changes came free of charges as the BCTF covered the expense. Another thank-you.
3. As in past election years, the BCRTA/ACER-CART will develop an election booklet with specific issues identified and relevant questions developed to use at all-candidate meetings prior to the October Federal Election. This will not be a partisan or politically biased booklet; rather one with background information with questions about a wide range of issues affecting all Canadians that may help you identify your candidate choice.
4. The BCRTA Board passed a set of guidelines that will allow Branches to accept paid advertisements for their newsletters. As the PostScript now accepts advertisements from select companies, it will be possible for the Truant to do so, as well. The Board set up their criteria; so, if we want to go in that direction, we will need time and interested people to establish protocols to forge a plan for the future.





*What did she win?*

## In the News – Your Health

1. The Influenza Season – Is Over? Apparently Not – Although the peak months for the ‘flu have past (November through February), please continue to take your usual precautions like staying away from sick people and continuing to wash your hands to help reduce the spread of germs.
2. Vaping – What’s That All About? For those of us who gave up smoking or never smoked in the first place, the thought of starting this activity should be abhorrent to you. What is



vaping, you might ask? A vape stick is one of the new high-tech gizmos that can almost perfectly mimic the nicotine hit of a cigarette with the stealth of a computer accessory and a bonus zest of fruit flavours. It's the first time in the history of nicotine use that a non-burning product can match the inhalation experience of a traditional cigarette.

Best advice – STAY AWAY, FAR, FAR AWAY!

3. Many sunscreens fail to meet claims – As we are all more susceptible to skin cancer the older we get, it is a bit troubling to discover that some of the sunscreens protect us less than advertised. Check out the list of preferred sunscreens on [www.ConsumerReports.org](http://www.ConsumerReports.org)

4. Do you have a well-stocked First Aid Kit? – I found this list of items to include in a home First Aid kit and realized I didn't have everything. Do you?

**First-Aid Kit for the Home – Keep a watertight box containing:**

- \* Alcohol-free antiseptic wipes and alcohol gel
- \* Latex-free disposable gloves
- \* Adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- \* Sterile dressings in assorted sizes
- \* Sterile eye pad
- \* Triangular bandages
- \* Safety pins in assorted sizes
- \* Crepe roller bandages of different widths and elastic band
- \* Combined sterile dressing and bandage
- \* Adhesive tape with scissors, tweezers
- \* Digital thermometer



5. The Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare reports that drug coverage in Canada is neither adequate nor sustainable. Too many Canadians are neglected due to drug costs and the unequal access to medically necessary pharmaceuticals across the country. There was broad agreement across all groups that a national pharmacare plan should provide comprehensive, evidence-based drug coverage in a fair, responsible and sustainable manner. The Council identified some core principals and foundational elements that can be implemented now regardless of the model government chooses. These core principal recommendations are:



- All Canadians must have access to prescription drugs based on medical need rather than cost
- Coverage should be portable across Canada
- Provide access to a comprehensive evidence-based formulary
- Be designed in partnership with patients and citizens
- Founded on a strong partnership between federal, provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous peoples
- Include a robust pharmaceutical management system that promotes safety, innovation, and cost efficiency and control

To continue to emphasize the need for government to understand the commitment Canadians have for this issue, Terry Green, Chair of the Member Well-Being Committee, has developed

a petition regarding support for a National Pharmacare Plan that will not only cover medications but also needed medical supplies. **Copies of the petition will be at the sign-in table for the Luncheon.** Please consider signing and/or taking one home for family and friends to sign. The more pressure exerted by Canadians; changes can happen. {Look at the effort and result behind Bill C-27.}

6. Some adults may need a measles vaccination booster for this highly contagious infectious disease. People born in Canada between 1970 and 1996 may need an extra dose of the vaccine to protect themselves — particularly if they are planning to travel abroad. People born before 1970 are generally considered immune since measles infections were so common back then. Do ask your physician about possibly needing booster shots for Pertussis, Tetanus and Diphtheria. Everyone over 65 should get a pneumococcus vaccination as well as the anti-shingle shot(s).

## **Volunteers Needed**

**The Annual Surrey-Delta Heritage Fair** will be held at the Harris Barn in Ladner from Thursday, May 9<sup>th</sup> through to Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>. This is a terrific event to see the work of Intermediate students who researched something that interested them from Canadian History. The event coordinator, Stephanie Haddaway [shaddaway@delta.ca](mailto:shaddaway@delta.ca), is looking for volunteers to adjudicate projects (training session provided) and help students, parents and teachers get the projects set up. It is a great way to connect and interact with kids again.

