



Delta Retired Teachers Association Newsletter

THE TRUANT

November 2021

"In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy." — William Blake

President's Message

Sorry, but there will not be a December Luncheon. To be honest, that Executive decision caught me by surprise as I had already spoken with the new manager at the Golf Course to get the ball rolling on a turkey buffet for early next month. When the former BTO group decided that it was still too risky to get together to rehearse, the members of the DRTA Executive also agreed that holding a luncheon was too soon; too risky.

Additionally, my plan was to hold an AGM and elections following the meal so, consequently, that too was cancelled. Unfortunately, an AGM must occur. Following the example of the approved South Okanagan Branch, a special and approved e-mail version for an election will be held before December 15th, 2021. For those who receive the Truant via Canada Post, a separate letter/ballot will follow this issue of the Truant shortly. Please respond, if at all possible.



Our last meal together, December 2019

As you read through this newsletter, please congratulate our contributors for their stories. Thanks to all who sent in their work. If you have any reminiscences of your days in the classroom, or what occupies your time now, give me a phone call (604) 943-1817 for further information.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at our next (TBA) gathering. Meanwhile, stay safe and healthy. Pat

Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud. - Maya Angelou



After the Rain photo by Peter Scurr, November 2021

FUNDING OUR SCHOLARSHIPS

I would like to thank all of you who donated to the Delta RTA Scholarship Fund last year. COVID-19 continues to disrupt our normal collection of scholarship funds and your direct assistance is needed again this year. We are again asking for your help by sending a donation to the Delta School Board's Finance Department at the School Board Office. You could consider this a delayed present to 1 or 2 of Delta's amazingly talented and qualified graduating students.



The Finance Department isn't set up to accept e-transfers or credit card donations, so please use **cheques or hand-delivered cash**. Any donations over \$25 will receive a **tax receipt** from the District. All donations must be submitted before January 14, 2022 as the student application forms go out to students early in February and we'd like to let them know the amount for this year's scholarship.

Thank you in advance for your generosity. Send your cheques to the Delta School District @ 4585 Harvest Dr., Delta, BC V4K 5B4 with a notation that the funds are for the DRTA Scholarship 21/22. Direct your envelope to the Finance Department.

Get your COVID-19 Booster dose

Booster doses maintain and extend the COVID-19 vaccine's strong protection against the virus.

Booster shots will be delivered through outreach and clinics managed by the Health Authorities and participating pharmacies. Everyone who received dose 1 and 2, who wants a booster, will be invited to get one. The highest risk populations will be invited to book their booster first.

Why you need a booster dose

A booster dose is an additional shot of vaccine that helps you maintain and lengthen your protection against COVID-19. When you get a booster dose, you're helping protect you and the people around you from COVID-19. **All booster doses will be mRNA vaccines.**

You will receive either the Moderna or Pfizer (mRNA) vaccine for your booster dose. These vaccines are interchangeable. If you received AstraZeneca for your first or second dose, you will receive Moderna or Pfizer for your booster.

When you can get your booster dose

The timing of your booster dose is based on your risk level of getting COVID-19, your age and the time since your second dose. **Once you become eligible, you remain eligible.** You will not miss your opportunity to get your booster dose.

November 2021 to January 2022: People most at risk of getting COVID-19

Seniors 70+ and Indigenous people 12+ - You will be invited to [book an appointment](#) to get your booster. *Invitations will be sent out by risk, age group (from oldest to youngest based on the year you were born) and the date of your second dose.*

Eligibility

- People born in 1951 or earlier (70+)
- Indigenous people born in 2009 or earlier (12+)
- People receiving care - Get a booster from a health care worker who visits you.
Residents in independent living facilities
- People who receive long-term home support
- Health care workers who received their first two doses on a shortened schedule (less than 42 days between dose 1 and dose 2)
- Rural and remote Indigenous communities - Get a booster dose in your community from the First Nations Health Authority.

Eligibility for everybody else - Starting in January 2022

Starting in January 2022, you'll get your booking invite between 6 to 8 months after the date of your second dose. Your first and second vaccine doses will continue to protect you from COVID-19 until you get a booster dose.

You must be invited to book an appointment. You can't go to a drop-in clinic for boosters.

Get ready for your booster dose

To get your booking invitation, you must be registered with the Get Vaccinated provincial registration system and your immunization record must be up-to-date.

If you're not sure, confirm your information as soon as possible.

- If you haven't already, register with the Get Vaccinated system
- Log-in to Health Gateway to check your immunization record
- Update your immunization record if it's incorrect or if you got a dose in another province or country

Booking an appointment

When it's time to get your booster dose, you can book an appointment at a vaccine clinic or pharmacy. Like you did for dose 1 or dose 2, use your confirmation number to select a location, date and time. You can do this online or by phone.

If you want to get your booster dose at the same time as a family member, you must both book an appointment.

If you need help

Phone the call centre if you have questions or if you don't know if you're registered with the Get Vaccinated system.

Call: 1-833-838-2323 Seven days a week, 7 am to 7 pm (PDT) Translators are available

Telephone for the Deaf: Dial 711

Video Relay Services (VRS) provides sign language interpretation free for registered deaf, hard of hearing or speech-impaired people.

