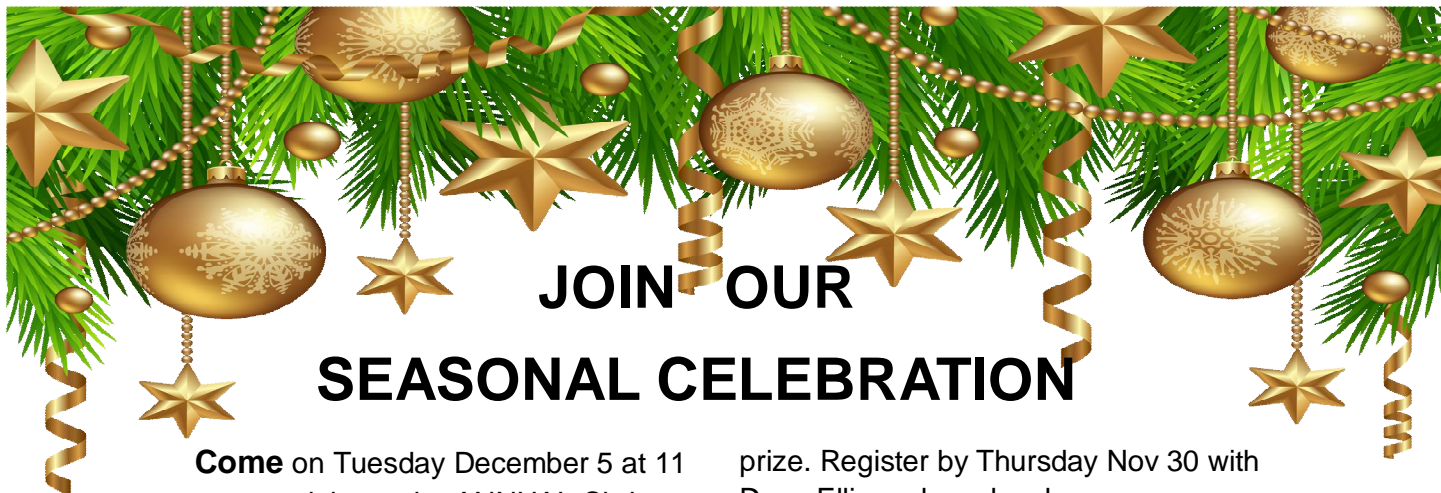


LOOKING FOR A GOOD BOOK TO READ OR GIVE AS A GIFT?

Inside are close to a dozen books your colleagues found engaging.

Vancouver Tabloid

Vancouver Retired Teachers' Association NOVEMBER 2023 Newsletter



JOIN OUR SEASONAL CELEBRATION

Come on Tuesday December 5 at 11 am to celebrate the ANNUAL Christmas Lunch in the cosy friendly atmosphere of the Hellenic Cultural Centre, 4500 Arbutus Street at Valley Drive.

Show your glamour side and wear some Christmas finery or bling or most outrageous winter sweater! A tasty three course turkey lunch will be served. There will be carol singing and a door

prize. Register by Thursday Nov 30 with Dave Ellis and pay by cheque or online—see BACK PAGE.

Cost is a minimum \$50 to replace our FOVRTA Scholarship Fund— but double this amount is also encouraged. Your contribution goes 100% to the scholarship fund. You will get a tax receipt for that amount by the end of February 2024.

DECEMBER LUNCHEON

TUESDAY DEC. 5—11 AM

Register by Thur. Nov. 30 and Pay \$50

PAY BY CHEQUE - Registration form ON BACK PAGE

Cheque to: Vancity Community Fund-RR Smith Foundation;

MEMO -Friends of VRTA

OR

PAY ONLINE to Scholarship fund -Friends of VRTA (details page 8) AND register with <vrtatreas@gmail.com>

***Minimum of \$50**

Mail to Dave Ellis, 2086 Newport Avenue,
Vancouver, BC. V5P 2H8

P:604 327-7734 or email <vrtatreas@gmail.com>

MENU: Appetizers -Traditional Greek, *TURKEY with all the trimmings— CAESAR SALAD, Surprise DESSERT *Non-Meat Alternative also available

INSIDE this issue...

