
THE BRIDGE



Red Bridge Photo by Rick Bennett - April 4, 2021

THE BRIDGE

Bridges provide a link
Bringing people closer,
Filling the space with new possibilities.
Let's bridge age, status, race, differences
With uncommon humanity.
Let's bridge the gaps that chain us,
Unlocking our grandest vision for today.

by Barb Stankiewicz

Letter from the Editor - Donna Sharpe

I searched for some time to find a good photo of the Red Bridge in its former life. I was sure I had one I had taken but it seems it must have been on a previous computer as I could not find it among the 7000 photos in my current file. Thanks to a friend of mine who asked her neighbour, Rick, an avid photographer, and he provided us with the lovely photo of our Red Bridge which many of us are missing so much.

My apologies to Miriam Semeniuk for leaving her travel entry, about Sao Paulo in Mexico, out of the Spring Summer issue of The Bridge. You will find it on Page 6 in this issue and this is a most appropriate time to learn about holidays in Mexico.

The BCRTA Conference and AGM was a lot of fun in September and you can read the report by our three delegates, Marney, Troylana, and me. You can also read the full content from the speakers by going to the BCRTA website and finding their talks there.

If you missed the November (Christmas Luncheon) like I did, you can catch up with our entertainment, the Jeweltones, on pages 8 and 9.

Don't miss the Book Review about "One Arrow Left" submitted by Margaret Catherwood. You will find it on page 13.

Saving the best for last there is a delicious recipe on page 16.

Thank you to Caroline Malm, our president of the BCRTA, for sending out a letter of support for the people of Tumbler Ridge.

I hope you enjoy your reading of The Bridge, Fall/Winter 2025-26 edition.

If you have any suggestions for the Spring/Summer edition coming up next, please send me an email. onlineoffice.ktrta@gmail.com

President's Message

February 2026

I hope this newsletter finds everyone enjoying our very unusual February weather. It certainly feels Springlike, but we know that we still are likely to have a little winter weather ahead! In the meantime, I love being able to take the dog for a walk without slogging through snow and slipping on the ice.

As I write this, I have the Olympics playing in the background. The Women's Hockey Team is playing Czechia, and the score is currently 5-0 for Canada. I love following the games. The Italian setting is spectacular!

The KTRTA have had some good lunches and presenters this year. Nancy Flood, of the Kamloops Naturalist Club, was our January guest and was entertaining and an excellent speaker. The Christmas music with "The Jeweltones" was wonderful and the lunch by the caterers, "The Salty Fig" was amazing. It is certainly wonderful to catch up with our members and meet in person.

Our lunches usually take place on the last Friday of the month, with no lunches in May, June, July, August and December. They take place at Cottonwood Centre, 730 Cottonwood Avenue, Kamloops. Invitations and information on the program and the caterer are sent out a week or so before the meeting. If you are interested in attending, contact Troylana Manson, our KTRTA Membership Chair, at onlineoffice.ktrta@gmail.com. Everyone of our members is welcome and you are certainly welcome to bring a guest. Please come and join us. Connect with former colleagues and make new friends!

Respectfully submitted,

Marney Bethell,

Report on the BCRTA Conference and AGM
Sept. 25-27/ 2025
Hilton Vancouver Airport Hotel, Richmond, BC

Three delegates from the KTRTA were elected to attend the BCRTA Conference and AGM in Richmond, Marney Bethell, Troylana Manson, and me, Donna Sharpe. The event started Thursday evening with a meet and greet session with an opportunity to meet with representatives from some of the services supported by and associated with BCRTA; BelAire Direct Insurance, Iris Eye Care, R.R. Smith foundation, Hearing Life, Cosco, and two travel companies, Collette and Trip Merchant.