For further information see <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/booster>

DRTA Executive Meeting November 10, 2021 - Summary



The Zoom meeting began shortly after 10:00 in the morning. Attending were Peter Scurr, Lois Wilkinson, Fiona Gray, Annie Coblin, Peter Yang, hosted by Pat Thiesen. Margaret Jensen sent her regrets.

Lois reported that three cheques for \$338.82 were issued to cover the outstanding costs of Truant printing and postage. The current balance is \$6575.00.

Discussion about this year's BCRTA Conference and AGM from DRTA delegates Peter S. and Fiona focussed on the major issue from all regions of the province about staying in contact with Branch members. [The Conference speakers can be viewed on-line using the BCRTA web-site.]

Another discussion concerning whether the DRTA should host its December Luncheon and AGM (which must be held by year's end) resulted in the decision to **NOT** go forward with the buffet luncheon for a second year. A different method of elections will involve returning an e-mail with your vote (or a letter using Canada Post). So far, no one has come forward to join the current slate to make voting necessary, but a vote confirming that the current Executive members remain in place for another short term (until May, 2022).

Peter Scurr reported on the Heritage project with hopes of expanding to include identifying staff members from submitted photos from years past. If you have photos that he might be able to use, send him an e-mail identifying the school and year the photo was taken and if you can identify the staff as well. The Truant will include a year-end "In Memoriam" page.

Peter Yang, Member-at-Large, presented his progress with the Delta RTA Facebook initiative. Whether to have a private Group page vs a public one was discussed. Peter will invite a few knowledgeable about Facebook will present their findings at the next Executive meeting.

Pat reported that the appeal for member contributions to the Truant was very successful and similar appeals will go out prior to each Truant edition. As the work done by the President will need to be shared by all the Executive and interested members, the first committee to form will be a "Social Committee" to organize for future luncheons - the venue booking, menu, speakers/entertainers, organizing door prizes, etc. If interested in being involved, contact Annie Coblin. (Please note, she is not chairing this committee.) In the Spring, members will be needed to represent the DRTA at the Fraser-Metro Zonal meeting in the Spring. Let Pat know if interested.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am.



BCRTA REPORT November, 2021

The inaugural full-length meeting of the BCRTA Directors was held Wednesday, October 27, 2021 at 9:00 am via Zoom.

President Grace Wilson congratulated organizers of the 75th Anniversary celebration and the interesting speakers at the 2 mornings Conference. 2 new directors were elected at the Saturday AGM - Brenda Jones from Surrey and Stephanie Koropatnick from Parksville. President Wilson expressed her disappointment about the lack of discussions surrounding the many National Health issues (for seniors especially, but others as well) during the federal election campaign. Additionally, Grace commented on her hope that all members consider getting a 'flu shot. The BC government is providing a quadrivalent vaccine for everyone. You may want to consider getting the "designer" flu vaccine; Fluzone High-Dose Quadrivalent vaccine, if possible (about \$75 this year).

The Executive Director, Tim Anderson, through a PowerPoint presentation, outlined the remarkable service to members that had been accomplished over this past year with everyone working from home. The membership of the BCRTA continues to grow with more than 16,825 members. The growth is slowing as the peak years for "Baby Boomers" retiring has now slowed. The membership committee continues to find innovative ways to encourage those soon to retire to join. Suggest to those soon-to-retire friends and former colleagues that the Membership application form is available online with free first year membership. You can update your information there as well. (www.bcrta.ca)

There were two special timed items on the agenda. David Chudnovsky and Professor Dan Laitsch (SFU) spoke to their work through their organization, the Institute for Public Education. The second timed item was a presentation from Lisa Hansen, who spoke about the connectedness between the BCRTA and her organization, Johnson Insurance. Lisa warned everyone that should you now want to travel and need to reinstate your MEDOC travel insurance if you discontinued it during COVID, please be very patient. They have been overwhelmed with members phoning to make this change.

Each committee of the BCRTA is actively updating their goals and will be sharing their activity more fully in the future with members. Watch for a new webinar on SLEEP coming soon from the Member Well-Being Committee.

The next BCRTA Directors' meeting is scheduled for December 1, 2021 again via Zoom.



**Association canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants retraités
Canadian Association of Retired Teachers**

November 10, 2021

The Honourable Kamal Khera, Minister of Seniors
Government of Canada, House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 06A

Dear Minister, Khera:

As ACER-CART, the *Association canadienne des enseignantes et enseignants retraités - Canadian Association of Retired Teachers*, we offer you our warmest congratulations upon the assumption of your responsibilities as Minister of Seniors.

ACER-CART, founded in 1991, represents 13 retired teachers' associations located in every province and Yukon, with a total membership of 165,000 members. We work in cooperation and collaboration with our Provincial Associations to promote the welfare and interests of retired teachers.

The priority of our members this year is to work towards the development of a National Seniors' Strategy.

By 2030 one in four of all Canadians will be classified as a senior. The fact that there is no national health care strategy for seniors is worrisome. Every Canadian expects to be a senior one day and we expect that there will be a plan for our care. A National Pharmacare plan and regulations governing Retirement and Long-Term Care Homes are essential parts of a National Strategy, but our focus this year is the development of a health care system that prioritizes care in seniors' own homes, or near their homes, for as long as possible.