Page 2 – President's Greetings/
VRTA Clubs/Contacts/ Calendar

Page 3—Welcome Back Lunch,
Photos

Page 4, 5—THEME Recent Book
recommendations

Page 6—BCRTA Confer. AGM Ed-
itorial

Page 7 —Live Stage Review/
Jokes/New Theme

Page 8 Members' News, Lunch
Form/Announcements

President's Greetings

With our hotter summer and milder fall it seems early to wish you winter greetings. We are trying to encourage participation in our VRTA in any interesting way. If you have any ideas of activities or events that would be of fun or informative to our group we'd love to hear about them. Ros Kellett put together a survey of suggested ideas at our September lunch. We have executive members willing to facilitate some of these activities. With the winter months coming it's good to be busy inside or outside. I do hope you will hear about some of these new suggestions from us in our Tabloid or from email notices..

Ali and I are always delighted to have new drivers (sometimes as spares) for the Poinsettia Project on Friday morning, Dec,1. Our Vancouver based members who are 85 years or older received very positive feedback from members and drivers for this worthwhile activity. If you can spare a couple of hours that morning and are interested please contact Ali Pollard or myself.

Denis Ottewell has sent out an email of COSCO Thursday workshops that are available online. We are looking into having some in person workshops at the Hellenic Centre during 2024. I listened to a very informative work-

shop "Stay on the Road" presented jointly by COSCO and ICBC. ICBC will send you a health status form to take to your doctor to complete before you turn 80 years old. ICBC then evaluates your health status and driving record to see if you need to take an in-person driving test. Most people with good medical reports from their doctor and a good driving history will not need to take this driving test. If you do need to take it, the instructors are helpful in giving you feedback while you are being tested. They are more "forgiving" than when you took your first driving test. You will be reevaluated when you turn 85,87, 89 and then at 2 year intervals.

I am really looking forward to enjoying the yummy turkey Christmas Lunch on Tuesday, December 5th at the Hellenic Cultural Centre. Singers from the VSB (now Friday Afternoon) choir will again serenade us with Christmas music followed by a sing-along. In the spirit of gifting this lunch is a fundraiser for the Friends of VRTA scholarship fund so please contribute generously.

BLESSINGS TO YOU ALL for 2024!

-Edie Wood

LEADERS for Activities

VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB: Diane Smith frandia@shaw.ca—3rd Wed at 2 pm
-*Contact vrta.president.e@gmail.com to start Second Book Club

STROLLERS: Norma Westrom normawestrom@hotmail.com—Wed 10:45 am

WALKERS: Margaret Yoshida margyoshi@gmail.com—Wed 10:00 am

Vancouver Tabloid

A publication of the Vancouver Branch of the British Columbia Retired Teachers' Association

#100, 550 West 6th Ave,
Vancouver, BC, V5Z 4P2

Executive Director

Tim Anderson (tim@bcrrta.ca)

Office Administrator

Kristi Josephson (kristi@bcrrta.ca)

Administrative Assistant

Laurie Boyd (laurie@bcrrta.ca)

WEBSITE: www.bcrrta.ca

VRTA EXECUTIVE 2023-24

President - Edie Wood

Vrtapresident.e@gmail.com
604 228-0830

Past Past President Winola Chu

First VP - Rosalind Kellett

Second VP - Lizette Pappas

Treasurer - Dave Ellis

604 327-7734

dellis7734@gmail.com

Secretary - Denis Ottewell

604 789-2758

dennyottewell@outlook.com

Temp. Editor-Tabloid - Ros

Kellett 604 873-0568

editortabloid@gmail.com

Assist. Ojassvi Jolly; Kate Scott

TABLOID e-Distribution—

Membership—

Vancouvertabloid@gmail.com

Members at Large

Karin Bernauer, Lee Green,
Suzie Mah, Barb Mikulec, Ali Pollard,
Les Rowe, Marilyn Rushton,
David H. Smith

Diane Smith, Norma Westrom

Volunteers

Ora Fraser, Lois Paterson, Monique Wong

WEBSITE: WWW.VRTA.CA

Calendar

**Please feel free to join us - *Notify
vrta.president.e@gmail.com*

Nov 20—BC Health Coalition Mtg

Dec. 5 Tue—December Lunch

Jan 8 Mon—10 AM Exec Mtg (TBC)

Mar 4 Mon Spring Fling Lunch—
Isobel Mackenzie—Snr Advocate

June 4 Tue AGM—(TBC)

NOTE: TBC = to be confirmed

WELCOME BACK LUNCH



Treasurer Dave Ellis and executive member Norma Westrom welcome registrants to the lunch.



Pat Parungao starts her talk acknowledging First Nations' land rights.