At our registration we received a ticket for a drink from the bar, so with this in hand we spent some time meeting up with friends from other branches, and executive members, and newcomers we had not met before. After a short while we were entertained by a group called the Louis Riel Métis Dancers. They were 2 very energetic and wonderful dancers accompanied by two musician on the fiddle. They not only danced and played to entertain us



but also gave us some history about their culture. And at the end of their performance they wanted to teach us some of the moves they had been dancing so they got us up on our feet for those who could and seated if necessary, to move our feet, with a shuffle and step, and shuffle and turn, then a little faster. It was fun and challenging to try to shuffle our feet to the music along with our young instructors.

The next morning after breakfast and a welcome by David Denyer, the Vice President of the BCRTA, we had a very interesting talk about Sustaining Age Friendly Programs by Devon Putland from Moosomin, Saskatchewan. She told us about a program that is working in her small community that benefits all ages. For instance mobility ramps don't just help the elderly but also moms with strollers, people of all ages in wheelchairs, etc. Their advocacy group looked at outdoor spaces and buildings for accessibility (parks, sidewalks, streets, stores, washrooms, etc.) Availability of transportation, suitable housing, social participation, and general respect, communication and tech time. She also included community support and health services.



photos by Donna

Devon also said that Age Friendly Communities did not happen all of a sudden. It was a long term journey with the organizers taking every opportunity to talk to people to find out what was needed and to connect with groups like the Chamber of Commerce, Kinsmen, Legion, and learning how to access funding with grants.

Many of the examples she talked about we are already doing but could be improved. and others could be followed up on to see how they might work in our community. If you would like to watch her talk you can go to BCRTA.ca, scroll down to Publications, then go down to 2025 AGM & Conference, click on Conference Presentations.

This section of the conference reported by Donna Sharpe. More to follow by both Marney and Troylana.

Vickie Robinson.

Vickie Robinson was the speaker who had the “after lunch” space, at the BCRTA Conference and AGM. With a background of 20 years experience in teaching and as a former president of the Abbotsford Retired Teachers association, she was a leader, advocate, and contributor to public education.

Vickie committed decades to supporting people in crisis and grief. She volunteered for seven years with the Fraser Valley Crisis Line, five years with the Provincial Suicide Line, and over 17 years as a hospice volunteer, including 10 years leading grief groups for families.

Gift of Knowledge - Steps to Consider before the End - The Topic

Combining her background of education, grief support, and hospice work, Vickie Robinson provides unique insights on what everyone should know when facing life's final chapter. Covering the “musts” of preparation, it explores palliative care and hospice — what they are, how they work, and how to access them. The session also provided an overview of Canada's Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) legislation, including current laws, access and key considerations. With honesty and compassion, the talk encourages individuals and families to understand their options better, plan, and approach end-of-life decisions with clarity. This was an interesting and sometimes painful discussion, and we could certainly hear a pin drop in the ballroom. Some people were uncomfortable with the topic of the discussion but there was interest.

By Marney Bethell and the BCRTA website.

Travel

San Pancho, Nayarit, Mexico: Magnet for Retirees



San Pancho (population 3000) is located in the northeastern section of Nayarit, Mexico, on the Bay of Banduras, approximately a 30-minute drive from the airport in Puerto Vallarta (50 kms). San Pancho (also known as San Francisco) has warm winter days and a slower pace with fishing and cultivation of tropical fruit from the Sierra Madre Mountains.

This charming town offers a clean beach for swimming and learning how to surf along with a traditional market on Fridays. There are several reasonably priced restaurants both along the boardwalk next to the beach and in the town.

Tourist attractions include

the town plaza, a renovated dairy building containing a recycle yard, a computer room, a book exchange, and a free store where people leave items such as clothing, games, puzzles, and toys, and take what they need. The space is popular among locals and visitors alike for meeting up where someone with a skill or talent leads others in music lessons, one-to-one reading, Spanish and English lessons, art workshops and book clubs. All are invited to participate in this community centre and to share of their time and interests.

