

PostScript

SUMMER 2022



THE MAGAZINE FOR RETIRED EDUCATORS

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PostScript has a not-so-secret sauce: our contributors. One of the rewards of working on this magazine is seeing one member's contribution inspire another person to step forward with their own story. In celebration of this uniquely strong trait of BCRTA, we are providing a new forum of shared learning, and you are invited! On June 22 we will hold, via ZOOM, our first **Writer's Workshop**, to give practical encouragement to those with a story to tell. See more on page 61, and then visit bcрта.ca/writers to sign up for this fun morning session. If you find the stories in this magazine stir you, listen to that feeling. We'll hold a place for you. Join us and be inspired!

A worthwhile theme that we have explored within the pages of PostScript is "teaching across borders," the way in which educators have the opportunity to forge connections, make breakthroughs and participate in new discoveries. In this issue **Steve Bailey** recounts a fun twist on that theme, how young educators explored the meaning of Canada by breaking the rules about curriculum so students could explore the less known realities of our country.

This issue of PostScript pushes across other borders, too. **Leslie Davidson's** free and associative prose explores what happens when a couple with a lifelong bond both receive life-altering diagnoses. **Vivian Morris** hits some of the same themes as she relates her zany tale of harrowing complications in Bangkok.

Perhaps the darkest border to cross is a shadowy absence that lasts for generations: the residual trauma of families that have encountered a persecuting evil. **Hinda Avery** addresses the compelling memory of the women in her family murdered by the Nazis with a flood of art that turns from tender to outrageous. Her paintings and comic books push us into an uncomfortable melange of white-hot rage, reworked history and self-deprecating humour.

These pages will take you to new places, show you many new opportunities. It's a privilege to see our peers breaking down walls, providing a place for one another, pushing themselves to new limits: it's the border-bending stuff of lives well-lived.

Enjoy.

Yours truly,

The Editor
postscript@bcрта.ca

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During the last federal election priorities for BCRTA were a National Seniors Strategy and a National Pharmacare Plan. We produced a booklet that identified seniors' needs for these programs and the benefits to our health care system that would flow from implementation of these initiatives. But to our disappointment neither of these issues gained traction during the campaign. Were we heard?

On March 27, 2022, the federal Liberals and federal NDP signed a Supply and Confidence Agreement. This agreement provided an answer to the question of how long this administration would be in office. Widely reported at the time as a feature of this partnership, was the new promise of better support for dental care for low-income Canadians. That is no doubt a good thing. But given the fact that both those parties have promised support for Pharmacare, we also now have an unexpected opportunity to progress towards a national Pharmacare program. This is a significant opportunity to make life better for all Canadians. Will it happen?

Currently there is a patchwork of private and public drug plans across Canada. However, there continue to be many Canadians without any drug coverage plan. This results in significant costs to individuals. Those costs are further affected by the province of residence, as each province is negotiating with the pharmaceutical companies independently. This leaves some Canadian seniors having to make hard choices. They choose between paying rent, having heat, buying food, or purchasing the necessary drugs. These are Canadians that do not have a public or private insurance plan.

UBC's Dr. Steve Morgan highlighted the significant savings of moving to a national pharmacare plan when he presented to the 2020 BCRTA conference. The annual savings could be upwards of \$7 billion.

In addition to financial savings there would be less stress on other parts of the health care system and a healthier population. But keep in mind that those savings will mean a comparable reduction in profits for the pharmaceutical companies. To stem or mitigate potential revenue losses pharmaceutical companies will ramp up their already powerful lobbying. We have seen this happen before and watched as government backed away.

In 1964 the Hall Commission promised Pharmacare but it never happened. Since then it has been studied and was promised as part of the political campaigns of 2019. It has yet to be delivered. We must not let this slip away. We must all do our part to make it happen.

Pharmacare is a matter that spans federal and provincial jurisdictions so it requires that governments work together. The BCRTA has sent

If we want to turn a national Pharmacare plan into reality we must all work to keep it on the agenda.

The annual savings to Canadians of a Pharmacare program could be upwards of \$7 billion.



a letter to Premier Horgan urging him to exercise his influence and fight hard to both assist and hold accountable the federal parties as they move forward on this legislation. BCRTA has also asked ACER-CART to make national Pharmacare a priority by developing a campaign. But if we want to turn a national Pharmacare plan into reality we must all work to keep it on the agenda.

If there is one thing politicians understand about retirees it is this: we vote. That is why your voice needs to be heard. Take a few minutes and write a letter to your MLA and MP. As you have opportunity to meet them, ensure that this is a topic of conversation.

In 2014 BCRTA President Cliff Boldt told us about a book titled *Life before Medicare*. It is a series of anecdotes about what life was like before Medicare. This book needs a sequel, and I would be so bold as to suggest the title of *Life before National Pharmacare*. Perhaps future generations will shake their heads at what life was like before Canada embraced the better solution of Pharmacare.

Let's turn this opportunity into a happening. •

GRACE WILSON is President of the BCRTA

To see Dr. Steve Morgan's 2020 BCRTA Conference Presentation and other Pharmacare articles, visit

<https://bcrt.ca/?s=pharmacare>



PostScript Letters

Picture Perfect

I got my copy this week and am thrilled that member photos are used to such effect in the magazine. The cover photo this issue submitted by Diana Dugas is a classic of spring, which happens to start today.

I was especially interested to see the story of Stanley Fukawa about a part of Canadian history which is shameful - we have our dark side too.

I appreciate receiving the dates of the pension cheques. I try to keep my computer calendar up to date with these dates - I call them "pay day". Having the federal and teacher pension side by side is helpful.

I always find something of interest in the magazine, and besides Stanley's stories, the one room school adventure. I came within an Ace of starting my career in one, and I did live in a teacherage for one year - a memorable experience, with lots of stories to tell, some of them even true.

Sadly, I once again note in the Obituary section, the names of my colleagues from another time.

It is important that the PostScript be a retired teacher's magazine, by and for retired teachers.

Cliff Boldt

(Former BCRTA President)

Puzzle Solution Bun Fight - Part Two

Please DO NOT publish the crossword solution in the same issue as the puzzle. I love doing the crossword, but am afraid I would lack the self discipline to not peek at the solution if it were right there!

Thank you, everyone, for all the work you do putting out Postscript. It is a "four times a year" delight!

Rena Neufeld

Please, please, please don't even consider posting the crossword solutions in the current edition of Postscript. The challenge would be gone. And how could you be a prize contestant if you have cheated and looked up the answers? I would hate for that to happen.

Anne Lauderdale
(Bulkley Valley RTA)

Yes, you should include the puzzle answers in the issue they appear in or online somewhere.

V Morris

In response to Jan McLean's request to publish the answers in the same magazine I say a resounding no. The fun is in trying to get all the answers without peeking! The reward is succeeding and if you can't get them all... well, instant gratification isn't everything! So I say let's not change - this method works very well!

Marilyn Jobson

Hi, just leave it alone.

Joe Jackson

I like having to wait for the solution to the puzzle I complete. This way, there's no temptation to cheat! Suggest storing completed puzzles in a "puzzle folder" or agenda or whatever works so they can be found later. So please don't put the solution in the same magazine. Thanks for a great magazine!

Janet Oakes

Re: the solution to the crossword being in the same magazine - absolutely not!

That would end the contest.

Ardelle Cates

Thank you for putting together an all-around marvelous magazine with interesting and informative articles. Thank you also for the puzzles. I tend to turn to them first. I enjoy submitting the puzzles for a possible prize - it adds to the fun. So please keep the contest running.

Uta Van Ziffle

I always enjoy doing the puzzles in PostScript. I suggest that you scrap the prizes for puzzles and instead, include the solutions within the magazine itself. Also, you may want to make the sudokus with one easy and the other harder.

Thanks for all your work around these.

Linda Hibbard

I also look forward to the arrival of the latest issue of 'Postscript', but I rarely have time to read it cover to cover right away. I like to digest the articles one at a time. As an avid crossword puzzler, I complete the puzzle in each issue for the fun of it, not for the cash

prize, and I don't necessarily keep it to check whether or not my answers are correct. However, if you publish the solution in the same issue, it will spoil the contest for those who like to participate. I say, keep the same format. It's a terrific magazine!

Lynn Hembree

I would much rather have the answers in the same magazine. By the time the next edition comes around the previous puzzle has become quite meaningless.

Wendy Nielsen

I agree that posting the answer to the crossword puzzle in the same issue of Postscript would defeat the contest aspect. How about posting the answers online about two weeks or a month after the magazine is sent out.

Dave Hadley

You can keep the puzzle contest. Set up a link to the puzzle solutions on the BCRTA website. For those who want to know the answers without waiting for the next Postscript, post the answers a day or two after the contest deadline.

Les Ellis

Editor's Note: We have decided to follow the advice of Dave Hadley and Les Ellis. Solutions to the PostScript crossword puzzle will be posted online. The solution will be posted after the contest deadline, which is about five weeks before you get the next issue.

To see crossword solutions, visit bcрта.ca/crossword

Comment? Article spark a memory?

Write us at postscript@bcрта.ca

Caring for Families at a Time of Loss

Today I rec'd two copies of the current magazine with our family member's name in the Obits.

Thank you SO MUCH for responding and for doing so promptly. This means a lot to our family.

Nancy Carson

Smallish Print is a Big Deal

I enjoyed the cover of this issue, but then was surprised by the content. Most of the text was in very small print, making it a strenuous exercise to read. Many newspapers and books now use small print; and now you! Is it your intent to discourage reading?

Tony Brummell

Editor's Note: Tony, your comments are important - we do want the magazine to be readable for all. These are the first comments we have received on the magazine layout since we did a series of type changes about a year ago. Previously, the standard was to use a sans-serif font throughout (as we do on the letter pages). We switched to a serif font (Caslon) for article content and kept the same sans serif fonts for titling.

Serifs are the small shapes at the tips of letterforms. Studies have shown that serif fonts are easier for the eye to follow when reading large blocks of text. William Caslon designed a family of fonts early in the 18th century which have proven to be favourites for major magazine publishers, such as The New Yorker.

Size of type is one factor in legibility, but just as important is having space around letters for the eye to discern the shape clearly. Large fonts jammed into a standard page can mean tough reading and also means using a lot more paper. We are trying to strike a good balance.

Readers can also find our magazine posted online at bcрта.ca/postscript and enlarge to suit their preferences.

Brevity Award

LOVE POSTSCRIPT.

Pearl Gervais

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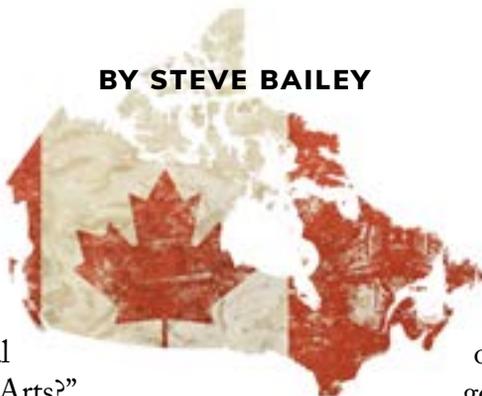
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Canadian Studies in Burnaby: Teaching Beyond the Borders of Curriculum

BY STEVE BAILEY



“What about a Grade 10 Canadian Studies programme that brings together Social Studies, English, French, Home Economics, Industrial Education (I.E.), Music, and Visual Arts?”

I sat across the table from Charles Hou, head of the Social Studies Department at MacPherson Park Junior Secondary School on a fine early spring day, having what I would come to call a “visionary chat”.

It was 1972 and we could sense it was time for some kind of innovation that would create a student experience within learning community focussed on our heritage and culture as diverse Canadians.

It wasn't a hard sell; the visionary chats expanded to include French teacher Varrie Parke, Home Economics teacher Marion Hartley, I.E. teacher Fred Smith, and Art teacher Andreen Nelson. I was tagged for English and Music. The school administration was on board, and after wining and dining some Burnaby school board members, we were on our way.



Charles Hou. Photos courtesy of Steve Bailey.

We teachers can reach beyond many borders—geographical and cultural to name two obvious ones—but our team proposed to go beyond the current curriculum borders right in our own school,

about our own country. We formulated curriculum themes around Canadian history, literature, culture, and language to jointly explore in our classrooms from various perspectives.

Throughout the 1970s, the programme grew. We introduced students to Canadian literature in English and French, to First Nations cultures, and to a rich heritage of Canadian history and society. We staged a re-trial of Louis Riel at the old courthouse in New Westminster, then “The Trial of Louis Riel” was published as an educational resource. We made a film on Sir John A. McDonald, and we had a project honouring Chief Maquinna as we studied First Nations–European contact. Commerce teacher Leslie Clausen designed a beautiful “Maquinna poster” that is now a Canadian Studies keepsake.

One of our major activities was a debate about the government ban on the potlatch. Then our First Nations students' families honoured Canadian Studies by inviting Charles Hou to a potlatch. Students completed an individual Canadian Author Study. They learned how to make First Nations crafts, studied Canadian music, and learned how to enjoy bannock and quiche, among other things.

On a trip to explore our provincial capital we arranged for the current owner of Emily Carr's home to give us access to the attic roof where Carr had painted beautiful eagles with wings spread.

At a conference on teaching Canadian literature where we were both teachers, Canadian poet Miriam Waddington gave an inadvertently humorous criticism of our programme, “I don’t think canoeing down the Fraser River provides an opportunity for students to learn about their nation’s literature”. She was wrong, as it turns out, and I continued to present poems by Ms. Waddington to my students.



Canadian Studies class, 1976

The greatest adventure of all was the annual Harrison Hike, a weeklong experience starting with a boat trip from Harrison Hot Springs up to the old townsite of Port Douglas and then a hike along the Lillooet River, a historic route to the interior goldfields in the 19th century. Students explored the remains of the Port Douglas townsite, bathed in the hot springs at St. Agnes’ Well, and visited the village of Skookumchuk with its rather grand wooden church. Lil’wat elder Fidel Charlie provided students with local history and Lil’wat narratives. Students wrote daily reflective and creative journals and learned to live in a camping community. We sang Canadian folk songs and students chose visual arts projects to work on along the way.

The students were divided into hiking groups which took names and formed identities for friendly competitions of various kinds. One of my groups titled themselves “Bailey’s Bush Bums”; I still have the T-shirt. We arranged for army engineers to retrieve us in trucks and drive us through Mount Curry and down to Pemberton where everyone boarded the train for the trip home.

Those first few hikes were real adventures in “trail blazing”. Once the route became established, the Government of British Columbia designated the Harrison-Lillooet Gold Rush Trail as an official Provincial Historic Site under the Heritage Conservation Act.

Other schools quickly took interest in these hiking experiences. Moscrop Secondary and Burnaby North Secondary joined in, and soon Walnut Grove Secondary in Langley adopted the hike. Every time I see Vancouver actor and television personality Todd Talbot in a commercial or using his powers of persuasion on “Love It or List It, Vancouver”, I remember him as a member of one of my Harrison Hike groups! He hasn’t changed much.

Canadian Studies went on to be recognized by the Hilroy Fellowship Award, which honours innovation in teaching. The programme created a lasting community of teachers and students who keep in touch through social media and personal communication. Teachers and students alike see the experiences as long-lasting life highlights.

Charles, Marion, Leslie, and I still love to reminisce at Burnaby BCRTA branch meetings. As teachers, we treasure the memories of the special learning communities we created out of a few “visionary chats” around staff room tables. I went on to work on Canadian secondary language arts textbooks with Prentice Hall publishing. Charles Hou and his wife Cynthia produced and published unique collections of Canadian political cartoons.

Marion Hartley and I have also served on various BCRTA committees over the years, and we’ve never lost that special bond formed during those days when we struck out to teach “beyond the borders” of the curriculum.



Fort Langley dancing.

EXCERPTS FROM STUDENT JOURNALS

“In October, the Canadian Studies students took a trip to Victoria to do research on the life of Emily Carr. This time we left at 5:15 a.m. Wow, what a day! We arrived in Victoria at 9:00 a.m.,. We split up. Some went to places such as the Empress Hotel, Beacon Hill Park, and the Carr House (with Mr. Bailey & Mrs. Elwood) for filming. Some of us visited the Parliament Buildings for a tour of it and of the Centennial museum. Many were out interviewing people who knew Emily Carr, visiting Emily’s house and the family house. Others made notes and researched in the BC Archives for documents and other data pertaining to Emily Carr’s life here.” (Student Journal)

“This fall Canadian Studies students went on a day trip to Fort Langley. We left the school at 7:30 a.m. so that the bus could get us to Duncan Bar by 9:00. We canoed eight miles down the Fraser River to a beach west of Fort Langley. After a rest and time to change into our costumes, we paddled the remaining mile to the Fort. We landed outside the Fort and proceeded to parade to the Chief Factor’s house inside the fort. Here we re-enacted parts of the 1858 Crown Colony ceremony. We went back to the beach and had a Voyageurs’ lunch of stew & bread, pastries & tea. We then saw films and listened to a talk by one of the Fort’s guides, Ken. Afterwards we split up into groups to do projects, such as poetry, cemetery studies, coopering, blacksmithing, etc.” (Student Journal) •

STEVE BAILEY is a director of BCRTA and BC’s representative on the Canadian national body of retired educators, ACER-CART. He is also Chair of the BCRTA Excellence in Public Education Committee and president of the Sunshine Coast Branch of the BCRTA.