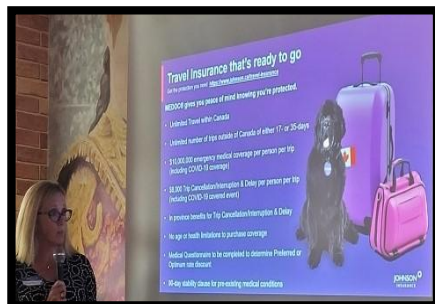


Pres. Edie Wood welcomes all OVER 40 people attended the September 11 lunch at Trocadero Restaurant. With personal service by co-owner Vasso and waitress Chrissy, each of us got tea or coffee ahead of time if we arrived early. President Edie Wood started the proceedings by welcoming all and introducing the speakers

Pat Parungao, retired teacher librarian and now President of Pacific Canada Heritage Centre – Museum of Migration Society (PCHC-MOM), showed slides about this organization. Many of us are interested in the Museum of Migration that is a virtual museum at present but shown around metro-Vancouver at various locations over the past year.

After lunch, Lisa Hansen, the friendly knowledgeable face of Johnson Insurance, gave an excellent talk on the various travel and extended health coverage options available for BCRTA members.

If any of you have had problems with out of province travel, Johnson Insurance for trip interruptions is worth taking a look at. I don't use Johnson Insurance but now find my other travel insurance company still has not repaid us for the cancelled hotel and travel plans we needed to take in December of 2022 when I developed bronchitis and could no longer travel throughout the UK.



Lisa Hansen shows slides.

One must do one's own research on these travel, dental and extended health care options. Lisa presented great slides that compared their benefit plans to other providers' plans, available from the VRTA secretary Denis Ottewell. Johnson's website has a pdf pamphlet that gives the costs of their plans: <https://www.johnson.ca/affinity/bcrt>

What was the surprise dessert? Well, it involved ice-cream, pie and a chocolate piece – courtesy of social coordinator, Lizette!

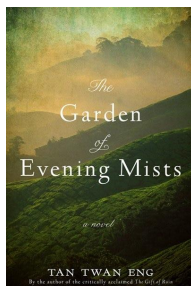
- Ros Kellett



Lizette, Chrissy and Vasso served.

What was the best book you read recently?

***The Garden of Evening Mists*
by Tan Twan Eng**

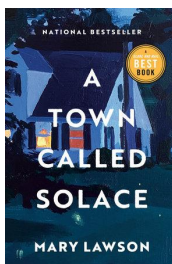


This is the second English-language novel by Malaysian novelist Tan Twan Eng, first published in November 2011. It follows protagonist Teoh Yun Ling, who was a prisoner of the Japanese during the World War II, and later became a judge overseeing war crimes cases.

Seeking after the war to create a garden in memory of her sister, who was imprisoned with her but did not survive, Teoh Yun ends up serving as an apprentice to a Japanese gardener in Cameron Highlands for several months during the Malayan Emergency. As the story begins, years later, she is trying to make sense of her life and experiences.

I was lucky to be accepted into a cultural exchange youth program when I graduated from high school. This novel brought back all the rich layers of history and culture that cooperate (and clash) in Malaysia.

-Lee Green

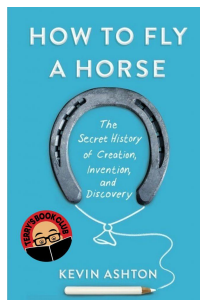


***A Town Called Solace*
by Mary Lawson**

Told through three characters points of view, loss, redemption, hope, acceptance are all there in a small town plus a cat that needs love too

-J Macphail

***How to Fly a Horse: The secret History of Creation, Invention and Discovery*
by Kevin Ashton**



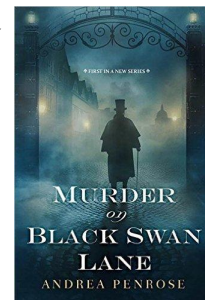
A fascinating book that questioned so many assumptions that most of us make and gives interesting historical research to back his findings. Some examples are as follows:

Brainstorming in a large group results in less creative thinking than individuals and couples thinking together eg. The Wright Brothers as well as Marie and Pierre Curie.

Talking and planning in groups rather than doing does not improve creative ideas. Kindergarten kids build taller towers to hold a marshmallow than any group of adults because they "built" quickly rather than talked about "how" to build the tower. Successful leader used the phrase "Show Me", don't waste time talking about it.

