

Coquitlam Retired Teachers' Association

January 2026
Issue No. 3

CRTA Newsletter

President's Report

President's Report

On behalf of the CRTA Executive Committee, I extend warm wishes for a happy, healthy, and fulfilling 2026 to all our members and their families. I hope the holiday season brought you joyful moments, good company, and a chance to recharge. As the New Year begins, there is much to anticipate—and your CRTA Executive has already hit the ground running!

Your Executive Committee continues to meet regularly to guide the work of the Association and support our members. Since September, the committee has held three Executive Meetings and produced three newsletters. With three more Executive Meetings, three General Meetings, and two additional newsletters scheduled, 2026 is shaping up to be a busy and productive year for CRTA.

Our General Meeting on October 22, 2025, was a great success and well attended. Held in the gym at Montgomery Centre, the meeting featured highlights from the 2025–26 CRTA year in the President's Report, a clear and informative financial report from **Howard Spence**, updates from the BCRTA Conference and AGM, and a sneak peek at our upcoming Christmas Luncheon. Members were also treated to an engaging and informative presentation by two dedicated volunteers—and their remarkable dogs—from BC and Alberta Guide Dogs.

The festive spirit continued at our CRTA Christmas Luncheon on December 4th at the Burnaby Mountain Golf Club. It was a delightful afternoon filled with good food, great conversation, and holiday cheer. Special thanks and heartfelt appreciation go to **Audrey Anthony**, whose outstanding organization made the event such a success. Be sure to read further in this newsletter for a full recap.



Looking Ahead to 2026

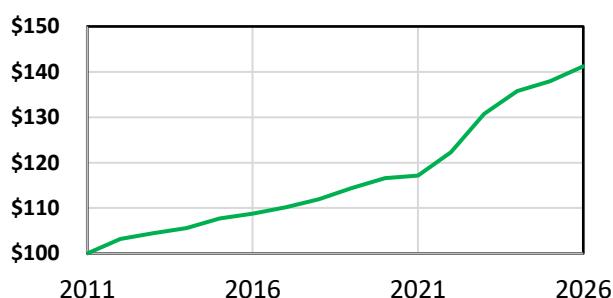
Our next CRTA General Meeting will take place on **Wednesday, February 4th**, at Montgomery Centre. Come to view and experience the Northwest Passage. I hope you'll join us—your participation makes our association stronger!

Teresa

Teachers' Pension Increase for 2026

The BC Teachers' Pension Plan web site confirms that the 2026 Cost of Living Adjustment is 2.4%.
READ MORE at: <https://tpp.pensionsbc.ca/cost-of-living-adjustments>

BC Teacher Pension Indexing



Coquitlam Retired Teachers' Association

CRTA 2025 –
2026

<https://bcrta.ca/coquitlam/>

TABLE OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Teresa Grandinetti
(604) 230-5411
tgrandin@uniserve.com

SECRETARY

Jennifer Blenkinsop
(604)461-4088
jennfb@shaw.ca

TREASURER

Howard Spence
(604) 936-8320
hspence@gmail.com

DIRECTORS

BRUNCH/LUNCHEON
Audrey Anthony
(604) 937-3086
iouaud@telus.net

MEMBERSHIP/ MEMBER CONTACT

John Pope
(604) 461-7355
tipope1@hotmail.com

DOOR PRIZES/GIFTS

Doug McSavaney
604-540-9654

dmcsavaney@shaw.ca

WINSLOW CONTACT

Caroline Malm
(604)461-0008
caroline@malm.ca

Mark Your Calendar!



Wednesday February 4: CRTA General Meeting:

Speaker – Dr. Howard Malm – Sailing the Northwest Passage with Adventure Canada:

Greenland to Kugluktuk, NWT in 17 days. Glaciers, icebergs, polar bears, history, archeology, Inuit culture, geology and more.

Wednesday April 1: CRTA General Meeting

Wednesday June 3: CRTA AGM

All meetings begin at 10:00 am at the Continuing Education Center (aka Montgomery Centre) located at 380 Montgomery St, Coquitlam.



Parking is at the WEST side of the building.

Coquitlam Retired Teachers' Association Bursaries

The CRTA offers **three bursaries of \$750 each** to students graduating from SD 43 secondary schools who are **relatives** of either a current or deceased CRTA member.



Information should be available from high school counsellors. Please spread the word to any and all eligible students.

Christmas Brunch 2025

Our annual Christmas brunch once again delivered joy, laughter, and plenty of holiday cheer! Over 50 attendees gathered with friends and colleagues in a beautifully decorated venue, creating the perfect backdrop to reconnect, share highlights from the past year, and chat excitedly about plans for 2026.

As always, the buffet was a true highlight of the day. Guests raved about the wonderful variety and exceptional quality of the food—from the first bite right through to the final, irresistible dessert. It truly was a memorable feast!

Adding to the festive atmosphere, we were delighted to be entertained once again by the wonderful music of **Jim Burton**, whose performance set the perfect holiday tone. Our CRTA Life Members (85+) were honoured with lovely poinsettia plants, a heartfelt gesture that was warmly received.

