

PostScript

FALL 2020



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PostScript

FALL 2020



Autumn in Osoyoos - cover photo by Getty Images/istock.

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Well, dear PostScript readers, it's getting to be that time of year. No, not back to the classroom—we're free of that! It's time for walks in the brisk afternoon air, then curling up by the fire with a nice fat book. And better yet, maybe digging in to a multi-volume adventure that takes us to worlds unknown, into the boardrooms and maybe bedrooms of intriguing characters. Right on time, we have suggestions for your next reading adventure in *Our Next Page-Turner*. If you have a suggestion for your colleagues, we'd love to hear it. Write us at postscrip-t@bcрта.ca and we will share your suggestions in a future issue.

Susan Cheng never pictured herself astride a snowmobile but a chance to adventure with friends helped her work up the courage. It's a bumpy ride for her, though. Bumpy, too, for PostScript favourite *Lynda Grace Phillippsen* who follows up her Ikebana article of a few issues ago with her return visit to Japan this spring. Flower arrangements were coming together just as everything else fell apart.

And sometimes falling apart is the only proper response. We have two articles on bereavement. Loss is always personal, but there will be something in these words that will help you.

Nola Obee shares an unexpected journey that happened within her own perceptions during an art tour in beautiful Santa Fe, NM.

Sheila Gair lets us walk a mile in her shoes. Really. With her usual sharp observations and maybe an opinion or two, we get the full account of her storied relationship with footwear.

Our Well-being team has articles that will keep you seeing, hearing, sleeping and thinking straight. Lots to see in our classifieds, music and books by BCRTA authors and no shortage of words from this issue's figure of inspiration. *Hint*: this person retired in order to create a resource that you and your favourite authors have used a million times.

Happy reading, in this issue and your next book, too!

Yours truly,

The Editors
postscrip-t@bcрта.ca

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Springs at Donaueschingen in the Black Forest

Exactly a year ago, in pre-COVID-19 times, I was happily cycling down the **Donau** – we Canadians call it the **Danube River**. We flew into Paris and rode the trains to **Donaueschingen** in the Black Forest where we climbed onto our bikes at the spring that is described as the source of the river. The spring itself isn't nearly as impressive as the infrastructure around it – the statues, the plaza, a church and a castle.

I wondered if the town had a very successful lobby group, maybe the Donau Tourist Association. You see, the water from the spring flows underground into the Brigach and the Breg Rivers nearby which are much bigger and have both already flowed for over 40 km. For geographical and hydrological reasons the river and Strass' waltz should have been called the Blue Breg River. People have argued about the real source for centuries but in 1981 the Baden-Württemberg State government declared Donaueschingen to be the source of the Danube, never mind those pesky scientists. Good job, Donau Tourist Association!

A question came to mind as I was flipping channels and watching the fake news today: Are any major government decisions made based on facts, real science or clear, logical thinking?

I fear the answer is very often no. The COVID-19 response illustrates the issues. Admittedly, it would take the wisdom of Solomon to find a way through this pandemic but the task is not made any easier by the politicization of the debate and the constant demands of every group seeking a way to gain a dollar. But I can't help but question the rationale for some government decisions.

The \$300 tax-free grant for all Canadian senior citizens is one example. Certainly, the grant is appreciated and appropriate for low-income

seniors, but not necessary for many others who live comfortably. Kudos to those who are passing that extra \$300 on to a food bank or other reputable charity in their community. And I have a new-found admiration for the few politicians who have stood up to the pressures and are making decisions to protect the lives of their citizens. Looking at decision making around the world, we are actually very fortunate here in BC.

There were 6,102 registered federal lobbyists in Canada in 2019; that works out to 18 for each Member of Parliament. Those people are all working to promote some group's self interest, just like my imaginary Donau Tourist Association. Are they influencing government decisions? I imagine they are – the person paying them expects a return on the investment and what else explains decisions that appear to benefit select groups at the expense of others?

Discouraging, isn't it? Fortunately, our trip didn't end in the Black Forest. Including side-trips we rode for 6 weeks through 4 countries and covered 1,300 km, ending in Budapest. Along the way we met hundreds of helpful, friendly, hard-working ordinary people. Salt-of-the-earth people making thoughtful, caring decisions. People that reminded me of the BCRTA Executive and members that I am fortunate to work with regularly – cheerfully enjoying each moment, using the knowledge and skills they have to make each day a little better for their families, friends and colleagues.

Gerry Tiede is President of the BCRTA

PostScript Letters

Visible Gratitude

I am an 81 year old retired educator and my eyesight isn't that great so I want to thank you for using a large font in the Post Script. Some newspapers I can't read any more and I get large print books from our Ladysmith library. I always look forward to reading Sheila Gair's articles.

Keep up the good work,

Irene D.
Ladysmith

Staying Connected

Let me compliment you on a fine magazine. Since I have re-joined the BCRTA I look forward to receiving my copy. As a handicapped retired teacher unable to travel, I look forward to reading colleague's adventures.

Guy L.
Chilliwack

Non-remembrance of Things Past

Can you please help? I taught English for five years at Prince George Secondary School. I have been trying to locate a Canadian short story that I taught during that time. I believe that its title was "Kaspar's Antelope". It concerns Eastern European immigrants living in one of the prairie provinces in the late 19th or early 20th centuries, and takes place in mid-winter. The protagonist — Kasper, I recall — shoots an antelope for food, but his wife convinces him to get rid of the carcass because poaching had been a capital crime back in Europe and she believes that the same laws applied in Canada. Their solution is to throw the carcass down their well, but soon realize that's a really bad idea! So the protagonist climbs down into well in sub-zero temperature to try to retrieve the carcass.

I have spent hours searching the internet for this book, or even for the title and author of the story, without success. The Vancouver Public Library was unable to help. Are there any retired English teachers who have any memory of this short story?

Best regards,

Bob I.
Vancouver

PostScript Contributors Experience Fame

Thank you very much for the contributor copies of PostScript. Your letter was very touching. It was a wonderful experience to be part of the magazine.

We have had lots of great feedback. Many retired teaching buddies from Vernon and Burnaby have gotten hold of us. Very cool!

Best,

Lori and Harry
Texada Island

Many thanks for the opportunity to share my experiences with others, and thanks for the extra copies which we will try to use only a little to boost my ego with friends and relatives. I'm sure I said before, but we are very proud of the quality of our in-house publication. We enjoy the interesting variety of items from all contributors. Postscript shows the excellent leadership of the editors. It is a top quality and nicely balanced professional magazine.

Duncan L.
Salmon Arm

Executive Director's Note: Travel Insurance Info

Many of the member support requests we receive at BCRTA concern travel insurance coverage.

You may have noticed that there are far fewer advertisements for travel opportunities in recent issues of our magazine. With current travel advisories there have been fewer options available, and travel insurance plans have clauses restricting coverage when travel advisories are in place. Many are feeling a bit stuck regarding these issues and are wondering how things will unfold.

BCRTA has been working to keep our members aware of the current status of our sponsored travel insurance packages through Johnson, both the stand-alone MEDOC option and our combined Prestige plan.

These are annual plans with monthly payments. As I write this, in view of this time where travel is reduced, we have secured an additional four months' coverage at no cost to enrolled members of BCRTA-Johnson plans.

Members who are in the Johnson plans can stay aware of what your coverage status is by visiting the plan home page at: bcrta.johnson.ca.

Let us know what you think! Write us at postscript@bcrta.ca

SHEILA GAIR

LIFE IN THE *slow lane*



When my daughter was born my mother-in-law sent over a dress – tiny, white, perfect – and heavily smocked and embroidered. Several years later I came upon it tucked into a drawer, and many years after that I had the dress framed in a box frame – and beneath the dress I put a tiny pair of beaded leather baby moccasins. It is still in her room today.

I had no interest in shoes when I was small but one day we went to a garden party in the village – perhaps it was near the end of the war. The first person I saw there was a young woman who had a very red mouth – I had never seen lipstick – and she was wearing black high-heeled shoes. My mouth dropped open and stayed open. I had never even dreamed of such shoes, but that didn't prevent me from dreaming of owning some one day.

We were not a wealthy family and the only shoes I recall from childhood were Clarks sandals, the ones with a small cut out design on the front. As we grew dad would take a heavy razor and cut out the toes so that we could wear them another year – and of course they were passed down. Any shoes bought in my first dozen years were taken immediately to the local cobbler and rubber soles and heels were stuck on, and sometimes the protective metal clips we called Blakeys to make them last longer.

I passed the scholarship and headed to the grammar school. I had long list of items to buy. Along with the uniform I received socks and name tags. You can imagine how long it took to sew name tags on to every pair of underwear and every sock. And the indignity that my name was misspelled! Then of course I required footwear for the year – one pair of outdoor shoes, brown; one brown pair of indoor soft soled shoes; and a pair of canvas plimsolls for gym.

Once I raided my mother's wardrobe at home and found a pair of heeled sandals which I promptly put on and trotted around the house admiring how they looked. In my very fashionable state I went upstairs to pick up the microscope in its box and managed to fall down the stairs with it! My ego was bruised as well as my rear end, and my father was apoplectic until he found that the microscope was still in one piece.

Walking the high street one day I saw some flashy black patent sandals for ten shillings and I wheedled until they were mine. My mother warned me that they were cheap plastic and wouldn't last long – and darn it if she wasn't right! We had friends and neighbours who often gifted us clothes and shoes and my Sunday School teacher gave me two pair with heels. I wore one pair to the dance classes I was taking and they carried me through my bronze medal test. When I look at what the younger folk call dancing today I shudder. Give me a quick step or foxtrot any time.

At eighteen I was married and at nineteen we emigrated. We lived in a half-duplex in the West End for \$35 a month, and it was then that I discovered the Army and Navy on Hastings Street. It was a cavernous emporium crammed with hundreds of pairs of shoes – in my size! The



first year I went the shoes went for \$6.95 a pair and a bargain, but the household budget was always tight and so just one pair went home with me. Later, when we had moved to the other side of the Patullo Bridge and I had found the New Westminster Army and Navy store, I ran in, grabbed a pair and was out again just as quickly. Only to discover later at home that I had misread the tiny imprinted numbers. My size 9s were actually size 6s! *Sorry madam, no returns.* I learned a lesson.

Over the next couple of decades and when I was earning I considered each outfit I bought – loved the Bay Clearance centre out at Riverside in Surrey – and I bought shoes to go with each ensemble. Flats, wedges, sling-backs, peep toes, platforms, slip-ons, lace ups, courts – and all colours and textures: leather to suede and even fabric – a gorgeous pair of blue floral silk shoes – and Clarks again! I filled a bookcase in my *en suite* closet and even then still had shoes piled on the floor.

I retired and things changed. I began to recycle my dressy shoes as I no longer needed them to enhance my wardrobe. My heels shrank lower and lower. I began to enjoy the benefits of slides and shoes with Velcro fasteners – so much easier than finding a chair or trying to



bend over as you tighten laces and make bows. And once again I found shoes by the hundreds in those charity shops that I like to check into every few weeks. If you know your makers then you will often be lucky. I keep my eyes peeled for good old Clarks, Skechers, Geox, Naturaliser, Reiker and Rockport, and I find many bargains. I am wearing leather Mephisto slides today, as comfortable as slippers and they cost me all of \$4.

So far I have never ventured into the red-soled stilettos that celebrities wear. At my age I think I'll pass and the fourteen pairs of shoes now in my closet will see me through.

Sheila Gair is past editor of *PostScript*

important dates

Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security

Includes the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) retirement pension and disability, children's and survivor benefits.

Upcoming payment dates

- September 28, 2020
- October 28, 2020
- November 26, 2020
- December 29, 2020

Teachers' Pension Plan

Here are upcoming dates that pension payments are directly deposited to accounts.

2020 payment dates

- September 29, 2020
- October 29, 2020
- November 27, 2020
- December 23, 2020



RRIF WITHDRAWALS - WHAT TO DO?

The recent shocks to the economy have created extremely volatile markets that raise the fears of all investors and particularly retired Canadians relying on their portfolios for regular income.

Most of you are well aware that Canadians are required to convert their Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs) into Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) by age 71 and are then mandated to withdraw at least a minimum amount each year. The minimum required withdrawal rate increases at each age – from 5.28 per cent at age 71, up to 20 per cent for those age 95 and older.

It is entirely understandable that retirees wish to carefully preserve their nest egg, often withdrawing the minimum required payment to

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financial planner, has three children and lives in North Vancouver. Always discuss your particular circumstances with a financial planner prior to acting on the information above.

* Names have been changed.

make their plans last as long as possible. This also better ensures the sustainability of income, helps them avoid or reduce OAS Clawbacks, and to keep the resulting income taxes as low as possible. A significant market drop, like the one experienced early this year can have serious implications to those who must sell their investments to meet the RRIF minimum payment. Obviously, being forced to sell low in negative markets is a wealth-destroying process.

Thankfully on March 25th the government responded to the COVID-19 crisis by allowing a temporary reduction in the required minimum withdrawals by 25 per cent for 2020. This also applies to Life Income Funds and locked-in RRIFs. They are once again using the tactics employed after the market correction in 2008.

But should you make the election or not?

First of all, if you have already taken the original minimum payment for 2020, you already have received your annual minimum payment and cannot put it back. You need not read further.

If one considers the reduced call on invested reserves and the accompanying tax savings, a reduced withdrawal may make a lot of sense. Consider Bruce*, who has \$100,000 in his RRIF on Jan 1, 2020, and turns 72 later in 2020. Normally, his 5.4% minimum withdrawal would be \$5,400, but with the change in legislation, he can choose to take out just 4.05%, or \$4,050.

If Bruce has a spouse and he dies early, this reduction in his current withdrawal will increase the future payments to his spouse at a time when they would lose the ability to income split for tax purposes – further increasing their taxes.

Finally, this temporary measure is not really costing the government a lot and it may cost you more. If you take less money out of your RRIF it will continue to grow. If you die earlier than expected, there will be a larger tax bill to pay at death. The Government will still get all their money when the larger RRIF is included on your terminal tax return.

Considering the ballooning federal debt, income taxes are more likely to rise than remain the same. Allowing your non-tax paid RRIF pool to grow may turn out to be less tax efficient.