NOTES FROM 1976

Canadian Studies is interdisciplinary and involves eight subject areas: Social Studies, English, Drama, Music, Art, Home Economics, French, and Industrial Education.

The teachers in these areas feel that the existing school curriculum does not place enough emphasis on Canada and that too often in our society “Canadian” is synonymous with “dull”. The aim of Canadian Studies is to dispel this myth and to give students a chance to discover and appreciate our rich cultural heritage.

Sample activities:

Social Studies: The re-trial of Louis Riel; Sir John A. MacDonald Night; European contact with West Coast First Nations: The Chief Maquinna Project

English: Journal writing on the Harrison Hike; Canadian Author Project

Art: Learning the traditional Inkle Loom; trip to Victoria to study the heritage of Emily Carr

Industrial Education – Mask carving, traditional first nations box, snowshoe, and canoe construction projects

Music: Canadian folk dancing; Canadian folk song traditions

Drama: Scene presentations from Canadian plays

Home Economics: Canadian traditional foods and recipes; trip to First Nations restaurant.

French: Differences between French Canadian and Parisian French, French Canadian Author Study

A Wandering Path

BY PATRICIA PORTER, PhD

My journey through my teaching career has not been a straight path. For that I am both grateful and anxious.

I started teaching in the United Kingdom in the late 60's. Jobs were hard to find, and I ended up working with children who were thought to be slow learners, "Special Education students", as they were known then. After a couple of rocky years—nothing like experience to teach you what you don't know—I realized that I liked working with these kids.

I took a position in a school for students whose IQ measured below average. What a joke! Yes, these kids had learning problems, and some had behavioral and medical issues, but many of them showed levels of intelligence that surprised me. One boy could calculate betting odds instantly, another child did amazing embroidery, one could draw intricate images—I have one of his drawings near my desk as I write this. So, what was going on? Why were some kids struggling to learn, while some kids learned more easily? These questions bugged me for years. I had a lot to learn so I managed to enroll in courses that eventually led to a Master's degree.

But I still didn't have my answer.

When we emigrated to Canada in the dying days of 1989, I wasn't going to teach; I needed a change. Then I found out not only that I would be earning double what I had earned in the UK, but that there was this position called "Learning Assistance Teacher". Back to the classroom I went, first as a substitute teacher—we all have to pay our dues—and eventually as one of two learning assistance teachers in a large East Side elementary school in Vancouver.

Most days, I loved my job, but I still needed answers to those questions of mine. I was very fortunate; experts from the Feuerstein Institute in Israel were putting on a training course in children's learning for the Vancouver School Board. The course changed my whole approach by teaching me that children need to learn how to learn. There are 12 foundational learning skills all children need to reach their full potential, in three broad categories: physical skills - sight, hearing, energy, movement; emotional skills - good attitudes about themselves, others, their work, the future; and cognitive skills - attention, understanding, processing, production. Simple, eh? The reason some children struggled to learn was because they were lacking one or more of these basic skills. It made sense; even a bright child who lacked skills would struggle to learn.



Illustration series by iStock/Getty



A lack of self-confidence (“good attitude about themselves”) is one of the main factors I came across in kids who struggle to learn. Once they knew WHY they were struggling to learn, their confidence grew, and they became good learners. A few kids knew the subject but couldn’t show others they knew it, they stumbled at “production”. I was able to help my niece learn how to complete university exams; she was getting low marks, not because she didn’t know the work, but because she didn’t understand how to answer the questions correctly.

I had found my answer. The reason some children learn more easily than others is because they have and use all the foundational skills that lead to learning. Now all I had to do was assess which skills students were missing and help them develop them. Problem solved!

Well not quite. I had a full teaching load so finding time to assess a child’s level of skills was very difficult. Further, as a Learning Assistance Centre teacher, I often came into contact parents who wanted to know what they could do to help their child learn. I knew all the regular answers, talk to your child, read with your child, pay for tutoring, buy this book etc. but now I knew that parents also needed to make sure their young children developed the skills necessary to learning.

What to do? What to do?

I talked myself into a part-time job with the Vancouver School Board as a Home/School Consultant and worked with schools to let parents to know about this new way of supporting their child’s education. I started presenting at various Parent Advisory Council meetings and local libraries. At the end of nearly every presentation, parents would come up ask for help with a child. It became clear that the school system, no matter how good it was, should be seeing parents as collaborators and, whenever possible, trying to work with them. So, I used my skills to work one-on-one with parents and students and soon realized that I had a system that could be of use to many parents.

All the above was the fun part of my career for which I am very grateful. Now I come to why I am anxious. At the ripe old age of 76 I am having to learn how to create online courses for parents who want to help their children become better learners, how to use social media to let parents know that I exist, how to network with other organizations that work with parents, and how to design a website. I like learning but sometimes it all gets a bit too much.

Tech students in India are helping me with social media. I read all I can about marketing (and not liking it much) and trying to come up with a feasible marketing plan. I’m learning to write better blogs and get them up on my site. I can even handle YouTube and send out weekly tips.

It is exhausting but every time I think of quitting, some parent contacts me and asks for help. Oh, I know that parents might want to secure the services of an educational psychologist, either through the school or privately, but this option is not open to many parents. My system fills the gap between a full Educational Psychological Report and no report at all. For not a lot of money, parents can access information that helps them help kids succeed in school. So many parents have written to express that learning how their child learns, and helping them to develop these basic skills, has not just helped their children to learn, but has reduced distress and frustration for everyone involved.

How long will I continue to do this work? Possibly as long as parents keep asking for help. What have I learned from this journey? My main takeaway is that I understand how children learn and why some struggle to learn.

I have also learned that while I may be a good teacher, I am not good at setting up and running a business. In fact, as much as I like helping children learn, I really

dislike all that comes with trying to set up a business. That is where my anxiety comes from. This service is needed but I am not sure I can get it to the people who would benefit from it. The anxiety comes from not being able to help the kids who need help, and from worrying that this work I've built over the years may not survive once I am no longer involved.

What comes next? I am not sure. Once a teacher always a teacher. For now, I am hanging in there. My passion to work with parents is still strong. Maybe my anxiety will go away. Who knows?

Meanwhile I am grateful for the joy that my teaching career has given me, the fun I have had working with kids of all ages, the support from the many learning specialists who have taught me, my PhD supervisor, and the calming influence of my overweight cat.

Learning is forever. I may take a cartooning course this summer—why not? •

PATRICIA PORTER has empathy for “Seed Pod” kids - she was one of them. She has diplomas in Educational Broadcasting and Special Education, and earned a Master in Education degree from Birmingham University and a PhD from UBC. She now uses her 35 years of teaching experience to support parents and children.

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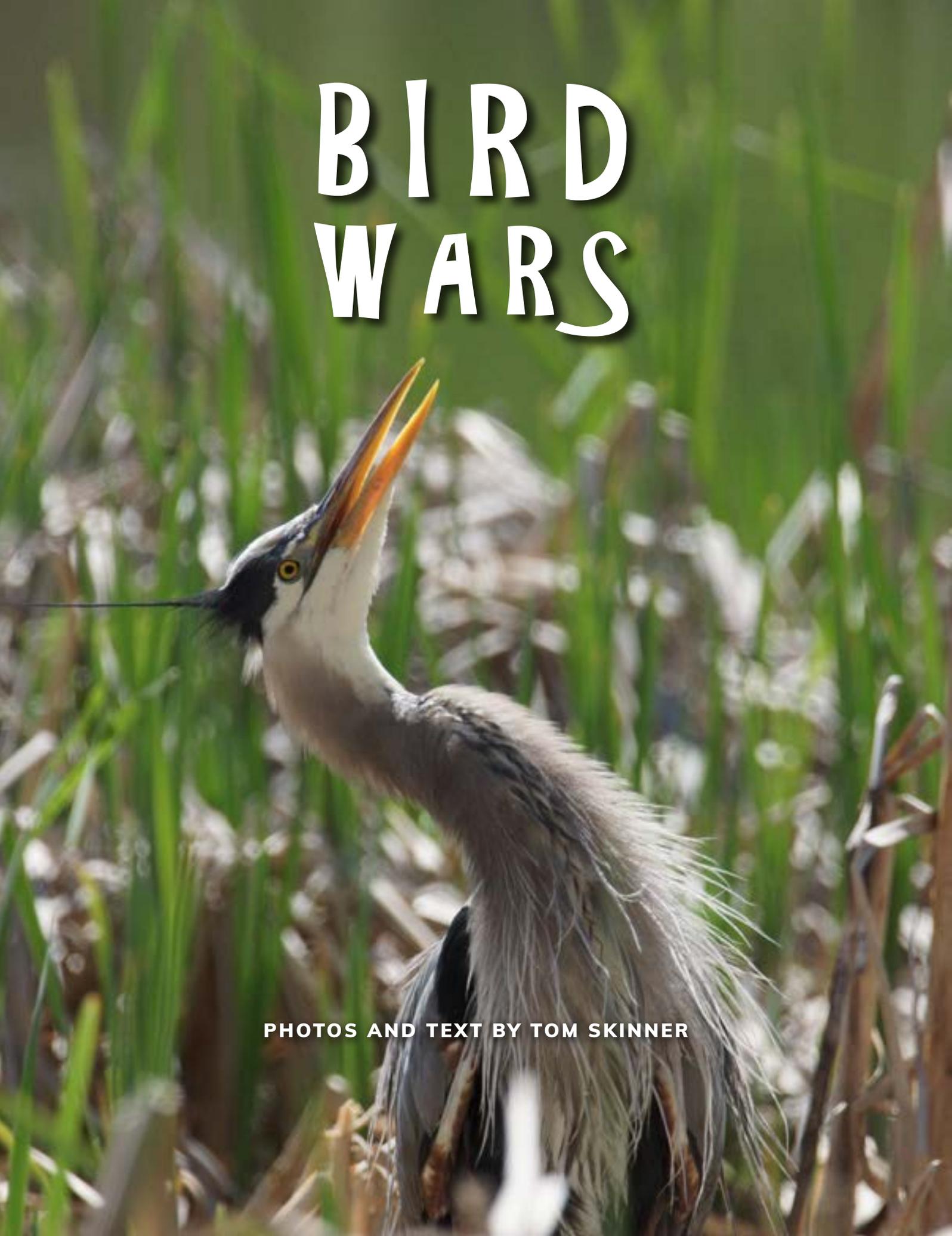
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BIRD WARS

A Great Egret is shown in profile, facing left, with its long, sharp beak wide open. The bird has a white head and neck, a black cap, and a yellow eye. Its body is covered in long, greyish feathers. The background is a dense thicket of green reeds and marsh grasses, some in focus and some blurred.

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY TOM SKINNER

I am a photographer, and passionate about wildlife, including bears, birds, bighorn sheep, elk, and mountain goats. With my camera, I can easily be amused for hours watching the interaction between birds and other animals.

There are some beautiful and well-known lakes in and near Vernon, including Kalamalka Lake, Wood Lake, and Okanagan Lake. You might be less familiar with smaller bodies of water like Cool's Pond in the BX area, and Mud Lake, in the middle of McKergow Meadows on Middleton Mountain. I visit and photograph all of these areas at different times of the year.

Over a four-year period, during the spring, I have captured many images of territorial conflicts between the great blue heron, one of BC's largest birds, and the red-winged blackbird, one of BC's smaller birds. The herons are found west of the Rockies all the way up to Alaska. Their ability to stand absolutely still while waiting for prey fish means they are often held up as models of persistence and patience. They prefer to nest in colonies, called "heronries" or "heron rookeries", and their appearance can run the gamut from awkward and ungainly to refined and regal.

The red-winged blackbird is, for many British Columbians, a true indicator of spring. They range widely in the U.S.A, but primarily west of the Coastal Range in BC. The males are glossy black and have flashy red and yellow shoulder epaulets that they can hide, or flare to attract attention. Like many birds, in the spring the male's behaviour is purposeful; to establish a territory and to attract a mate. The females are smaller and a subdued, streaky brown in colour.



Photos by Tom Skinner

Red-winged blackbirds often frequent areas where cattails grow, usually in ponds, sloughs, and at the edges of lakes. The red-wings and herons show up in the general area around the same time, but the red-wings immediately start claiming territory in the cattails for a suitable home to mate and rear their young. The herons nest in a heronry nearby, then come into the marshes looking for food for themselves and their young, whether it be a fish, a snake, or perhaps a mouse.

The conflict is essentially over territory, which the red-wings have already staked, and although no set of interactions is exactly the same, a pattern of behaviour appears to play out quite consistently. The herons usually fly gracefully onto the edge of a pond and settle in one position for a long time. The male red-wings generally dive-bomb the heron's head and the female red-wings seem to head for the hind end or back, pecking at the bigger birds.

BX is an agricultural area of Vernon, well-known for orchards. "BX" is short for the Barnard's Express. Francis Jones Barnard from Quebec began by carrying mail newspapers from Yale to the Cariboo in 1861, walking on foot! In 1868 he sent a partner, S. Tingley, to New Mexico to acquire horses. The freight wagons needed as many as 12 horses each, and Tingley returned with 400 head of horses, all of the sturdy Morgan breed. Barnard's Express hauled supplies to the Cariboo and brought gold back to Yale and the coast. The company continued to operate for over 50 years, until the railway lines took over. I once worked at BX Elementary, so it was important to know the history.



Photo: Stephen Tingley driving a BX coach, 1880. Source: BC Archives via Wikimedia Commons.



The herons will stay in position despite being dive-bombed by one, two, or even three separate birds. Most modern cameras are built with mechanisms for counting the number of images, and as I sorted through photos for this article, I wondered how long a heron would stay in an area before leaving. I can't actually give you a definitive answer, but I can say I have recorded at least fifty separate dive bombs made by red-wings before a heron leaves. Eventually the heron will walk away, then take flight over the body of water, and land in a completely different area, close to the water, and cattails.

The herons seem to be oblivious to the fact that red-wings will also be present in this different area. Once again, the red-wings will notice the interloper in their nesting territory and the pattern of behaviour will repeat. I have spent countless hours being entertained, frustrated, and enthralled by these interactions.

In conclusion, I will offer up one piece of advice. Well actually, I never give advice in single segments, so bear with me.

In photographing birds and other wildlife, there are no guarantees; if the birds are present, you have a chance, if not, you are out of luck. For this reason, many photographers return to the same locations, at the same time each year, which is, of course, exactly what the birds do.

I've found it very difficult to capture close-ups of great blue herons being dive-bombed. I've waited for the precise moment the red-winged blackbird attacked. Invariably the heron ducked its head, with a quizzical look, and I had a picture of half a red-wing. I also have quite a collection of "Startled Herons" without the red-wings visible.

My wife, Myna, sometimes asks how many pictures I need. My typical response is "One. If I get the right one." In my mind, I can see exactly what it will look like. If you notice me, in the future, next to a pond, camera in hand, waiting patiently like a great blue heron, you'll know why I'm there. •

TOM SKINNER is a BCRTA member and photographer. He has written for a number of magazines, including *Snowbird & RVTravelers*.



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the NIGHT
that WALL
came DOWN

BY BETTY TAYLOR



My first teaching job, teaching English as a Second Language at a school in Richmond, was just right for me in many ways (see “Journey to a Perfect Job” in *PostScript Magazine, Summer 2021*). But the job wasn’t always “perfect”. On arrival at my new school I found, to my surprise, that there were two separate staffrooms side-by-side, one for men and one for women. The women’s room was an unwelcoming place; each woman had her own “special”, “reserved” chair. Because I was new, I didn’t have one. That I only had 12 students did not endear me to those teachers either. The fact that none of the students spoke English or understood it, and only two of them could read or write it at all, meaning that the workload was considerably greater, made no difference.

By the time summer holidays arrived, my students had made good progress learning English. I convinced the School Board that a two-month break in listening to and speaking English would set my students back to the beginning, so I was hired to teach over the summer.

There was one other teacher at the school that summer, teaching a “catch-up” Science class for those who had fallen behind. We had coffee and lunch together and became friends. When September arrived, my new friend invited me to join the men’s staffroom morning coffee club. Camaraderie developed and I soon joined in the Friday afternoon “TGIF” gathering at the pub. We had lots of discussions, often late into the night, about the inequalities meted out to women, everything from

segregated staffrooms to women’s basic rights. I would engage with them until I finally left to go home.

After one such Friday night, at about 3:00 a.m., the phone woke me. “Well, Betty,” the voice of one of the men said, “We did it!” “What?” I said, uncomprehending. “We made a hole in the wall!!!”

That weekend my daughter and her friend made a poster to fill in the empty hole in the wall between the staff rooms. It was of a jitterbugging staff member and pronounced, “THE BEST NON-PROFESSIONAL DAY OUR SCHOOL EVER HAD.” I took it to school on Monday morning at 6:00 a.m. and got the janitor to hang it up over the hole in the wall.

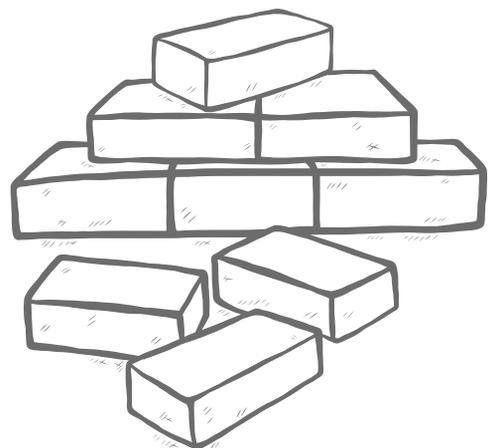
School opened at 7:45 a.m. That’s when the principal entered the men’s staffroom and saw the poster hanging there, and then saw the hole in the wall for the first time. He turned red and then purple with rage and I thought he was going to have a heart attack! Then the “Damage to School Property” interrogations began. He asked every man on the staff if they had done the damage, except one—who then demanded to be interrogated as well! No one confessed. The fact that I was one of the instigators was never revealed either!