The excitement continued with lucky door prizes of Purdy's Chocolates. Congratulations to our winners: **Margrete Wylie, Susan Lundahl, Katherine Woodrow, Debbie Meredith, Eileen Miyanaga, Lynda Nelson, and Albert Lynn.**

By the time lunch came to an end, spirits were high and the room was filled with smiles and festive cheer. A huge thank-you goes to our outstanding luncheon coordinator, **Audrey Anthony**, who has already secured Wednesday, December 2nd for our 2026 luncheon. Be sure to mark your calendar now—we can't wait to do it all again! ✨🎄

Coquitlam Retired Teachers' Association

BCRTA Golden Star Awards 2026

Each year, the BCRTA *Excellence in Public Education Committee* recognizes outstanding **intergenerational** programs in BC's public schools.

If you know of a public school program involving **seniors and students**, please encourage the teacher to visit:

<https://bcrtा.ca/about-us/golden-star-awards/>

Deadline for submissions is April 15th each year.



Membership Report – Submitted by John Pope

The past year has seen an encouraging vote of confidence in Coquitlam Branch. Between January to October, forty-five newly retired Coquitlam District teachers have signed up for a complimentary introductory membership. The total may increase with late-year sign-ups. The Executive Committee extends a warm welcome to all and adds that we hope to see you (if we haven't already) at Branch events in 2026.

CRTA has lost contact with **Audrey Schock** and **Noreen Sherling**. If you can help with current information, please contact us at sd43.crtा@gmail.com or 604-461-7355.

If your contact information changes, besides contacting us, please also update the BCRTA at office@bcrtा.ca or 604-871-2260.

Howard's Wacky Word Games

In one of my more idle moments, I thought it would be amusing to start with a single word, and change one letter of the word to create a two-word phrase with some meaning, preferably humorous. After some thought, I came up with the following:

- *Horse house*: Stable
- *Furry curry*: A ten-day old South Asian dish
- *Pointer painter*: A dog that creates abstract art with a wagging paint-loaded tail
- *Better batter*: Pinch hitter
- *Brief grief*: Mourning the death of a pet worm
- *Paper piper*: Kazoo player
- *Branch brunch*: Our "To Hell with the Bell" get-together

Pull out your dictionary to find appropriate words, and see what you can come up with. I had an entertaining time creating these, among others, and you also might find it worth doing. It's good for the brain, and good for the soul. Email me with your best efforts and we'll publish them in our next newsletter. Happy word play!

CRTA 2025 – 2026 EXECUTIVE

DIRECTORS cont'd

PHONING

Nick Magistrale

778-899-7701

Magistralenick99@gmail.com

WELCOME/DOOR PRIZES

Vicki Stacey

(604) 936-9040

akrod@telus.net

SUNSHINE

Dale Linton

(604) 937-5113

sewgr1@gmail.com

POLICIES/PROCEDURES

Jennifer Blenkinsop

(604) 461-4088

jennfb@shaw.ca

GEN MTG SPEAKERS

Fran Mitchell

(604) 936-1120

fmitchell@telus.net

BURSARIES

Henry Thiessen

(604) 939-9906

tsen@telus.net

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Caroline Malm

Audrey Anthony

Teresa Grandinetti

FORMATTING

Howard Malm

Coquitlam Retired Teachers' Association



OFFICE OF THE
SENIORS ADVOCATE
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Dan Levitt, BC Seniors advocate
was appointed January 2024.



Let's Tackle Myths about Ageing in 2026

The BC Seniors Advocate is calling on British Columbians to challenge persistent myths about ageing and confront ageism in 2026. Despite some recent progress, many stereotypes about ageing continue to affect the lives of older adults. Learn about common myths and the facts that disprove them.

[Learn More](#)

Sunshine Committee

Sunshine coordinator **Dale Linton** sends get well and sympathy cards to members who are ill and to families suffering a bereavement. Please keep her updated by calling 604-937-5113.

THE BCRTA DOGWOOD RETIREE BENEFIT PLANS

Enhancements are coming to your DOGWOOD Extended Health Care Plan!

Starting January 1st, 2026, your DOGWOOD Extended Health Care Plan will include several key improvements designed to give you better coverage and more flexibility.

Get more out of your benefits with a higher maximum lifetime coverage, increased maximum coverage for major dental and paramedical services, along with reworked vision care that lets you choose where to apply your coverage. For more information click the following link: <https://bccta.ca/dogwood-upcoming-changes/>

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Birchland Elementary in Port Coquitlam is seeking any CRTA members who would be interested in volunteering at the school supporting students with reading, crafts etc. Birchland is a small but loving school that would be very grateful to any CRTA member who would like to join their community. If this is an opportunity that interests you, please contact school counsellor Katie DeReus by phone at (604) 941-3428 or by email at: kdereus@sd43.bc.ca.

Apologies to Shirley Whittome, Family, & Friends

The CRTA apologizes to **Shirley Whittome**, her family and friends for incorrectly including Shirley in the CRTA November 2025 Newsletter 'In Memoriam' section of the Newsletter. The CRTA received incorrect information and we are very sorry for any hurt we caused.

Letter from the Editors:

Please send us your suggestions, personal writings, photos from your travels, up-coming events, things you would like to see included in the Newsletter. This is more than just a Newsletter, it's a method to help connect CRTA members. We'd love to hear from you!

Caroline@malm.ca