Eighty-seven percent of the money allocated for seniors' care goes to publicly funded nursing care homes. This money is misdirected; seniors want to stay in their homes as long as possible. And most of us do as only 15% of those Canadians over 85 years of age live in long-term-care homes. The benefits of aging in one's own home and community include better physical, mental, and social health as well as cost savings.

We look forward to working with your department towards the completion of a National Seniors' Strategy.

ACER-CART Executive members and Directors meet in Ottawa once a year while attending their Annual General Meeting. The next meeting will be on June 3-4, 2022. We would very much appreciate an opportunity to meet with you to introduce ourselves, provide an overview of our current initiatives and priorities, and discuss ways in which we can support progress on the many issues affecting seniors.

Yours sincerely,
Gerry Tiede
President

Recommended Reading for the Christmas Season

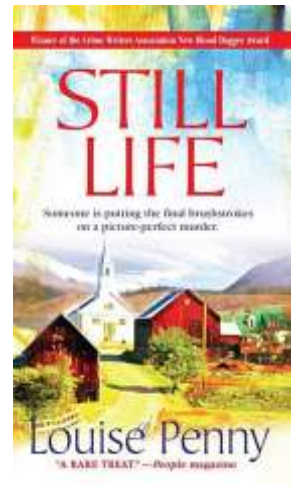


From Sylvia Bishop

The Inspector Gamache Series by Louise Penny

Want a taste of Quebec rural life? Crave cafe au lait and fresh croissants? Like mysteries? Louise Penny, a Canadian author, has written a most engaging mystery series featuring Inspector Armand Gamache, head of the Quebec provincial police force, the fictitious Quebec village of Three Pines, a cast of eccentric characters and of course, a crime to solve. Penny has written 17 books in the series so far.

Penny's writing is atmospheric. You get a real sense and vivid picture of life in the charming village of Three Pines with its bistro, the gathering place for villagers, book store and village green where children play and dogs run free. Inspector Gamache is a thoughtful man, well read, shaped by events in his childhood and fiercely dedicated to his police force, sometimes laying his job on the line in pursuit of justice. Serving alongside him are his future son-in-law and loyal colleagues. But don't let me give too much away. Discover for yourself the wonderful world of Inspector Gamache.



The Windsor Knot by SJ Bennett

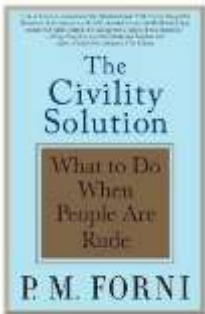
This novel is a rollicking romp through Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle with the Queen as lead detective. When a murder takes place during an event at Windsor Castle, the Queen takes charge of the investigation as she has little confidence in the MI5 assigned lead detective. Using the discretion and talents of her young personal assistant secretary, the Queen dispatches her to investigate leads and follow up on hunches. All the while, the Queen maintains her rigorous schedule including preparations for another state visit, this time hosting the Obamas. Never in the limelight, the Queen nonetheless shapes the investigation to a satisfactory end.

For those that follow the news and/or documentaries featuring the royal family, you know what the Queen sounds like. As I read the book, it was the Queen's voice in my head. There is a real mystery to solve. The plot is intriguing but it's the Queen as main character that is most engaging with her diplomacy, clever wit and sharp mind.

SJ Bennett has released a sequel in the UK titled "A three dog problem". No release date for North America yet.

Fill your house with stacks of books, in all the crannies and all the nooks. Dr. Seuss

From Pat Thiesen



The Civility Series by P. M. Forni

A leading professor of Italian Literature and Poetry, P. M. Forti, realized he wanted to teach his students to be kind human beings more than he wanted them to know about a particular poet. He took his role as a teacher seriously and started offering lectures and workshops on civility. This is a little book; Choosing Civility has his 25 *Rules of Considerable Conduct* explained as society's norms and expectations change. His companion book, The Civility

Solution *What to Do When People Are Rude*, shares situations and responses to the many diverse types of rudeness. I am waiting to read his next book - The Thinking Life: How to Thrive in the Age of Distraction.

The Jesse Stone Series by Robert B. Parker

Robert Parker is a prolific writer in the Crime/Justice genre. He has created Jesse Stone as a solitary figure, hired as Police Chief by the town council of a small coast community on the Atlantic coast. As with all series, there is a significant back-story for the actions of the main character. Currently there are 20 novels in the series. The original books inspired a series of TV movies starring Tom Selleck as Jesse that were filmed in and around Halifax and environs along the coastline of Nova Scotia.

From Barbara Hinson

Free Canadian-based Online Newsletters

What on Earth? From CBC - As an example, the headlines for April 2021 were: 'Scientists uncover traces of climate history by cracking open narwhal tusks' to 'Canada is touting hydrogen as crucial to its climate action plan, but how green is it?' See - great stuff for retired teachers to know!

Climatechoices.ca from the Canadian Institute for Climate Choices who are "publicly funded, non-partisan and independently governed" It consists of experts from diverse disciplines and has 'integrated policy thinking' as the foundation of their approach.