Next came a staff vote: to put the wall back, to make a door, or to leave the hole in the wall.

The hole won. And there it is. •

BETTY TAYLOR taught the first ESL class in the Richmond School District. After 27 years of retirement, Betty was thrilled to have her first article published in the Summer 2021 issue of *PostScript*.

Betty passed away shortly after submitting this piece. Thank you, Betty, for breaking down the walls.





TEACHING IN A *Country School*

In the early 50's, after Senior Matric and a year at Victoria Normal School, I sent out seven applications and received seven job offers. The one I accepted was from District 34 for a new one-room school halfway between Abbotsford and Chilliwack that was scheduled to open that September for grades 1 to 5. They found me a boarding place for \$60 a month within walking distance of the school. My salary was \$1895 for the ten-month school term.

That first day there were over fifty eager students waiting at the doors. Fortunately, some board members were there to make the decision that it would be a Primary School for grades 1 to 3. It was a lovely new building, a large classroom with washrooms and cloakrooms at each end. The maintenance crew were still there finishing up painting, etc. The girls noticed there was a long white tub outside the boy's washroom, and they asked me about it. I didn't know, so they asked one of the workers. He told them it was a "footbath which would be hooked

up the next day." This convinced the girls, because they knew boys had dirtier feet. It was a urinal of course; This naive young teacher had never seen one before. I must have been quite the butt of jokes for that work crew.

It so happened that most of my students were in third grade, and only a few in first and second. We worked on the buddy system; the older ones were great little tutors, listening to the others read and do their numbers. They were a bright bunch that year, so anxious to learn, and we worked as a family. It was a lot of work, but very rewarding.

I didn't have a copy machine, so there was lots of board work to put up every day and, of course, workbooks to mark as well. Initially there was also no phone, so one thing that constantly worried me was what to do in case of a medical emergency. The lady janitor lived about fifty yards down the road, and I was prepared to send a runner to use her phone, if necessary, but luckily the

need didn't arise. All we needed from the first aid kit they provided was the disinfectant and a few band-aids. It was just after Christmas before the telephone was installed.

The Primary Supervisor called on me twice a week to bring out supplies and any mail from the office. She was a great support for beginning teachers. Another great service was the mobile library van which came twice a month to provide age-appropriate reading material for the classroom, plus each student could check out two books to take home, to be exchanged during the next van visit. The children treasured those books, because families weren't as affluent in those days.

The Public Health Nurse came every week, and even made home visits when necessary. A classic case was little Reggie, a small boy who wandered in one day after recess. He asked if he and his dog could stay and play with the kids. He was so grubby but always had such a big smile on his face. He said he was six but didn't know his birthday and wasn't sure of his last name. He never had a lunch; the other students were always willing to share with Reggie and his dog, who waited obediently at the door.

When the nurse came, I asked if she could drive him home. I hoped the nurse would talk to the mother. The nurse reported later that he lived quite a distance away, right by the river, in a shack with a dirt floor, a wood stove in the middle, and little else but blankets and boxes. Nobody was home, but Reggie was sure she would be home soon. The nurse couldn't wait that day and it was several more trips before she made contact with the mother. She left a big box of clothing that her own boys had outgrown, knowing they would fit Reggie. Shortly after that he stopped coming to school. The

nurse went out to check on him, but the place had been abandoned. As a follow-up she contacted the neighbouring school districts to see if he was enrolled anywhere else, but she couldn't find any trace of the little guy.

The Christmas Concert was a memorable event for many rural communities. Every child had a part to play, and we had great fun decorating the classroom. A dad arrived with a tree, complete with a stand and set of lights. The mothers made any necessary costumes, and the children were bubbly with excitement. After the concert, the mothers served cookies and cocoa to everyone, and we all sang carols. One of the dads surprised us all by dressing as Santa and giving out candy canes. It was a night to remember!

I must admit it was rather lonely, as I hadn't met any of the other district teachers. Mr. Carson from the office thought it would be better if I moved into town after the holidays, so he found me a boarding place with two other teachers and arranged for me to ride out to my school each morning when the bus driver left on his rural route and be picked up on his return trip. This arrangement worked out perfectly; I joined the bowling league, and square dance club, and was able to attend teachers' meetings. I now had a social life!

The following Sept. I was assigned to a school in town and was able to enjoy the company of others. I did benefit from sharing ideas, though I must admit that I missed the country setting. There is a friendly atmosphere that is unique to a small rural school and has left me with many fond memories. •

MARILYN ADRIAN loved her 33 years as a classroom teacher in Prince Rupert, Surrey and Abbotsford before retiring from SD 34 in 1994.

A Dry Run



After retiring, I took up long-distance cycling. In 2011, I biked from Vancouver to Northern California. In 2013, I biked across Canada, beginning at Port Moody, and ending at Halifax Harbour. In between, at the age of 66, I decided to bike Death Valley. The second leg of that trip, from Baker to Shoshone, was particularly notable.

BAKER, CALIFORNIA TO SHOSHONE

Back at home in BC, I had spent at least half an hour trying to decide between two motels in Baker. One was the Wills Fargo (the owner's name was Will), and the other was the Royal Hawaiian. Now, at the Wills Fargo desk, I heard a surprised, "The Royal Hawaiian? That place closed three years ago. We are the only motel in town." So much for the internet information highway!

To try to beat the heat, I got an early start. By 6:30 a.m., my bike was loaded, and I was on my way. It was 56 miles to Shoshone, and I was hoping to do the tough stuff before noon. Things went well at first. With cool air, a flat road, and beautifully desolate scenery, I covered half the distance to Shoshone in just a couple of hours, but I began to be concerned that there was so little shade along the way. There had been telephone poles near Baker, but those disappeared, and eventually there were no structures to block the sun at all: no trees, no billboards, not even a substantial traffic sign to hide behind when the sun would be high in the sky. The only plants were scrub bushes that grew no taller than two feet high. "No matter," I thought. At the rate I was travelling, I'd be in Shoshone before the hottest part of the day.



Early morning start from Baker. Photos by Victor Neuman.



Desert scenery.

I was enjoying the cool of the morning and the magnificent scenery when I noticed a distant road that appeared to climb vertically up a mountain to my right. My road design experience kicked in: what jerk had decided to build a road straight up a desert mountain that did not seem to access anything in particular? As I pondered that ridiculous route in the distance, the road I was on began to swing ominously to the right. Soon, to my dismay, my route was pointing right at the road I had thought was a joke! With the heat of mid-day approaching, I was about to begin the 2,000-foot ascent to Ibex Pass.

What jerk had decided to build a road straight up a desert mountain that did not seem to access anything in particular?



Call boxes offered little shade, but often that was all there was.

By 11:00am, I was still a long way from the summit and I began to see the point of the emergency call boxes I had been passing all the way from Baker. These solar-powered wireless phones were spaced at intervals of around two miles. I hadn't thought much about them to that point, since I had a couple of bottles of water with me, the day was still cool, and I figured there was still enough traffic to help me out in an emergency. They were rather pathetic in size—the pole was 3 inches in diameter, and the sign itself was only around 16" square at most—but I began to appreciate that they were the only shade around. I knew that when I had to rest, I would need to have at least my head shaded in order to stay cool, which was about all the call box signs could give me.

I was an older guy on a bike laden down with gear, pedalling uphill in the middle of a hot desert day. I must have begun to look a little pathetic.

As the temperature rose, I couldn't do the climb continuously, and began to pull over to rest more and more frequently. I went through my first bottle of water quickly and reached for the one that was mounted on my frame. Nasty shock. The bottle was plain plastic, and the sun had heated it to a temperature that was great for soup but not for drinking. I was out of water, part way up a hot, desert grade that seemed endless. Still, I was feeling there was no real danger. Cars passed me every twenty minutes or so, and my thinking was that, in a pinch, I could always flag one down for a drink. I didn't want to do it; it made me feel like a water panhandler, and I hated the feeling of being a screw-up in need of help. I took the bottle of heated water and dumped part of it over my head. It was warm at first, but soon evaporation took over, and I started getting a little relief.

I was an older guy on a bike laden down with gear, pedalling uphill in the middle of a hot desert day. I must have begun to look a little pathetic. Cars that I didn't flag down began to pull over anyway and ask me if I was OK. This was a feature I would become accustomed to on this trip. Because of the dangerous heat of the desert, drivers looked out for each other and folks along the way. Mostly, I just waved them on, but when my water was totally gone, I finally got off my bike when a fellow pulled over to check on me.

"You don't look so good. Do you need anything? Any help? Want me to put your bike on the roof and drive you someplace?"

"I'm OK, but do you happen to have any extra water?"

"A little."

He popped open his trunk and the angels sang; inside were two coolers stuffed with individual bottles of cold water. He gave me three bottles, one of which disappeared down my throat in a flash. I gave him my heartfelt thanks and said that was all the help I needed, but he was unconvinced and jammed two granola bars in my hand before he left.

Renewed, I carried on up the grade. Disturbingly, in spite of my adequate water supply, I made less

and less distance between rest stops. I found it harder and harder to get anywhere and I became nauseous and dizzy to the point that I felt like I'd pass out if I pushed any harder. Then the dizziness got worse; I needed a longer rest and some shade, and the only thing I could find was one of those call boxes. It wasn't much, but at least my head was in shade as I lay down.

It didn't help that I presented passing vehicles with the spectacle of a body lying flat out next to an emergency call box. Before this, when I was pedalling along, many had just slowed down to ask if I was OK as they drove by. Now every car was stopping to check if there was a dead body next to a call box. Spent as I was, I had to raise my head every time a car stopped and wave to them to prove I was still breathing. Eventually I couldn't do it anymore; I needed to lie still. From that point, when I heard the tell-tale crunch on gravel, I wouldn't move except to raise my arm a little and give a thumbs up.

Eventually the dizziness and nausea subsided, and I got back on my bike. Several rest stops later it was three in the afternoon and the sixth hour of my climb up the mountain.

Then I saw it—almost like a mirage--the sign that said "Ibex Pass Elev 2072 ft." A point of passing interest to a driver in a car, to me, it was the pearly gates . On the downgrade, with the wind cooling



The Pearly Gates—Ibex Pass Summit.

my face and no physical effort required, all my symptoms of nausea and dizziness disappeared after just a minute or two. The heat and the lack of shade no longer mattered; I felt like I was in an air-conditioned room with a powerful fan blowing cool air in my face. I quickly realized that I must have been hyperthermic. At the time, I thought of it as mainly a nuisance that slowed my progress. Later in the trip, a local informed me that not everybody who dies in Death Valley, dies of thirst. Some simply overheat, pass out and, while they are unconscious, the sun finishes them off.

After 60 miles and 11 hours on the bike, I arrived at Shoshone around 5 p.m. and headed straight for the Shoshone Inn, where I expected my reward of a cool bath and an air-conditioned room. It was not to be. "Here's your key, sir." Said the clerk, "But I should tell you that the air conditioning is out in all our rooms. Let me get you a fan." He disappeared into a back room, then reappeared scratching his head. "I think all our fans are in use. I'm really sorry. Would you like a free Pepsi?"

Too tired to complain or get mad, I took the Pepsi to my room with an armful of other beverages and, sitting in a cool bath, drank non-stop until around nine that evening. The bath helped, but the room was stifling, and sleeping in that heat was impossible. After an hour of tossing and turning, I grabbed every towel they had, and soaked them in the tub. Then I wrung them out and put them under me, over me; I covered every inch of my body as I lay back in the bed. I would have swallowed one to cool my innards if I wasn't afraid of sitting on the toilet later, feeling like I was passing a duvet. But the exterior towels did the trick, and I finally fell asleep.

My thought as I drifted off was, "I can't do this again." I was going to have to figure out this Death Valley thing. •

VICTOR NEUMAN received an MA in literature from UBC, where he taught English. He later went on to have a career in engineering, designing highways.

DANCING
in
SMALL
SPACES



In April of 2011, I was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. At the same time, my husband Lincoln was exhibiting signs of cognitive impairment—a tentative diagnosis of Alzheimer's changed to Lewy body dementia as his symptoms revealed themselves. I wrote many emails to our two daughters, to my siblings, and to our close friends in order to keep them informed. Those emails, other random reflections, our photographs, and my memories all became the source material for a memoir: **Dancing in Small Spaces: One Couple's Journey with Parkinson's Disease and Lewy Body Dementia.**

Three years in the making, the book is a crazy quilt, a piecing together of the moments of our lives as our years together were coming to an end.

I feather-stitch together the bits and pieces of our stories, and I dream that when it is finished I will wrap it around all those who loved him. We will touch the pieces of ourselves that cling, thread by thread, to one another. I dream we laugh in wonder to be so comforted.

The first of the excerpts is a pre-diagnosis story. Lewy body dementia is often preceded by REM Sleep Behaviour Disorder, which is characterized by the acting out of vivid, often frightening dreams.

The second excerpt references the title, and is from the later days of Lincoln's illness when I was no longer able to care for him at home.

The third, written after his death, intertwines memory and sorrow. It also reflects Lincoln's role as a teacher-librarian and his impact on students.

NIGHT TERRORS

It begins with those night terrors. Over the next few years they gradually increase in frequency and intensity, though in the daytime he seems normal and untroubled. But at night he startles awake, shouts, flings off the bedding, searches frantically for small animals among the tangle of sheets, or begs me to run with him from dogs and men with axes. I fumble for the lamp switch and beg him to wake up, to open his eyes. I hold him and tell him over and over that he's okay.

I buy a lamp for my bedside table that I can control with a clap of my hands. I think I will be able to get the room lit quickly and spare him a few seconds of that dreadful panic.

One night I am jolted out of sleep by a frenzied tugging of the sheets.

"Get out! Get out!" Lincoln shouts.

"Honey!" I cry. "It's okay!"

Then I bang my hands together with as much force as I can muster, a single, sharp, loud smack that not only fails to turn on the lamp but startles Lincoln and sends him stumbling away from me, tripping over the duvet on the floor, careening off furniture, and still shouting "Get out!" while I clap like a madwoman—and the lamp never does turn on.

I fly out of bed to slap at the wall switch for the overhead light. Lincoln and I are both caught, frozen in that sudden flash of brightness, like escaping prisoners trapped in a searchlight's beam in an old movie. All that is missing is the wail of sirens. We look at each other and fumble our way together. We don't hug; we cling. I feel his heart thumping against my chest and I am sure he can feel mine. I settle him back into the bed, and as I tuck the sheets around him, I explain about the lamp and apologize for the clapping.

"Is that what that was?" he asks and starts to laugh. "I thought someone was shooting at us!"

DANCING IN A SMALL SPACE

As our days in Revelstoke become months and almost a year, I find myself grateful our bewildered family is together but am sometimes sad with the missing of home. My daily visits to the cottages are my anchor in a strange, disconnected life. I help Lincoln eat and take him for walks. I read to him and show him photographs and tell him our stories, but I do not know what he knows. I know that he is always happy to see me, our girls, and our grandchildren, because his face lights up with a smile so bright and so fleeting that I am both suffused with delight and almost undone. Sometimes he sighs in greeting, and then he is gone. His eyes close; his head droops; his thoughts and feelings slip far beyond guessing.

When I return after visiting my mother, I wrap him in a hug.

“I missed you every day,” he murmurs, the longest sentence he has said in a great while.

The disease has almost silenced him, but sometimes I get this precious whispering of meaningful words. I write them down on scraps of paper. I still find them on occasion, ragged fragments out of time.

As I hug him, he slides his arm around my waist and pats my back, a rare, remembered touch that carries the comfort of all our together years. I feel that touch still, in the small of my back. When he grows tired, I settle him into his wheelchair and he disappears from me once more.

“Goodbye, buddy. I love you,” I whisper at the end of that visit, at the end of every visit.

I buy a loveseat for his room so I can sit beside him instead of crouching by his wheelchair. He leans into me and then closes his eyes. Asleep? I never know for sure. I wear his familiar weight and listen to our old CDs. The music conjures memories. I wonder if it does for him.

I pull him to his feet after helping him with meals. I want him to walk a bit, to get out of the wheelchair. We wait for the message from brain to limbs to make the journey through the bizarre neuron jams.

“Okay, feet! Start walking!” I say.



I rub his legs and tap his toes with my fingers. I rock him gently back and forth. And then, sometimes, he doesn't just find the familiar shuffle—he hops. He hops from one foot to another! He bounces! He skips! He laughs out loud!

As he boogies, I hold on for his dear life because he falls frequently. He . . . we . . . make the staff anxious. They've all seen me go sideways when I mean to go forward. I beg for his freedom to move, for our right to move together, and they let it be. For the time being, they let it be.

We start dancing together in his room. The first time that I hold on to his hands and coax him to stand so we can dance, he joins me not with that exuberant hopping-bopping-bursting-out of his own volition but with a sweet little shuffle. We dance in that small space. We dance to “Yellow Submarine,” “Bennie and the Jets,” and “Diamonds and Rust”—three songs, and the last one a slow one—and I am, for a moment, back in our old, good life, in his arms, home again.

