



Volume 2, Number 3

October 2024

PQRTA Newsletter

A publication designed for communication between the Parksville Qualicum Retired Teachers' Executive and PQRTA Members

If you are new to our branch, or if your address, phone number or email address changes, please contact BCRTA (office@bcrt.ca) to update your contact information.

Thank you

Are you eligible to become
BCRTA/PQRTA
Life Member?

All you have to do
is celebrate your

90th birthday

(& be a BCRTA member
for 10 years or more).

Please let us know
when you turn 90
so we can update
your status to

Life Member!



Message from the President

I don't usually do a note from the President, but our recent BCRTA Conference and AGM with 101 in-person and 6 online delegates held over the last weekend of September provided a lot of information that will shape our next year ahead. PQRTA was represented by me, as President, Cathy Van as a delegate and Stephanie Koropatnick in her role as BCRTA Director.

In brief, here are notable items and highlights. On Friday from our guest presenters we learned from an appraiser that the furniture and treasures that we have inherited or accumulated are not all necessarily going to be wanted by our children; from Classrooms Without Borders, there are dedicated educators providing long distance education to students in war-torn countries and, that we should all have a will which should be renewed or reviewed very seven years and finally, that changes are coming to Power of Attorney laws that we should also review. In short.... Planning for our eventual futures isn't a once and done thing but is ongoing as we move through our life cycle. If you wish to have the full details, these presentations were recorded and will be available on the BCRTA website soon. bcrt.ca

At the Saturday AGM we acclaimed new Executive members: Our new President is Caroline Malm (Coquitlam branch); Linda Watson (North Vancouver) is 1st Vice President; and David Denyer (Cowichan Valley) is the new 2nd Vice President. Many thanks to them for taking on the leadership aspect of BCRTA. Double thanks to Arnie Lambert, who is now Past President, for all the work he has done and will continue to do for BCRTA members. The full list of Table officers and Directors will be on the BCRTA website. We were provided with reassuring information that BCRTA is under good steady, leadership with finances and future planning.

In other news: BCRTA now has over 17, 000 members. BCRTA office staff has grown to meet demands including a newly hired technology specialist who will be revising and creating a new, friendlier website.

Other business at the AGM was concerning. BCRTA is a member of ACER-CART (Association Canadienne des Enseignantes et des Enseignants Retraités - Canadian Association of Retired Teachers), a collective of Retired Teachers Associations across Canada which focusses on advocating for issues affecting seniors across Canada such as federal Pharmacare and the Canadian Dental Program.

The concern arises from the recent departure of RTOERO (Retired Teachers of Ontario) from ACER-CART in an attempt to become the voice of ALL retired teachers in Canada. We all know that being a retired teacher in BC is much different than that of Ontario so what we want is for ACER-CART to continue to be recognized as our advocate. BCRTA will continue to advocate for this. But what may affect you even more is Ontario Retired Teachers have launched an aggressive campaign to recruit teachers from across the country to join their own Insurance plan. While their rates and benefits may appear to be competitive at first glance, we believe that a plan administered by our own BC Retired Teachers Association would be much more relevant to our needs here in BC. If you are contacted by the Ontario Retired Teachers to switch your insurance plan, contact the BCRTA office to find out more reasons why the newly renamed and BC-based 'Dogwood' insurance plan would be more beneficial to you.

Although my brief overview may be short on details, you can see most of the conference for yourself online on the (soon to be updated) BCRTA website. (Will be live from October 7 onward)

As you can see, there was a lot of information in the Conference and AGM relevant to you and PQRTA. The PQRTA Executive gained inspiration and ideas for future newsletters and our in-person presentations. We are working on those and will send out dates and registration information as soon as we have it. In the meantime, Happy October, Happy Thanksgiving and pull out your warm sweaters for the autumn weeks ahead.

Looking forward to our next event TBD sometime in November and our Yuletide Celebration anticipated for the second week of December.

~ Judy Stewart

DONATE YOUR USED BOOKS to promote early literacy in preschoolers.

In 2021, PQRTA's life member Eva Hilborn founded a registered charity called the **Wonderful World of Books** which gives quality book gifts to local preschoolers. Each month, 50 volunteers deliver 250 brand new books to the homes of 3 and 4 year olds living in Qualicum School District. After two years, these children have a personal library of 24 books which is a wonderful head start to begin Kindergarten.

You can help promote early literacy skills in young children by donating your used books to the **WWB** account at Fireside Books in Parksville. When a \$1000 credit is reached, the **Wonderful World of Books** will purchase a month's supply of age-appropriate book gifts for preschoolers from Nanoose Bay to Bowser.

FIRESIDE BOOKS: 464 Island Hwy E #1 in Parksville <https://firesidebooks.ca/>

1. Put used books or jigsaw puzzles into a paper grocery bag or a small liquor store box
2. Label with a Post-It note, inside each bag or box: **Eva Hilborn WWB 250.752.6217**
3. During store hours (no appointment needed), drop off to the rack at the cashier desk
 - Used books and/or jigsaw puzzles in gently used condition
 - NO: magazines, readers digest, encyclopedias, DVD's, CD's, VHS, text books, damaged books, ex-library books, or books w/o original dust jacket/cover
 - No plastic bags or bins. Reusable bags are donated to the food bank
 - Credits range from \$1 to \$6 per book or jigsaw puzzle

Since the store only accepts a maximum of 2 paper bags or 2 small boxes per day, please contact WWB for pick up of any extra donations: wwbeec@gmail.com

Eva Hilborn: 250.752.6989

Cathy Van Herwaarden: 250.248.0412

For more information: <https://thewonderfulworldofbooks.com/>



Canadian Harambee Education Society (CHES):

Did you know that school-aged girls in Kenya can't go to high school if they have no funds for fees? School fees in Kenya are more than the total annual income of many poor rural families who often choose to only help their sons.

