

CRTA Newsletter

President's Report

Hello to all CRTA members!

This truly is a season full of promise. As I write this, spring is less than a month away! While we're all looking forward to steady sunshine and warmer days, we can take comfort in the fact that our mild winter may be paving the way for an early spring. In the meantime, let's soak up every ray of sunshine we can — this is the Lower Mainland, after all! May the photo of the daffodil serve as a cheerful reminder of the bright days just around the corner! Take good care, everyone 😊.



Your CRTA Executive Committee has been hard at work and continues to meet regularly to guide the business of our Association. Since the New Year, they've met twice, published two newsletters, and hosted a February General Meeting. With three more Executive Meetings, two additional General Meetings, and another newsletter planned, 2026 is shaping up to be a busy and productive year!

Our recent General Meeting held in Montgomery Centre was a wonderful success. **Teresa Grandinetti** delivered the President's Report, highlighting CRTA activities for 2025/26, and **Howard Spence** presented a clear and informative financial update. **Teresa** also shared a recap of our well-attended and festive CRTA Christmas Luncheon.

We were especially fortunate to welcome Dr. Howard Malm who treated us to a fascinating presentation about his 17-day voyage last August through the legendary **Northwest Passage** — sailing from Greenland to Kugluktuk, NWT. Through stunning slides, music, and engaging commentary, he brought the **Arctic** to life, sharing stories of the people, flora, fauna, and breathtaking landscapes he encountered along the way. Those in attendance were taken on an unforgettable journey!

Congratulations to **Gwen Raycroft, Evelyn Thompson, Rita Long, Vicki Stacey, Nick Magistrale, and Don Portelance** who were the lucky winners of our door prizes!

Looking ahead, our next CRTA General Meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 1st in the Montgomery Centre Gym. Be sure to read further in the newsletter for full details — we'd love to see a great turnout and hope many of you can join us!

Teresa

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. In some years there were no bursaries awarded because there were no applicants. Please spread the word to any and all eligible students.

The money is there to be spent!



Coquitlam Retired Teachers' Association

CRTA 2025–
2026

<https://bcрта.ca/coquitlam/>

TABLE OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

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

WINSLOW CONTACT

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

SECRETARY

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

TREASURER

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

DIRECTORS

SEPTEMBER BRUNCH/ LUNCHEON/SOCIALS

Audrey Anthony
(604) 937-3086
louaud@telus.net

MEMBERSHIP/ MEMBER CONTACT

John Pope
(604) 461-7355
tjpoppe1@hotmail.com

DOOR PRIZES/GIFTS

Doug McSavaney
604-5409654
dmcavaney@shaw.ca

April General Meeting Speaker: Gerry Tiede

Looking ahead, please mark your calendar for our **General Meeting on April 1st**. BCRTA Past President **Gerry Tiede** will be explaining our new **Dogwood Insurance** programs — thoughtfully designed right here in BC, by members and for members. At last fall's AGM, we were introduced to the new **Dogwood** Extended Health Care, Dental, and Travel Plans, and in January, **Belairdirect** (a subsidiary of Intact Financial Corporation) became the administrator of our **Dogwood** Benefits Plans.

This is an important opportunity to learn more about the many advantages these new plans offer. **Gerry** will walk us through the details and answer your questions, helping you make informed decisions with confidence. We encourage you to attend and to bring along another member so they can benefit from this valuable information as well.

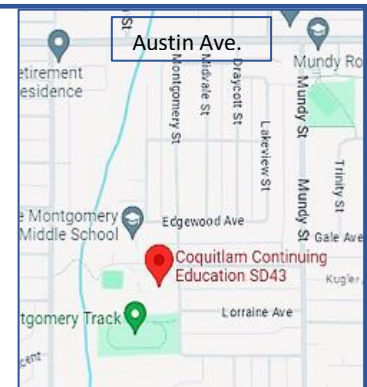
We look forward to seeing you there!

Next CRTA General Meeting

Wednesday April 1 at 10:00 AM in the Gym at the Montgomery Centre located at 380 Montgomery St, Coquitlam.

Parking is at the **WEST** side of the building.

Coffee, Tea, and Goodies served beginning at 9:30 am!



ANNOUNCING THE CRTA BOOK EXCHANGE!

WHEN: At all CRTA General Meetings

WHERE: Montgomery Centre Gym

WHAT: Any book, in good condition, that you wish to donate

WHY: Why not? We all have so many books that we have read but somehow, they stay on our bookshelves. Here is an opportunity to not only give those well-read books a new home but also, to find a new book (or two) to enjoy for yourself.