RAIN MAKES APPLESAUCE

Every fall, I used to read a picture book called *Rain Makes Applesauce* to my kindergarten students. I never owned my own copy. It came from the Hutton School library, Lincoln's library. It was a funny, quirky, offbeat little book with the nonsensical refrain "You're just talking silly talk!" And it was always a hit.

I think of it as it rains and I make applesauce. Applesauce is not supposed to be my job; it was Lincoln's, and this is the first time I've made it on my own. It's not that it is difficult—it isn't—but getting motivated and staying motivated to cook for myself has been a struggle ever since he went into care. Remembering the book makes me smile; then it makes me feel old, as the memories seem so long ago. I bought all these apples at the farmers' market because they looked so beautiful. And I love applesauce. And it is raining. Reason enough, I suppose.



Lincoln in Morocco.

(All images courtesy of the author)

As I chop and mash and stir and round up jars and lids, to the back sound of the rain, I remember all the times we worked together in the kitchen, Lincoln, me, and the CBC. I talk to the radio and I talk to him. He mostly listens.

"You know they can't hear you," he says. "The voices on the radio can't hear you."

"But you can!"

"I can," he says and laughs.

"If you want me to be quiet, I can be."

And that makes him laugh again.

It is our shtick. For no one else but him and me. Old-married-couple's shtick. I miss it. His cooking style is tidy and efficient, well planned, librarian-ish. Mine is chaotic and often interrupted by the need for a trip to the grocery store for a missing ingredient.

"I'll go," he says, almost always.

Grocery shopping is his job. It doesn't become mine until he needs help. When the time comes when he can no longer go alone, I discover the goodness of the people who work at our local grocery store, the cashiers who patiently coach him through the steps for using his debit card, who wait while he insists on bagging his own groceries, who leave the till to find the things he can't find himself. Department managers make a point of coming over to talk to us, and teenaged kids who'd been his students, and have part-time jobs filling shelves, greet him.

"Hi, Mr. Ford," they say.

Sometimes they turn to me and tell me how his library was a haven for them or how he showed up in their classrooms with books, newly catalogued, that he knew they would like, that he had purchased with them in mind. They tell me how that made them feel.

They remember the Friday field trips. His goal was to get them out of the school every Friday afternoon, and he came close to doing that. Lincoln and his kids and a few parents roamed the valley and the hills, even visiting the rattlesnake dens, to show his kids where they lived. He taught them the

meaning of home. And as they tell their memories, everyone holds their sorrow and their honouring in their gentleness with him, and in their eyes.

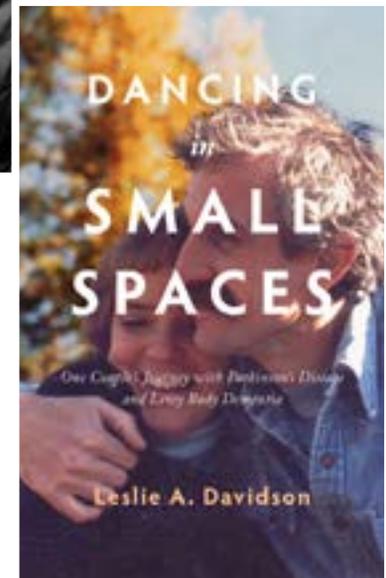
When it comes time to put the apple mash through the food mill, I discover it is a job for two well-behaved hands. On the best day, I've got one reasonably obedient hand and one brat. I settle on a system that involves hugging the bowl while I turn the handle on the mill. To the accompaniment of some moments of involuntary parkie dancing, I manage to get some applesauce through the mill and into the bowl, and the rest on me, the counter, and the floor.

At one point, close to tears with frustration and the melancholy of the rain and the missing of him, I take a break. This appears on a friend's Facebook page. It is a poem, "Epitaph" by Merrit Malloy, and is included in the Reform Jewish prayer book as an option before reading more traditional forms of liturgy. I love these lines:

*Look for me in the people I've known or loved,
and if you cannot give me away,
at least let me live in your eyes and not in your mind.
You can love me best by letting hands touch hands,
and by letting go of children that need to be free.
Love doesn't die, people do.
So, when all that's left of me is love,
give me away.*

"Let me live in your eyes and not in your mind."
Oh boy. I'm not there yet, not able to do that yet. Lincoln lives so very much in my mind. I don't know if, or when, I will be able to give him away, but I hold that place and time in possibility, in gratitude, and in wonder.

Rain makes applesauce and rain makes kitchen shtick. Such a perfect little non sequitur leading to such perfect and tender and bittersweet places - to touching hands and giving to others what I need to give him and to remembering what others have given to us. And to letting go and to the sureness of love that doesn't die.



Excerpts from: **Dancing in Small Spaces: One Couple's Journey with Parkinson's Disease and Lewy Body Dementia**, by Leslie A. Davidson

www.touchwoodeditions.com

Publication is set for October 2022. •

LESLIE A. DAVIDSON is the author of two children's books, *In the Red Canoe* (Orca Books, 2016) and *The Sun is a Shine* (2021). Her essay "Adaptation" won the CBC Canada Writes Creative Non-fiction Prize and her work has been published in the *Globe and Mail*, *Viewpoints* and *On the Move*. Her article "One Hand on the Wall" appeared in the Summer 2018 issue of *PostScript*. Leslie is a retired elementary school teacher, a mother, and grandmother. She lives in Revelstoke.

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

2022

- June 28
- July 27
- August 29
- September 27
- October 27
- November 28
- December 21

Teachers' Pension Plan

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

Upcoming payment dates

2022

- June 29
- July 28
- August 30
- September 28
- October 28
- November 29
- December 22

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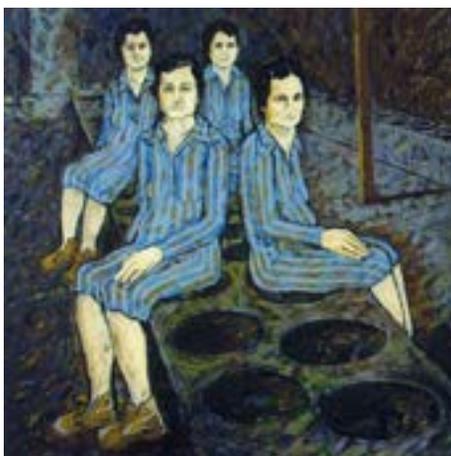
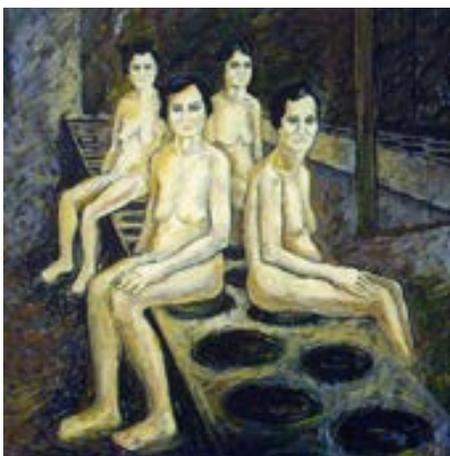
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HINDA, BAYLA

&

THE ROSEN WOMEN

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. HINDA AVERY



*Early versions of "The Rosen Women"
(All images courtesy of the author)*

On March 30, 2022, art historian Dr. Angela Andersen invited artist Dr. Hinda Avery to participate in a public lecture, "The Importance of Maus and the Graphic Novel," presented at the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society (CSRS) at the University of Victoria. Avery is a BC painter and comic artist who uses her art to explore topics related to aging, friendships, the Holocaust, and her own life experiences as a Canadian descendent of women murdered in the Polish Nazi camps. Andersen organized this talk in response to continued attempts to ban the seminal Holocaust work **Maus** by comic artist Arthur Spiegelman, most recently by a Tennessee school district in early 2022.

Graphic novels and comics have long been used as a means of educating, satirizing, and critiquing society. **Maus** centres on Spiegelman's interviews with his father, a Holocaust survivor who eventually immigrated to the United States. The story characterizes European Jews as mice, the Nazis as cats, and assorted Second World War-era figures as other animals. **Maus** is used in thousands of schools to teach the horrors and the generational trauma of the Holocaust.

Dr. Avery began what became seven series of "The Rosen Women" paintings after retiring from a career in education. Painted on large canvases between 2005 and 2017, the series featured Avery's murdered grandmother and aunt, as well as her surviving cousins. She also began to include herself. Initially, the women appeared in the garb of Polish camp residents,

wearing drab colours and striped uniforms, but Avery disliked the air of victimization that accompanied the depictions. As the series progressed and she came to know the Rosens, she mixed new colours and gave the women different aspects. Significantly, her lost family members became resisters and freedom fighters, and in the final series, superheroes, defeating the Nazis wearing neon trench coats and bikinis, and sporting tattoos and pistols. The Rosen Women now smile knowingly at onlookers, speaking to viewers in detachable dialogue bubbles that are straight off the pages of Sunday morning comics.

"Bayla's Got Issues" is Avery's recent collection of comics featuring the titular Bayla, who has certainly "got issues", many of them of an existential nature. Should she print and save the useful contents of the Internet? Will her time to shine as a visual artist ever arrive? And perhaps most importantly, is she getting enough calcium? Bayla is a silver-haired protagonist who is the star of her own inner turmoil, but with comfortingly familiar neuroses.

While Hinda Avery may well be part Rosen Woman, part Bayla, she has her own lens through which to view the role of comics (aka graphic novels) as didactic tools and critical narratives in our society. Her interview was a highlight of the CSRS presentation, which was warmly received by academic researchers and graduate students.

Q What inspired your interest in telling stories through the graphic novel format?

A For 13 years, I painted Jewish women resistance fighters attempting to defy Hitler. This was my way of retaliating for the murder of my family during the Holocaust. These mural-size paintings eventually ran their course, and I was burned out; their large format required a huge amount of time and energy. But once I stopped painting, I became depressed. I missed hanging out with the women. I realized that, while painting them, I also became a resister, albeit a vicarious one, and it gave my life purpose.

So, I found myself at a crossroads. The only thing I could think of expressing was my depression. Given that it wasn't something I wanted to advertise, I decided to hide it behind a fictionalized character named Bayla. She's an older, muddled, unfulfilled woman dealing with aging, anxiety, and the need for affirmation in the art world. Of course, Bayla needed text to help her swear and scream. It was never my intention to produce a graphic novel. It happened by default, and I'd really still prefer to call my work a comic – it's a less snobby word.

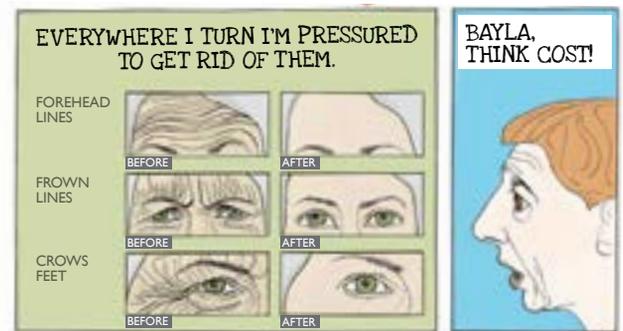
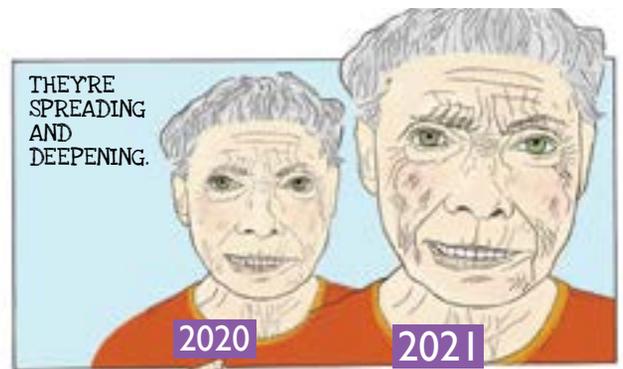
There're many things I like about creating a comic: it can be small in size – I don't need to stand on a stool to reach Bayla, and what I can't say visually, I can say using text. Another bonus is that my protagonist, an older woman, can fill a much-needed niche in main-stream comics. Most, if not all, popular comics portray women as young and highly sexualized. Older women are not to be found, at least the way I would like us to be portrayed. I hope that I am remedying this situation.



Q Would you, as an artist and as a person, be able to tell the same stories in writing or in a purely visual narrative that you tell as graphic novels?

A I'm not a writer—words have always been foreign and difficult things for me to manipulate. With a comic, I can keep the words to a bare minimum. At the same time, I can use lots of “F” words, which I find fun and easy to do! I like bouncing back and forth from drawings to words. I don't think my story would work strictly as a visual narrative—it does need some words. On the other hand, I feel gifted writers and artists could perhaps tell the story in strictly written or visual form.

***I CAN USE LOTS OF
"F" WORDS, WHICH
I FIND FUN AND
EASY TO DO!***



How have graphic novels given freedom to story-tellers and readers to address challenging topics in a way that other visual arts mediums or other forms of literature might not?

Graphic novels give storytellers the freedom to combine pictures and words. In a graphic novel, images and text can be blown up, distorted, exaggerated, reduced, cropped, and even disintegrated. Images and text can go outside the margins or margins can be eliminated entirely. Graphic novels can take challenging topics—social, political, or sexual—and bring them to life using special visual effects. Controversial or traumatic subject matter may have more credence when expressed using both pictures and text. For example, Art Spiegelman’s *Maus* was one of the most powerful books I have read on the Holocaust. Graphic novels encourage creativity

because the format is “open.” It doesn’t have the restrictions or boundaries that other forms of art or literature may have. A richer experience takes place for readers when a story is accompanied with illustrations. It’s a way of adding dimensions to a work.

Graphic novels are nothing new; they’ve been around since the birth of homo sapiens – images and text were drawn on cave walls, Egyptians produced hieroglyphs, religious manuscripts were illuminated, and of course, most children’s books are graphic novels. Somewhere along the way, someone decided that adults didn’t need pictures to accompany a story. Nothing could be further from the truth – adults can benefit from pictures just as much as children. One wonders what form graphic novels will take when they deal with Russia’s onslaught of Ukraine.

Q What role does the creation of characters that are simultaneously autobiographical and fictional (avatars or alter-egos, perhaps) play in your work?

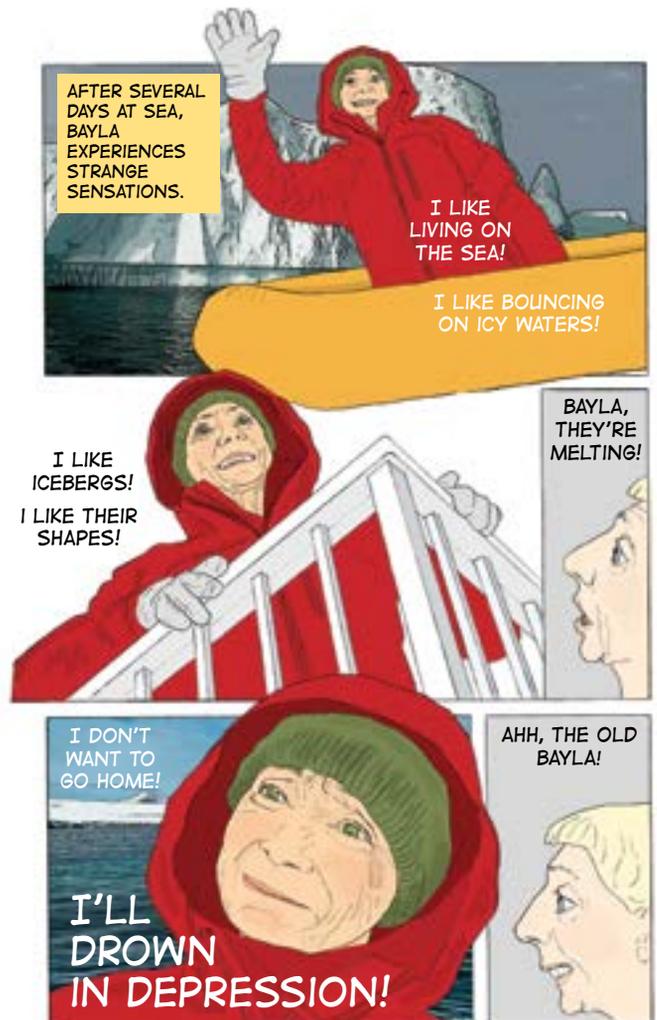
A The creation of characters plays a crucial role in my artwork. Currently, I have no desire to create abstract, landscape, or conceptual art. Much as I love colours, textures, and shapes, my art needs social and political content. My comics are both autobiographical and fictional. While there are some similarities between me and Bayla, there are also differences. I like to hide behind Bayla – I’m a very private person and find communicating with

friends and acquaintances difficult. I’m not a talker and seldom reveal what’s in my head. Bayla acts as a shield and she can communicate things that I would never be able to disclose. For example, Bayla expresses her horror over her wrinkles. Because I’m a feminist, I’d never express such horror. Bayla has a shrink, Dr. Kate – I’d be ashamed to confess I go to counselling. Bayla seeks a cure for her depression by reading a book on self-compassion – I’d be embarrassed sharing that information. Bayla reveals she’s Jewish. I’d have trouble with that. To conclude, Bayla makes it a little easier for me to be in the world.



Note: The men on the airplane were last seen in M. Tree quarterly number 1, summer 1990.