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Mysteries: Magic Theatre by Kenneth Noland. Courtesy of Yares Art, New York, Santa Fe.

Learning Circles

PAINTINGS BY KENNETH NOLAND

REVIEW BY NOLA OBEE

Santa Fe is the oldest state capital in the USA. New Mexicans joke that many of the people they meet have weird guesses about where their state is, sometimes placing it in another country. Most Westerners know it's the filling in the sandwich formed by Arizona and Texas, on the Mexican border.

Santa Fe residents have another name for one of my favourite cities: **The City Different**, and different it is. The mandated architecture is adobe, but mud bricks are now, ironically, so expensive it's often faked. With a population of less than 100,000, Santa Fe vies with New York City as the largest art market in the country. It's possible to spend days going in and out of galleries, and I've done just that.

Some time ago, I was walking away from the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum when I saw a boxy building ahead of me, the Riva Yares Gallery.

.....
Nola Obee is a member of the BCRTA who writes from her home in Armstrong.

We are grateful to Nicolas and Victoria of Riva Yares Gallery for their permission to share images of several Kenneth Noland paintings.

Inside, its well-lit high ceiling and long white walls allowed large works to be viewed clearly without interference from one another.

The day I was there, three paintings by Kenneth Noland hung on one wall. I remembered him from gallery ads in magazines as a late twentieth century painter who used geometric forms. Each of these paintings was a set of coloured concentric circles.

Picture me standing in front of the middle one. I note its title: **Mysteries: High Noon 2001**, and back away to give it my total attention. A yellow dot lies inside wide rings of pinks and reds. I keep my eyes on it for some time and begin to feel pulled into a vortex as it swirls and spirals. Snatched from daily life, I am seized by a sensation of panic. I wrench attention aside and anchor my sight on a concrete wall.

Wary of falling, I move to the painting on the right, **Mysteries: Lumina 2000**. This time the centre spot is orange, at rest in bands of blues without distinct borders. Everything goes hazy, ephemeral. My eyes feel as though they're pulsing, gently, repeatedly, rocking me. My muscles relax. I pause to write some notes and



Spring Call by Kenneth Noland. Courtesy of Yares Art, New York, Santa Fe.

find a blue dot about the size of a quarter on my page—an after-image. I feel calm.

Serene, I face the last, **Mysteries: Hopi 2000**. A rich blue dot is centered in hoops of yellow and yellow-flecked green. After I stand for a while, I see three golden disks drift forward in sequence around the thirds of a clock. They float in the air, then blend into a glowing sun. Joy!

I've been alone in the gallery during this time. It's the off-season. A man comes in, takes a quick glance around the room and leaves. I imagine him telling his friends that his kids could do better.

No, they could not.

I cannot conceive of the time and skill it took to create these effects. I am astounded by Noland's knowledge of the exact hues and the precise

widths of the rings needed to elicit an emotional reaction, and then by the ability to actually mix the necessary paints.

Until these works I had no idea what people were talking about when they spoke of the emotional effect of non-figurative art. I thought they just meant that it stimulated their imaginations. Now I understand that the colors in the paintings make the eyes move in certain ways. This changes the physiology of the body and the brain construes the felt sensations as emotions. With this new awareness I can see that paintings do not always need to represent a physical object in order to be both effective and affective. Effects can be created with only form and colour and these effects can be dramatic. Noland had a gift and has given me a gift.



Top: **Amusement Blues**; Bottom: **Mysteries: Moonlit**, by Kenneth Noland.
Courtesy of Yares Art, New York, Santa Fe.

“

Being an artist is about discovering things after you've done them. Like Cézanne - after twenty years of that mountain he found out what he was doing. If it isn't a process of discovery, it shows. I'm in it for the long haul.

”

KENNETH NOLAND

EXPLORE FURTHER AT WWW.YARESART.COM/KENNETH-NOLAND



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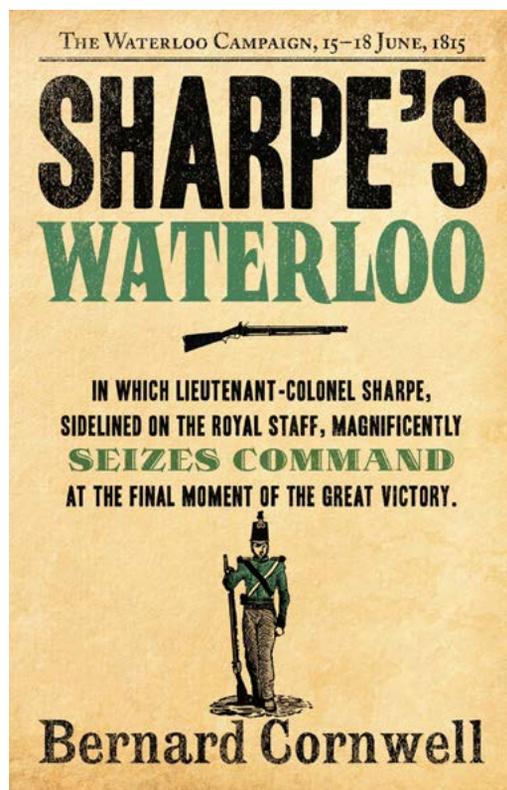
BERNARD CORNWELL'S **SHARPE** SERIES

It was 1998, and my wife, Bonnie, and I were driving from Paris back to Liege, where our daughter had spent a year on a Rotary exchange. We were trying to get to a small place in Belgium: Waterloo. This was before rental cars had GPS or cell phones had Google Maps, and while our small map wasn't a big help, Bonnie's navigating got us there. These days Waterloo has become more of an attraction, and there is better signage, but bigger crowds are not always a good thing!

Having grown up as an "army brat", I had always had an interest in military history, and I thought that it would be interesting to see the site of the famous battle of Waterloo, the scene of Wellington's victory, and where Napoleon lost his final battle.

But why Waterloo? What interested me so much about this specific battleground? What of the battlefields of World War I where both of my grandfathers had been wounded? What of the sites in France, Belgium and Holland that my father had marched through in World War II? While it is possible that I am descended from one of the thirteen Lamberts who fought at Waterloo, I did not know that. What I did know was that I was captivated by Bernard Cornwell's depiction of the battle, and the drama of such a large historical event.

Cornwell has now written over fifty books, mostly historical fiction. The Sharpe series includes twenty-one



ARNIE LAMBERT is BCRTA's 2nd Vice President and Chair of the Communications Committee.



Waterloo Memorial (istock)

novels and three short stories that follow the adventures of a British soldier, Richard Sharpe, who wins a battlefield promotion in India, and then fights through the Napoleonic War to its climax at Waterloo.

In *Sharpe*, Cornwell has invented the quintessential protagonist; a survivor from a poor background, with little formal education but plenty of street smarts and a mind for strategy. He is an outsider in the officers' mess, but the officer to be with in a fight. Sharpe's promotion from the ranks in India comes as a result of saving the life of Sir Arthur Wellesley, who by the time of Waterloo, is the Duke of Wellington and leading the British army, while Sharpe has risen to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, serving on the Prince of Orange's staff.

As an author of historical fiction, Cornwell's research is amazingly thorough. He also has the gift of being able to weave his fictional characters into history without straying from historical fact. Since the end of the peninsular War in Portugal, Spain and France, Sharpe has been retired and farming; however, Napoleon has escaped exile on Elba and returned to France. The stage is set for both an epic battle between France and a British-led coalition, and for Sharpe to meet his nemesis.

Two days prior to Waterloo, we find Sharpe where the battle begins, a dozen miles south at Quatre Bras, and from there Sharpe's story, and history itself, go on to the final defeat of Napoleon and the French army.

Sharpe becomes Cornwell's witness to the battle's significant locations and events; the defence of both the La Haye Sainte and Hougoumont farms, which exist to this day, the broad valley between the British and French ridges, where infantry squares formed in defence of cavalry attacks, the eventual arrival of the Prussian army from the east to tip the balance in Wellington's favour, and the final cavalry charge into a depleted and defeated French army.

Sharpe brought me to Waterloo, and standing on the mount overlooking the battlefield brought Cornwell's tale to life. My peaceful, sunny day was so different from that Sunday in June, 1815. I tried to picture the ridges and valley filled with over 130,000 combatants, and to imagine the roar of cannons and crash of rifles, the thundering of horse's hooves, the clashing of swords, and the screaming of the men, and I shuddered to think of how incredibly difficult it must have been to have the courage to stand on that battlefield.

Leaving Waterloo, I was in awe of those who had to be there, doing the impossible. I bought a coffee cup as a memento of the visit, and strangely enough I often fill it with a cup of Earl Grey. As with most of the museum at Waterloo, it is more of a memorial to Napoleon than to the victors - somewhat like the Musée de l'Armée in Paris, which pays homage to L'Empereur but leaves out a few of the critical details. But that is another story.



STEVE RECOMMENDS

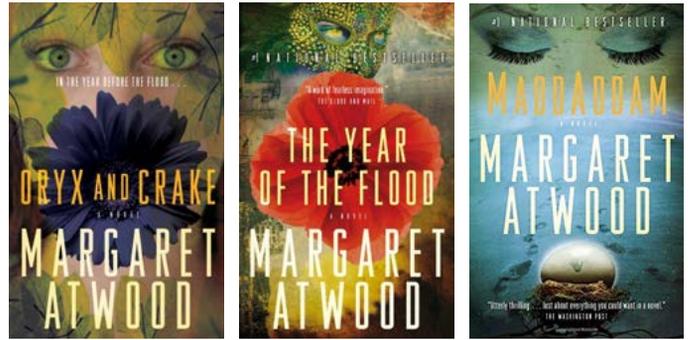
MARGARET ATWOOD'S *MaddAddam* TRILOGY
JUSTIN CRONIN'S *THE PASSAGE* TRILOGY

Protracted story telling provides an opportunity to explore situations from multiple vantage points in meaningful detail over an extended time period. When combined with the genre of the 'cautionary tale', protracted story telling can create fascinating narrative visions of what is, or what can or might be in our human present and future.

Two trilogy works that have a significant impact in terms of presenting dystopian cautionary tales stand out to me as thought provoking visions of where humanity might be headed if current trends are extrapolated into what might be the not-so-distant future. They are Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* Trilogy and *The Passage* Trilogy by Justin Cronin. If you enjoy reading that is 'apocalyptic' in nature and have the patience to delve into drawn out cautionary tales, these will definitely impact you. Both sagas are quite relevant today as they deal with variations on the over-arching theme of humanity being devastated by different kinds of pandemic.

Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy began with the publication of *Oryx and Crake* (2003), continued with an expansion of the same story in *The Year of the Flood* (2009) and concludes with *MaddAddam* (2013) - a continuation of the first two volumes. Here is classic Atwood - exploring her grand narrative theme of the constant need to reflect on the ideologies we live by and their intended or unintended consequences.

Described by readers as describing 'a near future that is both all too familiar and beyond our imagining', *Oryx and Crake* centres around Snowman - known as Jimmy before humanity is struck down by a plague. Given his circumstances it is natural that he thinks he may be the last human. He embarks on a journey to find answers in a world with very little to offer. This motif resembles Richard Matheson's narrative direction in his 1954 novel *I Am Legend* which became the basis of the



1971 film *Omega Man*. Matheson is also relevant to Cronin's *Passage* Trilogy as he pioneered literature in which vampires and zombies appear as powerful extended metaphors for a dying humanity.

Mourning the loss of his good friend Crake, Snowman travels through lush forest that was recently a great urban centre until powerful corporations managed to manipulate humanity through uncontrolled genetic engineering. Cronin's *Passage* Trilogy is based on a similar premise. The story of Oryx, victim of another kind of human exploitation before humanity's demise, is woven into the mix.

The Year of the Flood is my personal favourite part of the trilogy because of the character Pilar, an aged woman of wisdom described as having an "old walnut" face. As part of the ecological cult, "God's Gardeners", Pilar is dedicated to preserving the riches of the earth that benefit humankind, but which have almost been destroyed. She talks with the bees, and has expertise in tending them, and 'knows' mushrooms and other fungi. She is literally part of reconstructing the relationship between humanity and the earth. She brings wisdom and hope: "Everything's good. In the big picture."

The Year of the Flood chronicles the aftermath of what is known as the "waterless flood" - a pandemic event that alters the Earth and obliterates most human life. The world is ruled by corrupt powers and new gene-spliced life forms abound. Class divisions are dramatic, the rich enjoying high-end sex clubs and luxurious spas in an otherwise wasteland world.

STEVE BAILEY is a retired Burnaby English Department Head, a BCRTA Director and a member of the BCRTA Communications Committee.

MaddAddam continues the chronicling of the near extinction of humanity by the 'waterless flood' pandemic. There is a small group of human survivors, along with the Children of Crake - gentle quasi-humans who are the product of bioengineering. They just may be the "meek" who will inherit this new earth. The major characters, Zeb and Toby, were introduced in *The Year of the Flood*. Humans and Crakers are constantly pursued by the Painballers, a vicious group hardened by a "Rollerball" style violent game called Painball.

Similar situations arise in the Cronin trilogy. Bioengineering has gone horribly wrong.

Distinctly American in its cultural and physical setting, the books in Cronin's trilogy unfold the consequences of experiments by the American military to produce invisibility cloaking for combatants in war. The result is a plague of vampire-like creatures that threatens the existence of humanity.