Everyone is born with an imagination and creative ideas. The more people the more patents for inventions. **-Edith Wood**

***Murder on Black Swan Lane*
(1st of a series)
by Andrea Penrose**



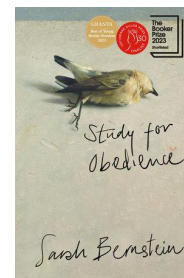
For those who like to get to know interesting characters in a historical setting as they engage in trying to solve a murder (or more), this series by Andrea Penrose is a delight.

Set in London in the Regency Period, the male protagonist is, at first, a stock character: a rich aristocrat who uses his money and his position in society to do as he pleases. However, the female protagonist is full of surprises. When they come together, sparks fly.

The books only get better as the series progresses and Penrose fleshes out both the main and supporting characters.

-Ann Marie Carlson

***Study for Obedience*
by Sarah Bernstein.**



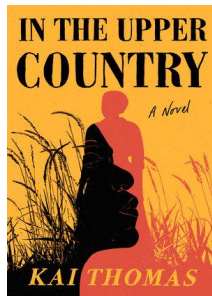
A challenging book to read but I found the richness of the language and evocative imagery really drew me in.

One critic described it as "strange and beautiful". I agree. Retired English teachers in particular are likely to enjoy this novel.

-Susan Dickson

Best recent books continued

In the Upper Country by Kai Thomas



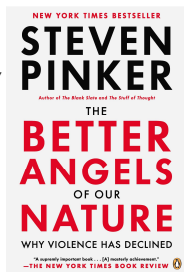
It's book award season and all three Canadian awards have announced their shortlists. This historical fiction is on the shortlist for two of the three - the Writers Trust and the Governor General's Awards.

The novel begins in a negro town. Staying there right now are some former slaves who have just completed their journey up from the US on the underground railway. When a white slave trader appears in town to return them to their owners, an elderly former slave shoots him. She is put in jail and much of the novel features her and other characters telling their stories.

A great read as many of those stories include the little known relationships between black and indigenous populations. It's a fascinating part of our country's history in southern Ontario.

-Susan Harman

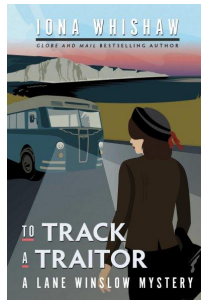
The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined by Steven Pinker



This book requires a very open religious mind.

-Merelyn Jackson

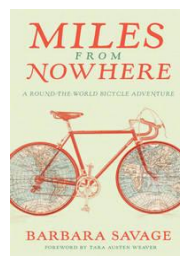
To Track a Traitor by Iona Whishaw



Whishaw, a retired VSB principal, has written a great mystery series and this is her eighth and latest book. It can be found at your local public library or through Libby on your iPad. P.S. Her artistic book covers are a treat!

-Ora Lynn Fraser

Miles from Nowhere – A Round the World Bicycle Adventure by Barbara Savage

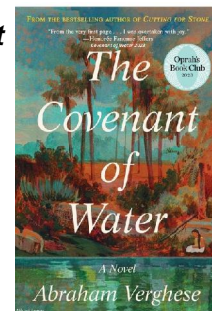


This is a most pleasant travel book to read, especially for cyclists.

The author and her husband took two years to cycle around the world from 1978-1980. The hefty volume (342 pages) is full of anecdotes as chronicled by the author. I found it interesting to compare her impressions of places I have since visited and to learn how bike riding technology has evolved so much that such trips would be easier today. This is a good bedtime read as one can read one anecdote a night and still feel connected to the adventure.

-Ros Kellett

The Covenant of Water by Abraham Verghese

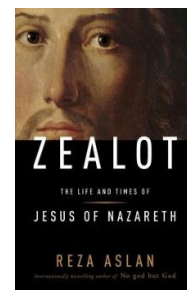


Some 715 pages long it takes place in India and spans years from 1900 to 1977. It starts with a young 12 year old bride having to leave her home to live with her husband's family, he is very understanding and doesn't rush her. True love develops.

A parallel story is the tale of a young doctor who leaves Glasgow to practice in India He falls in love with a married woman and trouble follows.

Thirdly another doctor decides to restart a home and hospital for lepers. There is an overlapping of stories with many memorable characters. **-Sandy Johnson**

Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth by Reza Aslan



This book requires a very long attention span!