Through donations from Canadians like us, the Canadian Harambee Education Society (CHES) provides scholarships to female students who meet scholastic standards. The Parksville Qualicum Retired Teachers' Association (PQRТА) has a long-standing history of sending donations to CHES.

Many years ago, a PQRТА member visited Kenya as an agent for Canadian Harambee Education Society and he sent many letters which moved PQRТА members to sponsor a Kenyan female to attend school. To this day, PQRТА continues this tradition each year.

It takes only \$650 per year to provide schooling for one Kenyan girl to attend high school. Her ability to obtain an education will, in turn, help to raise her family out of poverty. Last year, we had many generous donors who gave enough to cover schooling for two female students: Velma and Scovia (see their letters later in this issue). *

This year, we need to collect \$1300 again to continue the education of these two students. If every one of our 300 PQRТА members sent just \$5, we would have enough to cover both of these students with a little extra towards CHES administrative costs.

Currently, we have collected \$250 toward our target. The deadline for donations this year is **November 15th, 2024**, Please help us to continue to help these deserving students and submit your donations soon!

Thank you
Cathy Van Herwaarden – Past President

For more info: <https://canadianharambee.ca/>

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. Nelson Mandela

The best anti-poverty program is a world class education. Barack Obama

How to Help:

Let's help Velma and Scovia rise from poverty! Please submit your donations by November 15th. You will receive an individual income tax receipt from the Canadian Harambee Education Society (CHES).

Two ways to pay:

1. e-transfer with auto-deposit to: cathyvanh@gmail.com
(Note: CHES)

OR

2. CHEQUE – payable to CHES

Two ways to send your donation:

Mail to:

Cathy Van Herwaarden
Box 286
Coombs, BC
V0R 1M0

Drop off:

2061 Pierpont Road
Virginia Estates,
Coombs

Contact 250-248-0412 or email (above) to arrange drop-off

Here is a letter from Velma Awiti, one of the students we support with CHES: She would love to receive a letter from you!

Velma Awiti,
Holy Cross Emalindi Girls high school
P.O BOX Private Bag,
Khwisero, Kakamega
KENYA
01/4/2024. (April 1, 2024)

Dear Sponsor, Parksville, Qualicum RTA

How are you? Are you fairing on well? I hope God has blessed you with a breath of life and everything is possible.

Our school is one of the best school in the county Kakamega. It has has best teachers who always remind us more about academics. Above all, almost all subjects are ~~one~~ of my best. I like them because they are subjects that has career. In our stream we are sixty-five students and overall we are three hundred and twenty seven. Activities that have happened in our school is Drama festivals. Our School becomes always winners since they began the Drama and now they are preparing to go to National level at Meru.

During my school holiday I have planned to help my parents by doing all activities that I can do and take serious with my academics by revising always.

My family is healthy and always happy about you. We all appreciate you for having this opportunity to help those in need. I am very happy when

I am in this school because without you I wouldn't have known where I could have been. God bless you and continue guiding you on your way to go. Continue supporting those who are in the most need of your pity. Goodbye, God bless you.

Yours sincerely,
Velma Awiti.

October 19 is Election Day in B.C.

A great deal has happened in BC since the last election, including a change in electoral ridings and political parties. You can find out which riding you are in, confirm that you are registered to vote and where to vote through the Elections BC site elections.bc.ca/2024-provincial-election/. Which candidate to vote for? You can access information about them from the media, and candidates themselves at all-candidate forums being sponsored by various groups prior to the voting period. BCRTA has prepared a booklet that highlights issues relevant to us as retired teachers and seniors in BC and questions to put to a candidate. Download a copy of the booklet from the BCRTA website link:

<https://bcрта.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/BCRTA-2024-BC-Provincial-Election-Guide.pdf>



122 little purple caps ready for delivery to the Nanaimo Hospital Foundation to give to newborns after parents receive information to prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome. If you knit or crochet, consider helping out! Please contact Cathy Van Herwaarden: cathyvanh@gmail.com OR 250.248.0412



Found in the Local Newspaper...

PROBUS Parksville Club: Social Club for Seniors. Next meeting is Oct. 21. Parksville Community Centre at 223 Mills Street (behind Starbucks) Doors will open at 9:15 a.m. There is a \$5 entry charge to cover coffee, tea, and freshly baked goodies. Guest speakers are Dr. David Robertson, Medical Director and Amanda Proznick, Regional Manager, both of the Island Health MAID Program. (Medical Assistance in Dying). Guests are most welcome. Info: Harry at 778-584-0909 or email ProbusMembershipChair@gmail.com.

Qualicum Beach Probus Group: We are an active social group of retired and semi-retired seniors which meets on the first Tuesday each month at St. Stephen's Church (150 Village Way, Qualicum Beach). We have a variety of interesting and diverse speakers and several special interest groups. We welcome guests interested in exploring, joining us and meeting new friends. Check out our activities at www.qbprobus.com.

Sad News
Hi All

If you taught at QBES you may want to know that Beth Le Baron is arranging a funeral service for Felicity Smith to be held at St. Mary's church in Nanoose. Please let her old colleagues know.

November 2, Saturday at 11:30 am

Thanks
Dee Arnold

PQRTA Executive

Parksville Qualicum Retired Teachers' Association Executive consists of PQRTA Members who share a passion for supporting our fellow members and other seniors in the community.

Judy Stewart

Cathy Van Herwaarden:

Vacant

Vacant

Ellen Coates

Vacant

Vacant

Vacant

Stephanie Koropatnick

Sharon Cox-Gustavson

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Past President

Vice President

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Treasurer

Programs Chair

Membership Chair

Sunshine Chair

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