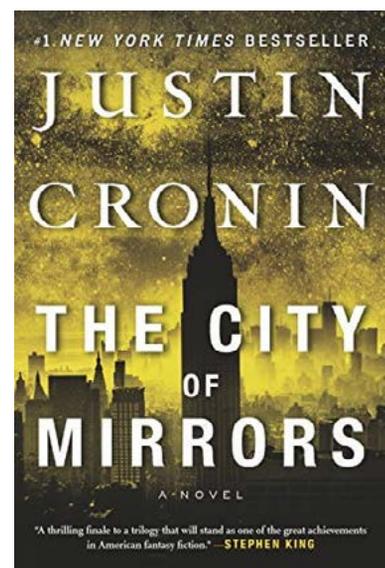
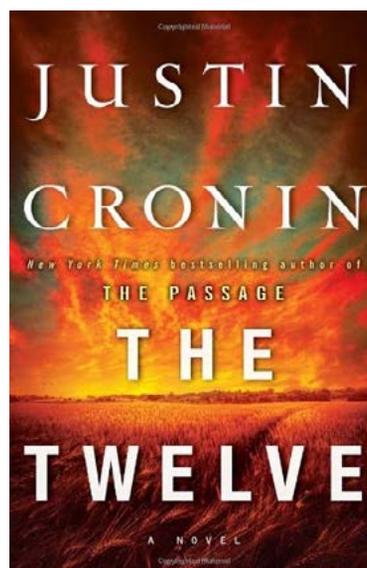
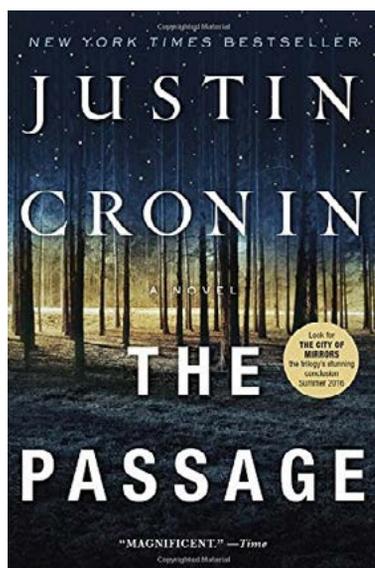
The books in the series are *The Passage* (2010), *The Twelve* (2012) and *The City of Mirrors* (2016). As a result of biomedical engineering gone awry, civilization devolves into the pursuer vampire-like creatures and the pursued. In the mounting danger, two characters emerge - FBI Agent Brad Wolgast and six year old orphaned Amy Harper Bellafonte. Amy herself is a young victim of experimentation and Wolgast attempts to protect her from the fallout of a scientific debacle.

The Twelve develops further background into the pandemic and focuses on specific individual and group situations as people battle the mounting threat of the 'infected', known as the Virals. The narrative even stretches a hundred years into the future. The search for the original Virals continues. Amy lives on as does Zero, the father of the viral race who is revealed in *The City of Mirrors*.

The City of Mirrors is set following the destruction of 'The Twelve' and their viral followers. Civilization continues to re-emerge in the former United States. One centre is The Republic of Texas and other centres exist in the former Ohio and New York. We are now hundreds of years into the future with seemingly immortal people waiting for the given 1000 years required for the Virals to die off. We don't know what has happened to Canada over this epic passage of time, but we do know that England has survived in one form or another.

Considering time, space and the human ability to survive, a la William Faulkner's observation "Man will survive. He has a spirit" (forgive the gender specificity). It is ironic that we are running out of patience with a pandemic lasting far less than 1000 years (we hope). At any rate, both Atwood and Cronin move us through time to the timeless, from what we know here and now to what may result from various 'tipping points' triggered by 'accidents' or natural occurrences totally unexpected or imagined.

Cautionary tales indeed.



STEPHANIE RECOMMENDS

IONA WHISHAW'S *LANE WINSLOW* MYSTERIES

Why do we love to read? To learn something new about the world or ourselves; to be entertained; to escape to a different time and place? Readers who pick up any of the *Lane Winslow* mysteries by Iona Wishaw accomplish all of these goals.

Set in the Kootenay region of eastern BC in the years immediately following the second world war, this series plunges us head-first into a world both familiar and far away.

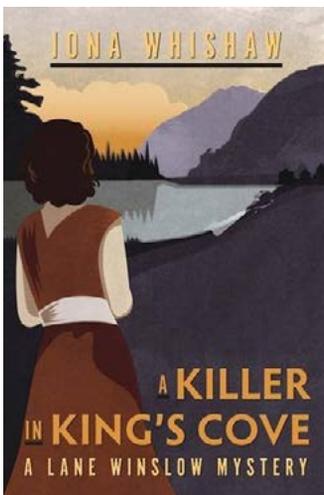
Rich with local characters and small town charm, the fictional village of King's Cross draws the reader in as it welcomes the newcomer into its idyllic rural life. Wishaw grew up in the Kootenays, not far from the real-life town of Nelson, and recreates this world with the rich hues of forest, lake and mountain vistas and with a large helping of affection for the land.

Our heroine is Lane Winslow, recent British emigré, who has chosen this small town in the wilderness of British Columbia to put as much

distance as possible from her wartime past as a top-notch operative for British intelligence. But as luck would have it, intelligence is not a skill one can so easily escape from, and trouble and intrigue manage to find her.

The seven novels in the series (so far) each feature an ingenious mystery to solve along with adventure and peril, misunderstandings and misdirection enough to engage the most steadfast lover of mystery novels. In addition, the stories are linked with a consistent narrative building the character development of Lane and her compatriots, including a slow-blossoming romance. While each novel may be read and enjoyed as a stand-alone mystery, the developing story is too good to miss and I strongly recommend reading them in order, beginning with *A Killer in King's Cove*.

Before turning her hand to novel-writing, Ms. Wishaw's most recent career was as an award-winning high school principal in Vancouver.



STEPHANIE KOROPATNICK is a member of the BCRTA Communications Committee.

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As seen in



Bear River Ride

LEARNING TO SNOWMOBILE

It's never too late to learn something new. How about riding a snowmobile? Recently, my husband and I spent a week at Bear River Lodge near Christmas Meadows, Utah, with a retired couple (he's 75 and she's 70) who have ridden snowmobiles for over 40 years. My husband is also an experienced rider who has ridden with them in the past. What an experience it was for me riding a snowmobile for the first time! It was a "steep" learning curve.

We left Vancouver and stayed overnight in Coeur D'Alene, ID. It was an easy, stress-free drive. We spent the next night at Idaho Falls, Idaho. On the third day, we arrived at Evanston, Wyoming, which is the closest town to **Bear River Lodge**, about 30 miles away. We loaded up on groceries at the local Walmart, since the Lodge is very isolated and the only eatery in the area is their own restaurant, the **Burly Bear Grill**. To ride in Utah, you need to purchase a decal to be displayed on your snowmobile. We needed to purchase the decal from the Maverick gas station.

The road is not well-travelled except by those who are going to Bear River Lodge or living in the vicinity. During the winter, the road ends 500 feet from the lodge. There is no vehicle through-traffic except for snowmobilers.

We rented a two-bedroom rustic log cabin, which was very spacious for a party of four. It was cozy and high windows in the living room allowed in natural light. The area was covered in snow, which made for awesome winter views (it was mid-March). Housekeeping dropped by mid-week with towels. Our cabin was equipped with a gas log fireplace, kitchen, dishwasher, a gas BBQ grill outside on the deck and free Internet and satellite TV. With limited bandwidth at the lodge, internet access was spotty at times. We could not get cell service in the area but were able to receive text messages.

In the past, we have stayed at ski-in ski-out accommodations. Bear River Lodge was snowmobile-in snowmobile-out which was very convenient. In addition to the cabins, the lodge also rented out snowmobiles (single-seater or two-seater), snow bikes, tubes for tubing, helmets, boots, and clothing. Fortunately, they had a gas bar so you can fill up and ride straight off the property onto groomed trails.

With two feet of fresh snow. Our friends said they had never seen so much snow in all the years that they had come there. We arrived Friday evening and on Saturday morning, there was not a cloud in the beautiful, blue sky. We waited until it was 0° C before heading out. Since it was the weekend, the trail was freshly groomed and smooth. I rode a Polaris Pro RMK 800 geared for mountain terrain.

I was given a quick Snowmobile 101 orientation: how to start and stop the machine, how to use the throttle and brake and to keep an eye on the temperature gauge to make sure it did not exceed 175° F otherwise the machine would overheat. Lastly, I attached a red tether, a safety feature, to my snowsuit which would kill the engine if I fell off.



SESSION 1: OPERATING THE SNOWMOBILE AND TURNING

With the engine-cooling “scratcher” down, I inched out slowly onto the freshly groomed, wide, flat, straight trail going 10 miles per hour. I was very nervous--my upper body was tense and to add insult to injury, I wore a helmet that felt heavy and uncomfortable. As I rode my husband kept yelling behind me, “You need to go faster or else the machine is going to overheat.” I gripped the throttle harder and was travelling at 20 mph.

Within 30 minutes, I felt more comfortable with the speed, the noise, and the machine, but the sled kept shifting left and right. I was so grateful no one but us was on the trail. I practiced making wide turns which was difficult. No matter how hard I aimed the machine in the direction that I wanted to go, it refused to cooperate. I was ready to give up, but my husband told me to speed up a bit and I found that easier. We rode for what seemed to be forever before reaching the summit- elevation 10,759 feet!

As we returned I rode on fresh powder at a lake. I felt more comfortable handling the machine and began to enjoy myself immensely. Snow conditions were perfect and the snowmobile just plowed through the powder. Manoeuvring turns took little effort and I was able to comfortably go 30 mph on the straight stretches.

But I was exhausted. My upper body and back were sore all over, my neck was stiff and I was feeling cold. I really needed a massage. The minute the sun went down, the temperature dipped and the wind piped up, making my face really hurt.

It was my first ride, 4 and a half hours on the trails!

SESSION 2: RIDING UP AND DOWN HILLS

Another beautiful day as we set out. To my disappointment the once-groomed trail was now rough with lots of bumps which made riding difficult for a novice bouncing up and down on the snowmobile. I felt like I was back to square one. It was difficult to keep the snowmobile straight. After an hour on the bumpy terrain, we found an untouched powder area. There were short hills of various sizes. We spent the day riding up and down hills. After three attempts on the same hill, I made it to the crest and rode



down. It was fun riding the hills; I felt like I was skiing. My confidence was building and it was thrilling to ride the hills as I lost my sense of fear. During this session, I also practised riding standing up to stretch my legs.

SESSION 3: HAVE FUN

It was sunny again. We snowmobiled to an open meadow close to the reservoir and I was told not to go beyond a set of trees in the distance. After riding the same hills over and over, I decided to do a bit of exploring and went to the other side and began riding those hills. Shortly afterwards, I realized that I couldn't find my way back. My sense of direction is mediocre at best, and every hill and mountain looked the same to me. There was no cell service and I did not have the app to create a breadcrumb trail so I could find my way back. I stopped and took a selfie of myself with a mountain in the background as a reminder never to wander off ever on my own again. Luckily, my friend found me and led me back to my group. To get back, I had to climb a very steep hill, and on the right-hand side going down the hill there was a depression where I could see water. Fortunately, I am very adept at turning left and avoided what could have been a disaster. After getting lost, I did not venture out on the snowmobile again for the remainder of the trip.

This snowmobile trip will forever be etched in my memory. The day we left, the lodge had a 2 for 1 snowmobile rental. Go figure!

Susan Cheng is a BCRTA member.



Losing MY BEST Friend

Like most days in November here on the coast, it was not too cold and a bit overcast. I was settling in to read the morning newspaper when I got an unexpected long-distance phone call from my girlfriend's younger daughter. She had very sad news for me. Her Mum had passed away during the night. I was quite unprepared for that news. How could it be? Lynn was only 3 months older than me. We had talked on the phone just 3 weeks earlier and she was so excited about all the things that were planned for just before Christmas. I did my best to deal with this devastating news all the while trying to calm her daughter. It became obvious that Lynn's family, too, had been unprepared for her death, though she had spent the last 5 years dealing with the repercussions of a fall down the stairs in her home. Lynn was looking forward to her time living in a new "apartment" in an Assisted-Living Facility. As the daughter and I talked, she became aware of some of the things that needed to be done immediately for her mum, and for her father

and sister. We agreed to talk again soon, once the family had organized the necessary funeral activities.

Lynn had been in my life for more than 60 years. I originally met Lynn at summer camp. She was always smiling and it was difficult to not be drawn to her. We re-established our relationship a couple of years later, coincidentally taking the same music education course at UBC during our first year there. Neither of us needed the music part of the course as we were both heavily involved in the coffeehouse/hootenanny scene of Vancouver of the 60's. She had a clear, sweet voice and could harmonize anything by ear.

Once we graduated, she left the Vancouver area to teach Special Ed in Kamloops while I stayed on the coast. She was my bridesmaid and I, her matron-of-honour. Despite the physical distance separating us, we regularly got in touch with one another. We started our families within 3 years

Pat Thiesen is a BCRTA director.

of each other and when my marriage dissolved in the mid 80's, she was the one from whom I sought solace. Due to the physical distance between her home (now in Creston) and mine (still on the coast), the summer vacations were when we got together to catch up on the minutia in our lives. She loved trying out new recipes on me from her closet full of cookbooks. I learned a great deal about owning sheep, and the Spring lambing season. As our families got older and the kids' acquired summer jobs, we got together less but phoned more. Eventually we both faced that time in our lives when the kids got married and our retirements beckoned.

She would have to give up organizing the Creston Valley School District's "Focus on Youth" annual concert series and inspiring her students to love the ukulele. But being retired meant she could take up learning to play the harp. Being retired meant we could travel together when and where we wanted. We found as many excuses as we could to cruise the Caribbean and fly to the Big Island, destinations we had only dreamed of before.

And now she was gone.