I find these newsletters readable and I trust them. I feel that it is my responsibility to stay informed on climate change and educate whenever, wherever possible. BH

From Frithjof Akerblom

The Woman With the Blue Star by Pam Jenoff

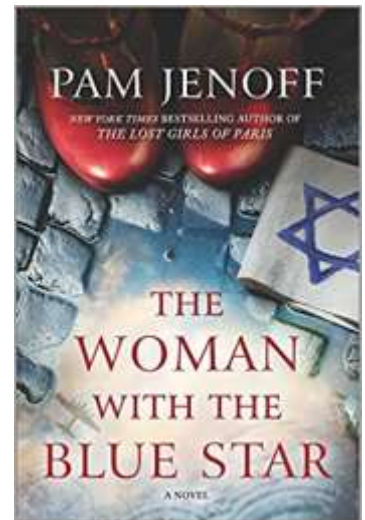
Reading time presents itself when it rains, when strata issues are on the back burner, or when we are not enchanted with a Netflix episode. Recently I read another of Pam Jenoff's historical novels entitled "The Woman With the Blue Star"; fictional yes, but based on real events during WWII in Poland.

The focus of the novel is the survival of the Jewish population under German-Nazi occupation. Of personal interest is that the plot is set in Krakow, the first capital of Poland. My family and I lived in Llodz (in German "Litzmanstadt"), about 150 kms from Krakow. As I was reading about the plight of two families trying to survive in the sewers under the streets of Krakow, it occurred to me that I was a four-and-a-half-year-old child living in the lap of luxury with my parents in an apartment on a Main Street in Llodz. I can only imagine now that there must have been people hidden under the streets of Llodz as well, unbeknownst to us.

In the novel, Pam describes how the Jews were herded into a ghetto and I remembered that my mother and I took the streetcar for an afternoon outing, passing large fenced-in buildings which were filled with people one week and empty the next. I asked my mother for an explanation, which she did not give or did not have. The streetcar conductor told us that no one was allowed off the streetcar in that area, nor would the tram stop there. It was a puzzle for a small but curious child. It was only long after the end of the war, when we were settled in Canada, that I found the answers so long denied.

In spite of all the tragedies of war, I do enjoy Pam Jenoff's account, and marvel how she can have such deep insight of an era before her time. I recommend this book to anyone interested in a time of turmoil, into which many of my generation were born.

Other novels Frithjof recommends include more from Jenoff - The Lost Girls of Paris and The Orphan's Tale.



"No book is really worth reading at the age of ten which is not equally – and often far more – worth reading at the age of fifty and beyond." – C.S. Lewis

Enunciation Entertainment - Tongue Twisters

Tongue twisters have been around for centuries and can be found in languages world-wide. The famous “She sells sea shells by the seashore” was based on an incident in England. These are generally a group of words that are difficult to articulate clearly by the close sequence of similar consonant sounds. Many tongue twisters have been passed down the generations becoming a part of a region’s folklore and are known to have been used to cure hiccups as well as by speech therapists to help alleviate lisps and other speech defects. They have been used by denturists to help fitting new dentures and for screening potential TV and radio announcers. Some of the fun around tongue twisters is finding out how many repetitions it takes before a mistake is made, but just trying to get through a single statement can also be hilarious. Try some of both types.

Repetition Type: say as quickly as possible 4 or 5 times

Selfish shellfish. Steve’s sixth sheep is sick. Clowns grow glowing crowns.

Imagine an imaginary menagerie manager managing an imaginary menagerie.

Six thick thistle sticks. Six thick thistle sticks.

In French - *Cinq chiens chassent six chats.* (“Five dogs hunt six cats.”)

Try to Get Through It Once! -without a mistake

Which witch switched the Swiss wristwatches?

Rory the warrior and Roger the worrier were reared wrongly in a rural brewery.

I thought a thought. But the thought I thought wasn’t the thought I thought I thought. If the thought I thought I thought had been the thought I thought, I wouldn’t have thought I thought.

If you must cross a course cross cow across a crowded cow crossing, cross the cross coarse cow across the crowded cow crossing carefully.

Six sick hicks nick six slick bricks with picks and sticks. (Considered the hardest TT today.)

A Limerick and a TT - just fun

*There was a fisherman named Fisher
who fished for some fish in a fissure.
Till a fish with a grin, pulled the fisherman in.
Now they're fishing the fissure for Fisher.*

Our Members Write

Much Too Close by Dianne Hein Heal

We were driving along the Yellowhead Highway, when we noticed a few cars stopped on the shoulder. Not wanting to miss whatever they were viewing, we pulled in behind them. Catching glimpses of wildlife in their natural setting is a great experience, and we were curious. Our eyes followed everyone's gazes and we saw some large elk grazing among the lush green grasses and trees. Some had lifted their heads to watch us curiously, but most of them were ignoring our presence. They were hungry, and they had found a meadow full of their favorites treats. About five to ten yards away was the closest elk, casually grazing. I rolled down the passenger window for a clearer view. As the elk was quite near, we decided to remain in the car. Even though others around us were out of their cars trying to get good, photos....this elk seemed a bit too close. I wanted to be able to make a fast getaway if need be. I'd heard my share of stories of encounters gone badly between tourists and wild animals. I was so caught up in the moment that I didn't even think to locate my camera.

Suddenly, the elk lifted his head, turned and looked directly at us. It was as if something made him aware of our presence. He started ambling in our direction, appearing to be heading directly towards the side of our car. Thoughts came quickly, and I began to wonder what shape our car would be in if he started ramming into its side with its huge, powerful antlers. I nervously rolled up my window and waited to see what would happen next. As this elk casually approached our car, he seemed to be growing larger with each step. He was still slowly munching the last bits of grass he'd pulled from the ground. This all seemed to be happening in slow motion, and he gradually came right beside our car. Just as he reached the front end of the car, he veered right and stepped around the front of it, between both cars parked on the shoulder.