Also of interest are a chocolate factory, Huichol and Cora traditional arts and handicrafts, over 40 species of birds, and floral diversity. Rather than rubbing fingers to indicate the bill is requested at the end of a meal, locals make a sign of the length of a cacao pod extending their thumb and index finger as this was the common currency up until the 1970s.

Miriam Semeniuk

October Lunch and Learn

Our October Lunch and Learn was on Halloween which made it doubly exciting. Several people



came in costume and others dressed in orange and black. Sancho, the clown, came early to make balloon decorations. Some of the people in costumes in the photo are: Jim Fernelli, Mildred Kolody, Sharon Olsen, Rosemarie Stoltz, Mary Ellen Patterson, Carolyn Ramsay, Pat Petley,



Sancho and Suzanne Legault
Photos by Donna

Suzanne Legault, Susan Price, Marney Bethell, Marg Catherwood, Marlene Olineck, Troylana Manson,



As well as having fun with Costumes, we had a very interesting presentation by Susan Price, an archaeologist, specializing in Greek and Roman archives. In keeping with our Halloween theme she was able to tell us about Vampires. She gave us a brief history lesson on Greek mythology, Religion and the Greek legal system. and then she told us about discovering curse tablets. She

showed us photos of curse tablets that she had uncovered in an archaeological dig she was part of. These curse tablets were used by the ancient people of the time to get retribution for some wrong that had been done to them. The tables were made out of lead and were inscribed with the wrong that had been done and sometimes the name of the guilty person. Because the lead was flexible at warm temperature it could be rolled or folded and buried so that the writing was inside. A most interesting story about some of the excitement of being and Archaeologist.



Submitted by Donna Sharpe

November Lunch and Learn

Christmas comes but once a year and is full of fun, presents and treats. We had a great treat for our Christmas Luncheon this year with a performance by the Jeweltones. The Jeweltones are a group of 12 women who sing in 3 to 4 part harmony. They sing without a director in front of them to give them all the cues that

they need for singing. This means each of the Jeweltones need to know when to come in and when to cut off, and have to do it all at the same time! If you watch closely, you can see them all breathing at the same time. It puts a complexity to their singing that is not present when a group has a director.

Musically they took us from “Christmas on Broadway” to a park bench to tell “Jack Frost,



Get Lost”, to a quiet walk on a winter’s night where you can hear the snow softly falling. There were “Nutcracker Jingles” with Jingle Bells as if it had been written by Tchaikovsky, “A Welsh Noel”, a less familiar Christmas Carol and even a lovely “Solstice Song”, quite different from Christmas Carols.



We had no idea what to expect for their final number. We could see them putting on hats and coats and we wondered what was coming now. A fine tablecloth was at the front and we were treated to “A Whacky Family Christmas” with endless uncles and crazy cousins and whacky it was! Some of the older members were so happy to see one another that they totally missed each other when they were running for a BIG HUG. It would appear that grandma’s family Christmas

Dinner was not good enough for some of the younger family members, as one even tried to sneak out for a greasy burger and some fries and was then brought back to the gathering. The remainder of the “family” were suggesting pepperoni pizza, some mac and cheese, chicken, coke and pie – anything but grandma’s cooking. They threatened if they didn’t get what they wanted, they were going to “whine and cry”. Meanwhile the two grandmas were



tasting what was cooking and thought everything was wonderful! A clash of generations for sure. On top of the major disagreement about what was going to be served for Christmas dinner there were family squabbles with no shoving. Apparently in the song, that’s called loving and all a part of family business. The song ended with a wish that all would have “a joyful FAMILY Christmas”!



Submitted by Sandy Baird and Karen McClelland

Photos by Rosemarie

January Lunch and Learn

At our January 30/2026 Lunch and Learn we had a most interesting talk by naturalist Nancy Flood. She is an instructor at TRU, and President of the Kamloops Naturalist Club. Their motto

is “Knowing nature and keeping it worth knowing”. She showed us photos and told us about some of the many activities of the local naturalists; field trips, monthly meetings, setting up bluebird boxes, participating in the swan and eagle count, the Christmas bird count, and sharing their data with other naturalist clubs in Canada and the World.