-Merelyn Jackson

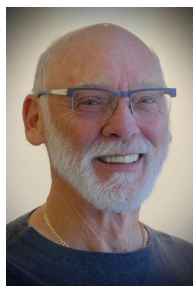


BCRTA 2023 CONFERENCE & AGM HIGHLIGHTS

VRTA delegates: Winola Chu, Dave Ellis, Les Rowe and Edie Wood, along with BCRTA Directors Barb Mikulec and Ros Kellett attended the virtual event, Friday and Saturday Sept. 29 and 30. Norma Westrom and other members were able to observe the Friday events. The Conference presented speakers on high interest topics :Recruiting Volunteers; Better at Home; Housing BC; & How your pension funds are invested through an ESG lens (Environmental, Social & Governance) by BC Investment Management Corporation. Reports & Awards were presented including the Postscript Awards for: Best Personal Experience; Best Travel article; Best art or photograph. Each winner told a fascinating story to Tim Anderson, interviewer and POSTSCRIPT Editor. The story, *Dancing in small spaces*, published in SUMMER 2022 Edition, was most moving. Go to hear all these interviews, plus the presentations, now available, on the web-



site at: bcrt.ca/conference2023/
President Arnie Lambert welcomed all to the AGM then former BCRTA director Gary Litke chaired the meeting. After one minute of silence for deceased members, then business started with suspending any Bylaw that allowed nominations from “the floor” or candidate voting (Bylaws 2.7(3), 5.9 (1 & 2)). Past President Grace Wilson chaired the Nominations, Voting procedures and Election of new BCRTA Directors: President Arnie Lambert; 1st VP Caroline Malm; 2nd VP Dave Scott; ACER-CART Rep David Denyer. Finally: Directors from the Lower Mainland – Barb Mikulec, Ros Kellett, Pat Thiesen, Linda Watson; • Directors from outside the Lower Mainland – Lori Dennill, Stephanie Koropatnick, Margaret Sutton, Cathy Macintosh Lambright. VRTA delegates to the BCTF AGM in Vancouver in March 2024 Les Rowe, Barb Mikulec and Ros Kellett.



Attendees sent questions by email regarding any of the Reports mailed to them ahead of time: President’s, Executive Director, Branch Reports, BCRTA Finances. Then the 2022 audited financial statements were accepted, the auditor MNP and the 2023-24 budget were approved. The auditor was not able to connect online due to technical difficulties at “their end”. The meeting then gave time for the 9 committee chair people to make comments and respond to questions. However, there were again technical issues – this time at the BCRTA end of the connection – so some chairs used the CHAT function to comment. Arnie concluded the meeting expressing confidence in the new executive, the continuing updating of BCRTA communication tools and fresh energy and ideas for this upcoming year.

-Ros Kellett

NEW EDITOR NEEDED

Dear Readers,



After eight years, this is my last issue editing TABLOID. I’m finding I no longer have the time to stay with this job.

This is a great opportunity for one of you willing to write, encourage contributions, manage articles and images, crop and format, and learn on the job. An honorarium is offered. A team of helpers will work with you. Contact President Edie Wood by phone: 604-228-0830 or by email at vrtapresident.e@gmail.com

-Ros Kellett

R. R. Smith Memorial Fund AGM



The virtual AGM started at 9 am, prior to the BCRTA AGM. President Barb Mikulec reported the Board intends to continue funding literacy groups in BC and developing

countries having Canadian charitable status. The AGM approved increasing the annual fee to \$5 for Sept. 2024. For further details of the great works of this group go to www.rrsmith.ca or 604 871-2260



Live Stage Offerings

November to December 2023



JOKES

-from the Internet

Prepared by Winola Chu

The **Arts Club's Stanley Theatre** presents *Elf the Musical*, "*The tale of a human who thinks he's an elf*", from Dec.2nd to Dec.31st.

At the **Granville Island Stage**, *Mom's the Word: Talkin' Turkey* runs from Dec.5th to Dec.31st. Check artsclub.com or phone 604-687-1644.

The family musical Reflections On Crooked Walking runs at the **Firehall Theatre** from Dec.2nd to Dec.24th. Showtimes are Tuesdays to Saturdays at 7:30p.m. with matinees on Wednesdays at 1p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:00p.m. Visit firehallartscentre.ca or phone 604-689-0926.

Gateway Theatre presents the *musical Cinderella "with a modern twist"* from Dec.14th to Dec.31st. Visit gatewaytheatre.com or phone 604-270-1812.

Metro Theatre Vancouver presents their *annual holiday pantomime Sinbad!* From Dec.7th to Jan.31st. with select matinee dates. Check

metrotheatre.com or phone 604-266-7191.

The Cultch presents *pantomime rendition of Beauty and the Beast* at the York Theatre and Online on Demand. Visit thecultch.com/shows or phone 604-251-1363.