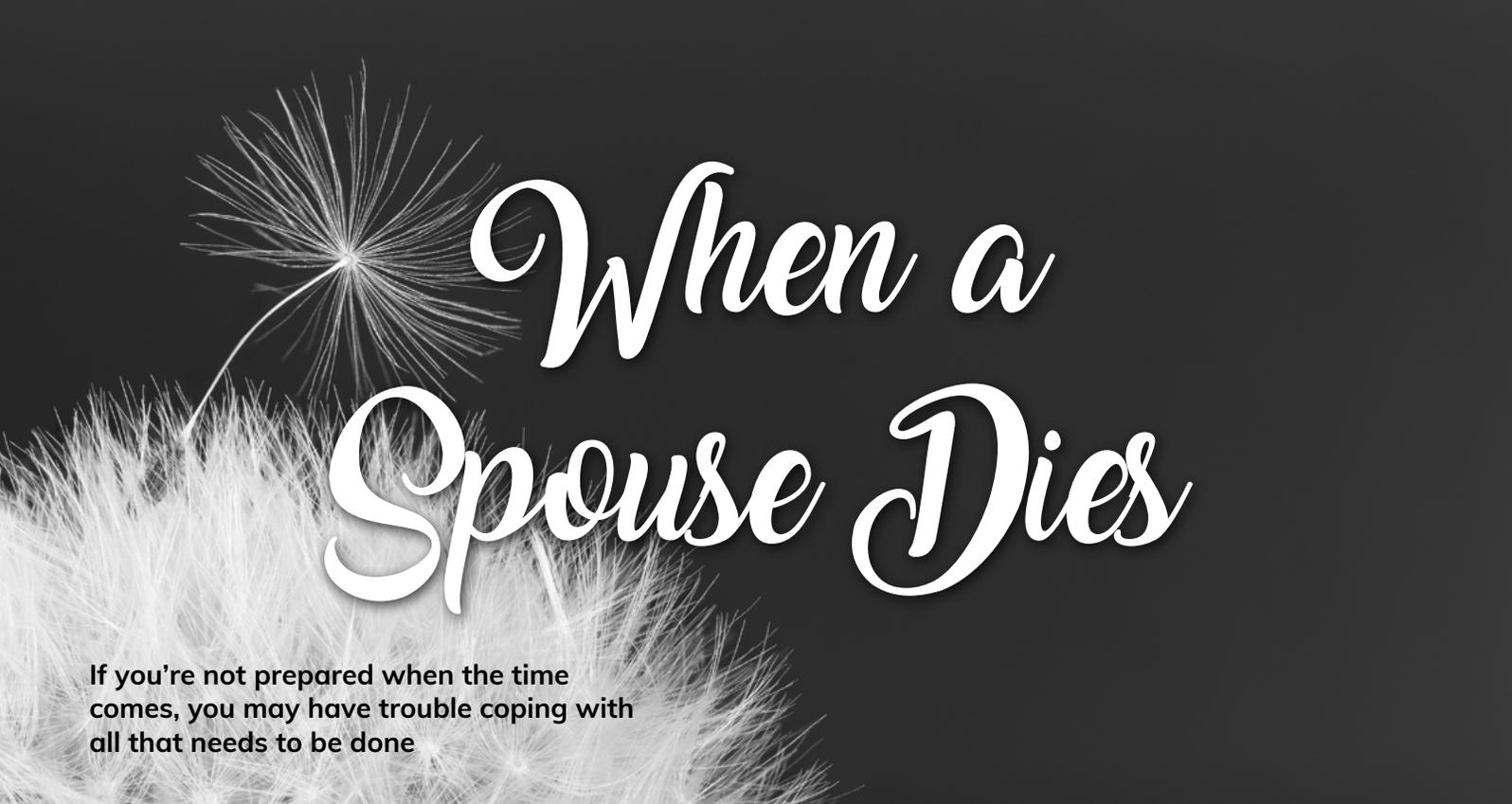
I have continued to keep busy but every once in a while, I stop and wonder 'why am I feeling depressed?' A dark heaviness descends on my body and into my heart.

There hasn't been a great deal of research done about dealing with the loss of a close friend except to state the obvious: you have a loss and you should deal with it. I am working on a few things to help me get through the immediate stages of the grief process. I've begun to realize that everyone grieves differently. I am trying to be good to myself, not over-working to get things done, nor hibernating. I am giving myself time to adjust to the fact that she isn't going to pick up the phone to chat as we used to, trying to keep a balance between then and now. And to know that at the end of the day, my life is richer—my history is richer—because of our friendship.

Lynn gave so much to so many throughout her teaching career, through her love of music, and sharing with us her lilting laughter and positive spirit. I know I am a more thoughtful, caring person for having known her and so appreciative of her giving spirit that she shared with me.



*To honour my dear friend, Lynn Johnson,
who passed away peacefully in her sleep
on November 15, 2019
at the young age of 73.*



When a Spouse Dies

If you're not prepared when the time comes, you may have trouble coping with all that needs to be done

By Okey Chigbo

When a husband or wife passes away, the loss can be one of the most emotionally devastating experiences in the life of the surviving spouse. The death of a loved one who has been a life partner can leave a person prostrate with grief, unable to think straight or do anything. Unfortunately, there is a lot that has to be done, and done right.

Susan James* believes preparations for the death of a spouse should begin well before there's any sign that such a thing will happen. The 62-year-old teacher from Guelph, ON, lost her husband to cancer in 2015. "It happened very, very quickly," she says. "We found out in February, and he was gone in April. I was unprepared for his quick passing because I believed 100 per cent that he was going to survive. It was very difficult."

James says it's important for both spouses to make wills and to make sure those wills are up-to-date and include the name of an executor. "Visit your will regularly. Set aside some time every couple of years and make sure it's worded the way you want. Make sure the wording is

clear, that you say exactly what you want to say. If you don't, you leave things up to other people's interpretation," she says.

Accountant Earle Pierre agrees that wills are vital. "When there's no will, people spend a lot of money," he says. "It cost one of my clients \$180,000 to hire lawyers to settle disputes over inheritance."

Pierre says it's preferable to have a will prepared by a lawyer, because such wills are better regarded. It's not that it can't be contested, but a will prepared by a lawyer stands on more solid ground, he says.

If one partner is incapacitated by a mentally debilitating disease, it's also important to have a power of attorney prepared beforehand and given to a trusted person. Yvette Trancoso, a Toronto journalist, had to handle things when her mother died in 2009 and her father was unable to take care of what needed to be done.

"There's power of attorney for property and one for personal care," Trancoso says. "Without power of attorney, the government will not release any information to you or talk to you. People in official positions are always concerned about fraud and you have to prove that you are authorized to act on this person's behalf."

* Name changed for reasons of privacy.

Even if you're a spouse, they may not release the information if you don't have a power of attorney. I learned the hard way. I went to close my mother's bank account, and the bank wouldn't give me anything because they weren't sure who I was. It will be very difficult to close an account or sell a house."

Pierre says it's also important to have the right person selected as trustee. It can't just be a friend—it has to be a friend who knows and understands the duties of a trustee. He says that in one of the horror cases he handled, a friend of the deceased wife had been selected as trustee, and the friend felt this gave her the right to order the husband out of the house. "She came into the home screaming at him to get out!"

While the surviving spouse has to give directions, it's also useful to have a professional or a team of professionals giving advice, and in some cases, actually doing the legwork. A lawyer, an accountant, and a financial advisor can help.

The foregoing are some of the things that should be done before a spouse passes on. Afterwards, a death certificate will have to be ordered. A certificate can be obtained from your provincial government, and you'll need several copies—for such things as life insurance claims, accessing the bank account of the deceased spouse, and survivor benefits. "You almost can't get anything done without a death certificate," Trancoso says.

Pierre says that a funeral home can handle the death certificate, so you may not have to go through your provincial government. Finding a funeral home is therefore important for more than one reason.

The Employment and Social Development Canada website (www.canada.ca) offers a checklist of the tasks that need to be done, many by the estate's executor (search for "after a death"), such as closing all accounts that don't need to be open, from bank accounts to RRIFs, investment accounts, and credit cards. In addition, the surviving spouse should transfer utility accounts to his or her name.

All pensions and benefits programs from the government or an employer should also be cancelled, and where possible, benefits transferred to the surviving spouse. Also cancel health insurance, passport, and citizenship. The

surviving spouse or executor should also contact the Canada Revenue Agency so that taxes owed by the deceased can be paid.

Trancoso says that the lawyer who handled her mother's death put an ad in the paper "stating that she had passed away, so that people who have outstanding claims can come forward. He publicized it for a limited time, about two months; if creditors don't show up, they can't put a lien on the house after that."

She adds that the lawyer put the jointly owned house in her father's name. This prevents people who may have been owed money by her mother from coming to take the home. Pierre sounds a note of caution about choosing lawyers: "They can give false advice that drags things out because they want to make money."

It's also important to watch for fraudsters who may want to take advantage of a surviving spouse's vulnerable state. Before signing any financial agreement, it must be thoroughly checked out by an expert, and the survivor should take the necessary time to think about it. Also consider a pre-nuptial agreement for any marriage proposals, especially if assets are significant.

According to an article in *Psychology Today*, "Loneliness also represents perhaps the greatest challenge for seniors dealing with the loss of a spouse, making it particularly hard to move on with their lives afterward. This can also become a major health risk for seniors."

The article reports an increased risk for depression and behaviour such as smoking and alcohol abuse. Seniors may fail to take care of themselves and become more inactive and isolated. A reduced life expectancy can result. Social support alone may not be enough, and seniors may need therapy.

Susan James says that she's still grieving the loss of her husband, but she hasn't sought any professional help.

"My grief is at a different level now," she says. "Initially there was shock, which protected me. I was grateful for the shock because it allowed me to sleep at night and allowed me to do what I had to do. I didn't know it was shock at the time. I thought it was my strength. I realized it was shock only after it passed."

Reprinted with permission from *Good Times Magazine* (January 2020)



Cavern in Kamakura. Facing Page: Ikebana arrangement by the author.

Challenge!



Have anyone's best laid plans for 2020 not been hijacked by the global pandemic?

I left Victoria for Japan in late February with two goals in mind. First, I wished to complete the course work for certification for **Sogetsu Ikebana** Level 5 at their Tokyo location. Second, I planned to binge and gorge on the cultural offerings across this vibrant city during the height of sakura (cherry blossom) season.

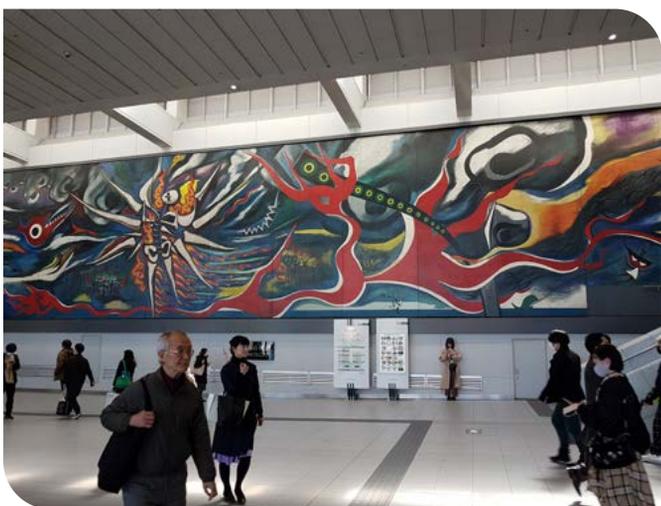
These included two installations by the interdisciplinary art collective teamLab. On the manmade island Toyosu, **teamLab Planets Tokyo** promised to surround visitors planetarium style with digital sakura throughout March and April creating the illusion of floating in a universe of flowers. And in Odaiba Palette Town, in the

MORI Building DIGITAL ART MUSEUM: teamLab Borderless beckoned. There interactive art exhibits created with light seemed to live and evolve when touched. Landscapes, creatures, and crystals could be controlled by hands, feet, or a smart phone QR code. Even the tea house refreshments included flower projections which bloomed in a cup or bowl. I'd also hoped to wander the the 52nd floor Tokyo City View observation deck for the 360-degree views of the city, and enjoy "blue hour" from the rooftop Sky Deck. During the interval between sunset and darkness Tokyo's sky transmutes through various tones of indigo to black and the city puts on its diamonds.

Other temptations beckoned: a comprehensive historical overview of national dress featuring



Above: Sakura. **Below:** Myth of Tomorrow exhibit.



kimono from the twelfth century onward at the **Tokyo National Museum**, familiar hole-in-the wall ateliers or new ones to discover during purposeless meanderings through neighbourhoods, as well as numerous galleries offering collections from Europe and Japan.

Alas, while I was in pre-boarding for a Friday afternoon flight out of Vancouver, I received an email from Sogetsu Administration that on government orders all schools were to close during March. All classes were cancelled as were concerts throughout the city. Government run galleries and museums closed as well.

There was no way to turn back at that point. I fired off a quick email asking whether Sogetsu could find a private teacher willing to accept me. My only option moving forward was to wing it.

I had the weekend to settle into my apartment before I learned that **Fukushima Koka**, whose reputation is global, had kindly offered to accept me into her **Meguro** studio. Under her tutelage, I would not only complete my own assignments but also observe senior-level teachers from abroad in training, witness her guidance of a 10-year-old beginning Level 1, and participate in an exhibition in the hall of her Chiyoda-ku apartment complex.

At the beginning of each lesson I was given a bundle of branches and blossoms which I paired with a suitable container to execute the day's theme. Often, if I finished a few minutes early, after evaluating my effort Fukushima-sensei would insist that I knock off another in the remaining time and say, "Challenge!" That it was, and glorious though I can't say the same of every attempt.

Unable to explore the usual cultural offerings, I had to improvise during the few hours I was not in class. Before leaving Canada, I had contacted **Ossan Rental** (Old Man Rental), a company I'd seen featured on mainstream Japanese media for years. Since it had a "no touching" policy I felt comfortable engaging an English-speaking gentleman to show me around **Shimokitazawa**, the Tokyo neighbourhood renowned for its coffee, vintage thrift shops, music scene, alternative culture, and vibrant shutter art.



Above: Custard presented as a blossom. **Below:** Ikebana arrangement by the author.

My guide turned out to be a lithe and fit 49-year-old who looked ten years younger. How he qualified for the *ossan* distinction mystified me—my forties were my late youth, and eighty is the new sixty. Nevertheless, as gardens, temples, and shrines remained open, I also engaged him to accompany me to **Kamakura** where we explored various gardens, caverns, and temples containing religious iconography.

Art is a ubiquitous part of daily life in Japan, right down to a restaurant's place settings and table ware, or a child's wagon of succulents parked alongside a narrow passageway between the supermarket and my home. Public art such as **Taro Okamoto's** *The Myth of Tomorrow* above the concourse of Shibuya Station became part of my daily travels as did numerous magnificent ikebana installations in lobbies, sculptures along walkways, department store galleries, exhibitions of children's art in corridors, and street performances.

