



# Ridge Meadows Retired Teachers' Association

## October Newsletter 2020

***From the desk of the President ~ Julie Zoney [jbz@telus.net](mailto:jbz@telus.net)***

*Happy Fall everyone! ... and this COVID pandemic has decided to stick around for some time in the future. Be safe!! It is not safe to get together in large groups at this time, but do connect in small safe groups.*

### Our 2020-2021 Executive:

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### ***Congratulations:***

To MRTA's June retirees: Karen Blom, Rajinder Chhina, Catherine Dixon, Richard Foster, William French, Cynthia Lacroix, Areal Lutsch, Craig Mitchell, Maureen Morgan, Nancy Palecek, Lyrae Perkin, Don Rhodes, David Sanderson, and Norman Sun and any others I may have missed. Members if you know any of these retirees can you connect with them and invite them to join our local Branch.

### ***WELCOME!!***

A BIG welcome to these new members to our RMRTA Branch:  
Anna Heavenor, Daniel Lesnes, Michael Steffich, and Susan Thompson.



## Update from Ken Holmes (Love Guatemala Project)

At our get together we accepted donations on behalf of Ken Holmes for this very worthwhile project that provided funds to put books in the schools of needy children in Guatemala. Although we no longer are able to get together this project is still active. If you would like to support this project you could etransfer money ( [klholmes@telus.net](mailto:klholmes@telus.net)). This method might incur a service charge depending on your bank. Or they could mail a cheque to me at 8545 Harms St., Mission, B.C. V2V 6E2.

\*\*\* Until further notice our luncheons and other events have been cancelled.

???? If you know of any of our members that are in the hospital or ill at home please let our Secretary Elizabeth know  
[ejajakeway@hotmail.com](mailto:ejajakeway@hotmail.com) or 604-467-6608  
. Thanks!!

## BC Retired Teachers' Conference ~ Oct. 2/2020

This Zoom conferenced had 3 very informative speakers.

**Isobel Mackenzie** (Seniors Advocate BC)

She spoke on issues relevant to seniors during these troubled times. She stated that Long Term Care is important but alternatives are more important:

1. Better coordinated community services and making sure all seniors know and have access to them.
2. Better home supports, more home supports and less costly. Also make sure that seniors are aware of them.

3. More support for family caregivers (I.e. Adult Day Programs, and more respite time).
4. More choice and affordability in Assisted Living. As it is now you have to pay for all the extras (help with care, meals, laundry, etc.) on top of the monthly fee.

COVID has caused a very negative impact on seniors:

- They used to be able to have access to the internet to communicate with family and friends in senior centres and the Library. When they closed many seniors became lonely without these connections. 30% of seniors are in the lowest income bracket and can not afford their own internet service.
- Family members are not allowed to visit inside care homes so seniors have lost the hugs and close contact with their families.
- There are not enough staff members allocated to care homes.

Isobel Mackenzie said the high dose flu vaccines will be given out to the Long Term Care residents.

\*\* That the results of a Survey on Long Term Care would be out by the end of this October.

The Office of the Seniors' Advocate has a phone line and a website to provide personal supports for seniors. Call 211 or <http://www.bc211.ca/> to access their services.

**Dr. Steve Morgan** (School of Population & Public Health, UBC)

He shared insights into Pharmacare.

- Canada is the only country (in his research) with universal medical care that does not have some form of national prescription medicine program. There are over 100 public plans and thousand of private ones (2/3 of workers have coverage through their employer). His conclusion: we treat coverage as a privilege rather than a right. Three issues:
- *Access*: will require cooperation of federal and provincial governments. He said that 1 in 10

adults are skipping prescriptions because of the cost. In research from 2016 there were more than 374,000 medical and hospital visits because of the lack of taking their prescriptions. There were more than 300 deaths due to cost related barriers to prescriptions.

- *Cost:* He suggested that Canada require firms to compete on price of drugs and it would bring costs down for individuals. Canada spends more/person on drugs than other countries in his study. We could save billions of dollars through bargaining power if one carrier rather than many small ones purchased in bulk.
- *Financial equity:* Average cost in Canada \$519/yr. Other countries in his study average \$73/yr. 729,000 Canadians reduce their food budget to buy prescriptions. Companies have little incentive to develop drugs here.
- *Conclusion:* Pharmacare will save us money. We are already spending too much. May have start with one province at a time.
- **What can we do??** Let's start with B.C. Send messages to Adrian Dix, John Horgan and our local MPs to ask them to get B.C. to jump on board a Federal Universal Pharmacy Program.

The third speaker was **Dr. Roger Wong** (Geriatrician, Faculty of Medicine, UBC. He is also a member of the Task Force on Long Term Care in Canada).

He spoke on issues of educating seniors and their families on self-care during the current situation. He stated that one of the real concerns for seniors is that this pandemic is causing isolation and loneliness this is one of the major impacts on decreasing life expectancy.

UBC has a website with info:

<https://www.med.ubc.ca/news>

He gave links to many of his articles related to COVID and seniors, some:

<https://thinkspacepodcast.com/episodes/dr-roger-wong/>

and

<https://thinkspacepodcast.com/dr-roger-wong-ubc-medicines-ea-dean-on-how-to-pivot-during-covid-19/>

We can help the seniors we know by keeping in contact with them by phone FaceTime, Zoom or other methods.



### ***BCRTA AGM Oct.3/2020***

- You can now use your Credit Card to pay for your membership fees or any other items you want to purchase from BCRTA.
- BCRTA no longer uses your SIN number for your membership info.
- 2021 fees will be \$42.00 a year.
- We now have over 17,000 members.

***Elections:*** our new BCRTA President: Grace Wilson from Kootenay Lake West

Gerry Tiede (now our Past President) has been elected President of ACER-CART.

Updated Pensions information is available at <https://tpp.pensionsbc.ca/>

Here is the most important thing: Our pension payments are secure and will continue to be deposited into our bank accounts right on time.

As a member of BCRTA you are able to use BCRTA Members' Advantage visit:

<https://bcrt.ca/members-advantage-program/>

Some local workshops you might be interested in Personal Planning Month webinars by Nidus. Checkout:

[http://www.nidus.ca/PDFs/Nidus\\_Oct2020Webinars\\_Poster.pdf](http://www.nidus.ca/PDFs/Nidus_Oct2020Webinars_Poster.pdf)

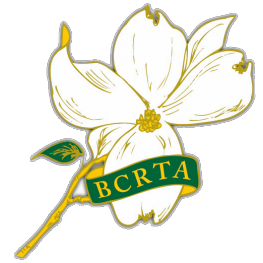
- Types of power of attorney
- Consent for care facility admission? Or health care?
- Joint ownership: the good, the bad and the risky!
- Making a will? What if someone dies without a will?
- Being a representative. Being at attorney. Being effective!



If you know of any members that are ill or in the hospital please contact our Secretary so she may send our best wishes:

Elizabeth Jakeway [ejajakeway@hotmail.com](mailto:ejajakeway@hotmail.com)  
or 604-467-6608.

Help us grow - invite a friend.



Check out the new BCRTA website:

<https://bcrt.ca>

A Hello to our life members that have reached their Golden Years and no longer have to pay membership fees to the BCRTA or our local branch:

***Patricia Barteski***

***Molly Falcon***

***Gen Shamlock***

***May they have many  
happy healthy years  
ahead!!***