Their monthly meetings are held at Heritage House in Riverside Park on the third Thursday of the months at 7:00 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend and there is no charge.



Nancy Flood and Rosemarie Stoltz



In honour of the upcoming Chinese New Year we had our lunch delivered from Moon Wok.

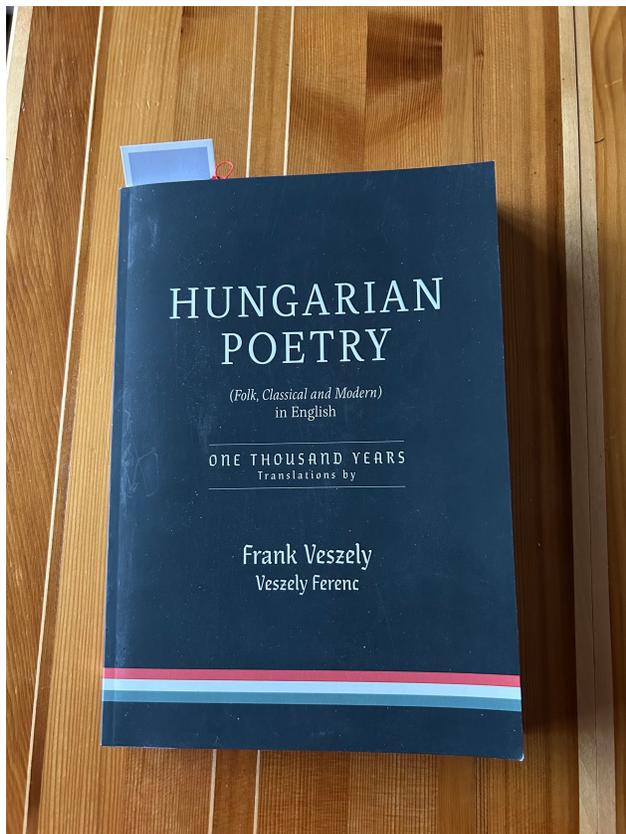
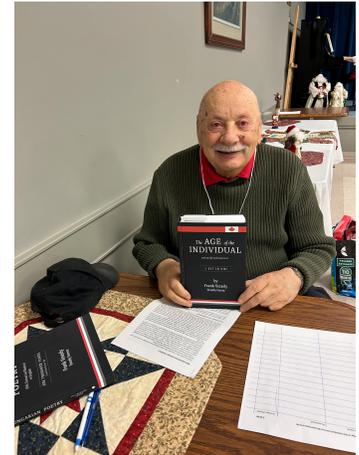


Photos by Donna

Congratulations !

Frank Veszely, one of our members has been awarded the honour of having his book, "Hungarian Poetry" winning the Luminaries 2024 Gold Award for poetry. Congratulations Frank from those of us in the KTRTA

Submitted by Mary Ellen Patterson



Luminaries is an award given by Atticus Publishing. They give a Gold, Silver, and Bronze award for each genre: Fiction, Non-Fiction, Children's, and Poetry. It is one of the most prestigious awards given in literature.

Accolades

A special thanks to Marney Bethell, our very busy president, for making the desktop calendars that she has given out for the past few years. With the permission to use Glenn Dregger's photographs of our local birds, she has produced a beautiful and useful tool for each of us. This is no small task. Once she has the pages set up on her computer with each month sporting a different bird photo, she then needs to print them, cut them to size, put the stand on each one punch holes along the top, and then thread the coil binding onto each calendar. Thank you Marney, you are amazing!