Fortunately, Tokyo's edgy **Watari Museum of Contemporary Art**, located half a kilometer from



my apartment remained open with **Philippe Parreno's** *A Manifestation of Objects* on view. His first large scale exhibition in Japan was described as “the cutting-edge but also nostalgic, mysterious world of Parreno, which is here today and gone tomorrow.” Among numerous outré installations in various rooms, hung columns of entangled cords which shifted almost imperceptibly in the ever-changing air currents—never remaining the same.

Though the promised digital “universe of flowers” in Toyosu was closed, the sakura blossoms in Aoyama Cemetery located 150 meters from my front door delivered their annual performance right on cue. From first blush to full show—which included an unexpected snowfall—I walked daily at all hours under the petal canopies.

For most of 2019 I had dreamed of returning to my studies and stepping back into my familiar Tokyo life with its endless opportunities on offer. Alas, I lived a mere fraction of that dream and little of it as I had imagined or hoped. I had

followed my heart and invested much to make a 2020 return to Tokyo possible. You do that for love. But sometimes an affair does not work out.

After my arrival COVID-19 reports changed daily, creating an ever-menacing uncertainty. Mid-month Air Canada cancelled my return flight six weeks hence, and the Canadian Government urged citizens to return while the opportunity to do so remained viable. I resisted, but eventually recognized that shifting priorities, to safeguard my health and ensure that I could leave, was not the same as defeat. I longed to stay, but it became clear that it would be imprudent to hold on.

Reluctantly I booked my departure. As I packed my bags, a feral cat wailed incessantly outside my window, an uncanny expression of everything in my heart. Overnight a fierce windstorm howled through Tokyo's concrete canyons. How fitting. Like the ethereal petals, in a matter of hours I too was afloat on the wind and gone.



Street art: Wagon of succulents.

Lynda Grace Philippsen writes from Victoria. Read more of her adventures on her blog: www.thewayofwords.com.

Music

IN THE TIME OF COVID



While there has been much sadness and grief as we all grapple with the pandemic, our group has found a way to enjoy and share music while still adhering to provincial guidelines.

Along with schools, businesses and organizations, Vancouver Island's many choirs "closed down." They ceased rehearsing and performing in late March as part of our province's emergency response to the global pandemic. Here in Beechwood Village, in Sidney, we saw firsthand the impact on our elderly neighbours.

A trio of choristers and musicians in our building quickly began to brainstorm ways in which we could return live music to our own lives and also share it with our fellow condo owners and our "locked down" neighbours. We were inspired by our love of music, and wanting to help others, all in keeping with **Dr. Bonnie Henry's** advice to: "Be kind. Be calm. Stay safe."

Our trio, all retired educators, consisted initially of a harpist, a recorder-player, and a singer. None of us had performed together previously. We began by rehearsing outside, to easily maintain social distancing protocols, and performed outside our

front entrance for the first time on April 12, Easter Sunday. It was a cold morning, but six intrepid Beechwood owners attended, distancing two metres apart, and several of the "locked down" AMICA residents watched and listened from their windows, across our parking lot.

Emboldened by the positive response, we continued rehearsing and performing and have thus far performed seven times, with our audience increasing each time. Our group has grown to a quintet, with the addition of another singer and recorder player, who are also retired educators and fellow Beechwood Village owners.

Our performances culminated on Canada Day, with 20 people in attendance, all wearing red and white, and all maintaining social distancing protocols. We plan more in the summer.

Each mini-concert has included 10-12 songs, both secular and spiritual, and has always ended with the singing of O Canada, in both official languages.

I wrote new lyrics for the song: **The Cat Came Back**, to honour our efforts provincially in "flattening the curve".

(1) OUR OLD WORLD HAD TROUBLES OF ITS OWN,
WITHOUT CORONAVIRUS AND ITS WIDESPREAD ROAM.
WE'VE TRIED AND TRIED TO KEEP IT AWAY.
WE ALL STAYED HOME TO KEEP IT AT BAY.

CHORUS: SO IT WON'T COME BACK. IT'LL STAY AWAY.
IT WON'T COME BACK. IT BETTER BE A GONER!
IT WON'T COME BACK. IT JUST BETTER STAY AWAY!

(2) NOW OUR FRONTLINE WORKERS HAVE LED THE FIGHT.
THEY'VE WORN MASKS AND GOWNS AND DONE IT RIGHT!
THEY'VE FOUGHT AND FOUGHT TO KEEP THE NUMBERS DOWN,
IN THE HOSPITALS, HOMES, AND ALL AROUND.

(3) HERE IN BEECHWOOD, WE'VE DONE VERY WELL.
WE'VE MASKED AND DISTANCED AND ZOOMED AS WELL!
AT 7PM WE'VE CLASHED OUR PANS
FOR THOSE WORKERS AND ALWAYS WASHED OUR HANDS!

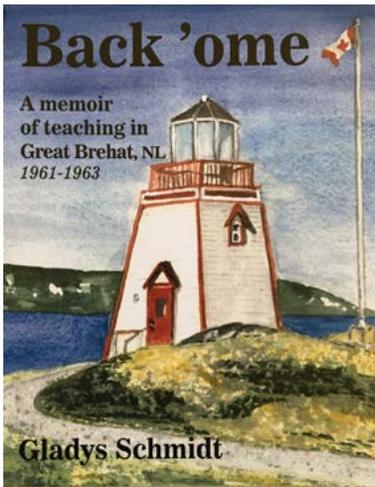
CHORUS

(4) NOW THE STORES ARE OPEN IN A NEW WAY.
HAIR SALONS, RESTAURANTS, TOO. HOORAY!
PARKS OPENING. SCHOOLS OPENING. SLOWLY, WE SAY.
LISTEN TO BONNIE HENRY, THE ONE WE SHOULD OBEY.

CHORUS

ELAINE BARR is a retired teacher who lives in Sidney, BC.

books OF NOTE



Back 'ome - A memoir of teaching in Great Brehat, NL by Gladys Schmidt

In 1961 a 20-year old woman boarded a plane in Saskatoon, SK for a two-year volunteer teaching assignment in Great Brehat, NL.

This book tells of these two years in a remote fishing community in the Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland where the weather was harsh, fishing was the only means of making a living, and education was not a high priority. However the people were resilient, accepting their hardships with dignity. Gladys and her teaching partner, Verla, were accepted with enthusiasm by most of the residents in this community. But conflicts arose that left them with some difficult decisions. Romance entered her life unexpectedly.

Back 'ome is told in first person as she reminisces and answers questions from her two daughters as the three of them travel in Newfoundland. The details were remembered by rereading the letters she had written to her parents. Her mother had saved these weekly letters in a shoebox making this story possible.

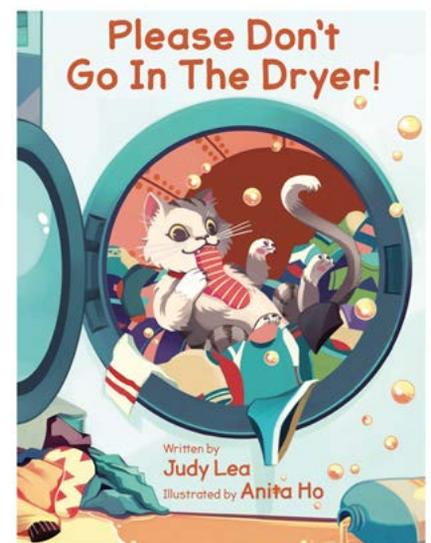
Available from gladysken31@gmail.com

Please Don't Go in the Dryer by Judy Lea

Young readers (and their parents) will laugh out loud at this whimsical cautionary tale about a mischievous kitten and its overly imaginative owner. The delightful text and beautiful, hilarious illustrations will make this a 'read it again!' favourite. (Just watch out for the sock monster in the middle!)

Judy Lea adapted this playful, funny, spoken word text from her first CD, "Too Much Work To Do!", (nominated Best Children's Album of the Year at West Coast Music Awards). She taught for over 30 years in Campbell River, Vancouver, and Coquitlam.

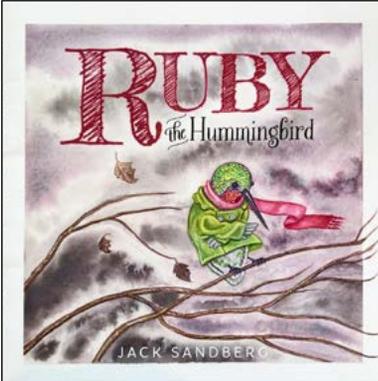
Available online from Amazon, Chapters/Indigo, and Barnes & Noble or directly from the author, judyplea@gmail.com.



BCRTA members who have authored a book are featured in Books of Note.

To be included, send your book details to postscript@bcrt.ca

books OF NOTE



Ruby the Hummingbird by Jack Sandberg

This is a children's book of a hummingbird's adventure in surviving the winter migration through the help of a friend. It is suited to Christmas reading as Santa Claus makes an appearance at the end of the story. It is written in seventeen short verses, one or two verses to each page with a large coloured illustration of a major theme of that verse to be placed on the facing page. The beautiful illustrations were created by **Patricia Dewitt-Grush**.

Born in 1941 in the southeastern corner of BC, **Jack Sandberg** has lived there ever since. He enjoyed a career teaching in elementary schools until retirement in 1997. Jack has five children and step-children, twelve grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. His stories are often read aloud on Christmas Eve.

Available from Amazon in paperback, hardcover and Kindle editions

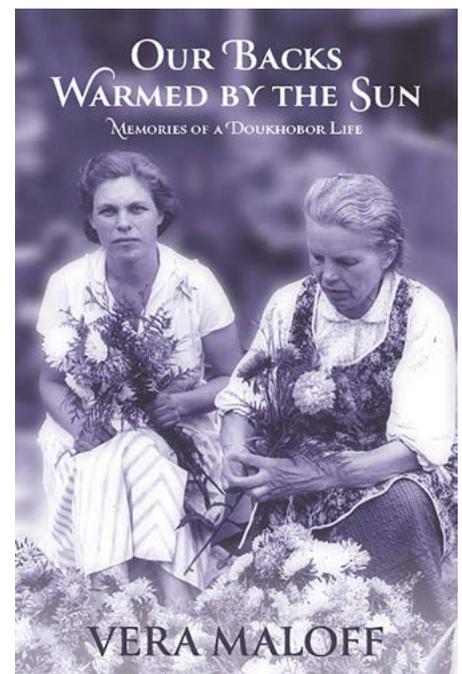
Our Backs Warmed by the Sun: MEMORIES OF A DOUKHOBOR LIFE by Vera Maloff

When author **Vera Maloff** set out to find the truth about her family's history, she knew something of the struggles of living a pacifist, agrarian life in a world with opposing values. To find the bones of that history she turned to her mother, who, in her nineties, had forgotten nothing.

This is the story of a small but thriving Kootenay community, and of the experiences of a family who stood by their beliefs. Laughter, ingenuity and tenacity are offered up in the pages of **Our Backs Warmed by the Sun**, an important and engaging window into our collective history.

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Sleep



Do you get a good night's sleep? Do you awake feeling refreshed? Do you feel the need for a nap during the day?

Sleep is important for our emotional, physical and mental well-being. It affects our moods, our concentration, creativity and memory. Sleep is critical to healing of injuries, reducing blood pressure, maintaining the endocrine and immune systems, and repairing organs. Many people believe that as we age, we need less sleep, but in fact, all adults need 7 - 8 hours of sleep each night.

There are many reasons why people may have trouble getting a good eight hour sleep. Some problems may be short term - lasting maybe a day or two, or a few weeks, such as worry about an upcoming situation or perhaps the death of a loved one.

Other issues are chronic and long term. These are often brought on by medical sleep disorders such as obstructive sleep apnea, restless leg syndrome, or advanced sleep disorder where an individual falls asleep and awakes at unusually early times. There are treatments for all of these disorders.

Many studies have been done on sleep hygiene: the circumstances and habits that impact on how well you sleep.

Some of the things you might do in order to get a good night's sleep:

- try to go to bed at the same time every night and wake up at the same time each day
- don't smoke or drink alcohol close to bedtime
- don't drink any caffeinated beverages close to bedtime and limit your caffeine intake during the day
- have your last meal of the day at least three hours before you retire. This allows your digestive system to be relaxed when you sleep.
- sleep in a comfortable bed in a room that is quiet, dark and at a comfortable temperature. If your room doesn't seem dark enough, try wearing a sleep mask or invest in heavy drapes (like they have in hotels)
- use your bed only for sexual activity and sleep
- exercise regularly but not near bedtime
- try to get some sunlight and fresh air everyday
- do a calming activity right before bed
- and go to bed only when you are feeling somewhat tired

There is some controversy about watching TV or the small screen before retiring. For some it



is agitating and for some it is soothing. Some prefer a good book.

If you suspect that you have a sleep disorder, seek professional help. Don't self-medicate. Sleeping medication can become addictive. And as your body gets used to a drug, you will find that you have to increase the dose to get the same effect.

And so, when you head off to bed tonight - check your sleep hygiene!

Pleasant dreams!

Cheryl Halsted is a member of the BCRTA Well-being Committee, and reports that she sleeps very well.

“Sleep! O gentle sleep,
Nature’s soft nurse...”

(Shakespeare - Henry IV)

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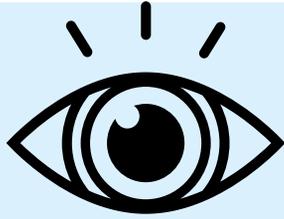
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SEE THIS

TAKING CARE OF YOUR EYES

You may think that if your vision seems fine you do not need to visit your optometrist, but this is an incorrect assumption.

As we get older we should visit the optometrist once a year.

It is important to regularly test for glaucoma, a disease that is undetectable by the afflicted person until it is firmly established. Glaucoma leads to blindness if not detected and treated.

Cataracts come with a long life. Your optometrist will determine when it is time to intervene. If you decide to not go ahead when you are advised to do so, you are putting yourself at risk for complications.

Age Related Macular Degeneration is a condition that may develop in older persons and specially designed eye supplements have been found to help slow down the progress but do not, however, prevent or cure it.

An eye exam does far more than check vision; it also checks for disease and other potential problems.

There are other eye conditions/diseases that affect vision, but your optometrist is your best friend to help you with the road forward.

Don't put it off!