He slowly and gracefully passed right in front of our car. Through the front windshield, was a perfect view of this animal. I'd never been this close to an elk before, and time seemed to stand still. He was massive, and towered above our car. I saw one huge brown eye, with his head adorned with the largest rack of antlers I'd ever seen. I could almost reach out and touch their velvety softness. His dark brown fur revealed his rippling muscles as he sauntered by. He didn't even give us a glance, seeming to ignore us as he passed by. As to this large elk, he was more interested in greener pastures on the other side of the road, unaware of the commotion and show he'd just given us. He continued right across the highway, oblivious to the screeching of brakes, and other cars trying to avoid a collision with this massive animal. It was all a breathtaking, almost ethereal experience that I will never forget....and I'm glad I stayed in the car for a front row seat!

Apples for the Neighbourhood by Barbara Hinson

This Fall my backyard apple tree offered an abundant super sweet harvest. So abundant that we could not keep up with the number of bright red apples adorning my green lawn each morning after a high wind. We gave away buckets of apples to my friends and family. We baked apple strudels and apple crumbles. We cored and quartered apples and deposited them in the freezer. We filled our two composters with the broken and mushy. And still they kept falling! What to do, what to do?!

So I decided to think outside of my box. Varage Sale, an on-line local 'Buy and Sell' service, had proven successful for me once before. This time I listed the price as FREE with 3 beautiful pictures of my offerings. And what an unpredicted response I received! Over 30 inquiries in less than 24 hours. I am happy to say that the whole experience of "meeting" my local neighbours in my backyard and distributing over 15 boxes of apples was joyful. I also enjoyed reading the online reviews and swapping stories about apple trees and other backyard crops. Everyone was happy, even in the rain. I would do it again. Sharing is awesome! Even the horses got a supply.



Writing Saves the Day by Sheila Gair

Every day between ten and noon, and many times later, I sit at the computer to see who has written to me. This couple of hours each day is the way I stay sane - but has proven to be worth its weight in gold.

Right at the start, at Christmas 2019 I had an old school pal write me from England with the sad news that her cancer was now stage four, and would I write her a letter if she wrote me.? My response was immediate. I will write each day that you take the time to write to me. Not a huge screed, just a few lines to show we care about each other. We have written every day since, never missed once, and she has steadily improved over that time. Meanwhile a buddy here was feeling a bit low and I told her of my letter writing and wondered if she too would like a letter a day - result, of course. Has been several months now.

As school pals here several teachers and I met on a regular basis once retired, and when the pandemic struck - we dropped our monthly trip to a local restaurant and decided to email on a Monday. I had a reading club here for about 20 years and it was cancelled at the start of

Covid, and we moved to email as well. A couple of the group moved out of town, no problem, email gets through. And of course there is family and a weekly note there too.

Having this writing/reading break each day, Sunday included, has made a world of difference to me and I feel part of life again. Having some underlying issues as well as asthma and COPD I stay home - I have not shopped for groceries since my daughter and her son moved in. I am so lucky to have them and they take care of the yard for me. We have enough space here that we don't bump into each other and I know how lucky that is. I count my blessings every day and am forever grateful that I taught and have a good pension, something I never, ever thought I would need! Shows how wrong one can be. Write to somebody, make their day, and see how much better you feel as well.

Leone's Schoolhouse Days - Chapter 2 - by Leone Wright

Once upon a time there were many one room school houses like mine. The lady teacher had grade one to maybe grade eight with a few in each grade. I remember my school room. Teacher's desk at the front, blackboards on two sides of the room, windows along one side and student desks in rows. The bigger desks had a top right-hand hole for the ink well. The desk top was varnished wood with a space under the wooden desk top for school supplies. The legs and feet of the desk were black iron and were fastened by nails or screws to wooden runners. Many desks were fastened together by these long wooden runners and were set in lines facing the teacher's desk. There was an oil stove at the back to heat the room which had a chimney pipe with a bend in it. Outside the classroom was a dark hall (the cloakroom) where the washrooms were located and a place to put your coat and boots. It was in the girls' washroom that I began to learn the facts of life. A little girl friend told me where babies came out. Of course, I didn't believe her. That was impossible!! I had seen a huge operation scar on a lady's neck and she was talking about the birth of one of her children. That long incision looked far more plausible for a baby to come out rather than what my little friend told me. School went on, teachers came and went and as time went by I had moved up a couple of grades and now I was across the room near the windows. I remember looking at one of the study books on a shelf and someone had drawn mustaches and beards on some men. I thought this was hilarious and spent a good time giggling my head off! Then one day Miss Hill arrived to teach. I remember she wasn't very tall and wore her hair in a bun. She would get very irate with us and stamp her foot. Well, one day she stamped her foot once too often and the chimney on the oil stove came apart and smoke filled the room. The kids had to crouch down close to the floor and creep to their desks to get their school materials. Then we all went and sat outside on the school steps. A couple of kids were running around in front of the school but I was nice and proper and looked down my nose at them. Well, with Miss Hill stamping her foot and not getting the results she wanted, this eventually led to her using choice words that were not appropriate. Some kids told their parents and were allowed to stay home. I eventually told my mom and I got to stay home too. I guess the

fun of going to school was beginning to wear off. Anyway, men from the department of education came and as I was walking up the street, coming down the street was little Miss Hill walking between the two rather big men and I was thinking....."They're taking her away."