## **Re-Purposing 101**

In the first week of April, we have the opportunity to remove some of the clutter in our homes when Delta's Annual Spring Clean-up arrives. Generally, it comes a bit too early for me, but judging by the accumulations on the sides of the road, many Deltans use the chance to rid themselves of detritus, while others scour the piles for treasure. Before stuff goes out the door, I'm at a loss as to what to do with items that are just "too good" to toss. I came across this idea for re-cycling one of the many things that are redundant in today's technological menagerie of iPod, Smart Phones and other such gadgets. Use an old CD case to organize and store your seed packets. Apparently, it works great to store them by seed type or even alphabetically. It's a convenient reference to have for the following year. It is suggested to write notes on the individual packets to remember which seed varieties worked and which ones didn't. Clever! What do you think? Could you use this idea? I'm going to give it a go for the various types of beans, carrots, onions and lettuce I plant in my tiny raised vegetable garden.







Why shouldn't you tell a secret near a garden? *Because the potatoes have eyes and the corn has ears!*

What happened to the plant in math class? *It grew square roots!* [For you, Brian O.]

What kind of garden flowers grow in outer space? *Moonflowers, sunflowers, star clusters and cosmos.*

How does your garden grow? *Only thyme will tell...*

Did you hear what the foolish gardener did? *The guy planted a light bulb and thought he'd get a power plant.*

## **On a Personal Note    Movie Review, Gloria Bell**

Last month, I had the opportunity to see one of the only movies playing that wasn't so loud that earplugs were needed. It was about a single woman, divorced, in her 50's, and trying to find some meaning for herself. She loves to dance and meets up with a guy who, ultimately, is not always there for her as he, too, has issues, of course. But during their time together, he reads a poem to her. I don't know how more complete a statement of love could be than this. I thought you might like it, too.

### ***Poem from Film "Gloria Bell"***

*"I'd like to be a nest if you were a little bird.  
I'd like to be a scarf if you were a neck and were cold.  
If you were music, I'd be an ear.  
If you were water, I'd be a glass.  
If you were light, I'd be an eye.  
If you were a foot, I'd be a sock.  
If you were the sea, I'd be a beach.  
And if you were still the sea, I'd be a fish, and I'd swim in you.  
And if you were the sea, I'd be salt.  
And if I were salt, you'd be lettuce,  
an avocado or at least a fried egg.  
And if you were a fried egg,  
I'd be a piece of bread.  
And if I were a piece of bread,  
you'd be butter or jam.  
If you were jam,  
I'd be the peach in the jam.  
If I were a peach, you'd be a tree.  
And if you were a tree,  
I'd be your sap... and I'd course through your  
arms like blood.  
And if I were blood, I'd live in your heart."*



by Claudio Bertoni (translation from Spanish)

### **Letter from a new member**

Hi Friends/Fellow-Retirees,

I sincerely enjoyed attending my first luncheon as a new member of the Delta Retired Teachers Association last December. The festive meal, music and the chance to re-connect with so many former friends/teachers was much appreciated.

I retired from teaching in Delta this past June, 2018. Even though I taught in our District for 39 years, I did not feel ready to retire and stop teaching "cold turkey". That is why I decided to become a TTOC and I want to encourage some of you to do the same.

I am now happily employed in the Surrey School District where they have 101 elementary schools and 21 secondary schools! This means there are plenty of jobs for me to choose from, so I can be particular about the location, days and grades, etc. I have taught in 20 different Surrey schools thus far, (some more than once, of course) none of which have had any more than 24 students in Intermediate, and usually under 20 in Primary. I don't know if I have just been exceptionally lucky, but all of the classes have had EA support, sometimes more than one in a class. I am loving what I



*This isn't Kim, just so you*

do. After working just a few short days, I could afford to travel somewhere warm and sunny with this “bonus” salary. I have already been to Mexico and the Dominican Republic so far, and have a trip to Maui booked later this spring. Your skills are needed, retired teachers, and the kids keep us young!  
Kim Hill  
*[Kim’s letter was edited for space and content. Pat]*