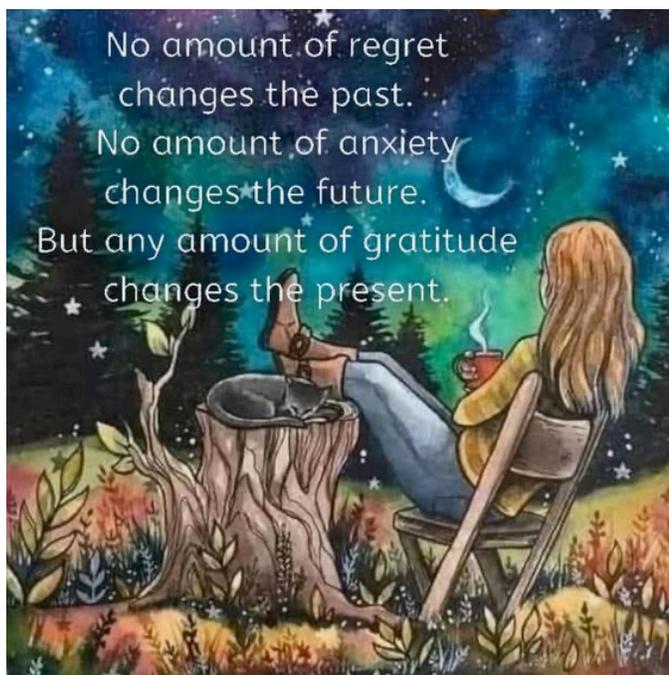
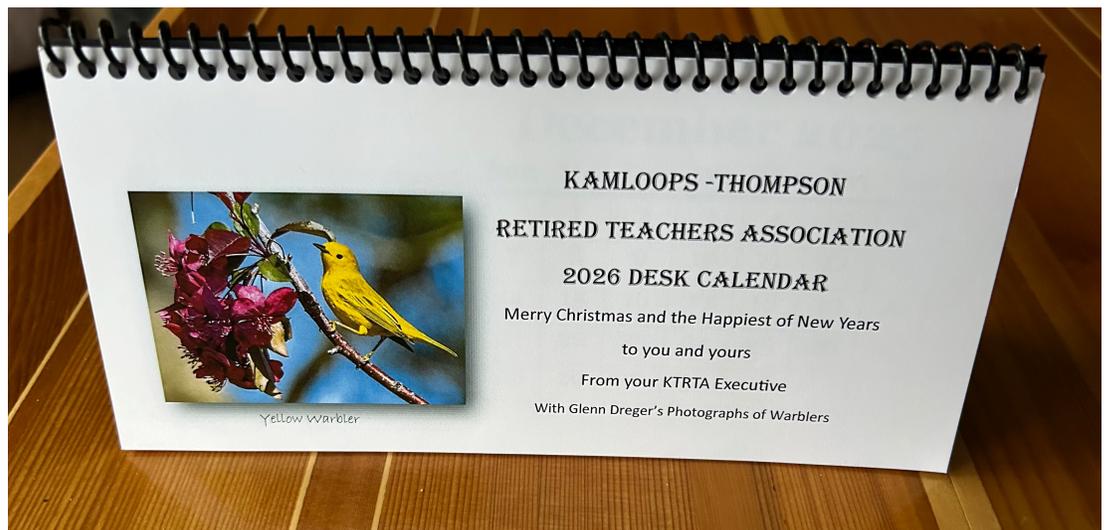


Photo by Donna

Quote submitted by Laurie Dahlgren

Book Review

Title: **One Arrow Left** The Memoir of Knowledge Keeper, Cecilia DeRose

Author: Cecilia Dick-DeRose with Sage Birchwater

Published: 2025 by Caitlin Press Inc.

Cecelia Dick-DeRose was born into a hard-working Secwecemp family at Eskel (Alkali Lake, BC) on January 14, 1935. She was raised in a remote meadow a day and a half journey by horseback from the village of Eskel.

Cecelia was sent to the St. Joseph's Mission near Williams Lake when she was seven years old. Her parents and siblings also attended the same residential school. Cecilia was able to retain her Secwecemp language, culture and traditions. She went on to become an ambassador of Secwepemcstn culture. She eventually fulfilled her dream of becoming a teacher. From this she gradually became involved in cross-cultural training, in hospitals, the courts and law-enforcement institutions. She believed that, "...we have one arrow left in our quiver and that's education...we must use it wisely..."