The discussion that followed the interview with Dr. Avery investigated the depth that is possible with comics, and several participating scholars mentioned the graphic novels in their home collections, from the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* to a biography of Metis leader Louis Riel. This format, and Avery's contribution to it, has the capacity to tell difficult and moving stories to a wide audience, and to include those who were once excluded, from Holocaust survivors to women of a certain age.





DER FÜHRER
WANTS TO MAKE
MANURE OUT OF US.
WE'LL PROVE HE'S
ALREADY FULL
OF SHIT.



DER FÜHRER
THINKS HE'S
AN ART EXPERT.
OUR SHOW WILL BOWL
HIM OVER,
PERMANENTLY.

IN OUR BAG
WE HAVE HAND
GRENADES TO SEND
THOSE SWINE
TO HELL.



*Lost family members became resisters and freedom fighters,
and in the final series, superheroes.*

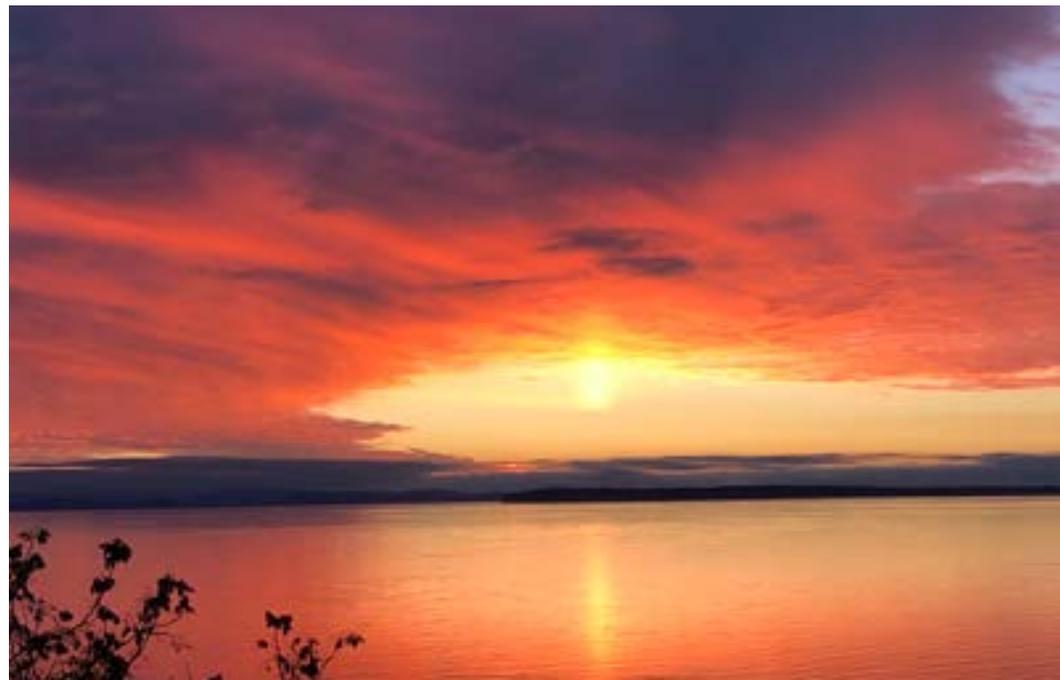
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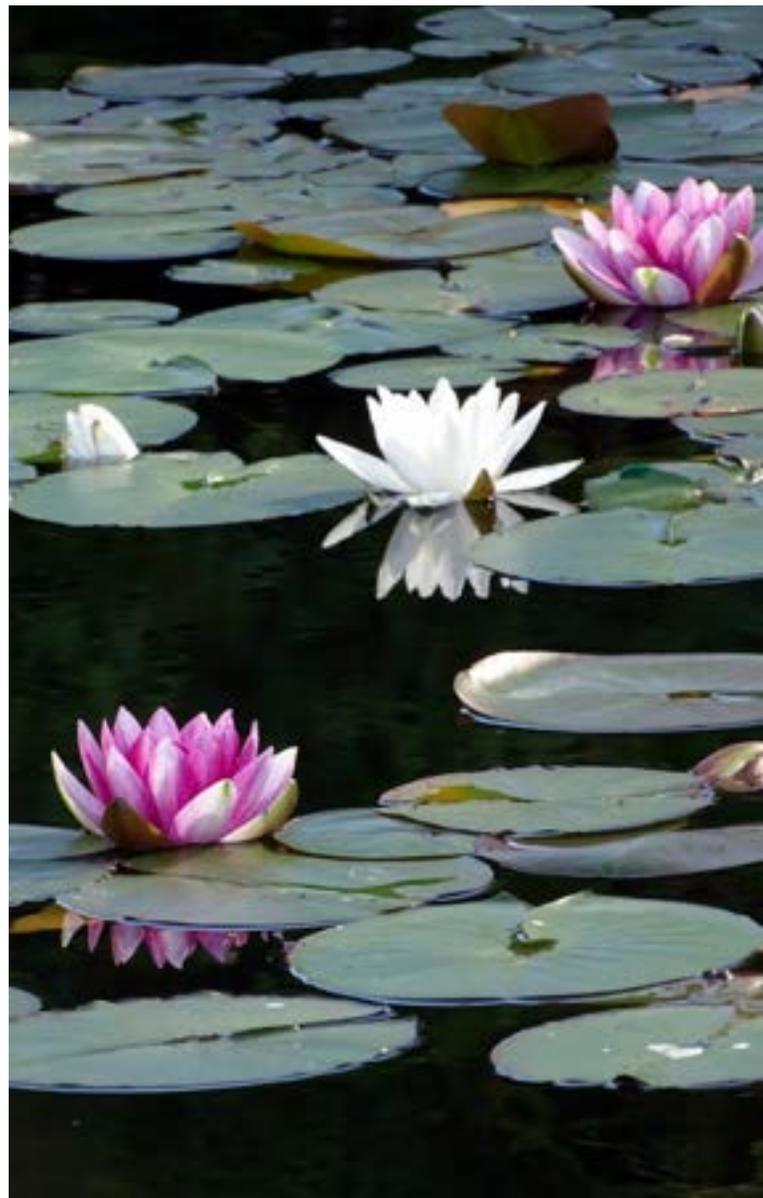
DR. HINDA AVERY was born and raised in Vancouver. She earned an interdisciplinary PhD at UBC in Urban Planning, Architecture, and Education. She developed curriculum for the Vancouver School Board and other BC boards. She taught art at Port Hardy Secondary School, and Teacher Education for Simon Fraser University's Professional Development Program. She is a painter and a comic book author. Her work can be viewed at hindaavery.com.

DR. ANGELA ANDERSEN holds a doctorate in architectural history and was a postdoctoral fellow in the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at MIT. She is a university instructor and an editor for academic publications, and fellow at the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria. She has worked in Holocaust and anti-racism education, and recently implemented an after-school programme for grades 1–5 students on architecture and architectural history.

Celebrating Summer

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BCRTA MEMBERS





Facing page: Clockwise from top left, Wagon by Bob York, Mo the Yellow-bellied Marmot by Karen Pacheco, Seaside by Gayle Greveling, White Rock Pier by Gayle Greveling.

All photos on this page by Penny Pitcher.

SENIOR HOSTELING IN IRELAND

Semi-Adventurous Travel for Seniors on a Budget

BY L. KAY KENNEDY

Do you love to travel but have limited funds? I don't have a full pension and am single. While I've been able to travel much more by teaching English overseas (twice in China) and saving travel points, hostelng, in particular, has been an excellent way to see the world on a budget.

In 2018, an email from Air Canada touted a "48-hour International Seat Sale." I jumped for a \$424 round trip to Dublin, including all taxes and fees. So did my two adult children, one with spouse. Online, I learned the excellent Globetrotters'

Backpacking Hostel, with its full Irish breakfasts and lovely walled garden--was unavailable for those dates.

Ashfield Hostel was more basic, but at a great location, south of the Liffey near Trinity College and museums, and a great price which included breakfast with yogurt, fruit, boiled eggs, toast, juice, and cereal. The receptionist, Connor, was friendly and helpful, always finding a lower bunk for me, even if he had to shift things a bit.

The next morning, we bussed down Dame Street to Dublina, an interactive museum of the history of Dublin from the Vikings through medieval times. The top floor held archaeology, and instead of speeding through the dry display I expected, we lingered over the very interesting interactive exhibits. Our admission included the beautiful Christ Church Cathedral, where we wandered and picked up mementos in the shop in the crypt.

A short walk brought us to the Brazen Head Pub (founded in 1195), in the medieval, part of Dublin, in time for lunch. A remnant of the old city wall is intact here. My son, always twice as fast as the rest of us, had already visited the library and Dublin Castle before he met up with us.



The Brazen Head Pub, since 1195. Photo by iStock/Getty.



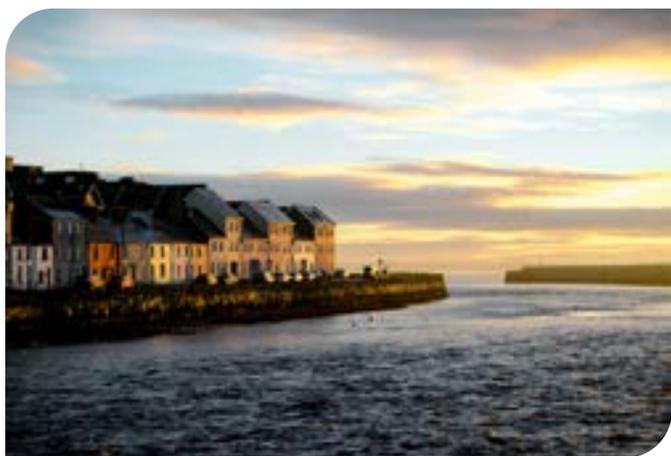
Dublin. Photo by iStock/Getty.

The next day we walked along Grafton Street and visited the Georgian “mall” and several of the famous pubs listed in my guide and in Joyce’s *Ulysses*, stopping for a hot whiskey for the cold I’d brought with me from Canada. Strictly medicinal, of course, and tasty. The hostel was next door to a bookstore with a very nice coffee shop above, and we had dinner and beer at the excellent Doyle’s Pub

right across the street. There was food shopping nearby when wanted, and the bus from the airport stopped in front of the hostel. There are many good hostels in Dublin, though I’d recommend avoiding the very lively Temple Bar area unless you like raucous parties.

My daughter and her husband preferred to rent their own car and stay in B & B’s or small hotels, rather than the hostels my son and I had chosen. Besides, I’d been to the Dublin Writers’ Museum, as well as several others, so my son and I picked up our rental car at the airport and headed north to the Antrim Coast and Giant’s Causeway early the next morning.

The driving rain and the map finder, which kept trying to direct us to the Isle of Man, led to us getting lost a number of times. That and stopping for a late lunch at a friend’s in Lurgan (I’d met them on a teaching exchange to Scotland) meant that we came into Port Stewart late. Supposed to meet up with my daughter and her husband for dinner, we’d missed them. The host was incredibly helpful,



Galway Harbour. Photo by iStock/Getty.



Aran Island of Inishmore. Photo by iStock/Getty.

phoning every B & B around until he located them, and buying us a beer to go with our fresh fish dinner, reputed to be the best on the Antrim Coast.

Due to my lingering cold, the nighttime, and the still-driving rain, finding the hostel in Portrush was difficult, but once we got there, Rick's Causeway Hostel was exceptionally helpful. We were given a private room with a skylight and bath for only 14 euros each.

The following day we toured the Giants' Causeway, the Information Centre, and Bushmill's Distillery, and came back to a warming peat fire and a movie in the common room. We were the only guests that night. The next day I decided to rest up and rid myself of the cold for good. My son walked in the sun along the promenade of stores fronting the beautiful white sand beach, which had made this town a popular holiday spot in the last century before inexpensive air trips to holidays on the continent became common.

On to Donegal, the most rugged of the counties, and my favourite. It is a hilly area of sheep and small villages, and very friendly people, 75% of whom speak Gaelic, the native Irish language, while most have English as well. The western and northern districts retain the label "Gaeeltacht", meaning they are majority Irish Gaelic speaking. We chose to go to the farthest west, to an amazing hostel in Malin More, near the folk village of Glencolumcille. The hostel had a beautiful wood



Stone cottages. Photo by iStock/Getty.



County Donegal. Photo by iStock/Getty.

interior, a warm fire, a comfortable, large kitchen, and an upstairs living area of sofas and games. Our room was huge, private at this time of year, and had a bath large enough for my 6'3" son. When I had booked online I'd agreed to 30 euros each per night with a cooked breakfast. When we checked in, I was told 25 euros per night, and when we checked out, we were charged 20 euros. If we'd stayed a week, they might have ended paying us.

The town of Donegal is small enough that the train does not come here. After a leisurely stop in to walk the town square, shop, have lunch, and visit ruins, we made it to Galway in time for rush hour traffic. Galway is a university city and known for a good time. It was midterm break, and like Fort Lauderdale, it's to Galway the young people come. My son enjoyed the pub crawls, the live music, and the pedestrian malls until 4 a.m. Me, not as much. Scantly clad girls wandered the hallway in tears over having lost their friend, their boyfriend, or crying because a friend got lucky but not them. It wasn't the Ireland in the brochures, though Simon said the bottles that had lined the mall at 4 a.m. were all picked by the next morning.

Next, we took the ferry to the Aran Island of Inishmore. This is the Ireland of the movies, with its white stone houses. People on the island have created leprechaun houses and leprechauns which are tucked away in the gardens and fields. It's an incredibly rocky land with hundreds of stone fences. Our guide to the ancient iron-age fort lived on Inishmore. He told us the fences were made when the land was cleared of stones long ago, but did double duty as pens for sheep and lambs.

THE HOSTEL EXPERIENCE - IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU?

I've been using hostels since my first trip to Europe in 1969. I have a lifetime membership with Hosteling International, whose hostels tend to be more family-oriented. Anyone can stay, but a membership gets you a slightly better rate. There are many fine independent hostels, but some can be quite raucous.

Hostels work best for people who like people, and who are willing to share bathrooms, sleep in a room with others, and be flexible. They are less costly than B&B's or hotels, especially for singles, and great places to meet people of all ages from everywhere. You might get into discussions with a student from a small town in Denmark or Nigeria, eat barbecued kangaroo on a hostel rooftop in Sydney, stay in a haunted castle in Scotland, have a free sauna in Helsinki, or find short-term travel partners. Most hostels have supplied kitchens, though a wonderful, welcoming hostel in Shanghai with western style bathrooms and a delightful bistro had only one microwave and one table. Most hostels have brochures and maps of local sights, some offer tours of museums, pub crawls, and movie nights, as well as walks, and all offer friendly advice and suggestions on cafes, directions, and transport.

LINKS

Hosteling International: hihostels.com
Hosteling International Canada: hihostels.ca



Below the Rock of Cashel with my son, daughter, and son-in-law.

The town of Galway is totally walkable with a car-free centre, pubs with live music, buskers, museums, and a Saturday market. It is the gateway to the west, at the mouth of the river, and has seafood and good eats in every pub, washed down with Guinness or some other tasty ale at every meal.

Leaving the third morning for the south, we made a long, leisurely stop at Bunratty Castle and folk village, a community of whitewashed cottages and a reconstruction of a village of the last century. While quiet in the winter, the village is more open for

business in the good weather season, when one may partake of a medieval banquet in the great hall of the castle and stay in one of the B & B's near or in the town of Limerick nearby.

Ireland is a very small country, 486 km. from tip to tip and 275 km at its widest, and much can be covered in one day's travel. We headed to Cashel, where we met up again with my daughter and son-in-law. Known for the Rock of Cashel, a castle on the hill built a thousand years ago for a rich landowner and later given to the Church to be a monastery, the Rock has a view of the countryside for miles around. We also visited a famine museum complete with 'bodies' of the dead and dying.

Our hostel here had a nice kitchen, coin laundry, friendly "WOOFers" (from Worldwide Work on Organic Farms) there to work, and a great common room with free computer and internet, and was next door to my daughter's B & B.

The southern part of Ireland made a contrast to the Northwest of Ireland. Verdant fields and many villages were a constant on the drive back to Dublin, compared to the often desolate, very rocky, hilly land of the Northwest, which is so much wilder. It was the Northwest drawing me, and my son and I began planning our next visit: a drive along the Wild Atlantic Way. •

L. KAY KENNEDY is a BCRTA member who first discovered hostels in 1969. She has a bookshelf full of travel books.

“Hostels work best for people who like people and who are willing to share...”



Who Would Have KNOWN?



Who'd have known that after leaving teaching, I'd enter a phase of life that would be equally rewarding?

After retiring, I volunteered for a couple of years with a speech and language group for people affected by stroke. That experience was so rewarding that I extended my volunteering into the gym environment and made many strong connections, while helping participants recover movement and strengthen muscles. Working with adults was indeed a different experience, with much to validate my existence.

Now, however, I'm back learning and laughing with children—three under three, to be exact. I love our technicolour family pictures, showing as they do our mosaic of diverse backgrounds. These little gems show me the innocence of living, the creativity of learning connected to the absolute joy in discovery.

How liberating is it to just push something off your tray if you don't feel like eating it? To put Cheerios

in chocolate chip cookie mix because you just love them? To fall on your back laughing when someone hides and then pops out? Imagine the thrill of figuring out how to walk down a step and not fall, the exhilaration of flying down the longest slide you've ever seen, or discovering how to change the tune on your crib mobile.

We can fail to remember these moments from our lives or with our own children; we were too busy second-guessing our parenting and balancing our workload and responsibilities to totally absorb ourselves in their world. As grandparents, though, we can experience such times through our wee ones' unfiltered emotions.