## **Report from Metro-Fraser Zonal Meeting – April 16, 2019**

Each Spring, the Branch President’s and/or representatives are invited to meet as a group to find out more about the Branches within a certain geographic area. The Delta RTA is in the Metro-Fraser Zone. This year’s meeting was held at the Langley Teachers Association building on Glover Road. It is always good to see some of the same faces from past years as well as new ones who are getting involved in their branch’s leadership. We discover just how different each branch is from one another in size, but more importantly, in activity levels. **Abbotsford** RTA (360 members) meet 8 times a year with an average of 20-25 members eating at a local restaurant or group travel to Bowen Island for a dinner. Their April meeting (12 – 15 people at most) is at a nursery where spring planters are created. It costs each member about \$40 to make a planter. Each February, a Cribbage Tournament is hosted for their members. **Ridge Meadows** have monthly lunches with 15-20 attending (membership 195) held at a local pub. At Christmas, they hold a Toy Drive for the less fortunate. **Coquitlam** (868 members) send out 5 newsletters each year. Each lunch will have a presentation of some type, e.g. BCRTA’s 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President spoke about Pensions and our history behind them (remember 1971?). They have maintained a very successful Bridge Club which meets once a month. They are lucky to have a special “bond” with their meal provider. They have had some very successful workshops not connected to luncheons. A memorable one on Photography was presented by one of their own. **Chilliwack** RTA had a memorable October luncheon where they decorated pumpkins, have been treated to a \$10 luncheon by the Secondary School’s Foods classes once a year, and hold a Strawberry Social in June. A special event was to bring in retired teachers who have now published authors to share their experiences. **Langley** (400+ members) send out a newsletter generally every 2 months about what events are planned. They have found a way to communicate with soon-to-be retirees using the School Staff Reps. to introduce to them the benefits of joining the BCRTA/LRTA. A very successful workshop was presented by Diana Crutchley, who wrote a binder (The Indispensable Binder – a \$30 value available at the workshop) on what to have ready in case of emergencies. **Surrey** (1,000+) have about ¾ of their newsletters go on electronically. “Chatter” goes out 5 times a year with an e-mail “blast” to remind members of up-coming events. They have created an Executive position of Workshop Coordinator whose only function is to organize the many workshops that Surrey hosts. Most of these involve some financial investment by members as the presenters are quite expensive. Once we have the electronic information system set up, invitations to these workshops will be sent out to you.

## **Travel and Cruising**

One of those exciting things we thought about as active teachers was to be able to travel and see the world once we retired. That was a leading idea when the BCRTA decided to align itself with 2 or 3 different travel companies who specialized in unique travel opportunities for those who (now) can travel during the off-peak times.



[Collette Travel](#) is advertising Tours to Ireland, Italy, the South Pacific, and Iceland. [Merit Travel](#) have Adventure Tours as well as Guided Tours and Vacations, Cruises and Group Travel options especially designed for seniors and with BCRTA reduced rates or perks. Both of those companies have been with the BCRTA for many years. A newer option for travel is with [CPEAC \(Canadian Public Employees Acquisition Club\)](#). Once you go to their web-site [www.cpeac.org], register and find out what destinations they are promoting. Saving money on trips you would otherwise be taking makes your \$48 BCRTA/DRTA fees a pretty sound investment.

## Concert Opportunity

The Delta Choral Society cordially invites one and all to attend either of their Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup> concerts “**Just Imagine**” at the South Delta Baptist Church (1988 – 56<sup>th</sup> St, Tsawwassen). Singing begins at 2:00 pm or 7:00 pm.



Tickets for Adults - \$20 and Students/Seniors - \$15 will be available at the door or from a choir member.

### **John Henderson**

Andres

Written by George

*John graduated from Simon Fraser University and began his teaching in 1970 at Boundary Bay Elementary where he met his future wife Della Gray. Before long John transferred to Port Guichon to begin a long working relationship with Roland Chapman as he accompanied him to Brooke and Holly Elementary. Along the way John's professionalism allowed him to establish close working relationships with many of his colleagues.*

*John was a teacher's teacher. It was John who kept the often-antiquated school's computer labs functioning by spending hours of his own time working on the hardware. He also gave freely of his time assisting teachers complete electronic report cards on the early software developed by the school district. John's extra-curricular work extended outside the classroom to the gymnasium and the sports field. During the volleyball season John spent most noon hours in the gym coaching the boys' senior team. After school he could be found refereeing at*



*a game be it basketball or volleyball. His hard work with his teams frequently paid off with a regional championship.*

*John served his district colleagues in his early teaching days by working on various DTA committees, especially as a member of the contract negotiating team*

*Although school life was very important to John, he also enjoyed a life away from the school. In a camper van he and Della travelled much of Canada and the United States. John especially loved to visit sites connected to the British - American struggles along with various American civil war battles. He was very knowledgeable on these topics.*

*In spite of John's valiant battle against cancer, we have lost a great teacher. May he rest in peace.*

*There will be a Celebration of John's life on Wednesday May 29 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm at the Tsawwassen Springs Ball Room.*

Della has asked for any one who has stories or anecdotes about their time with John and would like to share them, please send them to Dave Sowerby ([dsowerby@telus.net](mailto:dsowerby@telus.net)). If you have any photos of John, Peter Scurr ([petergrantscurr@gmail.com](mailto:petergrantscurr@gmail.com)) is arranging a video montage to be shown at the event and would like to include your pictures along with any stories that go along with them. Your cooperation is truly appreciated.

Thank you to all who have sent their condolences to Della through the DRTA e-mail.

### **Trivia Answers**

1. Gemini, Cancer, and Leo 2. December 3. Lovin' Spoonful 4. Peridot 5. SPF 15 6. Redness 7. None, the nectarine is a smooth skin variety of the peach. 8. Some tarts 9. That you liked butter 10. Frisby Pies (a bakery)