Rails and Civil Rights Trails by Wynanda Polman

Four years ago on a road trip, we watched an Amtrak passenger train stop in Glacier National Park, in NW Montana. My husband and I had both traveled on Canada's equivalent (now VIA rail) as students, and the idea to do so again as retirees began to intrigue us. A few days later at our B & B we met an American woman with whom we struck up a long, spirited conversation. Her parting words were "If you're ever in Atlanta, be sure to connect and I'll show you around." Later we learned she'd been instrumental in establishing the National Center For Civil and Human Rights, in Atlanta. We were hooked, and set in motion Amtrak research and plans. We purchased a US Rail pass with "Roomette" accommodations and the trip morphed to 9 extended stops around the eastern perimeter of the US. (Note that Amtrak rail pass regulations have since changed.)

Late August we started off, but because of COVID, not rolling out on Amtrak from Vancouver's Pacific Central Station as originally planned, but having to fly into Seattle to make the connection at Union Station for the "Empire Builder" heading east to Chicago. This route features a summer program, "Rails and Trails" whereby local (retired) historians come on board for a few hours to share, interesting facts and figures of sites along the way. It's impossible in this article to share in detail, so I'll keep to a few observations within the framework of our "Civil and Human Rights" interest.

Having listened earlier to a podcast by a black American urban planner lamenting a lack of recognition of prominent African Americans in Chicago's public space, we set out to find the bust of Chicago's founder, Jean Baptiste Du Sable, a freed slave who in the mid 1700's settled along the Chicago River and well ... the rest is history! There it was hiding in plain sight, midspan on a bridge; with a colorful backdrop along the river wall, reminding folks "YOU ARE ON POTAWATOMI LAND."

Onward via "The Cardinal" to Washington DC, where we visited the latest Smithsonian, the National Museum of African-American History and Culture, and the new Memorial to ML King Jr. at 1964 Independence Ave. W., in honour of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. A treat for our eyes was all 60 pieces of artist Jacob Lawrence's *Great Migration* series, 30 in Washington's Phillips Collection and the other 30 at New York City's Museum of Modern Art. All depict the movement of 6 million black Americans from the rural south to the urban north from 1917-1970.

“The Crescent” took us from NY to Atlanta, where true to her word, our friend greeted us with a tour of the National Center For Civil and Human Rights. Very special it was, to hear personal stories behind the scenes of exhibits. There’s no comparing today’s Atlanta downtown Peach Street, with the devastated scene depicted in the book or film *Gone with the Wind*. Just blocks east, Auburn Ave. anchors Martin Luther King’s childhood neighbourhood --well-signed-- and the King National Memorial.

From Atlanta we took a rented car through Macon with its rich Indigenous history, past cotton fields to Savannah, a well-preserved city. We missed an opportunity to visit nearby Sapelo Island, inhabited by African-American inhabitants, known as Gullah-Seechees, and descended from enslaved West Africans, brought there in the 1700’s. On a side trip to the ocean we learned of rice fields in the upper fresh water river estuaries being restored to natural marshlands.

A public monument in Savannah depicts a slave family and has a tribute by writer Maya Angelou. First African Baptist Church hosts storytelling of its connections to the “underground railroad.” But overall, Savannah, presents to my mind a “whitewashed history,” with no public references to the thousands of slaves who worked on the cotton and rice fields we saw. This is unlike the cities of Birmingham and especially, Montgomery, in Alabama, where new signage on location, by the Equal Justice Institute, lays bare the facts of their slavery and civil rights histories. Readers who have seen the film *Just Mercy* know the work of the EJI, leading to the recent opening of the new Legacy Museum. Its graphic exhibits powerfully portray a country needing to come to grips with the consequences of unresolved racial violence and prompt a national discussion for citizens to become informed and engaged in effecting change. It’s not unlike what is beginning to happen in Canada with establishment of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

On board “The Crescent” again we travel to New Orleans. Pockets of New Orleans were still recovering six weeks after September’s Hurricane Ida, and even more outlying areas still from the devastation of Katrina 10 years ago. But for visiting tourists, the city was ready and as enlightening as we hoped it to be, sharing its unique history and culture. We were disappointed to learn the renowned Whitney Plantation was closed indefinitely as its electricity and damaged buildings had not yet been restored.