Margaret Sutton is a member of the BCRTA Well-being Committee.



HEAR THIS

COVID-19 AND THE HEARING IMPAIRED

The COVID-19 pandemic has meant keeping a distance of two meters, wearing masks, and interacting through large Plexiglas barriers at retail stores.

These activities are a minor inconvenience for most of us, but for those who have hearing loss these protective measures, combined with an increasing reliance on technology in order to communicate with others, may produce greater isolation and loneliness.

With the use of "Zoom" or similar types of audio-visual communication technology being more frequently used, hearing impaired individuals do have the benefit of getting some visual cues to understand some of the dialogue. But often the audio quality is poor and those kinds of calls don't have the capacity for computerized note-taking or TV captioning.

Once the decision is made to venture out into noisy environments in the community it is even more of a challenge to clearly discern what someone is saying. When encountering those wearing masks, the voices are muffled and there's no longer the ability to read lips or have the benefit of facial expressions to aid understanding. This results in increased stress levels and adds to the sense of loneliness and isolation.

Dr. Bonnie Henry's mantra "be kind, be calm and be safe" applies as we consider what added challenges there are for the hearing impaired living in the time of COVID-19.

Pat Thiesen is a BCRTA director and member of the Well-being Committee.

IT IS NEVER TOO EARLY TO

Save Your Brain

CHOOSING BRAIN-FRIENDLY FOODS



Many neuroscientists believe that age-related damage in your brain begins the day you are born. So when should you start worrying about loss of brain power with age? Right now. Think about it. If your brain goes...what's left? You have a lot depending upon it, and much invested in your mental performance, and your memories. If you haven't been caring for your brain before - it's time to start!

Brain diseases like Alzheimer's don't begin the day of diagnosis, but much earlier. Research seems to point a finger at free radical damage. Damage which starts early with small undetectable hits on brain cells. Your brain is very fatty which makes it vulnerable to free radical attack. Such attacks can lead to neuronal death, and faulty brain circuitry. Free radicals are everywhere - in the air, the water, the food. Free radicals are your brain's enemy. Fat is the favorite breeding ground for free radicals. Your brain just happens to be the fattiest organ in your body. Your brain also uses a lot of oxygen. Oxygen and fat react to generate free radicals.

This process is called oxidization. In short, oxidized fat is rancid.

Guess what? A rancid brain doesn't work very well.

I take my brain health seriously, and that

includes eating anti-oxidants. An anti-oxidant rich diet is one of the best things you can do for your brain! Anti-oxidants keep you smart, happy, and save your brain from aging. Antioxidants can help. Lots of research shows that animals fed antioxidants are healthier, mentally sharper, and live longer. One study showed that pregnant mice fed antioxidants gave birth to offspring that aged more slowly. Sounds good to me!

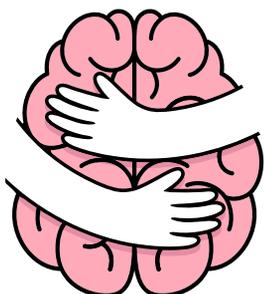
So, what are the best brain-saving fruits and vegetables? Number 1 is a virtual powerhouse of antioxidants for your brain! It's cheap. It tastes good. It's in every supermarket. And it's probably not part of your daily diet (add it fast!). What is it?

Prunes.

A single prune has an antioxidant capacity (ORAC) of 5770. That is double #2 on the list! In our house, we now have a container of prunes (beside the fruit bowl) in plain view. One a day. What could be easier?

Good news: Anti-oxidants fight off free radicals and keep your brain sharp at any age. The evidence is overwhelming: fruits and vegetables are full of anti-oxidants that are good for your brain. Yet most people don't eat enough of the right ones.

Here are the top 20 best brain saving fruits and vegetables:



Food	Anti-Oxidant Capacity
prunes	5770
raisins	2830
blueberries	2234
blackberries	2036
garlic	1939
kale	1770
cranberries	1750
strawberries	1536
spinach, raw	1210
raspberries	1227
brussel sprouts	1123
plums	949
alfalfa sprouts	931
spinach, steamed	909
broccoli	888
beets	841
avocado	782
orange	750
grapes, red	739
pepper, red	731



The champ of anti-oxidant foods.

What did you notice? These anti-oxidant superfoods are all deeply coloured. Richly coloured foods are great for your brain. What are you waiting for? Start eating. Remember: the earlier you care for your brain the better it will perform at any age.

Terry Small, B.Ed., M.A., is a master teacher and learning skills specialist. He is the author of the *Brain Bulletin* with over 34,000 subscribers worldwide. To learn more about brain health go to www.terrysmall.com.

Photo and adapted illustration by istock/Getty

more

Brain Foods



Nuts and Seeds
Nuts and seeds are good sources of vitamin E, explaining that higher levels of vitamin E correspond with less cognitive decline as you get older.



Wild Salmon
Deep-water fish, such as salmon, are rich in omega-3 essential fatty acids, which are essential for brain function.



Dark Chocolate
Dark chocolate has powerful antioxidant properties, contains several natural stimulants, including caffeine, which enhance focus and concentration.



Avocados
Avocado is a fatty fruit, but it's a monounsaturated fat, which contributes to healthy blood flow. And healthy blood flow means a healthy brain.



Pomegranate Juice
Pomegranate juice offers potent antioxidant benefits, which protect the brain from the damage of free radicals.



Whole Grains
Whole grains, such as oatmeal, whole-grain breads, and brown rice can reduce the risk for heart disease. If you promote cardiovascular health, you're promoting good flow to the organ system, which includes the brain.



Freshly Brewed Tea
Two to three cups a day of freshly brewed tea contains a modest amount of caffeine can boost brain power by enhancing memory, focus, and mood.



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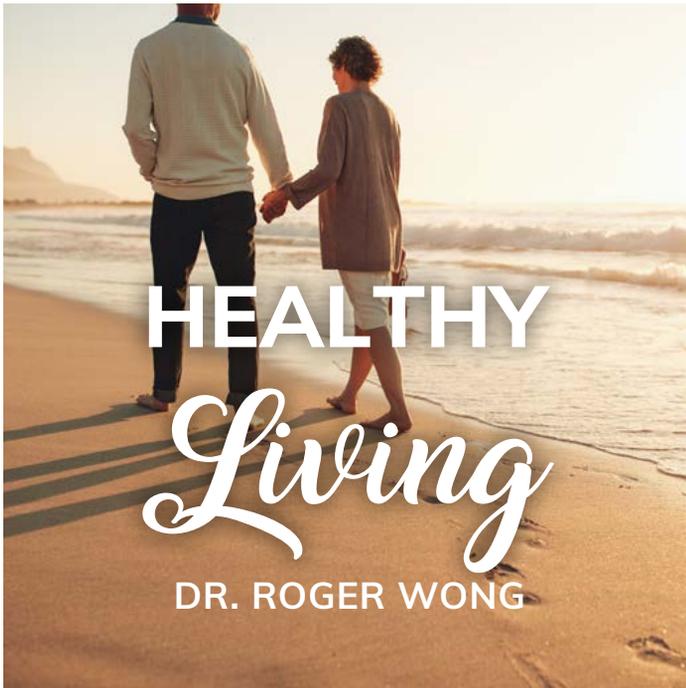
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As I wrote in my recent op-ed in the *Globe and Mail*, in many ways, my life's work is culminating now in real time with each new development of COVID-19. Everyone wants to help. From front-line health-care workers, who risk infection caring for those in need, including our seniors, to our neighbours and friends who leave groceries on front steps, ringing the doorbell right before they walk away. That collective desire to help to alleviate stress and suffering is one reason to remain hopeful, even as the number of COVID cases and tragic deaths increase.

I believe that all of us must do everything we can to protect and support our most vulnerable, including older adults.

Government agencies, including Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada, have repeatedly reminded us of the importance of physical distancing, such as visiting our older loved ones virtually rather than in person during the pandemic. However, we must remember that physical distancing does not mean social isolation. We know that loneliness and isolation can have negative impacts on physical and mental health, especially for seniors.

We must interact with older adults regularly, perhaps at this point through computer technology, social media or, if they prefer, by telephone. The accessibility of virtual technology may present barriers for some older Canadians, such as those who reside in rural or remote geographic areas because they may have limited internet network coverage or those who cannot afford it due to socio-economic reasons.

For seniors, connecting with compassion is important at all times but especially during the pandemic. It is even more crucial for those who live with dementia, such as Alzheimer's disease,

Protecting the Vulnerable

This article is adapted from a presentation made by PostScript columnist Dr. Roger Wong to the Government of Canada's Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology regarding the protection and support of older Canadians amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dr. Roger Wong, Clinical Professor of Geriatric Medicine, Department of Medicine, University of British Columbia:

Older adults are vulnerable to developing infections, including COVID-19. In part, that is because the immune system function in seniors may not be working as well. Many seniors live with long-standing health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and lung disease.

“ That collective desire to help to alleviate stress and suffering is one reason to remain hopeful... ”

continued...

“ For seniors, connecting with compassion is important at all times but especially during the pandemic. It is even more crucial for those who live with dementia...” ”

because they may not understand what is going on. It is imperative that we increase the support for family caregivers and people who have dementia. I believe the Government of Canada is well positioned to champion the development of national best practices in supporting vulnerable seniors and their households and to provide the resources for sustainable implementation.

This includes how Canada responds to the situation unfolding, in particular, at long-term care homes across the country. Older adults living in long-term care are highly vulnerable, relatively voiceless and without strong advocacy.

As of June 1 of this year, 6,007 Canadians residing in long-term care homes have died as a result of COVID-19, accounting for 82% of the 7,326 deaths reported here in Canada.

We must protect seniors where they live. Recently, the Chief Science Advisor of Canada convened a task force on long-term care, of which I am a member. Our government and health leaders must set the tone now by emphasizing a humanistic and compassionate approach to ensure that we fully address the ongoing needs of older adults in long-term care. Practically, this would mean dedicating societal priority, strategic attention and appropriate resources towards long-term care in Canada, such as through the creation of a Canada-long-term-care strategy that is informed by continuous learning from a national health data system.

We all have observed that COVID-19 has revealed a fragmented continuum of seniors' care in Canada, which is compounded by the heterogeneous operational models involved in public and private sectors, making it difficult to provide older Canadians with equal and consistent access to the necessary services based on their care needs as they age. We must



Dr. Roger Wong presenting to the Government of Canada's Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology. Image: YouTube

take action now to identify immediate and ongoing solutions to resolve these national systemic issues. This should, for instance, include a national dialogue to explore how long-term care can be covered within the Canada Health Act.

COVID-19 has also revealed that long-term care sector resources are not at the levels needed to enable the quality of health and social care required, both at regular times and at times of a pandemic. We must develop national strategies to ensure adequate and sustainable staffing in long-term care so that workers with the right mix of skills can focus working at a single site without crossing sites at a given time. This would require national guidelines to address compensation inequity and sick-leave policies that allow symptomatic staff to stay home.

Nationally accredited and continuous professional development programs are also needed to refresh long-term care skills, including infection prevention and control. In addition, I believe that a national emphasis in Canada on increased health professional training — especially in areas of

geriatric medicine, geriatric psychiatry, care of the elderly, palliative care, family medicine, internal medicine and psychiatry — preferably done in a collaborative learning format, can bridge the existing service gaps across Canada in delivering the best possible care for older adults.

To mitigate the challenges in the long-term-care sector, I believe that Canada should also implement a number of additional systemic solutions, including the national supply-chain management of personal protective equipment, or PPE, with priority provision to the long-term-care sector, as well as deploying a national approach to fast track COVID-19 diagnostic testing for both seniors and staff in long-term care.

All of us must take collective action now in addressing these cross-sectorial and systemic issues affecting older adults which are unmasked by COVID-19. I believe that a coordinated and strategic approach, led by the Government of Canada and with full engagement of the provinces and territories, can make the much-needed difference for older Canadians and their loved ones.

The time to act is now.

Dr. Roger Wong is Vice Dean (Education) in the Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia, a geriatrics specialist doctor, clinical professor of geriatric medicine, the 13th President of the Canadian Geriatrics Society, and a TEDx speaker. He tweets at @RogerWong10.

The content of this article is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your doctor or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.



BC LONG TERM CARE FACTS

Figures from 2019, unless noted.

Facilities operated by health authorities: 111, with 8,962 beds

Facilities operated by contractors: 183, with 18,322 beds

Also about 1,500 fully private beds (paid entirely by resident)

- Average age of residents in facilities is 85 years
- 60% aged 85 or older and 5% younger than 65.
- 65% of residents are female

Residents Needs Profile

- 31% of residents are totally dependent on staff
- 29% have severe cognitive impairment
- 48% exhibit “low” social engagement

Employees and Staffing Levels

- 33,506 Registered Care Aides & Community Health Workers
- Fewer than 15% of facilities meet the target levels of hours of support per resident (3.36 hours per resident in 24 hrs)
- 85% of B.C care homes are not funded for the number of hours required to reach target level
- The target level is also inadequate based on studies of long-term care needs

Health Care Aides provide 80% of the care to seniors.

- BC will need an additional 2,833 HCA FTEs over next five years to meet demand
- 95% of care homes and home support agencies experiencing staff shortages
- We are not training enough HCA's to meet current or future needs

Info sources: BC Seniors Advocate and BCCares.ca

NOTICE OF 2020 AGM

75th Annual BCRTA Annual General Meeting (9:30am)
called for Saturday, October 3, 2020

BCRTA Positions for Election

- President - 1 year term
- 1st VP - 1 year term
- 2nd VP - 1 year term

2 Directors (2 yrs) from outside the Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley Regions
2 Directors (2 yrs) from inside the Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley Regions

18th Annual General Meeting of the RR Smith Memorial Fund Foundation
(9:00am) called for Saturday, October 3, 2020

RR Smith Positions for Election
8 Directors - 1 year terms

This meeting will be held online. Details to follow.



Keep up your Connections!

- BCRTA's email newsletter
- BCRTA and advocacy news
- Useful links and articles
- Special member offers
- Download as PDF magazine

View online and subscribe at
www.bcrt.ca/connections

NOMINATION FORM FOR 2020-2021 BCRTA DIRECTOR POSITIONS (OCTOBER 3, 2020 AGM ELECTIONS)

Note that the President and the two Vice-President positions have one-year terms. All other directors have two-year terms.