An afternoon spent with any of my grandchildren is to me like an episode of *America's Funniest Videos*—such a good feeling. •

FIONA GRAY is a BCRTA member, a retired Delta teacher, and a busy grandmother.

Zen and the Art of Being Stuck in Bangkok During the Pandemic with Your Husband Who Has Stage Four Cancer

BY VIVIAN MORRIS
CARTOONS BY DUNCAN MORRIS

I call my husband the Zen Master. Lest you get the idea that he's a former Buddhist monk let me set you straight; he's a meat and potatoes construction worker who wouldn't be caught dead in a yoga class. He is nevertheless a master of the Buddhist tenet "be here now". Very little ruffles him, not even a diagnosis of stage four prostate cancer two days before Christmas, 2019. "I feel fine" he said, and insisted we continue our plans to go cycling in Vietnam. I had taken a year off from my teaching job to travel. I had gone through breast cancer a year and a half before and Duncan is older than me and had recently retired. Why let another cancer diagnosis change our plans?

Me? I was born nervous. I have very healthy supports for my anxiety; I meditate, run, cycle, and do yoga, but being in the moment does not come naturally to me. His diagnosis had me worried. It was obvious from the speed with which he moved through the medical system that his prognosis was not for a long life. Duncan thought otherwise, and "why worry about it now?" He was convinced he had many years ahead of him. I hoped he was right but felt ripples of anxiety when I saw the look on health care professionals when he mentioned his PSA (a protein that can indicate the presence of prostate cancer). His number was "astronomically high" according to our GP.

Friends of ours came out of the woodwork to tell us about a new high tech, targeted radiation treatment that had put the husband, also secretly in stage four, into remission. We discovered that the treatment

was available in Vietnam's neighbour, Thailand. So, before we headed off cycling, we tucked a visit in to a Thai oncologist. The oncologist looked at Duncan's scan and expressed his surprise that Duncan was not in a wheelchair and in pain. I did not look at the scan. The envelope that contained it was left unopened for two months. Just holding it made my heart race.

Jet-lagged, in culture shock, and worried about the cancer, I often lay awake at night racked with anxiety. Duncan was oblivious of my sleeplessness. During our cycling trip, I meditated an hour each morning before our ride. But I would often drop back from him when cycling to weep.

We had two wonderful weeks in mid-February cycling in Vietnam against a backdrop of the emerging pandemic. Tourist crowds thinned and masks started to appear. Our tour guide grew despondent at a series of phone calls cancelling future trips. We flew back to Thailand for bloodwork and then to the beautiful tropical island of Koh Samet to spend ten days waiting for the first treatment.

The worldwide pandemic panic was slowly growing. Italian, British, and German tourists breakfasted glued to their phones with worried looks. We checked the news in the mornings then shut our devices off. I meditated and did yoga to ground myself. I managed every day to join Duncan in appreciating the moments we were living, but for me, it was work. We did not talk about cancer and called our time together "island time".

Two days after Duncan's first treatment (minimal side-effects), we sat in on our bed in the Josh Hotel deliberating over going to Bali, where we had hoped to wait out the four weeks until the next treatment. There were rumours of Thailand shutting the doors on travellers, but "in the know" friends thought we could probably go to Bali and back. We travelled to the airport, masked and in gloves, to try and change our tickets. This proved impossible, then the bank machine swallowed my credit card, then came a message from some British friends saying they were being kicked out of Vietnam. The world was shutting down; we could not risk being stuck in Bali.

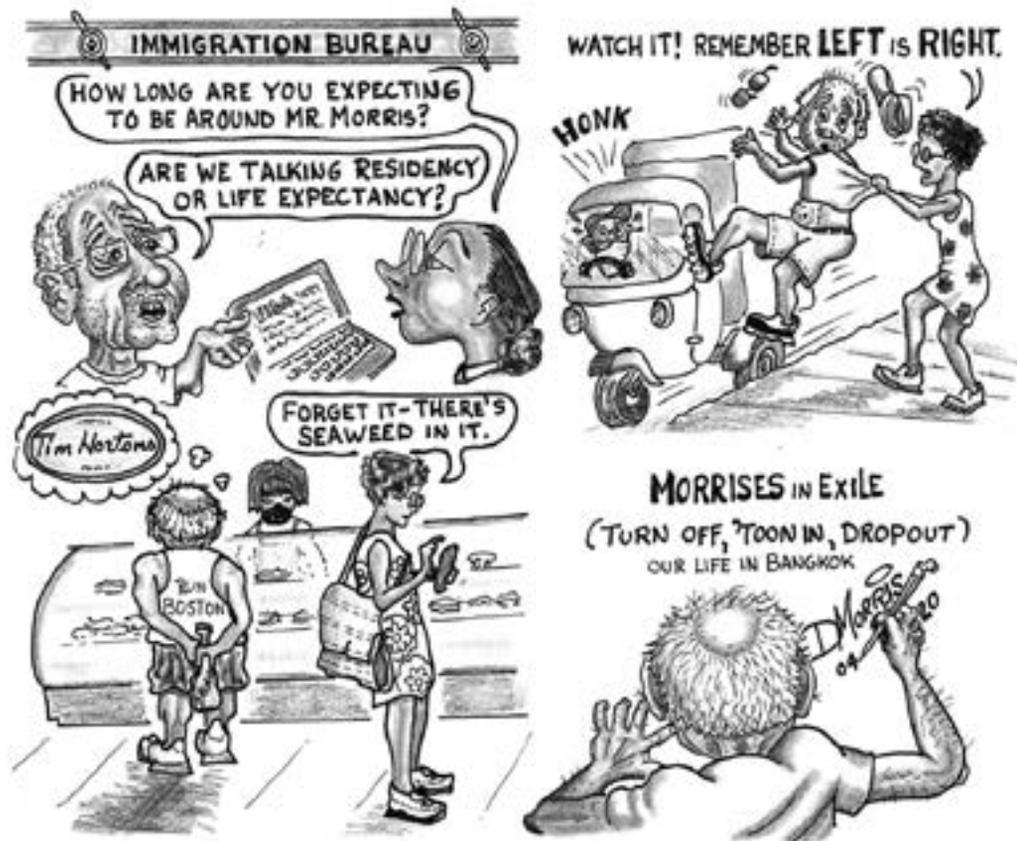
Even the Zen Master got flustered. We resorted to whiskey at four o'clock to calm us. Duncan quickly recovered; I was meditating at three in the morning. Calm returned only to be disturbed the next day as we joined hundreds of masked tourists trying to renew their visas at a government office. We were very aware the virus could be in the room so were tense and vigilant.

Back to Koh Samet we went, this time with our British friends following closely behind. Tracey

and Mike were on a two-year trip travelling the world. They both had itchy feet so I wondered how they would fare on the laid-back island, with no mountains to climb or passes to hike. By now the world was in full-scale lockdown and panic. Worried travellers hovered over the breakfast buffet. Our friends back home messaged that we were crazy to eat at a buffet! They were busy washing down groceries and updating their wills. I upped my yoga and meditation time and ran in the mornings to join him in the present moment, because Duncan was enjoying every minute of this drama.

We had tea with Tracey and Mike every afternoon before spending the evening endlessly talking about the pandemic and life back home. They planned on moving on in a week as it did feel like the panic had calmed down and lockdown protocols were in place. Ten days after arriving on the island we got a panicky message to get off the island as the provincial borders were shutting down. We packed up and high-tailed it back to Bangkok within an hour. The Brits would spend two and a half months stuck on the island, one of a couple of dozen tourists that stayed; they are currently camping and hiking in Iceland; the only country open to them.





Our contacts helped us secure a beautiful apartment to hunker down in. We spent several days waiting in the Josh Hotel, where we were two of the three guests, among a nervous staff that outnumbered us ten to one. Duncan, of course, was in the moment and worried about neither the pandemic nor his cancer. Ironically the pandemic had a calming influence on me. The crazier it got the calmer I got. Every morning I started the day with an hour's meditation. When I meditated now, I felt connected to the whole world. My meditations often did not have the crazy monkey mind that tests so many meditators. There was a sea of calm to bathe in.

Over the next two months, we settled into an apartment life that was interspersed with trips to the hospital. The world was in lockdown and so were we. Every day we went running, then came back to the apartment. Duncan, an artist, worked on his political cartoons and documented the non-cancer parts of our trip in cartoons for the local paper and his Facebook page. I did yoga and read. We worked on puzzles in the evening and watched Netflix, like the rest of the world. On the weekends we cycled around closed temples. A pointed reminder to be in the present moment, huge Buddha statues were everywhere.

“THE CRAZIER IT GOT THE CALMER I GOT.”

I was calm for most of these two months, though after worrisome hospital visits the calmness only came after a run and yoga. Most of the time, I joined Duncan in “being here now” but, as always, it took a lot of hard work. The Zen Master was just there naturally. While it could be annoying if Duncan missed appointments, something he is famous for when he is “in the moment”, his state of calm, calmed me.

After Duncan’s third treatment we got the joyful news there was no cancer to be seen in a scan. We stayed three more weeks. Thailand was opening up so we could at last visit a few places. We cycled further afield and ate in wonderful restaurants (with masked servers and Plexiglas dividers). Travelling home through deserted airports, stewardesses served us in hazmat suits, wearing shields and masks. We felt like we were in a Margaret Atwood novel.

Home now and back teaching for my last year, the daily meditation continues. The pandemic also continues so there are still anxieties to deal with. I can’t honestly say I am calm all the time. I have the tools to deal with what lies ahead, though. Life is uncertain. We both deal with that uncertainty by being Zen; it’s just a lot more work for me than for Duncan.

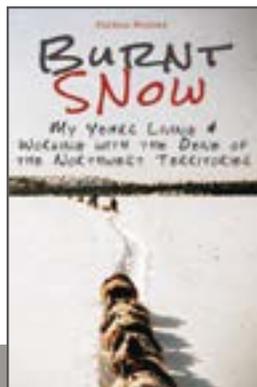
As for our relationship after this trip and 45 years of marriage? Well, there’s nothing like the threat of death and a world-wide crisis to bring you together! We are like newlyweds. We hold hands and kiss. Perhaps surprisingly, it turns out our different styles of coping through the stress of the cancer and the pandemic helped us nourish and renew our marriage. •

VIVIAN MORRIS is a new BCRTA member who received her first PostScript in the spring and was published in the summer. Welcome, Vivian!



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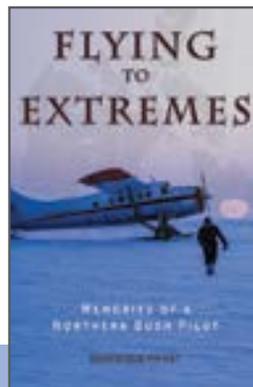
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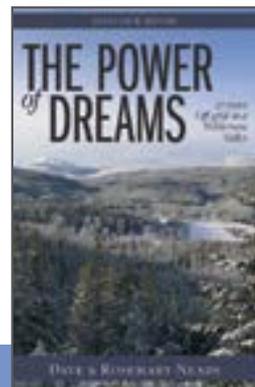
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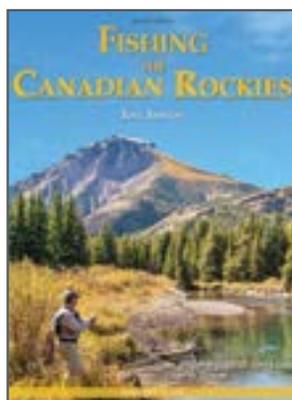
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THE MILLION DOLLAR GIFT

One of the most comforting activities of my life is to be immersed in stories that have me travel the world through the magic of words by a transporting author. That is my “Million Dollar Gift”.

My father began my journey when he started reading the Golden Book Stories with their amazing illustrations to me shortly after I was born. My Aunt Irene gifted me with all of her girl adventure-themed stories from her childhood—*Nancy Drew* and *Girls’ Story Omnibus* books—when I was seven. As an early teenager, my big adventure was going to the Public Library near my home in Renfrew Heights every Saturday to gather new reads. As an older teen, I folded a towel against the bottom of my bedroom door to hide my long-burning light while everyone else was busy sawing logs in the bedrooms that surrounded me.

I no longer read with a hidden light in my bedroom but enjoy the comfort of a wonderful chair as I turn the pages of a great story. I love the way words move across a page as they allow me to visit wherever a story is taking me into the early hours of the morning. That is my quality “down time”.

I now have an e-reader that my husband gave me after I carried three hardcover books while flying down from Smithers for my first BCRTA AGM in Richmond. That gift has also significantly reduced the weight above our bed in our travel rig when we’ve taken our multiple road trips around Canada.

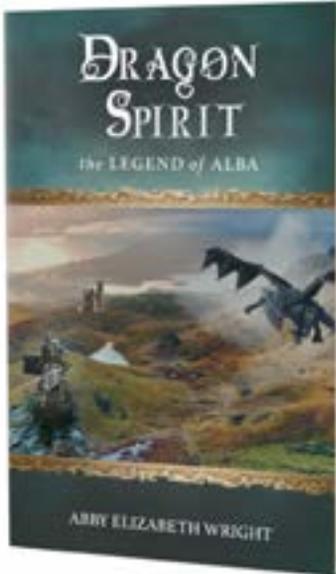
Not a day goes by without my nose poked into a good story. An e-reader does not have the magic of paper but it still allows me to read a good and often great story late into the evening. Rarely do I buy a paper book anymore, though sometimes I still enjoy holding one in my hands and turning the pages in what is now a special and amazing treat.

A good read has been my saviour through the many experiences we have all been exposed to on a daily basis during the COVID pandemic. Being able to read is a true gift, one we should always encourage, knowing as we do that everyone needs a gift more valuable than even a million dollars, perhaps than all the money in the world. •

ELAINE THOMPSON is a BCRTA Director for the Northern Zone and President of the Bulkley Valley Retire Teachers Association.

Do you use an e-reader? How does it compare to a “real” book?
Write and let us know what you have been reading: postscript@bcrt.ca

books OF NOTE



Dragon Spirit: The Legend of Alba

by Abby Elizabeth Wright

A classic tale that brings together Kings and Queens, Elves and trolls, an evil wizard and a fire breathing dragon. King Jaimie, ruler of Alba knows that, in uncertain times he must prepare for the possibility of his own death. He searches the kingdom for a brave young knight to be the Lord Protector, not only of the land but as guardian of the young princess. Enter handsome young Robert Kennedy.

The most dangerous enemy is Queen Penelope, a distant cousin who rules the land to the south. She is aided by her chief supporter, the evil Arcand, master of the dark arts and totally devoted to his queen. Together, they plot the murder of Jaimie, and shortly after the curse that turns John Robert from the protector to the destroyer of the kingdom of Alba.

Available at Amazon as e-book or in print and at Mosaic Books, Kelowna.

11,000 Days by Hugh Greer

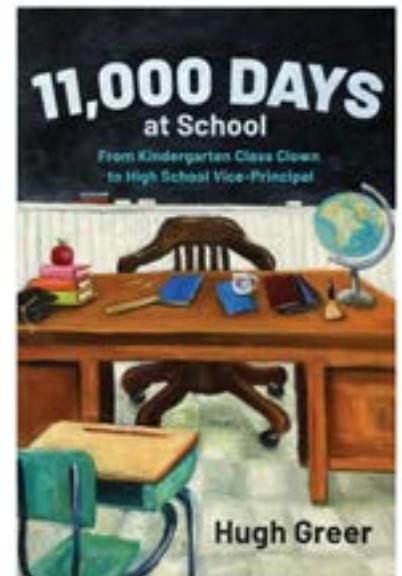
Hugh Greer never met his paternal grandfather and by the time he was 14 years old his remaining three grandparents had passed away. He spent years wishing he had known more about his grandparents, so at age 69 he decided to write a small memoir for his two grandsons.

11,000 Days spans 53 years of Greer's life, from his student days attending kindergarten in the 1950's to his retirement as a high school vice principal in 2009. His memoir recounts Greer's comical, teachable, tragic and unforgettable experiences as a student in the Burnaby School District and educator in the Vancouver School District.

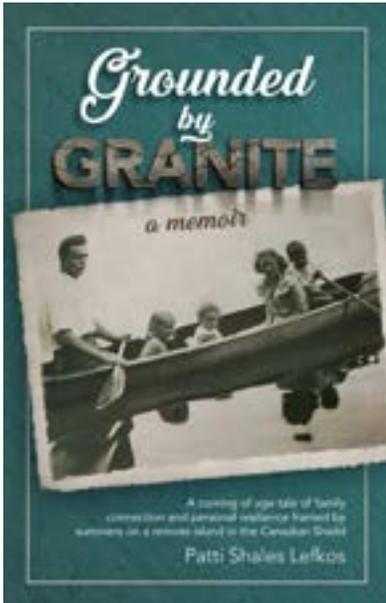
11,000 Days at School: From Class Clown to High School Vice Principal is an illuminating and entertaining journey through the evolution of education in British Columbia.

Available soon via your local bookstore, Indigo-Chapters or Amazon.ca

Author website: hughgreerauthor.com



books OF NOTE



Grounded by Granite by Patti Shales Lefkos

Grounded by Granite is a coming of age tale of family connection and personal resilience framed by summers on a remote island in the Canadian Shield by Patti Shales Lefkos, award winning author of *Nepal One Day at a Time: One woman's quest to teach, trek and build a school in the remote Himalaya*.