In 2024, Cecelia received an honorary Doctor of Letters from Thompson Rivers University. This recognition was bestowed upon her by her daughter, De De DeRose, chancellor of TRU, also a teacher and school administrator in School District #73 (Kamloops).

One Arrow Left provides the reader with a first-hand look into the memories and experiences of Cecelia Dick-DeRose. Her story encompasses being raised in a remote meadow, attending residential school, her marriage to a non-indigenous ranch hand, the rodeo circuit, as well as sharing her love of family and her commitment to her First Nations heritage.

I found Cecilia's book to be a very enjoyable read. Recommend it to anyone who is interested in the lives and relationships of Indigenous and non-indigenous people in the Cariboo region of British Columbia's Central Interior.

by Richard (Dick) Taylor

October 22, 2025.

Submitted by Margaret Catherwood.

History

For years now we have been giving bursaries to students in the Education department at TRU. Back in 1994 there were 5 people responsible for establishing a fund to go to the Thompson Rivers University Foundation for their bursary program. These 5 people were Janet Doubt, John Philip, Alf Law, Warren Damer and Fred Shirley. Janet brought the idea back from the BCRTA provincial AGM meeting. At that time the group determined that the bursary would be called "The Retired Teachers' Bursary" and would never be named after any specific person. All of the retired teachers got together and raised \$4272. At that time this fund received matching Provincial Government donations. I don't know when that stopped. Since then the Retired Teachers group known now as KTRTA have continued to raise money to put into the TRU foundation for bursaries. As of March 31, 2025, when last reported to us, the Kamloops Thompson Retired Teachers Endowment has a balance of \$110,110.73. This amount earned interest of \$4229.11 which was used to give 2 bursaries for the year 2025/26. Our members should be proud of what we have achieved.