Information about directors' nomination and election procedures is summarized below, along with a guide to related information contained in the BCRTA Handbook (www.bcrta.ca) - look under the "About Us" heading.

Nominators: (Two required. Must be Active or Life BCRTA members in good standing. Signatures on the same form are not necessary - it is acceptable for nominators to endorse the nomination of a candidate by email to kristi@bcrta.ca)

Name: _____ Sign: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Sign: _____ Phone: _____

We nominate (please print clearly): _____

(Nominee must be an Active or Life BCRTA member in good standing)
for the position of (circle):

President 1st Vice-President 2nd Vice-President

Director (Lower Mainland) Director (outside Lower Mainland) ACER-CART Representative

By signing here I affirm that I accept this nomination: _____

Nominee, please fill in the blanks below and **attach item #4** to this form.

1. Address: _____

2. Phone: _____ Email: _____

3. Branch membership (if applicable): _____

4. A curriculum vitae, preferably in item form - not to exceed 200 words - for publication in the Summary of Reports booklet (**publication deadline July 15th**).

Summarize educator positions held, experience on executive and other committees, and why you would like to serve on the BCRTA Board of Directors.

Please note: Candidates do not have their expenses paid to attend the AGM unless they are elected by their branches as delegates. There are not usually any candidates' speeches at the AGM.

Acknowledgment of receipt of your nomination will be forwarded to you as soon as possible.

Return this form by July 15th to:

Patricia Clough, Nominations Chair,
c/- BCRTA, 100-550 W. 6th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 4P2,
or fax to (604) 871-2265, or email a scanned attachment to [<kristi@bcrta.ca>](mailto:kristi@bcrta.ca)

NOMINATION AND ELECTION RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR BCRTA DIRECTOR POSITIONS

There are usually five 3-day (Mon.-Wed.) meetings of the Board of Directors each year. Most directors are asked to chair a BCRTA committee, and there is usually homework. Travel, accommodation and meal expenses are reimbursed by the BCRTA.

In summary, you may be nominated:

- by completing the nomination form and your c.v., and submitting them to the office by July 15th. Your c.v. will be published in the Summary of Reports booklet; **OR**
- by completing the nomination form and your c.v., and submitting them to BCRTA staff after July 15th but before the day of the AGM. Your c.v. will then be distributed to the AGM delegates; **OR**
- by being nominated from the floor of the AGM -- whereupon you and all the other candidates for that particular position will be given two minutes to introduce yourselves.

The following refer to sections in the BCRTA Handbook, located on the BCRTA website at www.bcrta.ca

Handbook Section B. Bylaws:

- | | |
|------|--|
| 2.16 | Member not in good standing |
| 2.7 | Rights of Active and Life Members |
| 6.1 | Number of directors |
| 6.2 | Eligibility to become a director |
| 6.3 | Election of directors |
| 6.9 | Limits on directors' terms in office |
| 6.10 | Board of Directors Meetings |
| 6.11 | Powers and Responsibilities of Directors |

Handbook Section C. Procedures:

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 4.6.2 | Pre-AGM nomination procedures for Director positions |
| 5. | Duties of Directors |

Handbook Section E. Rules of Order:

- | | |
|-------|----------------------------|
| 8.4 | Nominations from the floor |
| 8.5.3 | Voting in elections |
| 8.5.4 | Order of the elections |
| 8.5.5 | Balloting rules |

BCRTA DELEGATES TO THE 2021 BCTF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOMINATION FORM

The BC Teachers' Federation holds its AGM each year during the March spring break. A block of time during the AGM is normally set aside for debating recommendations and resolutions relating to pensions. The BCRTA sends a number of delegates to participate and vote in the "in-committee" consideration of those motions. Our delegation consists of BCRTA directors and BCRTA members elected at the BCRTA Annual General Meeting—to be held online on October 3, 2020.

To be elected as a BCRTA delegate to the BCTF AGM, you must be an **active or life member of the BCRTA, and a member or honorary associate member of the BCTF**. If you were a BCTF member when you retired, you are almost certainly an honorary associate BCTF member now. If you are unsure, you should contact the BCTF to check. (Google "BCTF" to get phone nos. etc.)

A background of past membership on a BCTF or local association Pensions Committee is a requirement, and experience on BCRTA or Branch executive or other committees would also be helpful. If elected, you may be asked to attend a pre-AGM session to become familiar with the issues. You should be prepared to go to a microphone at the BCTF AGM, to speak for or against a motion if the opportunity presents itself, and to stay until the end of the Pensions section of the BCTF AGM agenda.

Filling in and submitting this form will result in your name being added to the list of candidates on the **BCRTA Delegates to the BCTF AGM ballot**, used in the elections at our BCRTA AGM, scheduled for October 3, 2020. Nominees do not have their expenses paid to attend our BCRTA AGM unless they are delegates. You will be notified after our AGM if you are elected. If elected, your expenses will be paid to attend the BCTF AGM.



BCRTA DELEGATES TO THE MARCH 2021 BCTF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOMINATION FORM

Must be in the hands of BCRTA staff by 5 p.m. on October 1, 2020.

Name (please print clearly): _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____ Email: _____

Branch (if any): _____

Signed: _____

Nominated by 2 BCRTA members (email notice of your nomination from nominator to kristi@bcrt.ca is also acceptable):

Nominator (please print): _____ Signed: _____

Nominator (please print): _____ Signed: _____

If you are applying see note above and outline your pensions experience through positions you have held and/or work you have done in the BCTF and/or BCRTA:

Mail this form to: BCRTA, 100 – 550 W 6th Ave., Vancouver, BC, V5Z 4P2, or email scanned copy to kristi@bcrt.ca

2020-2021 BCRTA COMMITTEES - APPLICATION FORM

DEADLINE for receipt of Applications: October 2, 2020

BCRTA committees meet 5 times a year during a 2-day period prior to each Board of Directors meeting. Some meetings are held electronically and in-person meetings are held in the BCTF Building at 100-West 6th Avenue, Vancouver. Appointments are made at a post-AGM Board of Directors meeting, and terms are two years. Members may serve on any one committee for up to a maximum of 4 consecutive years (i.e., two 2-year terms). Travel, accommodation and meal expenses are reimbursed.

Members are expected to sit on one or two committees, as selected by committee chair. For further information see the **Handbook** on our website (www.bcrta.ca), and look in "Section C-Procedures", parts 7 and 8.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____ Email: _____

Branch, if any: _____ Signed: _____

Nominated by two BCRTA members in good standing: (email notice from nominator to kristi@bcrta.ca is acceptable)

Nominator (please print): _____ Signed: _____

Nominator (please print): _____ Signed: _____

The BCRTA Committees are:

COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION HERITAGE MEMBERSHIP

PENSIONS & BENEFITS (A pensions background, e.g., in the BCTF or a local, is **required**.)

WELL-BEING [The FINANCE, ADVOCACY and PERSONNEL Committees are Directors only]

Please list in order of preference:

Committee Applying for: #1 _____

Why would you be a good choice for this committee? _____

Committee Applying for: #2 _____

Why would you be a good choice for this committee? _____

Committee Applying for: #3 _____

Why would you be a good choice for this committee? _____

Outline positions held and/or the work you have done in your branch: _____

Note: All applicants will be informed of the Directors' decisions concerning appointments.

Mail to BCRTA, 100 – 550 W 6th Ave., Vancouver, BC, V5Z 4P2, or email to kristi@bcrta.ca

CLASSIFIEDS

TRAVEL

DISCOVER CUBA TOURS - 2020/21.

CUBA1TOURS will continue to offer the best guided tours to the most interesting parts of Cuba with a personal touch and excellent guides. All tours operate through Square1travel of Courtenay, BC, a licensed travel agency.

All tour details are at www.cuba1tours.com.

As office hours and personnel have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic you should contact Tom Robertson at tom@cuba1tours.com. At this time I am just taking names and will 'PENCIL YOU IN' for future tours. Cuba is working hard to safely open airports and this should be happening soon.

HOUSING

Ready to downsize, but don't need a care facility?

We have draft plans for our community-based neighbourhood site in downtown Sechelt.

Join early for preferred choice – own or rent your apartment in our resilient community.

<https://thecoastalvillage.ca>

BOARD MEMBERS SOUGHT

Make a difference in the lives of underprivileged youth in India. **HUGGS Canada** is a registered Canadian charity supporting youth in India to obtain an education. If you have talents in the areas of financial planning, governance, fundraising, grant-writing, event planning or more, we would love to hear from you. As a member of the board, you would work with other board members to manage the program, and meet once a month to implement and review the work of HUGGS. 604.988.4898 or info@huggscanada.org

FOR SALE

WALK-IN TUB Therapeutic, walk-in tub. New and installed in 2014. Paid \$15,000. All reasonable offers considered. 778-828-6122.

ACCOMMODATION OFFERED

France - Heritage house in Alsace-France, Vosges Mountains, three bedrooms, modern kitchen, wifi, located on wine route, close to Germany (Freiburg) and Switzerland (Basel). Cleaning included, CA\$700 per week. mano936@gmail.com

PALM SPRINGS Nov and/or Dec 2020 and April 2021 rental. 2 bed, 2 baths, view of the Par 3 course and mountains. This is a 55+ resort with an 18 & 9 hole golf course. Clubhouse, restaurant, bar, billiards room, library, card room, 2 swimming pools, hot tubs, tennis, pickle ball, shuffleboard. \$1600 per month. No smoking or pets. barbara_grundy@yahoo.com or 604.200.2164.

GABRIOLA ISLAND -Waterfront home on Silva Bay, fully equipped September to May 1. 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 1500 sq. ft. deck overlooking the bay, 70 ft. Private wharf, hardwood flooring, granite counters on 1 acre of wooded private land. \$1600.00 per month plus utilities Contact Dennis @604-764-2033 or email dhoy1951@gmail.com

ZIHUATANEJO, MEXICO - Panoramic Bay View, right above La Madera Beach. Charming, spacious ground level 2 bedroom suite. Pool, Housekeeping, Security 24/7. Easy walk to beach, restaurants & townsite
Check out vrbo.com/602231# cgdkelly@gmail.com

ACCOMMODATION SOUGHT

RETIRED TEACHER looking for an affordable and nice, clean private accessible space for the winter months Oct 2020 to March 2021 approximately. Shared house with maturer owner or a small cottage or studio along water preferred. \$700 for shared house. Negotiate other arrangements. gawidz@gmail.com

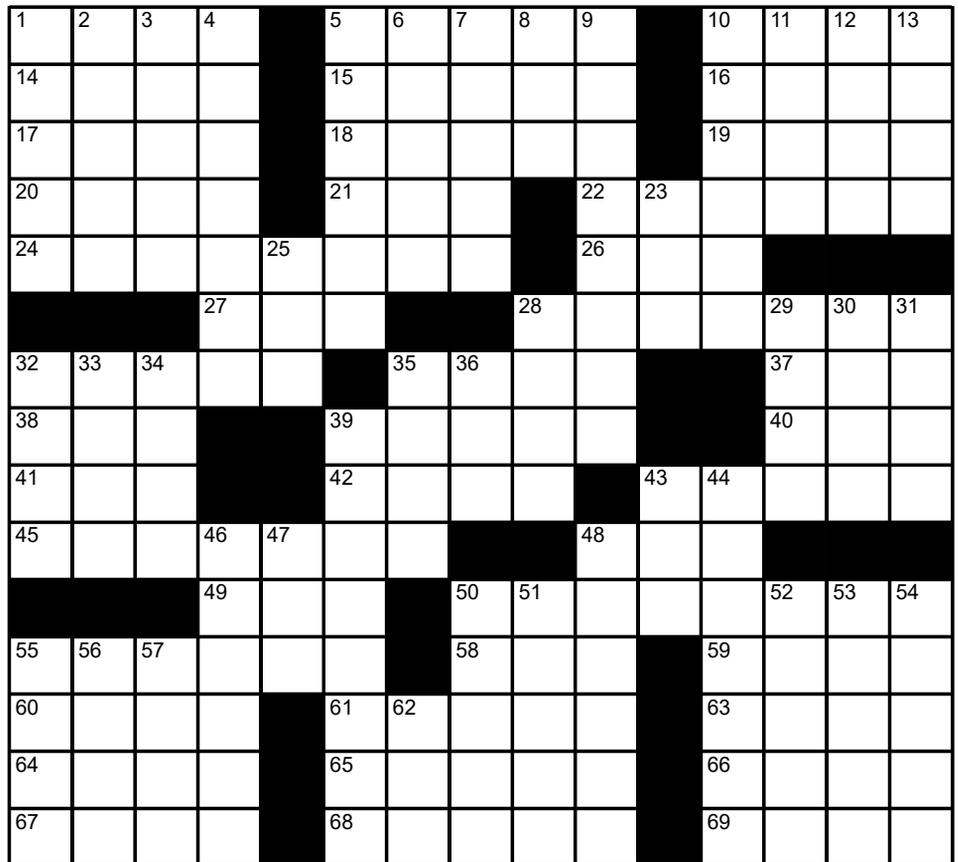
RICHMOND - Retired couple looking for a furnished rental for December / January. Preferred location Richmond. Ideally 1 bedroom self-contained suite or apartment. No pets, non smoking. Contact email: mikealan501@gmail.com.

crossword

By David Squance, Victoria

ACROSS

1. Erupt, emit outflow in a rush
5. Corn chips (sing.)
10. Newbery award winning author (2001)
14. Common word on pub signs
15. City and municipality in Nicaragua
16. "That suits me to _____."
17. Loch _____ monster
18. Stravinsky and Sikorsky (pl.)
19. Discourteous
20. Usually criminal activity, as in "aid and _____"
21. Installment publication (abbr.)
22. See 10 across (1972)
24. Dependably
26. Helpful pollinator
27. Negative vote
28. _____ quo, "something for something"
32. River in Russia
35. One-time post-secondary institution in Nelson, closed in 1984 (abbr.)
37. Consume
38. Yes (Fr.)
39. Part of a book, usually used in connection with early manuscripts
40. See 10 across (2003)
41. Frozen water
42. Right quadrilateral (abbr.)
43. Common area measure for farms (pl.)
45. Roll of _____ ... (1977 Newbery winner)
48. Mongrel; inferior dog
49. "_____ a bone to pick with you!" (contr.)
50. 1994 Newbery winner (Lowry; 2 wds)
55. Meal associated with blankets and ants
58. Bricklayer's carrier
59. A few
60. _____ vera
61. Deadly virus, mostly found in Africa
63. Type size
64. Bird's _____ soup
65. The one on the short end of the score in a game.
66. American actor (Sopranos) and poker player
67. Remain
68. Silty, windblown soil
69. Scottish negatives