On Loon Island, a granite mound in a pristine lake near Frontenac Provincial Park in the Ontario Canadian Shield, post-war summer days for Patti and her siblings overflowed with swimming, fishing and hunting for snapping turtles. Life seemed perfect until a shocking letter from the Department of Lands and Forests questioned their ownership of the land.

"The sense of place and family is spot on. She brings cottage life in the '50s to life and deftly handles generational change in the 2020s with compassion and humour."

Roy MacGregor – Author of *The Great Escape*

Available from Amazon in print and ebook.

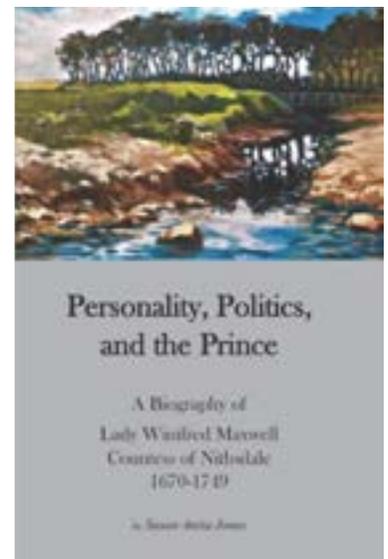
To ensure a larger portion of profit goes to children in Nepal, purchase your print copy directly from the author at pattilefkos@shaw.ca

Personality, Politics, and the Prince by Susan Anita Jones

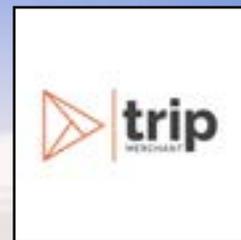
A tale of love and courage depicting the incredible story of Winifred Maxwell Countess of Nithsdale. Author Susan Anita Jones stumbled across Lady Winifred on a trip to Scotland in 2018. Further research and writing ensued with trips to Scotland and the continent to trace Winifred's life and footsteps while in exile.

Intrigue and harrowing excapes defined Lady Winifred's life as a Jacobite supporter. How did she rescue her husband, the Earl, in 1715? How did she come to rescue Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1746 after the Battle of Culloden? Using theories of the subconscious, the biography creates a vivid portrait of lives inspired by loyalty and the determination to survive. An astounding woman, Lady Winifred truly shaped the course of history.

Author website: www.susananitajones.com



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- the editing process and types of editing
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- overcoming hesitation and self-doubt

All BCRTA members with an interest in writing are welcome to attend!

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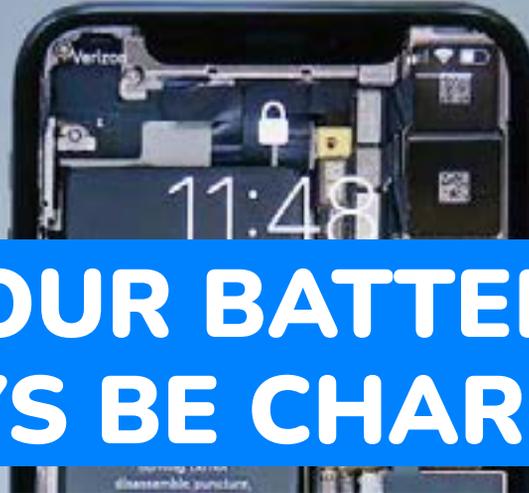
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MAY YOUR BATTERY ALWAYS BE CHARGED

Learning how to care for your mobile device battery is the key to extending its life. Here are some tips scientifically proven to do just that.

Modern mobile devices use lithium-ion rechargeable batteries made of cutting-edge materials and impressive chemistry. They weigh less, last longer, and charge more efficiently than the rechargeables we used way back in the dark ages of the 1990s.

But, like all rechargeables, lithium-ion batteries are consumable products. That means they have a limited lifespan. As these batteries age, they can't hold a charge for as long.

You have probably noticed an older smartphone doesn't hold its charge as it did when brand new. Or you have an old device that says the battery is 90% charged, and an hour later, it's almost dead. This sounds like normal behaviour for an older lithium-ion battery. If your battery is new, contact the device manufacturer.

Battery capacity may decline with age, but there are things you can do to extend your battery's useful life. What matters most with lithium-ion batteries is how they are charged. That means adopting good charging habits and taking care with battery storage.

#1 PARTIAL CHARGING IS SMART

It's a myth that you need to discharge and recharge your battery to erase its memory. This couldn't be more wrong and is a very bad plan when caring for modern mobile devices with lithium-ion batteries.

#2 DON'T LEAVE DEVICE POWERED OFF FOR EXTENDED PERIODS

Try not to turn off your mobile device for weeks and months. Daily use keeps the electrons in the battery active, extending its lifespan.

#3 DON'T CHARGE TO 100%

Avoid charging your mobile device to 100%. Batteries age faster if they're always plugged in. Small recharges are better than a full charge. 50% to 80% is your sweet spot – stop charging when at about 80% charged.

#4 LET BATTERY DIE MONTHLY

Once a month, let the battery die. This helps it recalibrate and makes your 'estimated battery time remaining' reading more accurate.

#5 KEEP IT COMFORTABLE

Heat is the enemy of a long battery life. Between 6° to 22° C (62° to 72° F) is the comfort zone. Ambient temperatures higher than 35° C (95° F) can permanently damage your battery. So no leaving your device in a hot car or baking on the beach.

#6 AVOID A PARASITIC LOAD

A parasitic load occurs when the battery is being significantly drained while it is being charged. This happens when you watch a video while charging. Try to avoid doing this. Charge your battery first, then use it.

#7 TURN OFF OR LET DEVICE SLEEP WHILE CHARGING

Let your mobile device sleep while charging. But your device will still charge when it is turned off. At Gluu, we put our devices to sleep while charging to easily keep an eye on how much charge the battery has.

#8 UPDATE OPERATING SYSTEM

Operating system updates often include advanced energy-saving features. Another reason to make sure your operating system (OS) is always updated.

#9 REMOVE CERTAIN CASES DURING CHARGING

Certain case styles may generate excess heat. Heat can damage your battery. If your device is hot when you charge it, take it out of its case before charging it again (and maybe consider a new case).

#10 NO IDLE CHARGING

Charging overnight or leaving a device plugged in during the day is a common habit. But it's not recommended, and 'overcharging' isn't the problem — modern mobile devices are smarter than that. A steady charge to a full battery reduces its stability. It creates excess heat as the device tries to get rid of the charge it doesn't need. Heat is very bad for lithium-ion batteries. We covered this in Tip #3, but it's worth saying again — stop charging at around 80%.

#11 USE YOUR OFFICIAL CHARGER

The charger that came bundled with your mobile device is the best one to use. It uses best practices for your battery's general health. If you lose it, get an exact replacement.

Fun Facts

Lithium-ion Batteries

- A typical Lithium-ion smartphone battery retains 80% of its original capacity after 500 charge cycles. It can take many years to perform that number of charge cycles.
- Most 1-year mobile device warranties replace defective batteries.
- In 1912, American Gilbert Newton Lewis developed the storage technology we now know as lithium-ion batteries. He was nominated for the Nobel Prize in chemistry 41 times but never won.
- Most of the lithium on earth is found in briny, underground ponds in South America.

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DOCTOR, DO I REALLY NEED AN ANTIBIOTIC?



BY JANET CURRIE & JOHANNA TRIMBLE

WHAT IS ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

When antibiotics no longer work to kill bacteria, this is called antibiotic or antimicrobial resistance. This means that infections caused by certain types of bacteria can become difficult or impossible to treat with the antibiotics we have now. For example, there is growing evidence that urinary tract infections are becoming increasingly resistant to the antibiotics that, for generations, easily and quickly cured them. As another example, some types of tuberculosis have become resistant to antibiotics and are becoming deadlier, just like they were before antibiotics were discovered.

In Canada, over a quarter of bacterial infections are now resistant to antibiotics that once cured them¹. In 2018, experts estimated that 15 Canadians died every day as a direct result of antimicrobial resistance.¹ According to the World Health Organization, antimicrobial resistance is one of the ten most serious public health problems of our time.² Antimicrobial resistance has been made worse because of a decline in the development of new antibiotics over the past decades, especially those that target the most resistant bacteria.

Antibiotics are drugs that kill bacteria. Antibiotics do not work on viruses, such as COVID-19, nor do they work on fungi such as athlete's foot.

WHY SHOULD OLDER CANADIANS BE CONCERNED ABOUT ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE?

Canadians aged 60 and over are prescribed antibiotics 1.5 times more often than any other age group.³ Older people may have weaker immune systems, making them more vulnerable to bacterial infections. Furthermore, older Canadians living in long-term care or assisted living facilities or who are admitted to hospitals may be more at risk of being exposed to “superbugs” like *C. difficile*. *C. difficile* can cause a life threatening diarrheal illness, especially among those who have compromised immune systems or who have recently used antibiotics. *C. difficile* is now resistant to most antibiotics.

WHAT CAUSES ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE?

• USING ANTIBIOTICS WHEN THEY ARE NOT NEEDED OR DON'T WORK

Antibiotics are often prescribed to treat illnesses not caused by bacteria. Colds and flu are caused by viruses and cannot be cured by antibiotics. Another example is when a lab test shows bacteria in the urine but there are no physical symptoms of a urinary tract infection, which is common in older adults. Giving antibiotics in this case can lead to overuse and antibiotic resistance.

continued...

• OVERUSING BROAD SPECTRUM ANTIBIOTICS

Broad-spectrum antibiotics are a type of antibiotic that kill many types of bacteria as opposed to only the specific bacteria causing the illness. For example, the overuse of broad-spectrum fluoroquinolone antibiotics (drugs whose names end in “floxacin”, such as ciprofloxacin or Cipro®) contributes to antimicrobial resistance. Not to mention, fluoroquinolones have a history of harmful side effects.⁴ Narrow-spectrum antibiotics, which focus on the specific bacteria causing the infection, should be used where possible. Sometimes, tests are needed to determine the type of bacteria involved.

• NOT USING ANTIBIOTICS AS PRESCRIBED

It is important to only use antibiotics that are prescribed for you and to take the dose as prescribed, even if the infection seems to be gone before the treatment is finished.

• GLOBAL, POORLY REGULATED ANTIBIOTIC USE

Antibiotics are overused in agriculture as well as seafood and meat production. In some countries, they are available without a prescription, leading to overuse and contributing to resistance. Residue from human and animal antibiotic use contaminates our soil and water, another cause of antibiotic resistance.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP REDUCE ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE?

DON'T

- ✗ Do not share or use leftover antibiotics.
- ✗ Do not demand an antibiotic if your doctor, nurse, dentist or pharmacist says you don't need one.

DO

- ✓ Ask your doctor, nurse, dentist or pharmacist, “Do I really need an antibiotic?”
- ✓ Follow your doctor, nurse, dentist or pharmacist's advice if you are prescribed antibiotics.
- ✓ Take all of the antibiotics your doctor has prescribed even if you feel better before you are finished.
- ✓ Avoid infections from bacteria:
- ✓ Wash your hands regularly, especially after you use the bathroom and before eating.
- ✓ Avoid close contact with sick people.
- ✓ Keep your vaccines up to date.
- ✓ Spread the word about the dangers of antibiotic resistance and how we must use antibiotics more wisely. •

Janet Currie is past co-chair of the Canadian Women's Health Network and was a two-term member of Health Canada's Expert Advisory Committee on the Vigilance of Health Products. She is completing a Ph.D. on medication safety and off-label prescribing at UBC. *Johanna Trimble* is a patient safety advocate and member of the BC Patient Voices Network. She is a member of the Geriatrics and Palliative Care Subcommittee of the Council on Health Promotion for Doctors of BC. Content reprinted with permission of *DeprescribingNetwork.ca*

SOURCES

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³ Public Health Agency of Canada. (2018, April 3). Prescribe antibiotics wisely (Clinical points). Government of Canada. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/drugs-health-products/prescribe-antibiotics-wisely.html>

⁴ Health Canada. (2017, January 23). Summary Safety Review - Fluoroquinolones - Assessing the potential risk of persistent and disabling side effects. Government of Canada. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/medeffect-canada/safety-reviews/summary-safety-review-fluoroquinolones-assessing-potential-risk-persistent-disabling-effects.html>



Anticipation

Have you been just a bit “antsy” these last few months waiting for the “All-Clear”? I most certainly have, but not likely for the same reasons. Yes, mine involve getting to see old friends and acquaintances, and yes, I’ll get to leave the house. But no, it’s not to take a cruise to some warm clime, and no, it’s not to go out dancing until the wee hours of the morning, although that would be a treat.

My enthusiasm is to re-establish connections with the people who play music in “my” concert band. As with so many others, many kinds of fun drained out of our existence as we were told, and rightfully so, that we were to be kind, be calm, and be safe. That meant, to a greater or lesser degree, stay away from all but close family, maintain yourself in a cocoon so as not to let the virus get in, and once available, get vaccinated three separate times. But now the time has truly come; I can rejoin the others who have prevailed through it all, to gather together simply to have a band rehearsal and try to find that wonderful balance of harmony and synchronicity that we so obliviously enjoyed two years ago.

Back in December, a small group of the band met, appropriately socially distanced, to discuss the possibility of resuming rehearsals in early January, but it just seemed a bit too early. Our age demographic were still experiencing significantly high death tolls with high hospital and ICU occupancy rates. So we put it off, but at least now we were enthusiastically certain that we would resume our music-making. The knowledge that we all anticipated getting back together was so encouraging; I just needed to “hang-in-there” a bit longer and to begin practising to get my

embouchure back into shape. Both were agonizing but the future was looking so much more positive.

The email finally came in late February letting me know that patience and perseverance had finally won the day. We were going to meet the next Friday afternoon for our first rehearsal together. What would it look like, how many would show up, who would no longer be able to play with us, what songs or charts could we still play, would any new musicians come onboard and, most importantly, what would we sound like after two years of silence?

Re-connecting with those we hadn’t seen in all those months was fantastic. Considering everything—we weren’t all present and the instrumentation was uneven—we sounded surprisingly good!

At the end of Friday’s rehearsal, the contentment and re-affirmation in the room were palpable—people smiling as they put their instruments away, laughter filtering through the various conversations, each one anticipating getting back together again next week to just have some fun making music.

I hope you, too, have had the gift of anticipation around re-establishing an activity excluded by the pandemic. Perhaps you have already been able to reconnect with other people with like-minded interests. Our next opportunity to reconnect will happen when Branch members can gather together for a meeting or, even better, a lunch to celebrate the arrival of spring. •

PAT THIESEN is a BCRTA Director, Chair of the Well-being Committee, and 2nd trumpet in the “Loades of Music Daytime Concert Band” of Delta, BC.

CLASSIFIEDS

ELDER DOG

ElderDog Canada supports seniors in the care of canine companions. Volunteers help with dog care activities like dog walking, basic grooming, feeding, administering medication, and transportation to and from the vet or groomer. We provide foster care when a senior is temporarily unable to care for their dog and re-homing. Vancouver Pawd provides services to the Lower Mainland at no charge.

Phone 1.855.336.4226 or visit www.elderdog.ca

PRODUCTS

Anyone that uses a microwave needs a FingerSaver™.

Have you ever burned your fingers when taking a hot bowl of soup/chili/porridge out of the microwave?

It will never happen again if you use a FingerSaver, a fabric bowl that holds your food. It also acts as a tea-cozy to keep the food warm at the table.

Visit www.spotnots.com and see the FingerSaver information after the underwear information.

CRRTA PUBLICATION

To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the BCRTA, the Campbell River RTA is publishing a photo journal of the early School District 72 schools (1893-1993). Included are photos, anecdotes from the first teachers and students and stories of our own retired teachers, elders of the three native reserves and their early schools.

The history encompasses the Discovery Islands, Phillips Arm, Sayward, Oyster River, Strathcona Park and Campbell River. Fifty contributors with 100 pictures from the archives of the Campbell River Museum, and the Cortes Island Museum.

To purchase contact Bonni Roset, CRRTA President: crrtapresident@gmail.com

NUTRITION BOOK

BCRTA CONFERENCE SPEAKER James McCormack has released his book "The Nutrition Proposition". Available as a paperback or Kindle e-book on Amazon, or visit nutritionproposition.com

upcoming events

WRITER'S WORKSHOP JUNE 22, VIA ZOOM

Register at bcrtc.ca/writers

BCRTA CONFERENCE SEPT 30

Keynote speakers:

Sue Lantz and Noel Bentley

BCRTA AGM OCT 1

CLASSIFIEDS

TRAVEL

DISCOVER CUBA WITH CUBA1TOURS

Once again, cuba1tours is offering the best guided tours to the most intriguing parts of Cuba with a personal touch and excellent local guides.

All tours operate through Square1travel of Courtenay, BC, a licensed travel agency. Check out all our tours for 2022/23 at www.cuba1tours.com

Contact Tom Robertson at: tom@cuba1tours.com or tomcr@shaw.ca or use the contact form on the website.