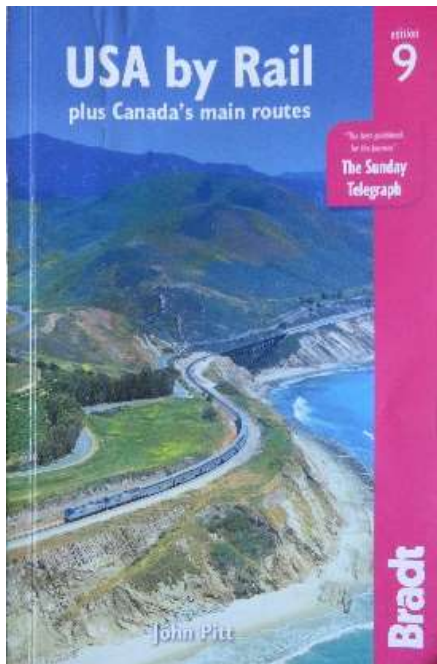
From there it was west and homeward bound via the “The Sunset Limited.” The Mississippi estuary waters, lush forests and rice fields give way to east Texas with cotton fields and heavy industrial lands, to Houston, and eventually the dry beautiful landscapes of the west. Watch for cell phone roaming as the trains hugs the Mexican border through El Paso. Eventually the rugged dry land, and the daylight gives way to the Sunset and by morning we are in Los Angeles.

There, a transfer to the “The Coast Starlight” brought to the edge of the Pacific Ocean and past hundreds of migrant workers in the Salinas Valley. In Portland, local historians joined us again

for the portion of the trip to Seattle. They shared fascinating insights of history and facts of present-day sites, all of which I'm sure we bypass speeding down or up the I-5 by car. Until regulations change, Amtrak continues service by bus from Seattle to Bellingham. There we extended our stay for three days awaiting results on COVID tests. Thankfully, negative results capped a positive six-week experience!

For readers intrigued by rail travel, as we were, try to locate a copy of *USA by Rail*, a very helpful trip planner. (I'd love we could find an equivalent for VIA Rail in Canada.) In Canada and the US (unlike Europe) most track is shared with more lucrative freight transport. And, yes, efficient, safe and on-schedule passenger service needs better support.

Have fun planning and executing your own trip by rail, exploring your area of interest.



Writing poems about Household Items became a way to focus on the positive of everyday life during Covid. From a chair to a shoe to an oven and even a stack of toilet paper, ordinary items rose in importance and represented a quirky psychological defence against Covid.

“Not Just a Chair” is the first of her “Not Just Poems”.

Not JUST A Chair

I have a new chair.

I have dubbed it my reading chair.

Soft leather, reclining ability, and lumbar support
Are among its attributes.

Without a need to buckle up,
I can visit a multitude of places and people.

Safe, comfortable and with a matching footstool,
It will continue to be a preferred destination,

Long after covid restrictions
Can be prudently lifted.

(And it was 50% off!)



Joanne Thauli

BCRTA NEWS:

GOLDEN STAR AWARDS 2021-22

The Excellence in Public Education Committee asks Branch presidents and members to please remind current active teachers in their districts that the **deadline for applications for Golden Star Awards is April 15th**. Golden Star Awards celebrate programs that promote the interaction of seniors and students. Do you know of any teachers that feature a program with students interacting with seniors? Get them to apply for the **\$1500 award!** Spread the word!

Golden Star Awards application forms: <https://bcрта.ca/bcрта-golden-star-awards/>



DRTA is now on Facebook: (Drta Delta)

DRTA now has a presence in social media through Facebook. The main purpose is to offer an opportunity for members to reach out and stay in touch with former colleagues in their retirement years. If you have a Facebook account, you can search “Drta Delta” and do a “friend request”.

Feel free to share stories, and happenings with your colleagues, but please exercise normal social media good manners, cautions, and awareness. If you have any questions or suggestions you can contact Peter Yang at py2010@telus.net.

Change of Address or Circumstance

Email or other change of address? Here's what to do...

Online at BCRTA.ca. BCRTA Email: laurie@bcrt.com Phone: 604.871.2260

DRTA Email: deltaretiredteachers@gmail.com

In Memoriam - 2021

Arnie Backer
Cec Hardy
Peter Liedtke
Bob Putnam
Reidum Seim
Edward (Ted) Thorstenson
Scott Vannatter
Marilyn Webb





Protect yourself from a **holiday heart attack**

These 5 tips will help you maintain healthy habits

Whatever the holiday, gatherings are fun, but they can make it a challenge to maintain healthy habits. It's important to find a balance because more people die from a heart attack or stroke in the winter months than during warmer weather, with mortality averaging 10% higher.

The good news is, many risk factors for heart disease and stroke are in your power to control.

Tips for maintaining holiday health:

- 1. Make good choices.** Eat a balanced diet focused on whole foods. Enjoy your favourite treats by keeping portions small.
- 2. Stay active.** Skate, walk, ski – or keep warm inside with an online class. Physical activity boosts feel-good endorphins that help ease stress.

3. Ask for help. The holidays can be a lonely time. Especially this year, take time to seek out support. Learn about joining a Heart & Stroke online peer support group (see p. 6).

4. Sip smart. Heavy drinking is a risk factor for high blood pressure and can increase your risk of heart attack and stroke. The holidays make it easy to over-consume. Limit alcohol to three drinks a day for men and two for women.

5. Steer clear of heart stressors. Shoveling heavy snow can place a dangerous strain on the heart. Be cautious and get help when needed.

8 in 10 cases of premature heart disease and stroke are preventable through healthy behaviours. To learn more, visit: heartandstroke.ca/healthyliving

Celebrate with a delicious, heart-healthy festive feast!