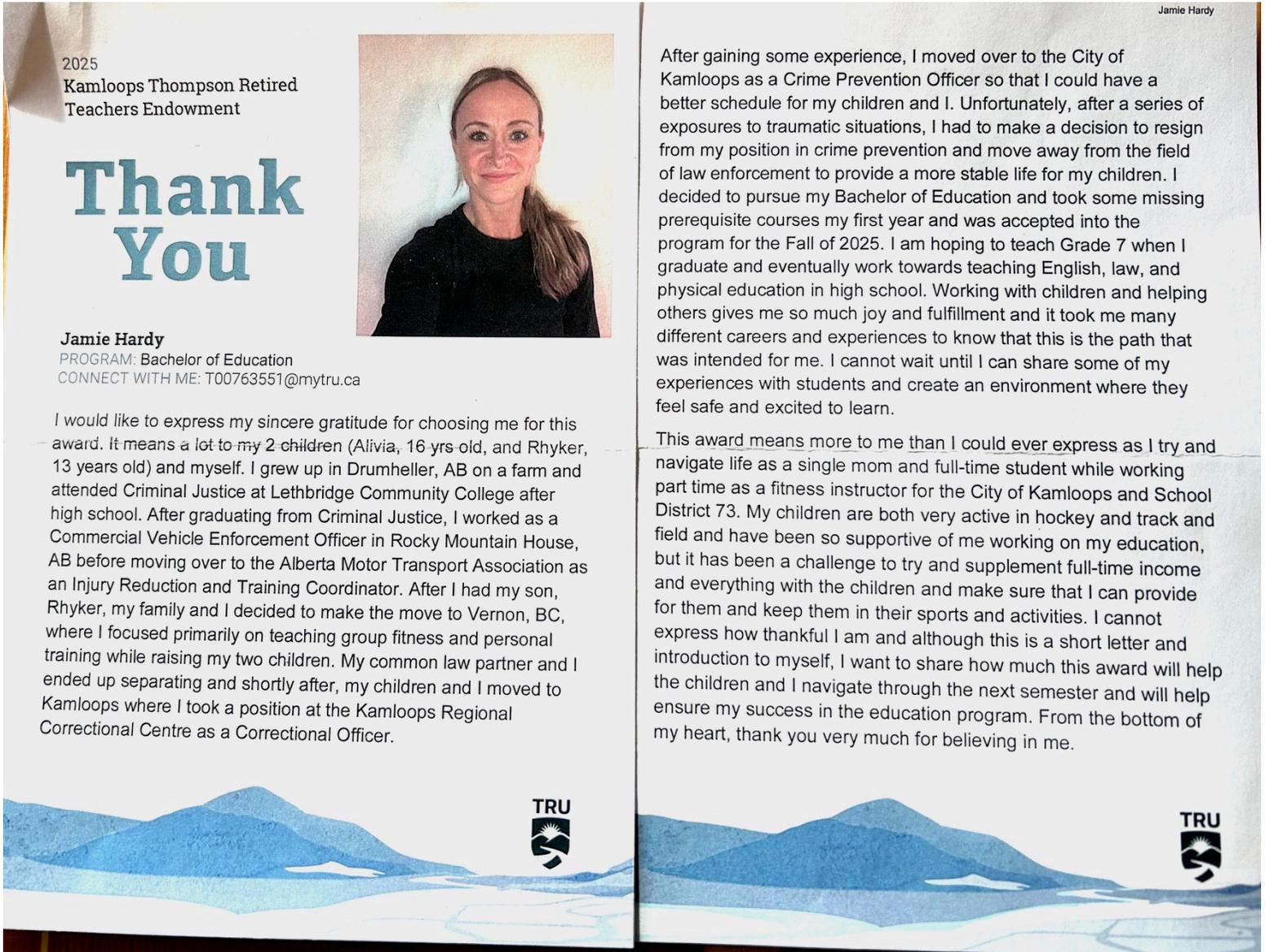
The fund criteria reads as follows: income (interest) will provide two annual bursaries to students enrolled in a Bachelor of Education program who show commitment and demonstrate financial need. In recent years we have been able to give 2 students each an amount of \$1300.00 in 2010, \$1400.00 in 2011, \$1500.00 in 2013, \$1600.00 in 2017, and by next year it will be \$2000.00.

Over the years there were different ways that we used to raise the money. In recent times we have held a Silent Auction at our meeting in March. These are always a lot of fun and have provided a good funding to be given to the TRU foundation to build our endowment and also to other charities determined by our membership. For many years it has been the Canadian Harambee Education Society (CHES) that supports schools in Tanzania. We will have another Silent Auction this year at our Lunch and Learn in March. So keep thinking of items that you can bring or send with someone else if you aren't able to attend. We encourage items that are consumable like baking, canning, reading, themed basket such as a wine theme or chocolate or something like that. Also popular are the special activities such as an afternoon tea, a mystery tour, an afternoon of gardening, lunch or dinner for a set number of guests. a picnic, etc. If you would like to donate money instead of an item to auction, there are two ways you can do that: you can bring a cheque to the Auction and put it in an identified envelope on your table at lunch or if you want to donate cash and would like a tax receipt, put it in your own envelope with your name and address on the envelope and also put that in the envelope at your table.

Our efforts are always very much appreciated. You can read a thank you from one of our recipients on the following page.

Submitted by Donna Sharpe with help from a previous document in 2006 that I believe was written by Barb Stankiewics, and some recent information from the TRU foundation.

Here is the thank you letter from Jamie Hardy sent to Glenda Miles.