HOW: Bring your book to the CRTA General Meeting. Leave it on the table provided for this purpose. Pick up a new book to take with you and enjoy at your leisure. Happy reading! 😊



Mark Your Calendar!

March 14 to 29:

Spring Break

Wed. April 1, 2026

CRTA General Meeting

Wed. May 6, 2025

CRTA Newsletter

Wed. June 3, 2025

CRTA Annual General Meeting and lunch



Coquitlam Retired Teachers' Association



For many CRTA members who are no longer able to drive, attending a CRTA meeting can pose a challenge.

One solution to this issue, for some members, would be to access the Translink HandyCard, HandyDart and TaxiSaver programs. For information on eligibility and services, call 604-953-3680 or visit <https://www.translink.ca/rider-guide/transit-accessibility/handydart>

Did you receive an audit letter for the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP)?



As a teacher, you may have been ineligible to receive these benefits and could be required to pay back any CDCP benefits you received for the 2025/26 year.

Interested in better understanding CDCP eligibility? Visit the article on the BCRTA website at: <https://bcрта.ca/canadian-dental-care-plan-did-you-receive-an-audit-letter/>.

You can never underestimate the innovativeness of Saskatchewan Farm Boys

At a high school in the small town of Wadena in Saskatchewan, a group of farm boy students decided to play a prank. They let three goats run loose inside the school during school hours. Before turning them loose, they painted numbers on the sides of the goats #1, #2 and #4. School Administrators spent most of the day looking for #3.

BCRTA Golden Star Awards – 2026

These **six awards** recognize and reward established school programs in the public system that have, as the salient feature, the interaction of BC students and seniors. One of the six is a **Royal Canadian Legion** sponsored award for programs that include veterans in intergenerational projects featuring remembrance and patriotism. BCRTA now offers award amounts of **\$2000**.

Although there are six awards to be distributed each year, there have been only a few applications for the past few years. Many CRTA members have connections through colleagues or family who are still in the public school system and whose programs could benefit from this valuable award.

The deadline for applications is **April 15** each year and teachers can find the application form here: [Golden Star Awards • BC Retired Teachers' Association](#) or contact the BCRTA office for more information: 604-871-2260



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

sewgrl1@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

WANTED: RETIRED TEACHERS!

From time-to-time CRTA Executive Committee members are asked to recommend retired teachers who would be willing to offer their services as tutors. While Executive Committee members cannot recommend individual retired teachers, we can recommend the Teachers' Tutoring Service (TTS), established in 1983 with the support of the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF). For more information visit the Teachers' Tutoring Service website at: <https://tutor.bc.ca/> or phone: [604-730-3410](tel:604-730-3410).



Call for Support from Retired Teachers: French Immersion Projects

The Coquitlam French Immersion team (Language and Culture Department) is seeking the expertise, experience, and historical knowledge of our retired educators to support two meaningful initiatives that will directly benefit students and new teachers in our district:

- **Maillardville History & Culture Resources** - Personal stories or historical insights
 - Primary sources, photographs, or classroom resources
 - Any materials on the cultural legacy of the community
- **Archive of French Immersion Teaching Songs** - Share songs they used in their classrooms
 - Help us record these songs for our internal SharePoint site

Help preserve this knowledge! Music remains one of the most powerful tools for language acquisition.

If you are interested in contributing to either project, your experience and knowledge would be deeply appreciated and would continue to enrich teaching and learning in our district.

Please contact **Andrea O'Neill** (French Immersion Mentor Support Teacher) via email at anoneill@sd43.bc.ca. Merci!



TAX TIPS FOR THE 2025 TAX YEAR

FOR RETIRED EDUCATORS

Each year BCRTA prepares a basic guide to help members make the most of their annual tax return.



BCRTA does not offer income tax advice, but there are some common issues and deductions to keep in mind. Working through the guide will help members complete their return to their maximum advantage. The Tax-Tips start with some new items of note for the 2025 tax year that may apply to members, then proceed to a handy checklist that is fine-tuned to apply to retirees.

The **TAX-TIPS** can be found at: <https://bcrt.ca/tax-tips-for-the-2025-tax-year-for-retired-educators/>



CRTA Sunshine Director Dale Linton sends cards to members who are unwell or families who have suffered a bereavement. Please keep her informed: 604-937-5113



IN MEMORIAM



The CRTA regrets to announce the passing of the following District 43 colleagues. We extend heartfelt condolences to their families and friends.



Jim Knight: November 28, 2025: Jim taught languages at George Pearkes Junior and Centennial Secondary schools. He is remembered by family, friends and former colleagues.

Astrid Pednault