From succulent crab cakes with "smarter tartar" to a slow and easy turkey topped with "lighten up" gravy, treat your guests to a heart-healthy holiday meal. For mouth-watering recipes from our partner, CanolaInfo.org, that will make an unforgettable feast, visit: heartandstroke.ca/festive



Using Your Brain - the Puzzle Pages

A. Fill in the blank space with the word(s) that complete a well-known phrase.

1. _____ to the wise
2. _____ to the nines
3. _____ to the races
4. _____ to the gills
5. _____ to the bar
6. _____ to the chase
7. _____ to the centre of the earth
8. _____ to the choir
9. _____ to the finish
10. " _____ to the Chief"
11. _____ to the brim
12. _____ to the grindstone

B. Given are the second part of compound words. **Find the one word** to add to each to create the complete compound word. For example, given the words *weed*, *coast*, and *sick*, the one-word that makes each a compound word is **sea** (*seaweed*, *seacoast*, and *seasick*).

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. HOUSE, ROBE, WATER, TUB | <i>hint "b"</i> |
| 2. HOLDER, LUCK, BELLY, HOLE | <i>hint "p"</i> |
| 3. DREAM, BREAK, LIGHT, TIME | <i>hint "d"</i> |
| 4. SHIELD, FALL, PIPE, SWEEP | <i>hint "w"</i> |
| 5. CUT, BRUSH, DRESSER, SPRAY | <i>hint "h"</i> |
| 6. BELL, KNOB, MAT, WAY | <i>hint "d"</i> |
| 7. LORD, MARK, SLIDE, LOCKED | <i>hint "l"</i> |
| 8. BEE, MOON,, COMB, DEW | <i>hint "h"</i> |
| 9. MAIL, SMITH, BERRIES, JACK | <i>hint "b"</i> |
| 10. BEAM, SHINE, WALK, LIGHT | <i>hint "m"</i> |
| 11. BACK, BOY, HANGAR, WEIGHT | <i>hint "p"</i> |
| 12. STY, PEN, TAIL, SKIN | <i>hint "p"</i> |

C. Alphabetic Brain Buster

Try to find words that end in "O", one for each letter of the alphabet.

A _____	B _____	C _____	D _____	E _____
F _____	G _____	H _____	I _____	J _____
K _____	L _____	M _____	N _____	O _____
P _____	Q _____	R _____	S _____	T _____
U _____	V _____	W _____	X _____	Y _____
Z _____				

D. Finish the quotation at the bottom by unscrambling the given letters. Use the numbered letters in your answer to finish the quotation.

T A B L T N	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
		10		2		12
L I K S T	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
		4				
S F L O C K	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
			8	3		
R F T A E T	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
		11		13	14	
K A B E D	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
		1				
T O U H Y	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
		7	6	9	5	

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	

“Dogs come when they’re called; cats take a message and get

_____.”

E. Canadian Trivia - stuff we might know!

1. *Who was Canada's first French speaking Prime Minister?*
2. *In which year was Canada's Constitution patriated from Great Britain?*
3. *Who hit a walk-off home run to hand the Toronto Blue Jays a World Series title?*
4. *Olivia Poole, an Indigenous mother of seven, received the patent for what invention?*
5. *Name the 4 longest rivers in Canada and into what body of water does each empty?*
6. *Whose face is on the Canadian hundred-dollar bill?*
7. *The maple leaf on the flag of Canada has how many corners/ points?*
8. *In which year did Canadian law declare women as "Persons"?*
9. *How many National Parks are there in Canada?*
10. *Who was the first Canadian to walk in space?*

Autumn Alexander Posey

In the dreamy silence
Of the afternoon, a
Cloth of Gold is woven
Over wood and prairie;
And the jaybird, newly
Fallen from the heaven,
Scatters cordial greetings
And the air is filled with
Scarlet leaves, that, dropping
Rise again, as ever,
With a useless sigh for
Rest - and it is Autumn.



This poem is in the public domain.

Puzzle Pages - Answers

A. Complete the Phrase -

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|----------------------|
| 1. Word | 2. Dressed | 3. Off | 4. Stuffed or Fed up |
| 5. Belly up or Admitted | 6. Cut | 7. Journey | 8. Preaching |
| 9. Fight | 10. Hail | 11. Filled | 12. Nose |

B. Compound Words -

- | | | | | | |
|---------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|---------|
| 1. Bath | 2. Pot | 3. Day | 4. Wind | 5. Hair | 6. Door |
| 7. Land | 8. Honey | 9. Black | 10. Moon | 11. Paper | 12. Pig |

C. **B A C K T O Y O U L A T E R** **1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14**

D. **Alphabetic Brain Busters** - these are just suggestions

Armadillo, Banjo, Cello, Disco, Echo, Flamingo, Gazebo, Hero, Into, Jumbo, Kimono, Logo, Mango, Nacho, Oregano, Piano, Quarto, Radio, Shampoo, Tornado, Undo, Vertigo, Weirdo, X (sorry, nothing), Yoyo, Zero.

E. **Canadian Trivia**

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Sir Wilfred Laurie | 2. 1982 | 3. Joe Carter | 4. Jolly Jumper |
| 5. McKenzie (Arctic), Yukon (Bering Strait), St. Lawrence (Gulf of St. Lawrence),
Nelson (Hudson Bay) | 6. Robert Borden (PM 1911-20) | | |
| 7. 11 points | 8. 1929 | 9. 40 National Parks | 10. Chris Hadfield |



Dawn on Boundary Bay - Peter Scurr