2025
Kamloops Thompson Retired
Teachers Endowment

Thank You

Jamie Hardy

PROGRAM: Bachelor of Education
CONNECT WITH ME: T00763551@mytru.ca



After gaining some experience, I moved over to the City of Kamloops as a Crime Prevention Officer so that I could have a better schedule for my children and I. Unfortunately, after a series of exposures to traumatic situations, I had to make a decision to resign from my position in crime prevention and move away from the field of law enforcement to provide a more stable life for my children. I decided to pursue my Bachelor of Education and took some missing prerequisite courses my first year and was accepted into the program for the Fall of 2025. I am hoping to teach Grade 7 when I graduate and eventually work towards teaching English, law, and physical education in high school. Working with children and helping others gives me so much joy and fulfillment and it took me many different careers and experiences to know that this is the path that was intended for me. I cannot wait until I can share some of my experiences with students and create an environment where they feel safe and excited to learn.

This award means more to me than I could ever express as I try and navigate life as a single mom and full-time student while working part time as a fitness instructor for the City of Kamloops and School District 73. My children are both very active in hockey and track and field and have been so supportive of me working on my education, but it has been a challenge to try and supplement full-time income and everything with the children and make sure that I can provide for them and keep them in their sports and activities. I cannot express how thankful I am and although this is a short letter and introduction to myself, I want to share how much this award will help the children and I navigate through the next semester and will help ensure my success in the education program. From the bottom of my heart, thank you very much for believing in me.



Recipe

If you go to an executive meeting at Sandy Baird's home you might be lucky enough to be treated to some of her roommate's spectacular baking. Here is her Coffee Cake that she made for us in February.

COFFEE CAKE 350°F 40 – 45 minutes (check at 40 minutes) Karen McClelland

½ C shortening
 1/3 C margarine or butter
 ¾ C white sugar
 1 C brown sugar
 1 tsp vanilla
 2 tsp cinnamon
 3 eggs
 1 C chopped nuts (I use pecans)
 2 C flour
 1 tsp baking soda
 1 tsp baking powder
 1 C sour cream



Cream shortening, sugar and vanilla. Add eggs separately, beating well after each one.

Sift flour, baking soda and baking powder, add to creamed mixture alternately with the sour cream, beginning and ending with the flour. **DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP.**

Spread ½ of batter in 10" tube pan that has been well greased.

Cream butter, brown sugar and cinnamon.

Sprinkle ½ of the nut and sugar mixture evenly over the batter in the pan.

Cover evenly with remaining batter.

Sprinkle remaining nut and sugar mix over the top of the batter.

GOOD LUCK!

Submitted by Sandy and Karen



February 11, 2026

Dear colleagues and parents,

On behalf of the BC Retired Teachers' Association (BCRTA), I want to express our sorrow and solidarity in the midst of the devastation in Tumbler Ridge that has shaken our province.

Although BCRTA members are no longer in classrooms each day, our hearts remain with the educators, students and families who are carrying the heaviness of this tragedy. We understand that in times like this, the roles of teachers and others extend far beyond instruction and daily routines. Teachers and parents are being called upon to provide comfort, stability, and reassurance while dealing with your own grief.

In sorrowful times, the strength of our educational community matters more than ever. Please know that our association stands with each educator, student, parent, and support staff member. Every healthcare worker, paramedic, first responder, and resident in Tumbler Ridge is in our thoughts. Tragic events have wide ranging effects; to all people who have been affected by these heartbreaking events, we encourage you to seek support from your family, friends, and community members.

With heartfelt condolences and solidarity,

Caroline

BCRTA President

Suite 100, 550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver BC V5Z 4P2 Tel. 604-871-2260 Toll free: 1-877-683-2243

The BCRTA office is located on the traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples – s̓k̓w̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish), selílwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh), and x̓m̓əθk̓ʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) nations



Submitted by Laurie Dahlgren

We acknowledge that we live, work and play on Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc territory within the unceded ancestral lands of the Secwépemc Nation.

Please submit your articles (max.1500 words) and photos to Donna Sharpe at onlineoffice.ktrta@gmail.com. Submissions on various topics, such as travel, good books, writing, poetry, hobbies and sports welcomed. Authors agree that their submissions may be edited.