At the **Waterfront Theatre, Granville Island Carousel Theatre** presents *Snow White* from Nov.29th to Dec 31 st. Check carouseltheatre.ca or phone 604-669-5410.

Vagabond Players at the **Bernie Legge Theatre** in Queen's Park, presents the musical *The Marvelous Wonderettes* from Nov.30th to Dec 17th. Check vagabondplayers.ca or phone 604-521-0412.

United Players of Vancouver presents a musical adaptation of *Dylan Thomas' A Christmas In Wales* this holiday season from Dec.1st to Dec. 24th, Check unitedplayers.com or phone 604-224-5007

-Ora Fraser

1. Why are writers always cold ?
2. What's a bee's favorite novel?
3. Who's robot's favorite author?
4. When is a green book not green?
5. Where do library books like to sleep?
6. What do you call an obnoxious reindeer?
7. Who is Santa's favourite singer?
8. What do snowmen have for breakfast?
9. What is a comedian's favourite book?
10. What did the Christmas tree say to the ornament?

**** *Answers *****

1. Because of all the drafts.
2. The Great Gats—bee!
3. Anne droid
4. When it's read (red)
5. Under their covers
6. Rude-olph
7. Elf— is Presley
8. Snowflakes
9. The Pun also rises.
10. "Quit Hanging around"

THEME & DEADLINE for the NEXT ISSUE - Friday JANUARY 12, 2023

WHAT IS THE BEST LIVE PLAY YOU HAVE SEEN RECENTLY AND WHY DID YOU LIKE IT?

Keep this to about 100 words.

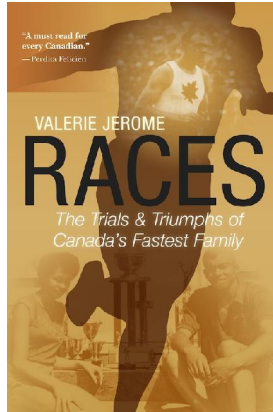
HAS YOUR POSTAL OR EMAIL ADDRESS CHANGED? CONTACT

Laurie Boyd (BCRTA) 604 871-2260 or use the ONLINE Form. <https://bcрта.ca/update-member-info/> Then NOTIFY VRTA membership: Edie Wood vrtapresident.e@gmail.com

MEMBERS' NEWS

RACES—The Trials & Triumphs of Canada's Fastest Family by Valerie Jerome

Retired secondary teacher, Valerie Jerome, has spent her retirement years writing a powerful story about her family, her brother Harry who became the World's Fastest Man in the 1960's and the racism they faced growing up in North Vancouver and even inside their family home. Go online to find one of her Book launch events to learn more then buy the book! Highly recommended **—Ros Kellett**



Margaret Yoshida arranges the large blooms of her spiderlike chrysanthemums for the Vancouver Chrysanthemum Association Show on November 4. Margaret is the Club President and hand grows these "mums"!

ANNOUNCEMENTS



POINSETTIA DRIVERS NEEDED

-A few more backup drivers are needed for Friday Dec 1st . If

interested, contact Ali Pollard at bobalipollard@icloud.com

ESL HELP WANTED

To teach basic English (ESL) one hour a week to immigrant seniors. Contact the 411 Seniors Centre on Fraser x East 19th Ave. at <https://411seniors.org/> or phone: 604 684-8171
Someone there will assist you as well. Winola Chu highly recommends this vital and rewarding opportunity.

Support the Friends of the VRTA Education

Donate online: Go to Vancity Foundation
vancitycommunityfoundation.ca

Click "Funds" at the top of home page, Type R.R. Smith in the "Search" area, Click on "R.R. Smith Community Fund", then Click on "Give to this Fund" and Fill in details. Designate the funds by typing **Friends of VRTA** in "Leave a comment" space. Donations over \$20 get a tax receipt immediately.

REGISTRATION FOR DEC. 5–11:00 AM -LUNCH HELLENIC COMMUNITY CENTRE

Name(s): _____

Ph: _____ Email: _____

Those wishing vegetarian entree/special diet, check here _____

Enclose cheque for ___ attendee(s) @ \$50 MINIMUM
Cheque payable to:

VANCITY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION-RR Smith Memorial Fund
Memo TO: Friends of VRTA –Scholarship & Bursary Fund

Or Pay DONATION ONLINE—see details at right—Notify Dave Ellis

See Page 1 for where to send. Register by Thursday Nov. 30 TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT
Donations for the FOOD BANK are appreciated