COHOUSING

Imagine... ALL who live in your new multigenerational, environmentally sensitive, apartment building in Sechelt, are not just your neighbours - they're your FRIENDS! Rent-then-purchase in The Coastal Village – A Community-Based Neighbourhood. <https://www.thecoastalvillage.ca>

ACCOMMODATION WANTED

Elementary teacher from Coquitlam, now living and teaching English in Italy, looking for accommodation in the Tri-Cities end of July through August. Two bedroom. Contact Janice janicegayleb@gmail.com

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

ACCOMMODATION OFFERED

Crete, Greece: Small family hotel. Studios and Villa right on a sandy swimming beach. 7k west of Chania, short drive to villages. Fully equipped kitchens, each unit sleeps 1 to 6 guests. Wine, olive oil and fresh fruit always available. Authentic Greek hospitality. 500€-1000€ per week. Contact mjtglenabbey@gmail.com

New Zealand November rental. \$1800. Subtropical Karikari Peninsula, Northland. Close to Bay of Islands, Cape Reinga. Historical villages, beautiful beaches and walking, nature lovers Paradise. Contact rosemarynelson46@gmail.com or phone 250 248 6516 for more information.

MUSIC TOUR

VANCOUVER OPERA GUILD ESCORTED TOUR
MILAN-PARMA-CATANIA-PALERMO
OCTOBER 12 – 24, 2022

- Verdi Festival, Parma (5 nights) with Verdi's Simon Boccanegra, Quattro Pezzi Sacri and more
- Catania, Sicily (3 nights) Italian Opera Arias in Taormina
- Palermo, Sicily (3 nights) with Verdi's Nabucco at Teatro Massimo
- Optional: Milan and Giordano's Fedora at La Scala
- Plus sightseeing tours to Cremona, Busseto, Bologna and Agrigento

Great Expeditions 604-257-2040 or 1-800-663-3364 or www.vancouveroperaguild.com for more information.

HELP WANTED

WANTED: Editor for Vancouver RTA Newsletter. The newsletter is published four times a year and covers members' news and events, contributions on a theme, reports and other items of interest to retirees. An honorarium is provided. If interested, contact vrtapresident.e@gmail.com. More details available on VRTA website <https://vrta.ca>

crossword

Cats & Scratches

By David Squance, Victoria

Send your compliments and quibbles to crossword@bcrrta.ca

ACROSS

1. Political unit
5. Supply with tools
10. "... a jug of wine, and _____"
14. Famous large cat from a movie
15. Health care worker
16. A very long time (pl.)
17. Middling; pleasant
18. Bob _____, American musician ("Ramblin', Gamblin' Man")
19. City in Alaska
20. Brand of capsules for treating acid reflux, etc.
21. Central American tree; suffix, originally diminutive
22. Moulded, formed
24. Well-known ginger cat
26. Man's name
27. "Life has its _____ and downs"
28. Section of Great Slave Lake
32. Woman's name
35. Money advance
37. Acronym for a report sent after you file income taxes
38. Month when you'll often receive a 37 across (Abbr.)
39. Type of verb (Abbr.)
40. Woman's name
41. Designation of the degree of clarity of a screen, with low or high (Abbr.)
42. Piece of cake, easy
43. "_____ the cat", cartoon from the 1920s
45. Sell drugs; accumulation of vehicles
48. Body of water
49. Coastal inlet, drowned river valley
50. Portion of the school year
55. Rift
58. Modern abbreviation used when you're hearing more than you want to
59. Starchy root
60. Ballet movement
61. _____ Flynn, actor
63. Lower levels of schooling (Abbr.)
64. Bring in, as wages
65. Fry lightly in a small amount of oil
66. Common grain

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20					21				22	23				
24				25					26					
			27					28				29	30	31
32	33	34				35	36					37		
38						39						40		
41					42					43	44			
45			46	47				48						
			49				50	51				52	53	54
55	56	57					58				59			
60					61	62					63			
64					65						66			
67					68						69			

67. Ogled
 68. Feminine suffix (pl.)
 69. Political org.
- ### DOWN
1. Make cloudy or confused
 2. Woolly animal
 3. Willow
 4. Avoiding mishap
 5. Follows
 6. Put down, as an uprising
 7. Encouraged strongly
 8. Suffix with moral or advert (English spelling)
 9. Fluffy, long-haired cat breed
 10. Renter
 11. Ring, circle of metal
 12. "This one is _____ _____" (2 wds.)
 13. No longer new
 23. Owns, is in possession of
 25. Beer type (Acronym)
 28. One of a family of famous Western outlaws or lawmen
 29. Overly picky, colloq.
 30. Rice-a-_____, packaged food mix
 31. Breed of cat with no or very short tail
 32. Role

33. One who copies or imitates
34. _____ major, prominent constellation
35. Short form of a man's name or a luxury car
36. Mouth or opening, plural form
42. Breed of cat with short hair, large ears and almond-shaped eyes
43. Charge for service
44. Of the part of Asia once termed the Orient
46. Close acquaintance, pal
47. International body that oversees ski racing (Acronym)
48. Reacts in a happy or pleased way
50. Walk in a very proud way
51. Overact
52. Short form of a woman's name
53. Upright; construct
54. One of a pair of star-crossed lovers
55. Graf _____, German battleship
56. Modeling medium
57. Take on, as an employee
62. Rodent

See the crossword solution at bcrrta.ca/crossword AFTER JULY 15

Sudoku

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

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

JULY 15, 2022

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

Crossword:

Janice Chmelyk, Peace River South
Sharon Chaikin, Surrey
Louise Meville, Burnaby

Sudoku:

Martine Wakefield, North Vancouver
John Newman, Nanaimo
Ross Pearce, Prince George

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News and links relevant to you.




 facebook.com/BCRTA
 twitter.com/bcrta1

SPRING 2022 CROSSWORD SOLUTION

1	C	2	L	3	O	4	U	5	T	6	C	7	O	8	L	9	T	10	A	11	S	12	T	13	A	
14	M	15	I	16	L	17	N	18	E	19	A	20	D	21	A	22	R	23	B	24	O	25	O	26	B	
27	D	28	E	29	I	30	S	31	M	32	P	33	I	34	S	35	A	36	O	37	L	38	L	39	A	
40	S	41	N	42	O	43	O	44	P	45	Y	46	E	47	S	48	I	49	V	50	O	51	L	52	T	
53	U	54	S	55	E	56	R	57	I	58	N	59	T	60	E	61	N	62	S	63	E	64	S	65	E	
66	C	67	H	68	O	69	P	70	L	71	E	72	V	73	E	74	E	75	S	76						
77	M	78	E	79	R	80	C	81	U	82	T	83	I	84	O	85	D	86	A	87	36	37	38	39	R	
88	A	89	R	90	G	91	O	92	T	93	N	94	I	95	P	96	R	97	O	98	99	O	100	S	T	
101	S	102	O	103	Y	104	N	105	U	106	T	107	C	108	A	109	S	110	S	111	E	112	T	113	T	E
114	R	115	O	116	B	117	E	118	R	119	T	120	S	121	H	122	E	123	S	124						
125	I	126	N	127	C	128	O	129	N	130	N	131	U	132	T	133	A	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	
142	N	143	O	144	U	145	N	146	O	147	L	148	D	149	Y	150	E	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	
159	S	160	I	161	R	162	I	163	E	164	L	165	O	166	N	167	T	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	
176	E	177	S	178	S	179	O	180	N	181	E	182	R	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	
195	T	196	E	197	E	198	N	199	D	200	R	201	A	202	W	203	R	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	

NOTICE OF 2022 AGM

77th Annual BCRTA Annual General Meeting (9:30am)
called for Saturday, October 1, 2022

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
1 Director (1 year only to complete a term) from outside LM and FV
2 Directors (2 yrs) from inside the Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley
1 Director (1 year only to complete a term) from inside the Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

20th Annual General Meeting of the RR Smith Memorial Fund Foundation

(9:00am) called for Saturday, October 1, 2022

RR Smith Positions for Election
8 Directors - 1 year terms

This meeting will be held in person AND online.

Location: Vancouver Airport Hilton Hotel, Richmond, BC. 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.bcrta.ca/connections

NOMINATION FORM FOR 2022-2023 BCRTA DIRECTOR POSITIONS (OCTOBER 1, 2022 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.bcrt.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@bcrt.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 submission 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:

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

- a. 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**
- b. 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**
- c. 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.bcrt.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 2023 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 1, 2022.

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 1, 2022. 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 2023 BCTF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOMINATION FORM

Must be in the hands of BCRTA staff by 5 p.m. on September 30, 2022.

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@bcrtc.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@bcrtc.ca

2022-2023 BCRTA COMMITTEES - APPLICATION FORM

DEADLINE for receipt of applications: October 1, 2022

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 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.

To learn more, see a description of BCRTA Committee activities and responsibilities www.bcrta.ca/committee-profiles

Members are expected to sit on one or two committees, as selected by the committee chairs. 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.

Obituaries

Location listed is the area given as "last taught"



Anderson, Alice	Surrey	Evans, Donna	Langley
Andrew, Peter	Vernon	Ginter, Carol	Prince George
Barlow, Roberta	Kamloops	Gosling, W.J. Bill	Powell River
Beaulac, Judy	Cranbrook	Harwood, Gail	Vancouver
Beinder, Leo	Sooke	Hillman, Sharon	Alberni
Blackaby, R. William	Richmond	Horner, Norna	North Shore
Buss, William	Trail	Hutchinson, Viola	Prince George
Campbell, V. Enid	Quesnel	Irvine, M. Linda	Nanaimo
Chapman, Alan	Creston	Isaacson, Anja	Greater Victoria
Cormons, Allan	Nanaimo	Keeping, C.S.	Cowichan Valley
Crawford, Patricia	Burnaby	Lall, Edward	Coquitlam
Crowe, Geoffrey	Vancouver	Lauscher, Ruth	Nanaimo
Demcheson, June	Surrey	Lucas, Joyce	Coquitlam
Duke, Suzanne	West Vancouver	Lynch, Charles Craig	Peace River North
Dyer, Lucille	Chilliwack	MacDonald, Norman	Langley
Easter, Cal	Vancouver	Marchand, Joseph	Kelowna
Elsdon, Gary	Coquitlam	Matthews, Jean	Peace River South

McColl, Barbara	Vancouver	Sheehan, Daniel	Vancouver
Moore, James	Cowichan Valley	Simmons, W. Bill	Burnaby
Neem, Rein	Surrey	Slinger, Ted	Burnaby
Nosella, Roy	Delta	Sommer, D. Bruce	Kitimat
Ojala, Carol	Greater Victoria	Steinhauer, Cheryl Rae	Delta
Pankratz, Frank	Nechako Lake	Street, G.Vivian	Chilliwack
Parson, Keith	Surrey	Swann, Sandra	Coquitlam
Paterson, Dorscie	Langley	Taylor, Thomas	Kimberley
Pearson, Doug	Shuswap	Thorne, Annabelle	Cowichan Valley
Popesku, Sorin	Peace River North	Vakenti, Lenora	Coquitlam
Powlik, Lynne	Langley	Ward, John	Cowichan Valley
Rhodes, Audrey	Howe Sound	Warkentin, Ben	Fernie
Richey, George	Sunshine Coast	Wright, Jacqueline	Delta
Schemmer, Lorne	North Shore	Young, M. Joan	Sooke
Scott, Stella	Vancouver		
Scott, Barry F.F.	Powell River		
Shamlock, Genevieve	Maple Ridge		



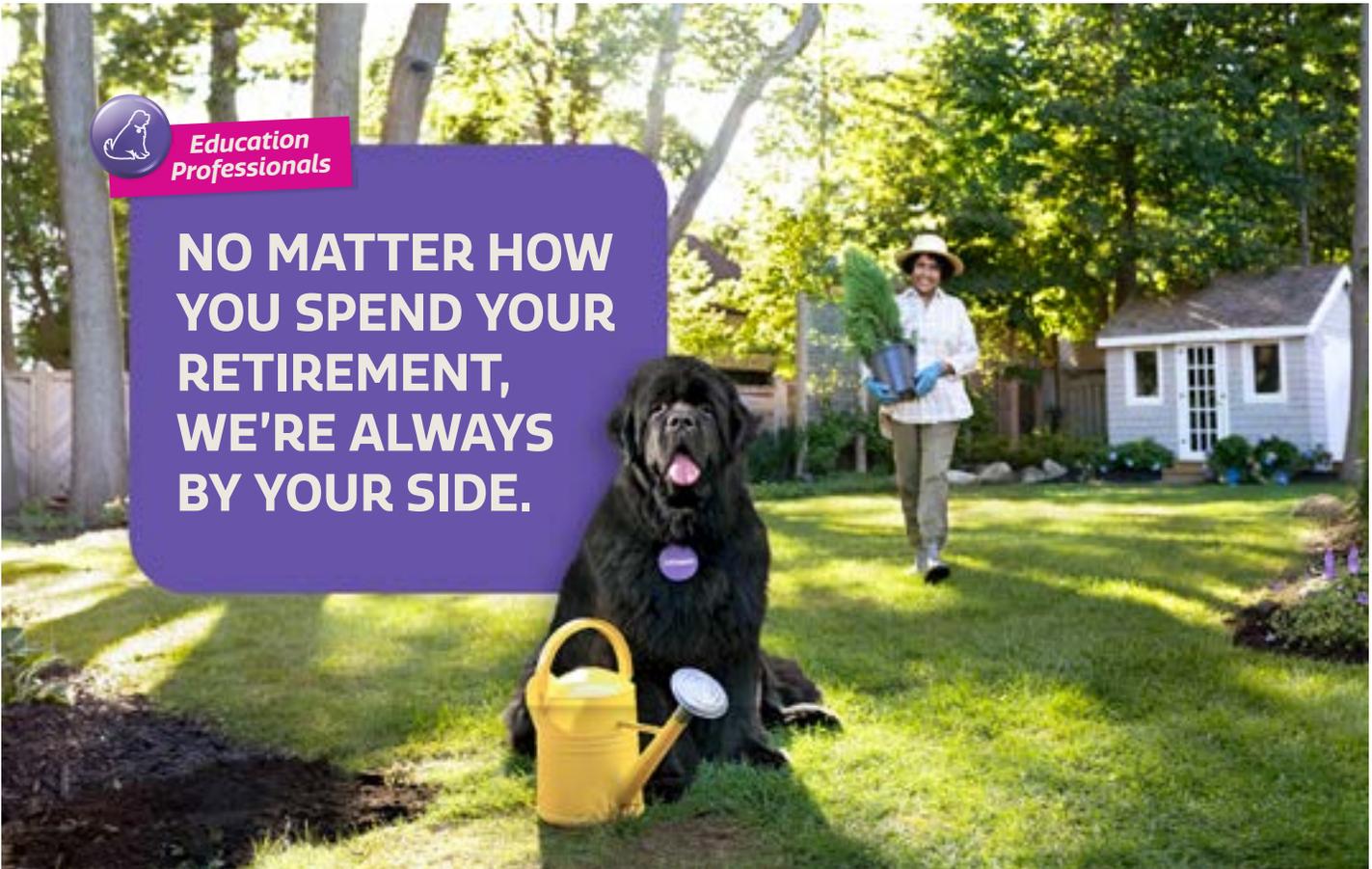
This year the R.R.Smith Board of Directors approved over \$47,000 in grants to the following organizations. Every cent of R. R. Smith membership fees collected were spent in funding these educational projects.

1. **DARE** Supplies and materials for RCMP anti-drug program in BC.
2. **Children's Care** To provide education and training for 3 Indian formerly enslaved children to continue their studies. The grant pays fees, supplies and books.
3. **Victoria-Taiama** Vocational scholarships and supplies to students in Sierra Leone to acquire marketable skills
4. **One Girl Can** Kenya: mentoring scholarship as well as tuition and supplies for girls
5. **Gibsons Marine Education Centre** Supplies and materials for programs for 12 local schools
6. **Tumaini Fund** Tanzania: student fees for several orphans to pursue A level qualifications
7. **Rwanda Prefer Society** Assistance to purchase one laptop per primary school
8. **Harambee** Support for two Kenyan students in arrears in their fees as a result of the pandemic
9. **Maria Orphanage** Bangladesh: 7 of the youngest children enrolled in school focussing on math, science and English plus a laptop to remain at the orphanage to assist with homework
10. **Families for Children** Instruments to augment the music program of the school. The students in Dhaka love to sing, dance and perform
11. **Wonderful World of Books** Books for 100 Qualicum preschoolers involved in a literacy program
12. **STEP International** Resources and library materials for 13 schools in Northern India
13. **Umoja** Scholastic material to support grade 7 math and science education in Uganda
14. **Innovative Communities - Instruments for Africa** Musical instruments and materials for music program in Mali
15. **Bright Beginnings** Surrey: fees and materials for financially challenged students to pursue further education



16. **Learning Buddies** British Columbia: to purchase zoom licences, reading materials and on-line subscriptions
17. **KEEF** Educational sponsorship of two students plus library books for students in Kenya
18. **Love of Africa** Tanzania: to fund bursaries for 10 students to take vocational courses in tailoring, masonry and heavy equipment repair
19. **ACCES** Kakamega Kenya: two post-secondary scholarships for students to pursue a full degree, diploma or trade certificates
20. **Guatemala Stove Project** Nutritional education project
21. **Art Book Club for Kids** Vancouver Art Gallery: materials and books
22. **Into All the World** Uganda: to fund supply of paper, books and other educational materials
23. **Innovative Communities** For the Love of Africa: Funds to purchase books, teacher guides and on-line subscriptions for Nashipay Maasai School in Tanzania. Bursaries include tuition and school uniforms
24. **Shiloh Place Orphanage** Congo: teaching equipment and supplies for a new self-funded classroom
25. **Learning for Humanity** Congo: tablets for each of the teachers in the school
26. **Love Guatemala** English books for students studying English language
27. **Canadian Harambee** Kenya/Tanzania: scholarships and school supplies

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