DOWN

1. Equipment for underwater scanning
2. Freshman cadet
3. Ford car model with a poor reputation
4. The _____ Game, 1978 Newbery winner
5. Mrs. _____ and ..., 1972 Newbery winner
6. Star in Orion
7. Material often sought by poachers
8. Constituent of asphalt
9. Italian veal dish (2 wds.)
10. Scored the average in golf
11. Needle case
12. Give up territory
13. Sharp; astute
23. By, at (Ger.)
25. Organization providing roadside assistance in the U. S. (abbr.)
28. Stop
29. Tree fruit
30. Talk madly
31. Famous name in elevators
32. American sporting goods company
33. Word often heard when a finger is pinched
34. Stead; "in _____ of"
35. Active person, one that gets things done
36. Special treatment, familiarly
39. Solitaire game found on many PCs
43. Summer month (abbr.)
44. 2003 Newbery winner (by 40 across)
46. "There were _____ and nine that safely lay" (old hymn lyrics)
47. Five hundred six in ancient Rome
48. "The _____ of Lebanon"
50. Plural of that
51. 1999 Newbery winner (Sachar)
52. Ta da! (Fr.)
53. A word from initials meaning the introducer at events
54. Raises
55. Gives a poor review
56. "If _____ her get away" (Michael Jackson lyrics)
57. _____ Nostra
62. Character in To Kill a Mockingbird

Sudoku

6		5	2		8		9	3
2	4							
		8	1					5
8		9	4					
					7	3		4
7					2	1		
							2	8
1	9		8		6	4		7

2	3			6			1	9
		7		2		3		
6	5							
		4	6					2
1				7				6
5					3	9		
							2	3
		3		4		8		
8	9			1			5	4

TO SOLVE SUDOKU PUZZLES:

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3 x 3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

SEND COMPLETED PUZZLES TO:

100 – 550 West 6th Avenue,
Vancouver BC V5Z 4P2

FOR MORE ONLINE SUDOKU PUZZLES:

www.fiendishsudoku.com

DEADLINE FOR SUDOKU AND CROSSWORD SUBMISSION IS:

OCT 31, 2020

Congratulations to the winners of the last issue. Your cheques are in the mail!

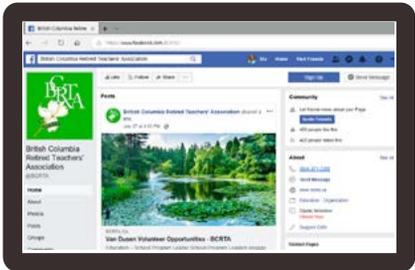
Crossword:

Henning Von Krogh (Kootenay Lake West)
Bob Lemon (Central Okanagan)
Christine Bischoff (Central Okanagan)

Sudoku:

Brenda Gunn (Campbell River)
Mel Maglio (Vernon)
George Fraser (Wine Country)

Like and share BCRTA
News and links relevant to you.

 facebook.com/BCRTA
 twitter.com/bcrtal

SUMMER 2020 CROSSWORD SOLUTION

1	T	A	M	P	A		E	T	A	L		C	A	M	E						
14	U	S	E	R	S		15	B	A	L	I	16	A	L	A	D					
17	R	E	S	E	T		18	B	U	L	B	19	P	A	N	G					
20	N	A	S	S	E	R	21		22	S	U	B	23	E	R	S	E				
							24	E	R	O	S	25		26	R	E	A	R	M	E	
28	A	N	O	N			31	S	U	P	E	R	32								
33	S	O	F	T	W	A	R	E				35	S	A	F	E	S	T			
40	C	A	M	E	O		41	F	A	H		42	R	I	V	E	R				
44	S	H	E	R	R	I		45	C	O	M	E	46	L	I	V	E				
							48	S	N	E	R	S	49				50	E	L	E	E
51	B	E	L	I	E	V	E					55	S	P	A	M					
57	A	M	E	N				58	E	Y	E		59	S	P	A	R	S	E		
64	S	O	A	K				65	N	O	D	E		66							
68	E	T	R	E				69	T	R	A	P		70	A	K	I	T	A		
71	S	E	N	D				72	S	E	M	I		73	T	R	E	A	T		

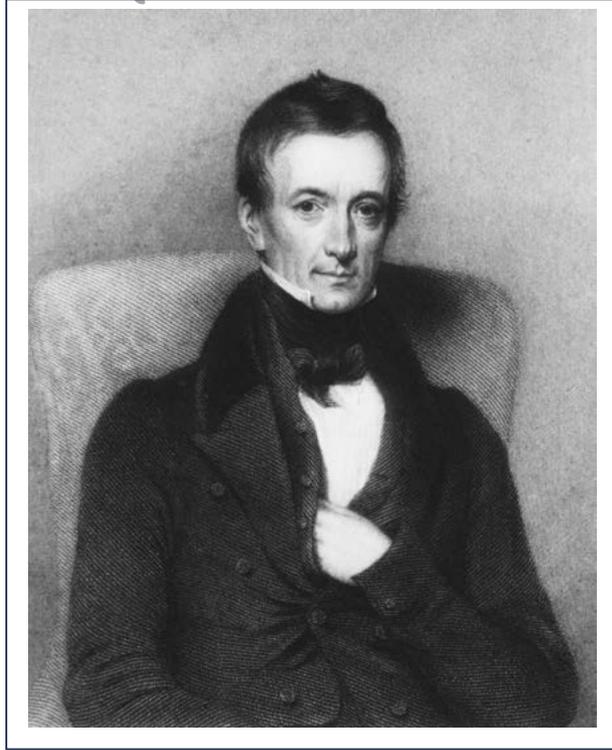
Obituaries

Location listed is the area given as "last taught"



Bagshaw, Ralph	Vancouver	Nelson, Jessica	Coquitlam
Barker, Byron	Greater Victoria	Nicholls, Barbara	Peace River South
Burkholder, Burton	Coquitlam	Nielsen, Frances	Central Okanagan
Bushey, Douglas	Kamloops	Ninatti, Agnes	Nanaimo/Ladysmith
Champion, W. Harvey	Vancouver	Opas, Ronald	Okanagan/Shuswap
Chauhan, Rita	Kamloops	Paterson, Lynn	Nanaimo
Christensen, Rosemary	Castlegar	Pearson, Paul	Peace River North
Copan, Donald	Burnaby	Piggott, Ed	Campbell River
Cormier, Ernest	Vancouver	Plotnikoff, Marjorie	Creston Valley
Crowley, Alberta	Qualicum	Read, M. Arvilla	North Vancouver
De Faria-Neves, Marina	Vancouver	Renflesh Alvin	Surrey
Dranchuk, Peter	Central Okanagan	Rigby, Richard	Powell River
Fleming, Catherine	Central Okanagan	Robertson, James	North Vancouver
Galeazzi, Muriel	Burnaby	Roper, Janice	Saanich
Grigoruk, Alicja	Vancouver (Ben.)	Scharff, Nancy	Vernon
Hamm, Abram	Langley	Seaboyer, Fern Louise	Campbell River
Hansen, Gordon	Greater Victoria	Shunter, David E.	Penticton
Harrison, Nora	North Vancouver	Siemens, Abraham	Prince George
Henderson, Robert	Okanagan/Shuswap	Skinner, Neila L.	Vancouver
Hoен, Richard	Okanagan/Similkameen	Smecher, Hugo	Kootenay/Columbia
Holloway, Roy	Vancouver Island North	Smith, James R.	Shuswap
Horne, Irene	Coquitlam	Starr, Yvonne	Nechako Lake
Hubers, Petronella	Abbotsford	Tamboline, Doreen	Gulf Islands
Ion, Frank	Vancouver	Tamburri, Christine	Howe Sound
Joughin, Catherine	Richmond	Townsend, Nita	Maple Ridge
Kenna, Frank	Surrey	Tubman, Dorothy	Greater Victoria
Kinahan, Muriel	Powell River	Vagg, Terry	Burnaby
Koski, Paul	Greater Victoria	Vanderlinden, Hans	Vancouver
Libby, Shirley	Vernon	Weber, Doris	Maple Ridge
Lum, Carroll	Chilliwack	Whitmore, Brian	Greater Victoria
Matthews, John	Chilliwack	Wilcox, Sharon	Surrey
McLean, Barbara	North Vancouver	Williamson, Harry	Burnaby
McMillan, Patricia	Surrey	Wollizter, Dorothy	Burnaby
Mitchell, M. Kathleen	Peace River South	Worobetz, Irvine	Vancouver
Mostovich, Michael	Sunshine Coast	Worsdale, Arthur	Coquitlam
Mowat, Jean	Campbell River	Zaiss, Doreen	Kootenay Lake
Murray, Robert	Kootenay Lake		

inspiration



“Words are the most powerful thing in the universe...
Words are containers. They contain faith, or fear,
and they produce after their kind.” (Charles Capps)

THE MASTER OF WORDS

PETER MARK ROGET - PHYSICIAN, SCIENTIST AND WORD-LOVER

Do you have any retirement projects underway? Any post-employment tasks afloat? Any hobbies for your superannuated years? An avocation now in full flower after you have called full-time on work?

However you describe what you are up to, Peter Mark Roget has you beat. An accomplished physician and scientist, Roget was a much-respected member of Britain's prestigious Royal Society. His contributions to science were, well, incalculable, with the possible exception of the slide rule, which is enumeration personified.

But his greatest hit came when at 70 he retired from the Royal Society to devote himself to a little side project. Roget liked lists, most especially lists of words, and he compiled an astounding collection of synonyms that were published as “Roget's Thesaurus”. Since its first appearance in 1852, it has never been out of print.

Roget's retirement project makes him this issues' refreshing, stimulating, motivating, enlivening, moving, encouraging, heart-expanding and brain-exalting, wordy, uplifting, syllabically delicious and unparalleled prosaically perspicacious gushing font of inspiration!

And if you have another way to put that, go right ahead. That would make him happy.



**R.R. Smith
Memorial Fund
Foundation**

BUILDING AN EDUCATIONAL LEGACY

During a pandemic is the perfect time to celebrate the positive outcomes of our members' generosity. In 2006, a portion of a court ordered fine was directed to the R.R. Smith Memorial Fund Foundation. Endowment funds were established at six universities offering either education degrees or professional teacher-training programs (U.B.C., S.F.U., U Vic., T.R.U., B.C.N.U., and V.I.U.).

As a result of this forward-thinking decision at least eight (8) academically successful/financially challenged students are granted bursaries each year. These samples of their appreciation are heartwarming:

Alicia: *The R.R. Smith Bursary in Education has allowed me to complete my teaching degree and move into a full-time teaching position. I am looking forward to a long teaching career full of continuous learning and teaching students. I am so thankful to donors to be able to pursue my passion in teaching.*

Andrews: *I am beyond grateful to have received the R.R. Smith Memorial Fund grant this year. I'm a strong believer in breaking down the barriers that monetary constraints place on formal education. Thank you for allowing students to achieve their ambitions.*

The Covid-19 pandemic will likely impact bursary funds available for the 2021 year but our members and universities can 'top up':

Members may:

- * Contribute directly to the R.R. Smith Bursary Fund at the university of their choice and the university will issue a tax receipt;
- * Send funds to R.R. Smith designated for the R.R. Smith endowed fund.
- * R.R. Smith will provide a tax receipt.

Universities may:

- * Top up their existing R.R. Smith Bursary Fund for any given year;
- * Notify R.R. Smith if funds are added and by whom to ensure the donor(s) are thanked.
- * Issue a tax receipt to the donor(s).

To learn more about the work of the R.R. Smith Memorial Fund Foundation, visit

www.rrsmith.ca



CALL FOR A QUOTE
& BE ENTERED
FOR A CHANCE TO

WIN
A \$20,000
CASH PRIZE!†

As we all adapt to the changes necessary due to COVID-19, home insurance should be the last thing you have to worry about.

That's why BCRTA members can depend on Johnson to help make things easier with great savings and benefits, and caring and compassionate service, plus:

- AIR MILES® Reward Miles[‡]
- 24/7 Claims service
- First Claims forgiveness

1.855.616.6708

[Johnson.ca/start-saving](https://johnson.ca/start-saving)

Mention group code **BC** for your preferred rates.



Johnson Insurance is a tradename of Johnson Inc. ("JI"), a licensed insurance intermediary, and operates as Johnson Insurance Services in British Columbia and Johnson Inc. in Manitoba. Home policies primarily underwritten, and claims handled, by Unifund Assurance Company ("UAC"). Described coverage and benefits applicable only to policies underwritten by UAC. Home insurance not available in NU. Eligibility requirements, limitations, exclusions, additional costs and/or restrictions may apply, and/or may vary by province or territory. JI and UAC share common ownership. [‡]AIR MILES® Reward Miles awarded only on regular home and car insurance policies underwritten by UAC. At the time the premium is paid, one (1) Mile is awarded for each \$20 in premium (including taxes). Miles are not available in SK or MB. [®]™ Trademarks of AM Royalties Limited Partnership used under license by LoyaltyOne, Co. and JI (for UAC). [†]NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Open May 1, 2020 – April 30, 2021 to legal residents of Canada (excluding NU) who have reached the age of majority in their jurisdiction of residence and are a member of a recognized group of JI (excluding members of any group in the health care sector) with whom JI has an insurance agreement. One (1) available prize consisting of CAD \$20,000. Conditions and/or restrictions may be imposed. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. Math skill test required. Rules: [Johnson.ca/cash2020](https://johnson.ca/cash2020)